



Geisinger
Commonwealth
School of Medicine

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

2019- 2020

Updated 8/11/19

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Welcome from the President and Dean

Dear Geisinger Commonwealth student,

One of the most gratifying things I get to do as president and dean is to welcome the new students. You have chosen a challenging and rewarding career path. And you have chosen to begin this path at our remarkable school with its strong and vibrant mission.

Whether you are beginning your first year of medical school or pursuing graduate education course work toward medical school candidacy or other healthcare professions, you can rest assured knowing there is a community invested in your success. Not only are our dedicated faculty members and staff committed to your success, we are also fortunate to have the support of Geisinger, an innovative and forward-thinking clinical system, and of community leaders, regional physicians and hospital affiliate partners who are engaged in the success of the medical school and the students.

And you are joining this college at an exciting moment in its history. Three years ago we integrated with Geisinger Health and became Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine. This exciting linkage of two institutions, both known for innovation and for a commitment to the patient and to the community, expands the opportunities for our students and for development of new programs. During your time here you will witness our growth as an institution, made possible by our integration.

Our engagement with the community is very real. Right from the start, you will be assigned to work on a Longitudinal Community Health Intervention Project (L-CHIP). I encourage you to get involved in your regional communities and find opportunities to serve and give back. Geisinger Commonwealth was founded on a legacy of service to the community and commitment to exceptional educational experiences based on respect, teamwork and collaboration.

Our educational philosophy expects the student to be actively engaged. Lifelong learning is a cornerstone to our values and we encourage our faculty and students to seek opportunities for continuous improvement. We look forward to your feedback and new ideas on advancing the educational process and your learning.

Take advantage of the Geisinger Commonwealth orientation experience. It is an opportunity to bond as a class and develop lasting team-building skills and friendships.

On behalf of everyone at Geisinger Commonwealth, we look forward to working with each of you. Please know that my door is always open to you.

Sincerely,

Steven J. Scheinman, MD

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine Mission

The Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine educates aspiring physicians and scientists to serve society using a community-based, patient-centered, interprofessional and evidence-based model of education that is committed to inclusion, promotes discovery and utilizes innovative techniques.

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine Vision

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine will educate the healthcare workforce of the future, leveraging our unique strengths to be regionally engaged and nationally relevant.

Academic Advising

In accordance with Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine (GCSOM) mission, advising services for graduate students at GCSOM are based on a model that is developmental and proactive in nature. This model aims to help learners maximize their potential by providing differential assistance and support to students throughout their education as they build upon their science knowledge and develop their professional identities.

Academic Records

Student academic records are confidential and are maintained in the School Registrar's office. Records will be available to students for review in accordance with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (FERPA). FERPA allows disclosure of student information without consent to School officials with legitimate educational interests, i.e., if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. A student may request that official copies of his/her academic transcripts to be sent to designated individuals or organizations by providing a signed transcript request form and the established fee to the Registrar's office. Unofficial transcripts are available at any time upon request. If a student or former student has any outstanding obligations to GCSOM, financial or otherwise, release of the official records will be withheld until the obligations are satisfied.

The student may request in writing an amendment to the education record that he or she believes is inaccurate or misleading. The request should be directed to the Vice Dean for the School of Graduate Education. The Vice Dean for the School for Graduate Education, or a designee, will consult the School official or faculty member responsible for the record. The Vice Dean for the School of Graduate Education will notify the student of the decision. The student may appeal the decision in writing to the Dean. The Dean will make the final determination and notify the student of the decision.

Accreditation

Accreditation is a process of peer review that the educational community has adopted for its self-regulation since early in the 20th century. It is a voluntary process intended to strengthen and sustain the quality and integrity of higher education, making it worthy of public confidence. Institutions choose to apply for accredited status, and once accredited, they agree to abide by the standards of their accrediting organization and to regulate themselves by taking responsibility for their own improvement.

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine is accredited by the **Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)** to award master's and doctor's degrees. MSCHE is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. Inquiries can be referred to Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 3624 Market St., 2nd Fl. West, Philadelphia, PA 19104-2680 or by phone to 215-662-5501.

[Additional information is available online.](#)

Administrative Leadership

President's Cabinet

Steven J. Scheinman, MD, President and Dean

Ida L. Castro, JD, Vice President for Community Engagement and Chief Diversity Officer

William B. Jeffries, PhD, Vice Dean for Medical Education and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Venard Scott Koerwer, EdD, Vice Dean for Graduate Education and Vice President for Strategy, Planning & Communication

Anna M. Arvay, CPA, MBA, Vice President for Finance & Administration and Chief Financial Officer

Rebecca S. Slangan, MBA, Administrative Director

Michelle Thompson, MD, Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education and Designated Institutional Officer

Nicole Woll, PhD, Associate Dean for Faculty & Continuing Professional Development

Harry X. Wollman, MD, Interim Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs

Leadership Council

Steven J. Scheinman, MD, President and Dean

Tanja Adonizio, MD, Associate Dean for Student Affairs

John A. Arnott, PhD, Interim Chair, Department of Medical Education

Anna M. Arvay, CPA, MBA, Vice President for Finance & Administration and Chief Financial Officer

Kevin Baumes, Manager, Financial Planning and Support

Jennifer Boardman, PhD, Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs for Graduate Education; Associate Professor of Microbiology & Immunology

James F. Caggiano, MD, Chair of Faculty Council

Diana Callender, MBBS, DM, Associate Dean for UME Simulation and Simulation-based Assessment

Ida L. Castro, JD, Vice President for Community Engagement and Chief Diversity Officer

Heather M. Davis, MFA, Director of Marketing & Communications

Sam Diaz, MBA, Senior Director of Operations for Academic Affairs
Andrea DiMattia, MEd, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
Michael Ferraro, MD, Regional Associate Dean, South Campus
Anthony R. Gillott, MD, Interim Vice Chair, Department of Medical Education
John Gorczyk, Director of Facilities & Public Safety
Leighton Y. Huey, MD, Associate Dean for Behavioral Health Integration & Community Care Transformation
William B. Jeffries, PhD, Vice Dean for Medical Education and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Rita King, Director of Accounting & Business Operations
Venard Scott Koerwer, EdD, Vice Dean for Graduate Education and Vice President for Strategy, Planning & Communication
John Kulp, PhD, Regional Assistant Dean, Doylestown Campus
Teresa Lacey, RN, Executive Director, Behavioral Health Initiative
Sonia Lobo, PhD, Associate Dean for Research & Scholarship
Joseph Martin, Director, Relationship Management
Andrea Mulrine, CFRE, Senior Director of Advancement Operations
Antonio Pellegrino, Chair of Staff Council
Kevin A. Pernet, MBA, Director of the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness
John Robbins, Director, IT
Lawrence Sampson, MD, Regional Associate Dean, Guthrie Campus
Michelle Schmude, EdD, Associate Dean for Admissions, Enrollment Management & Financial Aid
Shubhra Shetty, MD, Regional Associate Dean, North Campus
Rebecca S. Slangan, MBA, Administrative Director
Rebecca S. Stoudt, DNP, PhD, CRNA, Associate Dean for Nursing Student Education
Erin Sutzko, EdD, Associate Dean for Graduate Education and Director of Graduate Admissions
Michelle Thompson, MD, Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education and Designated Institutional Officer
Janet M. Townsend, MD, Regional Associate Dean, Central Campus
Nicole Woll, PhD, Associate Dean for Faculty & Continuing Professional Development
Harry X. Wollman, MD, Interim Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs
Elizabeth Zygmunt, Director of Media & Public Relations

Admissions Office

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine (Geisinger Commonwealth) Office of Admissions is responsible for recruitment, admission and enrollment of students who exemplify our mission to address the healthcare needs in our regionally preferred areas in Pennsylvania and New Jersey and share our core values of academic excellence, experiential diversity and service for the medical and graduate school programs. Students admitted to Geisinger Commonwealth create a legacy of physicians and healthcare professionals who are dedicated to improving the quality and delivery of healthcare for all. The Office of Admissions works with prospective students year-round.

MBS Admissions Requirements

1. A bachelor's degree from a U.S. or Canadian accredited undergraduate college or university (must be completed before enrollment in MBS program)
2. The following coursework*:
 - General biology with laboratory (one year/two semesters)
 - General chemistry with laboratory (one year/two semesters)
 - Organic chemistry with laboratory (one year/two semesters)
 - English and English composition (one semester)
 - General physics with laboratory (one year/two semesters) - Optional, not required for MBS program
3. United States citizen or permanent residence

MBS Application Process

1. Submit your completed application through Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine's [application portal](#).
2. Request official transcripts for all undergraduate and graduate coursework completed. Transcripts can be mailed to Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine, 525 Pine St., Scranton, PA 18509, or emailed to admissions@som.geisinger.edu.
3. Standardized test scores are optional, but can be uploaded with your application material. You can upload MCAT, DAT or GRE scores.
4. Submit one committee letter or three letters of recommendation. Letters can be uploaded from your letter writer or sent directly from the letter writer to admissions@som.geisinger.edu.

Professional Science Master's Admissions Requirements

Applicants to the Professional Science Master's (PSM) program must:

- Have a bachelor's degree (BS or BA) in a life-science field (biology, chemistry, neuroscience, molecular biology or related field)
- Complete an online application
- Two letters of recommendation
- Qualified applicants will be invited for an interview.

An optional submission of GRE or MCAT score may be made.

Professional Science Master's Application Process

1. Submit your completed application through [Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine's application portal](#).
2. Request official transcripts for all undergraduate and graduate coursework completed. Transcripts can be mailed to Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine, 525 Pine St., Scranton, PA 18509, or emailed to gradadmissions@som.geisinger.edu.
3. Standardized test scores are optional but can be uploaded with your application material.
4. Submit two letters of recommendation. Letters can be mailed to Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine, 525 Pine St., Scranton, PA 18509 or emailed to gradadmissions@som.geisinger.edu.

Admissions Ambassadors

The Office of Admissions welcomes assistance from our graduate students to serve as “Admissions Ambassadors” to prospective students. Students may volunteer to assist in any or all of the following activities:

- Attending recruitment events
- Meeting with visiting students
- Organizing career events
- Serving as a campus tour guide
- Serving as an overnight host to visiting applicants
- Serving on student panels
- Sponsoring/hosting activities for visiting students

Interested students can contact Alysha Nicholls, Assistant Director of Graduate Admissions, for more information. Anicholls@som.geisinger.edu

Referrals

The [Admissions Staff](#) is happy to assist any interested student. Please forward all inquiries to admissions@som.geisinger.edu.

Board of Directors

Robert Dietz, PE, *Chair*
Virginia McGregor, *Vice Chair*
Pedro J. Greer, Jr., MD
V. Chris Holcombe, PE
David H. Ledbetter, PhD

David B. Nash, MD, MBA
Deborah E. Powell, MD
Jaewon Ryu, MD, JD
Steven J. Scheinman, MD

Board Officers

President and Dean: Steven J. Scheinman, MD
Geisinger Health System Executive Vice President, Chief Academic Officer
Treasurer: Kevin V. Roberts, MBA, CPA
Geisinger Health System Executive Vice President, Chief Financial Officer
Secretary: Atty. David J. Felicio, Esq.
Geisinger Health System Executive Vice President, Chief Legal Officer
Assistant Secretary: Lori R. Gramley, Esq.
Geisinger Health System Associate Chief Legal Officer

Bursar's Office

Hours

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine Bursar's office is located in the east wing of the Medical Sciences Building on the third floor. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The office will be closed on college holidays. Individual appointments may be made by calling the office at 570-504-9075 or by email at Bursar@som.geisinger.edu. The Bursar's Office is the sole source of official information concerning tuition/fee rates and policies. All inquiries regarding tuition/fee charges and account payment responsibilities should be addressed to this office.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Billing and Collection

Students receive electronic bills (Estimated Tuition Worksheet) approximately 30 days before the start of class. **Full payment of all charges, less applicable financial aid, is due by the first day of class.** Estimated Tuition Worksheets are available to students through the Empower student portal.

