

APRIL 14, 2014

**SPECIAL  
POINTS OF IN-  
TEREST:**

- Student insight about where to live
- Advice for surviving medical school
- What to do in Central Florida
- How to be involved at UCF COM

**INSIDE THIS  
ISSUE:**

- Come enjoy Central Florida! 2
- Studying 101 3
- What makes UCF COM unique? 5
- How to get involved! 7
- Living arrangements 13
- Support at the COM 18
- Tips from current first year students 19

# Second Look Newsletter



## Welcome to UCF College of Medicine!

Congratulations on your acceptance to UCF College of Medicine! On behalf of the entire student body, we are excited to welcome you all back to Medical City for Second Look 2014. While we hope you enjoy this opportunity to get to know your potential classmates and professors, we also hope that this experience will allow you to take a glimpse into what life will be like as a medical student in Central Florida. Whether you want to know more about academics, FIRE,

global health, housing or summer opportunities, please probe our students and faculty to help you determine how UCF COM will be a great fit for you!

In addition to learning what UCF COM has to offer, we also hope you begin to envision yourself here. One trait that all UCF COM admitted students, current students, and faculty share is their pioneering spirit; as you tour the places you will work in and learn about some of the things you will

do during the next four years, imagine the contributions you can make and the unique perspective you can provide. One of the great things about going to a new medical school is that you will undoubtedly contribute to the culture of our school and establish traditions that will last for years to come. Thank you for taking the time to visit us and we hope you find a new home here at UCF COM!

All the best,  
*Class of 2017*



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA  
*College of Medicine*

# Come enjoy Central Florida!



**Pumpkin Palooza,  
2013**

**Looking for a fun activity at the COM? Join other students for pumpkin carving, Hygeia (a gala for COM students, faculty and staff), and the Holiday Concert!**

You're probably aware that medical school is more demanding than a full-time job. Nevertheless, taking a few weekends/afternoons off from studying is healthy and productive! When you do, you'll find a wealth of opportunities to enjoy. Just a few of the most popular attractions in Orlando are WonderWorks, Disney, the Kennedy Space Center, Sea World, Universal, Islands of Adventure and Wet 'n Wild. As a UCF student, you can get discounts to all of these attractions (and more) from Student Affairs! In close proximity to the theme parks are the Mall at Millenia, the Prime and Premium Outlets, and the Florida Mall; these malls are like theme parks to those who love retail! If the theme parks are a little too pricey or exhausting, check out Downtown Disney and Hard Rock Live for unique restaurants and concert venues. In addition to

discounts you can get on theme park tickets, many Lake Nona area businesses offer coupons or vouchers for nearby spas/restaurants that are just opening. The newly renovated Amway Arena, located in the heart of Downtown Orlando, has frequent concerts and is home to the Orlando Magic basketball team. If you want to get out of Orlando, Wekiwa, Moss Park and Rock Springs are great parks/campgrounds that offer canoeing, kayaking and hiking.

One of the more popular East Coast beaches, Cocoa Beach, is less than an hour away. Not only can you relax in the sand, but there are also numerous shops that offer surfboard, paddle board and kiteboard rentals and lessons.

The Tampa Bay area is on the West coast of Florida and is a little over an hour away. This is where you will find the St. Petersburg and Clearwater beaches, which are known for their tranquil beauty.



**Students gathered at the Orlando Science Center, Hygeia, 2014**



**Enjoying a weekend at Universal's Islands of Adventure**



**Weeki Wachee State Park**

## But seriously, you'll have to study eventually...

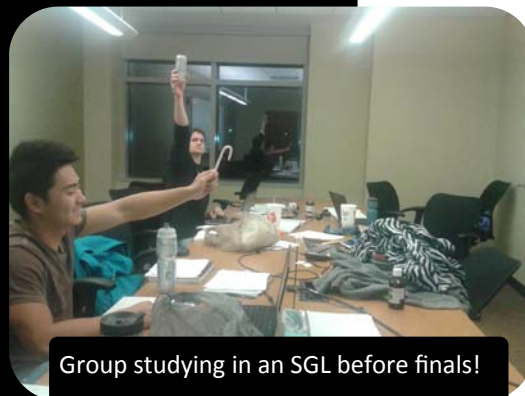
*If you do stay at the COM to study, the drinks and snacks can be purchased from the cafeteria 24/7! The Nemours cafeteria is also a nearby alternative (and they have a coffee shop).*

As the new dynasty of the UCF COM family, the class of 2018 shall partake in all the greatest pastimes of medical school. At the top of that list, our personal favorite—STUDYING. In fact, studying is almost a social event in medical school and so we've compiled a list of our favorite study spots other than the COM library. This list is organized from nearest to farthest. We have some classic study spots in Lake Nona, but there are some special ones a little farther out in Orlando when you feel the need to escape!

1. Panera Bread—just off of Narcoosee Rd, food and free coffee refills
2. Starbucks—The standard just a few miles away
3. Drunken Monkey Coffee – a coffee shop with a silly name and board game nights on Friday.
4. Dandelion Communittea Café – eclectic mix of vegan food, entertainment and of course, tea.
5. Downtown Credo—an awesome spot to study with an awesome mission. Their coffee is even pay what you wish but realize that they are really a non-profit organization!
6. Stardust Coffee House –a coffee shop that serves great food, beer, and even VHS rentals.
7. Austin's Coffee – open 24 hours and 7 days a week!

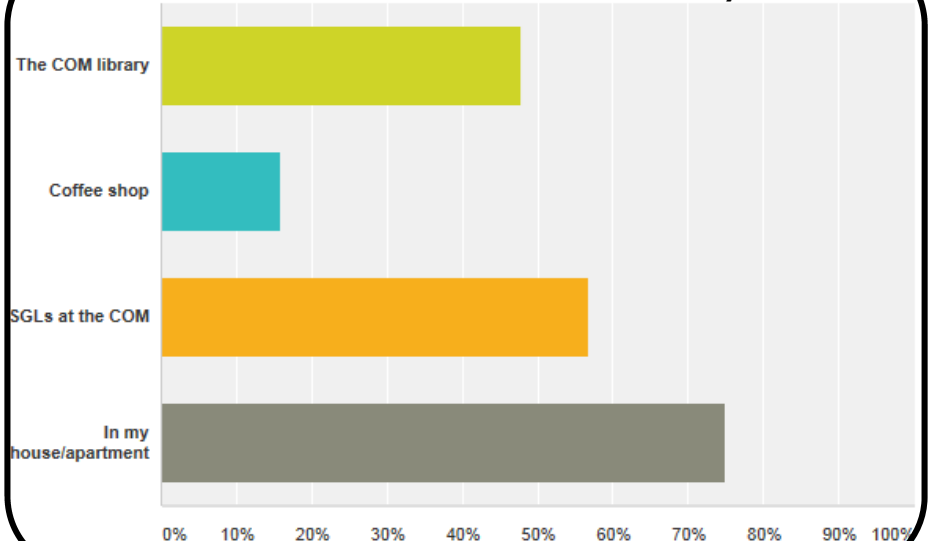


Collaborating in the library



Group studying in an SGL before finals!

