



Medical Student Council Meeting  
Thursday, **August 24th**, 2023 6:00 PM  
Student Center Main Lounge  
\*\*\*Minutes\*\*\*

**Voting Members in Attendance: Name (proxy for name)**

Joya Ahmad (proxy by Hannah Brown), Srishty Amarnani (proxy by Amanda Jirgal), McKenzie Andrews, Alberto Barrientos (proxy by Carl-Frederick Janvier), Rachel Baum, Hannah Brown, Hayley Carabello, Kunika Chahal, Liam Deegan (proxy by Amanda Jirgal), Rahat Elahi, Mohamed Heiba, Carl-Frederick Janvier, Anna Lieberman, Michel Liu, Lulu Wei (proxy by Amanda Jirgal), Jack Nasar

**Guests in Attendance:**

Sabina Kubayevea, Christopher Montalvo, Dan Green, Tasneem Ibrahim, Kyle Reid, Maria Botero, Zoe Lanis, Nicole Gladstein, Swati Madankumar, Lindsay Blank, Adam Burgman, Jeffrey Putman, Jason Lazar, and Schuyler Hooke

**Minutes recorded by Hannah Brown.  
Amanda Jirgal presiding over the meeting.  
Meeting called to order at 6:14pm**

1. New Business

- a. \*Note - approved absences for this meeting: Alexis Roth, Lulu Wei, Srishty Amarnani, Liam Deegan, Joya Ahmad
- b. Welcome and Q&A with COM 2027
  - i. President of the class gets the most votes
  - ii. Regular VP
  - iii. VP of social events (activities for class)
  - iv. Secretary (communications, taking minutes)
  - v. Treasurer (keep the funds of your class)
  - vi. SLC Liaison (active role; involved in education; member of med council that communicates with SLC to discuss, unit to unit, issues going on with the class.

- ex: OSCE practice session falls on a holiday, issue getting a lecture uploaded)
1. Work with Dean C., Dr. Bianchi, Dr. Quinn, etc and create good relationships with them
- vii. In Medical Student Council there is President, Secretary, Vice President, and Treasurer
    1. We are in charge of Med Council overall; we do club budgets, hold monthly meetings
    2. Meetings are open to everyone from the medical school
  - viii. Intros to faculty: Dr. Putman, Dean Lazar, Schuyler Hooke, and Adam Burgman
    1. We can discuss our concerns with them
  - ix. Intros to the council members
    1. You can reach out to people if you're interested in one of their positions
  - x. Note: you can run for SLC if you'd rather be on the education-side
  - xi. You just run for medical council and positions are decided later
    1. There is a re-election in January if you don't want to run right now
  - xii. If you have questions about University Council, you can talk to Adam
  - xiii. Each individual council is in charge of themselves
    1. You're representing your peers and trying to help them
    2. It's up to you as a class council to decide how often to meet
    3. You can communicate on GroupMe to assign what needs to be done
  - xiv. There are multiple councils (none of them require you to be on your year's council):
    1. Med Council
    2. University Council
    3. SCGB (social events for the whole school)
    4. College Council
    5. Res Hall Council

c. Requests/Updates from Adam:

- i. Kahoot subscription for clubs to SCGB special events
  1. **\$128.98**
- ii. Approved funding for puppies for the week before MS1 exams (part of stress relief week) to SCGB special events
  1. **\$600**
- iii. Block Party funding request to SCGB Block Party
  1. **\$3,000**
- iv. University Council sponsoring mixer on September 18th – GMC invited
  1. All class councils will be invited
  2. Will be in PHAB hall
  3. We can meet all the other councils
  4. Beginning will be an ice breaker, but then it will be fun
- v. Restarting AMA
  1. National organization who had their chapter removed from campus last Spring
  2. A student is staying in contact with the people, but they don't have time to be on the E-Board
  3. If any students want to be on it, they can go
- vi. Orientation went well, yay!

d. Trending Topics (all MC)

