

# Upstate Medical University Undergraduate Medical Education Office NEWSLETTER

AUGUST  
2021

*Improve the health of the communities we serve  
through education, biomedical research and health care*

## Letter from the UME Office

*The UME Office is responsible for managing, coordinating and evaluating the medical School curriculum. In addition, we provide support to the students, faculty, and administration.*



Dear Students & Faculty:

Greetings from the UME Office,

It is August already and summer is more than half over. I hope that you have had some time off to relax and enjoy the warm weather. If you haven't – I suggest you make some plans to do so soon! Even a long weekend off from work can do wonders for our mind and body!

If it's August, that means we will soon be welcoming our new MD and MPH students! Due to the pandemic, some may not ever have visited our campus. Keep a look out for students who might be having trouble finding their class or the cafeteria. A Beatles song comes to mind... we get by with a little help from our friends!

Unfortunately, the coronavirus pandemic continues to dominate both national and local news reports. University and hospital administration are doing their best to develop and adapt policies and procedures to keep our community safe. Be sure to read the Upstate Announcements for the latest guidelines.

Curriculum renewal efforts continue. A steering group has charged four working groups (faculty leader) that are developing the main foundational and clinical sciences elements: the pre-clerkship curriculum (Rebecca Greenblatt), a longitudinal pre-clerkship clinical experience (Rachel Hopkins), the core clerkships and electives (Matt Mason), and innovations such as micro-credentials, combined degrees, and the three-year option (Lynn Cleary).

In addition, there are threads that run throughout the curriculum, including health systems science (Amy Caruso-Brown and Travis Hobart) and assessments (Lauren Germain).

The steering and working groups want to hear your feedback. There will be open forums for students on August 25 and for faculty and staff on September 1. For your convenience, these forums will be offered via WebEx at two different times each day: Noon and 5:30 PM.

Finally, I want to share another resource with you. The peer-reviewed *AMA Journal of Ethics* exists to help medical students, physicians, and all health care professionals make sound ethical decisions in service to patients and society. Founded in 1999, the journal explores ethical questions and challenges that students and clinicians confront in their educational and practice careers. They publish cases and expert commentary, medical education articles, policy discussions, peer-reviewed articles for journal-based and audio continuing education, visuals, and more. All content is free, available to everyone in perpetuity, and searchable by ACGME core competency area, clinical specialty, article type, or topic.

Best wishes for the 2021-22 academic year! Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,  
Leann Lesperance, MD PhD FAAP  
Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education

[www.upstate.edu/ume](http://www.upstate.edu/ume)

For questions regarding this publication, please contact:  
Susan (Anderssu@upstate.edu)



# Phase 1

The new academic year begins soon and we look forward to welcoming the MS1 students to campus. There will be two in person sessions of academic orientation on August 5th and 6th. MS2 students will be excited to all be together as a group for the first time for academic orientation on the morning of August 9th. The pandemic has left us all wanting more personal interactions and our goal and hope is to have the vast majority of lectures this academic year in person.

We urge all students to attend course introductions as there have been changes to grading rubrics and course policies for this academic year.

We are pleased to welcome some new co-directors to a number of courses in the pre-clerkship curriculum. Marissa Smith, MD is a new co-director of POM 1 and 2. Tom Duncan, PhD is the new co-director of MCM. Rick Matthews, PhD is the new co-director of Nervous System I. Amit Dhamoon, MD, PhD is the new co-director of both Cardiovascular, Respiratory I and II. Mary Lou Vallano, PhD is the new co-director of Urinary, Respiratory II. Daniel Zaccarini is the new co-director of Foundations and Skin. Scott Blystone, PhD is the new co-director of Hematology and Oncology. John Folk, MD is the new co-director of Renal, Reproductive and Endocrine.

Best wishes to all for a successful and fulfilling new academic year!!

