

Keck SOM Virtual Suggestion Box November 2023

Thank you to all who have contributed suggestions to the KSOM Virtual Suggestion Box. We have received many thoughtful and helpful suggestions and each of them has been carefully reviewed and the suggestions and responses are shared below. We have edited the suggestions to make them more concise statements while maintaining their intent. We also want to emphasize that it is important that student suggestions be expressed in ways that maintain the standards of professionalism we all value here at Keck. Using professional communication assists our faculty and administrators in evaluating your concerns, focusing our responses, and considering new solutions. As always, we look forward to hearing from you and working on ways to optimize your experience here at the Keck School of Medicine of USC.

Early Morning Classes and ICM Schedule

“Required classes should not be held early in the morning at 8 a.m. as this deprives students of necessary sleep which is detrimental to their well-being.”

“Make ICM later in the day, please. “

“I think ICM should be later in the day.”

Response: We focus on the sequence of course content and limiting the amount of in-class time to 4 hours per day as guides for creating schedules. Starting most days at 8 a.m. enables us to capitalize on the morning and finish by 12 p.m. rather than needing to break for lunch and having students return for classes after lunch. In recent years, a significant ask from students has been to keep afternoons clear of scheduled classes on non-ICM and non-EPIC days. Starting at 8 a.m. on some days is required to achieve this.

Insufficient Food at Events

“At events where RSVPs are requested, the amount of food offered is always insufficient.”

Response: Thank you for bringing this to our attention. It is our practice that department events account for the number of RSVPs and expected attrition on the day of the event, which is usually 20-30%. We will discuss implementing practices such as reminding students to please confirm



their attendance by the deadline so we can order the appropriate amount of food. For student sponsored events, budgets are limited and sometimes the attendance exceeds the budget for food and refreshments. We encourage student groups to co-sponsor events as much as possible to maximize their resources. We're sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused.

Recording Small Group Discussions

"Please record the required small group discussions so that we can review them later."

Response: Video recording of small group activities in the LCs raises significant FERPA privacy issues as it would be difficult to avoid including students, and thus we would be required to obtain consent from each student before recording. When we have done this in the past, the recording of small group activities in the LCs has generally not produced satisfactory results unless an experienced videographer is present to capture quality video and manage the audio recording during such dynamic events. Currently, we believe that allocation of resources to achieve this is a lower priority than other AV needs. Also, small group activities are intended to include participation of those in the room and there is some expected variability in experience between rooms, which raises a logistical issue of which room to record.

LAGMC Use of Patient Restraints

<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2023-10-19/psychiatric-patients-restraint-high-rate-california-los-angeles-general-hospital>

I would greatly appreciate someone speaking with us about this horrific news story posted today and what actions are being taken to ensure humane care moving forward.

Response: Thank you for this suggestion. We will reach out to the hospital for a reply.

Dual Degree Student Emails

"Most email communication to medical students is sent to the listservs for the 4 classes (this year, it's keckmed2024-l@usc.edu - keckmed2027-l@usc.edu). As a dual degree student on a leave of absence, I would like to keep receiving information about events and seminars happening at Keck. However, after my class (Class of 2024) graduates this year, I will no longer receive these email announcements. Is



there a way to make sure LOA students from years who have since graduated, can continue receiving communication and announcements from Keck SOM?”

Response: Students in the dual degree MD/MBA and MD/MPH program are added to the email listserv of the class they are joining when their leave of absence is processed. Since students in the MD/PhD programs are gone much longer than a year, we created an MD/PhD student listserv and will work with our MD/PhD program office to ensure that you continue to receive important communications about KSOM regularly. Thanks for this suggestion.

SIG Event Menus

“SIGs should inform students of what food will be served before events.”

Response: The Office of Student Affairs will bring this to the attention of the ASSM council during the class presidents meeting on November 28th for a decision and follow up in an upcoming VSB or another communication to students.