- i. Approved funding for students for the Student Activities Fair–lunch bags in Navy Blue
  1. **\$1,137.29**
- ii. Approved funding for LMSA conference via virtual vote (2 hotel rooms for 2 nights)
  1. **\$792.68**
  2. We don't typically do a virtual vote, but there was a time constraint for them
  3. They requests 3 nights, but we told them we only do 2 nights
  4. They also got funding from outside sources
- iii. Elections for Class of 2027
  1. Alberto sent an email on Monday 8/21 accepting submissions until Sunday 8/27 at 11:59pm
    - a. Send in a short video and a poster
    - b. These materials will be sent to the class, and there will be a vote
  2. Elections will open Monday 8/28 and close after  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the class has voted or 1 week
- iv. Attendance Policy for Monthly MC Meetings
  1. We need to be more strict about this attendance policy
  2. We have students who are on their class councils that are not coming to these meetings
    - a. This is a voluntary role that people take on and want to do, so they need to be accountable
  3. The current constitution was voted on 2 years ago, but it wasn't done in the proper way, so it can't be the one we go by
    - a. We have to go by the one from 2013
  4. If you are a first or second year and miss more than 2 meetings in a row, we have to vote about removing you from the council
    - a. They can appeal this
    - b. There would be a replacement election
      - i. There doesn't seem to be a point for MS4s
      - ii. But the vote to remove could still take place to set a precedent, and really make a point about professionalism and responsibility
  5. If you're not fulfilling your role, you can be voted to be removed from the council
  6. During the closed meeting, we will vote on the person who has not been coming
  7. If you cannot come for academic or personal emergency reasons, you have to email Hannah and we will document it, and it will be an excused absence
    - a. Won't count as a 2
  8. After each unexcused absence, you will get a formal email to let you know you're in violation of our constitution
- v. Voting on the Constitution
  1. Current version (2013):  
[https://www.downstate.edu/about/our-administration/finance/faculty-student-association/\\_documents/MSCConstitution.pdf](https://www.downstate.edu/about/our-administration/finance/faculty-student-association/_documents/MSCConstitution.pdf)
  2. We are determining if the voting should be done by our council or the

- med school student body
- 3. We will review the new constitution again and make sure everyone agrees with the changes
- 4. Perhaps we will have a constitution committee
  - a. Lulu will be taking over this project and make sure everything is up to date
  - b. Jack, Mo, and Rachel are interested in being on this committee
  - c. Dr. Putman is happy to help
- 5. We will take into account what we voted on in May about class president being on Medical Student council
- vi. Monthly Shuttle Schedule
  - 1. Andre Sterling is the person to go to for the monthly shuttle schedule
  - 2. Usually the same from month to month, but MS3s should email him every month with the last month's schedule and make sure it's the same
    - a. Send this out to the MS2, MS3s and MS4 classes each month (and the MS2s because of bedside preceptorships)
- vii. [New Registration Form for each class \(six positions listed\)](#)
  - 1. Form is more up-to-date with different positions we have
  - 2. Please submit the form to Adam ASAP
- viii. MC Reserve Account Collaboration
  - 1. We have a lot of money in our reserve account (this is because clubs weren't spending their money during Covid)
    - a. \$80,000 in our rollover funding
      - i. When clubs come to request money we can use this money
    - b. Right now our conference funding account has \$0, but we will vote today to move money from class reserves in here
      - i. We will vote to put \$10,000 in there from class reserves
    - c. Each year each class gets \$1,500 which rolls over each year, and senior week we get \$6,000
    - d. We have \$36,500 in class reserve funding from classes who left
      - i. Ex: class of 2023 had money left over
      - ii. Some of the money from the class of 2023 was earmarked to replace lounge furniture in the student affairs office, and it will have a plaque saying it was dedicated by the class of 2023
    - e. We want to come up with fun ideas to spend this money
      - i. Ex: Yankee game with cheap tickets, dance in the gym
- ix. Conference Committees
  - 1. People interested in doing more in med council (but maybe not have a medical student council role)
  - 2. Amanda will brainstorm how to get it done
  - 3. With people going to more and more guidelines, it would be nice to have a committee to review that everyone is submitting their funds correctly before coming to med council
- x. Appeals Board
  - 1. We're supposed to have this according to our current constitution
  - 2. We will see if we keep this
- xi. Student Activity Fair: Library card sign-up
  - 1. Either at our table or the table next to us at the activities fair