- Geisinger Commonwealth does not accept credit card payments.
- Payments can be made via cash or check either in person at the Bursar's Office or by mailing checks to the Bursar at 525 Pine Street, Scranton, PA 18509.
- Bank wires and electronic checks are also accepted.

Please contact Bursar@som.geisinger.edu for further information.

Geisinger Commonwealth reserves the right to cancel the registration of a student with an unmet financial obligation that results for any reason. Furthermore, Geisinger Commonwealth reserves the right to withhold a diploma, transcript, letters of recommendation or other official documents for a student with an outstanding financial obligation to the school.

Student Refunds – Credit Balances

If a credit balance occurs on a student's account after billed tuition and fees are fully paid, the resulting credit balance will be refunded to the student so the funds may be used for other cost of attendance expenses. Refunds of credit balances are made within 14 days after a credit balance occurs. Students will be responsible for the immediate payment of any charges that are added to his or her student account after a refund occurs. Refunds related to withdrawal, dismissal or leaves of absence are addressed under the Geisinger Commonwealth Tuition Refund Policy. Please note that financial aid will not be posted to student accounts until the first day of class. Direct deposits are available to students to allow for faster receipt of funds. Please contact Bursar@som.geisinger.edu for a direct deposit form and further information.

Payment and Refund Policies

This cancellation policy applies to students who choose to withdraw, take a leave of absence, or are dismissed for any reason. In order for a student to be eligible for any cancellation or refund, the student must submit his or her notice of withdrawal, in writing or orally, to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs for MD students or the Assistant Dean for Graduate Academic Affairs for graduate students. Written requests are preferred. However, if a student makes a verbal request, the request will be converted to writing by the person making the request or a GCSOM staff member and then reviewed and signed by the person making the request. The date of the receipt of this notice determines the official date of withdrawal. Exceptions to this policy will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, VP for Finance & Administration/CFO and Associate Dean for Admissions, Enrollment Management and Financial Aid.

Refunds will be made according to the following for all **Graduate School students**:

For full Fall and Spring Terms:

- Before the first day of classes to and including the 5th calendar day of the term 100%
- Through and including the 12th calendar day of the term 75%
- Through and including the 19th calendar day of the term 50%
- Through and including the 26th calendar day of the term 25%
- Beyond the 26th calendar day of the term **0%**

Condensed Sessions (8 weeks):

- Before the first day of classes to and including the first 5 days of the term 100%
- Through and including the 10th calendar day of the term 50%
- Beyond the 10th day of the term **0%**

**Cancellation percentage refers to the percentage of a semester's tuition charges that will be cancelled upon withdrawal.*

Ordinarily, fees are non-refundable, except for the Technology Fee, the Student Health Insurance Fee, and the Disability Insurance Fee, under certain conditions. The Student Health Insurance Fee may be prorated as described in the Student Health Insurance Policy. The Disability Insurance Fee is refundable for withdrawals that occur before the first day of classes. Any changes to this refund policy will be reflected on the Bursar's page of the student portal.

If a student going on a LOA wishes to maintain their technology package, they will be charged half of the current technology fee per term of leave. The student is financially responsible for any outstanding funds to the institution and these must be paid at the time of the start of the leave.

For purposes of this policy, one week equals five class days. The first day of classes for the fall and spring terms is the date published in the school's Student Bulletin. The death of a student shall cancel charges for tuition as of the date of death and the tuition will be adjusted on a pro rata basis.

The Higher Education Amendments of 1998 require that when a recipient of Title IV grant or loan assistance withdraws from an institution during a payment period or period of enrollment in which the recipient began attendance, the institution must determine the amount of Title IV grant or loan assistance that the student earned as of the student's withdrawal date. A refund according to the school policy may be due to the student, but for students who are recipients of federal Title IV funds, the money may, based upon date of withdrawal, be returned to the aid program from which the funds were disbursed. Students are encouraged to contact the Geisinger Commonwealth Financial Aid Office for additional information or if they have questions regarding this policy. Refunds will be processed and sent to the student within five business days after notification to Geisinger Commonwealth of withdrawal.

All refund policies return of Title IV funds policy and the procedures students must follow to officially withdraw from the college can be found on the Geisinger Commonwealth website and portal.

Federal regulations concerning privacy & confidentiality

Due to very strict federal regulations concerning privacy and confidentiality, the Bursar's Office will not be able to discuss or release information regarding a student's account without the student's written approval. This includes phone calls related to the payment of bills. Students who desire to have the Bursar's Office discuss their bills with appropriate people (such as parents, who wish to make payments, spouses, etc.), should visit the office and complete a Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) permission form, giving the Bursar's Office these permissions. This form will also be available through the Geisinger Commonwealth portal for current students.

Career Services

The director of Career Engagement will assist with:

- career and professional school planning
- career advisement
- recruitment and employer engagement

Additional career development is provided through faculty advisement, as well as participation in professional development classes and workshops. Students will be assisted in developing their curriculum vitae, personal statements, and professional school applications. The activities will enhance the students' communication and leadership skills, increase their cultural competency and connect them with clinical and service opportunities. The webpage for career engagement is available at <https://portal.tcmc.edu/graduateprograms/career-engagement/>.

Clubs & Organizations

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine recognizes the contributions of student clubs and organizations that enhance the quality of student life and the college community. Clubs and organizations offer students the opportunity to participate in academic, cultural, social and athletic activities that are consistent with the development of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes expected from healthcare professionals. Numerous standing clubs currently exist; however, the Office of Student Affairs is always interested in meeting student needs and works collaboratively with the Medical Student Council, the governing board, to welcome suggestions for starting new clubs.

Activities and functions of student clubs and organizations are considered college activities and therefore must:

- Be registered with the Medical Student Council and approved by the Office of Student Affairs.
- Function in an organized manner consistent with the values, identity and mission of Geisinger Commonwealth.
- Comply with policies and procedures of the college.
- Be open to all students currently enrolled at Geisinger Commonwealth.
- Complete at least one service project per academic year.
- Have at least 10 enrolled students as members

Listing

Clubs and organizations are an integral part of student life as they reach the diverse interests of both medical students and graduate students.

[View listing of clubs & organizations](#) at Geisinger Commonwealth.

Starting a club

- [Policy for recognition of student organizations](#)

Curriculum Overview

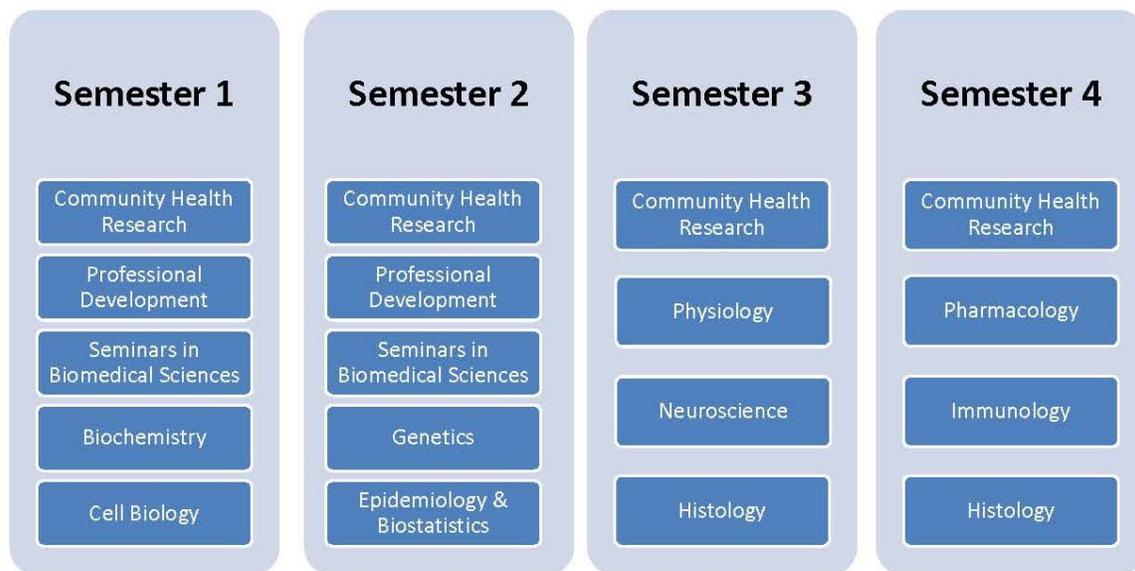
Master's of Biomedical Science Program

The MBS program intends to prepare its students for admission to medical school or for a career in the health-related professions. The MBS program offers students the opportunity to research a health-related problem in the community. In addition, MBS students receive individualized professional development sessions to assist with study and learning issues, resume development, and acquisition of interviewing skills. GCSOM has partnered with The Princeton Review to offer students in the MBS program an opportunity to complete a preparatory class for taking the Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT), Dental Admissions Test (DAT) or Graduate Record Exam (GRE). Graduates of the program are evaluated as thoroughly as possible for their cognitive and non-cognitive abilities, their academic and professional knowledge and skills, their integrity, and their suitability for a career in the biomedical sciences.

MBS Curriculum – Scranton Campus and Online



MBS Curriculum – Doylestown Campus



MBS-Scranton and Online Course Descriptions

Core subjects

Biochemistry (4)

This course has been designed to emphasize the key principles related to metabolic biochemistry laying the foundation for potential further study of human biochemistry or other related fields.

Cell Biology (4)

This course will emphasize the basics of cell structure and function; modern investigative techniques

used in the cell biology laboratory and have exposure to the practical application of cell biology concepts under normal physiological conditions and disease states.

Human Genetics (4)

This course introduces students to classical and molecular genetics. The emphasis of this course will center on inherited human disorders and the emerging model of the human genome. Major topics include: Mendelian genetics, cytogenetics, multifactorial inheritance, developmental genetics, epigenetics, RNA biology, cancer genetics and genomics.

Physiology (4)

This course will introduce students to the physiological aspects of the human body by using a systems based approach. The course emphasizes broad concepts that form the basic understanding of human physiology and the physiology of each organ system.

Professional Identity Formation for Healthcare Careers (3)

This course is designed to assist students in developing their professional skills and to engage them in postgraduate career planning. The course will focus on professional identity formation, career planning, interpersonal skill development, and reflection and self-directed lifelong learning.

Professional School Application Enhancement (3)

The Princeton Review course for preparing to take the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT), the Dental Admissions Test (DAT) or the Graduate Records Examination (GRE) is a proven means of improving your score.

Electives

Bioethics (1)

The course reviews the basic principles of ethics and discusses cases arising in the clinical environment.

Epidemiology and Biostatistics (3)

This course provides a broad introduction to the principles and methods of epidemiology and the basics of biostatistics, with particular emphasis on the role of these core disciplines in public health practice and research. In this course, students learn about the basic epidemiological and biostatistical concepts and tools applied in public health practice and population-based research. Students gain the knowledge required to appropriately interpret epidemiological and statistical data, to determine appropriate study design and methods for epidemiological and clinical studies, and to critically review the clinical and public health research literature. The influence of socio-demographic characteristics and lifestyle factors on disease risk and mortality are also discussed.

