

## 3/31/2020 – COM Updates

Dear students,

As you are aware, on Sunday March 29, New York State extended its recommendation for working from home through April 15 and the federal government advised continued social distancing through April 30. On Monday, the AAMC updated its guidance to medical schools recommending that medical students not be involved in any patient care activities through April 14.

We assure you that we are actively monitoring the situation in New York State and across the country. We are in regular contact with colleagues at other medical schools – through videoconferences, list-serves, and personal conversations – sharing ideas and strategies for best delivering medical education in these uncertain times. We also are communicating with AAMC, LCME, USMLE, NYSED, and other agencies – inquiring about options for handling the many disruptions to our usual schedule.

Predictions regarding the pandemic vary, depending on the model and on society's response to recommendations. While we still hope for rapid flattening of the curve as well as rising hospital capacity and PPE supplies, we have decided that a delay for the step 1 deadline and a similar delay for the start of MS3 clerkships is prudent. The curriculum committee held an emergency meeting today to discuss and approve these plans (which we first reviewed with the LCME).

For current MS2 students, the step 1 deadline has been extended to Sunday June 28. We hope that the additional step 1 preparation time will enable all our students to be successful with this exam. Please watch for a follow up email from Mary Ann Grandinetta. She and Jennifer Martin Tse (registrar) are keeping abreast of Prometric announcements and will help answer questions you may have about rescheduling exams or adjusting your study schedule.

MS3 orientation will start on Monday June 29 and block A will start on Monday July 6. Due to the delayed start, each MS3 clerkship will be 4.5 weeks long, with a half week of online and/or recorded content (to be reviewed prior to the start of the clerkship) and four weeks of in-person clinical activity. IM will be 9 weeks, Surgery will be 6.5 weeks, and EM will be 2.5 weeks – with proportional online/recorded content. Third year schedules are being reviewed in light of these changes and will be released soon.

To maintain the required total instructional time, students also will need to complete an additional 4.5 credits of electives prior to graduation. We will send out more information on that, including a list of electives that could be taken this spring – for students who are finished with, or want a break from, their step 1 prep.

Here are some updates for other classes.

MS1 – instruction continues by online/remote methods.

MS3 – instruction continues by online/remote methods. NBME sent us information today that remote testing for subject exams is available starting April 7. Colleen Denniston will test and implement this new option, and then let students know what is needed for it. Students who are registered for block 12 electives will be contacted regarding contingency plans for that elective

in the event that students still are restricted from patient contact during that block. As soon as students can return to the clinical setting, time will be scheduled for those who need to complete their last clerkship block. The traditional end-of-year CSE has been cancelled (due to social distancing) but all students will have the opportunity to demonstrate their clinical skills in a re-imagined CSE offered remotely. Details to follow!

MS4 – students are completing graduation requirements by taking electives that do not involve patient contact. Many thanks to the faculty who helped quickly adapt or create those electives – some will be taken by MS2 and MS3 students as well!

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we all work together to navigate through this difficult time.

Be well!

Dr. Lesperance  
UME Office