2. They will be helping people sign up for library cards
- e. Class Trending Topics & Updates/New Topics
- i. 2024
    1. Trending Topics:
      - a. EM elective confirming missing dates for interviews (excused vs need to be made up), still need formal email
      - b. Recent ERAS Q&A recording
      - c. Concern that people with all high pass and honors on rotations could be in a low quartile
        - i. There's also disconnect between who's grading you, and who's with you everyday
          1. They could give a 3 (failing, 60) or 4 (80), but it isn't associated with how much work they're actually doing
          2. It's also concerning that some students are 1 point from honors, but get lumped in with high pass
            - a. Amanda suggests maybe it could be numerical? That might be more fair?
              - i. Dean Lazar mentions that while this will help some students, but will hurt other students
              - ii. He said it could be interesting to see how much of a difference that will make (do scenarios)
              - iii. He'll bring this to the educational leadership team
      - ii. Dean Lazar says it's "weighted" because longer rotations are weighted more heavily
      - iii. Dean Lazar says:
        1. There's grade inflation (more honors and high passes given out recently than in past years), so maybe that's the reason
        2. They're not going to go back and be graded more strictly
        3. Shelf exams are worth different amounts in different rotations
          - a. It has become standardized more recently
    - iv. For each clerkship there's a bar graph that shows how many students received each grade category
      1. They are required to represent where each student ranks among their class for the Dean's Letter
        - a. They used to be more flexible (ex: say upper third, lower third, etc)
        - b. But they got in trouble, and now they do quartiles
    - v. It's important to make it clear to the third years that they need to get Honors in each clerkship if they want to be in a high quartile

1. Dean Lazar agrees that there should be communication to students about how their performance goes into quartiles
    - a. Maybe clinical advisory deans could be in charge of this?
    - b. Is there a way to do this without being anxiety inducing?
  2. Maybe they could see the bar graphs ahead of time?
    - a. Dean Lazar says no; the distribution of grades changes year-to-year
  - vi. Dean Lazar says program directors are aware that the borders between quartiles are blurry
    1. It's a myth that you need to be in the 1st quartile to get into a competitive residency
    2. He says they should advise students better about this
    3. The clinical advisory deans need to provide better clarity on this
      - a. Kunika suggests that, as students meet with clinical advisory deans, they tell them where their progress is so far, like what quartile they're currently in
        - i. It could be difficult because one or two clerkships could make a big difference
  - d. Dean Lazar says they're working on fixing up the electives
    - i. There are some electives listed with advisors who are not even alive....
2. Updates:
- a. Pathways being listed on Dean's Letter (advertised on Downstate website)
    - i. They were really advertised coming to Downstate! (That we can hyper-focus on something outside of Downstate curriculum)
      1. Some are active, but a lot of them aren't
    - ii. What's the criteria for them being on the Dean's Letter since some of them are more active than others
    - iii. Dean Lazar says over the years, leadership has become concerned about pathways
    - iv. The pathway leadership is supposed to report to the Dean's Council of education yearly, but they haven't been doing that recently
    - v. The pathways are supposed to be completed over 3 years
    - vi. Challenges: LCME accreditation, the pandemic
    - vii. 6 weeks ago, Dr. Lazar called a meeting of all the pathway directors and they described what their pathways were like. They also had a meeting this week. Here's what he learned:
      1. 40-50 apply to Global Health and they take 18

2. HEAL pathway also takes a limited amount of people
  3. Clinical Neuroscience pathway can accept unlimited students since it's structured differently
  4. Urology pathway leader wasn't at this meeting, but they kept minutes, and they'll be emailed
  5. Maybe a student shouldn't be able to be in more than one pathway if they only accept a few people?
  6. Dean Lazar doesn't think the dean's office should be micromanaging the pathways
    - a. It should be up to the pathway directors and the students
      - i. The students should reach out to the pathway directors and see if they're on track / what they need to do
- viii. He thinks it will take many meetings to hammer out the issues with pathways and differing criteria
- ix. They know that not every student who started a pathway actually completes a pathway
1. He asked the pathway directors to email them stating that a student either completed a pathway or "is on track" to complete a pathway
  2. On August 21st, the pathway directors agreed that they would get Dr. Lazar and Dean C. that information, and that information will be included in the Dean's Letters
  3. They're going to standardize the language so it's the same across the MSPEs, even though they're written by different people
    - a. This makes the clinical advisory deans feel better
- x. General plan: Re-invigorate all of the pathways!
- xi. There are also some new pathways that are being proposed (preliminary stages)
- b. Graduation date & location
- i. Confirmed as May 15th
  - ii. Confirmed it will be at Coney Island
  - iii. Time is not confirmed
  - iv. Right now they can guarantee 5 tickets per person, but it might go up
    1. Last year it was 5 per student and they went up to 6
    2. People will be happy with this number!
- c. Senior week—when do we start planning
- i. Can start planning it now
    1. They can set up a meeting with Schuyler in December
  - ii. Latest they can start planning it is January, depending on