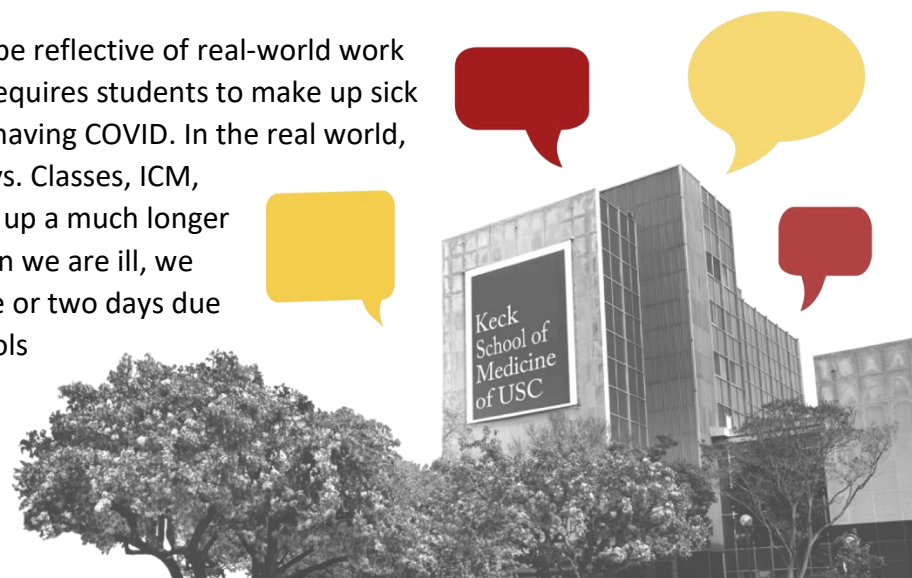
K-Cup Supply

“Hello, many students, including myself, appreciate the Keurig machine on the bottom floor of KAM. However, we often find that the K-cups run out quickly. Could we explore a system to ensure a more consistent supply, making our long study hours go by a bit easier? Your consideration is much appreciated. Thank you.”

Response: We appreciate the feedback regarding the K-cups and we will do our best within our budget to provide coffee during your study hours.

Absence Policy

“Can USC innovate its absence policy to be reflective of real-world work environments? KSOM has a policy that requires students to make up sick days, even with a legitimate excuse like having COVID. In the real world, workers, including doctors, have sick days. Classes, ICM, clerkships, and sub-i’s are already taking up a much longer portion of our time than is needed. When we are ill, we need sleep and time to heal. Missing one or two days due to illness should be excused. Other schools have a much better model for absences which gives



students an allotted number of days in the pre-clerkship phase to miss specific classes with no questions asked.”

Response: We are considering other approaches to managing requests for absences but expect that some required activities will continue to warrant make-up assignments. This could also include making up time missed in the clinical environment to ensure that students achieve the objectives of the course and the MD program.

Flickering Lights

“Is there a way to get the 3 flickering lights in Mayer fixed? They are super distracting in lecture.”

Response: We’re putting in a service request to address this issue. Thanks for bringing this to our attention.

Post HEA Exam Clinical Skills Lab

I am truly appreciative that our program provided an opportunity to learn the HEA exam, and I want to emphasize that I am not complaining, just providing a gentle suggestion. Following the completion of the HEA exam, it would be fantastic if we could participate in a clinical skills lab, specifically focusing on detecting pathological findings. I recently came across a YouTube video demonstrating a prostate exam, where the instructor used a product that simulated male pelvic structures. It seemed like an effective learning tool so just thought I would share! I'll add the link below to the products he used and additional models that would complement the learning module.

<https://limbsandthings.com/us/products/60951/60951-clinical-male-pelvic-trainer-cmpt-mk-2-advanced-light-skin-tone?cat=ranges&subcat=postgraduate-medicine>

<https://limbsandthings.com/us/products/60187/60187-male-rectal-examination-trainer-advanced-dark-skin-tone>

<https://limbsandthings.com/us/products/60935/60935-clinical-female-pelvic-trainer-mk-3-cfpt-advanced-dark-skin-tone#tab5>

Response: We are happy to hear that you found the HEA workshop educational. We appreciate your recommendation



for incorporating simulators that mimic different disease states, to better equip you to be successful as physicians in detecting abnormal findings on physical exams. While the pre-clinical phase of the curriculum tends to focus on establishing physical exam skills that are grounded in the absence of disease, we will certainly investigate incorporating these technologies within the continuum of the clinical curriculum to further enhance your educational experience.

Trying Out VSB Suggestions

“It's clear that this suggestion box is not used as students intend it to be used. We submit suggestions in the hope that suggestions are implemented. If you look at the answers for our suggestions, all of the answers shut down our suggestions instead of actually trying them. In what ways can students with great ideas communicate our suggestions such that our suggestions are actually tried?”

Response: We believe that the VSB is being used as both students and faculty intend. All suggestions are viewed by faculty and senior administrators and some suggestions have led to further discussion and consideration and have been implemented. Students may not be aware that your suggestions help to inform decision making on many topics. An example of this came from a suggestion that OSCE SPs be evaluated by students. The result is that a process whereby students will have the opportunity to evaluate SPs after OSCEs is being developed. Students were also provided access to the gym throughout the summer at no additional charge because this issue was brought to our attention through VSB. Some suggestions offer a welcome opportunity to give context to an issue which, hopefully, helps to increase awareness about a concern and address it, even if it does not result in a change to policy or practice. Know that your suggestions are heard and taken seriously and that we value your input. We look forward to your continued use of the Virtual Suggestion Box to learn about the issues that are important to you.

This concludes the November edition of the KSOM VSB. Questions that were received after November 10th will receive a response in the December edition. Please submit your suggestions for the next edition by December 10th. We're looking forward to hearing from you!

