Co-teaching is an approach where two professionals deliver substantive instruction to a group of students within a single physical space (Cook & Friend, 1995).

There are many benefits of co-teaching including a more active and enhanced learning environment for students. Faculty benefit as well by learning from each other, and sharing the teaching experience. In the Pathways Curriculum many of the sessions are led by two or more instructors, often from different disciplines. This sheet provides a list of tips for faculty teaching together.

1. Do your homework—study session materials ahead of time. (With the new Pathways curriculum, you may have only received the material the day before. Please refrain from complaining to the students about this! It only undermines the faculty and course in general. The faculty who are preparing the sessions are all working incredibly hard. Things will be ready well ahead of time....next year!)

2. It is essential to take time to meet with your co-teacher prior to the session.
   a. Go over the plan for the session
   b. Review the cases, slides, etc.
   c. Familiarize yourself with the rooms and media ahead of time.
   d. Discuss content which may be challenging for you or the students
   e. Discuss content for which there may be controversy or differences of opinion.

3. In general, a session will have one leader, and one co-leader.
   a. Acknowledge that one faculty member may be more senior and/or a content expert. If this is the case, don’t pretend that both faculty are equally expert, however both faculty can have useful input. Sessions work best when both faculty are participating.

4. During the session
   a. It seems obvious, but is critically important to treat each other with respect.
   b. It’s ok to disagree at times. Observing faculty in respectful disagreement is a learning opportunity for students.

5. Be aware of non-verbal communication.
   a. Listen to each other respectfully
   b. Be engaged—not checking email, phone, etc.

6. Take advantage of having a co-teacher! Work together, ask for opinions or clarification from your co-teacher during the session.

7. Debrief after the session to review what went well, what didn’t. Make plans for future sessions together.

8. Use humor and have fun!

References:
