

# FACULTY ADVISOR

## GUIDEBOOK

**Faculty Advising Goals:** Your primary goal as a faculty advisor is to support and advise your student-advisees in ways that will help them minimize the number of “bumps” they experience on their journey (failed classes, professionalism issues, being sent to the Student Performance Committee, etc.), and to help those who hit bumps successfully navigate through them. We also encourage you to offer overall support/mentorship/guidance to your student-advisees.

**Advisor as Triage Doc:** Consider yourself a triage doc for your advisees. There is a wealth of support available to students for the many challenges they may face, and contact information for these entities is listed below. You can either refer students directly to these resources, or call them to seek advice regarding how to counsel students. The Office of Student Affairs (OSA), Office of Academic Affairs (OAA), and the Institute for Medical Educators (IME) are also always available to you for consultation and assistance.

**Advisor Roles & Responsibilities:** We believe that the goals articulated above can be achieved by engaging students in the ways listed below. The first section indicates what you are asked to do with all advisees and the “code yellow” and “code red” sections indicate what additional things you are asked to do with student-advisees who are experiencing challenges. Please feel free to identify additional creative ways of supporting your student advisees to encourage their successful completion of the academic program.

### *All Advisees*

1. **Actively check-in with all of your advisees at least three times per year** and encourage them to contact or meet with you when they are feeling particularly stressed or concerned. See suggestions below for the timing of these check-ins and suggested conversation topics. Please refer students to support services that are appropriate to their needs (see below).
2. **Actively monitor academic progress of all advisees in APP.** Academic concerns are more likely to surface for 1<sup>st</sup> years between August and October, so please check grades for 1<sup>st</sup> year student-advisees weekly during this time. All other advisee grades can be checked monthly. Please refer students to support services that are appropriate to their needs (see below).
3. **Take advantage of learning opportunities as they arise;** especially as they pertain to issues of professionalism since these are often the hardest for students to change.
4. **Exercise great prudence in advising students regarding personal matters.** Please see [CLASS Advising Worksheet](#) and the [Faculty Advisor Triage Worksheet](#) for suggestions. Please refer students to support services that are appropriate to their needs (see below).
5. **Counsel student-advisees regarding curriculum and graduation requirements.** The Offices of Academic Affairs (OAA) and Student Affairs (OSA) are always available to assist.
6. **Assist students by writing letters of reference** as necessary.

**Code Yellow Advisees** (those who are experiencing challenges and still have time to correct them)

1. When you are made aware of a student who is facing challenges, **let them tell you the full story and then help them to think through the issues and develop a plan for tackling them.** Depending upon the situation you may need to gently, but firmly give them a reality check to help them understand the situation, options, and/or possible outcomes. Remember to **document these plans in the Faculty Advisor notes section of the APP** so that the action plan you came up with in conjunction with the student is documented and available for follow up. Reference the [Recommendations for Faculty Advisor Notes in APP](#) documentation regarding how to document notes in APP.
2. It is highly likely that a student experiencing challenges should also be **encouraged to seek assistance from other available resources.** Contact information is provided below for the most commonly needed resources.
3. **Follow-up is the key to success** with Code Yellow Advisees. Check-in with these students at appropriate times based upon the plan you helped them to develop.
4. Advise students in academic distress to **cease non-scholastic activities.**

**Code Red Advisees** (those whose challenges have led them to the SPC)

1. **Meet with students who are called to the Student Performance Committee (SPC)** before the meeting. The Assistant Dean or Director of Student Affairs will also meet with them so that they will know what to expect regarding the technical aspects of the SPC proceedings.
2. **Accompany advisees to Student Performance Committee meetings** and be prepared to speak to the committee regarding the student and the issue at hand.

### Advisor Resources

#### [Institute of Medical Education \(IME\)](#)

- Gail Singer-Chang, PsyD, MA, MS 909-706-3812 Consultation for advising issues & advisor resources

#### [Office of Student Affairs \(OSA\)](#)

- Mirabelle Fernandes-Paul, EdD 541-259-0220 “Red Flags”/serious student concerns (Lebanon)
- Michelle Emmert, EdD 909-469-5414 “Red Flags”/serious student concerns (Pomona)

#### [Career & Professional Development \(CPD\)](#)

- Elisabeth Guenther, MD 541-259-0275 Career advice (Lebanon)
- Lisa Warren, DO 909-469-8492 Career advice (Pomona)

#### [Office of Academic Affairs \(OAA\)](#)

- Jerry Thrush, PhD 909-469-5374 Pre-clinical matters (Lebanon & Pomona)
- Katie Fisher, DO 541-259-0243 Clinical matters (Lebanon)
- Natalie Nevins, DO 909-469-8414 Clinical matters (Pomona)

## WHEN SHOULD I CONTACT MY ADVISEES?

It is recommended that you use the following timeline as a guide while working with students.

### *OMS I Advisees:*

- **August** - Attend Faculty Advisor/Advisee Welcome Gathering during Orientation Week
  - *Talking points*
    - What is most exciting about starting medical school at WesternU?
    - What makes you most anxious about starting?
    - What are you most interested in/passionate about professionally and personally?
  
- **September** - Encourage students to attend Residency/Hospital Day. We encourage you to also attend and talk with representatives about their rotation/residency programs and what they are looking for in a student doctor.
  
- **September/October** - Check in with each of your advisees
  - *Talking points*
    - How are classes?
    - What have been your greatest challenges so far?
    - What can you do to minimize these challenges?
    - Have you joined any clubs or other extracurricular activities?
    - What resources do you need to stay motivated and succeed?
  
