



Faculty Mentor Handbook

Dear Mentors,

The role of an faculty/career Mentor is very important for our students' success here at Kansas College of Osteopathic Medicine (KANSASCOM). The office of Student Affairs recognizes the importance that a Mentor plays in ensuring the academic success of our students. The relationships that develop between you and your Mentees are paramount in the academic progress of our students. This manual will guide you on the process, tips, model of Mentoring, resources for additional support, and red flag solutions for the most common academic issues.

Sincerely,

The Office of Student Affairs

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Faculty Mentoring Mission Statement

The mission of the KANSASCOM Faculty Mentoring Program is to promote student success by empowering students to take responsibility for achieving their academic goals. Faculty Mentoring is a shared responsibility among the student, mentor, and college community. Faculty Mentoring promotes individual growth consistent with the students' academic, personal, and professional goals through direct service to the student and collaboration with faculty and other campus resources.

Faculty Mentoring Goals

- To help students explore educational, career, and life goals.
- To teach students how to monitor progress toward established educational goals.
- To encourage students to utilize college support services and community resources.
- To provide students with a professional, leadership, and academic role model.

The Role of the Faculty Mentor

We believe that serving as a faculty mentor is both an honor and a responsibility. Faculty Mentors are a valuable part of the overall academic support provided to students at KANSASCOM. The mentoring relationship you develop with students provides them with another knowledgeable and supportive individual to discuss their concerns or share their successes with. For many students, mentors are usually among the first to notice when a student is having academic or personal difficulty. As a Faculty Mentor, you are in a unique position to offer useful advice to the student throughout their journey in medical education. Active mentoring allows students to truly benefit by your mentorship!

Meeting with Mentees

OMS 1 Faculty Mentors and Mentees will meet for the first time during new student orientation. Prior to orientation, however, you will be invited to virtually connect with your new Mentees through a virtual activity in late June or early July. During one of the orientation days, you will have the opportunity to have lunch with all your new Mentees as a group to introduce yourselves and start to get to know one another. This is a good time to share information about yourself and tell students about your philosophy as a mentor. This is also a good time to inform students of things that might trigger you to reach out to them (i.e. when they fail an exam).

During this initial meeting, we suggest that you show students where your office is and provide them with your contact information so that they feel that you are easily accessible and open to meeting with them.

After this initial meeting during orientation, please plan to meet with your OMS 1 Mentees, as a group, within the next month (August). You may have a meeting anywhere you like – your home, KANSASCOM, your choice. Although your Mentees are adults, alcohol may not be a part of your meeting(s) with students in your role as a KANSASCOM Faculty Mentor. After you have met as a group, we encourage you to meet with your student's one-on-one (September-October) so that you can develop a closer relationship with each student.

Faculty Mentors should meet with their OMS 2 Mentees within the first month of school as well. Again, you may want to meet with your Mentees as a group or you may want to meet with them individually, since you have already established a relationship with them from the OMS 1 year. Once OMS 2 students are assigned to a Faculty Mentor, the mentor should try to contact their new Mentees and meet with them. This contact should continue throughout the Mentees' OMS 3 and OMS 4 year, which is more challenging since these students are no longer on campus.

Following your first meeting with your Mentees, please continue to reach out to your Mentees throughout the academic year (see calendar). Make sure to reach out to them, not only when they are struggling, but also when they are succeeding or just to say hello. Email, phone calls, or an “accidental” meeting after class, are all ways to reach out to your Mentees. These contacts can be to ask a student to meet with you or they can be just to check in. Your continued effort is much appreciated by students and assures them that you are a person they can reach out to if needed.

Contact Ideas

Ever wonder when or how to break the ice with your student? Below are several ideas on ways to contact your Mentees throughout the year.

- ***Checking In***

Some of the most positive student feedback we receive is regarding mentors who periodically send their Mentees emails just to “check in.” “Checking in” is a good way to simply remind the students that you are available if they need advice or just someone to talk to. You can contact them once a month or during times of the year to remind them that you are still there if needed.

