

UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

School of Medicine & The Board of the Medical Student Association

WE HEARD YOU #8 FALL 2020



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Executive Summary

Thank you to all students who took the time to submit their comments, questions, and concerns via the We Heard You (WHY) survey – this quarter’s survey was the biggest yet. Each comment was read by the Board of the Medical Student Association (MSA Board) Chairs. We identified common themes, which were then brought to the attention of Deans and faculty during the quarterly Deans & Friends meeting held on November 8th, 2020. All anonymous comments were then shared **in full** and **uncensored** with the administration following this meeting and responses collected until December 11th, 2020. While all comments were read and acknowledged, the following Q&A format included in the document was chosen to concisely summarize responses from the administration in an accessible manner.

The goal of the WHY survey is to collect honest and anonymous feedback about what is going well and the areas of improvement. The Fall 2020 WHY and Deans & Friends meeting identified a number of concerns about ongoing policies surrounding COVID-19, ongoing anti-racism and anti-ism work, and student access to health insurance.

A Note on the MSA Restructure

Many MSA specific comments surrounded ambiguity of the new Board structure and how it came about. The idea of the Board was borne out of need for continuity and institutional memory across years and a better platform for communication/collaboration across all sites. The new structure was discussed beginning in March 2020, and all existing MSA officers had the opportunity to provide feedback on what this structure would look like via Zoom meetings, email notifications, and ultimately voted on whether or not to adopt the new structure. This vote passed by majority of all MSA members and the newly formed Board, consisting of MSA Presidents from all sites and all years, selected a Preclinical and Clinical Chair to serve a 1-year term in an administrative capacity. The functioning of the local MSA has remained largely the same since this change, with autonomy over cohort-specific projects, activism, and initiatives remaining intact; rather the Board serves as a coordinating body for region-wide projects that were traditionally left solely to the Seattle MS1 MSA. Please feel free to reach out with additional questions regarding the restructure to the current Charis Lily Jeong (jeong9@uw.edu) and Parker Blekken (pblek@uw.edu).

Site-Specific Concerns

Unlike previous iterations of the WHY document, the Fall 2020 document does not include site-specific comments regarding facilities or faculty. Instead, these comments were communicated directly to each Foundations Dean, who will be addressing these concerns in a manner that makes the most sense for their site. Further questions regarding this can be directed to your Foundations Dean and your cohort’s MSA President.

Thanks again to all for their responses and commitment to bettering UWSOM as a whole. Stay safe, stay healthy, and stay engaged.