Dr Thomas J Poole, Assistant Dean for the Foundational Sciences  
Theresa Stowell, Director for the Foundational Sciences



## Phase 2

Dear students, faculty, and staff,

Our third-year students have been in clerkships for about 10 weeks now, and we are happy to see them all in the clinical setting. We know that this group of students had limited clinical experiences during their MS2 year, and there was a steep learning curve at the start of this year, but as MS3 students they are up to the task and are fully involved in patient care.

Our fourth-year students are preparing to apply to residency, participating in electives and acting internships and working to secure letters of recommendation. With regard to away rotations, the default national guidance allows students across the country to do one away rotation per specialty. Some specialties have given further guidance to allow more than one. Some specialties have published statements with regards to away rotations, the interview process, and more, and the AAMC has these listed on the following website:

<https://students-residents.aamc.org/researching-residency-programs-and-building-application-strategy/specialty-response-covid-19>

The current timeline for residency application is just a couple weeks later than the typical, and the ERAS residency application service will allow residency programs to start downloading student applications on September 29.

Thank you everyone for your continued flexibility, adaptation, and motivation! We continue to be proud of the entire Upstate team since the COVID pandemic was declared, including all faculty, staff, and students.

Matt Mason, MD  
Assistant Dean for Clinical Sciences



## Testing & Technology Corner

### Welcome!!

Welcome/Welcome back to our MS1 and MS2 students. It is time to start a funtastic new academic year!!

**COM Student Resources:** [https://www.upstate.edu/ume/com\\_students.php](https://www.upstate.edu/ume/com_students.php)

### Calendars

You can locate all sorts of calendar information on our UME Academic Schedules website:

<https://www.upstate.edu/ume/schedules.php>

Some of the most clicked calendars are:

MS1 Daily Schedule:

<https://outlook.office365.com/calendar/published/e6dedfc41dad42ff8195c633be75dfd1@upstate.edu/12e97948b9224277a18f9de43fff224d8161298622528895935/calendar.html>

MS2 Daily Schedule:

<https://outlook.office365.com/calendar/published/e6dedfc41dad42ff8195c633be75dfd1@upstate.edu/23a7ae48ba0f4d4ea4024f8c23efcf9e9675608008344128679/calendar.html>

Academic Calendar: <https://www.upstate.edu/currentstudents/academic/records/calendars.php>

### Exemplify!!

Exemplify is the next wave in the test taking software for students from ExamSoft. Exemplify is the application that students will be using to take their exams. Students can download your copy here: <https://ei.examsoft.com/GKWeb/login/upstatemed>. As we are SAML ready, it is just a matter of logging in with your active ID and password. MS1's, will be sent a welcome email with instructions when your Exemplify logins are active.

### Student Access/Hospital Credentialing

If you require access to Epic, PACS/Synapse, Remote Access or need help getting Crouse or VA credentials, please follow the instructions on the Student Access website under the drop down for the request you are seeking: <https://www.upstate.edu/ume/intra/student-access.php>.

If you have any questions or need any other assistance, please email me directly at [dennistc@upstate.edu](mailto:dennistc@upstate.edu).