- ***Updates on Current Events/Topics in Medicine***

If you come across an interesting story about medicine, or even just an interesting story, why not send it to your Mentees? They might find it an interesting read when they are taking a break from studying. It can also provide a good conversation starter for some of your less gregarious Mentees.

- ***Fun Jokes/Pictures***

If you see something that makes you chuckle (like an adorable picture of a dog wearing a business suit or a cat playing the piano), why not send it to your Mentees on a rainy day? Random and spontaneous things like this can create a connection with your Mentees that might break the ice, or just give them a well-needed chuckle during a tough day. Remember to keep everything family-friendly and appropriate!

• *Inspiring Quotes*

Reading a lot of Emerson or Thoreau? Send some inspiring quotes to your Mentees and provide them an encouraging word.

• *Study Advice/Stress Management Advice*

Your experience of pursuing and completing a higher degree has given you many unique, distinct, and valuable insights that could be very helpful for your students as they navigate the waters of medical school. Share these insights and experiences with your Mentees to let them know that even when things seem the darkest there is light at the end of the tunnel.

Making Contact Opportunities

When is a good time to reach out to your Mentees?

• *OMS 1*

- The first few weeks of school - The first few weeks are a major transition time for students filled with stress and anxiety. Additionally, many students have moved to attend KANSASCOM and are away from family and friends who they rely on for support.
- Before and during packed exam weeks and final exam weeks.
- A week or two before the end of each trimester.
- Holidays
- During slow weeks to coordinate a day to meet while they have more time.
- When you receive notice that they have failed an exam or if you hear other news that is of concern.

• *OMS 2*

- The first few weeks of school - Although these students have been through their first year of medical school at this point, the 2nd year is still filled with stress and anxiety. A shortened summer and a looming board exam can make the first few weeks of the OMS 2 year more stressful for students than when they first began medical school.
- Before and during packed exam weeks and final exam weeks.
- Holidays
- January - There are many stressors in January, such as finding out where they are going for rotations. At this time, students will also begin adding to their study for boards, which can be especially stressful since they are simultaneously learning new material in the curriculum while preparing for their board exams.
- During slow weeks to coordinate a day to meet while they have more time.
- When you receive notice that they have failed an exam or if you hear other news that is of concern.

- Before COMSAE Phase 1 and COMLEX Level 1 (May - August)
- **OMS 3**
 - During first few months of rotations
 - Holidays
 - Before end of rotation exams (at the end of every rotation)
 - Before end of 3rd year testing
 - Before COMLEX Level 2 (CE: May -August, PE: December - August)
- **OMS 4**
 - During first few months of rotations
 - Before and during interviews for residency (throughout the OMS 4 year)
 - As matches are announced (late winter/spring)
 - Holidays

Get-Together Ideas

- ***Pizza Party***

Perhaps one of the easiest methods to gain your student's attention is with food. You can meet at a local restaurant for pizza or sandwiches, or even host your get-together here at KANSASCOM. If holding a get-together at KANSASCOM, simply reserve a lounge or conference room and then pick up a few sandwich trays at your local grocery store. Please be mindful that your Mentees may have dietary restrictions. Ideally, you should seek input from students before placing your meal order so they can enjoy their meal with you.

- ***Care Packages***

If you do not want to do a meal, create a care package for finals weeks (or any random week) that can include things like snacks, coffee, inexpensive gifts, etc. This is an easy way to show them you care and remind them that you are available. Additionally, if you have them pick up the care package from your office it can provide an excellent opportunity to meet with them one on one.

- ***Activities Outside of KANSASCOM***

Sometimes getting out of the school is the best medicine for our students. Bowling, hiking, sporting events, or a picnic are great activities to do with your Mentees.

- ***Special Events and Holidays***

Make sure they have a place to go on holidays and events.