-Your 2020-2021 MSA Board

Lily Jeong
Clinical Chair
E17 Seattle President

Parker Blekken
Preclinical Chair
E19 Montana President

Gifti Abbo
E17 Spokane President

Thamanna Nishath
E18 Seattle President

Emily Cox
E19 Seattle President

Albert Ng
E20 Seattle President

Heidi Hanekamp
E17 Wyoming President

Taylor Bozich
E18 Spokane President

Virkamal Dhaliwal
E19 Spokane President

Allegra VanderWilde
E20 Spokane President

Jill Carlile
E17 Alaska President

Trey Thompson
E18 Wyoming
President

Caleb Hardt
E19 Wyoming President

Blake Hopkin
E20 Wyoming President

Adam Whiteley
E17 Montana President

**Bart
Grabman**
E18 Alaska President

Hope Spargo
E19 Alaska President

Cory Johannsen
E20 Alaska President

Taylor Wilkinson
E17 Idaho President

Quin Stevens
E18 Montana President

Devin Gaskins
E19 Idaho President

Hans Munzing
E20 Montana President

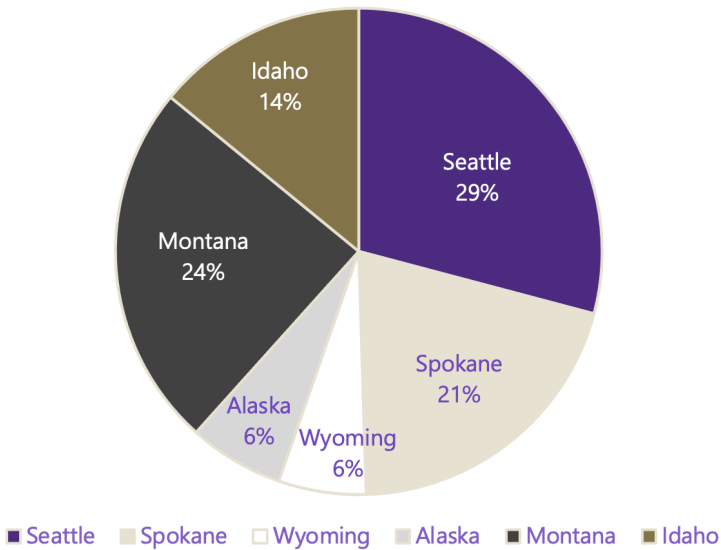
Olivia Do
E18 Idaho President

Sophia DeKlotz
E20 Idaho President

Metrics

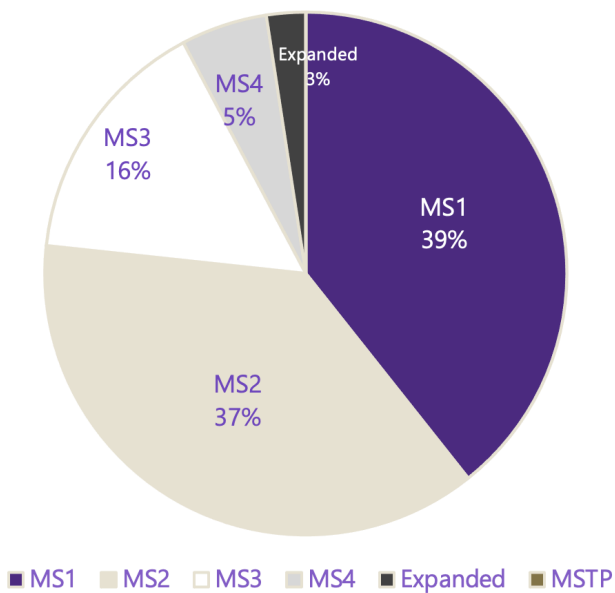
The Fall 2020 WHY survey was completed by a record number of students – 206 across all years and sites. Thank you for this feedback and level engagement!

Responses by Foundation Site



Foundations Site	Number of Responses
Seattle	60
Spokane	42
Wyoming	12
Alaska	13
Montana	50
Idaho	29
Total	206

Responses by Year



Year in Medical School	Number of Responses
MS1	81
MS2	77
MS3	32
MS4	11
Expanded	5
MD/PhD	0
Total	206

Student Support

**Denotes an item that is being followed up on by MSA for further details or clarity from the administration, with the hope to provide an update to the student body early in Winter Quarter.*

Q: *Counseling is generally very helpful, but I would like to be able to see a counselor who is BIPOC.**

A: There are presently four counselors available to see students. Three of the four counselors are BIPOC individuals, and their services are offered free of charge to medical students. Cliff Kelly and Joanne Estacio-Deckard are available through the UWSOM Counseling & Wellness Service. The UWSOM has also made an arrangement with the **University of Washington Psychological Services and Training Center** on upper campus to provide students access to two BIPOC counselors. Students can call the Clinic (206) 543-6511 to request a routine phone intake.

Students are not required, nor limited, to see these counselors. At your own expense, students may seek services from Hall Health Mental Health, or the Counseling Center at Schmitz Hall (note: these two clinics are in the process of merging; the merger should be complete by the end of this academic year), or students may elect to see a clinician in private practice in the community. The Seattle Counselors are happy to assist you in locating a clinician in the community if this is your wish.

Contact: Joanne Estacio-Deckard (joanneed@uw.edu) Director of Medical Student Counseling and Wellness Services

Q: *Can the school help us pay for outside study resources (i.e. Boards & Beyond, Sketchy, UWorld)?**

A: The School currently provides 6 months of UWorld for all students to prepare for USMLE Step 1 exam.

Contact: Suzanne Allen (suzaalle@uw.edu) Vice Dean for Academic, Rural and Regional Affairs

Q: *Can the school support students with getting better WiFi, since most of the Foundations coursework is online?*

A: WiFi is part of your utilities. The portion of your budget that covers rent /utilities is \$1461 per month. If your rent and utilities (including WiFi) exceed \$1461 per month you may submit a Revision Request for additional Expenses-School of Medicine Students only. This cost would go under other. <https://www.washington.edu/financialaid/forms-2/> Contact the SOM Financial Aid Staff if you have questions, somfao@uw.edu.

