



WELCOME TO NOLA GUIDE FOR INCOMING 3RD YEARS

UQ-Ochsner MD Program

2023 Edition

Disclaimer

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2023 MD ACADEMIC CALENDAR PHASE 2

2023 MD PROGRAM ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Week Commencing	UQ Academic Calendar 2023	Year 3		Year 4	Week Commencing	Public Holidays & Key Dates
		Pathway 1 Hospital Practice > Comprehensive Clinical Practice	Pathway 2 Comprehensive Clinical Practice > Hospital Practice			
02-Jan-23	Summer Semester	END OF YEAR BREAK			02-Jan-23	02 Jan - New Years Day
09-Jan-23		INTRODUCTORY WEEK			09-Jan-23	
16-Jan-23		Block 1 (Hospital Practice)	Block 1 (Comprehensive Clinical Practice)	Block 1	16-Jan-23	16 Jan - Martin Luther King Day (US only)
23-Jan-23					23-Jan-23	26 Jan - Australia Day (Aus only) TBC - UQMS Sports Day
30-Jan-23					30-Jan-23	
06-Feb-23					06-Feb-23	
13-Feb-23					13-Feb-23	
20-Feb-23					20-Feb-23	21 Feb - Mardi Gras (US only)
27-Feb-23		27-Feb-23				
06-Mar-23		06-Mar-23				
13-Mar-23		13-Mar-23				
20-Mar-23		20-Mar-23	Block 2 (Comprehensive Clinical Practice)	Block 2	27-Mar-23	31 Mar - Toowoomba Show Holiday (TWBA RCS only)
27-Mar-23		27-Mar-23			03-Apr-23	7 Apr - Good Friday
03-Apr-23	03-Apr-23			10-Apr-23	10 Apr - Easter Monday	
10-Apr-23	10-Apr-23	INTRA-SEMESTER BREAK		17-Apr-23		
17-Apr-23	17-Apr-23			24-Apr-23	25 Apr - Anzac Day (Aus only)	
24-Apr-23	24-Apr-23			01-May-23	1 May - Labour Day (QLD only)	
01-May-23	01-May-23			08-May-23		
08-May-23	08-May-23			15-May-23	19 May - Ipswich Show Holiday (ICU Only) 19 May - Fraser Coast Show Holiday (HB RCS only) TBC 26 May - Bundaberg Show Holiday (Bund RCS only) TBC	
15-May-23	15-May-23			22-May-23	29 May - Memorial Day (US only)	
22-May-23	22-May-23			29-May-23	9 Jun - Rockhampton Show Holiday (Rock RCS only) TBC	
29-May-23	29-May-23	REVISION (MON-FRI)	REVISION (MON-FRI)	05-Jun-23		
05-Jun-23	05-Jun-23	EXAMINATION WEEKS	EXAMINATION WEEK	12-Jun-23		
12-Jun-23	12-Jun-23			19-Jun-23		
19-Jun-23	19-Jun-23	INTER-SEMESTER BREAK	INTER-SEMESTER BREAK	26-Jun-23		
26-Jun-23	26-Jun-23			03-Jul-23	4 Jul - Independence Day (US only)	
03-Jul-23	03-Jul-23	Block 4 (Comprehensive Clinical Practice)	Block 4 (Hospital Practice)	10-Jul-23		
10-Jul-23	17-Jul-23			17-Jul-23		
17-Jul-23	24-Jul-23			24-Jul-23		
24-Jul-23	31-Jul-23			31-Jul-23	8 Aug - Exhibition Day (Redland, Redcliffe and Caboolture Only) TBC	
31-Jul-23	07-Aug-23			07-Aug-23		
07-Aug-23	14-Aug-23			14-Aug-23	16 Aug - Exhibition Day (Brisbane only)	
14-Aug-23	21-Aug-23	21-Aug-23				
21-Aug-23	28-Aug-23	28-Aug-23				
28-Aug-23	04-Sep-23	04-Sep-23	4 Sep - Labor Day (US only)			
04-Sep-23	11-Sep-23	11-Sep-23				
11-Sep-23	18-Sep-23	18-Sep-23				
18-Sep-23	25-Sep-23	25-Sep-23				
25-Sep-23	02-Oct-23	02-Oct-23	2 Oct - Queen's Birthday (QLD only)			
02-Oct-23	09-Oct-23	09-Oct-23	9 Oct - Columbus Day (US only)			
09-Oct-23	16-Oct-23	16-Oct-23				
16-Oct-23	23-Oct-23	23-Oct-23				
23-Oct-23	30-Oct-23	30-Oct-23				
30-Oct-23	06-Nov-23	06-Nov-23	10 Nov - Veterans Day (US only)			
06-Nov-23	13-Nov-23	13-Nov-23				
13-Nov-23	20-Nov-23	20-Nov-23	23 Nov - Thanksgiving (US only)			
20-Nov-23	27-Nov-23	27-Nov-23				
27-Nov-23	04-Dec-23	04-Dec-23				
04-Dec-23	11-Dec-23	11-Dec-23				
11-Dec-23	18-Dec-23	18-Dec-23				
18-Dec-23	25-Dec-23	25-Dec-23	25 Dec - Christmas Day			
25-Dec-23	25-Dec-23					



OMSA

The Ochsner Medical Student Association (OMSA) is the representative body for UQ-Ochsner Medical Students in Australia and the United States. OMSA's key mandate is to connect, inform, and advocate for each UQ-Ochsner students. OMSA advocates for UQ-Ochsner students through policy, program development, and representation to faculty, staff, and the community.