### Where do COM students like to study?



## But seriously, you'll have to study eventually...

Check out the SASS website at: <http://med.ucf.edu/administrative-offices/student-affairs/student-services/student-academic-support-services/>

**A student's perspective about Student Academic Support Services (SASS):** Nervous about the lifestyle and academic adjustments you may have to make as you start and progress through medical school? No worries, the Student Academic Support Services (SASS) office is here to assist in a multitude of ways! Medical school will be a different game compared to your previous scholastic experiences. SASS will help guide you with developing new study skills, test taking strategies and provide Peer Academic Coaching (PAC). PAC consists of select upper classmen that provide review sessions and work in groups or one-on-one to help go over concepts and answer questions that you have during your progression through the core science modules. SASS is also all about holistic wellness and they do a wonderful job of advocating wellness through events such as "Paws-a-tively Stress Free" days (bringing puppies to remind us of the important things in life!) and getting instructors from the UCF main campus Recreational Center to do weekly exercise classes such as yoga, boot camp and Zumba! And when the time comes, SASS will be there to help you prepare for Step 1 and 2! At the SASS office, Mrs. Weissmann and Latisha have an open door policy and are always enthusiastic to assist us all and talk about whatever is on our minds! (*Khadijah Fergiani*)



Professors make lectures very engaging because they know a lot of students might choose to stream the lecture rather than attend class.

Need an incentive to stay on campus to study? The library provides free popcorn on Thursday afternoons! If you do want to get away (but don't want to be tempted by food) many of the apartment complexes have business centers and meeting rooms that residents can use.

Apprehensive about studying in groups? This is a randomly assigned anatomy group; throughout the 18 week course, these group members formed very strong bonds with each other. They agreed the group experience benefitted them academically and socially. SASS and your upper-classmen can give you tips about effectively studying in groups.



# Student perspectives about attending UCF COM

I was obsessed with the University of Central Florida College of Medicine before this beautiful building even existed. As a UCF alumna, I remember the first time that I heard Dean German and REL speak to a group of pre-medical students about their vision for Medical City and the medical school, and I was instantly hooked. Needless to say, with only two months left in my first year—*what?!*—my expectations of this school have been met, exceeded, and continue to be raised.

Of course, this beautiful building would be nothing without the beautiful souls that call it home. The faculty, staff, and administration are truly one-of-a-kind and will bend over backwards to help a student. Dr. Verduin, the Associate Dean for Students, once rescheduled a meeting to meet with me during surprisingly my only mental breakdown during the anatomy and

physiology module. Everyone in the front office will know you and address you by name, even if you've only been in there once during orientation week to turn in your vaccination form. The faculty members are interested in your success in the modules not so that they receive great reviews, but so that you are well-prepared for your career as a physician. And here's the craziest part: all of the aforementioned folks actually *listen* to what you have to say. To paraphrase the great poet Vanilla Ice: if you've got a problem, yo, they'll solve it.

As for my fellow classmates, I cannot think of a more accurate representation of what it means to be a family. Say goodbye to the cut-throat competition of undergrad or even of other medical schools. Upperclassmen are proud to offer assistance to lowly first-years. The current M1 class even has a group online where students post charts,

study guides, helpful videos, interesting articles, you name it. We all want to see each other succeed and we do everything we can do ensure that no one falls behind—because we know that at any point, it could be us. We're also really good at finding fun things to do in Lake Nona, which may seem like more of a challenge than it was to get accepted.

Overall, I cannot speak highly enough about this school and the people who are a part of it. Not once have I ever regretted my decision to come here, and in fact, I'm constantly finding new things to love about my new home. Medical school is difficult no matter where you choose to go, but I am relieved to be at a college where no matter how difficult it gets I will always have a family to keep me afloat.

-Angela DelPrete, MS-1

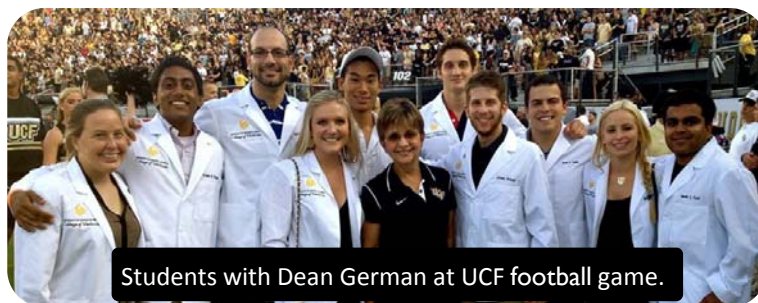
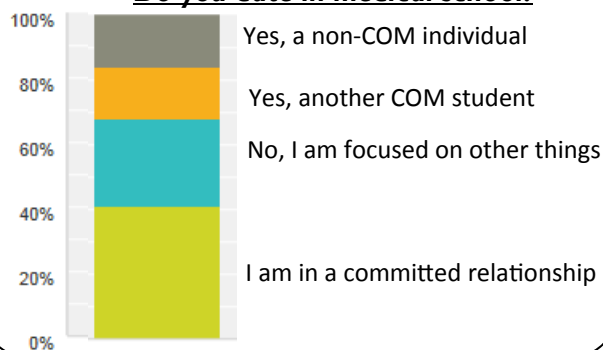
## What else are UCF COM students doing?

### Tips from a native Floridian!

Festival Bay Mall is a hidden gem with an indoor glow-in-the-dark putt-putt golf course, a movie theater that is never crowded, and some shops, like the Bass Pro Shop, that can be fun to explore. During the fall, my favorite weekend past time is going to a Knight's Football game at the Bright House Stadium. Prefer basketball? Join the Nightmare at the CFE arena on UCF's main campus. Dinner shows like Medieval Times, Pirate's Dinner Adventure, Capone's and Sleuth's Mystery Dinner are good options for date nights. For performing arts buffs, Bob Carr and Orlando Shakespeare Theater are good options, as well as performances on main campus put on by UCF students in the arts.

