

## **Research Assessment #9**

**Date:** October 29, 2021

**Subject:** Interview Assessment

**Assessment:**

Since the Independent Study and Mentorship program course has progressed, I have been granted the opportunity to research the various components of Dermatology. With the help of conducting secondary research, I am now better informed of procedures and skin diseases. However, gaining experience with medical professionals is also a crucial component in gaining an advanced viewpoint on Dermatology's day-to-day commonalities. With this being said, I scheduled an interview with Dr. Robert Terrill to ask him questions and insight on ideas for the Original Work/Final Project.

For context, Dr. Terrill is a board-certified dermatologist at Sonoma Skin Works located in Frisco, Texas. He has been practicing dermatology for over 30 years and is a current member of Texas Medical Association, Texas Dermatological Society, and American Academy of Dermatology. In terms of his education, he attended Southern Methodist University and earned his medical degree at University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas. He went on to serve his internship at Baylor Hospital in Dallas and his residency in dermatology at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. In regard to his subspecialties of Dermatology, Dr. Terrill is highly trained in acne/rosacea, cosmetic dermatology, and dermatological surgery.

When interviewing Dr. Terrill I was gratified to learn his motivations, favorite procedures, and challenges experienced. Firstly, Dr. Terrill described the process of medical school and how going through different specialties (gynecology, surgery, internal medicine, pediatrics) is required. In his experience, Dr. Terrill realized he wanted a more office-like setting instead of an on-call schedule (which is his reasoning behind selecting Dermatology). In addition to this, he is motivated by helping individuals take care of

their skin issues/aiding insecurities. Thirdly, I found it important to inquire on his greatest professional achievement. He spoke on curing serious skin cancers that would have otherwise been fatal (such as melanoma). Nowadays, professionals are able to detect an issue sooner/more efficiently. Prior to having certain technologies, misdiagnosing skin diseases was unfortunately common.

Furthermore I asked about the most interesting procedure he has performed in the duration of his professional career which was taking a regular biopsy on a patient and finding out it was leprosy (as it involves the skin). The physicians had to take samples and refer the patient to the infectious disease department to get treated. I found this interesting as it showed how Dr. Terrill adapted to a difficult diagnosis which is required by professionals in the medical field. Secondly, I asked about the most common procedure that he personally experiences which was taking off moles (which is typically because of the look or patients have an issue with it). Thirdly, Dr. Terrill offered me some advice in regards to my studies in highschool. He suggested focusing on science courses in high school and broadening your education in college (such as business administration if wanting to open your own practice).

Finally, I asked Dr. Terrill for some of his input on ideas for the Original Work/Final Project. I described to him the idea of writing a research paper and then designing a smartphone application based on the study design I create. Prior to the interview, I was not knowledgeable of what skin disease I wanted to target. With the assistance of Dr. Terrill, I have some new suggestions such as moles. Taking a picture of the suspicious moles and having algorithms look at its characteristics (would pick out indicators of melanoma).