

**Subject:** COVID-19 Update to Medical Students in Learning Environment

**Date:** Thursday, March 19, 2020 at 1:14:01 PM Pacific Daylight Time

**From:** Catherine R. Lucey

**To:** Wolfson, Rebecca



## COVID-19 Updates for Medical Education

*Dear Colleagues,*

*We are sending the email below to our Foundations 2 (core clerkships) and career launch (senior students) with an update to our plans for training students in the clinical environment. We will abide by the recently released [AAMC guidance document](#), and students will resume clinical rotations on April 1, 2020. Based on feedback from many of you, this also gives us time to work with our clerkships to adjust our educational programs to provide needed flexibility in this historic time.*

*It is a great honor to work with each of you. Thank you for continuing to help us hold fast to our UCSF principles as a public institution serving our California communities.*

*As always, please let us know how we can support you. If you have other concerns about a student, please contact the medical education dean on call (24 hour phone line) 415-476-1216, option 1.*

*Thank you for all you do,*

*Catherine*

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Dear F2 and Career Launch students,

We are writing with updates for your clinical schedules amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. We are grateful to you, our faculty and staff team, and your coaches for your flexibility, commitment and professionalism in this dynamic time.

**Our UCSF values and mission are clear: We are a public institution with a commitment to train the physician workforce that our communities, state and nation need. And what is needed now are well educated physicians and physicians in training to address a serious pandemic.**

The Deans of all of the UCSF Health Professions Schools and Graduate Program in Physical Therapy are united in a belief that students are essential members of the care team in the response to this pandemic. Our students have the knowledge, skills and professionalism to contribute in many ways. We have been heartened by the outpouring of support and offers of help we have heard from many of you. We know that all of you are committed to fully embrace the responsibility of supporting our people and our health systems during this crisis so that our patients receive outstanding care, regardless of the illness or concern that led them to seek care.

Your deans have been hard at work, consulting with health system leaders and clerkship directors and working with other UC medical schools and national organizations. The decisions we have made that are outlined in this email have been made in support of our values and mission along with the following principles.

1. **We are committed to your safety**, as well as the safety of the residents, faculty, and other health care professionals. Students will not be the direct care providers for patients with possible COVID-19 and will not provide care for any patient without the appropriate PPE for that patient's condition. We recognize that this will decrease, but not eliminate the risk that you will be exposed to COVID-19 or to any other infectious agent in the workplace. Accepting this risk is part of our responsibility as people committed to becoming physicians.
2. **We are committed to graduating students who have all of the skills they need to function as outstanding interns and to making sure that all are making progress towards a timely graduation.**
3. **We are committed to adapting to circumstances that limit the availability of some clerkships.** There are three types of challenges we have been facing: decreasing patients due to the cancellation of elective surgery and appointments, shortage of PPE in some areas, and the deployment of faculty to telehealth responsibilities from remote locations, making them unavailable for supervision of students.

### **Class of 2022 F2 Students**

- **Clinical Experiences will resume on Wednesday, April 1, 2020.** Many of you will return to your usual scheduled clerkship. As you return to clinical experiences, we encourage you to anticipate that you will have new and different student clinical roles in many clerkships. As departments rapidly reorganize care delivery, all clinicians, residents and students may be doing new and different tasks. Make yourselves as useful as possible! For students, this may entail scribing, participating in telemedicine, and providing extra support to patients who do not have known or suspected COVID-19. You will also be using alternate methods that will enable you to achieve all core clerkship competencies, such as online cases, reflections, or independent reading. FCM clerkships will continue unless instructed by FCM clerkship directors regardless of the options described below (Clinical experiences, COVID-19 Response Rotation, Mastery Learning Rotation). All students should also continue to participate in FS-in-F2 remotely as well as any clerkship learnings to stay engaged and prepared for clinical activities.
- **If your assigned clerkship has notified us that they do not have sufficient patients, faculty capacity, or PPE to provide educational activities, we will notify you by next Tuesday.** Impacted students will be assigned to either a COVID-19 Response Clerkship or a Mastery Learning Rotation. It is our expectation that most students will be assigned to the COVID-19 Response Clerkship unless they have personal or medical reasons for not being in the health system at this time.
  - **COVID-19 Response Rotation:** Students will participate in the health system response to the pandemic at the hospital of their most recent clerkship. They will carry out support activities in the clinical environment (scribing, patient communication, information gathering, fit testing, telephoning patients, triaging, screening, whatever) based on what the command center needs. If there is insufficient work to accommodate all interested students, we will rotate students between the COVID response rotation and the Mastery Learning Rotation so that all who want to participate can do so. Students will receive academic credit towards Foundations 2 requirements.
  - **Mastery Learning Rotation:** Students who have a medical or personal reason for not being in the hospital at this time will be assigned to either study for step 1 or study and take clerkship shelf exams (we will use the practice NBME exams

as proxies: these are the NBME Self-Assessments for the Clinical Science Mastery Series). **These students will not rotate into the COVID-19 response rotation.** Students will receive academic credit towards Foundations 2 requirements.