-Stacy Watson, MS-1

## Do you date in medical school?



Students with Dean German at UCF football game.

# Student perspectives about FIRE and grades

While I was deciding what medical school I was going to attend, there were a few factors pertinent to UCF COM that I considered.

One is **grades**. Many schools across the country have switched over to a pass/fail system for more cooperative learning and less competition. Since we are a new school, the graded system more accurately shows your performance in your classes, so it can help you if you make excellent grades. In the words of one student who eventually chose USF, “The use of a A-F grading system at UCF also discouraged me because students commented on how cut throat it could be.” This may be the case at some schools, but I think that the classmates in both year 1 and year 2 here do not feel that the graded system changes the way they approach classes, or that we are competing against each other. Whatever the grading criteria, medical school requires a lot of

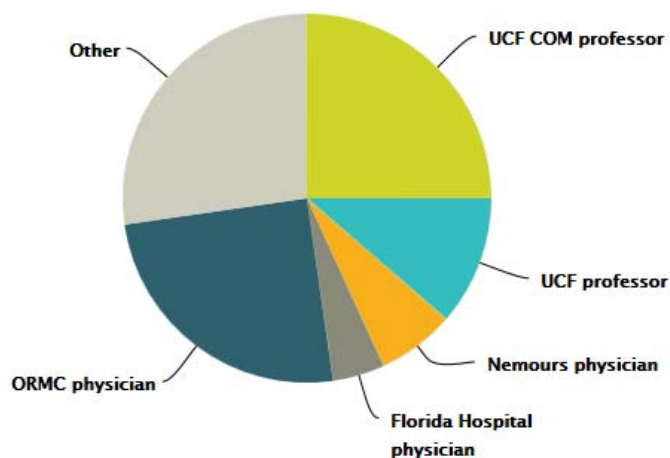
dedication, and other factors such as clinical performance, class rank, and the USMLE also play a role in residency selection. Thought of in another way, a graded curriculum just opens up an opportunity to strive for an A, which we know will make everyone proud, including you.

The second is that unique aspect of UCF COM, called **FIRE**—that individualized research project. We just finished the FIRE Research conference before spring break, and it was quite memorable. As the slogan states it so well, “UCF stands for opportunity.” That includes the College of Medicine and the students that go here. We come here to create and expand on new opportunities. We are here to be an example of medical education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and part of that is new discoveries in medicine and education. What if you were like me and weren’t a big fan of research as a premed? That is fine,

but perhaps it might grow on you. If you have a very specific project that you would like to work on, you can go find a mentor in the community and start the experience. Finding your own mentor is a great way to network with physicians in the community, and they can open doors. Innovative professionals have a spirit of inquiry. If you see this as a way to make you stronger and increase your knowledge base for the real world, there can be immense joy in the journey. When applying to residency programs, many programs say something to the effect of “research is preferred but not mandatory.” What does this tell you? It means that residency programs are interested in physicians that contribute to discovery. FIRE is what you make of it. You can do as little as you can possibly do (we hope not), or you can expand, publish a paper, and move the medical community forward.

-Ryan Burkholder, MS-I

## Who are first year students' FIRE mentors?



Jae Kim, MS-I, presenting his FIRE project at the annual research conference.

## A variety of *Organizations* to suit your needs

One of the great things about UCF COM is that there are so many student interest groups (and more form every year!). Whether you want to make a serious commitment to a group or just stop by one of their meetings because you think it sounds interesting, these groups offer students ways to explore their interests, network, and meet others who are passionate about similar things. Most of the group meetings are held during lunch and are well advertised by flyers throughout the school, on the UCF COM calendar, and on Facebook. *An additional bonus is that most groups offer lunch to those who attend! We asked the current student-organization presidents for descriptions of their groups. Here is a compilation of what many groups had to say:*

Visit the **COM Student Council** webpage for more information on each club!  
<http://med.ucf.edu/student-council>

**Internal Medicine Interest Group:** The Internal Medicine Interest Group (IMIG) at UCF is an interest group partnered with the American College of Physicians, the single largest medical specialty organization in the US. IMIG strives to serve as a resource for students to learn about the field of internal medicine, provide leadership and professional networking opportunities, and recognize outstanding students and faculty members within the IM field. Internists can subspecialize, receiving further training in areas such as adolescent medicine, allergy and immunology, cardiology, critical care, endocrinology, gastroenterology, and many more. Join IMIG and learn about the various subspecialties of internal medicine, volunteer at health fair screenings, attend specialist seminars, and presentations from residency directors. *(Tiffanie Do)*

**OGIG:** The ObGyn interest group (OGIG) provides many opportunities for students to explore this field of medicine. This past year students learned IUD placement and vacuum aspirations at a papaya clinic, discovered the impact of hypnotization on pregnancy, and participated in a "speed dating" event with ObGyn's from across Orlando where they learned about the diverse fellowships available after ObGyn residency. And this is only to name a few events!  
*(Sarah Hart)*

## Brand new opportunities!

**Interprofessional Healthcare Coalition-** This is a brand new club whose focus is to build relationships with other graduate healthcare programs in Orlando for social and professional development events. This currently includes, but is by no means limited to, UCF Medical, UF Pharmacy and UCF Nursing. *(Rahim Ismail)*

The **Dermatology Interest group** has just been approved by the school. We are excited to begin planning events and coordinating with those in the field to provide opportunities and experience for those interested in dermatology!  
*(Renee Domozych)*



The Class of 2017 **Student Council** organized a COM event called "An Afternoon with Suleika Jaouad". Suleika Jaouad, is a cancer survivor and Emmy Award-winning New York Times writer of "Life, Interrupted", a blog featured in the UCF COM Practice of Medicine Curriculum.

## A variety of *Organizations* to suit your needs

**Careers in Oncology Group (COG)** is a student interest club aimed at educating and introducing students to the field of oncology and its various sub-specialties of hematology-oncology, surgical-oncology, radiation-oncology, and pathology. One of our goals is to raise awareness about cancer and its prevention/treatment; fund-raise money for our organization and community; foster strong relationships with patients and community oncologists; and help create a network of peer-support for patients suffering from cancer. A few of the events the club has participated in the past include the American Cancer Society Relay for Life, “Be the Match” –Bone Marrow Registry and the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. (*Gurjaspreet Bhattal*)



Residual Volume practicing their vocals in the ‘acoustic’ bathroom.