what they want to do

1. Last year they spent a lot of money on a bigger dinner cruise with an open door and a big dinner
  2. In other years they've done things like Great Adventure, Broadway show, etc
  3. Whatever the class wants to do
- iii. It's all subsidized events (not free) to ensure that people come
  - iv. There is \$6,000 allotted (basically replacing yearbook funding)
    1. Classes can augment this by reaching out to other departments
      - a. In the past, Alumni has been generous
    2. It's good to start this earlier
      - a. Departments may make all their donations by later in the year
  - d. Gold Humanism and AOA decision dates
    - i. Both groups are meeting this week, so decisions will be soon
    - ii. There will be ceremonies for both
      1. Gold Humanism might be in September
      2. AOA may also be earlier too
        - a. In the past, it's been a dinner in April
  - e. Schuyler is working with Office of Institutional Equity to set dates for Lavender Graduation, etc
    - i. They're also trying to smooth out dates with other clubs and events
- ii. 2025
    1. It takes a lot of time to get access to the EMR
    2. Some places are making students pay for their own drug tests, which isn't good
      - a. Brooklyn Hospital charges \$40 for a drug test unless they've had the very specific panel within the past year
    3. They would like information about grading given out at the beginning of each rotation
      - a. This is past along well among students, but it should be formal
    4. There are some quality control challenges on comments and reports
    5. There are issues with Shelf exams in accommodations because people get booted off, and they kept having to restart, and it's totally new exams sometimes so they have to start over
      - a. They had to do them from home
      - b. Half the time of the exam they spent it on the phone with IT
      - c. Also, some of the exams were from different specialities than the exams they're supposed to be taking
      - d. This doesn't seem to be a new issue
        - i. It seems like the people with accommodations have more issues just general
          1. It's deterring people from wanting to get the accommodations they need
        - ii. Timing is always off for unit exams



- e. The people who are helping are nice, but they don't know how to fix it
- 6. At Brooklyn Hospital, there are too many students per rotation, so it affects the students' relationships with residents, and causes them to have a horrible experience
  - a. This has been brought up in previous years
  - b. Dean Lazar is unhappy with the relationship with Brooklyn Hospital, and it's going to change
  - c. They need to secure more spots for students in OB
    - i. Spots in OB are down, because there are fewer deliveries
  - d. Dean Lazar mandated that the Dean's office go to Brooklyn Hospital, and they weren't happy about it
  - e. Kings is taking fewer students (they're being pressured to take students from CUNY and SGU)
  - f. There is little incentive for site directors to treat Downstate students well when there's only 2 of them
    - i. Dean Lazar will try to find better solutions for those students

iii. 2026

1. **Follow-Up:** Can we get absences approved for doctor's appointments that won't count towards our 2 absences?
  - a. This was done!! Yayy!!!
  - b. Additionally, any way we could work on modifying the absence policy to be proportional to the length of the unit?
    - i. Dr. Putman says this is maybe a possibility
    - ii. We could talk about this on next meeting
2. **Follow-Up:** Please let us see the data on people who ID'd the units and who took LoAs!!!!
  - a. It's never the same between years what students struggle with
  - b. But we could have the data, just for transparency
3. From the Comments/Concerns Form:
  - a. "Why are so many people remediating? It's like a quarter of the class! What's the plan to fix this?"
    - i. There could have been 40-50 people taking exams in the summer but it doesn't mean they were remediating
    - ii. It was not 25% of the class remediating
  - b. Lecture Hall is freezing! Anything to be done about this?
    - i. Multiple people submitted this
    - ii. Dr. Putman is aware of this
      1. That building was built in the '50s and the cornerstone laid by President Eisenhower
        - a. It doesn't have the ability to adjust to the outside temperature
        - b. It's always too hot or too cold
        - c. Happens more in fall or spring
      - iii. We could get doorstops!
  - c. "Gateway - Why haven't we received feedback? It's not acceptable for something that impacts our grade so much to not have it to use for reflection to improve upon the skills for gateway 2. The feedback from those who grade us (not our

classmates) is important to use while we improve our clinical skills during year two. Also, we should know what gateway 2 is by now so as we go through year 2 we can prepare accordingly. This should have been shared with us week 1 of this year rather than thrown on us a month before gateway 2 so we don't have to scramble to make sure we've covered our bases."

i. Dr. Putman will look into it

ii. Faculty says they shouldn't give information because of what they think they'll do with it

1. We could say we respect the faculty's opinion, but we want to let them know our feelings on this

d. Tutoring

i. Dr. Putman told Seth Langley that he needed to solve it

ii. We went through the dates, and he followed through, and tutoring will start for MS1s on Monday! (1st day of week three)

