

FAQs from MDUP Students regarding Fall Term 2021

From Class of 2025

1. Can you inform us of what parts of orientation will be online?

A: Registration is required to be in-person by the university. Apart from Registration, there are 2 types of events: curricular (organized by the program) and extra-curricular (organized by the students or Student Affairs). For the curricular events, we are planning on in-person delivery for most sessions but can pivot to online or a hybrid depending on updates from the Provincial Health Officer. We have not received guidelines from the universities (UBC-V, UBC-O, UVic and UNBC) regarding extra-curricular activities and gatherings. We will need to wait on further directives from the Provincial Health Officer and the universities before planning in-person extra-curricular activities.

Please be at your site and ready to start having complied with any quarantine requirements on the following dates for **mandatory, in-person registration**:

Vancouver Fraser Medical Program (VFMP): **Monday August 23, 2021, 8:00am**

Island Medical Program (IMP): **Friday, August 20, 2021, 9:00am**

Southern Medical Program (SMP): **Friday, August 20, 2021, 9:00am**

Northern Medical Program (NMP): **Friday, August 20, 2021, 9:00am**

*IMP, SMP or NMP students who cannot attend the mandatory in-person registration on Friday, August 20 at 9:00am because of extenuating circumstances, will be offered in-person registration on Monday, August 23 at 8:00 a.m. Please contact the Student Affairs Coordinator at your site ahead of time to confirm your registration attendance.

2. Is there any more news that we can be given regarding how often teaching will be on-campus at UBC? Is in-person teaching being considered outside of UBC at VGH?

A: VFMP in-person instruction will be scheduled primarily at Life Sciences Centre (LSC) at UBC Point Grey Campus, with clinical skills also occurring at the Diamond Health Care Centre (DHCC) next to Vancouver General Hospital. IMP/NMP/SMP in-person instruction will be scheduled primarily at the respective University campuses (UVic/UNBC/UBC-O). Accordingly, students should seek living accommodations that will best allow them to attend in-person instruction, which will be primarily on campus. If the situation changes before the fall some sessions would revert to online.

From Class of 2024

General

3. When do I need to be at my site?

A: Please be at your site and ready to start (having complied with any quarantine requirements) on the first day of classes, August 30, 2021.

Assessment

4. Could exams continue to be done at home? (97)

A: MCQ Exams will very likely return to in person delivery, unless the university and the distributed sites modify room occupancy restrictions to align with revised provincial direction. If you require exam accommodations, please reach out to your Student Affairs Assistant Dean or contact the Centre for Accessibility directly to set up a meeting with Laura Bulk the Accessibility Advisor for the Faculty of Medicine in the Centre for Accessibility.

5. I am anxious to have in person exams with the noise, distractions, etc. Is it possible to get proctoring software and have exams completed from home? (91)

A: Sometimes students require accommodations for various reasons throughout medical school. If you require exam accommodations, please reach out to your site Student Affairs Assistant Dean or contact the Centre for Accessibility directly to set up a meeting with Laura Bulk, the Accessibility Advisor for the Faculty of Medicine in the Centre for Accessibility.

The UGME Task Force has directed that no virtual proctoring be used for our MDUP exams as of now. This decision took into account the input from the student body.

Shadowing

6. When will shadowing be allowed?(64)

A: There are 2 aspects to this question:

- a. When will the Health Authorities allow students not on curricular clinical placements to shadow in the clinical areas? Your Regional Associate Deans are working with the HAs to determine when you will be allowed back into clinical spaces for shadowing.
- b. When will your clinical preceptors, who until now have been very busy with the increased workload of COVID patients and adapting to the pandemic, have capacity to take students for shadowing? The Year 3-4 Curriculum Subcommittee will confer with the clinical preceptors and advise us when shadowing can be resumed. We are hopeful this will be by September 2021.

Shadowing opportunities that were previously in ambulatory setting may be challenging due to the transition to care in the virtual environment.

Social

7. Will we have the opportunity to meet and have social events with our classmates? The isolation from the past year has not been great for our mental health (33)

A: This is completely understandable, and we are also looking forward to meeting you and for you to restart your social events. The guidelines for extra-curricular activities

will be based on guidance from the Provincial Health Officer according to the [BC Restart Plan released on May 25, 2021](#). If all goes well and we are in Step 3, we can increase capacity for indoor and outdoor organized gatherings, with safety plans and in alignment with university direction for MDUP supported events.