Histology (3)

This course is designed to introduce students to the microscopic study of tissues and tissue organization of organs in relation to their function using both light and electron microscopy. This course will provide foundational knowledge of structural histology and integrate fundamental anatomy, cell biology and physiology concepts in relation to tissue and organ function. The course

will emphasize high yield material essential for further medical/healthcare related training and certification.

Immunology (3)

This course is intended to provide a fundamental knowledge of the role of the immune response in human health and disease. The tissues, cells, and molecules that comprise the immune system will be examined and the principles of the immune response in the context of microbial infection and immunopathogenesis will be studied. Both immunologic and microbial features that influence host-microbe interactions and outcomes of infection will be highlighted. Students will also apply basic immunological principles to develop an understanding of various diseases such as autoimmunity and cancer and the immunotherapeutic approaches used to treat such diseases.

Integrated Group Learning (IGL) (1)

This is a student-run small group course. Sessions are clinically oriented with the intention to expose pre-medical students to clinical concepts in a safe learning space with medical student facilitators. The curriculum employs a flipped-classroom model so that the students are equipped to walk through clinical scenarios with their medical student counterparts.

Laboratory Techniques (2)

This course is designed to introduce current laboratory techniques to students who are interested in pursuing medical and research career. It covers experimental techniques of molecular biology, protein biochemistry, cell biology, biophysics, and animal research. This course will allow for the practical application of students' biomedical knowledge.

Management (1)

Organizational behavior is the understanding and management of human behavior individually and of groups, teams and organizations. This course will serve as an introduction to basic concepts of business, organizations and decision-making, leadership, professionalism, social and shareholder responsibility, and team performance in the context of traditional theories and models of organizational behavior.

Neuroscience (3)

This course will introduce fundamental neurobiological principles to students so that they will have a basic understanding of how the human nervous system operates in health and how the brain functions can alter under pathological conditions. The course will emphasize basic cellular aspects of neuroscience, architectural design of the nervous system, the CNS sensory system, CNS disorders, and motor systems.

Pharmacology (3)

This course will introduce students to medical pharmacology. The emphasis will be on the big picture of drugs in general, and to prepare students for future success in modern medicine, research, industry, or matriculation to health science programs. The course also will introduce sources of drug information, concepts in drug development, and pharmacogenomics.

Readings in Basic Sciences (2 or 4)

This course provides for a period of independent study in an area of the students' choice, allowing

the students to gain depth in an area of their field of interest and within the expertise of the Basic Science Department. The student will write a scientific review on the topic, provide a lay summary in the style of a blog post, and produce a short lay audience power point presentation with an audio.

Seminars in Biomedical Sciences (1 or 2)

This course develops students' ability to critically read, evaluate and analyze primary research literature in basic and clinical sciences. The course allows for teamwork, peer-to-peer teaching, and acquisition of skills for scientific research presentations.

MBS-Scranton and Online Course Descriptions

Biochemistry (3)

This course has been designed to emphasize the key principles related to metabolic biochemistry laying the foundation for potential further study of human biochemistry or other related fields.

Cell Biology (3)

This course will emphasize the basics of cell structure and function; modern investigative techniques used in the cell biology laboratory and have exposure to the practical application of cell biology concepts under normal physiological conditions and disease states.

Human Genetics (3)

This course introduces students to classical and molecular genetics. The emphasis of this course will center on inherited human disorders and the emerging model of the human genome. Major topics include: Mendelian genetics, cytogenetics, multifactorial inheritance, developmental genetics, epigenetics, RNA biology, cancer genetics and genomics.

Physiology (3)

This course will introduce students to the physiological aspects of the human body by using a systems-based approach. The course emphasizes broad concepts that form the basic understanding of human physiology and the physiology of each organ system.

Professional Identity Formation for Healthcare Careers (2)

This course is designed to assist students in developing their professional skills and to engage them in postgraduate career planning. The course will focus on professional identity formation, career planning, interpersonal skill development, and reflection and self-directed lifelong learning.

Epidemiology and Biostatistics (3)

This course provides a broad introduction to the principles and methods of epidemiology and the basics of biostatistics, with particular emphasis on the role of these core disciplines in public health practice and research. In this course, students learn about the basic epidemiological and biostatistical concepts and tools applied in public health practice and population-based research. Students gain the knowledge required to appropriately interpret epidemiological and statistical data, to determine appropriate study design and methods for epidemiological and clinical studies, and to critically review the clinical and public health research literature. The influence of socio-demographic characteristics and lifestyle factors on disease risk and mortality are also discussed.

Histology Foundations (2)

This course is designed to introduce students to basic histology. After a brief introduction to cellular structure at the light and electron microscopic level, the course will survey the four basic tissues: epithelium, connective tissue, muscle and nerve.

Histology Organ Systems (2)

This course involves class instruction, team learning and assessment that are designed to introduce students to the histology of organ systems. Using information learned in Histology Foundations, the students learn to recognize many different organs based on their morphology, and learn some basic concepts regarding disease clinical correlates of these organs.

Immunology (3)

This course is intended to provide a fundamental knowledge of the role of the immune response in human health and disease. The tissues, cells, and molecules that comprise the immune system will be examined and the principles of the immune response in the context of microbial infection and immunopathogenesis will be studied. Both immunologic and microbial features that influence host-microbe interactions and outcomes of infection will be highlighted. Students will also apply basic immunological principles to develop an understanding of various diseases such as autoimmunity and cancer and the immunotherapeutic approaches used to treat such diseases.

Neuroscience II (3)

This course will introduce fundamental neurobiological principles to students so that they will have a basic understanding of how the human nervous system operates in health and how the brain functions can alter under pathological conditions. The course will emphasize basic cellular aspects of neuroscience, architectural design of the nervous system, the CNS sensory system, CNS disorders, and motor systems.

Pharmacology (3)

This course will introduce students to medical pharmacology. The emphasis will be on the big picture of drugs in general, and to prepare students for future success in modern medicine, research, industry, or matriculation to health science programs. The course also will introduce sources of drug information, concepts in drug development, and pharmacogenomics.

Seminars in Biomedical Sciences (2)

This course develops students' ability to critically read, evaluate and analyze primary research literature in basic and clinical sciences. The course allows for teamwork, peer-to-peer teaching, and acquisition of skills for scientific research presentations.

Community Health Research (4)

This course consists of a one-credit course for each of the four terms. The class meets once a month for three hours. The course emphasizes literature review, research proposal writing, survey design, research ethics, data management and analysis, community engaged research, qualitative research, field investigation, and presentation skills. It is designed to give the students an opportunity to research a single topic in depth through secondary analysis of data and to relate that topic to healthcare and its effect on the community.

Grading System

The graduate program for the Master's in Biomedical Sciences assigns grades as indicated in the accompanying table.

A	93-100	4.0
A-	90-92	3.7
B+	87-89	3.3
B	83-86	3.0
B-	80-82	2.7
C+	77-79	2.3
C	73-76	2.0
D+	67-69	1.3
D	63-66	1.0
D-	60-62	0.7
F	0-59	0.0
I	Incomplete	
W	Withdrawn	

Academic Standing

Students must maintain an overall grade point average (GPA) of 2.25 or better to be considered in good academic standing in the Master's of Biomedical Sciences program. Progression from the first to the second semester and graduation with an MBS degree are granted only to students in good academic standing.

Incomplete Grades (I and W)

The assignment of the grade Incomplete (I) is at the discretion of the instructor. If an incomplete grade is not changed to a permanent grade by the instructor within one year of the end of the semester in which the course is offered, the incomplete grade (I) lapses to a grade of fail (F).

A grade of W represents official withdrawal from the course. A student may withdraw from a course up to 24 hours prior to the scheduled final examination. Any tuition refund will be in accordance with the refund schedule for that semester.

Graduation Requirements

Students must meet the following criteria to obtain an MBS Degree:

- Satisfactory completion of the 36 credit hours of required coursework with an average GPA of 2.25 or above.
- Attainment of a level of judgment and skills which warrants the faculty's confidence in the student's ability to perform in an independent manner compliant with the Graduate Policy on Academic and Professional Performance.

- The recommendation of the Committee on Graduate Academic and Professional Performance.
- The discharge of all financial obligations to the School.

The Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine will award academic degrees upon successful completion of the curriculum. Degrees can be conferred in absentia upon prior approval obtained from the Office of the Dean.

As part of The Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine Strategic Plan, the School will evaluate the Graduate Program once every three-year cycle.

Professional Science Master's Program

The curriculum for Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine's Professional Science Master's (PSM) program is focused on biomedical sciences relevant to human health with additional professional offerings including business, bioethics, epidemiology and biostatistics.

Students will be engaged in course work for the majority of time in the first semester while also participating in laboratory rotations within partner biotech and biopharmaceutical companies located on campus within the Baruch S. Blumberg Institute and Pennsylvania Biotechnology Center of Bucks County. The Biotech Center houses more than 57 biotechnology companies and nonprofit research entities and serves as the headquarters for the Baruch S. Blumberg Institute and Hepatitis B Foundation.

In the second semester, students will finish course work and begin their research internship/externships. The final two semesters are completely devoted to practical, professional, real-world experience as a researcher within a biotech company. The students will devote all of their time to working on a thesis research project, developing technical skills, working with professional teams, learning and enhancing communication skills and garnering working experience that will serve their future career aspirations.

First semester

Cell Biology - 3 credits
 Seminars in Biomedical Sciences - 1 credit
 Management - 1 credit (Session B/SCR)
 Lab Rotations - 3 credits
 Term total = 8 credits

Second semester

Human Genetics - 3 credits
 Epidemiology/Biostatistics - 3 credits
 Bioethics - 1 credit (Session A/SCR)
 Journal Club - 1 credit
 Thesis Research I - 4 credits
 Term total = 12 credits

Third semester

Thesis Research II - 8 credits

Term total = 8 credits

Fourth semester

Thesis Research III - 8 credits

Term total = 8 credits

Fifth semester

Thesis Writing/Defense - 6 credits

Term total = 6 credits

PSM Course Descriptions

Cell Biology (3)

Cell biology is an ever-growing field that represents the convergence of three scientifically distinct fields: biochemistry, genetics/molecular biology and physiology. Modern cell biology is the study of what components make up the cell, how they got there and what they do, which includes the study of how cells interact with each other. In this course, you will learn the basics of cell structure and function, modern investigative techniques used in the cell biology laboratory and have exposure to the practical application of cell biology concepts. This is a required, three-credit course for students enrolled in the Master of Biomedical Sciences program

Management (1)

This course provides students with an introduction to the dynamic world of business and leadership. The goal is to peruse the concepts of business ethics, communication, decision making, diversity, leadership, professionalism, social responsibility and team performance, all through the lens of the traditional theories and models of organizational behavior.

Seminars in Biomedical Science (1)

The purpose of this course is to develop student ability to critically evaluate and to utilize the primary scientific literature in their professional studies. It will give students the opportunity and experience of working in groups and educating their peers. In each class meeting, a research paper from the primary scientific literature will be presented by a group of students in an approximately 50-minute period (40 to 45-minute presentation, 5-10 minutes for questions). The students, who may confer with the course director during the preparation, will prepare a PowerPoint presentation. Each presentation represents an opportunity to educate your classmates on important research in biomedical science relevant to your course work in the program and to assist them in developing the skills necessary to understand and evaluate the scientific literature. The students in the course are expected to take an active part in the discussion during and following each presentation.

