



MEDICAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM MD / PhD

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

April 12, 2018

In February 2015, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign approved formation of the Carle-Illinois College of Medicine. This is an exciting development for the Urbana campus, but one that had immediate implications for the Urbana site of the University of Illinois College of Medicine (UI COM) and the Medical Scholars Program. The White Committee, a task force led by President Emeritus Joseph White, and including MSP Director Jim Slauch, defined the status of these programs and the timeline for transition.

The UI COM is phasing out the Urbana site because the Champaign-Urbana area cannot support two medical schools. The timeline was designed around the Medical Scholars, providing time for current students to finish both their PhD and MD. No new MSP students were admitted into the current structure after 2015. There was a full class of traditional M1 students in Urbana in 2016-17 with the vast majority of these students moving to Peoria or Rockford. Beginning in fall 2017, the Peoria and Rockford sites began teaching their own M1 curriculum in addition to M2 through M4. In Urbana, the final M1 classes will be taught in the 18-19 academic year; M2 will be offered for the last time in 19-20; last M3 in 20-21, the final class will graduate in 2022.

The UI COM, Urbana campus, and the Carle Illinois College of Medicine have shown unwavering commitment to the success of the current MSP students. All MSP students are being fully funded through the remainder of their PhD and MD. The MSP office is working closely with each student and their advisor to ensure the timely completion of both degrees. For the several students who will not be able to complete both degrees by 2021-22, they will finish their PhD in Urbana and then move to Chicago for the MD degree. Given the timeline, both MSP and Carle Illinois students will be in clinical rotations at the same time. The two Colleges are working closely together to optimize these experiences.

Jim Slauch is on the Carle Illinois COM leadership team and is also on the Presidential-level Transition Oversight Committee, led by Gregory Freund, M.D., Interim Associate Dean for Academic and Clinical Affairs, put in place to ensure a smooth and effective transition for students, staff, and faculty. Many former and current faculty and staff familiar to MSP alums are involved in the Carle Illinois COM. For examples, Nora Few is Director of Admissions for Carle Illinois, and Heather Wright is Coordinator of Student Recruiting, while Dr. Uretz Oliphant, M.D., Clinical Professor and Head of Surgery, is chairing the admissions committee.

The MSP is highly respected on the Urbana campus and everyone wants the program to continue. Indeed, a stated recommendation of the White Committee was that the MSP will be the MD/PhD program of the new Carle Illinois College of Medicine. The first class in the Carle Illinois College of Medicine will begin in summer 2018 and their efforts to date have been focused on establishing an exciting new curriculum, but planning for the MD/PhD program has begun with details yet to be worked out. Things should become clearer over the next year. We will keep you posted.

The MSP remains a strong and vibrant community of scholars. Our challenge is to maintain the many strengths of the program as we transition between medical schools, with our primary focus being the success of our current and future students. We appreciate the critical role that you, as alumni, have in the success of the program and thank you for your support. Please let us know if you have questions.



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