

COSGP NEWSLETTER



COSGP WINTER BUSINESS MEETING UPDATES FOR COM STUDENTS:

COSGP Held its Winter Quarterly Business Meeting virtually January 11-12. Each COM had two representatives in attendance where they discussed key topics in Leadership, Student Finance, Global Health topics and opportunities for students, Wellness Resources, Board Study Tips, and collaborated with other COM leaders to find creative solutions to issues affecting each COM's unique student bodies. **Below you will find highlights and resources for students** discussed at the Business Meeting as well as COSGP Committee Updates and Board Relevant Topic Reviews. For full meeting minutes and topics discussed please reach out to your COM's COSGP Representatives.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

DO Day on Capitol Hill 2026

- Virtual: March 21-22, 2026
- In Person: March 25-26, 2026 in D.C.

National DO Day of Service (NDODs):

- April 25, 2026

Presidential Town Hall with Dr. Bob of the AOA

- Feb. 25, 2026
- Students: 6:30-7:30 p.m. CT

NEW STUDENT RESOURCE
Wellness Tool-Kit
connecting osteopathic medical students with wellness resources

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Past Initiatives Links:

[Wellness Toolbox](#)

[OMELA](#)

[Research Resources](#)

[Sample CV](#)



Let's Budget: The Med Student Guide

Do You Need to Budget?

Medical students face:

- Limited income
- High debt following the conclusion of our education
- Delayed earning potential



Where to Start:

- Identify your Financial Goals
- Identify what you want your life to look like 5 years from now
- Write down the goals in present tense, be specific
- Each goal has a price tag, that you will need to budget for



Key Financial Steps:

- With your goals in mind, organize your current income and expenses
- Find a budget template online.
- For most, Income = Student loans, scholarships, and side hustles
- Expenses can be
 - Fixed (rent, car payments, insurance)
 - Variable (food, gas, entertainment)
 - Financial Goals



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Hidden Costs of 4th Year

- Students on avg spend \$8,000
- Expenses Include:
 - Visiting rotation fees - \$100s-1000s, program specific
 - Sub-I travel and living expenses - \$1500-3000, depending on location
 - Application fees - \$2000-5000, depending on the number of programs
 - Interview travel expenses - \$0-1000s, many programs still offer virtual interviews
- Costs can be reduced with careful planning in the first 3 yrs of Med School

Common Pitfalls

- Setting Unrealistic expectations
- Forgetting irregular or unexpected expenses
- No buffers for high spending periods
- Giving up after "one bad month"

Links to COSGP Finance Lecture Series Recordings:



[Student Loan Discussion with The White Coat Investor](#)



[Financial Advising Discussion with Endeavors Advising](#)



UME Topic: Cardiology

Meet the
Committee

ATHEROSCLEROSIS

Common form of arteriosclerosis
(hardening of arteries)

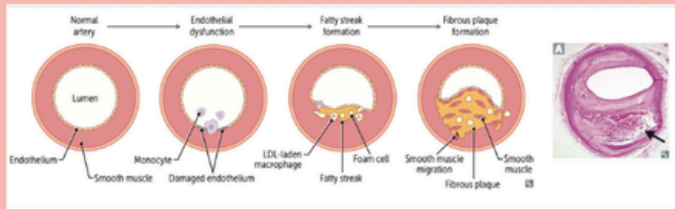
Risk factors: HTN, smoking, dyslipidemia, DM, family history, age, male sex, and postmenopausal.

Symptoms: Angina, claudication. can also be asymptomatic.