1. Yay!

iii. There's an issue with Unit 5 tutoring not starting

1. Dr. Putman will figure it out with Dr. Langley

2. There seems to maybe be a budget issue

f. Budget Requests

i. Rachel Baum - Independent Student Project: **\$408.54**

1. HINTS Data Users Conference

a. Amtrak Train - \$111

b. Local Train - \$6

c. Hotel Room - \$291.54

d. Waiting to hear back from Alumni, so she will wait to see if they approve her funds, because the conference isn't until after the next Medical Student Council meeting

ii. DHSU Ophthalmology Club

1. Faculty Panel: **\$200**

a. Food (pizza, soda, etc) - \$200

b. Multiple sub-specialists will come and talk

2. Vision Screening Fair: **\$40**

a. Occuluder - \$10-15

b. Alcohol Pads - \$6

c. Penlight Batteries - \$10

d. Wall Chart - \$8

e. Community service activities with churches

f. In previous years there wasn't professional equipment, but this year they want real equipment

3. Eyeglasses Drive: **\$50**

a. Box Shipping - \$50

b. Community service

c. There will be a box on campus and ask people to donate glasses not being used

4. Dr. Schinder Meeting: **\$70**

a. Pizza - \$70

b. A lot of people show up, it happens every year

- c. He's not sure how many people attended last year, but the President said it was a full meeting, and there were around 10 pizza boxes
  - d. Amanda says they probably will need more than \$70
- 5. They already have \$400 in their account; they do not need to request funds**

- g. We will send the Agenda to Dean Lazar and Dr. Putman the agenda on the Monday before the meeting, so we would please like people to have their items on the agenda by then
- h. Elections
  - i. Previously there was a rule that president of a class cannot hold a Medical Student Council position
  - ii. We voted in May that if no one in each class wanted to run for a role during elections, the President can run for that position
    - 1. If someone else wants to run, the president can't run
    - 2. When we voted in May, we didn't clarify well enough that this can only happen during an election period
      - a. We can't frequently have transitions in the E-Board because it isn't conducive to things running smoothly
  - iii. This can only happens during elections, and cannot happen at other points during the year
    - 1. Elections for Secretary and Treasurer in January
    - 2. Elections for President and Vice President in April
  - iv. Amanda can help people who like to be more active on Medical Student Council be active on new committees
  - v. MS3s can have E-Board positions on Medical Student Council, but it just is often hard

### **Closed Meeting:**

- i. Motioned by Rachel
- ii. Seconded by Hannah

**iii. Meeting is now closed.**

### **New Business**

#### **1.) Approval of May Minutes**

- a. Motion to approve May minutes made by Hannah
- b. Seconded by Anna
  - i. Vote:
    - 1. For - 16
    - 2. Against - 0
    - 3. Abstain - 0

**Motion passes to approve May minutes**

- 2) Budget Requests:  
a) Rachel Baum - Independent Student Project

**Motion tabled.**

- b) Contribute funds to Block Party  
i. For - 16  
ii. Against - 0  
iii. Abstain - 0

**Motion passes to transfer \$3,000 from Projects and Programs (40-70174-012-30001) to SCGB Block Party (40-70409-015-30001).**

**Virtual vote on August 15th, 2023 approved funding for the Latino Medical Student Association (LMSA) conference. Approval of transfer of \$792.68 from Projects and Programs (40-70174-012-30001) to LMSA (40-70266-012-30001).**

**By previous E-Board decision: To pay for Kahoot subscription, approved transfer of \$128.98 from Projects and Programs (40-70174-012-30001) to SCGB Special Events (40-41006-015-30001).**

**By previous E-Board decision: To pay for puppies at MS1 de-stressing event, approved \$600 from Projects and Programs (40-70174-012-30001) to Puppy Party INC**

**By previous E-Board decision: To pay for Student Activity Fair giveaway of lunch bags, approved \$1,137.29 from Projects and Programs (40-70174-012-30001) to ACUI Promos**

3) Vote to remove Pricilla Varghese from Medical Student Council due to excessive absences and egregious lack of communication

- a) Option to vote to remove Pricilla from Medical Student Council Made by Rachel  
b) Motion to vote to remove Pricilla from Medical Student Council made by Hayley  
c) Seconded by Mo  
i. For - 15  
ii. Against - 0  
iii. Abstain - 1

**Motion passes to remove Pricilla Varghese from Medical Student Council**

Motion to end meeting by Mo  
Seconded by Kunika  
Meeting Closed at 8:30pm

**Minutes were scribed by Hannah Brown  
Approved by Hannah Brown - Medical Council Secretary**

