

AO Davos Courses



Suthorn Bavonratavech, MD
President Elect AO Foundation,
Davos, Switzerland.

AO's vision is excellence in the surgical management of trauma and disorders of the musculoskeletal system. The mission is to foster and expand the network of health care professionals in education, research, development, and clinical investigation to achieve more effective patient care worldwide.

AO offer events, symposia, and courses worldwide featuring lectures, hands on practical exercises and interactive discussion groups for surgeons and Operating Room Personnel at every stage of their career helping them to acquire the specific and up-to-date knowledge progressively to fit their needs and clinical practice.

Davos is a leading congress destination, and is located in a mountain setting accessible at any time of the year, in Grisons, Switzerland. This small town with its impressive mountain scenery setting is also the home base of the AO Center and the AO Research Institute. Over two weeks each December, AO Davos courses welcome more than a thousand clinical professionals from all over the world.

53 years of AO Davos Courses

In 1960, the first AO course was held in Davos, Switzerland and was attended by 69 orthopedic surgeons. The course was held to train surgeons in the application of the innovative orthopedic surgical tool kits and pioneering implants. The lectures took place in local cinemas while the practical exercise on bones was partially performed in basements.



*AO Laboratory for
Experimental Surgery Forschungsinstitut Obere Strasse*





Now the AO Davos Course is held at the newly expanded Congress Center Davos and has become the single largest educational event in various surgical trauma fields. The course currently offers a range of principles in operative fracture management up to master's courses on very complex treatment selections. The courses are enhanced by the most modern learning methods and tools. This includes knowledge sharing through discussion groups, online references, online broadcasted lectures and iPhone apps to give surgeons information quickly on hand. In addition, to date more than 350,000 surgeons and 150,000 operating room personnel have been trained worldwide by the AO Foundation.

Overview of the 2013 AO Davos Courses



*Professor Jaime Quintero
President of the AO Foundation*

From November 30 to December 13, 2013, AO offered 18 orthopedic trauma, spine, veterinarian and cranio-maxillofacial and neurotrauma courses, to more than 1,700 participants with nearly 500 expert faculty members representing 78 countries. This is a foremost educational global event. This year the course extended professional learning, and contributed to educational activities for the individual Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program. One of the highlights of the CPD program is an opportunity for 70 courses participants to meet 30 faculty members including nine past presidents to discuss the role of coaching and mentoring in the professional development of AO surgeons.



Group of AO Foundation past and present Presidents



AO Trauma highlights

AO Trauma offered 12 course modules from basic to master level for fracture management:

- Basic Principles of Fracture Management for Swiss Residents
- Management of Fractures of the Hand and Wrist
- Fragility Fractures and Orthogeriatrics
- Basic Principles of Fracture Management
- Advanced Principles of Fracture Management
- Advanced Principles of Fracture Management for Swiss Residents
- Acetabular and Pelvic Fracture Management

AO Trauma Masters Course:

- Current Concepts
- Lower Extremity
- Upper Extremity
- Complications and Complex Fractures



AO Trauma faculty

It was another extraordinary achievement year for AO Trauma. More than 1,200 participants and 350 international faculty members attended twelve courses and 70 CPD activities. Especially at the masters' level courses, there was an increase in anatomical specimen laboratories offered, and coaching for faculty members.

AO Spine highlights

Year 2013 is the 10th anniversary of the founding of AO Spine. Since 2003, AO Spine's global community has grown to more than 3,000 members representing some of the world's top talent in spine care management. This year, AO Spine gave the participants a rich and excellent mix of master level educational courses and highly popular CPD activities. Of special significance was AO Spine's introduction to a new modular course format, which allows participants to structure their own learning plan. This was extremely well received by participants, faculty and chairpersons alike. Based on the AO Spine Curriculum and the AO Spine Principles, each of the master modules comprises five case discussions, followed by solutions and evaluations. Overall, it was another highly successful AO Spine Davos Course.

AO CMF highlights

AO CMF Principles in Craniomaxillofacial Fracture Management Course began with a review of the basic principles of operative fracture care, and an emphasis on how the treatment of fractures is influenced by the biology of bone-healing. The scientific rationale for rigid and stable fixation was discussed based on pioneering scientific work done by the AO Foundation. The evolution of internal fixation, hardware, biomechanics of the facial skeleton, variations on internal fixation and principles of plating technology, and the re-establishment of the premorbid functional occlusal relationship was presented.



As in previous years, the AO CMF principles course included many exciting highlights such as a symposium on Biomaterials in CMF surgery (which was webcasted) and led by subject experts in this field. All CMF-related CPD activities were highly appreciated by both faculty and participants: in particular the hands-on session on Bimaxillary Orthognathic Surgery, led by Mark Engelstad (US) and Manuel Chamorro (ES), was attended by 80 participants (well over the capacity of 60 available places). The first AO CMF Advanced Symposium discussed challenges and pitfalls in facial trauma. The course was enhanced by three keynote lectures based on the experience of outstanding specialists in the rapidly expanding field of biomaterials. The course ended with breakout-sessions to allow participants to explore focused topics in greater depth.

AO Neuro highlights

AO Neuro is an initiative of the AO Foundation to expand its activities into the area of cranial neurosurgery. Paul Manson, a past president of the AO Foundation, described AO Neuro as an organization of cranial neurosurgeons who wish, through AO education, to improve the outcomes of cranial neurosurgery patients throughout the world.

One of the goals of AO Neuro is to create a number of educational activities that have an impact on cranial neurotrauma, skull base surgery and cerebrovascular surgery and to create greater visibility for AO Neuro. Therefore, the first AO Neuro Trauma Course was held during the AO Davos Courses 2013 under the banner of the AO Neuro initiative, and attracted 28 participants from 14 countries.



The objective of the courses is to teach the theoretical basis and practical principles for managing neurotrauma, addressing complications, and performing up-to-date reconstructive surgery. A live Webinar on 'Neurocranial Reconstruction: Standards, Controversies and Trends' and a live Webcast on 'How to classify a neurotrauma patient: Methods and solutions' were presented. Both were highly successful with online participants from around the world.



AO VET highlights

This year, AO VET delivered a Special Focus Course in Small Animal Fracture Management and an Advanced Course in Equine Fracture Management. The participants were presented with the most up-to-date information in the science of articular injuries, and advanced management of fracture fixation in veterinary medicine through presentations, discussions, and hands-on laboratory sessions. A significant feature of this course was the interaction between participants and the faculty. One session from each course was broadcast online to members around the world. At the booth, a new AO VET image film was

launched and was very well received by all viewers. The iPad App Veterinary Insights was introduced to the faculty and to participants, and this app is now available for free-download from Apple. AO VET and Medical Insights are collaborating positively to bring the most relevant and comprehensive evidence to the veterinary world.

In Summary: Due to the enormous enthusiasm of all expert faculty members, AO staff and partnerships, AO Davos Courses successfully furthered AO knowledge with a high level of educational and technical input, and a high standard of teaching provided to all participants. The AO Davos Courses team will build on their hard work and efforts to prepare a great welcome to other clinicians to join the AO Davos Courses 2014. As the inauguration of the AO Center, Martin Allgower said:

"AO remains at the forefront of surgery and science. Looking ahead, we have no monopoly on brilliant new ideas. We therefore must remain open and attractive for the younger generation."