The Six Phases of Appreciative Mentoring

Appreciative Mentoring harnesses the power of the organizational development theory of Appreciative Inquiry and the positive psychology literature to provide a framework for increasing faculty and student success. Appreciative Mentoring is the intentional collaborative practice of asking positive, open-ended questions that help students optimize their educational experiences and achieve their dreams, goals, and potentials. It is perhaps the best example of a fully student-centered approach to student development. The great news is that it works! Student Affairspiece of Appreciative Mentoring are the 6 Phases, which are listed below. If you are not sure how to structure your meetings with your Mentees, the 6 phases model can help!



Retrieved from www.appreciativeMentoring.net

Disarm: Make a positive first impression with the student, build rapport, and create a safe, welcoming space.

Discover: Ask positive open-ended questions that help faculty learn about students' strengths, skills, and abilities.

Dream: Inquire about students' hopes and dreams for their futures.

Design: Co-create a plan for making their dreams a reality.

Deliver: The student delivers on the plan created during the Design phase and the faculty is available to encourage and support students.

Don't Settle: Faculty and students alike need to set their own internal bars of expectations

The Do's of Faculty Mentoring

Do:

- Develop rapport with your student(s).
- Appreciate the emotion behind your student's words (voice intonation and body language).
- Check your understanding of what you hear (not hear what you want to hear).
- Do not interrupt your student's sentences. Let him/her tell his/her story first.
- Fight off external distractions.
- Check to see if your student wants to comment or respond to what you have previously said.
- RELAX - try not to give the impression you want to jump right in and talk.
- Establish good eye contact, use affirmative head nods and appropriate facial expressions and maintain an "open" posture. This is a sign that the helper is open to what the student has to say. It is a non-defensive position.
- Ask clarifying or continuing questions (it demonstrates to your student that you are involved in what they are saying).
- Face your student squarely and lean toward them. It says, "I'm available to you."
- Recognize the student's non-verbal behavior (body movements, gestures, facial expressions) and para-linguistic behavior (tone of voice, inflections, spacing of words, emphasis, and pauses). This will enable you to respond to the student's total message and not just his/her words.
- Be an active listener and listen for feelings and content behind the words, not just the words. Try to recognize if the feeling of the student is anger, happiness, frustration, or irritation and see if this conflicts with the words the student uses. This will enable you to respond accurately and effectively to the student in full perspective.
- Offer reflections on what the student is feeling and saying, based on your observations ("I sense you are kind of tense about this" or "I hear you saying that you aren't completely sure this is the right career choice for you?")
- Offer self-disclosure, which can support the student's experience ("I remember how nervous I was the first time I went in to see a mentor.")
- Indirect leads allow the student to choose the direction of the discussion ("What would you like to talk about today?")
- Direct leads help the student to further explore a specific area ("Can you tell me more about your thoughts on changing your career choice?")

- Help the student focus to help them zoom in on a particular issue after many issues have been presented. ("We're talking about a lot of things here, which one is most important for you to work on now?")
- Asking questions using "what" or "how" can help the student give more than "yes," "no," "because," or "I don't know" answers ("What do you like about this career choice and what don't you like?")

Points to Ponder:

- Be available to orient the students to KANSASCOM, to the region, and the profession.
- Let them know that you are here to help if they are having difficulties.
- Help guide them to the right KANSASCOM person if they need help. You do NOT need to do it all yourself! In fact, in some situations you **NEED** to pass them on.
- Should the students need to go before the Promotion Board, you may be called upon to assist them so please stay connected with your Mentees.

Retrieved from

www.nacada.ksu.edu/portals/0/Clearinghouse/MentoringIssues/Example_Univ_Handbook.pdf

The Do Not's of Faculty Mentoring

Do Not:

- Talk the whole time. You cannot listen while you are talking.
- Forget to empathize. Try to put yourself in his/her place so that you can see what he/she is trying to get at.
- Move on with the conversation if you do not understand. Ask questions when you do not understand, when you need further clarification, and when you want to show that you are listening.
- Interrupt the other person. Give him/her time to say what he/she has to say.
- Concentrate on something else. Actively focus your attention on his/her words, ideas, and feelings related to the subject.
- Look at the computer or elsewhere in the room. His/her face, mouth, eyes, hands, will all help him/her to communicate with you. They will help you concentrate, too. Make him/her feel that you are listening.
- Go overboard with facial or verbal gestures or positive comments. Be genuine and do not overdo it.
- Get frustrated or angry. Try not to let your emotions get in the way, regardless of what the student says. Your emotions may prevent you from understanding his/her words or meaning.
- Miss the main points. Concentrate on the main ideas and not the illustrative material; examples, stories, statistics, etc. are important but are usually not the main points. Examine the illustrative material only to see if they prove, support, and define the main ideas.
- Let your opinion of the person influence your interpretation of what he/she says. His/her ideas may be good even if you do not like him/her as a person.

