

Dear Valued Faculty and Educational Leaders,

Thank you for all you are doing during these challenging times. The work that you have accomplished to transition to remote or redesigned learning and your clear and present support for our students is truly inspiring. We are so fortunate to be at UCSF during this time.

We write to clarify the rationale and decision-making process we are using for the decisions that we have made and continue to make about in-person student activities for Late Summer/Fall 2020. ***We ask for your support in adhering to these decisions and in helping the students understand why their gatherings will continue to be restricted.***

### **How are decisions about what is allowed and not allowed being made?**

UCSF Medical Education follows the directives of the San Francisco Department of Public Health (DPH) as interpreted by the UCSF Emergency Operations Command (EOC) Center. In addition, the Educational Deans of all the Professional Schools and the Graduate Division have jointly agreed to move in lock-step with regard to restrictions on gatherings and use of in-person activities for essential work only.

### **How often are decisions reconsidered?**

The School of Medicine Education Deans meet three times a week to review updated evidence and directives and once a week with the Education Deans from the other UCSF Schools and Divisions. To ensure predictability of the education environment, we have put in place existing plans about in person classroom, clinical and social activities through the end of fall quarter, December 2020. This prevents faculty from having to constantly change methods of instruction and minimizes confusing communications in these dynamic conditions. Later this the fall, we will make decisions about in-person activities for the quarter starting in January.

An increase in restrictions from the DPH or other State Agency or UCSF is acted upon immediately. A loosening of restrictions is considered and, in general, watched for stability prior to changing course. This protects us from the policy swings that we saw with the city's plans to open restaurants and beauty salons in June.

### **What qualifies as an essential activity for in-person learning?**

Essential is defined by two things: 1) the activity is time sensitive to keep students on target to graduate on time and 2) the activity is unable to be conducted remotely without serious loss of effectiveness. Examples include: core clerkships, sub-internships, and physical diagnosis teaching.

### **What in-person essential activities are permitted?**

- Career Launch/Senior students: all required clinical activities
- Core Clerkship students: all required clerkships and CIEXs
- Foundations 1 students, year 2: preceptorships and CMC
- Foundations 1 students, year 1: selected CMC sessions and anatomy tutorials
- Approved health system volunteer activities related to COVID

### **What in-person student activities are not permitted?**

Everything else is not permitted. This includes non-curricular activities: no in-person interest group activities, Registered Campus Organization student meetings, non-COVID volunteer activities, shadowing.

### **Why is there a restriction on eating together in small groups?**

The challenge with eating in small group is not the food. It is the fact that eating requires mask removal and thus increases the risk of transmission in the event that there is a member of that group with asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic COVID infection. For these reasons, eating is not allowed at any medical education in-person activities. The campus is considering

locations and protocols that allow individuals to eat while on campus and we will communicate this information when it is available. However, there are no plans at this time to allow for small groups of students, faculty or staff to eat together during essential events.

**How are students protected for approved, essential, in-person activities?**

Students will use masks and face shields for any activity in which they are required to be within a six-foot radius to participate (e.g. physical diagnosis, anatomy tutorials and direct patient care activities).

**If preceptorships and clinical clerkships are allowed, why can't first year students do shadowing or other clinical experiences?**

Our clerkship directors continue to report shortages of patients for students, PPE shortages in affiliated hospitals and limited space in team workrooms for physical distancing of teams. We are prioritizing all clinical space, patients, and PPE for students in the core clerkship year and beyond so that they can advance towards graduation on time. We are hopeful that we will be able to get our students into clinical experiences after the new year.

**Why aren't the Free Clinics operational?**

Free clinics are suspended at this time because the spaces in which these clinics are held cannot accommodate the isolation of patients with suspected COVID-19.

**I've heard that there might be recreation activities starting up. Can we follow their lead?**

The recreation department is planning some limited physical distancing activities (such as single person kayaking). All such plans are vetted through the EOC and require strict safety and cleaning plans. As they come on board, we will notify students about these opportunities.

**Where can I find information about the guidance you are providing to students?**

Please refer to the COVID-19 Principles and Guidelines section on our [COVID 19 Medical Education page](#)

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We know that students are very disappointed to not be able to gather in the UCSF tradition of large and friendly groups. We are disappointed as well. However, strict adherence to the principles of prioritized essential experiences and no non-essential group gatherings minimizes the risk that a large group of students will be exposed and quarantined and helps us avoid having to back away from our in-person activities because of a renewed surge in COVID cases.

Your reinforcement of these rules and reminder that students can socialize with 1-2 people at a time, outdoors using masks will help everyone adapt to this normal. Please continue to use your creativity to provide mentoring and career exploration remotely. Faculty who need support in designing on-line experiences can contact the [Technology Enhanced Education](#) team who have experts in both technology and best practices for remote engagement. Contact them at [rocket@ucsf.edu](mailto:rocket@ucsf.edu).

Thank you for all you do to support our learners.

Sincerely,

**Catherine R. Lucey, MD, MACP**

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

**Medical Student  
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Website**