8. Will we be able to use the MSAC in Vancouver? (26)

A: We are working with UBC Faculty of Medicine Facilities to determine when the Medical Student Alumni Centre (MSAC) in Vancouver will be reopened and whether there will be any restrictions.

9. When can our class get together for a class photo? (16)

A: We are hopeful that by the start of Term 1 in August you will be able to have a class photo, depending on the stage we are at with the [BC Restart Plan released on May 25, 2021](#) and in alignment with university direction.

Health/Safety

10. Is there going to be a COVID-19 vaccination requirement? (7)

A: UBC and the Faculty of Medicine support the provincial vaccination program – please see President Ono’s latest broadcast relating to this [here](#). We do not currently anticipate a requirement to show proof of vaccination before coming to campus in the fall. This may change dependent on Provincial and Federal Health orders.

When participating in clinical placements in Health authority space, students are subject to Health Authority requirements with respect to [immunization](#). Health Authorities may require COVID-19 immunization as they do for other infectious diseases like Hepatitis B, Varicella (Chicken Pox), and Influenza.

11. Will we ALL have to update our vaccination records to include our COVID-19 vaccine? (4)

A: If Health Authorities require COVID-19 immunization in order for students to participate in clinical placements, it will be UBC’s responsibility to maintain a record of that immunization and each student’s responsibility to provide proof of immunity status on request.

12. Will those of us not comfortable getting COVID vaccines be forced to get them? (2)

A: See #10. Please keep in mind that vaccination is now associated with a significant decrease in asymptomatic COVID - and thus transmission. If a student chooses not to be vaccinated, they are putting patients who have not been vaccinated, or have incomplete immunity due to immunosuppression, at risk. And with the uncertainty around airborne vs. droplet precautions I think we cannot be certain that masks are going to be enough to protect patients. So, all people in the healthcare workplace, including students, really need to be vaccinated. Some clinics (HIV for example) will not be hosting unvaccinated trainees, as a patient protection issue.

Task Force/Decision Making

13. How does the task force function, why does it take so long to finalize decisions, and why are students not made privy of these conversations (why the confidentiality)? (21)

A: The UGME COVID-19 Task Force has delegated authority of the UGME Committee to make nimble decisions for the benefit of the program and the students, during these uncertain times. We acknowledge that although we make decisions at an expedited pace, it can feel slow for students directly affected by particular issues, and we appreciate their patience and engagement. The Task Force is committed to preserving advancement of students, integrity of learning and assessment and graduation timelines, prioritizing, first and foremost, the safety of patients, our communities, students, staff and faculty. Your student reps are representing you well on the UGME COVID-19 Task Force and we will add more student site representation on recommendation of the MUS President. All perspectives need to be considered before decisions are made, including provincial and university guidelines. The Key Messages ensure that everyone gets the same information at the same time from one source to avoid confusion.

14. Is the decision made intended to be final or is there a possibility of modifications later in the summer if COVID is better controlled than expected? When will clear guidance be provided for in-person instruction? (7)

A: We are working hard to ensure you receive as much in-person instruction as possible. According to the [BC Restart Plan released on May 25, 2021](#), the plan depends on percent of the BC population receiving dose 1 of the COVID vaccine, COVID cases declining and COVID hospitalizations declining.

The MDUP COVID-19 Task Force has approved the following Fall Plan on May 20th:

To deliver as much IN-PERSON instruction as possible, with some exceptions and potential variability across (and within) Sites, depending on local safety protocols and resources/recruitment. The Years 1&2 Teams are currently planning to deliver the various Course Components as follows:

- Lectures & Large Group Sessions: IN-PERSON with the option for lecturers/instructors and students to deliver/attend in real-time via Zoom.
- Labs: IN-PERSON
- Small-Group Sessions (CBL, etc.): IN-PERSON (with some potential variability across/within Sites depending on recruitment of Faculty and local safety protocols). Select workshops (e.g., UBC Health/UBC 23 24 IPE Sessions and some workshops with guests) will remain virtual.
- Clinical Skills/Family Practice: IN-PERSON with some possible exceptions.

NOTE: This plan may be adjusted based on University/Health Authority Guidelines throughout the Summer and the Fall Term (particularly with regarding to teaching occurring in spaces governed by Health Authorities, such as DHCC at VFMP).

Please bear with us as we may receive more details over the summer that may impact how sessions are delivered but trust that we will inform you of any changes as soon as we can. All decisions are subject to change as stipulated by the government regulators (federal and provincial), the universities and the health authorities.