- Forget to “listen” to what has not been said. Sometimes you can learn just as much by determining what the other person leaves out or avoids in his/her talking as you can be listening to what he/she says.
- Antagonize the speaker. You may cause the other person to conceal his/her ideas, emotions, and attitudes by antagonizing him/her in any of a number of ways: arguing, criticizing, taking notes, not taking notes, asking questions, not asking questions, etc. Try to judge and be aware of the effect you are having on the other person. Adapt to him/her.
- Jump to assumptions. They can get you into trouble in trying to understand the other person. Don't assume that he/she uses words in the same way you do; that he/she didn't say what he/she meant; that he/she is avoiding looking you in the eyes because he/she is telling a lie; that he/she is trying to embarrass you by looking you in the eye; that he/she is distorting the truth because what he/she says doesn't agree with what you think; that he/she is lying because he/she has interpreted the facts differently from you; that he/she is unethical because he/she is trying to win you over to his/her point of view; that he/she is angry because he/she is enthusiastic in presenting his/her views. Assumptions like these may turn out to be true, but more often they just get in the way of your understanding.
- Make hasty judgements. Wait until all the facts are in before making any judgments.

Points to Ponder:

- DO NOT excuse your mentees from classes.
- DO NOT approve make-up or rescheduling of tests or coursework.
- DO NOT advise students on financial aid issues or procedures. Refer the students to the Office of Financial Aid.
- DO NOT approve conference attendance.
- DO NOT verify their enrollment. For almost anything requiring a signature/official letter, please refer them to Office of the Registrar or other appropriate office. In many cases, there are federal or other guidelines regarding official letters, so please refer them on!

Essentially, refer all administrative issues to the appropriate administrative department. You should serve as a mentor and advocate. As such, you are the person who provides resources. You do not have to address each student's need on your own! Sometimes, a good referral is the most helpful and appropriate action you can take.

Retrieved from

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Confidentiality

Faculty Mentors must maintain confidentiality and model the ethics of confidentiality. While it may be desirable for the mentor to discuss a student's problems with other faculty in the “spirit of helping,” this should only be done with the knowledge and permission of the student. If you need to talk to a member of Student Affairs about a student so that additional academic or counseling support can be provided, ask the student if it is ok for you to contact us on their behalf and share the information that the student relayed to you. **Exception:** If a danger to him/herself or others is present, of course, you should refer a student situation to Student Affairs, Administration, and/or law enforcement.

Additionally, please understand that grades and board scores will not be released to mentors without the student’s consent. Therefore, if you ask the Registrar or Academic Affairs for the grades of your mentees, they can only provide them if the student has given consent. The best course of action is to ask the student to share his/her grades with you.

Relationship to Students

A primary responsibility of faculty members is to promote an academic environment conducive to the maximum development of students. Faculty members are encouraged to be familiar with and support those policies directly affecting students. These policies are described in the *Student Handbook*. KANSASCOM expects faculty, staff, students, and administration to exhibit professional behavior. KANSASCOM believes that an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect between administration, students, and faculty is essential to providing a healthy medical school environment where students may flourish.