Laboratory Rotations (3)

This course is designed to provide students the opportunity to conduct laboratory experiments under the direct supervision of a faculty member at a biotechnology company. The primary objective of this course is to assist students in choosing a mentor, thesis topic, externship/internship location and

completing thesis research. Students in this course are required to take three 3-week rotations in a minimum of two independent laboratories/biotech companies. Mentor expectations and grading criteria should be communicated between the mentor and student at the start of the rotation and approved by the course director. Students will be required to submit a written report that includes a description of the research, experiments attempted, interpretations, accomplishments, etc., along with a Student Evaluation Report form completed by the faculty mentor. Additionally, the student is expected to present a summary of this work during the scheduled presentation sessions after all rotations are complete.

Bioethics (1)

Bioethics is a one-credit course for students enrolled in the Master in Biomedical Sciences (MBS) program or PSM Program. This course meets two hours per week in the summer semester for eight weeks. The course will serve as an introduction to bioethics. Topics to be explored include scientific integrity (e.g. research with animals, research with humans including vulnerable populations, conflicts of interest, publication) and medical ethics (e.g. key issues facing geneticists, pediatricians, psychiatrists and geriatricians including genomics, precision medicine, autonomy and end-of-life transitions). Methodology used in the analysis and evaluation of contemporary bioethical issues will be emphasized. The course will be taught through a combination of didactic presentations, podcasts, active learning in the form of team-based learning and topic presentations by student groups.

Epidemiology and Biostatistics (3)

This course provides a broad introduction to the principles and methods of epidemiology and the basics of biostatistics, with particular emphasis on the role of these core disciplines in public health practice and research. In this course, students learn about the basic epidemiological and biostatistical concepts and tools applied in public health practice and population-based research. Students gain the knowledge required to appropriately interpret epidemiological and statistical data, to determine appropriate study design and methods for epidemiological and clinical studies, and to critically review the clinical and public health research literature. The influence of sociodemographic characteristics and lifestyle factors on disease risk and mortality are also discussed. Finally, students will gain an introductory understanding of how epidemiologic methods are applied using R, a powerful statistical programming tool that is popular among many professional researchers.

Human Genetics (3)

Human Genetics is a three-credit course that meets for 15 weeks of instruction that is designed to educate students in classical and molecular genetics, particularly as it applies to the understanding of inherited human disorders. Major topics covered in this course will include: Mendelian genetics, cytogenetics, multifactorial inheritance, developmental genetics, and cancer genetics. Sections discussing molecular biology, cytoplasmic inheritance, RNA regulation of the genome, and epigenetics are also included in the course. This course will incorporate case-based learning modules to aid in discussion of the above material

Journal Club (1)

This course is designed to develop scientific communication skills with a focus on reading and interpreting scientific manuscripts and scientific public speaking. Scientific philosophy, critical thinking and the use of online databases to access the primary literature will be introduced to students. Key communication skills will be developed in these courses including: thinking and

conversing competently in the language of science, oral presentation, critiquing the scientific literature and understanding the mechanics of writing scientific manuscripts.

Thesis Research I (4)

This course is designed to provide students the opportunity to conduct independent laboratory research that can be used toward their thesis under the direct supervision of a faculty member. The primary objective of this course is to conduct required research that is meant to be the basis of the student's thesis project. Mentor expectations and grading criteria should be communicated between the mentor and student at the start of the research and approved by the course director. Students will be required to submit a written report that includes a description of the research, experiments attempted, interpretations, accomplishments, etc., along with a Student Evaluation Report form completed by the faculty mentor. This research will be part of the thesis process and the student is expected to continue this research under MS592 and MS593 to prepare a poster and thesis project following the conclusion of this work.

Thesis Research II (8)

This course is designed to provide students the opportunity to conduct independent laboratory research that can be used toward their thesis under the direct supervision of a faculty member. The primary objective of this course is to conduct required research that is meant to be the basis of the student's thesis project. Mentor expectations and grading criteria should be communicated between the mentor and student at the start of the research and approved by the course director. Students will be required to submit a written report that includes a description of the research, experiments attempted, interpretations, accomplishments, etc., along with a Student Evaluation Report form completed by the faculty mentor. This research will be part of the thesis process and the student is expected to continue this research under MS593 to prepare a poster and thesis project following the conclusion of this work.

Thesis Research III (8)

This course is designed to provide students the opportunity to conduct independent laboratory research that can be used toward their thesis under the direct supervision of a faculty member. The primary objective of this course is to conduct required research that is meant to be the basis of the student's thesis project. Mentor expectations and grading criteria should be communicated between the mentor and student at the start of the research and approved by the course director. Students will be required to submit a written report that includes a description of the research, experiments attempted, interpretations, accomplishments, etc., along with a Student Evaluation Report form completed by the faculty mentor.

Thesis Writing/Defense (6)

This course is designed to provide students the opportunity to complete independent laboratory research if necessary and prepare a thesis and poster under the direct supervision of a faculty member. The primary objective of this course is to complete thesis project and poster and present this work to the student's advisory committee.

Disability Services

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine is in full compliance with the requirements of Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and its implementing regulations (34 C.F.R. Part 36) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and its implementing regulations (34 C.F.R. Part 104). The school does not discriminate against qualified persons with disabilities on the basis of disability in its programs, services, and activities. Students can request special accommodations by contacting the Center for Learning Excellence by completing a Request for Accommodations form. Please see Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine Policy for Disability Services that can be found on the portal for additional information. <https://portal.tcmc.edu/studentaffairs/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2017/07/Disability-Guidebook-7.24.pdf>

Facilities

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine is located within the Medical Sciences Building at 525 Pine St., Scranton, PA. This building opened in May of 2011 and provides a state-of-the-art facility conducive to academic and professional development.

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine is committed to creating a cohesive learning and study environment for its students. The school, along with its faculty and administration, has developed a strategic facilities plan to ensure that the students have a truly dedicated learning environment. Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine is committed to creating a supportive learning environment for Geisinger Commonwealth's students, complete with dedicated study space, classrooms, study rooms, laboratories and library facilities.

Medical Sciences Building is a 185,000-square-foot-facility that will meet student and faculty needs.

The Medical Sciences Building was designed around the educational needs of our students and faculty. State-of-the-art technology is in place and classrooms and small group rooms are easily accessible and comfortable. The Medical Science Building has 23 team rooms equipped with smartboards, study and lounge areas, a state-of-the-art Clinical Skills and Simulation Center, a gross anatomy lab that can accommodate six students at each table, a library, interfaith prayer room and a cafe.

The building houses 25,000 square feet of research space for investigator use. Core facilities in the new research space include a bioinformatics suite and support space for post-doctorate staff. Personnel in core facilities are supported by the school, as these facilities serve multiple researchers and are institutional resources. As programs develop and these facilities are more heavily utilized, core facilities will be partially supported by research grants.

Below is a listing of regional GCSOM campus sites and potential activities:

- South Campus – This campus has expanded into the GSWB (South Wilkes-Barre) location. The new space fully supports regional requirements for the students. A student presence may remain at Geisinger Wyoming Valley (GWV).

- Guthrie Campus – This campus is located at Robert Packer Hospital in Sayre, PA and has all the requirements needed for accreditation.
- Central Campus – This campus is located at Geisinger Medical Center in Danville and all student needs are being provided by the GMC site. This site also provides the administrative support for our students at Holy Spirit Hospital – GHS.
- Doylestown Campus – This campus is located in the PA Biopark center in Doylestown, PA. This campus supports our graduate student education and also allows students a unique opportunity to be involved in the research work being conducted by the Biopark companies.
- AtlantiCare Campus – This Atlantic City, NJ campus is in the planning stages, with the first student presence scheduled for July 2019.

Faculty

At GCSOM we have full and part-time faculty that are committed to research and to providing an excellent education for our students. GCSOM is currently recruiting several additional faculty members for the upcoming academic year.

Financial Aid

The Financial Aid Office at Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine (Geisinger Commonwealth) helps students identify the financial resources needed to achieve individual educational goals. While the primary responsibility to fund medical education rests with the student and his or her family, the staff at Geisinger Commonwealth is here to help find available resources to bridge potential gaps between the cost of attendance and available financial resources. Individual financial-aid meetings are available to students with concerns related to loans, scholarships and debt management. Meeting with the Financial Aid Office early will help build a financial plan that will be useful throughout a student's academic career at Geisinger Commonwealth. In addition, it will allow the student to make sound financial decisions as they enter the workplace.

The Financial Aid Office maintains an open-door policy to provide these services and meet the needs of Geisinger Commonwealth students. Students may stop in whenever questions arise or to obtain financial aid counseling. During busy times, appointments may be necessary. Questions may also be sent via email to financialaid@som.geisinger.edu. Phone calls are also welcome. You can contact either:

Sue McNamara, Director of Financial Aid, smcnamara@som.geisinger.edu 570-504-9682

Roxanne Seymour, Associate Director of Financial Aid, rseymour@som.geisinger.edu 570-504-7303.

Federal Title IV financial aid programs

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine is approved by the U.S. Department of Education to participate in Federal Title IV Financial Aid programs. Our federal school code is G41672. A complete review of financial aid eligibility requirements, frequently asked questions, timelines and

more can found in the Financial Aid Guidebook located on our website at <https://www.geisinger.edu/education/admissions/financial-aid>.

External scholarships and grants

<https://www.geisinger.edu/education/admissions/financial-aid/scholarshipsgrants/external-private-scholarships>

There are a variety of external funding sources available to graduate and medical students. Some scholarships are easily obtained, while others are more competitive. Researching and applying for scholarships can be time-consuming but is well worth the effort, simply because the more scholarships or grants a student receives, the less he or she will have to borrow.

When considering private sources of scholarships, students may consider:

1. Asking a parents' employer about scholarship or low-interest loan programs for children of employees.
2. Talking with a family doctor to become a mentor and assist in the search for funds.
3. Contacting religious and fraternal organizations, as well as local service clubs like the local Rotary or Lions Club, if the student or student's parent/spouse is a member.

In addition, private external scholarships are posted on the Geisinger Commonwealth website and notices are emailed to students as information on private scholarships becomes available.

If students receive any type of aid or benefit from an outside source, the Geisinger Commonwealth Financial Aid Office should be notified promptly. The total amount of financial aid a student may receive from all sources cannot exceed the cost of attendance for the associated degree program.

Eligibility for loans is based on the maximum amount that can be borrowed through the Unsubsidized Loan program and is limited by the student's grade level. The following chart shows the maximum amount that can be borrowed by an independent student enrolled in graduate/professional programs:

Graduate Student	\$20,500 (MBS program)
MD1 Student	\$41,611 (9.5-month academic year)
MD2 Student	\$40,500 (9-month academic year)
MD3 Student	\$47,167 (12-month academic year)
MD4 Student	\$42,722 (10-month academic year)
Aggregate Unsubsidized Loan Limit for Graduate & Professional Students	\$138,500
Aggregate Unsubsidized Loan Limit for Medical Students	\$224,000

Federal Direct PLUS Loan

The Federal Direct GRAD PLUS loan is an additional unsubsidized loan available to graduate/professional students. This loan can be borrowed in addition to the annual loan limits and can be used to help pay for educational expenses up to the cost of attendance minus all other financial aid. There is currently no aggregate limit on the GRAD PLUS Loan.