15. What are some of the reasons why the Faculty of Medicine may not be in person even if the general campus returns to in-person instruction? Since we are being told the vaccine is effective at stopping transmission and reducing severity of infection, why would we not have in person learning? (61).

A: As per above, we are currently planning to deliver as much IN-PERSON instruction as possible. Some of the factors that may limit this include:

- Use of teaching spaces governed by hospitals/Health Authorities (e.g., DHCC): These spaces are not governed by the Universities and therefore restrictions might apply to these spaces that do not apply to spaces located in regular University campuses. We are currently optimistic that we will be able to offer in-person instruction at DHCC and other Health Authority-governed teaching spaces, but we will need to remain adaptable, if the situation changes at any time during the Term.
- Recruitment: All our Full-Time Faculty will be expected to teach in-person (or apply for accommodations if needed through the regular University accommodation process for Faculty). However, we depend on a large number of Clinical/Adjunct Faculty (CBL Tutors, CS Instructors, FLEX Advisors, Portfolio Coaches) who are not bound by university regulations and therefore are not mandated to teach in person and may choose to remain virtual. We are optimistic that the majority will be willing and able to teach in-person, but we'll need to be prepared for some variability to occur across/within Sites and Course Components depending on recruitment.

16. What would have to change for us NOT to return to full in-person learning as recommended? A specific vaccination rate or COVID case count? What are the targets? (17)

A: As per above, the MDUP COVID-19 Task Force has approved the following Fall Plan on May 20th: To deliver as much IN-PERSON instruction as possible, with some exceptions and potential variability across (and within) Sites, depending on local safety protocols and resources/recruitment (see above for further details).

We are guided by the directives from our Provincial Health Officer, the Health Authorities and the Universities (UBC-V, UBC-O, UVic and UNBC).

According to the [BC Restart Plan released on May 25, 2021](#), the plan depends on percent of the BC population receiving dose 1 of the COVID vaccine, COVID cases declining and COVID hospitalizations declining.

17. Can we commit now to a full return to in person instruction, as per BC Health recommendations? We should show confidence in vaccine efficacy as health leaders. (15)

A: Yes, we are well aware of the BC COVID-19 Return to Campus Primer found [here](#). The tricky part is that much of our instruction takes place in buildings not under university control such as the Health Authority Buildings (the Diamond Health Care Centre, for example). We need to await approvals to go back to full occupancy in these buildings.

18. Did Faculty of Medicine representatives attend Dr. Henry's Townhall reviewing BC's Return to Campus document? Is the FoM committed to following her guidelines? (14)

A: Yes, we attended and are predicating our plan based on the BC COVID-19 Return to Campus Primer found [here](#). Importantly, this primer applies to university facilities and not to Health Authority buildings. See answer to Q16.

Curricular

19. What will be the format of the fall term? Can we get a clear table/breakdown that highlights which activities will be online vs. in person (i.e., anatomy labs, CBL, lectures)? If we are having some in person class, what date is the first in person thing scheduled? (63)

A: The current plan is to deliver as much IN-PERSON instruction as possible, with some exceptions and potential variability across (and within) Sites, depending on local safety protocols and resources. The Years 1&2 Teams are currently planning to deliver the various Course Components as follows:

- Lectures & Large Group Sessions: IN-PERSON with the option for lecturers/instructors and students to deliver/attend in real-time via Zoom.
- Labs: IN-PERSON
- Small-Group Sessions (CBL, etc.): IN-PERSON (with some potential variability across/within Sites depending on recruitment of Faculty and local safety protocols). Select workshops (e.g., UBC Health/UBC 23 24 IPE Sessions and some workshops with guests) will remain virtual.
- Clinical Skills/Family Practice: IN-PERSON with some possible exceptions.
- For IN-PERSON sessions, except lectures and large group sessions, there will not be the option for students to attend virtually. For students requiring accommodation, please reach out to your site Student Affairs Assistant Dean or contact the [Centre for Accessibility](#) directly to set up a meeting with Laura Bulk, the Accessibility Advisor for the Faculty of Medicine in the Centre for Accessibility.

NOTE: This plan may be adjusted based on University/Health Authority Guidelines throughout the Summer and the Fall Term (particularly with regarding to teaching occurring in spaces governed by Health Authorities, such as DHCC at VFMP).

