

11/29/2020 – Maximize In-Person Learning

Dear third-year students,

We hope you all had a nice Thanksgiving, and got to take some time to relax and safely connect with family/friends, whether you met remotely or in person. We hope you all are safe and well, and we welcome you back to rotations on Monday.

Unfortunately, rates of COVID continue to rise in our country and community, and it is uncertain what impact the next few weeks will have on our medical centers and practices. We are seeing that clinics are transitioning more patients to telemedicine, the OR is putting further limits on what surgeries are able to be performed, and a higher percentage of the inpatient beds in the hospital will be for COVID patients. As such, we expect that the opportunities for in-person clinical experiences will continue to decrease over the next few weeks. We hope that with administration of approved COVID vaccines and additional public health measures the rates will decline again, but we expect things will get worse before they will get better.

Now is the time for you to maximize your in-person learning! Do what you can to complete all your clinical logging as soon as possible with the in-person experiences you have available to you this week. Things are changing rapidly, and we don't know what the rest of this clerkship block will hold for us. As with everything else during the pandemic, we will all need to remain flexible and keep adapting to the environment. We commend you all for your hard work in this ever-changing environment thus far. Additionally, we've been very happy to see how well you all follow the rules for masking and eye protection, so keep up the good work!

As a reminder, continue to use the Upstate student and staff COVID-19 self-assessment tool (aka "chat-bot") each day. If you have symptoms or questions about a potential exposure, remember to call the resource line for staff and students at 315-464-THEN for guidance about what you should do, including testing, quarantine, etc. There are several options for testing that the staff at the resource line can help coordinate for you, including on-site testing at the downtown and community campuses for students who become symptomatic while on rotation.

Thanks everyone for your continued motivation. Make the most out of every day, stay safe, and keep learning!

Dr. Mason