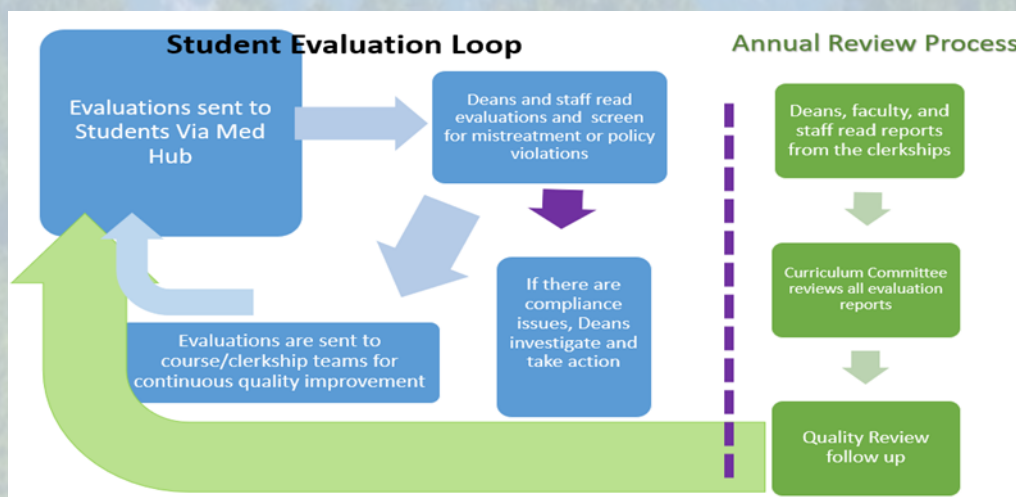
Colleen Denniston  
Testing Coordinator  
Setnor 4508



## Greetings from the Office of Evaluation, Assessment and Research!

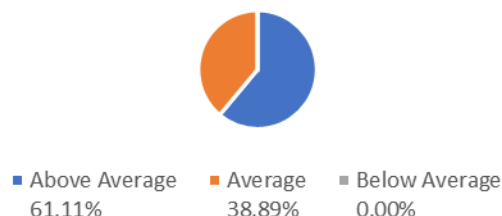
**WELCOME, CLASS OF 2025!** We are so excited to welcome you to the Upstate family. We are Dr. Lauren Germain and Ms. Josie Suser. We work with all four colleges here at Upstate to help design and implement assessments of student learning. We also work with faculty and students to design systems to evaluate courses and faculty.

All four years of student evaluations at Upstate utilize the same Student Evaluation Loop, shown below. Our philosophy is that evaluations are about learning and growing. Evaluations are a valuable tool to appraise and improve Upstate's educational programs and as such they play a pivotal role in continuous quality improvement. Every evaluation form you complete is read and reviewed either for program evaluation or LCME requirements. Most evaluations are sent via MedHub, so please contact Kristen Vella, [VellaK@upstate.edu](mailto:VellaK@upstate.edu) if you are having trouble accessing your account.



After you graduate, we'll send you one last survey a few months into your internship year. While we haven't sent out alumni surveys to the class of 2021 yet, the class of 2020 offered invaluable feedback, regarding the curriculum and their time at Upstate. The vast majority of those who complete the survey, reported feeling above average, in terms of preparation for residency!

Please rate your preparation for residency compared to your peers at your residency site.



Please feel free to reach out with any questions!

Dr. Lauren Germain: [germainl@upstate.edu](mailto:germainl@upstate.edu); Ms. Josie Suser: [suserj@upstate.edu](mailto:suserj@upstate.edu)



# OFFICE OF ACCREDITATION AND COMPLIANCE

## College of Medicine Graduation Competencies and Educational Program Objectives (GC-EPOs)

The GC-EPOs serve as statements of what students are expected to learn or accomplish during the course of medical school at Upstate. They describe the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes that medical students are expected to exhibit as evidence of their achievement and as a basis for the next stage of their training. The GC-EPOs provide the basis for all course and clerkship objectives.

The College of Medicine has six Graduation Competencies, and they are:

1. Patient Care
2. Medical Knowledge
3. Interpersonal and Interprofessional Communication Skills
4. Ethics and Professionalism
5. Practice-Based Learning and Improvement
6. Systems Based Practice and Population Health

GC-EPOs =  
Learning  
Objectives

The full list of GC-EPOs can be found [online](#) and in all course and clerkship syllabi. Please be sure to review this year's objectives, as there have been some revisions for the 2021-22 academic year. All our learning goals, assessments, and curricular planning centers around these all-important GCEPOs!



AAMC Association of American Medical Colleges

ARE YOU AN  
MS1 STUDENT?