**Residual Volume:** UCF's a cappella group, Residual Volume, is a fun, cathartic, and social break from studying and is a great opportunity to stay involved in music while in medical school. Our repertoire includes a diverse mix of pop, classical, and festive music and we welcome all experience levels to the group! Through a cappella I have had the opportunity to bond with my classmates outside of class and to perform both at school and community events such as the COM's holiday show, Lake Nona Relay for Life, and the most rewarding, to sing a Disney medley for the pediatric patients at Florida Hospital. (*Margaret Capobianco*)

Have an interest in the brain and mind, join the COM branch of the **National Psychiatry-Student Interest Group in Neurology.** (*Tal Buntinx*)

**Preventative Medicine and Aging Group (PMAG):** is a student interest group aimed to involve medical students in the elderly community and to disseminate necessary information regarding medical approaches involved in caring specifically for the geriatric population. This is done through organizing the Gerianatomy Project, and participating in events with the Osceola Council on Aging and the Alzheimer's Association. This student group is also focused on preventative medicine. This past year, we participated in the Orlando VA Stand Down and we will be expanding opportunities in this field for the following year. We'll also be incorporating complementary and alternative events too. We look forward to meeting and working with you! (*Tiffanie Do*)

**BoM (Business of Medicine)** provides students a unique opportunity to learn about a side of medicine that is not routinely discussed in the standard curriculum. This group presents topics such as health care reform, working in an academic hospital versus community hospital versus private practice, how to invest for the future and manage debt, and the financial requirements and process of starting a private practice. We are always open to new members and student input for topics that should be presented! (*Jaelyn Reinemann*)



Many club meetings are “lunch and learn” style

Members of the **Wilderness Medical Society** enjoy instructional meetings about advancing healthcare in wilderness settings that have little access to medical care and participate in outdoor excursions—such as hiking and kayaking. (*Tony Hawkins*)



## A variety of *Organizations* to suit your needs

Participate in the ethics bowl with the **Bio-medical Ethics in Medical Education** club to increase awareness about the role of ethics in medicine and to improve the quality of medical care for patients. (Tal Buntinx)



Clubs often recruit clinicians to speak and expose students to certain medical techniques. During this meeting, students learned how to apply casts by practicing on each other. Other 'clinical' style club meetings that students organized were a phlebotomy training and IUD insertion sessions.

**Family Medicine Interest Group** – Are you hesitant to come to UCF COM because you dream of going into primary care and think we are a research-oriented school? Well there is definitely interest in Primary care specialties, as you will see. While we mean business, FMIG is an informal group where you can hear about the history of family medicine and its future and be exposed to a wide range of practice options. Yes, we will be doing clinical skills workshops (i.e. suture clinic, etc) and community outreach events when you arrive. Our advisor is a FM residency director at FL Hospital, and the FM residents are willing to be of any help as well. Prepare for exciting things! (Ryan Burkholder)

**Narrative Medicine** is a club that explores the story of medicine through students', physicians' and patients' eyes. Through different activities like patient speakers, documentary viewings, and poetry workshops, we are able to gain perspective despite coursework and academic stressors and reconnect with why we started medical school. (Kathryne Kostamo)

**Military Interest group:** This group represents those who have an interest in the United States military. It is especially helpful to students in the Health Professions Scholarship Program, though everyone is welcome to participate and benefit from events. Recent events include a panel presentation on living with PTSD, and a discussion on life as a military physician with Army Lt. Col. Dr. Husted. (Eli Kinberg)



During the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) conference, students from the **Healthcare Innovations Interest Group** took dozens of HIMSS participants through a new "Intelligent Home" in Medical City. This innovative home encourages a healthy lifestyle through diet, exercise and wellness monitoring.

**SIAM (Students Interested in Academic Medicine):** Are you interested in teaching and/or doing research in your future illustrious career as a physician? Does the phrase "Journal Club" make your mouth water? Have you ever wondered how a physician gets to be the dean of a medical school? If your answer to any of these is yes (and even if it's no), we're the group for you! SIAM seeks to acquaint medical students with a career in training future doctors while treating patients, and to enrich their med school experience with various lectures/journal clubs/review sessions throughout. (Michael Chambers)

**Arts in Medicine (AIM)** is an organization at the UCF College of Medicine focusing on the intersection between art and medicine. Through AIM, our goal is to empower students, faculty, and the medical community through the power of self-expression. AIM is composed of the following branches: Dance, A Cappella, Music Performance, Writing, and the Visual Arts. Each branch is dedicated to the power of expression, whether it be through the annual literary magazine we publish, our a cappella group, or the annual Holiday Student Concert. If you have a passion for art or self-expression, we encourage you to take part in our mission to promote a vibrant community here at the UCF COM. (Aryan Sarapast)

# MedPACT Global Health at UCF COM

"We're so excited to welcome you to our global health family!"  
MedPACT Executive board  
globalhealthUCF@gmail.com  
<http://med.ucf.edu/global-health>

**MedPACT (Medical Students Providing Across Continents)** is UCF COM's global health and service organization – we are committed to providing robust, engaging programming and diverse service opportunities to create a culture of global responsibility, and to serve those in need within and across our borders.

There are plenty of ways for students to get involved throughout the year – here's a snapshot of MedPACT's events from this past year!

## Annual Global Health Conference

This year, our conference focused on **refugee health** and featured a keynote speech from Dr. Rick Hodes, interactive workshops from sexual health to building a refugee camp from scratch, thought-provoking clinical simulations on PTSD and ethnomedicine, a mobile hospital to teach students about triage, and a refugee panel. Past conference themes include Disaster Medicine (2013) and Sustainability (2011).



## Service: From Global to Local



**International Medical Outreach:** our annual, week-long summer experience serves six rural communities in the northeastern Dominican Republic, working alongside local medical students from Universidad Católica Nordestana, as well as faculty and nursing students.

**Local Service Projects:** make a difference in the local community throughout the year via the Renaissance Senior Center, medicine drives, Clean the World events, and community health screenings.

**5k Run for Global Health:** raise money for our DR service trip and engage with the community to promote healthy living!

## Educational Events

**Film Screenings:** in collaboration with the American Medical Women's Association (AMWA)

**Weekly Spanish Lunch Hour:** learn medical Spanish with your peers during our weekly classes!

**Speakers:** lecture by world-renowned humanitarian Samantha Nutt, Founder and Executive Director of War Child Canada.

# The KNIGHTS Clinic

*We hope to  
move to a  
weekly clinic  
and increase  
our impact in  
the Orlando  
community.  
Look for our  
table at the  
orientation  
fair to discuss  
how you can  
get involved!*

For members of the founding UCF class, the KNIGHTS Clinic was just a dream. Students began conducting a needs assessment of the Orlando area to determine how a student-run free clinic could serve Orange County best. Five years later, the KNIGHTS Clinic, which stands for **Keeping Neighbors In Good Health Through Service**, has been serving the uninsured and underinsured populations of Orange County for over a year now.