Here is the information provided to the E20 class during Technology Orientation in August:

Ensure good bandwidth at home

Playing videos, joining Zoom meetings, and other required activities take up bandwidth. The [School of Medicine Technology Requirements](#) indicate that students need to have a minimum download and upload speed of 3 megabits per second (Mbps), and we recommend 7 Mbps.

To find out the speed of your connection, run a bandwidth test from speedtest.net or a reputable test site of your choice. If your results are low, or if you find that your connection isn't strong enough to keep up with your schoolwork, take these steps and try again:

- Reboot your computer
- Reboot your Internet modem and/or router
- Check to see if others sharing your Internet connection are consuming large amounts of bandwidth

If your results consistently do not meet the minimum, you may need to contact your Internet Service Provider (ISP) to resolve issues or upgrade to a higher level of service. Some ISPs and cellular data providers provide free wireless access points or allow mobile phones to become hotspots using cellular data. Check with your providers. If the increased cost pushes your rent and utilities budget over the allotted amount for financial aid, you may adjust your budget by contacting SOM Financial Aid Office for more information.

If you have other specific suggestions for ways that the school could provide better support for Wi-Fi, please contact Michael Campion: campion@uw.edu.

Contact: Michael Campion (campion@uw.edu) Director of Academic & Learning Technologies, Diane Noecker (dnoecker@uw.edu) Director School of Medicine Financial Aid

Q: *I get a lot of emails that are not relevant to my site.*

A: We are open to working with MSA to streamline and minimize extraneous email. Students can opt out of receiving email from the auxiliary listservs.

Effort is made to ensure that the weekly medical student communication that is emailed on Thursday is relevant for all students at all sites. There is some information, which may be more relevant for one site or another, or because of the nature of all students rotating in Seattle during clinical phase, may contain information that may appear Seattle-centric, for example, access to study space or Hall Health Clinic.

We do filter out some external requests for students to complete surveys, marketing ads, etc.

From the student side, MSA has been exploring various communication platforms to streamline ways that students are able to be in contact with one another, such as the pilot program this summer. This work is ongoing and data regarding student buy-in and privacy compliance needs to be collected. In the interim we encourage students to be judicious in sending out region-wide emails for selling/sub-leasing that may not be applicable to students not located in the same physical location.

Contact: MSA (jeong9@uw.edu, pblek@uw.edu, and/or your cohort's MSA President)

Policies

Q: *Per Dr. Allen on the last WHY document, the school would be revising attendance policies for small groups as they conflict with UW policy. Is there an update on this?*

A: The UW policy is that a student's course grade cannot be based on attendance. The policy for small groups has been changed for Foundations blocks and now requires a student to complete a select number of assignments that can only be answered if the student participates in the small group session. It is not against the UW policy to require students to participate in specific course sessions.

Contact: Edith Wang (ehwang@uw.edu) Assistant Dean for Basic Science

Q: *How can information regarding health insurance be more effectively communicated to students? Students are unclear about how to obtain health insurance and what their insurance will cover as they travel across WWAMI.*

A: We are open to hearing from students about their preferred methods of learning about how to obtain health insurance. Currently, information is shared with students via the following methods:

- at orientation for Foundation students at each site
- at fall quarter class meetings in anticipation of the open enrollment period
- in email reminders during open enrollment
- during Transition to Clerkships each year
- in the [UWSOM medical education program handbook](#)
- on the [health insurance page of the Student Resources Blog](#)* (*this blog will be overhauled and integrated into the UWSOM intranet in December/January)
- in one-off info [webinar/zoom sessions](#) with the Washington Health Exchange – these webinars, while focused on the Washington Health Exchange system contains information that is helpful for all students.
 - March 31, 2020 [presentation](#) and [slide deck](#)
 - December 3, 2020, [presentation](#)

Open Enrollment runs until December 15 in all 5 WWAMI states. Students wanting a private health insurance plan for the upcoming year can research options and purchase a plan via the federal or state exchange as appropriate: <https://www.healthcare.gov/>

If students have questions regarding what services their particular insurance plans cover and whether they are covered across state lines, they must contact their insurance provider directly.

