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Subject: Fall planning update

Dear Co2023,

We hope that you are enjoying a well-deserved summer break! Here in VT it's been very hot and dry; almost makes us think about snow...but not quite.

LCOM is excited to welcome you back to campus using a hybrid in-person/remote structure that emphasizes a safe learning environment. This structure allows student engagement while reducing the number of students that come in physical contact. We are following the guidance of the CDC and UVM and have utilized input from all facets of medical education including faculty, staff and students. The attached document provides answers to questions related to your return to campus and the format of classes for the fall. We will be sending more information in the weeks ahead.

Dr. Cook will provide more specific information about your Connections course early next week.

The world continues to change during the pandemic and this fall will be different in many, many, ways. What has not changed is the outstanding character and resiliency of our students, the zeal and enthusiasm of our faculty, and the dedication and tireless efforts of our staff. By being flexible, understanding, transparent, and open we will be successful together.

Enjoy your summer and please reach out if you have questions,

Karen Lounsbury, PhD
Level Director Foundations

Jesse Moore, MD
Director of Active Learning

How successful was the switch to remote delivery for NMGI and MedNeuro?

Your class's performance on exams (block, final, and NBME) were comparable to prior years. Similarly, we have not seen an increase course failure or marginal pass rates.

What will the Class of 23 weekly schedule look like?

The requirements to maintain 6 feet of distance requires us to have the class of 2023 and class of 2024 on campus on different days; we do not have the physical space to have both classes on campus at one time. You will have curriculum responsibilities Monday-Friday. You will be on campus Mondays and Wednesdays. On Tuesday, Thursday and Fridays the curriculum will be delivered synchronously (faculty will conduct live sessions) via Zoom.

How is LCOM insuring the safety of learners, faculty and staff on campus?

When you are on campus the class will be distributed across MedEd 100 (Larner Classroom), MedEd 300, and the small group MedEd rooms. The faculty will be in 100 and the rooms will all be connected via Zoom. This enables us to keep 6 feet of distance between students while preserving the ability to interact. Should the need arise, it will facilitate contact tracing. We will periodically rotate who is in 100, 300, or the small group rooms. The University is following VT Department of Health (DOH) and CDC guidelines for cleaning classroom spaces. Masks will be worn in indoor public spaces.

Do I have to come to campus Mondays and Wednesdays?

The expectation is that you will come to campus. This is an opportunity to engage with your classmates and to apply knowledge. If you need to request an accommodation due to illness or other circumstances, please contact the [Assistant Dean for Students](#) or seek an accommodation from UVM Student Accessibility Services (see Medical Student Handbook Policy 310.00 Support for Disabilities: Technical Standards Procedure for Admission, Advancement & Graduation for Students with Disabilities Seeking Accommodation for additional details).

Dr Prelock sent an [email](#) that detailed options for learning at home. Does this apply to LCOM?

No, this applies to undergraduates. Medical education requires you to be in person for active learning sessions, labs, clinical skills sessions, and Doctoring in VT. LCOM expects you to be prepared for a hybrid delivery, in Burlington, as outlined above.

When do I need to be back in Burlington and what impact does quarantining have on timing?

Classes begin on Monday, August 17th. When you should be back in Burlington depends on where you are now, and how you plan on getting back to campus. It is our expectation that all

LCOM students will comply with UVM quarantine requirements. You should use this [tool](#) from UVM that helps you determine your need to quarantine and your options.

Will I need a COVID test once back on campus?

UVM is creating a testing program for all students. It is our expectation that all LCOM students will participate in that program when it becomes available.

When do I have exams?

Your exams will be delivered remotely. Your Connections and CRR exams will be on the following dates:

Connections:

- Exam: Friday, September, 4th, 2020 8:30-12:00 pm (3.5 hours)

CRR:

- COMET ECG Take Home Exam, due at 8:00 am Wednesday, September 23rd, 2020
- Exam 1: Cardiac Exam, Friday, September 25th, 2020 (3 hours) 9:00 – 12:00
- Exam 2: Pulmonary Exam, Friday, October 9th, 2020, (3 hours) 9:00-12:00
- Exam 3: Renal Exam, Wednesday, October 28th, 2020 (3 hours) 9:00-12:00
- NBME Customized Exam, Tuesday, November 3rd (2 hours) 9:00-11:00

HDRH:

- Exam 1: Wednesday, November 25th (Time TBD)
- NBME Customized Exam, Thursday, December 17th (time TBD)
- Exam 2 Friday, December 18th (time TBD)

When will the semester end and what is the plan for Thanksgiving?

The LCOM semester will end December 18th (see [calendar](#)). Recommendations regarding travel for Thanksgiving will be based on current VT DOH travel guidelines. We expect those will evolve in the coming months and we will do our best to provide you timely guidance regarding travel plans. At this time, we anticipate individuals will not be able to travel by public transportation for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Will I be able to come to campus on remote days (Tues, Thurs, Fri)?

The first-year class will be on campus Tues, Thurs, and Fri. They will be using most of the small MedEd rooms, 100, 200, and 300 for instruction. We need to minimize the number of people on campus and therefore you should not plan on coming to campus Tues, Thurs, or Friday.

What study space will be available?

Dana Medical Library and Given Café are still working on their fall plans. As soon as we have that information, we will share it with you.

What are the plans for PCR?

New for this fall, you will continue to meet with your PCR groups. This will occur approximately 4 times over the fall semester. These sessions will meet remotely, on Tuesday or Thursday.

What are the plans for the Public Health Project (PHP)?

The PHP Course will start in late August. The entire class will conduct a survey of Northwestern Vermont, asking about factors contributing to health and health care, social determinants of health and how our community has been specifically impacted by COVID-19. The coursework will be a combination of asynchronous online self-directed modules. You will have a small group project in your PCR group focused on one area of need, such as food security, housing, financial stability, mental health, social connections, inequity and injustice, access to care and tele-medicine, and much more. You will meet with your group, remotely, once a week. Your group will create a poster of your findings and make bold and creative recommendations to the United Way of Northwest Vermont to help them make substantive changes to help our community.

What are the plans for Doctoring in Vermont (DIV)?

DIV will resume in CRR. You will not have “make up” sessions any sessions missed during the spring. There will be space in the week on Thursday and Friday afternoons for completing the four required sessions with your preceptor. More details will be forthcoming.

Has COVID or the USMLE's plans to change to pass/fail in 2022 caused any change in timing for Step 1 for the class of '23?

No. We have not made any changes to the plans for Spring 2021 and the dedicated Step 1 prep time.

What is the LCOM plan if there is a second spike in COVID-19 cases?

We will look to the University and VT DOH for guidance on whether we need to go entirely remote. Part of our planning for a hybrid delivery model includes thinking and planning for the need to switch to being entirely remote.

What is the plan for spring '21?:

Discussions are underway for the spring semester and our plans will largely depend on what's happening with the pandemic, VT DOH and UVM guidelines. We will keep you informed as we learn more and make decisions.

I have additional questions, whom should I contact?

For questions related to:

Quarantining: [Vermont Department of Health Traveling to Vermont](#) site or [Student Health Services](#)

Accommodations: [Assistant Dean for Students](#) or [UVM Student Accessibility Services](#)

Technology requirements for remote learning: [Educational Technology](#)