The **Matriculating Student Questionnaire (MSQ)** is a national questionnaire administered annually by the Association of American Medical Colleges to first year medical students. The GQ asks questions related to pre-medical experiences, medical school selection processes, future career interests, and educational debts and financing. Your responses will be analyzed and aggregated by the AAMC and provided back to Upstate for quality improvement purposes. The MSQ is currently **open** through September 15!

Completion rates as of July 27, 2021

Status	Total	Percent
Completed	95	54.3%
In Progress	19	10.9%
Not Started	61	34.9%
Total Eligible	175	100%

**To complete the MSQ:** Please look for your email from the AAMC sent on June 1<sup>st</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup> with the link to the survey. Or, you can contact the AAMC for login info at [msq@aamc.org](mailto:msq@aamc.org).

## Incentive to complete the MSQ Survey...

On September 16, Dean Chin will raffle off one iPad to the students who have completed the MSQ.

Once you complete the MSQ, please click on the survey [link](#) to confirm you have completed the MSQ and submit your name into the raffle to win an iPad.





## Looking for a policy or procedure?

College of Medicine & Student Affairs policies can be found on the website:

[College of Medicine Policies and Procedures Website](#)

[Student Handbook Website](#)

## Exceptional Teacher Initiative

During the 2020-21 academic year, we received 296 submissions from students on how 185 of their teachers from 18 departments provided them with an exceptional teaching experience. Themes included appreciation, positive learning environment, professionalism, and time spent teaching.

During the months of September through June, we highlight one teacher from the Exceptional Teacher Initiative which includes a poster that is displayed in the WSK display cabinet, broadcast on the Upstate TV, emailed to all COM faculty, and published in the quarterly UME [Newsletter](#) and on the Upstate [Website](#).

Thank you to the students who took the time to complete the end-of-course and end-of-clerkship evaluations to share your stories about teachers who have impacted or influenced you in a significant way! Please continue to do so. Thank you to our dedicated faculty who make a real impact on individual students and are a positive influence on the learning environment!

## AAMC CAREERS IN MEDICINE

**Choosing a medical specialty** is one of the most significant decisions you'll make. With increasing competition for residency positions, it's critical that you make your decisions strategically. Careers in Medicine (CiM) can help you

- assess your interests, values, personality, and skills to help you choose specialties that best fit your attributes
- learn details such as salary and lifestyle, prerequisites and length of training, competitiveness data, types of patients and procedures, and other characteristics of more than 120 specialties
- compare your qualifications, pinpoint your preferences for residency training, and compare programs
- position yourself to be more competitive to land a residency
- and much more

You receive free access to CiM. [Sign in](#) using your AAMC Account. This is the same user name and password you created to sign up for the MCAT® exam, AMCAS®, and other AAMC services. If you need help signing in, use the tools in the [sign-in box](#) to recover your account information.



### 1. Understand Yourself

Self-exploration is essential to a satisfying specialty choice



### 2. Explore Options

Knowing about all career options that exist ensures well-informed decisions



### 3. Choose Your Specialty

Making a career choice that makes you happy is harder than you think



### 4. Prepare for Residency

Much is involved in a the transition from applying to arriving at residency





## Gold Star and Commendation Form



**Commendation Forms** are accessible in [MedHub](#) for faculty interested in acknowledging students that go above and beyond the call of duty! **“Gold Star” Reports can be filled out by anyone** to nominate **students, faculty, or staff** who demonstrate exemplary professional behaviors or contribute to a positive learning environment. Nominations can be made by going to the [website](#):

**Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education: Leann Lesperance, MD, PhD**

*Thank you for fostering a very supportive first in-person experience of third year!*

### Additional positive feedback from students through course/clerkship evaluations:

**Associate Professor, Thomas Duncan, PhD, in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology**

*“Dr. Duncan was a wonderful course director. When we had a tough quiz as a class he immediately went to work setting up times for us to get individualized help. I remember waking up to an email that had been sent well past midnight to schedule a review session after I had sent an email in total panic after failing my first quiz! He met with me two times and was so patient and kind helping me work through my mistakes. He went above and beyond and it was so incredibly appreciated! Thank you!”*