Faculty will serve as role models to students in the application of ethical principles in the classroom, at the patient’s bedside, and in the community. KANSASCOM’s goal is to produce highly qualified and knowledgeable osteopathic graduates who are dutiful and who exhibit integrity and compassion. To teach integrity and compassion, faculty are responsible to role model integrity and compassion. Education at KANSASCOM is conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of an individual teacher or the financial initiatives of KANSASCOM. Faculty will devote their efforts to developing and improving scholarly competence and should use self-discipline and judgment in using, extending, and transmitting knowledge to students. Faculty will be accurate and intellectually honest in their presentations to students. Faculty will exercise professionalism in all interactions with students as outlined. The environment of trust between students and faculty can be diminished when persons in positions of authority abuse their power. Faculty will not exert their authority to further a personal cause.

Faculty will not misuse their authority to bring about an amorous relationship with students. An amorous relationship between a faculty member and a student is generally regarded as misconduct and is defined as a relationship that extends beyond the expected professional relationship. The faculty member has professional responsibility (i.e., grading or mentoring) for the student. Even if consent is present, a clear conflict of interest that creates the appearance of

discrimination, favoritism in grading, or inappropriate access to educational opportunities exists. Faculty engaged in unethical conduct of this type are subject to disciplinary procedures. This may include dismissal from KANSASCOM. Such behavior may or may not constitute sexual harassment as defined in the sexual harassment policy.

Faculty should strive to be objective in their judgment of students, to look at the student as a whole person, and to be compassionate where appropriate. It is destructive and considered unprofessional for a faculty member to publicly criticize a student to fellow students, other faculty members, or administration. Faculty grievances and student grievances will remain separate. Student grievances follow the outlined process in the *Student Handbook*. Faculty grievances follow the process outlined in the *Faculty Handbook*.

Additional Support

Academic and National Boards Assistance

The office of Student Affairs Learning Specialist team number one concern is making sure KANSASCOM students are academically successful. We provide academic assistance, free of charge, to all KANSASCOM students that is tailored to meet their specific academic needs. We can assist students by helping determine their academic strengths and weaknesses and then aiding them in designing a study plan, choosing study strategies, or referring them to other resources. Student Affairs is proactive in its approach by constantly monitoring student progress and reaching out to students early in their academic careers should they need assistance. If one of your Mentees is struggling academically or just wants to improve their GPA, we can help!

We also provide academic assistance directly focused on helping students prepare for COMSAE and COMLEX exams. We can help students design a COMSAE/COMLEX study plan based on their unique needs, recommend study materials, and provide them with helpful insights. We can also provide you and your Mentees with detailed information on KANSASCOM policies related to National Board exams as well as inform them about good sources of information related to the exams. For more information on National Board assistance, see our website at:

<https://kansascom.kansashsc.org/>

Our Learning Specialist team

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External Counseling Services/Emergency Services

KansasCOM provides students with an on-campus counselor who provides free and confidential services. KANSASCOM also contracts with mental health providers in the campus community to assure that KANSASCOM students have readily accessible mental health services when preferred by the student. The fee for the first four visits, per incident, are covered by the agreement between KANSASCOM and these agencies and is free to students and their immediate families. Visits beyond this will be at the expense of the student (or the student's family member). The purpose of the sessions will be: (1) to provide crisis intervention and counseling services; (2) to determine the participant's need for assistance, counseling, and treatment; or (3) if appropriate, to refer the participant to one or more resources for assistance or treatment.

During the OMS 3 and OMS 4 years, students who are near campus may continue to utilize the community-based counseling providers or any of the KANSASCOM Counseling Specialists. In addition, KANSASCOM has also contracted with ComPsych for OMS-3 and OMS-4 students to ensure that they have readily available access to counseling services while on clinical rotations. ComPsych is a confidential, voluntary counseling and resource referral service that can assist students with issues related to school/work/home/life balance, relationships and parenting, stress/anxiety/depression, health and wellness, and legal and financial concerns. Services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This mental health contracted counseling service provides behavioral healthcare services for the benefit of KANSASCOM students and their immediate families (e.g., spouse and children) who reside with the student. Upon the request of a student and/or their immediate family, ComPsych will provide each participant with the necessary number of sessions per year. The fee for the first five visits, per incident, are covered by the agreement between KANSASCOM and ComPsych and is free to students and their

immediate families. Visits beyond this will be at the expense of the student (or the student's family member).