Note: GRAD PLUS loan borrowers cannot have an adverse credit history (a credit check is done at the time of application). If you are determined to have an adverse credit history, you may still receive a Direct GRAD PLUS Loan if you obtain an endorser who does not have an adverse credit history. An endorser is someone who agrees to repay the loan if you do not. The GRAD PLUS Loan can be endorsed electronically at www.studentloans.gov.

Interest Rates: Grad PLUS loan is fixed at 7.079% for loans first disbursed on or after 7/1/19 & before 7/01/20.

The Unsubsidized Loan is fixed at 6.079% for loans first disbursed on or after 7/1/19 & before 7/1/20.

Loan funds

Loan funds will be disbursed to Geisinger Commonwealth at the beginning of each semester. One-half the approved amounts, less origination fees, will be sent to the college in the fall and one-half the approved amounts will be sent in the spring.

Avoid delays in receiving your loan funds by:

- Completing your Direct Loan MPN electronically at StudentLoans.gov.
- Completing your Direct Loan Entrance Counseling at StudentLoans.gov for your Direct Loan.
- Completing your GRAD PLUS Application Request (credit check) at StudentLoans.gov.
- If approved for GRAD PLUS Loan, completing your GRAD PLUS loan MPN electronically at StudentLoans.gov.

Applying for financial aid

To apply for financial aid at Geisinger Commonwealth students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online at www.fafsa.gov and include Geisinger Commonwealth's federal school code: G41672.

Late filers or an incomplete FAFSA will delay the process and will result in ineligibility for institutionally administered financial aid.

To be considered for Geisinger Commonwealth scholarships, the FAFSA must be submitted no later than March 1. There are no exceptions and no appeal process.

Emergency fund

Geisinger Commonwealth has a short-term emergency loan fund for students who are experiencing extreme financial difficulties. Typically, students would be expected to repay the emergency loan upon receipt of the upcoming semester's loan funds. Please contact the Financial Aid Office for further information and eligibility requirements.

GCSOM Diversity Statement

Diversity is one of the key drivers to the fulfillment of our mission to graduate excellent physicians and professionals prepared to serve diverse patient populations and reduce prevalent health inequities. To ensure GCSOM graduates are culturally competent and enhance their interest in the elimination of health inequities in the region, GCSOM seeks to add value to the learning experiences of all participants by providing a diverse and inclusive learning environment. To further this goal, GCSOM will continue recruitment and inclusion of qualified women and traditionally underrepresented minorities in medicine and biomedical sciences, specifically African American/Blacks, Latinos/Hispanics and Native Americans. These priorities will apply to our recruitment and retention efforts for our faculty, staff and student body. To address GCSOM's commitment to replenishing the healthcare workforce in our service area, we have expanded our student diversity goals to also include regionally preferred residents, economically disadvantaged and first-generation college students.

GCSOM is committed to advance and sustain an academic and work environment that values differences. GCSOM's leadership, faculty, staff and students share important responsibilities in the achievement and maintenance of an environment that reflects these important goals. The Office of the Chief Diversity Officer, in partnership with GCSOM leadership, will promote/support system-wide initiatives that enhance recruitment of a diverse student body, learning experiences, and promote faculty and staff diversity in accordance with the goals specified herein. To promote GCSOM-wide engagement, assess our progress and recommend progressive steps, faculty, staff and student representatives active on the Committee for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI), led by the Chief Diversity Officer, discusses and reviews learning and workplace environments and works with the GCSOM community to further this important commitment. The CDI reports to the Dean on progress in recruitment, retention, curriculum, cultural competency, learning environment, faculty development, community-based research and engagement.

Revised December 4, 2018

History

Geisinger Commonwealth was established through the grassroots efforts of visionary individuals who foresaw what a community-based medical school would bring to the region and worked to make it a reality. Their goal was to provide more physicians and improved healthcare resources for the people of northeast and central Pennsylvania. The vision was to create a unique medical education experience that focused on caring for people in the context of their lives and in their community. The roots of Geisinger Commonwealth began in 2004 with the Founding Seven. This group included area physicians Charles Bannon, MD, Gerald Tracy, MD, and Robert Wright, MD; businessmen and community leaders Robert Naismith, PhD, and Gerald Joyce; and attorneys Mark Perry and Michael Costello. The Northeastern Pennsylvania Medical Education Development Consortium was established by 2005. The consortium included business, medical, community and government representatives. After acquiring funding from sources including the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania, Scranton-Temple Residency Program, several area hospitals and other state, federal and private philanthropic sources, the Commonwealth Medical Education Corporation was formed.

The Commonwealth Medical College (TCMC) was incorporated in 2008 and welcomed its first class of Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree students and Master of Biomedical Sciences (MBS) degree students in August 2009.

In April 2011, TCMC opened the 185,000-square-foot Medical Sciences Building in Scranton that houses the academic and research programs.

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education granted TCMC accreditation on June 27, 2014, and the Liaison Committee for Medical Education granted TCMC accreditation on July 7, 2014.

TCMC integrated with Geisinger on January 1, 2017, and became Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine.

Geisinger Commonwealth has administrative and educational space at hospitals in Scranton, Danville, Wilkes-Barre and Sayre, as well as in Doylestown at the Pennsylvania Biotechnology Center of Bucks County. Geisinger Commonwealth has relationships with more than 25 hospitals in northeast and central Pennsylvania that provide learning environments for the students. The college has four regional campuses: North, South, Central and Guthrie, which are integral to the college's community-based education. Community engagement is part of the fiber of Geisinger Commonwealth. More than 1,200 volunteer clinical faculty members throughout the region provide students with early clinical experiences and training across the four years of medical education. Families throughout the region are generous in allowing students to follow them so they can appreciate the social context and the impact of illness on the lives of patients. Students are required to pursue research projects in quality improvement and community health.

Housing

While Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine does not provide housing for incoming students, additional information and resources can be found using the GCSOM website link below:

<https://www.geisinger.edu/education/student-life/student-housing>

The School of Medicine has not inspected or investigated any property listings or property owners and does not endorse any of the properties listed on the website. Because the information contained in the listings was obtained from sources not associated with Geisinger Commonwealth, the institution does not accept or assume responsibility for the accuracy of the material, the condition of the properties for lease, or the terms of the lease agreement.

Library

Geisinger Commonwealth Medical Library provides the following services:

- Access to information resources, including a core collection of health sciences resources and tools licensed for all students, faculty, and staff.
- 24/7 access to electronic resources via the library homepage.

- Access to library staff seven days a week, including evening hours, during the academic year.
- Orientation to library services and resources on demand.
- Document delivery and interlibrary loan services.
- Reference and literature search consultation services.

Library facilities

- 5,000 square feet, with silent areas for study.
- 14 public access computer workstations and 14 laptop docking stations with plug-and-play capabilities.
- Badge access: Students may enter the library 24/7 with a Geisinger Commonwealth badge.

The collections

The primary mission of the library is to support the information, education, and research needs of the students, faculty, and staff of Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine. Our authorized users are provided access to Geisinger Commonwealth's library website, where electronic library resources are available 24 hours per day, seven days per week. A list of Geisinger Commonwealth's electronic resources can be found on the library website. The library is 95 percent electronic, with access to high-quality, evidence-based databases, e-journals, e-books, and point of care resources. The library maintains a core print collection of more than 1,800 biomedical titles, including a Reserve Collection with required and recommended textbooks for coursework. Online instructional tutorials, presentations, and guides are also available on the library website.

Staff

Library contact information: 570-504-9665 or library@som.geisinger.edu

Office for Community Engagement and Equity

Lead by the vice president for community engagement, the Office of Community Engagement (OCE) promotes inclusion and effective engagement with communities to support their primary health-related concerns. To date, OCE's efforts have focused on external community engagement to further Geisinger Commonwealth's:

- Service to Community
- Youth Development Programs (REACH-HEI)
- Diversity and Inclusion (Summer Enrichment Programs)
- Center of Excellence (COE)

Institute for Healthy Communities

Recognizing the myriad of health challenges in the region and beyond, GeisingerCommonwealth launched in 2016 its Institute for Healthy Communities (IHC) to address the region's most pressing needs for reliable, detailed health data, to identify best practices and to engage community and experts to develop innovative approaches to improve health literacy and implement innovative initiatives to improve health indicators in communities. IHC also provides the bridge to connect Geisinger Commonwealth students, faculty and staff to service opportunities meaningful to our

communities. IHC also leverages the vast expertise present in Geisinger as well as our Health Services partners to reach the greatest amount of community members in meaningful ways.

Office of the President/Dean

Meet the President and Dean

Steven J. Scheinman, MD is president and dean of Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine, and executive vice president and chief academic officer of the Geisinger. He is an exceptional leader with a broad vision, strong academic credentials and a commitment to student success, curriculum innovation, and community service.

Dr. Scheinman is an internist and nephrologist who has earned international prominence for his research into the genetics of inherited kidney diseases and kidney stones. He has published more than 90 peer-reviewed articles, reviews, and book chapters on topics related to kidney disease and genetics. For most of his career he was principal investigator on grants funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), American Heart Association (AHA) and other agencies. He has been an invited speaker at numerous national and international meetings and a visiting professor at many prominent universities across the United States and abroad.

Dr. Scheinman has served on review boards for the NIH, American Heart Association, American Society of Nephrology, American Federation for Clinical/Medical Research, and National Kidney Foundation, among others. He is a fellow of the American College of Physicians and of the American Society of Nephrology and is an elected member of the American Society for Clinical Investigation.

Dr. Scheinman is an advocate on healthcare workforce issues and matters affecting medical schools. He was a gubernatorial appointee to the New York State Council on Graduate Medical Education and has served on a number of advisory boards to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and national boards related to medical education. He is chair of the board of the National Resident Match Program.

Dr. Scheinman holds an AB, *summa cum laude*, from Amherst School in Massachusetts and received his medical degree with honors from Yale University. He completed his residency in internal medicine at Yale-New Haven Hospital; was chief resident in internal medicine at Upstate; and completed fellowships in nephrology at Upstate Medical Center and Yale-New Haven Hospital. He was formerly professor of medicine and pharmacology at SUNY Upstate Medical University, where he served for eight years as senior vice president and dean of the School of Medicine.

Role of the President

The president is the leader responsible for the successful management of the school, achieving accreditation and providing leadership for the school's missions of medical education, service, and research. The president is also responsible for supporting the governance structure, raising funds, and creating a constituency of support for the school. In addition to his administrative duties, the president is responsible for successful consensus building throughout the region. The president is

the key representative of the school to donors, national organizations, potential research partners, clinical affiliates, and governmental agencies. The president of Geisinger Commonwealth:

- Provides leadership to the school, the faculty, and staff in developing the vision and strategic plan for the school.
- Is responsible for matters relating to the design and effective administration of the school, including facilities, resources, budgets, fundraising and relationships with the community and external stakeholders.
- Develops and leads an aggressive, long-term funding plan designed to ensure its viability in the decades to come.
- Builds a culture of excellence in the school that incorporates fairness, integrity, respect, creativity, initiative, and community service.
- Ensures compliance in all legal and regulatory requirements.
- Ensures that the school follows all policies and procedures.