Complications: Ischemia, infarction, aneurysm formation, peripheral vascular disease, thrombosis, and embolism

Pathophysiology:

Endothelial cell dysfunction macrophage and LDL accumulation → foam cell formation → fatty streaks → smooth muscle cell migration, extracellular matrix deposition → fibrous plaque → complex atheromas



IN THIS ISSUE:



Atherosclerosis



Marfan Syndrome



Congestive Heart Failure

MARFAN SYNDROME

FBN1 MUTATION ON CHROMOSOME 15

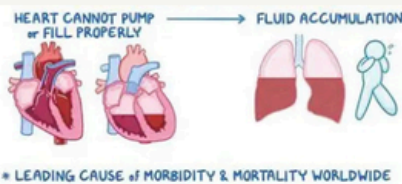


DEFECTIVE FIBRILLIN-1

Symptoms:

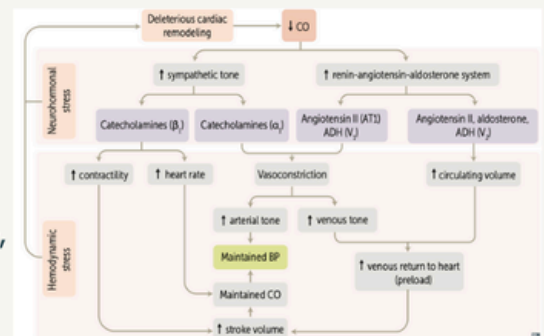
Arachnodactyly, lens dislocation (upward and temporal), aortic dissection, hyperflexible joints

CONGESTIVE HEART FAILURE

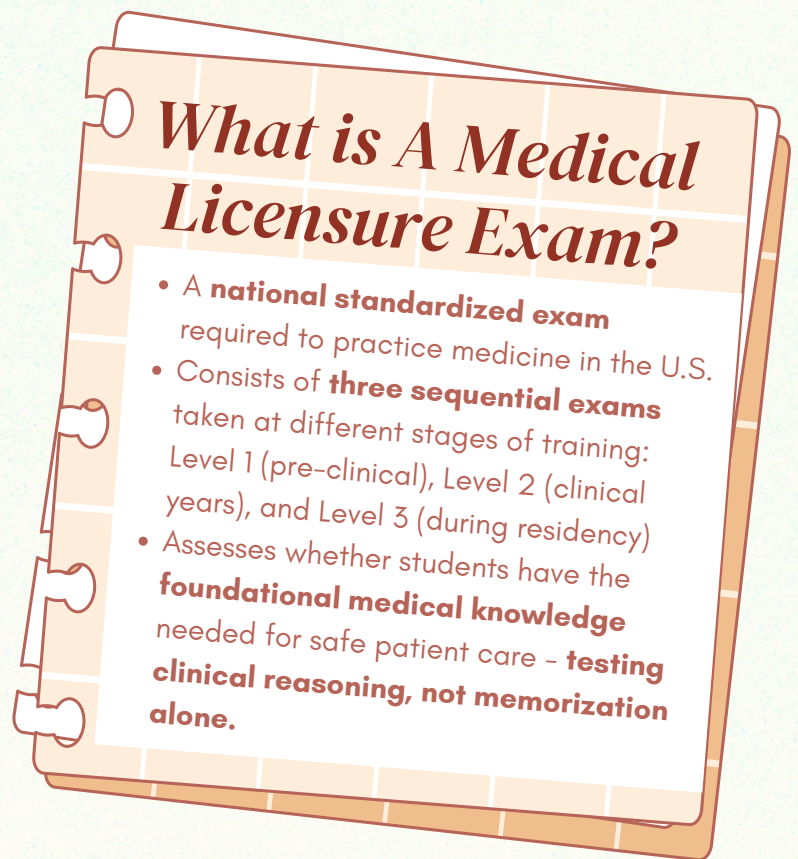


Cardiac pump
dysfunction

Signs & symptoms: dyspnea, orthopnea, fatigue, S3 heart sound, rales, jugular venous distention, and pitting edema.