Contact: Raye Maestas (maestas@uw.edu) Associate Dean of Student Affairs, Sarah Wood (sewood@uw.edu) Associate Director of Student Affairs

Q: *Why can't UWSOM offer health insurance when other graduate programs at the UW can?*

A: The graduate school runs the Graduate Appointee Insurance Plan, GAIP, which is a health insurance program for teaching assistants, research assistants, predoctoral researchers, and other academic student employee positions working across the University. Because this is an employer-based program and not a student program, expansion to include medical students is not an option.

Contact: Raye Maestas (maestas@uw.edu) Associate Dean of Student Affairs

Q: *What are the criteria behind giving certain questions back on exams? Is there a way for students to review multiple prior exams prior to cumulative finals?*

A: After each exam, the site block leads meet with the assessment team to review student performance on the exam. In addition to looking at statistical data on each individual question, the group also reviews student comments that are collected either during the exam or afterwards by email. All items that have questionable performance, based either on being too difficult and/or not discriminating between low- and high-performing students, are discussed with possibility for scoring adjustment. Questions are sometimes deemed to not have been "fair" based on what was taught/emphasized in class; in some of these cases all students may receive credit for a question. Sometimes questions are not worded clearly enough to have only one correct answer; in some of these cases, additional answers may be scored as correct.

RE reviewing exams: Site block leads receive reports for every student after each exam that contain questions that were missed on each exam. Students that need additional time to review their missed exam questions should contact their site block lead.

Contact: Matt Cunningham (cunningm@uw.edu) Director of Educational Evaluation

Q: *Many clerkship sites require a vehicle, but the option to expand financial aid to cover this need is non-existent. How does the school accommodate students who do not have the resources to purchase a vehicle?**

A: Students are expected to have a car during clinical rotations and receive this information prior to matriculation. This information is shared by the admissions office. Students sign a statement of understanding during the secondary application process to medical school acknowledging that they are expected to provide their own private vehicle for the patient care and explore and focus phases. Financial aid covers transportation costs for each year and that amount increases during third and fourth year, but it does not cover the purchase of a car, car payments or car rental fees. For extenuating circumstances (car breakdown), financial aid can be added to cover rental car fees for a short-term basis beyond the amount allotted for transportation for that quarter which is \$721.

Contact: Go WWAMI Office (gowwami@uw.edu)

COVID-19 Response

Q: *Zoom fatigue has become a very real issue -- is there any way this can be mitigated in Foundations?*

A: You typically will have less than 4 hours of synchronous online class each day for the Foundation blocks.

Contact: Edith Wang (ehwang@uw.edu) Assistant Dean for Basic Science, Kellie Engle (kaengle@uw.edu) Director of Curriculum

Foundations

Q: I am a Spokane student, and I wish we had access to a cadaver lab for HFF.

A: We are working hard to obtain access to the shared anatomy lab at WSU. We are meeting regularly with the WSU Chancellor and others in Pullman to obtain access. We believe cadaver-based anatomy can be done safely with appropriate PPE and other protocols that have been submitted. Paperwork has been submitted and is under review by WSU. Spokane's MSA President (Allegra Vanderwilde) and class representative (Kevin Glover) are updated regularly regarding progress.

Contact: Darryl Potyk (potykd@uw.edu) Associate Dean for Eastern Washington

Q: *Can the pharmacy thread be more integrated into course material and all threads more easily tracked?*

A: We recognize that coverage and integration of Pharmacology into course materials needs to be improved. This concern is being directly addressed in the restructured Foundations phase in 2022. One of the principles guiding the development of the Foundations revision is "Threads need a larger and more integrated presence in blocks."

Thread performance can be tracked using the [Student Performance Dashboard](#). Go to the Preclinical Grades tab, then expand each of the thread names to see performance in each term and block. Currently, thread scores are updated upon the completion of each block. We are working on a way to update thread scores after each exam, which will probably be available in Winter Quarter 2021.

Contact: Edith Wang (ehwang@uw.edu) Assistant Dean for Basic Science, Michael Campion (campion@uw.edu) Director of Academic & Learning Technologies

Q: *What is the update regarding more uniform anti-racist training for faculty?**

A: There is a committee chaired by Dr. Paula Houston and Dr. Trish Kritek. This group is working on the development of the uniform anti-racist training for all faculty. This should begin in the first quarter of 2021.

Contact: Suzanne Allen (suzaalle@uw.edu) Vice Dean for Academic, Rural and Regional Affairs

Q: *What is being done to better incorporate education on systems of oppression in our Foundations curriculum, not just during TIM weeks?**

A: As work is being done to restructure the Foundations phase for 2022, themes will have more presence in the blocks and provide opportunities to incorporate education on systems of oppression.