Role of the Dean

The dean is the school's chief academic officer and is responsible for creating successful academic programs and relationships with regional schools and universities, hospitals, clinics and physicians, businesses, industries, and individuals to create opportunities for academics, scholarship, and research. The dean is responsible for curriculum development and execution, the student experience, faculty recruitment and development and the execution of the research agenda. Since the dean also serves as president, he has delegated some of these responsibilities to the vice dean. The dean is specifically responsible for:

- Building and ensuring the highest possible quality in medical, graduate and postgraduate education.
- Managing and advancing the school's partnerships with clinical sites and providers.
- Recruiting a first-class senior leadership team to whom the dean can effectively delegate the key strategic and operational aspects of establishing the school.
- Designing an effective administration of the school, including academic programs, faculty, students and staff.
- Building a culture of excellence in the school that incorporates fairness, integrity, respect, creativity, initiative and community service.
- Ensuring compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements.
- Ensuring that the school follows all of its policies and procedures.

The dean also serves as executive vice president and chief academic officer of the Geisinger system. In that capacity she or he oversees all academic programs of Geisinger Health System including medical education, graduate education, nursing education, residency and fellowship programs, and non-degree health professions.

Orientation

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine takes pride in the attention given to assuring success in the transitions students face in adjusting to the medical environment. Through a comprehensive and collaborative effort, students are welcomed to understand and live out the mission and values of Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine.

Printing and Copying

Printing and copying is available for Geisinger Commonwealth students throughout the Medical Sciences Building and at the regional campuses and is accessible with a valid identification badge. Copies are \$.02 per page for black and white and \$.10 per page for color. Students are given a \$20 quota at the beginning of each semester and quotas can be replenished online using a credit card. Remaining balances left on accounts are not refundable.

Safety/Security

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for students, faculty, staff and visitors. At the beginning of each year, during student orientation, the director of facilities & public safety and the manager of public safety will attend and educate the students on safety and security measures. In addition, the student/faculty population will be encouraged to participate in crime prevention throughout campus. Information on safety and security concerns and precautions will be provided to all students, faculty and staff at various times throughout the school year. The information and guidance will be relayed to the group via seminars, films, bulletins, crime alerts, posters, brochures, newsletters and any other methods deemed necessary. Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine buildings will be properly secured each day to safeguard both individuals and Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine property. Only faculty, staff and students who possess Valid school identification badges will be admitted to the campus after hours. Each authorized student, faculty/staff member will be issued a photo identification badge which will also control admittance to Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine educational spaces. Visitors will receive a temporary ID card which will be required to be surrendered at the end of the visit. The areas of admittance will be limited to the areas necessary to perform job functions or visit with a desired party. Video monitoring / recording throughout the building takes place at all times. Security services are provided 24/7.

The Medical Sciences Building is equipped with a card access/entry control system. The building has 24/7 identification card access. Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine has contracted with Kraye Security to provide security coverage in the building. Kraye is an established security provider with a demonstrated history of success. Multiple security cameras are in place throughout the building which will be monitored by the on-duty security officer. Public Safety provides regular patrol of the campus buildings as well as parking areas. In addition, the security personnel will escort students and faculty after hours around the building or to parking areas as needed. Although the Public Safety Department is not a police agency, the department works in conjunction with the Scranton Police Department, and appropriate regional law enforcement agencies in all matters relating to reportable incidents.

Lost and Found

Any lost items will be held at the Public Safety desk at the main entrance. You may be required to produce identification to retrieve the item.

Lockers

There are lockers available on the fourth floor, East Wing of the Medical Sciences Building. Students are required to bring their own lock and inform Facilities & Public Safety of their locker selection. Lockers are available on a first-come basis.

Campus Safety

This section is produced for the general safety and welfare of Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine community. It is also designed to meet the requirements of:

- The Federal Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act of 1998 (formerly the Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990)
- The Higher Education Amendments of 1992
- The Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (PA Law 101-226)
- Uniform Crime Reporting Act (Act 180 of 2004)
- Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children and Sexual Violent Offender Registration Act
- The Campus Sex Crimes Prevention Act of 2000

How to report Criminal Incidents and other Emergencies

Each member of the Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine community has the right to be free from victimization and all members are expected and required to comply with all federal, state, and local laws. To report a crime or emergency, contact the Geisinger Commonwealth Public Safety Office at 570-558-2300 or extension 2300 from any on campus phone. The number is staffed 24 hours a day by public safety officers. The Public Safety office will investigate all complaints.

To report a crime/emergency to local or state police, dial 9-911. The 911 system is available for everyone in the community.

Anonymous Reporting

A person may want to consider filing an anonymous report. The purpose of an anonymous report is to take steps to ensure the future safety of the reporting person and others, while protecting her/his identity. The school can use such information to maintain accurate information regarding the number of reported incidents, look for patterns/trends of activity, and alert the college community to potential danger. If a person wishes to file an anonymous report, they may contact the GCSOM Director of Facilities/Public Safety, Associate Dean of Student Affairs, or the Vice President Community Engagement/Chief Diversity Officer. An anonymous third-party report containing information regarding the incident will be completed, however no names or identifying information will be used without consent of the victim. No follow-up or investigation will be conducted without the consent of the victim. The report will be forwarded to the Public Safety office.

Daily Crime Log

The GCSOM Public Safety Office maintains a daily crime log, which is located on their web page: www.geisinger.edu/education. The log is a record of all criminal activity reported to the Public Safety Department. The log, which is open for public inspection, lists the nature, date, time, and general

location of the criminal activity reported. The crime statistics are also published for a three-year period and are available on the website and through the Public Safety Department.

Emergency Notification System

In the event of an emergency situation requiring immediate campus-wide precautions and actions, the GCSOM Public Safety Department is authorized to activate the emergency alert notification system. Immediately prior to activation, Public Safety Officers may be dispatched to the scene and a 911 call will be made to trigger a response from the appropriate first responder. GCSOM will utilize the Blackboard Connect system for emergency notification. To register or make changes to your preestablished account go to <http://www.geisinger.edu/education> and log onto the portal. Enter your information under the emergency notification system. Once an emergency has been reported to Public Safety it is confirmed by the Public Safety Manager, Director of Facilities & Public Safety who would be responsible for sending the warning out.

Access to Campus Facilities

GCSOM has installed proximity card readers on all entrances, classrooms, student community rooms, laboratories, and common areas at the MSB. The GCSOM identification card has been programmed to grant the appropriate level of access to different areas of the building. If an ID card is lost/stolen, it must be immediately reported to GCSOM Department of Public Safety, and a new card will be issued. This action will also deactivate the lost/stolen card. A card should never be given to another individual or used to allow access to others. ID Cards must be displayed at all times.

Parking

Geisinger Commonwealth offers parking to all students. However, students who wish to utilize parking provided by the institution will be assessed \$100 to park for the year. This fee will not be included in your tuition payment. Students can register for parking from the pre-matriculation page or can log onto the Geisinger Commonwealth portal, click on Facilities & Public Safety under departments, click on "Parking" click on "parking permit request form" and register electronically. Once registration is completed, a parking permit which must be displayed on the vehicle will be available for pick up at the reception desk. The year begins on Aug. 1. Parking must be renewed annually. An escort is available from Public Safety. Contact the security desk to receive a walking/riding escort.

Fire Safety

The Medical Sciences Building has a state-of-the-art, integrated fire alarm system. The fire alarm system is monitored by an off-location central station. The City of Scranton Fire Department is the primary emergency responder. Fire safety is of primary importance, and GCSOM recommends the following measures to maintain a safe environment.

- If you observe or suspect a fire, activate the building fire alarm immediately. All fires regardless of size must be reported to the Public Safety Department.

- If the fire alarm sounds, don't panic, keep calm, prior to opening the door feel for excessive heat, if the door feels normal, leave by the nearest exit, if the door feels hot do not open the door.
- Do not use the elevator.
- Evacuate the building and proceed to the nearest meeting location that can be reached safely. There is one pre-determined meeting location which is parking lot B, located at the corner of North Washington & East Gibson Streets. Remain at that location until directed to move by GCSOM officials or the Scranton Fire Department.
- If you can't evacuate the area, remain calm.
- If you need evacuation assistance in a stairwell, please use the emergency call box.
- To attract attention; hang clothes or something similar in front of the window.
- Don't break the window or leave it open unless the room is filling with smoke.
- Stay calm and wait for help.

Evacuation routes are posted in all GCSOM areas.

Building and Grounds

GCSOM Public Safety Officers conduct lighting surveys on a regular basis, and submit facilities work requests to repair lights that are not operating properly. The Facilities staff tend to the college building and grounds with a concern for safety of the community members. They are available to respond to calls for service regarding unsafe conditions. These conditions include, but are not limited to, unsafe steps, rails, icy/snow covered walks. We encourage any member of the community to immediately report unsafe conditions to the Facility and Public Safety Department.

Crisis Management Plan

Standard procedures for the release of information during and following any critical incident on campus are as follows:

- The policy of Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine will be to release accurate consistent information to members of affected groups and to representatives of recognized news gathering organizations, when such releases will not endanger or impair the welfare of individuals conducting the investigation or inquiry into the incident.
- When management or investigation of a crisis involves officials or other authority agencies, all information released will be coordinated with appropriate individuals of those organizations.
- In all situations, the only school spokesperson who provides information to the media will be the dean or the director of marketing and public relations, or their designee(s) as determined by a case-by-case basis. Persons not designated should direct all queries to the appropriate spokesperson.

Campus Safety: Doing Your Part

Campus safety and security procedures/practices are a part of the orientation program for students and employees. Public Safety/Facilities policies and procedures are available to employees and students on the GCSOM portal.

ALL CRIMES SHOULD BE REPORTED TO THE PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

IN THE OFF-CAMPUS HOUSE OR APARTMENT

1. Never use your first name in the telephone directories or mailboxes and avoid using prefixes: Mrs., Miss, or Ms. List your first initial only.
2. After moving into a new home or apartment, it is a good idea to change the door locks. Every window that can be entered from the outside should have a good lock and be properly secured.
3. Never open your door to strangers! Repair persons and salespeople carry proper identification. It is in your best interest to request they show it to you before you admit them. Also, most repair persons and salespersons make appointments beforehand. During non-working hours, if repair persons are making "emergency" repairs or checks, confirm the necessity for the work by phone before admittance.
4. If someone wants to use your phone, no matter what the emergency claimed, offer to make the call. Do not open the door.
5. Always keep windows secured and covered at night. Never reveal either in person or to a telephone caller, that you are alone. Have two lights on in different locations of the house. This gives the impression of more than one person at home. To secure sliding doors, place a strong wooden broom handle or dowel in the lower track of the door.
6. In apartment buildings, be wary of deserted laundry rooms.

ON CAMPUS

1. When walking at night, use the best-lighted route and try not to walk alone, if possible. Call Public Safety for an escort.
2. Do not jog alone.
3. Do not leave personal property unattended, anywhere or anytime.
4. If you are a victim of a crime, notify the Public Safety Department immediately.
5. Report any encounters with voyeurs or exhibitionists to the Public Safety Department. Become aware of the emergency call boxes located in all GCSOM parking lots.

WALKING

1. Walk near the center of the sidewalk and use the busiest, safest and best-lighted routes. Avoid alleys, parks, vacant lots and parking areas that are deserted and dark.
2. Never hitchhike.
3. If you think someone is following you, cross the street, walk faster or even walk down the middle of the street. Try to go to a lighted area, store or near a group of people.
4. Do not accept rides from strangers. If a car approaches and you are threatened, walk in the opposite direction of the vehicle.
5. Do not overload yourself with packages, books and other things.
6. If your purse is snatched or if you are approached by a potential robber ... DON'T FIGHT. Cooperate rather than risk injury. It will not be a great loss if you carry no more cash than is absolutely necessary and keep a list at home of all credit cards, licenses, etc.