Level Up Your Board Prep



Level 1 & Step 1: Side-by-side Comparison

Level 1

- A part of the COMLEX licensure
- Required for all DO candidates to take
- Computer based exam
- **320 questions = 8 blocks of 40 qs***
- **Pass/Fail** but need 400 to pass**
- Scores released after ~4-6 weeks

Step 1

- A part of the USMLE licensure
- Not Required for DOs (optional)
- Computer based exam
- **280 questions = 7 blocks of 40 qs**
- **Pass/Fail** but need 196 to pass**
- Scores released after ~2 weeks

Level 2CE & Step 2CK: Side-by-side Comparison

Level 2

- A part of the COMLEX licensure
- Required for all DO candidates to take
- Computer based exam
- **320 questions = 8 blocks of 40 qs***
- Score of **400 to pass**
- Scores released after ~4 -6 weeks

Step 2

- A part of the USMLE licensure
- Not Required for DOs (optional)
- Computer based exam
- **318 questions = 8 blocks of 40 qs**
- Score of **218 to pass**
- Scores released after ~2 weeks

Level Up Your Board Prep

Step & Level: Scheduling

Level

- **Set up an online account**, register, schedule, or cancel a COMLEX-USA examination through your portal
 - www.nbome.org
- Because dates and seats are limited, candidates are advised to attempt to schedule an examination at least 120 days in advance of the desired test date(s).
- Make payment
- Be made **eligible by their COM** to take each COMLEX-USA examination (if level 2, you should already pre-approved)
- Testing dates available for scheduling up to six months in advance. **The examination test dates** can be found on the NBOME website.
- **Registration Fee: \$745**
- **Accommodations:** <https://www.nbome.org/assessments/test-accommodations/>

Rescheduling

- **Reschedule or Cancellation Fee**
 - *More than 30 days before the scheduled date:* \$0
 - *6 to 30 days before the scheduled date:* \$85
 - *1 to 5 days before the scheduled date:* \$250
 - *No Show Fee: Within 24 hours of the scheduled date:* \$400

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Step

- To apply for USMLE examinations, you must submit an application through the appropriate registration entity on website:
 - <https://www.usmle.org/apply-exams>
- Make payment (nonrefundable and nontransferable)
- Medical school verifies your enrollment status
- Schedule exam day/time with Prometric
- Confirm your appointment one (1) week in advance
- On exam day: Present scheduling permit and valid ID
 - [USMLE Checklist](#)
- **Registration Fee: \$695**
- **Accommodations:** <https://www.usmle.org/what-to-know/test-accommodations>

Link to Info For Rescheduling: <https://www.usmle.org/reschedule-exam>

January 1, 2026	Prometric Testing Region	Step 1	Step 2 CK	Step 3
The date that you change your appointment				
46 or more days before (but not including) the first day of the scheduled test date	All testing regions	No Fee	No Fee	No Fee
31-45 days and before (but not including) the first day of the scheduled test date	All testing regions	\$35	\$35	\$35
6-30 days before (but not including) the first day of the scheduled test date	All testing regions	\$100	\$100	\$100
5 or fewer days before (but not including) the first day of the scheduled test date	US and Canada	\$142	\$160	\$285*
5 or fewer days before (but not including) the first day of the scheduled test date	Outside the US and Canada	\$385	\$410	N/A

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Tips for Studying



What's Step got to do with it?