20. When will a final decision be made about the format of the Fall 2021 term? (41)

A: The Task Force has approved the plan outlined above on May 20th and therefore the Years 1&2 Teams are currently planning for the scenario outlined above (i.e., as much IN-PERSON instruction as possible, with some exceptions and potential variability across and within Sites).

21. Can a final decision be made ASAP? It's so hard to plan for living, buying a car, how much to work this summer, etc. It would be helpful to know if it will be necessary to move closer to VGH or not. (9)

A: When possible, VFMP in-person instruction will be scheduled at DHCC (VGH) 2-3 days a week and LSC (UBC Point Grey Campus) 2-3 days a week. I.e., weekdays with CBL or CS will be scheduled at DHCC; all other weekdays will be scheduled at LSC. Some sessions will take place in other facilities, as such St. Paul's Hospital.

For IMP/NMP/SMP students, in-person instruction will be scheduled primarily at the respective University campuses (UVic/UNBC/UBC-O), with some exceptions.

Accordingly, students should seek living accommodations that will best allow them to attend in-person instruction, which will be primarily on campus.

22. How will you make up for the lost and missed learning experiences in first year? (42)

A: Your medical education is designed in a way that you will revisit education objectives (the spiral curriculum). Rest assured that by the end of the program, you will be ready for residency. For clinical skills see answer to question 34.

23. If it is a hybrid model what ratio of in person: to online can we expect? It would be helpful to know if it will be necessary to move closer to VGH or not. Will the schedule account for time that may be needed to get between in-person locations and at-home online set-ups? (25)

A: Please see answers to the questions above. Presently, we are planning to offer as much IN-PERSON instruction as possible (including lectures/large-group sessions, labs, most workshops/small-group sessions, and Clinical Skills/Family Practice).

Some flexibility will be offered for lectures/large-group sessions: students will have the option to attend in person from a lecture theatre, or through Zoom from their personal device. Most lectures will be delivered synchronously in real-time, but we expect that the majority will be recorded and therefore students may also be able to view them asynchronously at a later time. It will be the students' responsibility to coordinate their schedule, if they decide to attend lectures via Zoom rather than in-person and ensure they allow sufficient time to travel to campus to attend mandatory sessions.

All plans are subject to ongoing public health guidance from the Provincial Health Officer, public health teams and regional health authorities.

24. If hybrid, could you pls consider all in person components on one day and then online on another? A lot of time is wasted commuting to do half and half every day. (25)

A: Please see answers to the questions above. Presently, we are planning to offer as much IN-PERSON instruction as possible (including lectures/large-group sessions, labs, most workshops/small-group sessions, and Clinical Skills/Family Practice).

25. If protocols change between Term 1 and 2, how much advance notice will we get about changes for Term 2? (12)

A: During Term 1, we will transition to IN-PERSON instruction in the hopes that we'll be able to maintain IN-PERSON instruction in Term 2 as well. We will continue to monitor the pandemic and may need to make adaptations throughout the Term to ensure we comply with Provincial/Health Authority/University regulations. The same will apply to Term 2. **As much notice as possible will be provided and should provincial direction change our program will need to be nimble in adjusting to the new direction.**

26. If there is in-person learning this fall, will there be a remote option for people who are not comfortable going in-person? (11)

A: Please see answers to the questions above. We will offer a flexible model for lectures/large-group sessions -- students will have the ability to choose between attending lectures in-person in a lecture hall, or via Zoom (or, in most cases, view the lecture recording asynchronously afterwards). However, for all remaining Course components (Labs, small-group sessions, CS/FP), only one mode of delivery will be offered (primarily IN-PERSON with some exceptions/variability).

Students that require accommodations please reach out to your site Student Affairs Assistant Dean or contact the [Centre for Accessibility](#) directly to set up a meeting with Laura Bulk, the Accessibility Advisor for the Faculty of Medicine in the Centre for Accessibility.

27. Is there any chance CBL will continue to be held virtually? (11)

A: Please see answers to the questions above. We are currently planning for IN-PERSON CBL at all Sites and have initiated Tutor recruitment for this scenario. However, some variability across (and within) Sites and Clusters is expected, depending on local recruitment. We depend on a large number of Clinical/Adjunct Faculty that are not bound by university regulations and therefore are not mandated to teach in-person. We are optimistic that the majority will be willing and able to teach in person, but some variability across/within Sites and Clusters is expected.