Contact: Suzanne Allen (suzaalle@uw.edu) Vice Dean for Academic, Rural and Regional Affairs, Edith Wang (ehwang@uw.edu) Assistant Dean for Basic Science

Clerkships

Q: *Clerkship ranking process is unclear, and I wish there was more information on each site and how to rank them.*

A: Students who choose special programs (WRITE, LIC, Track, GSO) rank their location and efforts will be made to provide a certain number of clerkships in that location or region. For students who choose Safari, attempts will be made to provide a top clerkship choice. Due to restrictions that some states are putting on travel, we are also asking for students for 2021-2022 to provide a preferred region so that attempts can be made to group clerkships as much as possible to help mitigate the need for potential quarantine.

Contact: Mark Whipple (mwhipple@uw.edu) Interim Associate Dean for Curriculum

Q: *Parking while rotating at Seattle clerkship sites (i.e. UWMC, HMC) can get very expensive. Can the school help us with the parking cost?*

A: The School is not able to cover the cost of parking during medical school. The cost of parking can be included as part of your living expenses for financial aid.

Contact: Suzanne Allen (suzaalle@uw.edu) Vice Dean for Academic, Rural and Regional Affairs

Q: *Why does it take so long to get my shelf exam score back?*

A: This has been discussed recently among the Clerkship Directors. The majority of them feel that providing final exam scores to students before the components of the clinical grade are collected and evaluated would result in increased levels of stress and confusion about clerkship grades and have thus decided that the best course of action is to return exam scores to students in the context of their final completed grade form.

Contact: Matt Cunningham (cunningm@uw.edu) Director of Educational Evaluation, Mark Whipple (mwhipple@uw.edu) Interim Associate Dean for Curriculum

Q: *Some sites give students half day or a full day off to study for shelf, and some sites don't. Can this be standardized?*

A: Due to the need to provide students with optimal clinical experience in the context of shortened Patient Care clerkships, the subject exam has been moved back to Friday from Thursday. Students are not expected to be on duty the night before the exam and should be released by 6 pm according to the following guidelines: <https://education.uwmedicine.org/curriculum/exams/clerkship-exam-schedule-guidelines/>

Since each clerkship has different clinical schedules, some students may have clinical responsibilities the day before the exam while others do not, but Curriculum will communicate with the clerkships that there should not be a routinely scheduled day off prior to the subject exam.

Contact: Mark Whipple (mwhipple@uw.edu) Interim Associate Dean for Curriculum

Q: *Why is the grade distribution by clerkship site not taken into account when calculating the MSPE word?*

A: Due to the limited number of students that many clerkship sites see in a given year, it is not possible to create a site-based weighting distribution when determining the MSPE summary word.

If a student has concerns about their particular clerkship grade, they should discuss it with the appropriate clerkship director. If they wish to submit a [formal grade challenge](#), they must do so within the appropriate deadlines.

Contact: Sarah Wood (sewood@uw.edu) Associate Director of Student Affairs

Q: *When can we expect an update on racial disparities in clinical grades? **

A: A repeat study of clinical grades with a focus on gender and race, which required data of at least three years since the last study is scheduled to begin in early 2021.

Contact: Matt Cunningham (cunningm@uw.edu) Director of Educational Evaluation, Leo Morales (lsm2010@uw.edu) Chief Diversity Officer, Mark Whipple (mwhipple@uw.edu) Interim Associate Dean for Curriculum

Q: *How is grading for clerkships being adjusted to accommodate for shortened duration and inconsistencies regarding COVID requirements? Will the idea of moving clerkships to P/F be revisited by the Curriculum Committee?*

A: The NBME publishes national means for clerkships of different lengths, which UW clerkships have used this year to inform their own grading thresholds. For clerkships that are shorter this year than prior years, clerkship directors have communicated with site directors and clinical faculty to adjust clinical performance expectations to align with the shorter clerkship lengths. Curriculum has been reviewing clerkship grades after each rotation and has noted no significant changes in grade distribution this year compared to prior years.