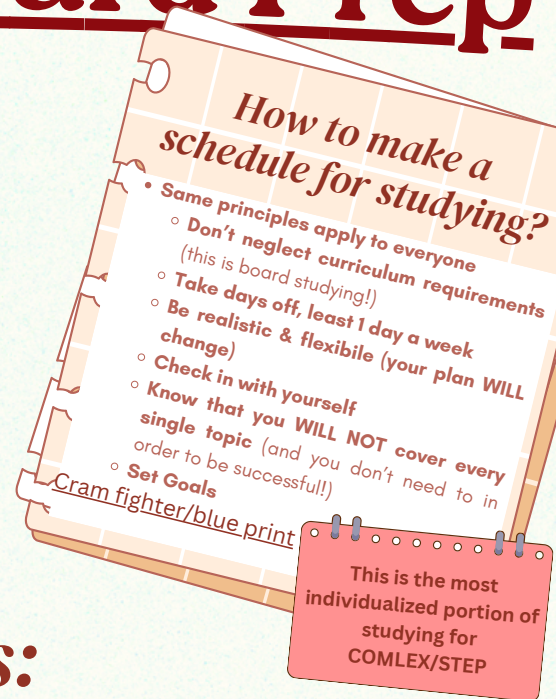
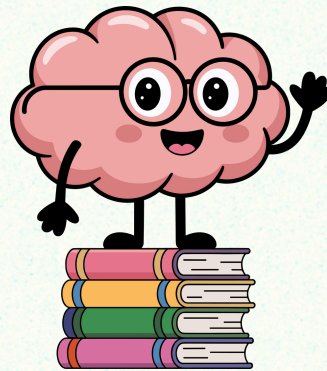
While Step is not required to become fully licensed, it is understandable that some may decide to take it for a variety of reasons.....

- Specialty Competitiveness
- Desired Residency Region
- Potential Fellowship Opportunities

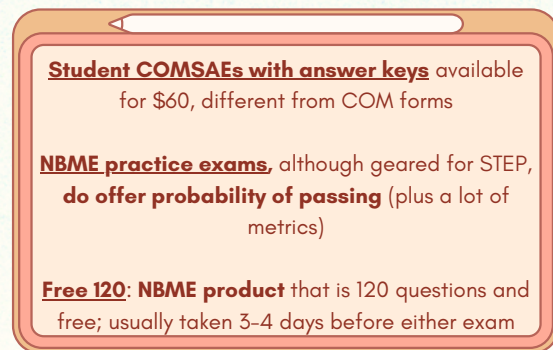
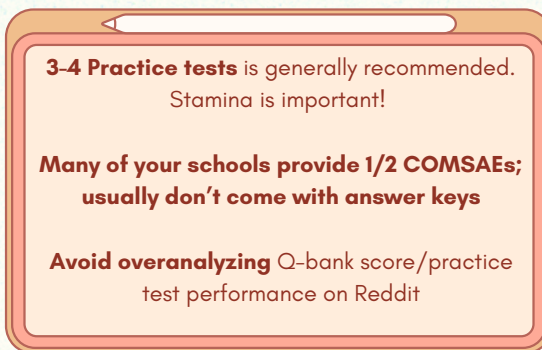
If you are considering/unsure if taking Step is the right decision for you, please speak to your Academic Affairs and get a better picture of your situation!

NRMP Charting Outcomes for U.S. DOs

Level Up Your Board Prep



Practice Tests:



Wellness During Studying

Consistency is KEY:

- Stick to your schedule
- It's more important than completion

Allow for flexibility while keeping yourself accountable:

- Being flexible reduces anxiety and ensures you are able to still complete tasks with the least amount of anxiety if your schedule needs to change

Self Care is NOT optional:

- Take adequate breaks, rest, sleep
- Talk to a friend
- Study with a group in quiet
- Change up study spots
- Eat well-balanced meals
- Treat yourself to your favorite coffee, snack, lunch, etc to reward yourself along the way!

COSGP WELLNESS COMMITTEE

WELLNESS TOOLKIT

LINK TO WELLNESS
TOOLKIT



WHAT IS THE WELLNESS TOOLKIT?

- This is a resource that helps highlight all 9 dimensions of wellness that we and fellow medical students should be educated on and encouraged to connect with.
- This website contains **definitions, facts, extra resources, and wellness events ideas** that fall under each dimension so that you can more easily bring well-rounded wellness supports to your own college of osteopathic medicine and maybe beyond into your future practice as an Osteopathic physician!