The KNIGHTS Clinic primarily serves the working poor population of Orange County—those that are working and earning just too much to qualify for Medicaid but still too little to afford health insurance. We work with Grace Medical Home, a community free clinic, to serve this population twice a month on Thursday evenings. Different than most other student-run free clinics around the country, the KNIGHTS Clinic aims to provide continuous care to our patients. This means that we don't take walk-ins but rather schedule appointments. This benefits patients because they are able to address both acute and chronic conditions at the KNIGHTS Clinic and are able to schedule follow up visits to make sure their concerns are completely addressed. We also offer lab, pharmacy, and education services and are even able to make referrals to specialists in the community. Additionally, we are also very excited to begin bringing specialty nights to the clinic. On special Thursday nights, we are providing services by specialists—like cardiologists and ophthalmologists—to our patients who may be in need of them.

KNIGHTS Clinic is a great chance for UCF medical students to not only get involved in the community but also to gain valuable clinical experience. When applying to KNIGHTS Clinic as a new M1 you are able to select any of the various committees that we have including laboratory, pharmacy, community referrals, and patient education, among others. These committees allow you to help out in the clinic, interact with our patients, and provide valuable services to them. Then, after you learn the basics of the physical exam and interviewing patients, you will have the opportunity to serve as a patient interviewing pair along with an M3 or M4. In this role you are usually assigned one or two patients a night of which you will interview, perform a physical exam, present to one of our volunteer physicians, decide on the course of care, write up the visit note using our electronic medical record system, and follow up with the patient about any labs done. It is an experience that you are unlikely to have before your clinical rotations, so it's a truly valuable experience.



Contact us at  
[knightsclinic@gmail.com](mailto:knightsclinic@gmail.com)

## Intramural sports

Do you remember seeing the ‘Intramural Champions’ shirt that was hanging in the Student Lounge when you were on your interview tour? Did you think “there’s no way the med school team won that... they don’t have time to play sports”? In case you are wondering about the IM sports scene at UCF COM, rest assured, you will have both the time and opportunity to get involved. Even though the COM is not located on the UCF main campus, we still get all of the perks of being asso-

ciated with a big school. UCF offers over 100 different intramural activities. Whether you’re interested in traditional team sports (flag football, basketball, soccer etc.) or individual activities (tennis, golf, ping-pong etc.), UCF has IM teams of different competitive levels (comp A, comp B, and rec) for anyone to enjoy. CoEd divisions are also available for certain sports.

Even though all IM games are held on the UCF main campus, this is a great opportunity to get out of



Lake Nona for a night. Enjoy a different restaurant after the game, carpool with friends or catch up with a friend on the 25 minute car ride. UCF COM students have played basketball, flag football, soccer and volleyball; we hope the future class will represent the COM just as well!



## Group exercise

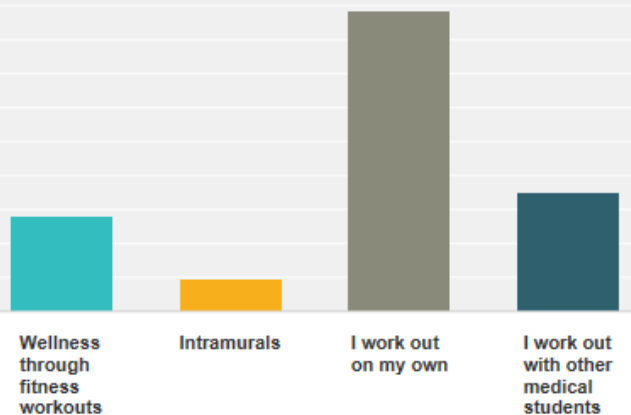
Want to try a new type of workout or workout with faculty, peers and an instructor? Fortunately UCF main campus rec center sends instructors to the COM to teach boot camp, Zumba and yoga classes! If you aren’t a fan of fitness classes, the Lake Nona YMCA is a quick drive away and often gives the COM free trial passes!

## Wellness through fitness

Get together with other medical students for a cross-fit style workout. You can also get involved with community 5Ks and the Healthy Knights Expo!



How do current MI students stay fit?



**Join the MI COMpadres or the MI/M2 Hemoglobin Trotters for some IM basketball!**

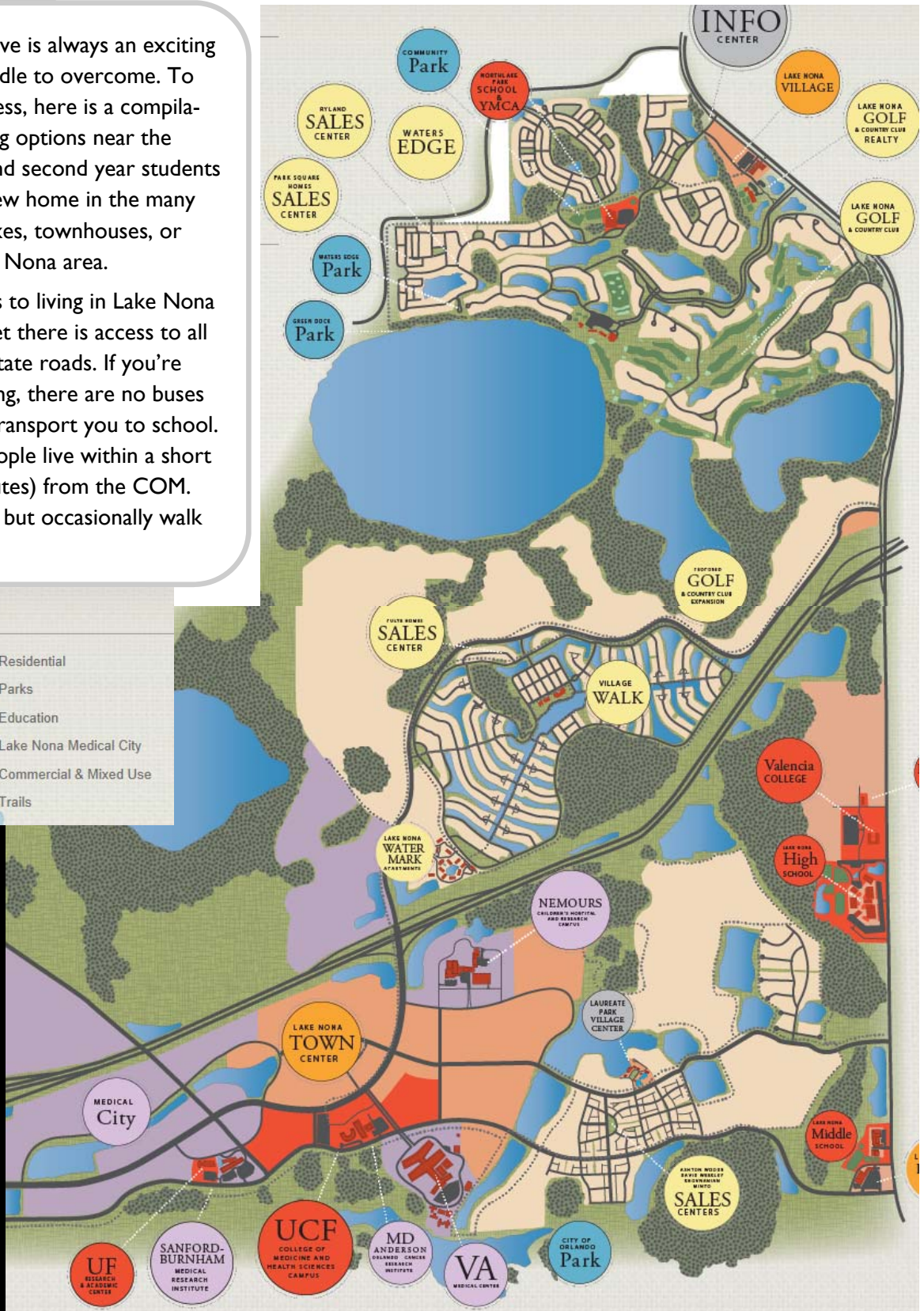
# Congratulations on your acceptance! Your next challenge is finding a place to live!