DRIVING

1. When you walk to your vehicle, have your keys ready in your hand so you will not have to stand outside your car looking for them.

2. Always check the rear seat and floor before you get into your car.
3. Lock the doors as soon as you get into your vehicle and keep them locked.
4. Do not pick up hitchhikers.
5. When stopping your car in traffic, always leave enough room to pull around any stopped vehicle that may be in front of you.
6. If you believe you are being followed by another car, do not turn into your driveway or parking lot. Attempt to locate open businesses or drive to the nearest police department. Use your horn and lights to attract attention. Try to obtain a license number of the other vehicle to pass on to police.
7. If you have car trouble, raise the hood and sit inside your car with the doors locked until assistance arrives. Ask the person who approaches to call a service truck for you. Keep an ample supply of gasoline.
8. Do not stop to offer help to a stranded motorist, male or female. Call the police or a service station.
9. If you park your car and the attendant asks you to leave your keys, leave only the car key.
10. Place valuables in the locked trunk or otherwise conceal where they cannot be seen.
11. Always lock your bicycle with a good lock and secure it to a bicycle rack.

Psychological prevention

BE PREPARED: There is a lot you can do to avoid becoming a victim, or to respond effectively if a crime does take place.

1. Educate yourself concerning crime prevention tactics.
2. Consider in advance, what you would do if confronted by a criminal.

Everyone must work together to create a safe campus. Please report all crimes to the GCSOM Public Safety Department as soon as possible. The Public Safety Staff is on duty 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Call 570-504-7000, ext. 2300 or 570-558-2300.

Elevator

- If while waiting for an elevator, you find yourself alone with a stranger, let him/her take the elevator and wait for its return.
- If you are on with someone who makes you feel uneasy, get off at the next floor.
- Always stand near the control panel, where you have access to the alarm and floor buttons.
- Do not hesitate to use the emergency call button or alarm if needed.

Incident reporting

- You are encouraged to immediately report any incidents of this nature to the Public Safety Department. Keep in mind that any assailant who is allowed to go free is a potential future danger, not only to you but also to other members of the community.
- Every situation will be different. Therefore, we cannot provide any specific rules as to what to do or not to do if you are faced with a threat. Only you can make the determination as to the appropriate course of action.
- If you think you are being followed, you can call out for assistance and run to a lighted building or residence; enlist the assistance of a passerby or flag down a passing vehicle, break a window in a building or residence or pull a fire alarm. Do anything that might attract attention or summon assistance.

What you can do

Your involvement is essential to the prevention of crime on campus. Disinterest and complacency are the prime contributors to the success of crime. The burden of crime prevention rests not only with the Public Safety Department but also with each member of the Geisinger Commonwealth community.

Public Safety cannot be everywhere at once and are, therefore, dependent upon you to recognize and report incidents of suspicious and criminal activity. The extent of your cooperation will greatly influence Public Safety's effectiveness in fighting crime.

Doing your part means

- Being aware of your vulnerability and following the suggestions outlined in this document to protect yourself and your property.
- Being alert for suspicious or criminal activity and conditions that may represent a hazard to the community.
- Getting involved by becoming more security conscious and by reporting all incidents of suspicious or criminal activity, no matter how insignificant, to the Public Safety Department immediately.

Remember that unreported crimes cannot be solved in that, by not reporting crimes, you allow the perpetrators to commit additional and perhaps more serious crimes. Many times, crime solving depends upon how accurately and properly the incident is reported. It is important that you be able to provide as much of the following information as possible:

- The nature of the incident.
- When and where the incident occurred.
- Number of persons involved (names, sex, race, age, height).
- Direction and method of travel.
- Vehicles involved (color, type, make, model, license plate number and state, distinctive characteristics, i.e., decals, bumper stickers, damage, number of occupants).
- Description of stolen property (item, manufacturer model number, serial number, value, color, dimensions, etc.).
- Any other applicable information

Sexual Offender Registration

The Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children and Sexual Violent Offender Registration Act sets the requirements for sex offender registration and community notification. The Campus Sex Crimes Prevention Act of 2000 provides for the tracking of convicted sex offenders enrolled at, or employed by, institutions of higher education. Persons seeking to obtain sex offender registration information may do so by contacting the Scranton Police Department at (570) 348-4141, or the Pennsylvania State Police Sexually Violent Predator web site at www.pameganslaw.state.pa.us.

Timely Warnings

To help prevent and mitigate crimes and potential threats, the Public Safety Department, in conjunction with other GCSOM Departments, issues timely warnings to notify the GCSOM community about crimes/threats in and around the campus. Timely warnings are distributed using a

variety of methods. Once the decision has been made to issue a warning, the warning is disseminated using text messaging, e-mail, and broadcast messages.

Firearms, Fireworks, and Weapons

The possession or use of firearms, ammunition, fireworks, major/minor explosives or any potentially lethal weapon is prohibited anywhere on campus.

Student Health and Welfare

Student health insurance

All Geisinger Commonwealth students are required to have medical insurance at all times while enrolled.

- Students must provide [Terry Waibel](#) with documentation of medical insurance regardless of the carrier.
- Students have the option of purchasing one of the Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) student health plans from Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine or can enroll in another plan of their choosing. The Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine plan is administered by [Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield](#).
- Carefully review all the benefit summaries and pay close attention to the deductible information for in-network and out-of-network costs prior to making a decision.
- Students can enroll in medical only or add vision and or dental.
- The election to have health insurance automatically continues until graduation unless an [opt-out form](#) is completed.

Open enrollment

New students

- Open enrollment for the Highmark Blue Cross for new students begins upon access to the Office of Admissions pre-matriculation site and ends on the close of business on the first day of classes.

Returning students

- Returning students who previously were not enrolled on the plan can only enter Geisinger Commonwealth's student plan during the open enrollment period which begins on **July 1**, and ends on the close of business on **July 31** unless there is a "life-changing event."
- Life-changing event: A life event is a change in your personal situation that makes you eligible to change or enroll in benefits outside your initial enrollment or the annual enrollment period. You can also use the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and other benefits for free services like counseling, financial advice, help finding childcare, will preparation and more. Reminder: you must make your benefit changes within 30 calendar days of your life event.
 - Arrival of child
 - Leave of absence
 - Marriage or divorce
 - Loss of loved one
 - Gain or loss of coverage

- Withdrawal from GCSOM

Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield Plan

The plan for all GCSOM student begins Aug. 1 of every year and ends 12 months later or July 31 of the following year. The election to have health insurance automatically continues until graduation. However, students may choose to waive the option to purchase student coverage from Geisinger Commonwealth's Student Plan by completing the [opt-out form](#). In order to waive coverage, students must supply a copy of the health insurance identification card for which they are currently enrolled and return the waiver form to Student Health Services.

The PPO student health plan from Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine through Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield does meet the recommended coverage suggested by the AAMC Group on Student Affairs regarding healthcare and insurance. This insurance will include:

1. Coverage for the full 12-month year
2. Coverage for pre-existing conditions
3. Provisions to purchase additional coverage for spouses and dependents at market cost
4. Access to and coverage for mental health services by mental health professionals in concordance with current LCME standards
5. Prescription drug coverage
6. Lifetime coverage limits consistent with the cost of a major or catastrophic medical illness
7. Coverage during out of state rotations

Disability Insurance

Disability insurance is provided and required for all medical students. INS MED is the insurance carrier and costs the student \$50 per year.

Students are provided clear, concise explanations of school health and disability insurance plans, including information related to additional fees for services beyond standard insurance coverage and the additional fees to cover a spouse and/or dependents.

Geisinger student health services (SHS)

Providing students with health, wellness and counseling services

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine's Student Health Services (SHS) aims to support the educational experience of students and minimize health-related barriers to learning by providing high-quality health services and health education and to guide students toward a personal commitment to wellness and self-care that will lay the foundation for a healthy life and will assist them to become self-directed and well-informed active consumers of healthcare, as well as “model” patients in the community.

Confidentiality

Student records are kept strictly confidential. Information may not be released to anyone – including family, faculty, or administration – without the written consent of the student.

Note: Certain public health diseases must be reported to the Department of Health by law. Also, if there is concern of imminent risk or harm toward yourself or others, appropriate personnel will be informed.

Provision of sensitive health services to Geisinger Commonwealth students

The faculty and staff of Geisinger Commonwealth understand that many health and psychological/psychiatric issues confronting Geisinger Commonwealth students may be of a sensitive nature and that a professional patient relationship between Geisinger Commonwealth faculty and students would be inconsistent with a teacher-student relationship. Should a Geisinger Commonwealth faculty member provide health services of a sensitive nature to a Geisinger Commonwealth student, the faculty member will not be involved in the academic evaluation or promotion of the student receiving those services.

Hours & location

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine Student Health Services (SHS) provides students with health, wellness and counseling services.

Staff:

Dr. Richard Martin – Medical Director
Paul Burke, R.N. – Manager
Michelle Ostroski, MSW, LSW – Clinical Well-Being Specialist
Kyle Strobel, MS, NCC, LPC - Behavioral Health Therapist
Terry Waibel– Administrative Assistant

SHS is located on the first floor, MSB Suite 1062

Phone number is 570-558-4290

Email address: twaiabel@geisinger.edu

Hours of Operation: M-F 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

For after-hours, non-medical student affairs emergencies, there is a student affairs administrator on call and can be reached at 570-687-9700.

Campus specific health resources are outline in links below:

[North Campus](#)

[South Campus](#)

[Central Campus](#)

[Holy Spirit Campus](#)

[Guthrie Campus](#)

[AtlantiCare Campus](#)

Personal support & therapeutic counseling

The educational, physical and social demands of a medical and graduate school curriculum are uniquely stressful on students, often creating academic and psychological problems that could impact their medical/graduate education. Student Health Services is available to assist students in the preventive management of this stress. A Clinical Well-Being Counseling Specialist is available to

support the personal and professional well-being of students. Services include mental health wellness screenings, behavioral health and wellness referrals to appropriate providers, and oversight of wellness programs and initiatives to promote and encourage all aspects of health, wellness, and lifestyle improvements to assist students in finding balance in their lives. Various topics such as stress management, relaxation techniques, self-compassion, goal setting, and effective coping mechanisms are among those addressed.

For students who may require ongoing counseling services, Student Health Services offers free counseling services through our Behavioral Health Therapist. Services are offered on-site at GCSoM or via telephone or telepsych for regional campus students. Each regional campus has an appointed mental health student representative to act as an initial point of contact. In addition, referrals to community therapists are available for therapeutic behavioral health services if a student chooses. These services are accessed by a referral through the Clinical Wellbeing Counseling Specialist for an initial needs assessment. Individual, couples and group counseling are offered as warranted. Student Health Behavioral Services include, but are not limited to, ongoing therapeutic counseling, psychiatric therapy, psychological and neuropsychological testing, drug and alcohol counseling and crisis intervention. Students have access to local providers who are not faculty members of the school, thus assuring the provision of services with privacy and confidentiality. Furthermore, the exclusion of faculty members from the provision of these services ensures that the providers will not be involved in the academic evaluation or promotion of the students. In case of an emergency, please dial 9-1-1. Students may also access 24-hours a day a member of Student Affairs for crisis intervention (570-687-9700).