- **Changes to Assessment Procedures:** We have adjusted Assessment procedures to enable you to achieve clerkship expectations flexibly in a manner that acknowledges the current situation for patients, students and their supervising residents and faculty.
  - **BBOT** – BBOTs will be student driven only. You do not need to ask faculty or residents to complete these until further notice. On a daily basis, you should document a piece of feedback you have received, or a learning point you gathered, using the usual method of scanning your QR code.
  - **Summary evaluations** – Your clerkship directors will continue to collect written summary evaluations, but we ask you to be prepared that these may be more limited in number or scope given the demands on clinical systems and changes to schedules. We are working on a strategy to make it easier for faculty and residents to complete evaluations.
  - **Clerkship exams** – These cannot be delivered in the usual form at this time because of the shelter in place orders, and these cannot be given remotely. Therefore students will need to complete the NBME Self-Assessment for that clerkship to satisfy the clerkship exam requirement (Medicine, Neuro, Ob-Gyn, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, Surgery).
- **Other important information for F2 students:**
  - There will be no ARCH Week in the week of April 6 because you have already completed ARCH 5. During the week of April 6, we will 'catch up' to the regular clerkship schedule after the postponement of clerkships by one week with the earlier ARCH.

### **Class of 2021 Career Launch Students**

- Career Launch 4a students (just starting their fourth year) will START the first rotation of their Career Launch on April 1, using the same approach as for Foundations 2 students.
- **If critical subinternships are not available, do not panic!** We will work with the department throughout the year to help you get the experiences you need to apply for residency programs. Remember that students throughout the country are experiencing similar schedule challenges.
- Career Launch 4a students whose assigned clerkship has insufficient patients, PPE or faculty bandwidth will be assigned to either a **COVID-19 Response Rotation** or to a **Medical Education Response Rotation**
  - **Medical Education Response Rotation:** Students assigned to this rotation will serve as faculty-extenders. They will work to develop on-line clerkship learning resources (evidence, articles, cases) for use by F2 students and will be offered the opportunity to observe, coach and support F2 students on the clerkships, thus providing support for the clinical teams.
- **Board Exams:** Prometric sites have closed down and will be closed through April. Depending on the evolution of this pandemic we don't know when they will be open again. We will be flexible – original deadlines will be adjusted as needed. Students who still need to take Step 1 will receive an email from Associate Dean John Davis about the plan going forward.

**Class of 2020 Career Launch/4B Students:**

- **All students assigned to Medicine 140.01 or Acute/Urgent Care requirement clinical rotations should continue in those rotations** and seek to make yourselves as useful as possible. If your rotation is cancelled because of insufficient patients, PPE or faculty, notify your rotation director/SET advisor and we will assign you to an alternate clinical rotation to support the team and your fellow students. If you have medical or extenuating personal reasons that prevent you from continuing on your clinical rotation, please consult with John Davis.
- **Students with only elective skills requirements remaining may opt to participate in those rotations or in COVID-19 or Medical Education Rotations**
- **Graduation:** We will make a decision by April 18th if we will be able to continue with an in-person graduation. In the meantime, please tell family and friends to not make travel plans.

We will be hosting two more Open Forums this evening at 6 p.m. and Thursday at 6 p.m. to answer specific questions. [Join us by Zoom.](#)

Zoom Link: <https://ucsf.zoom.us/j/923569612>  
Phone: 16699006833, 923569612#

**Questions or Concerns? Contact Your Academic Advisor:**

- F2 Advisor: [Nikki Williams](#)
- Career Launch Advisor: [Wenia Lee](#)

In addition, please refer to our [COVID-19 page](#) for more specific questions.

We thank you all for your understanding and flexibility during this historic time.

Warm Regards,

**Catherine R. Lucey, MD, MACP**  
Executive Vice Dean, UCSF School of Medicine  
Vice Dean for Medical Education

**Medical Education and Graduate  
Medical Education COVID-19  
Website**

**UCSF COVID-19 Website**



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