**Derek Starkey, MD, PGY2, in the Department of Anesthesiology**

*I really appreciated all of Dr. Starkey’s help during my SICU rotation. He was incredibly knowledgeable and helpful, and really made my rotation one of the best rotation’s I’ve ever been on. He was continuously supportive and kind, and went out of his way to make sure I understood what was going on and repeatedly facilitated ways for me to be directly involved in patient care. He went above and beyond any other teaching experience I’ve had in medical school so far, I hope to be a resident like him in the future— who emphasizes critical thinking (and shows how to do it), explains pathophysiology, clinical practice, and the paths between them in clear, well-thought out ways that just MAKE SENSE once he explains them, who is humble and knowledgeable and has a strong, caring bedside manner and always looks out for the patient.*

**Assistant Professor, John Cannizzaro, MD, in the Department of Orthopedic Surgery**

*Dr. Cannizzaro has a passion for teaching in the OR while ensuring the absolute best care for the patient. Orthopedics is a particularly difficult specialty to utilize teaching moments in the OR due to the delicate and intricate nature of the surgeries. Dr. Cannizzaro managed the strategic challenges of his job while training a senior resident and ensuring I got the most out of my experience. It was a level of finely executed multitasking that only comes after 30+ years of experience. In the office, he let me experience a full range of outpatient orthopedic conditions on top of follow-up for surgical cases. He took the time to educate me on the diagnostic value of good imaging and allowed me to partake in simple procedures.*





**SAVE THE DATE**

## STUDENT CLINICIAN CEREMONY

Please join us for the 20th Annual Student Clinician Ceremony. Students from the Class of 2022 and residents who were chosen by the students will be recognized for their excellence and for being great role models.

Date: Wednesday, September 22, 2021

Time: 5:30-6:30 pm

Place: TBD

Note that this is a mandatory event for MS3 students to attend per Dr. Lesperance, Associate Dean, UME. Clerkship directors will be notified so you can be dismissed to attend if needed.

If you have any questions about the mandatory attendance, please contact Dr. Lesperance's office directly at 315-464-5187.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

Patty Gooden  
GHHS Upstate Chapter Liaison



STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

**UPSTATE**  
MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

June  
2021

# EXCEPTIONAL MOMENTS IN TEACHING



**Leslie Major, MD**, is a clinical professor of Psychiatry at Upstate Medical University's Binghamton campus. He is the **June 2021** Recipient of the **Exceptional Moments in Teaching Recognition**.

## COMMENTS FROM DR. MAJOR'S STUDENTS:

*"I have never had a faculty member dedicate so much of his time to teaching students. During morning report students would present cases and he would provide immediate feedback. We were able to go through a differential diagnosis and devise a treatment plan with him. He went out of his way to make every student feel involved. He is truly dedicated to teaching students and it was very obvious he loved doing it. He always had a positive attitude and made everyone feel welcomed. He was one of the best preceptors I have had during medical school."*

*"With every patient we discussed, Dr. Major would integrate the pathophysiology, pharmacology, and social determinants of health. He was an amazing teacher who always made you think and constantly wanted you to improve. I feel like I learned a lot about psychiatry and about life. Dr. Major should be recognized for the truly amazing teacher and person he is."*

*"Dr. Major is a highlight of the Binghamton Clinical Campus and made for an enjoyable clerkship. I was not expecting to enjoy psychiatry, but his enthusiasm for the subject and willingness to teach left me pleasantly surprised."*

The College of Medicine recognizes exceptional teachers with the monthly "Exceptional Moments in Teaching" program. Honorees are selected via student assessments from courses and clerkships.

Recognized teachers—including medical faculty, residents, nurses and other educators—are those who challenge students and provide an exceptional learning experience.