

UPSOM Covid-19 Weekly Updates in red
April 15, 2020

Curriculum

MS1-2

- **OSB**
 - **Neuroscience**

Our first remote organ system block is in its second week. Generally things are going well, although we continue to iron out occasional glitches. We will continue this approach to the OSBs until we are able to ease the social distancing requirements
 - **Intro to Psychiatry** will be remote and ready by the mid-May start date
- **IPC (CP/APE)**

CP/APE will remain on hold until the fall

MS3-4

- We have decreased the **requirement of eight electives to seven** for graduation for the class of 2020 only
- **Period 12.5** has been **modified** for the class of 2020 only, **electives remain available for any MS4 interested. Students may also elect an additional vacation month. Students should notify UPSOM of their 12.5 plans by 4/20**
- **Preclerkship week** has been postponed to the first week of June (6/1-5). At present the plan is for it to be conducted remotely with synchronous activities Monday and Tuesday and the remainder asynchronous.
- **Clerkships** and other clinical rotations (including **electives and AIs**) are on hold until June 5. Over the next few weeks we will be identifying options for assuring that all students are able to complete required clerkships.
- **Assessment week** will probably run remotely at the end of April
- **Buprenorphine Training**: We will be offering an optional but strong encouraged virtual training on the use of buprenorphine in addiction, for all MS4s, on April 24th from 12:30p to 6p, led by Dr. Antoine Douiahy and colleagues. This “waiver training” will position our students to get certified to provide medication-assisted treatment later, after getting supplemental training in residency, and it helps us fulfill addiction medicine learning goals. All elective course directors are encouraged to release students to allow them to attend this training; we don’t believe any students will have synchronous conflicts at that time
- **Remote electives** will be available in May. Several have been developed and others are in the works.
- **Bootcamp** is moving to Period 12.5 for the upcoming academic year
- **Away electives**: At present few if any schools are accepting visiting students. Everyone is aware of student and program director concerns about the impact on resident selection processes. We will update you as soon as there is clarity about the options to have away experiences.
 - The AAMC’s Visiting Student Learning Opportunities (VSLO) program will put into place a short-term, two-week suspension on applications to away rotations from April 15-28, resuming on April 29th, as stakeholders across

the medical education community discuss how to approach away rotations in this current and next academic year. They recognize that 1) these away rotations play an important role in the residency application process, but 2) travel restrictions and variations in rotation availability may create inequity among students as they seek rotation experiences in a compressed timeframe. New guidance is expected by the end of April.

Assessments

Prometric cancelation of testing dates has affected students all over the country. Resumption of testing will not be before the end of April, and securing new dates remains many students' concerns

- **Step 1:** The Curriculum Committee approved extension of our testing deadline to December 31, 2020 (this year only). We urge students to take it as soon as possible (May, if possible), in close proximity to dedicated study time, but the option of an additional study month prior to a student's test date is available. **The recent survey of our students indicates that >90% plan to take Step 1 before starting their clerkships.**
- **Step 2 CS/CK** is also currently on hold. Fortunately, all of our students who need it this year (2019-20) have successfully completed it
- **SHELF exams** have been made available by the NBME for remote administration. We anticipate giving the exams for Period 11 on April 24, once we are certain that students, faculty, and staff have the required electronic capabilities. We intend to return to in-person exams as soon as it is feasible.
- **Examsoft** remote is working well remotely, although admittedly not secure
- **All Period 11 clerkships (4wks) will grade** as Pass/Unsatisfactory, given difficulties with completing full assessments. CAMPC for Period 11-12 will also be P/U, but Medicine and Surgery/Anesthesia will give full grades, to be completed after the clinical make-ups (at some point in the coming months).

Curriculum task force

- The curriculum committee approved the appointment of a curriculum task force to develop a cohesive approach to curriculum modifications to facilitate adapting to the impact of COVID 19, chaired by Dr. Buranosky and including course directors, other faculty, students, and staff representatives

Research

- **DSRP:** **Dr. Levine has announced that there will be funding for the summer research programs. Drs. Defranco and Veldkamp will be providing guidance for students to begin meaningful work in the face of uncertain availability of laboratory experience at least early in the summer.**
- **LRP:** The restrictions noted above also impact many students' LRP. Drs. Defranco and Veldkamp encourage students to meet with their research mentors to determine backup plans and a modified schedule for milestones (**see above**)
- **Research electives:** Students may schedule a thirds research elective month

Events

• Graduation:

- **We will NOT be pursuing early graduation this year.** None of the residencies at UPMC or other institutions where we've checked can accommodate interns early. In addition, few if any institutions have determined any other ways to use newly graduated physicians Licensure, malpractice insurance and health insurance, and impact on loan repayment make early graduation hazardous. **However, although we have opted against a mass early graduation, we are exploring the possibility of graduating individual students early, if they have a clear need and "landing place," (eg. individuals invited by their residencies to come early, who have otherwise completed PittMed requirements, and who will be accepted without the diploma in hand)**
- The usual **in-person ceremony has been cancelled.** Students have provided ideas for an alternate ceremony. We will work to select some of the ideas, with the help of students, and present them for discussion and possible revision at a town hall early next week. **We are planning a virtual ceremony to be held May 18. Feedback from students is guiding the specific elements of the ceremony.**

Pinning Ceremony

Will be held during Pre-clerkship course (currently the week of June 1-5)

Second Look

will also be a virtual event on April 24 from 1-2:30. Students who've been accepted received emails 4/7 informing them of the plan and encouraging them to participate.

Service

- A 5-person coordinating committee of students (Ben, Carly, Jane, Tejasvi, and Sara) is organizing many **volunteer opportunities**. The school can't be formally involved but Dr. Thompson is helping them coordinate efforts with UPMC and Pitt. Babysitting for healthcare workers needs to be tracked—students can't be evaluated by faculty they provide services to.
- **The students have opened a website, 412med.com, which links to the School of Medicine site listing volunteer opportunities and a centralized means of registering.**
- **Credit opportunities**
 - Some opportunities have the potential to be organized for elective credit. Students doing case tracking for the health department are getting elective credit for it under an established GSPH course.
 - UPMC has suggested some additional opportunities with substantial educational benefit that we are investigating making into electives. As these opportunities are clarified we will provide updates

Residency Preparation

Many are wondering if ERAS timelines will be delayed—it's uncertain. Specialty organizations are encouraging flexibility. As this takes shape we will provide updates.

Facilities

- Scaife, BST, Hillman have severely restricted access
- WISER is restricted but open
- Students are study for Step 1 off-campus
- Construction on the new building is on hold but efforts are underway to reactivate it

Student Health/Travel

- Students should call Student Health (or their PCP) if they think they're sick.
- No testing is currently available or needed for most students—if you're sick, stay home. If symptoms worsen be sure to stay in touch with your PCP as well as family or friends.
- **PPE is available** and is thought to be adequate, but the supply is not infinite—UPMC is being very cautious in its stewardship of these important supplies since our surge is likely to come in the near future. This is one of several reasons we don't have students in hospitals: PPE is being conserved for those with an essential role in providing patient care.
- Travel restrictions are increasing—students need to be aware. May need to leave 2wks of buffer when returning to Pittsburgh **or traveling to internships**