9 Dimensions of Wellness:

1. Physical Wellness
2. Emotional Wellness
3. Intellectual Wellness
4. Social Wellness
5. Spiritual Wellness
6. Occupational Wellness
7. Environmental Wellness
8. Financial Wellness
9. Creative Wellness



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FEEDBACK?



UME TOPIC: PULMONOLOGY



Lung Disease

Restrictive

Pathology

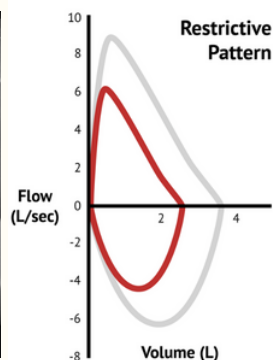
Lung volume is reduced due to process impairing inspiration. These diseases are characterized by lung VOLUME problems.

Differential

- Pleural Effusion
- Sarcoidosis
- Cystic Fibrosis
- Neuromuscular disorder
- Pneumonia
- Asbestosis/Silicosis
- Trapped Lung
- Kyphoscoliosis

Clinical Findings

- Dyspnea, chronic cough (typically dry)
- Inflammatory changes on chest imaging, including fibrosis
- Total Lung Capacity < 80% of expected
- FEV1/FVC < 0.8 where both FEV1 and FVC are low



Obstructive

Pathology

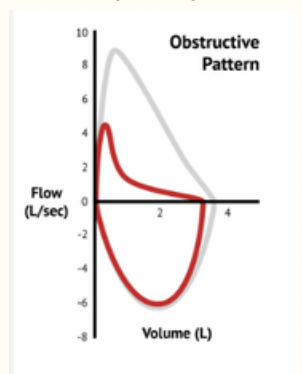
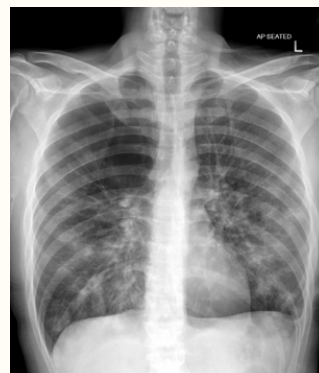
Diffuse airway disease that can limit airflow in or out of the lungs. These diseases are characterized by increased resistance to airflow due to diffuse airway disease.

Differential

- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
 - Emphysema
 - Chronic Bronchitis
- Asthma
- Bronchiectasis
- Bronchiolitis
- Cystic Fibrosis

Clinical Findings

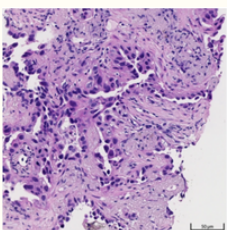
- Dyspnea, wheezing chronic cough with sputum production
- Blue Bloaters/ Pink Puffers
- FEV1/FVC < 0.7
- Typically, an older smoker with sedentary lifestyle



Lung Carcinomas

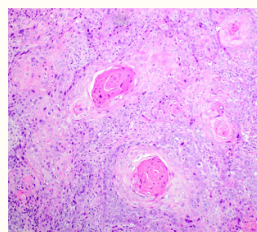
Adenocarcinoma

- Most common type in nonsmokers
- Tend to be in periphery of lung
- Gain-of-function mutations (EGFR, KRAS, ALK)
- Histology shows glandular formation and mucin production



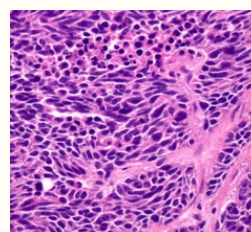
Squamous Cell Carcinoma

- Central tumor arising from metaplastic squamous epithelial cells
- Major risk factor is smoking
- More common in men
- Histology shows intercellular bridges and keratin pearls