Contact: Mark Whipple (mwhipple@uw.edu) Interim Associate Dean for Curriculum

Q: *What are the criteria for clerkship grading and how are they standardized across sites to avoid subjective interpretation by faculty?*

A: Each clerkship uses standard assessment forms with specific assessment items across all their sites. Faculty providing assessment are oriented to the goals and objectives of the clerkship and the assessment instrument. Each clerkship has a rubric for how clinical assessments and the subject exam are used to calculate a final grade, which is used across all of their sites. The curriculum office and clerkship directors review the distribution of grades across sites on an annual basis to identify and address any potential outliers.

Contact: Mark Whipple (mwhipple@uw.edu) Interim Associate Dean for Curriculum

Learning Environment

Q: *What is being done across departments to address the tumultuous and unsafe nature of the overall learning environment? Many students do not feel safe calling out instances of anti-Blackness, transphobia, and other -isms or engaging in conversations regarding this topic with their peers.*

A: Paul Ramsey has established the UW Medicine Learning Environment Steering Committee to oversee the learning environment improvement process across UW Medicine. The Steering Committee consists of members representing the classroom, the clinical and research settings. In this way, all clinical departments, graduate medical education, faculty, the medical school and the Office of Health Care Equity are tasked with efforts to address and eliminate mistreatment for all learners. The medical school arm of the learning environment holds weekly reviews of the student concerns and comments through the Incident Response and Oversight Committee. Melinda Frank, Director of the Learning Environment contacts and collaborates with students to address and intervene on situations that

warrant either urgent attention and intervention or intervention at a later date after student grades are submitted to mitigate any potential for student retribution. With regards to the second question, student members of the Learning Environment have submitted a proposal to the learning environment requesting training in bystander/upstander training and this is currently being worked on by a taskforce of committee members including students.

Contact: Raye Maestas (maestas@uw.edu) Associate Dean of Student Affairs, Mark Whipple (mwhipple@uw.edu) Interim Associate Dean for Curriculum, Melinda Frank (mmfrank@uw.edu) Director of Learning Environment

Q: How are the decisions being made at each site whether classes are continued to be held online versus in-person?

A: Each Foundations campus is following the direction of our partner university and the local public health recommendations in determining whether classes are held in person or virtually.

Contact: Suzanne Allen (suzaalle@uw.edu) Vice Dean for Academic, Rural and Regional Affairs, Foundations Deans

Q: *What is the current policy regarding small group attendance, now and going forward? This issue has been brought up previously and many students feel that they are often not beneficial for their style of learning.*

A: All students are expected to contribute to group learning and participate in problem solving. Preparation prior to class and active participation during class are critical not only to each individual's success, but to the success of one's fellow students. Ultimately, active participation in groups will better prepare all students for their work in clinical settings. Participation in small groups is being assessed by asking students to complete an assignment after each small group session. The ability to complete the assignment requires students to attend the session. Completion of a required number of assignments is part of the course grade and in compliance with UW policy.

Contact: Kellie Engle (kaengle@uw.edu) Director of Curriculum, Edith Wang (ehwang@uw.edu) Assistant Dean for Basic Science

Q: *How are students protected when reporting mistreatment or harassment, both in Foundations and in Clerkships? How are issues of harassment addressed? Why is the process not more transparent from a student perspective?*

A: Thank you for this question. Every effort is made to protect students after a report of mistreatment or harassment is submitted by a well-defined process that is communicated by Melinda Frank, Director of the Learning Environment at orientation, class meetings and by email communication. It is also posted on the UWSOM Intranet> Learning Environment or directly at: <https://blogs.uw.edu/esom/learning-environment/learning-environment-reporting-process/>

Students at the University of Washington who file a report are always protected under UW Executive Order No. 31, regardless of where they might be geographically in the 5-state WWAMI region. This order:

“Prohibits discrimination or harassment against a member of the University community because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, citizenship, sex, pregnancy, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, disability, or veteran status...[and also] Prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports concerns regarding discrimination or harassment, or who cooperates with or participates in any investigation of allegations of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation under this policy, or any individual who is perceived to have engaged in any of these actions.”

Contact: Melinda Frank (mmfrank@uw.edu) Director of Learning Environment, Raye Maestas (maestas@uw.edu) Associate Dean of Student Affairs, Mark Whipple (mwhipple@uw.edu) Interim Associate Dean for Curriculum

Q: *Can there be more transparency in regards to how the Themes in Medicine course is being re-worked? Will credit be given to students who have helped to craft the new curriculum?**

A: Listening sessions and an anonymous survey are currently available for students to share their ideas about themes in the curriculum. Past evaluations and feedback from student block partners will also be utilized. A working group will take this information into account while doing their work. Individuals who participate in the working group will be acknowledged.