- **Late January/February** – Check in with each of your advisees
  - *Talking points*
    - How are classes?
    - What has your progress been on tackling the challenges we discussed last time?
    - Have you identified any mentors  
(ie: a clinician in a specialty they want to know more about)?
    - What are your plans for the summer?
    - What resources do you need to stay motivated and succeed?
  
- **May** – Check in with each of your advisees
  - *Talking points*
    - What are you doing for the summer?
    - Who have you found as your mentor?
    - Have you explored specialties using Careers in Medicine, Frieda, Mentors, and shadowing?

## *OMS II Advisees:*

- **August** – Check in with each of your advisees
  - *Talking points*
    - Welcome back! How was your summer?
    - Are there any resources you need to start year two (especially reference any resources they needed to tackle challenges e.g. tutoring or accommodations)?
    - What specialty are you thinking about?
    - Have you logged on to Careers in Medicine?
  
- **September** - Encourage students to attend Residency/Hospital Day. We encourage you to also attend and talk with representatives about their rotation/residency programs and what they are looking for in a student.
  
- **September/October** - Check in with each of your advisees
  - *Talking points*
    - How are classes?
    - Have you joined any clubs or other extracurricular activities?
    - What resources do you need to stay motivated and succeed?
  
- **November** (following Rotations Preview Day) - Check in with each of your advisees
  - *Talking points*
    - What questions do you have about Rotations?
    - What concerns do you have about Rotations?
    - How are you preparing for Boards? Check out [www.cramfighter.com](http://www.cramfighter.com)
  
- **Late January/February** – Check in with each of your advisees
  - *Talking points*
    - How are classes?
    - How is studying for the Boards?
    - What resources do you need?
  
- **May** – Check in with each of your advisees
  - *Talking points*
    - Are you ready for Boards?
    - Are you ready for Rotations?
    - Each advisee will be required to complete the assessments on Careers in Medicine by Rotations Orientation Week. What did you discover about yourself when you did this?
    - What specialties are you thinking about?
    - What are your biggest concerns about starting clinical education?

### *OMS III Advisees:*

- **August** - Check in to see how they did on COMLEX II
- **September Didactic Week** - Check in just before didactic weeks so they can come talk to you during didactic week if something is on their mind. Ask: How are your rotations going?
- **March Didactic Week** - Same as above
- **June Didactic Week** - Same as above
- **December Didactic Week** - Same as above

### *OMS IV Advisees:*

- **Early August** - Check in to see how their Residency Application is going on ERAS.
- **September** - Check with students to see if they are getting calls for interviews. If they are not getting calls, refer them to the following for further support and advice:
  - **Lebanon:** Jessica Reynolds [jareynolds@westernu.edu](mailto:jareynolds@westernu.edu)
  - **Pomona:** Cha Hanna [channa@westernu.edu](mailto:channa@westernu.edu)
- **February** - Check in with students during DO Match Week
- **March** - Celebrate with students on Match Day (also MD Match Week)!
- **May** - Celebrate their accomplishments during Commencement!

# BOARD & CAREER PREPARATION RESOURCES

To study for their board exams we recommend that students use Qbanks, First Aid for the COMLEX/USMLE, and possibly board prep programs like Boards Boot Camp, Doctors in Training, etc.. Below are some additional tips for board study:

1. Choose a review method: Individual studying vs. course
2. Limit number of resources: Take First Aid or Crush or Step Up, not all 3
3. Use a question bank for each test (do not use the same bank for COMLEX & USMLE)
4. Take the COMSAE twice before taking COMLEX (\$50/attempt)
5. WesternU library's guide to COMLEX Preparation at <http://westernu.v1.libguides.com/COMLEX>
6. <http://www.cramfighter.com> is a great resource for planning a study schedule

## Should a student take the USMLE?

YES if they are...

- Planning a residency outside of California
- Planning to apply to ACGME residencies
- Applying to residencies in anesthesia, dermatology, ophthalmology, orthopedics, pediatrics, psychiatry, radiology, surgery or urology

NO if they...

- Are only interested in AOA residencies
- Are not in the top 75% of the class
- Did not pass a major course in the 1st or 2nd year
- Find standardized tests to be a challenge

## Career Planning Resources

- Find the medical specialty that's the best fit for you, find and successfully match into the residency program that meets your career goals, consider practice options, and maximize you're a career.
  - AAMC's Careers in Medicine
    - <https://www.aamc.org/cim>
  - AACOM's Career Planning Guide
    - <http://www.aacom.org/become-a-doctor/med-students/career-planning>
- Access information on over 9600 graduate medical education programs accredited by ACGME and 100+ combined specialty programs.
  - AMA's Freida
    - <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/education-careers/graduate-medical-education/freida-online.page>

## Specialty Selecting Resources

Ask your advisees to complete the Careers in Medicine Specialty Indecision Scale (SIS), Medical Specialty Preference Inventory (MSPI), and the Physician Values in Practice Scale (PVIPS) each year. Ask them what they learned about themselves while doing these? Their findings may change over time and while doing rotations. They should retake these at least annually.

## Curriculum Vitae (CV) Preparation

Encourage the use of [www.LinkedIn.com](http://www.LinkedIn.com) to easily format and update resumes as well as linking with others. Examples of CV's can be found on Careers in Medicine site under "Land Your Residency".