

Career exploration for University of South Alabama College of Medicine medical students

Choosing a medical specialty is one of the most significant decisions a medical student must make. Finding a specialty that fits one's interests, values, personality, and skills can be not only challenging but also time consuming. The College of Medicine wants to facilitate this exploration, as long as the opportunity allows students to adhere to HIPAA compliance and to function within the confines of the student's professional liability insurance.

- As a College of Medicine student, professional liability insurance is provided for career exploration if it contributes to your educational experience and is performed under the guidance and supervision of a USA Health physician. For the purposes of this policy, USA Health physicians are defined as those that either have a regular or adjunct faculty appointment in the USA College of Medicine.
- If you choose to operate outside these guidelines in performing career exploration, you will NOT be covered by USA's professional liability insurance. You must inform the outside supervising physician that you carry no liability coverage for this activity. That physician should have the ability to then decide whether or not to accept you within the confines of his/her professional liability.
- Regardless, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs in the College of Medicine must be notified of career exploration experiences PRIOR to any start date, including: your name and year in school, name of the physician preceptor, the physical location of the experience (name and address of the clinic, hospital, operating room, emergency department, etc.), inclusive dates of the experience, and type of experience (i.e., rounds, clinic visits, attendance in the operating room, etc.). This information will be tracked through the Office of Student Affairs and communicated to the USA Office of Risk Management.
- When interacting with patients or physicians, you must always introduce yourself as a "student physician" or "medical student".
- If you choose to conduct a career exploration experience outside the USA Health System, you may NOT wear your USA badge or your white coat which displays the imprinted USA Student Physician logo.
- The duties and/or tasks to be performed or observed during the exploration experience are those delegated to the student by the prearranged physician preceptor. The preceptor is encouraged to familiarize himself/herself with the approved College of Medicine Policy on Standards for Medical Student Supervision and be in accordance with said policy.

In summary, we in the College of Medicine want to be able to provide COM students with the most comprehensive education possible. Additionally, however, we also want the students, as future physicians, to be aware of the importance of professional liability and to practice within the framework of that awareness.