

5/1/2020 – Class of 2022 Updates

Dear students,

We know you all are frustrated with the current status of Step exam scheduling. Please know that those of us in Upstate leadership are frustrated with this situation along with you, and we continue to work to try to improve things for you.

NBME released an announcement earlier today that has some useful information and links to an FAQ page with answers to questions we know several of you have asked.

<http://campaign.r20.constantcontact.com/render?m=1114651212823&ca=e9253f6e-5411-4101-b827-67ab69eac5cd>

<https://www.usmle.org/frequently-asked-questions/#covid19>

Just this afternoon, we heard some good news from the USMLE:

"We have several efforts underway to deliver supplemental testing and accelerate our publicly stated timeline to provide a solution. We are exploring remote proctoring, delivery at alternate sites (including medical schools), and additional solutions to resume testing and to address testing backlog and capacity constraints. We have incorporated the suggestions and ideas we have received from medical students, medical school faculty, state medical boards, and our partners in this work, and will seek to partner even more closely with medical schools as we move forward with implementation. We expect to have better insight on feasible alternatives and associated requirements within the next week."

As of now, Prometric does not list any NY sites in their list of open testing sites. We don't know when they will open or what criteria will be used to determine whether individual sites can be open or not.

We are aware that some students have gotten emails stating their exam was canceled because the testing center is closed. The NBME has announced that "all bulk cancellations for May appointments resulting from social distancing requirements and center closures are complete. State and local guidelines are evolving rapidly, and cancellations may still occur for May appointments if a testing center's ability to open changes. If examinees do not receive a cancellation email from Prometric, their examination appointment is proceeding as scheduled."

This situation continues to evolve. We are enlisting the help of some of your classmates to monitor Step exam information from NBME, USMLE, and Prometric, as well as your concerns and suggestions, and to help transmit information back to you.

If USMLE figures out a way for schools to administer these exams, we can assure you that we will jump at that opportunity. We have added our voices and signatures to many others requesting this option. If possible, we would try to offer the exam before July 6, when clerkships start. Unfortunately, we have to wait for USMLE to act (and we realize that it is a very complicated process to change the administration of an internationally-used licensing exam).

For now, we are happy that their announcement today said they will let us know more "within the next week."

Again, we know many of you have studied hard and really want to take your exam before clerkships start. To further assist you with scheduling, we recently met with the clerkship directors and discussed the Step 1 situation with them. The clerkship directors decided that students who aren't able to take their exam before clerkships start, but are prepared and wish to take the exam on a date that falls during a clerkship, may take one day off from the clerkship to take the exam, providing that it does not conflict with any essential/required clerkship activities. For example, students would not be allowed to miss the first day (clerkship orientation) or last day (subject exam) of the clerkship or standardized patient exam. Other essential dates exist for each clerkship. This absence would have to be approved by the specific clerkship in advance. If this is something you wish to pursue, you can preliminarily schedule your date and then contact the clerkship staff ASAP for the clerkship in which you are scheduled to see if you could miss that day.

Here is a list of the clerkship directors and administrators, and their contact info:

<https://www.upstate.edu/ume/courses/clerkships.php>

We realize this one-day-off option wouldn't work for someone who was hoping to have several weeks of study time leading directly up to their test date. If you aren't able to take your exam before clerkships start and you also need several weeks of time to study leading up to your exam date, the other opportunities to take the exam are during the winter break/online learning period (December 19, 2020 to January 17, 2021), elective block G (January 19 to February 14, 2021), elective block J (April 12 to May 9, 2021) and after the end of MS3 year (May 10 to July 1, 2021).

We look forward to speaking with you next Wednesday at 5 pm at the weekly town hall meeting. We hope that these updates are helpful to you and that you enjoy your weekend!

Take care and be well,

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