Contact: Suzanne Allen (suzaalle@uw.edu) Vice Dean for Academic, Rural and Regional Affairs

Q: *How are instructors trained to handle difficult situations/conversations that arise and prevented from causing further harm?**

A: Some of this content will be included in the anti-racism training (mandatory for all faculty) that is being developed by a committee chaired by Drs. Paula Houston and Trish Kritek. In addition, many Foundations block leads have had faculty development sessions prior to their block to help develop these skills. We have a session in February, led by CLIME, on this topic that is available to all faculty and will be shared broadly.

Contact: Trish Kritek (pkritek@uw.edu) Faculty Affairs

Q: *How are instructors trained in regards to navigating Zoom? Lack of preparedness/ability to use Zoom is a problem that continues to persist despite being nearly 8 months into remote learning.*

A: Academic and Learning Technologies has offered Zoom training for faculty in each block in advance of the start of each course. The group recently has initiated twice-per-week technology office hours for

faculty and staff. If you have constructive feedback about ways to improve Zoom sessions, please approach the faculty member directly or contact your Foundations dean.

Contact: Michael Campion (campion@uw.edu) Director of Academic & Learning Technologies, Edith Wang (ehwang@uw.edu) Assistant Dean for Basic Science

Other

Q: *How can Financial Aid become more accessible to students and more easily reached?*

A: Thank you for this question. Given the volume of emails to FA and the details that each counselor must address to respond to student needs and awarding of FA packages and scholarships, we are aware of the delays some students may experience in response to emails.

The FA office staff wants to be responsive and has added drop-in hours communicated weekly in the Student Communication email. Students can also reach FA directly through somfao@uw.edu or google UWSOM Intranet>Student Programs and Resources>Financial Aid>Contact UWSOM FAO

When students contact the financial aid office at somfao@uw.edu, a drop-in link and times are in the automatic message as well as email signature. Rachel Palfini manages the FA account and forwards messages to the counselors. The drop-in option is available to students for urgent matters that cannot wait for an email response.

Contact: Diane Noecker (dnoecker@uw.edu) Director School of Medicine Financial Aid and Raye Maestas (maestas@uw.edu) Associate Dean of Student Affairs

Q: *Is there a way the Step 1 registration process could be further streamlined or made more clear?*

A: Thank you for this feedback. This was the first year that the Certification of Identification Forms could be signed remotely and we are planning to follow up with the NBME about best practices for transmitting student forms. In the past, the form signing and identification verification were done in person, but this year because of COVID our school and the NBME took extra precautions to make this process available online.

I appreciate all the students' flexibility with us about carrying this process out online. Yes, there were many areas that ended up becoming confusing. Such as: the main CID form from the NBME still stated that the form needed to be signed by a school official and mailed in. Our instructions recommended uploading it to a link. The link is where the form was signed by the school official and sent out to the NBME registrar team. Big thanks to Erika Songheea in the registrar team who processed all of these forms!

Should this process be online again next year Tara and I will look into simplifying and streamlining our instructions to make sure that the process of signing up for Step 1 of submitting CID forms can be clearer for students.

Contact: Yvonne Tyler (yvonneyt@uw.edu) Lead Academic Learning Specialist, Tara Gates (tgates@uw.edu) Registrar

Kudos & Appreciation*

**Note the below quotes are by no means comprehensive – over 400 comments of positive feedback were received regarding various people and aspects of UWSOM!*

Student Support

- “Thank you to **Career Advising** and **Student Affairs** for their dedication to helping students and all the extra time they put in to prepare us to submit ERAS applications! Special shout out to Linh Ngo!”
- “I just submitted ERAS and I am very thankful for my mentors, the advising team, and those helping me to review my application, and answer questions outside of normal business hours.”
- “I’ve never felt more supported as a student or professional. I have used some of the services, but not all of them.”
- “**Laura Yale** has been an incredibly accessible and helpful clerkship administrator! Thanks for solving problems expediently.”
- “**Sarah Wood. Josh Kosanke. Sarah Thomson.** These people are people in the administration that put their hearts into their work, care about us and actually make us feel like we are not alone during these tough years/this tough career path.”
- “I want to share my thanks and appreciation for **Brenda Martinez** and **Student Affairs**. Throughout the orientation process and beyond she has been a vocal and active advocate for having student's voices heard. She has repeatedly forced administration to answer our questions and really listens to our perspective.”
- “I really appreciated all the work done in **I&O** to help build community within the E20 class as we transition to remote learning. I do feel that there has been very minimal work or effort by the school since to further this sense of community throughout the year. Of course much of this can be done by students, but would appreciate if the school gave additional opportunities for connection.”
- “I feel well supported. There are many people I feel like I can reach out to with concerns or questions.”