28. How will the split between DHCC and LSC be decided? Will different classes be held at each location or will there be 2 "groups" overall (11)

A: For all VFMP students, in-person instruction will take place approx. 2-3 days/week at LSC (Point Grey Campus, UBC) and 2-3 days/week at DHCC (VGH). I.e., weekdays with CBL or CS will be scheduled at DHCC; all other weekdays will be scheduled at LSC.

29. Considering the difference in class sizes between VFMP and other sites, will there be differences in course delivery format between sites this upcoming year (6)

A: As above, the current plan is to deliver as much IN-PERSON instruction as possible, to the largest number of students across all Sites. However, as explained above, we do anticipate some potential variability across (and within) Sites, depending on local safety protocols, resources, and recruitment efforts. However, although there might be some differences in the mode of delivery across Sites, we will ensure that the experience remains comparable across Sites.

All plans are subject to ongoing public health guidance from the Provincial Health Officer, public health teams and regional health authorities.

Curricular - Anatomy

30. What are the plans for anatomy labs for the fall? Will we have a chance to do cadaveric dissections? (43)

A: At the time of writing and as detailed above, we are planning for a full return to IN-PERSON teaching, and this includes the return to cadaveric dissection Gross Anatomy Labs.

31. Before the start of first year last summer, Dr. Krebs mentioned an anatomy bootcamp that will make up for missed experiences, when will that happen? (34)

A: You are welcome to revisit online resources to support your learning from Year 1. Presently, our program does not have the resources to organize an Anatomy Bootcamp in Year 2 (there is also no available curricular time for it in MEDD 421). However, the Anatomy Team may be able to use some of the scheduled Gross Anatomy Labs to review some of the Year 1 topics – this will be at the discretion of the Anatomy Faculty Leads.

32. Will there be anatomy dissection make-up sessions for the experiences we missed from first year? (16)

A: As above.

33. If anatomy labs are in person, will they be mandatory or optional as they were this past semester? (7)

A: In contrast to small group sessions such as CBL and Clinical Experiences, attendance at large group sessions (e.g., lectures [with the exception of those with guests] and labs) has not been mandatory for many years. However, we strongly encourage your in-person attendance and engagement with these sessions as the learning cannot be duplicated in any other format.

Curricular - Clinical Skills and Family Practice

34. Will our missed experiences in clinical skills be made up? I don't feel that the amount of practice I had with physical exams is sufficient for clerkship (32).

A: There is limited capacity within curricular time to make up for specific sessions that are missed, among other constraints such as tutors and volunteer/standardized patients. However, each site will do their best to assess the situation, particularly if and when large groups of students have missed specific experiences beyond their control (e.g., Site- or province-wide closures preventing an in-person or online session from happening), to provide opportunity to meet the session objectives. The plan is to preserve physical examination sessions in Clinical Skills to be in-person as much as possible, and this was largely the case throughout the pandemic as well. We encourage students to practice with each other where appropriate, while following Provincial Health Orders regarding gatherings. Your Family Practice preceptors will be informed

that any opportunities for you to practice your clinical skills in the FP environment would be greatly appreciated.

35. Will expectations for us be adjusted based on the limited experience we have? I feel I have a very weak clinical skills foundation and don't want to be penalized (16)

A: From an OSCE point of view, topics and tasks that are examined on the Year 1 and 2 OSCE include only material that the entire class has been presented. For example, if a particular distributed site missed one of their clinical skills sessions because of physical distancing restrictions, we would not include it on the exam. The case selection committees include representatives from various parts of the curriculum (e.g., clinical skills, family practice, CBL) and from all the sites so that we ensure that the exam is fair and only covers material that has been presented to everyone. As stated above, we encourage students to practice with each other where appropriate, while following Provincial Health Orders regarding gatherings.

36. What will be done to ensure people have equal family practice experiences? This past year, some had fully virtual experiences and did not get much out of it (10)

A: Your Family practice experiences are very preceptor dependent. We have heard that virtual experiences are less helpful specifically when students are just shadowing/observing and we are making attempts to encourage preceptors/students to have more active learning experiences through email communication at start of term and through our ICE lectures (encouraging students to advocate for more active learning). That being said, with the reduction of public health measures that have been suggested recently in BC with the reopening plan- we anticipate that many more preceptors are likely to teach in person compared to last year which will hopefully support more comparable learning experiences.

37. Will we have access to DHCC study rooms, exam rooms next year? It'd be helpful to practice for family practice sessions or in-person OSCEs. (8)

A: We are working with Faculty of Medicine Facilities and the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority to determine when access the DHCC will be reinstated and whether there will be any room occupancy limitations.