To utilize ComPsych visit: <https://www.guidanceresources.com/groWeb/login/login.xhtml>. Students must provide XXXXXX with the access code that has been previously provided to them. ComPsych also provides 24/7 emergency counseling services by calling 800-272-7255

If OMS 3 and OMS 4 students prefer to seek counseling services outside of these KANSASCOM provided resources, the clinical site coordinator at their core rotation site can provide the information on local counseling services. This information is provided during the rotation orientation and at other times upon request.

Counseling is confidential between the student and counselor. Only in cases where the student is required by the Promotion Board or the Professional and Ethics Standards Board to seek counseling for the purpose of student or patient safety is communication required between the counselor and administration, and only upon approval by the student.

OUR COUNSELING OFFICE IS located: Office 429

Ms. Amanda Root, MS, LCPC
Counseling Specialist
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Issues That Cause Academic Difficulty

Not surprisingly, our students share very common issues that cause academic difficulty. Below we describe a few of the most common issues and talk about ways to identify if this is an issue for your student and ideas for how to help them overcome this struggle.

Study Techniques

Most students are putting forth the appropriate amount of time and effort into their study. Rarely, do we come across a student who is lacking in those areas. However, just because a student is putting in the time, does not mean that they are learning. One common reason for a lack of learning when the student is demonstrating the time and effort is a lack of structure to their study or the use of the wrong study strategies. Sometimes students have a wonderful study schedule but the study techniques they are using are not getting them where they need to be. So, how do you know if this is the problem?

Look for these red flags (these are not all encompassing):

- The student is putting in hours and hours of study each night and on weekends, but they are failing exams.
- The student tells you that they do not have time to get everything in.
- The student is getting limited sleep because they are staying up to study.
- When the student describes their study routine, they tell you that they are studying for longer than 2 hours (often 4 – 5 hours) without taking a significant break.
- The student tells you that they have trouble paying attention when they are studying, and they frequently zone out.
- The student tells you they know the information before the test but when they take the test, they cannot recall anything or did not know it.
- When the student is describing their study, they talk about trying to memorize or remember information or getting through the information.
- The student's main method of study is reading the PowerPoint or notes multiple times or listening to the lecture on CANVAS multiple times – they will often say, “I've been through the material multiple times, I've had multiple exposures – I'm not sure why I can't remember it”.

If you hear any of these things ask the student to describe, with more detail, their study structure. Ask them to describe what their study looks like on a normal evening. Ask if they take breaks. Ask if they have a written study schedule. If you believe that the structure of their study is part of the problem here are a few things you can suggest helping the student:

Chunking - We suggest that students think of their study time as “chunks”. A study “chunk” consists of the following sequence of events: deep study, active learning self-check, personal break, and preview. These “chunks” are repeated throughout the evening/night until the student is finished with their study. “Chunking” allows students to increase their attention and focus on mastering smaller bits of information instead of trying to master everything at once. Moreover, “chunks” give structure to study and make students more aware of how they are using their time.

Deep Study – Is whatever you need to study for the night. Deep study includes everything: reading, listening, reviewing notes, the memorization stuff, and the stuff they need to understand at a higher level. We call it deep study because it should be very focused and purposeful.

The length of deep study can be modified in length throughout the evening depending on how tired a student is, their attention span, or if the content is more difficult. However, deep study should never last more than an hour and a half before completing the other 3 components of the study “chunk”

As students read or listen, they should be self-talking their way through the material. After reading a slide or section of notes, the student should ask themselves questions or do short summaries of what they just read or heard. “Why do I need to know this?”, “Why is this important?”, “How does this connect to the previous slide?”, “What does this mean for a patient?”

Even for the things that students have to memorize (a table of drugs, parts of the body) they should be self-talking their way through that material too. “Ok, I have memorized column D but why? What do those drugs do?”

Active Learning Self-Check – After each period of deep study, regardless of whether it is for an hour and a half or for 30 minutes, the student must stop and check their understanding of the material they just covered. Most students neglect this or only do it the night before the test by doing a practice test. By this time, it is too late.