Policies

- “I really appreciate the learning environment associated with pass/fail. All requirements are straight forward.”
- “Grading has been fair and requirements for clinical aspects of curriculum have been good.”
- “Thank you for keeping the Honors/High Pass/etc system. For students like me who don't perform well on exams, I get to have a grade that reflects my knowledge and skills in the clinical setting.”

Learning Environment

- “Appreciation to everyone, across several university systems, who have worked so hard to keep students safe & to allow us to continue our education even in the midst of a pandemic. Attendings, educators, medical team members, program staff, and everyone else who has been working to make this happen!”
- “I feel that having professors prepared before class and having more of a flipped-classroom approach is beneficial to my learning experience.”
- “I have been extremely thankful for our in-class instruction. It has been really nice to get to learn with my classmates and discuss things with them in person. It has also been nice to be able to ask questions to professors. I think it's easier to speak up when face to face.”

- “Classroom is always welcoming and clean. It is a professional learning environment.”
- “Great! The faculty has worked so hard to make sure we are safe and able to be in person. I appreciate everything they have done for me.”

Faculty, Staff, and Sites

- “The entire **Wyoming** WWAMI team works extremely hard to provide us students with the best educational opportunities, and minimal disruptions, in this time of pandemics and political upheaval. While the effort might not always be acknowledged, it is absolutely appreciated by all students.”
- “Really everything and everyone up here in **Alaska** has been great. It's always clear that our education is at the forefront of all of the faculty's minds and in the greater UW administration.”
- “Appreciate the faculty, standardized patients, and hospital morning patient navigators in **Seattle** who have been working really hard to help us continue our clinical education in the midst of a pandemic, as well as all of the faculty in our courses who have had to make the transition to online learning.”
- “**Spokane** is an awesome site that feels more like a family than med school class. All the instructors are highly respectful and patient with students.”
- “I am so grateful for how hard the **Idaho** faculty team has worked to allow us to be back in person learning. I can't thank them enough.”
- “I really appreciate the small class size at **Montana** and the opportunity we have to have one on one time with professors when we are struggling with concepts, etc. Additionally, I have felt incredibly supported by my classmates and am grateful for the welcoming environment that WWAMI sets up for its students. I also am so thankful for the hard work the MT faculty have invested to allow us to meet in person and to adjust the learning environment in the midst of COVID. They have gone above and beyond.”
- “Zoom University School of Medicine has actually been pretty great. Lecture recordings are key, the syllabi are well-written and relevant, and the exams have been fair.”
- “I love **FCM**-- the simulations are great, the workshops are very helpful, and being in the hospital in the afternoon is such a treat. I am so appreciative of all the logistical work that makes this practice possible during the pandemic! Same for our anatomy lab time-- I feel so lucky to at least be able to look at cadavers, if not dissect. And finally, I love the college groups. Especially with Zoom class making it hard to make friends and really connect with classmates, it is wonderful to have a small group of classmates to do FCM and anatomy labs with-- makes the Zoom learning bearable.”
- “I have loved all of my **clerkships**. Whether in Seattle or far out in the WWAMI region (Cheyenne, anyone??) my rotations have been absolutely fabulous. The physicians that work with WWAMI students are proud to teach us and it shows. As a future physician in the WWAMI region, I have felt invested in, like I am part of something much bigger than myself. The support we have received as students has been amazing, from starting clerkships through residency applications. The Underserved Pathway has been an excellent experience and has added greatly to my training. It is so valuable that we have the opportunity to pursue interests, such as the Underserved Pathway, within the general medical education.”
- “Dr. Maestas for being amazing and working so hard for us!”
- “Huge appreciation for **Brenda Martinez, Ashley Russell, and Dr. Yvonne Tyler!**”