Clinical Elective in Pittsburgh

If you are a medical student of the Universities of Cologne or Bonn and interested in a two month clinical elective in Pittsburgh, check the options below to learn more about the joint elective programme of the CIO and the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute (UPCI).

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Before Acceptance

Why should I have a medical elective at UPMC?
There are five good reasons why you should apply for a medical elective at UPMC:

1. **A unique opportunity** to take advantage of the US system which provides well organized and cutting edge graduate and postgraduate medical training.
2. **Work in small medical teams** where you can benefit from an intense and supportive learning atmosphere. Perfect for your CV! As you can intensify your English and intercultural skills.
3. **Save $2100 tuition fees!** The program is based on a well established cooperation between UPMC and the CIO and recommended students only need to pay $50 application fees.
4. **Benefit from a big hospital network!** UPMC is a network of 19 hospitals and 40 day care units that provide the western part of the US state of Pennsylvania. Elective students usually get to know two different hospitals.
5. **Study a broad spectrum of diseases.** Cancer affects any organ system. Thus, every specialist will treat cancer patients at some point. Take this chance to learn more about general oncology issues: treatment options for different neoplasias, application and side-effects of chemotherapy, infectious disease management in cancer patients, palliative care, and many more!

Who is allowed to apply?
Every medical student, who is currently registered and in good academic standing, is allowed to apply for a 2 month elective at UPMC. The applicant should be a final year student at the time of his/her planned participation in the United States.

When is the deadline for applications?
Applications for all 3 trimesters should be submitted to Dr. Cornelia v. Levetzow by mid June of
the 5th medical year.

**Which documents are needed for the application?**
You will need to submit your CV, a motivation letter and an official school transcript of the Medical Faculty.

**After Acceptance**

**Which documents do I need to submit to the University of Pittsburgh?**

1. Letter of credentials from the director of the Center for Integrated Oncology
2. Filled out application form for an International Medical Clinical Elective Clerkship
3. Official academic records, academic transcript, or certification of grades; both in original language and English translation
4. Official TOEFL score report showing a minimum score of 600 on the paper test or 250 on the computer based tests. IBT score of at least 100. IELTS score of 7.0 (scores must be within the past 2 years)
5. Evidence of sufficient financial support for living expenses (estimated expenses for 8 weeks are 2250 US dollars; form is included in the application form)
6. Evidence of adequate personal health insurance to include coverage for both well-care and hospitalization as necessary while in the United States as well as professional and personal liability insurance.
7. Evidence of required immunization status (included in the application form).
8. $50.00 non-refundable application fee in U.S. dollars payable at time of application request.
9. Clearances

1. Pennsylvania State Child Abuse Clearance also called ACT 33 (current fee $ 10.00, payable via Moneyorder)
2. Pennsylvania State Criminal Background Check also called ACT 34 (current fee $ 10.00, payable via Moneyorder)
3. FBI Fingerprinting Clearance also called ACT 73 (only obtainable upon arrival in the State of Pennsylvania; current fee 36.00)

**Do I need a TOEFL test to be able to apply?**
You will need an official TOEFL score report showing a minimum score of 600 on the paper test
or 250 on the computer based tests. Alternatively, you can show an IBT score of at least 100 or an IELTS score of 7.0 (scores must be within the past 2 years).

**Do I need a J1 visa or is a B1 visa sufficient?**
You can go to Pittsburgh with a B1 visa.

**Do I need to pay tuitions?**
According to the cooperation between the CIO Cologne Bonn and UPMC elective students from Germany do not need to pay tuitions. They will only pay application fees ($ 50).

**Where can I stay in Pittsburgh?**
You can book the guest house of UPMC. This costs $ 1,000 per month.

**How much money do I have to plan for the elective?**
Depending on the type of accommodation you chose and excluding the flight ticket, the monthly expenses are estimated to be around $ 2,250.

**Do I need to read any literature before going to the USA?**

1. Medical English literature (see [English for Medical Purposes](#) Website)
2. First Aid for the USMLE Step 2 CS
3. a handy pocket medicine book
4. Reference book to learn the American names of medications

During the Elective Time

**Is there a dress code?**
Yes! Students should wear a shirt and tie (blouse for female students) underneath a short white coat, long dress trousers (no miniskirts) and leathern shoes (no sneakers). In general, students are supposed to wear short coats. Discuss with your attending whether you can use your long German coat for the 8 weeks and save some money!

**Do I have to do night shifts?**
Visiting students do not have night shifts.

**Do I get my own patients?**
You can ask your attending (Oberarzt) whether you can have your own patients to follow up till the day of their discharge.

**What are the daily assignments of an elective student?**
1. Patient admission and follow-up
2. Medical history taking
3. Physical exam
4. Diagnosis: lab values, imaging, pathology
5. Suggestion of therapy options
6. Dictation and/or writing notes

**Note:** performance of medical procedures like blood drawing, bone marrow biopsies, or writing of consultation enquiries is taught by physician assistants/nurses.

**Application Procedure**

What you have to provide

Applicants are asked to submit their CV attached to a motivation letter and an official school transcript of the Medical Faculty to Dr. Cornelia v. Levetzow.

**Note:** Applications for all 3 trimesters should be submitted to Dr. Cornelia v. Levetzow by **mid June** of the 5th medical year.

Successful applicants will be invited to a short interview. Upon acceptance the applicants will receive a letter of credentials from the director of the Center for Integrated Oncology.

Together with the letter of credentials the applicants are asked to **send the following documents to the Office of Student Affairs** (see [University of Pittsburgh, International Students](#)):

1. filled out application form for an International Medical Clinical Elective Clerkship
2. Official academic records, academic transcript, or certification of grades; both in original language and English translation
3. Official TOEFL score report showing a minimum score of 600 on the paper test or 250 on the computer based tests. IBT score of at least 100. IELTS score of 7.0 (scores must be within the past 2 years)
4. Evidence of sufficient financial support for living expenses (estimated expenses for 8 weeks are 2250 US dollars; form is included in the application form)
5. Evidence of adequate personal health insurance to include coverage for both well-care and hospitalization as necessary while in the United States as well as professional and personal liability insurance.
6. Evidence of required immunization status (included in the application form).
7. $50.00 non-refundable application fee in U.S. dollars payable at time of application request.

Further requirements: **Clearances**
1. Pennsylvania State Child Abuse Clearance also called ACT 33 (current fee $ 10.00, payable via Moneyorder)
2. Pennsylvania State Criminal Background Check also called ACT 34 (current fee $ 10.00, payable via Moneyorder)
3. FBI Fingerprinting Clearance also called ACT 73 (only obtainable upon arrival in the State of Pennsylvania; current fee 36.00)

For further formalities the applicants are asked to contact their local Dean’s office for student affairs (Studiendekanat) in Cologne.

Experience Reports

Erfahrungsberichte der Teilnehmer (in Deutsch)

2019

Fabian Ullrich | Uni Bonn | Mai-Juli 2019
Peter Jeong | Uni Köln | Januar-März 2019

2018

Jonas Saal | Uni Bonn | August-Oktober 2018
Tim Rehkämper | Uni Köln | Juli-September 2018
Jannik Stemler | Uni Köln | Januar-März 2018

2017

Andreas Glauner | Uni Köln | Juli-August 2017
Claus-Jürgen Bauer | Uni Köln | Januar-März 2017

Contact

For information about the cooperation and the application procedure please contact:

Dr. rer. nat. Cornelia von Levetzow

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For information about the requirements of the Dean's office for student affairs in Cologne or Bonn please contact:

**Dr. Benjamin Köckemann**

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