Students usually study by reading or listening. These activities are very passive and do not require much thought – mainly it is about getting through the material. In addition, these activities result in very low retention rates and low levels of understanding (memorization, etc...)

Self-checks must be something beyond memorization to see if the student can do something with the information they just read. We suggest doing 1 or 2 practice questions, explaining the concept out loud, or concept maps (compare/contrast, cause & effect, etc...). All these activities require the student to go beyond memorization and start making connections.

Personal Break – This is exactly what it sounds like. It is important for attention and sanity to take breaks for snacks, tv, exercise, meals, etc... The break allows the brain to start processing and organizing the information just studied in the deep study session before cramming more information in. If your brain does not have this time the next chunk of information cannot be organized and will stay in short term memory to be quickly dumped. The length of time for personal breaks can vary depending on what the break is for.

Preview – The goal of preview is not to study to learn the information but just to see the material so that the brain has some prior knowledge in class the next day. This allows the information you hear in class the next day to start connecting to the prior knowledge from preview – these connections are when learning starts. Previews boost attention in class and help with recall of the information later.

- No longer than 15 minutes a lecture.
- Only do 1 preview for 1 lecture per “chunk”
- Simply review the PowerPoint to see what the main points are, the organization of the lecture, or to look up a word that you do not know.

Review – You may have noticed that daily reviews are not part of the study chunk. In an ideal world, we would want students to review all the lectures that had that day at the end of the same day. However, for students who are really struggling, it is simply impossible for them to make time to review 4 or more lectures from that day, deep study for typically 2 exams that are coming up and do their previews each day after class. No, it is not ideal, but something has to give until we can get them above water. If we suggest that they do reviews on top of everything else, it results in a study frenzy where they spend most of their time just trying to cover all the material but not really taking time to learn the material. Once we get their study strategies and grades stabilized, we can add reviews back into their schedule.

Multiple Exposures to the Information – Seeing the information multiple times is an important component of study but if those exposures only involve reading or listening to the material over and over, multiple exposures will only get the student so far.

- Students should attempt to get the most out of their first pass through the material as possible just in case they are not able to get in a second pass. This means incorporating active learning so that the first time through they are already working on higher order thinking.
- Multiple exposures should occur over a period of time. Going through the material 3 times, 2 days before the exam does not allow you to do much more than memorize.

Active Listening in Class – Many students waste this opportunity to learn because it is hard to pay attention in class after multiple lectures a day. Active listening in class, especially when the student has done the preview the night before, can be a valuable exposure to the information.

- Many students look like they are engaged in class and are even taking notes, but they may not really be engaged. They might be engaged in the mindless task of letting the information pass right through them and into the keyboard without thinking about a single thing that is being said.
- A good note taking method can help.

Study Partner/Group – While most of a student's study will occur alone, it is important to have a study partner or group that meets on a regular basis. Study partners/groups require the student to be active in the learning process. Study partners/groups are also the ultimate self-check because it gives the student an immediate knowledge comparison of what they know of do not know in relation to the other members of the group.

Time Management

Many students struggle with how to effectively manage their time. Students who effectively practice time management techniques are often more productive, feel less anxious, get more sleep, and are more confident in their abilities. The volume of material covered and course pace in medical school often requires even the most successful students to revisit and modify their time management techniques. So, how do you know if this is the problem?

Look for these red flags (these are not all encompassing):

- The student tells you that there are not enough hours in the day.
- The student's life is consumed by KANSASCOM. They have quit socializing, exercising, sleeping, or spending time with family.
- The student is getting limited sleep because they are staying up to study.
- The students pull an all-nighter the night before the exams.
- The study is only focusing on whatever exam is coming next.
- The student tells you that they do not have time to get everything in.

- The students do not schedule their study – they say what they need to do is all in their head.

The following strategies may be useful for your student as they adjust to requirements of medical school.