Finding a place to live is always an exciting and challenging hurdle to overcome. To help with the process, here is a compilation of various living options near the COM. Most first and second year students have found their new home in the many apartment complexes, townhouses, or condos in the Lake Nona area.

One of the benefits to living in Lake Nona is that it is quiet, yet there is access to all of the major interstate roads. If you're used to big city living, there are no buses or trains that will transport you to school. However, most people live within a short drive (5 to 20 minutes) from the COM. Students need cars but occasionally walk or bike to campus.

### Legend

- Residential
- Parks
- Education
- Lake Nona Medical City
- Commercial & Mixed Use
- Trails



**For more information on this map and the Lake Nona community, please visit [www.learnlakenona.com](http://www.learnlakenona.com)**

# Perspectives from current M1 students

We asked 35 first year students to fill out a quick survey which asked them where they live, what they like, and what they dislike about their living arrangement. Here's what they said:

## Lake Nona WaterMark

[www.lakenonawatermark.com](http://www.lakenonawatermark.com)



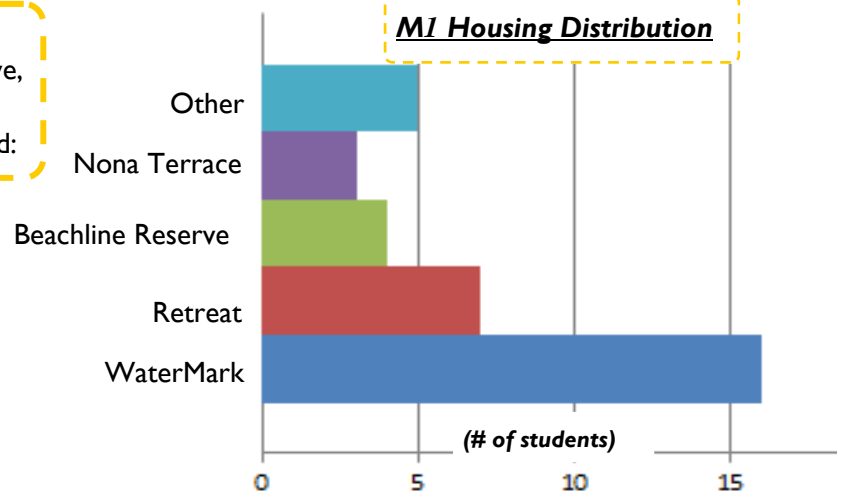
This is a newly-built, luxury apartment complex located 3 minutes away from the Medical City. Along with the Retreat at Lake Nona, this is where most medical school students live. This complex also has a new dog park, is family friendly, and has a very friendly leasing office (they have free snacks!).

## Retreat at Lake Nona

[www.retreatatlakenona.com](http://www.retreatatlakenona.com)



Many UCF COM students live in this very affordable apartment complex. Located behind the Publix on Narcoossee Road, you are in close proximity to a gas station and a plaza that has a gym, a Thai restaurant, a Japanese restaurant and a Subway (just to name a few of the amenities).



### WaterMark

#### Pros:

- “It is a great complex with a gym and nice pool area, as well as a lounge with a TV”.
- Students also enjoy the gas grills out by the pool and the convenience to campus.

#### Cons:

- “It is a little pricey for my taste; some things such as the monthly trash fee as well as the cable/internet company are non-negotiable.”
- Some students noted that management can be difficult to work with, likely because this is such a new complex and they are still gaining experience.
- Many students noted that the “walls are thin”. Stay tuned for more information about touring apartments so you can find out if this would deter you from living there.

### Retreat at Lake Nona

#### Pros:

- Despite the slightly longer commute to the COM, many students enjoy living at the Retreat because they feel they have better access to the grocery store, restaurants and other shopping plazas.

#### Cons:

- Some students complained that the Retreat is forcing renters to purchase cable which would add \$40/month to bills.

# Perspectives from current M1 students

## Nona Terrace



Nona Terrace is a quiet and quaint townhome community nestled between nature preserves and ponds.

Amenities include a community clubhouse, swimming pool, cabana, courts for tennis and basketball, and a fitness trail in the heart of the community. It is located off Moss Park Road and interstate 417 is easily accessible.

### *Other communities: Savannah Pines*

**Pro:** "I love that for the same price as an apartment, I have a townhouse with a garage"

**Con:** "I like that this is a gated community but the gate can be faulty".

### *Other communities: Camden LaVina, Lake Nona*

**Pro:** Located adjacent to a plaza that is home to Tijuana Flats (a popular lunch spot), Nona Tap (the local bar), and Café 407. It is also close to the CVS and the Lake Nona YMCA.

### *Nona Terrace*

#### **Pros:**

- "Nona Terrace is spacious and there is room for my dog to run around outside".

