

Dear Class of 2024,

It was wonderful to see so many of you on our Town Hall last month! The time this summer has flown, and we have spent much of it anticipating your arrival on campus.

Though faculty, staff and students have been actively discussing plans, we did not want to share details until some important decisions were finalized (recognizing that significant changes in pandemic characteristics may necessitate additional adjustments) and we are sharing them here and on the OUME website at: <https://umassmed.sharepoint.com/sites/oume/SitePages/Fall-Planning.aspx> Plans include input from curriculum committee chairs, faculty, students and staff. They adhere to the institutional and state guidelines and represent the following principles:

- The University of Massachusetts Medical School seeks to provide a learning environment that is as safe and supportive as possible, including during this pandemic
- The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is complex and affects individuals in different ways
- Learners build competence through a blend of independent and group learning experiences using a variety of settings and modalities
- There is no way to guarantee zero risk of acquisition of SARS-CoV-2 during this pandemic, despite excellent infection control practices and supporting policies
- Accommodations processes and policies are in place to address personal medical circumstances that may impact a learner's ability to participate in the curriculum

Major course and session determinations are listed below, details will be provided on course websites (which you will be introduced to next week).

- **All lectures will be virtual using zoom.**
- **Some small groups will be held physically on campus** using physical spacing and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). In general, students will have 1-3 face-to-face sessions weekly (not counting the Longitudinal Preceptor Program (LPP) or physical diagnosis (PD) sessions). Attendance at [these](#) sessions is required.
- **Other small groups will be virtual using zoom**, attendance will vary based on course determination.
- Students may choose to attend some zoom sessions from campus if timing between in-person and zoom sessions does not allow for travel from or to home. There will be designated spaces for this. Appropriate PPE and cleaning will be required.
- **LPP** will continue based on the preceptor's practice model (live or telehealth) and with complementary experiences and appropriate PPE.
- **PD** will occur on campus with appropriate PPE.
- **Standardized Patient** and **Simulation** exercises will be a mix of virtual and face-to-face using appropriate PPE.
- Faculty or students who have personal health reasons to not participate in face-to-face learning should contact the **Director of Accommodations**, Katrina Durham and review the website for more information: <https://www.umassmed.edu/ADA/> We will work with course leaders to adjust experiences based on accommodations granted by the committee.
- Learners who are not ADA-eligible can choose to utilize the 'fifth year option' to create an individualized academic plan and dedicate this year to professional development.

- The **calendar** is live at: <https://umassmed.oasisscheduling.com/public/calendar/> You will note that locations refer to the course website and session table. Session tables will be populated by the course administrators when the rooms are confirmed and when zoom links are created.
- FOM1 and FOM2 students will be **COVID-19 tested** weekly.
- **Students arriving to MA from out of state/out of region will need to undergo 14 day quarantine** per school rules. If this requires you to miss an in-person session please contact the appropriate course leader (information available on the OUME website at: <https://www.umassmed.edu/oume/> (navigate to OUME tab→Educator list; access requires your UMMS login). Please copy student affairs and student health services.

Additional information is available through links on the OUME COVID-19 webpage:
<https://www.umassmed.edu/oume/COVID-19-FAQ/>

The practice of medicine has long relied on application of best available information to individual circumstances, and dealing with uncertainty. This pandemic highlights both of those principles. While these are our best determinations at this time we will continue to update them should changes occur and if we identify better ways to support learning.

We are excited to work with and support you through this next phase of learning, recognizing that some of you may have mixed emotions and questions. Please take advantage of all the support the institution has to offer, reach out at any time and continue to join scheduled town hall meetings. Our goal is to work through these times and to emerge stronger together.

Welcome to your UMass family and see you next week on zoom and on campus!
Melissa