

Townhall June 21, 2020

Format of townhalls – with somewhat fewer students attending and with somewhat fewer questions being submitted, we would like to make the sessions more interactive. We would love to use this opportunity to get your input. We are also wondering whether to move to every other week townhalls. We added a Qualtrics yes/no question to the usual link

Format of questions – several students have mentioned whether we could paraphrase questions. We have been sharing the questions in an unedited way to prevent errors in paraphrasing and also give you a sense of how your colleagues are asking questions. We would be glad to paraphrase if that is better. We are trying it below. If you have a minute, please answer that yes/no question on the Qualtrics link also. (btw the link is anonymous)

An announcement: We have a new Learning Environment Liaison at UNC! Daryhl Johnson is from the department of surgery. Student Affairs will send out more information

https://findadoc.unhealthcare.org/details/802/daryhl-johnson-ii-general_surgery-trauma_critical_care_and_emergency_surgery-chapel_hill

One student comment deserves a full quote: A university of Michigan Medical School student died by suicide this week. Don't have a question but wanted to express thanks for the mental health resources available to us students and to remind that this is an isolating time for us all and to check in on your friends!

COVID questions:

What are expectations for students on and off campus?

We have put together the attached expectations as well as an infographic that summarized the expectations. We will begin to distribute these expectations more widely. They are consistent with the community standards that the Chancellor has asked students to attest to. Our document has some with some additional expectations relevant to medical student given their contact with patients.

We will clarify over the next week which document(s) you need to formally attest to

What is the policy on students seeing COVID positive patients?

We are continuing the policy endorsed by the AAMC that students should not be providing direct care for patients who are COVID positive or have a high likelihood for being COVID positive. Recognizing that there are Individualization Phase students who will soon have to care for COVID positive patients as residents we are providing an option for Individualization Phase students to opt in to caring for COVID positive patients. Students will be made aware of these opportunities email in advance, and will need to opt-in to be involved in these opportunities. Students will not be assigned to care for COVID patients or PUIs if they have not express interest in advance. These are optional educational opportunities, and participation in care of COVID positive patients or PUIs is not expected of any student. Faculty and administrators recognize that some students may not be able to safely participate in this opportunity because of personal health risks, or health risks of loved ones. Thus, student choice to engage or not with these educational opportunities will not affect the grade. Students that choose to be involved in the care of COVID positive patients or PUIs will be given all necessary PPE to ensure safety. Hopefully the attached document with examples is helpful.

What variation exists across health systems?

As you look ahead at your Indy Phase schedule, we thought it may be helpful to be aware of what COVID Precaution Policies exist at regional campuses (particularly for students who may personally have additional risk factors or have loved ones with additional risk factors). Of course, policies are changing rapidly and may differ by the time you rotate, however, we thought this would be a helpful start. If you rotate at a campus and notice the policies are different, please update the document! And, if you need additional assistance to ensure your own or your family's safety while on the wards, please do not hesitate to reach out to Student Affairs.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zyAYgvaiqKZKiFFX82tTOAvhUgEEBhaeL3njWp4ODLU/edit?usp=sharing>

Will public transportation be safe for students who need to use public transportation to get to school

The University is working closely with the town to make sure that all students wear masks on public transportation. We will also closely monitor situation and want to hear from you as the semester gets started whether you feel it is safe to ride buses

How many UNC faculty/residents/medical students have contracted COVID from work so far?

While it is hard to ever say for sure where an infection was acquired our occupational health team can often make a good guess. We have had one known patient to employee transmission and that was prior to universal masking rules. We have had a handful of staff to staff transmission. The rest of the positives are either known community transmission or unknown. We have had a total of 128 positive employees out of 15,000 since March, and again - the vast majority of those transmissions are thought to be community transmission. PPE works.

How to report issues on the learning environment including COVID related issues

This link is checked daily <https://www.med.unc.edu/md/anonymous-report/> It has been edited to more clearly label COVID specific issues. The form can be used by students at all campuses and is anonymous

Other mechanisms include talking to your course director, your learning environment liaison, and completing your block evals

Mask and eye protection.

- Where can I get new masks

You can pick up masks from Student Affairs office outside of scheduled times. Just drop by the office. The office hours are posted

- When can we expect to receive new masks

When you run out of mask, pick them up from Student Affairs. At regional campus, your campus coordinator will provide you with more.

- What eye protection works

With current evidence eye glasses with side protection and face shields appear to be similarly effective. Regular prescription glasses do not offer the same protection. A face shield or suitable eye protection need to be work over your regular glasses

- Can we get sturdier eye protection

The eye protection we have distributed is the same eye wear that is given to UNC Health employees. The advantage of this protection is that it fits over regular eye glasses. We are also purchasing face shields. Of course cost is a factor. Many in the health systems have bought their own eye protection and that is also an option

Testing and Other Curricular Issues

Can you speak to the USMLE update from this week regarding step2 cs and step1 reporting?

We were concerned by both announcements

- USMLE update #1: The Composite Committee approved the decision that, after the implementation of Pass/Fail scoring for USMLE Step 1, future Step 1 results are to be reported on official transcripts as Pass/Fail; for examinees who have received a numeric score, USMLE Step 1 results are to be reported as such in perpetuity.

It is likely that if program directors still have access to scores then they will continue to be used. That essentially pushes the effect of changing to Pass/Fail 2-3 years beyond the actual date of policy change. It does strengthen the recommendation to take Step 1 when you are ready and not delay just because of the possibility that you might be better off with a pass/fail score

- USMLE update #2: The Composite Committee approved the decision to report complete examination score histories on all USMLE transcripts during the suspension of Step 2 CS, including prior Step 2 CS failures.

We will work closely with any student who has a Step 2 CS failure and was not able to remediate that score. We can highlight in the student's MSPE our communication with programs and other evidence that the student has the clinical skills needed to succeed in residency. That can include things like the CPX exam and clinical course evaluations. This approach has worked well in the past with students who have failed Step exams.

When should 3rd year students plan to take Step 2 CK?

With centers opening back and UNC offering test times, we encourage you to go ahead and schedule the test. You will need to take it eventually for board certification. Until we hear otherwise, we encourage the class of 2022 to plan on taking Step 2 CK a month or two after they complete the Individualization

Phase. The two UNC testing dates are 8/27 and 9/10. An email will go out outlining the information and providing a sign up for the August date.

For Class of 2022, will scheduling individualization phase be done in one or two rounds?

We have been planning on going to one round. Our experience has been that one round works as well as two as we provide ample opportunities for switching. We may change the timing due to COVID and will provide more information in the next several weeks

Can you send reminder to us about dates that ERAS material are due to Maureen Rosen

MS4 presidents have a handy google sheet of dates:

<https://docs.google.com/document/u/0/d/1bNRLMUVcg5YM-l4i1D-nUkf7XLskV0PSgCWNQIwzcM/mobilebasic>

Is it possible to release App Phase and Indy Phase grades more quickly

Our school policy is 4 weeks and the LCME standard is 6 weeks. The challenge is collecting the grades from your clinical teachers. We would like to release the grades as soon after a rotation as possible and work hard to message this to your clinical teachers. We will renew our efforts to do so.