- One student describes Nona Terrace as a "quiet but active community that is well kept and safe".

#### **Cons:**

- "Although Nona Terrace is more private and more quiet than an apartment complex, the rent and utilities are slightly more than at an apartment".

## The Reserve at Beachline



These are also very nice apartments but are pricier than the Retreat. The complex is located right by the Beachline/528 highway that goes East-West and will take you to either the beach from Orlando or to I-4, another East-West interstate. These apartments are only 10 minutes away from the Orlando International Airport and this is a gated community. COM students love the free coffee served here!

## Apartments in Lee Vista

Although Lee Vista is about 20 minutes from the COM, complexes in this area are close to Semoran Blvd, which has the largest assortment of restaurants and the closest Starbucks! The apartment complexes and condos in this area are often cheaper than those in the Lake Nona Area.

- The Arbors at Lee Vista— residents have access to a racquetball court
- Crowntree Lakes— has an outdoor bbq/grill area and a clubhouse with a game room.

### *From a student renting a room in a house*

**Pro:** Renting a room in a house "is very cost effective and peaceful, with a lot more living space than an apartment. All utilities are paid for."

# Does anyone commute?

YES! There are a handful of students who live with their families/significant others in Orlando, Titusville, Sanford, Winter Park, and Melbourne. Some of these students commute up to 45 minutes to get to campus. Although things like going home for a quick nap

during lunch are more difficult for these students, the financial benefit of living with family is tremendous. You can also make use of your commute by listening to lectures you have downloaded or by catching up with friends/family members on the phone.

Some students also consider investing in a house/condo in Orlando (suggestions include the Thornton Park and Baldwin Park areas).



Definitely consider purchasing a SunPass, interstate 417 is a toll road!

Looking to rent a house with several bedrooms and have roommates? Look on Craigslist for homes in the Lake Nona, Kissimmee, and Lee Vista areas.

If your budget allows, consider investing in a condo or home. Lake Nona is a growing area and housing establishments are constantly being built. Several students and their families have purchased homes as an opportunity for investment.

## Housing Opportunity from a Current M4!

### Lake Nona Townhouse for Rent:

- 2 Bed/2.5 Bath, 1300 + sq ft.
- Located in Savannah Pines gated community with pool, gym, and clubhouse
- Within 10 minutes from UCF COM
- Furnished living room and dining area (includes 3 pc sofa set, coffee tables, 55" LCD TV w/ stand, bookshelves, 4-chair dining set)
- 1 car garage, walk-in closets, upstairs loft, backyard
- All appliances included (W/D, fridge, oven, dishwasher etc.)
- Rent \$1200/mo OBO, available for move-in June/July.
- Contact Asha at [ashab@knights.ucf.edu](mailto:ashab@knights.ucf.edu)

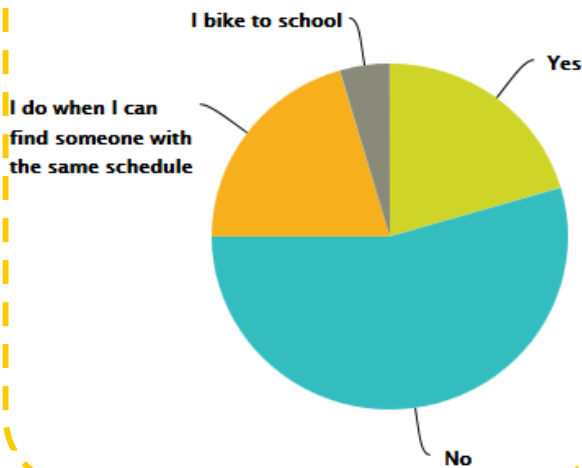
Check out the UCF COM Class of 2018 Facebook group for more rental options!



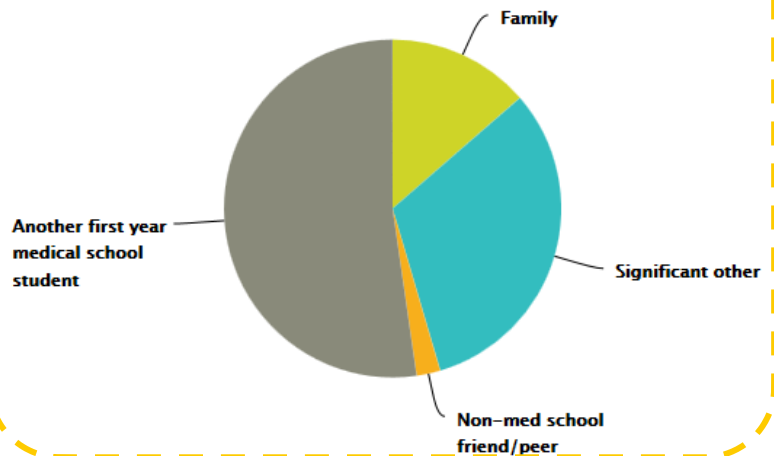


# Perspectives from current M1 students

## Does the class of 2017 carpool?



## "Looking back, who would you choose to live with during your first year at UCF COM?"



Finding the right place to live is crucial; we all believe it is refreshing to be able to go to a place we can call "home" after a long day of class. We're all happy to answer any housing questions you may have so please ask! Also, remember to check out the class of 2018 facebook page for additional listings.

## Feel like you're moving out of your comfort zone?

The fear of being alone tends to keep us in the comfort zone where your family and friends are within reach. I stepped way out of this zone when I decided to move from California, the only place I had ever lived, to the opposite side of the country. Was I scared? Of course. Nervous? Definitely. Am I happy I did it? Yes. I'm not going to lie and say it's always easy, but I have honestly found so much support in my new friends and COM faculty, that I've started to forget how far away I am from "home."

-Monica Mattes, MS-1

Coming from New York the thing I most looked forward to in Florida was the weather. While the sunshine is great, the thing I did not expect and value most about attending UCF is how inclusive and friendly everyone here is. The people in Orlando are some of the nicest individuals I have ever met and I truly feel like I'm part of a family at the College of Medicine. There are also tons of fun things to do from trips downtown, to Disney, and to the beach!

-Priya Katari, MS-1



Many of these apartment complexes have dog parks and are pet friendly. Make sure to ask about pet deposits! Also tell the rental offices you are a medical school student because they often offer discounts!