Students also have access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Students will have five (5) free sessions with a highly trained clinician. Sessions could be in person or via phone. Students may call 888-327-4623 for assistance or go online at guidanceresources.com. EAP is a 24/7 support service. Communication with EAP is strictly confidential and covered visits will not be billed to insurance. If additional sessions are needed / wanted, the student would be responsible for arranging that with the provider and would need to discuss insurance and payment options. **The WebID to access services is GHSEAP.**

As a matter of convenience for our students, Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine has developed an agreement with community therapists in the North, South, Central including Holy Spirit, Guthrie and AtlantiCare campuses as outlined in links above.

Student wellness

The health and well-being of our students is of paramount importance to the school. Students are encouraged to engage in healthy behaviors including participation in programs sponsored by the Student Health Services Team. Student Health Services conducts periodic focus groups and assessment surveys to ensure we are meeting the needs of our students and focuses programming on stress management, nutrition, and exercise. Student Health Services hosts programs focused on depression, suicide prevention, substance use prevention, stress management, healthy recreation, and interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships.

In addition, students who do enroll in Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine health insurance plan have access to Blue Health Solutions, which is a program that helps the insured manage their

overall health and wellness. Specifically, it includes preventive health education, early identification of future health problems, wellness and lifestyle management tools, care coordination and health management for chronic conditions.

Student Health Services: Counseling

The educational, physical and social demands of a medical and graduate school curriculum are uniquely stressful on students, often creating academic and psychological problems that could impact their medical/graduate education. Student Health Services is available to assist students in the preventive management of this stress. Clinical staff are available to provide mental health wellness screenings, facilitate counseling services, manage referrals to outside providers, and facilitate wellness programs and initiatives designed to assist students in finding balance in their lives. Topics such as stress management, relaxation techniques and effective coping mechanisms are among those offered.

Counseling Services Offered through Student Health Services

Initial Assessment: All GCSOM students are entitled to an initial assessment to determine what the focus of therapy will be and what type of services are most appropriate for a particular problem.

Individual Counseling: In one-on-one sessions with a counselor, students are helped to express feelings, examine thoughts and beliefs, reflect on patterns of behavior, and work toward making healthy changes in their life.

Crisis Counseling: Student Health Services offers crisis intervention services during regular office hours. Outside office hours, students are encouraged to reach out to one of the providers listed under the resources below, call the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), or go to the nearest emergency room.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP): Students will have five (5) free sessions with a highly trained clinician. Sessions could be in person or via phone. Students may call 888-327-4623 for assistance or go online at guidanceresources.com. EAP is a 24/7 support service. Communication with EAP is strictly confidential and covered visits will not be billed to insurance. If additional sessions are needed / wanted, the student would be responsible for arranging that with the provider and would need to discuss insurance and payment options.

Helpline NEPA

888-829-1341 or 570-829-1341

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-8255

The National Domestic Violence Hotline

1-800-799-7233

Student Identification

Access to Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine facilities is controlled through the use of photo identification badges. Badges are used to grant access to various portions of GCSoM facilities and parking lots.

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine faculty, staff and students are required to wear identification badges while on school property or as part of school activities. Students are required to wear their ID badge on our regional campuses or while participating with any of our academic partners.

All Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine students, faculty and employees will be issued picture identification badges by the Public Safety department. The badges will also control access to Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine education facilities. Access is granted as deemed necessary by position/function. Visitors, students, faculty and employees will be limited to the areas necessary to perform job functions or visit with a desired party. At the conclusion of their business in the school, the visitor's badge must be surrendered to the receptionist or public safety officer on duty at the front desk. Any member of the public who enters the building, may be challenged to produce identification and state their business by authorized members of the school community. Access may be denied by the School of Medicine officials at the discretion of the school.

The complete ID badge policy can be found on the portal in the policies section.

Student Policies

<https://www.geisinger.edu/education/student-life/student-bulletin-policies-graduate-education>

Student Space and Room Reservations

The following areas are approved study spaces for all students. We ask your cooperation in leaving the rooms as you find them by discarding your trash and not removing any books or journals, otherwise the privilege of using these facilities will be rescinded. Do not prop the doors open or allow individuals to access the rooms using student ID badges. Both of these are considered to be professionalism violations and will be dealt with appropriately. Please note that the registrar reserves the right to cancel reservations if the rooms are needed for educational activities.

Geisinger Commonwealth Library

The library has approximately 100 study seats at tables and individual carrels distributed throughout the library. All of these spaces are available to all Geisinger Commonwealth students 24 hours per day.

Geisinger Commonwealth team rooms

The Geisinger Commonwealth Team Rooms may be used if they are unoccupied. Students interested in reserving these rooms should do so via the scheduling resources link on the Geisinger

Commonwealth portal. Students have access to these rooms 24 hours per day. The general appearance of the rooms and organization of equipment needs to be restored to good order so as to be ready for class instruction the next day.

Please find the room reservation guidelines below.

Room reservation guidelines

- Room reservations should be made only during non-class time.
- Any one reservation request cannot exceed two weeks.
- Once a reservation is placed, the room must be occupied no later than 20 minutes after reservation start time or the reservation becomes void.
- Proper reservations will take precedence over those using the room without a reservation.
- Team rooms are designed for group study. Please be considerate of classmates, when reserving team rooms.
- If you no longer need a room you previously reserved, please go into the reservations system and delete it.
- If you need to store your belongings during lunch or class please do so in one of the fourth floor lockers. Feel free to pick any available locker and put your own lock on it. Be sure to email Steven Jarbola at sjarbola@som.geisinger.edu with your locker number.

**Please note: if you leave your belongings unattended for more than an hour in the library or team rooms, staff will take them to the front desk so that other students can utilize the study space.*

Geisinger Commonwealth lecture halls (2001 & 2045)

Students interested in reserving these rooms for club/organization purposes should complete the meeting event approval form found on the Medical Student Council portal page. Students may access these rooms for individual study when unoccupied. The general appearance of the rooms and organization of equipment needs to be restored to good order so as to be ready for class instruction the next day.

Geisinger Commonwealth classrooms (3073, 3079, 3083, 4011 & 4013)

Students interested in reserving these rooms for club/organization purposes should complete the meeting event approval form found on the Medical Student Council portal page. Students may access these rooms for individual study when unoccupied. The general appearance of the rooms and organization of equipment needs to be restored to good order so as to be ready for class instruction the next day.

Geisinger Commonwealth student lounge

The Geisinger Commonwealth Student lounge located on the fourth floor of the East Wing is available for study 24 hours per day and does not need to be reserved through scheduling resources.

Student Transcripts

A transcript is a complete account of each student's academic history at Geisinger Commonwealth. Courses with the grades are listed for all periods of time when students have been enrolled.

Official vs. unofficial copies

Official transcript copies are printed on security paper and stamped with the registrar's seal and date. They are mostly directly sent to third parties but may be given to students in a sealed envelope if appropriate. (Most applications for academic programs, scholarship programs, etc. require an official copy of your transcript).

Unofficial transcript copies are printed on plain paper. They are not stamped with the Registrar's seal. They are given directly to students for their use.

To request a transcript (MD or Graduate School) please include the following information in a letter:

1. Name and signature.
2. Transcript fee (checks payable to Geisinger Commonwealth)
 - There is a \$5 transcript fee if you are a Geisinger Commonwealth graduate
 - There is no fee if you are a current Geisinger Commonwealth student:
3. Empower ID (found on the first page of your Empower web account)
4. Number of transcripts requested
5. Address (s) to mail transcript

Generally, transcripts are sent out within one week of receipt of your request.

Requests should be forwarded to the Geisinger Commonwealth Registrar's Office.

Student Wellness

The health and well-being of our students is of paramount importance to the School. Students are encouraged to engage in healthy behaviors including participation in programs sponsored by the Student Health Services Team. Student Health Services conducts periodic focus groups and assessment surveys to ensure we are meeting the needs of our students and focuses programming on depression, suicide prevention, stress management, nutrition, and exercise. [The Center for Learning Excellence](#) hosts programs focused on study skills and time management.

Finally, all GCSOM students are encouraged to join a local gym. The Office of Admissions and Student Affairs has coordinated discounted gym memberships for students in each region.

Technology

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine's Information Technologies and Services Department (ITS) provides overall design, development and management of the school's information technology environment in support of its mission and curriculum. The department supports all regional campuses and the school's network is accessible from all locations, creating an environment in which systems, individuals and communities interact seamlessly for learning, teaching, research, community outreach and administration. Through technologies and services, the school strives to create an environment that leads to new possibilities – new bodies of knowledge, new synergies, new capabilities within the school that in turn enable an environment desired and required by students, faculty, staff, affiliates and community stakeholders of the institution.

“My Geisinger Commonwealth” allows students, faculty, and staff to have a virtual view of the institution and the resources available to them. This portal facilitates activities such as groups and organizations, wikis, and blogs. It serves as a vehicle for communicating with students, announcements, task management, calendar events, etc. are all presented via the portal.

The portal also provides students, staff and faculty with in-depth information about admissions, regional campuses, graduate medical education, research, patient care, human resources, faculty affairs, and information technology. The Bursar Office is also located on the portal under student departments. Empower, accessed via the Empower Web link on the portal, is the student information system containing information from the Registrar’s, Financial Aid’s and Bursar’s Offices.

Faculty members use Canvas as the Learning Management System to post course assignments, documents, announcements, grades, etc. for each of their classes. Canvas contains the audio/video delivery system and allows students to view or download course content at any time to a variety of form factors and devices including both browser enabled computers and the latest mobile devices. Classroom capture software is available to faculty members enabling them to provide students with an audio and video record of lectures and laboratory sessions through the portal.

Geisinger Commonwealth’s Technology Development Center, located adjacent to the auditorium, serves as a resource for faculty and students providing audio, photo and video editing software as well as desktop publishing software and a scanner for creation of course content and education related projects.

For graduate students, a bring your own device model has been implemented. Matriculating students’ devices must meet minimum requirements to be utilized. More information will be shared with the students at matriculation.

Information Technologies and Services Help Desk is located at the Medical Science Building (Scranton Campus), room 4033. An IT Ticket Request System is available in the portal. Students can reach the Help Desk at 570-504-9671 ext., 1225 or by email support@som.geisinger.edu.

Title IX

GCSOM embraces a medical education model, which recognizes that quality physicians surge from environments rich in diversity of experiences, cultures and ideas. GCSOM values diversity and is committed to maintaining a work and education environment free of discrimination. Actions and/or services affecting GCSOM employees or students will be applied without regard to sex, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, political affiliation, handicap, disability, marital status, parenting status, veteran status or disabled veteran status, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination based on sex in educational programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance. To ensure compliance with Title IX and other federal and state civil rights laws, Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine (GCSOM) has developed policies and procedures that prohibits sexual misconduct in all its forms and outlines the process for reporting, investigating and addressing violation of the Sexual Misconduct Policy (See Sexual Misconduct Policy). GCSOM complies with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania law on Sexual Violence and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE) Act provision, Section 304 of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013.

Inquiries regarding Title IX may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator or the Title IX Associate Coordinator.

Title IX Coordinator

Arthur Breese, Geisinger Health

Phone – 570-808-5809

Email – awbreese@geisinger.edu

Title IX Associate Coordinator

Jackie Ghormoz, Assistant Dean of Students

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