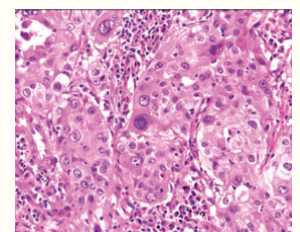
Small Cell Carcinoma

- Centrally located tumor of neuroendocrine cells
- Major risk factor is smoking
- Poor prognosis
- Histology shows small cells with scant cytoplasm, fine "salt and pepper" chromatin, numerous mitoses, and areas of necrosis



Large Cell Carcinoma

- Non-small cell carcinoma without definitive squamous or glandular differentiation
- Diagnosis of exclusion
- Histology shows large nuclei, prominent nucleoli, anaplastic features, and moderate cytoplasm



Global Health Org Spotlight



DOCARE INTERNATIONAL

Founded in 1961 DOCARE International is a medical outreach organization dedicated to providing healthcare to under-served communities around the world. DOCARE provides care via two approaches: short-term global health outreach trips and permanent continuity of care clinics.

Short-term outreach trips are generally one to two weeks in length and provide opportunities for medical students and professionals to volunteer their healthcare services to a community. Permanent clinics provide continuity of care in selected areas and permit medical students and residents to complete one-month rotations. In all cases, DOCARE works with local physicians and nonprofit organizations to sustain assistance, provide appropriate medical supplies, and ensure a positive impact.

Link to DOCARE Website

Link for Membership Info

Link to Info on Starting a COM

DOCARE Chapter

DOCARE Membership Benefits

- Participate in guided trips providing patient care on three continents
- Attend clinical rotations (medical students & residents)
- Travel to extraordinary places and experience new cultures
- Sharpen your clinical acumen and skills
- Expand your knowledge of Global Health
- Earn a DOCARE Global Health Certificate
- Network with like-minded individuals
- Participate in DOCARE committees and leadership activities
- Leave your mark and make the world a better place

**Student Membership = \$50
for all 4 yrs of Med School**

COM Student Activity Spotlight

Mr. VCOM Pageant

The VCOM-Carolinas Student Government Association has proudly partnered with our SOMA chapter to support the planning of their annual Mr. VCOM Male Pageant, a campus tradition that celebrates leadership, creativity, and service. With the support of SGA, student organizations came together to nominate contestants who will showcase their talent, professionalism, and dedication to VCOM during the competition.

This exciting event will feature multiple rounds and a Spirit Week leading up to the main pageant, giving students the opportunity to show their school pride through themed days while also giving back through a campus-wide canned food drive benefiting local food shelters.

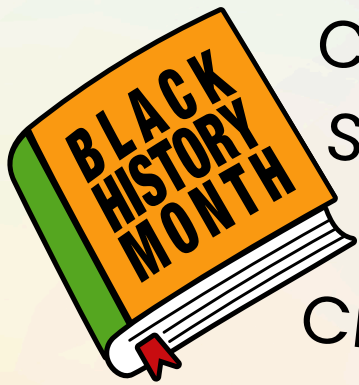
Mr. VCOM is not only a fun and memorable social event, but also a powerful example of collaboration among student organizations and a meaningful platform for philanthropy and community service. The success of this event truly highlights the strength of student leadership and collaboration at VCOM-Carolinas.



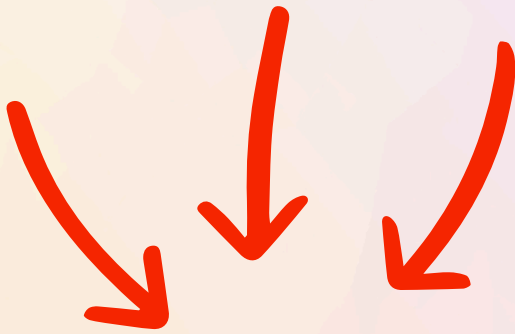
Stay Up to Date With COSGP

Congrats to all our COM
SDOY, GSOY, & SROY Winners!!!

!!! **COMING SOON** !!!



COSGP X SOMA Black History Month
Student Spotlights and an Exciting
Guest Speaker
Check out our Socials for Updates



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