**Reminder: The WaterMark management will be hosting an open house on Sunday, April 13th, from 1-3 pm. There will be food. Please R.S.V.P to watermarkmgr@spm.net with # that will attend.**

## Find the support you need at UCF COM

**Katie Peacock on how UCF can “make the juggling act happen”:** So you’re married? Maybe even have a kid or two? Feeling stressed that family and med school just don’t mesh? Well look no further than UCF COM! Ok, but really. Trying to maintain balance between family and medical school was (is) my biggest fear. But if you’re looking for a school to support you in that balancing act, well, then seriously, UCF is the place. Don’t get me wrong, trying to juggle a family and school reminds me of that concept in physiology, you know, dynamic homeostasis? Except I’d probably described it more like chaotic homeostasis. You have to sacrifice, you have to be realistic with your expectations, you have to be ok with doing your best, and you have to learn, sometimes the hard way, that a lack of discipline affects you worse than other classmates. ‘Cause you know, you have a spouse to talk to, and diapers to change, and you can’t devote an entire weekend to catch up without ever seeing your family. But I’ll tell you what, UCF can help you make the juggling act happen. As a new mother who started school with a 6 month-old daughter, I received support from not only my classmates who treated Vivian as their own family, but from faculty who shared stories with me about their own children, their own struggles, and their own paths of holding onto both their professional and personal goals and dreams. Half the battle is knowing someone has gone before. So while I’m convinced UCF is the best school for me and my family, wherever you end up, just remember that if I can do it, you can, too.

*We all have unique backgrounds that cause us to take different approaches to succeeding in medical school. Here are some student perspectives about how to handle these differences and the support UCF COM provides to help each student thrive.*

**Margaret Capobianco on student support services and having a significant other:** Transitioning to medical school can be emotionally and academically difficult, but at UCF, the faculty and support services are so visible and accessible that you always feel like you have some place to go. In addition to the SASS office, there are free professional counseling services and our Deans of Students have open lunch hours every week for students. My best source of support has been having my girlfriend in medical school with me. We were anxious at first to be open about our relationship, but everyone at UCF COM, from our classmates to our professors have been supportive. Being with someone who is going through the same emotional and academic stress as me has been an invaluable source of support in medical school.



Friends and family are always welcome at the COM!



One huge support network!

**Tony Hawkins perspective on balancing family commitments and school:** While most med students have some kind of time commitments to their family, those of us who are married have a unique challenge in maintaining those relationships. Coming into medical school, it is important for spouses and children to know that you will be spending a lot of your time over the next four years dedicated to learning your new profession; however, it is just as important for you to remember the commitment you have to your family. You cannot put your family relationships “on the back burner” while in school, so it is crucial for you to develop a balance between family and school. Doing so now will only aid you in the future when you are in residency and, eventually, a practicing physician with work commitments. Here are some tips that I find helpful:

**Come up with a study schedule.** Figure out how much time you need for studying each day, and stick to the schedule as much as possible. You may actually need much less time than you would think, especially when you’re motivated to study harder (and more efficiently) in order to spend time with your spouse or children.

**Plan family time.** Regardless of the rigors of medical school (real or imagined), you will have free time. Make use of this time by planning family time into your schedule.

**Learn to be flexible.** It is inevitable that family events will occur requiring your time and attention. The reality of is that you will not be able to study for 14 hours a day, so do not feel guilty if you miss some time on your study schedule to take care of family matters. For me, my family comes first, so I must be aware of when I need to be flexible while keeping on top of studying.

# 18 for '18

**We asked  
the Class  
of 2017  
“What do  
you wish  
you had  
known  
last  
summer?”  
Here’s  
what  
they came  
up with:**

1. Take advantage of orientation week to meet your fellow classmates. These will be the people who are battling in the trenches with you for the next four years, so embrace them!
2. Don't buy books before classes start. The library has copies of everything and you'll have access to most of them on your iPad. Once each module starts, you'll figure out which books you will need based on your learning style.
3. Pay attention to the emails you get from the Homestay Committee, student affairs, and admissions before orientation starts (i.e. order your Doctor's bag, make a plan for getting your immunizations etc.). *If you miss the ordering deadline for the Doctor's bag, don't fret! You won't need it immediately so don't pay extra money for overnight shipping. Also, the UCF-themed stethoscope (black and gold) is pretty sweet!*
4. Other than getting the required vaccinations and doctor appointments done, don't do anything school-related this summer. It won't give you an edge, but coming to school with a fresh mind will.
5. Get used to taking notes digitally. It's really hard to keep up and be efficient with pen and paper.
6. Even if your first midterm is after 4 weeks, 4 hours of class/day \* 5 days of class/week \* 4 weeks is A LOT of material and you will not be able to 'cram' the night before the test.
7. Be open to new methods of studying—try out different groups and use a variety of techniques. You'll be much better off once you learn that making flashcards works great for certain subjects while quizzing group members works better for others.
8. Start thinking about using an external hard drive or cloud service with auto-sync capabilities. You're going to have a lot of notes/learning resources saved on your computers and you don't want to lose them!
9. Listen to your body—if you're falling asleep on your book, take a break, exercise, or go to bed! Try IM sports, yoga or a morning run to wake your mind up!
10. Residencies care a lot more about the Step I score than first and second year grades so use your first module midterm as a learning tool rather than the 'end-all, be-all' of your career.
11. Google UCF COM GPS. Dr. Verduin is going to show you this website during orientation but check it out now! To encourage you to check it out, we're not even going to tell you what 'GPS' is an acronym for!
12. Start thinking about potential FIRE project ideas. Don't go crazy, but keep a look out and bounce off ideas in your mind. Giving yourself more time to think will increase the chance of you doing something that you're passionate about rather than scrambling for a project while studying for exams etc.
13. When buying your UCF parking permit, make sure that you purchase the Health Sciences at Lake Nona permit. It has an "M" on the decal that is needed for parking at the COM, but it will also work on main campus.
14. Try to put all of your bills as automatic drafts before school starts. Dealing with real life in med school? Ain't nobody got time for that! *The financial aid office has great resources if you're new at handling debt/loans, student affairs also knows where you can use your UCF id to get discounts!*
15. Drive slowly on Lake Nona Blvd. There are cops all the time, and you don't want to risk getting a \$100+ ticket. Also, a rolling stop is not a real stop.
16. Take advantage of the big sib/little sib program by asking the second year students all of your questions about how to study, what books to buy, which restaurants are the best, etc. Their dedication for your success makes UCF COM an incredible place to study medicine.
17. Try to make a good plan to stay in touch with non-med school friends. Sending a weekly email or meeting up for lunch can be great stress relievers.

**18. Enjoy your freedom!!! Relax during whatever time-off you have this summer, we hope you're all getting psyched for orientation this August!**