

## Dean's Q&A

November 25, 2020

### COVID

I wanted to ask about the asymptomatic testing being provided at the Student Union. I had previously gone to the Student Union for asymptomatic testing once or twice, but on arriving last week, I was told that anyone undergoing testing had to register an account online using the new QR code system. The registration website was not at all school-affiliated and seems to be part of the start-up lab that is carrying out the testing. Reading the terms and conditions gave rise to a number of data use concerns, and I began to wonder why students are required to register their personal information and create an account with a private start-up lab if they are undergoing testing on campus. With just a PID, shouldn't Campus Health be able to share testing results with students and contact them if need be? I can say that I was not the only student present who seemed to be uncomfortable with the prospect of registering an account/wondering why it was even necessary in the first place, but the staff were very very pushy. I know that this is an issue that goes beyond the SOM and you may not have any answers at this moment in time, but can we please get an explanation for why this is occurring, including who is carrying out the testing, what they are doing with the student data, and why this is not all internalized within the Campus Health system? Thank you!

The screening of asymptomatic students is being handled by a contractor and not associated with Campus Health given the magnitude of the task. As you may have heard from the Chancellor, testing will be required for undergraduate students starting this spring. We will announce shortly how we will handle testing for the medical students and will likely vary a bit by phase based on risks of transmission. The data collected by those doing the testing will enable results to be shared with students and track adherence to the testing protocol. The data will be held securely consistent with FERPA and HIPAA standards. Please let us know if you encounter other concerns when you get tested.

MS1 students should be expected to use the symptom check before Anatomy lab. Far too many conversations happening about students not feeling well, but not wanting to get behind, so coming into lab and prosections not feeling well. Can there be an expectation for students to check in before this lab?

All students coming to campus and students on clinical rotations are required to complete the symptom tracker (including coming to Anatomy Labs). This work is part of our efforts to keep our community healthy. It is part of our standards as professionals. We track adherence and if we find adherence is falling we will need to find new ways to ensure adherence. We also have a reporting mechanism where you can report when your peers are not adhering to community standards.

<https://www.med.unc.edu/md/forms/student-mistreatment-and-learning-environment-concern/> But we would much prefer to use you as colleagues, encouraging each other and yourself to hang in there and continue this onerous work until the pandemic is under control.

### Individualization Phase

Can you give a brief comment regarding step 2CS coming back in a virtual format and what this means for class of 2021/22 moving forward? Thanks!

Thanks for making us aware of this question. As I asked around, it seems that no decisions have been made. The USMLE website recently posted a discussion that indicates conversations are under way about restarting the exam but no timeline has been set. <https://www.usmle.org/revitalizecs/> We will track this discussion closely and let you know as we find out more information. It sounds like more information will be available early 2021.

Hello! I was wondering if there were any updates about what date our hooding ceremony would be held this year. Will it be the same as UNC commencement?

re in-person vs virtual Graduation/Match: I know its very hard to predict these things and obviously we would like to have it in person, but can we get a more clear picture when we will know if these events will be virtual? With how the pandemic is going its becoming more and more likely that these events will be virtual. I realize there is a lot of planning that goes into these events, so if this can't be done for several more weeks that's totally understandable.

We have been waiting for the main campus to make a decision whether the commencement ceremony on Sunday May 16 will be virtual or in person. We strongly suspect it will be virtual. We will likely need to use the same format. Once that announcement is made we will set the date for our hooding ceremony, likely on May 14 or 15. We hope to make a decision by early January and get student input on the final date.

Question regarding fourth year scheduling: Why is this process done by an individual rather than computer software? I hear you as you say that this allows for more individualization but I feel like this can have a lot of bias in it. I know multiple students who were assigned the same course multiple times. I feel like the most fair system would be a lottery style.

We are actively investigating a switch to a lottery system that was previously not feasible with 1) the cross listed courses in our catalog and 2) the significant flexibility we give to students to drop/add courses at any time and secure prioritized access to courses essential to their residency match. A transition to a lottery-based system will require parameters that may limit the flexibility that our students and advisors have come to expect. Our goal is to create a fair system that balances the unique and often urgent career needs of medical students while using staff time prudently. If an automated system allows us to achieve these goals, then we will strongly consider it.