Acknowledge How They Spend Their Time - It is important to ask your student how they spend their time. Ask the student to describe a typical day (or better yet, log their activities for a day or two so you can analyze them together during your next meeting). It may be helpful to ask your Mentees some of the following questions during this discussion:

- Did you get everything done that you needed to do?
- Which tasks were the most time-consuming?
- Which tasks do you feel you need to spend more time on?
- What time during the day were you most productive?
- Do you feel that your day is balanced (do you have time devoted to exercise, family, etc.)?
- How much time each day is devoted to routine tasks?

Determine Their Priorities - Work with your mentees to distinguish what should be deemed urgent, not urgent, important, and not important. Coach your student to categorize their current tasks into these categories. It is important for students to recognize that their time spent on urgent and important tasks should far outweigh those tasks that are not urgent and/or not important.

Study Schedule - Encourage your mentees to make a daily schedule. A written study schedule is the glue that holds everything together. In this schedule, students should include all the things they have to do and some things they want to do. Talk with the student about including time for daily life activities such as exercise and seeing friends and family.

A study schedule does not have to be detailed or scheduled in time increments to be effective. We usually suggest that students print the block calendar and on the white space at the bottom of each day jot down the things they want to cover. If students are having trouble creating a study schedule they are in luck because Student Affairs creates a sample one for each block and emails it out to the entire class!

Encourage Students to Study with a Partner/Group - One way for medical students to lighten their load is to share it with their classmates! Study partners/groups can work together to create study guides, go through material, and help each other stay on track.

Stop Procrastination - Students often put off difficult and challenging tasks because they seem insurmountable. Work with your student to break the task down into smaller components and make goals that are realistic and deadline-oriented

Mental Wellbeing

Managing mental health is one of the primary challenges students face during medical school. The academic and social transition into medical school and the clinical setting, the pressure to excel academically, and the negotiation of the various roles they play in life can leave students feeling disoriented, overwhelmed, and anxious. So, how do you know if this is the problem?

Look for these red flags (these are not all encompassing):

- The student talks about feeling overwhelmed
- The student expresses a sense of failure and self-doubt
- The student feels helpless, trapped, or defeated
- Express a loss of motivation
- The student's appearance has changed over time (has gained or lost a significant amount of weight, appearance is disheveled. Etc...)
- Is drinking excessively or has started smoking
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Eating more or less than normal
- The student has isolated themselves or expresses feeling alone – They do not communicate with anyone in class, are difficult to contact (they ignore your emails), they will not ask for help
- The student tells you they feel alone
- The student seems irritated, angry, sad, or upset.

If you suspect that the student is struggling to maintain mental wellbeing, refer the student to the Counseling Specialist on the fourth floor of the building room 429. If you need to talk to a member of Student Affairs about a student so that additional academic or counseling support can be provided, ask the student if it is ok for you to contact us on their behalf and share the information that the student relayed to you.

Exception: If a danger to him/herself or others is present, of course, you should refer a student situation to Student Affairs, Administration, and/or law enforcement. Further, KANSASCOM contracts with mental health providers in the campus community for student counseling services, which includes 24-hour emergency assistance. See the External Counseling Services/Emergency Services section above for more information and contact numbers.

For minor issues please feel free to encourage your Mentees to engage in self-care activities. KANSASCOM's Via Wellness program provides students with many opportunities to engage in healthy behavior in four domains: Intellectual/Vocational, Social, Spiritual, and Physical. Any time you see the Via Wellness logo, feel free to share the event or activity with your Mentees as a way of promoting healthy living.

Encourage students to engage in the following:

Exercise - Make a commitment to spend 10, 15, or 30 minutes a day engaging in physical activity.

Take Breaks - You cannot study 24-hours a day. Take time to relax and hang out with friends and/or family. Seek out social opportunities with your loved ones. Be present (physically and mentally) during these times so that you truly get a break!

Practice Healthy Living - Eat a well-balanced diet, exercise, sleep regularly, and maintain a normal routine. Practice effective time management techniques and seek help when you need it! Maybe get a “dinner buddy” to cook with on Sundays to prepare your meals for the week. You will have fun socializing while you cook, and all your meals will be prepared for the week; all of which will allow you to eat healthy and have more time during the week to complete high priority tasks.