Congratulations on having completed your first two years of medical school! This is no easy feat, particularly with all the grueling preparation for USMLE Step 1. But now Step I is behind you, and it is time to move on to the clinical aspects of medical education!

This is what you have been working hard for, and trust us when we say that all the medical knowledge you gained in your first two years will come in handy in surprising ways. Seeing medicine in action and participating in real patient care is incredibly rewarding!

Phase II Contacts:

If you have any questions or concerns during your Phase II education, the go-to email address for the administration is med.ocsStudentAdmin@enquire.au.edu.au.

You can also contact the OMSA officers at OMSAPresident@Ochsner.org, OMSAAcademic@Ochsner.org or refer to the OMSA website at www.ochsneromsa.org.

Welcome to NOLA 2023 Guide:

This guide will try and focus on a few key components to aid your transition. By now, you should all be pros at arranging international flights and moving houses, so most of that will be skipped over. The same principles and websites as in the Brisbane Guide apply here, so you can reference that if you need.

PLANNING YOUR TRANSITION

USMLE Step 1

By now, you should have already decided whether you want to stay in Australia to take your Step 1 or come back early to take it in the US. This is a personal decision and has myriad factors you must decide on for yourself. No matter what, you will need at least four (4) weeks of uninterrupted study time before taking the exam. And it is honestly one of the most important things for your Phase II career that you take Step I *before* Phase II starts. As of January 2019, Ochsner Clinical School students will operate under the "Sit to Progress" policy, meaning Step 1 must not be delayed before Phase II.

We strongly encourage all students to take Step 1 IN THE US. You MUST sit for the exam before starting Phase II.

Planning your arrival in NOLA

This can vary depending on your particular situation. We recommend arriving two (2) weeks early to get a place, ***buy a car***, and learn your way around NOLA a bit. Folks who are locals will have less need for extra time and if you have a friend in the year above you that you can crash with, that is always helpful.

You can look into Airbnb, hotels, or longer-stay motels (typically, Metairie/Kenner will be cheaper than New Orleans proper). Please refer to the online interactive [neighborhood map for more information](#).

It is highly recommended that you find housing and have a car before orientation starts.

Orientation week is a full-day affair. It is difficult (not impossible) to find housing/cars/furnishings during orientation and rotations, but your required hours in Phase 2 are significantly longer than in Phase 1.

Health Insurance

As a UQ-Ochsner medical student, you must have valid health insurance. Your OSHC will not cover you in the US, so you must get your own plan. However, you cannot get rid of your OSHC since you need it for the length of your Visa, and you need your Visa for your return rotation to Australia in Year 4. After you graduate, the unused portions of your OSHC (i.e., all the time you were not in Australia) will be refunded.

NOTE: The health plan provided through the Ochsner Clinical School will be discontinued for 2023.

All students are required to enroll in medical coverage and present proof of coverage prior to beginning clinical placements in January 2023. Failure to do so will result in ineligibility to start placements in January 2023. You will need to shop around for a plan that suits you best and use the website healthcare.gov to help guide you. The marketplace opens on November 1st of each year.

If you are under 26, you could be added to your parents' plan, which is probably your best bet if you qualify.

You may also choose to apply for Medicaid if you qualify. However, you will need a local address in NOLA (***do not use other local addresses to get around this requirement***). Nearly all students - on student loans/family support and thus having no taxable income - qualify for Medicaid, which is free.

An overview of Medicaid plan benefits, which typically include some vision and dental coverage, can be seen here: <https://myplan.healthy.la.gov/choose/compare-plans>.

WHAT TO PACK FROM AUSTRALIA

What you can move back from Australia will dictate what to bring. Books are largely unnecessary unless you bring back review books for Step I dedicated.

Furniture

- Most apartments/rental houses are unfurnished, but there is a Costco and Sam's Club here that can quickly and cheaply restock much of your goods. Craigslist is also a good option for furniture, and there is a second-hand store called [Bridge House](#), which offers many goods for extremely cheap. And don't forget about Amazon; it can be extremely handy over here!

Medical Equipment

- Stethoscopes and penlights are a must-have! We recommend you hold off buying more medical equipment until you start rotations and see what you truly need. Neuro exam kits may come in handy but are also available to borrow through OMSA.

Books

- If you already have textbooks you like, you may wish to bring them. There are many reference books in the Ochsner library, and most departments have their own small libraries with useful references.
- There is a space in the medical library on the main campus for us to have computer access with all the library resources available including, access to EPIC, the electronic medical record that Ochsner uses.
- Note that the access from Ochsner is different from that of UQ. There is much overlap but some differences.
 - From home, the UQ VPN is easier to use than the Ochsner library. If you don't have access to something from Ochsner, try UQ and vice versa.
 - If you have any issues, please contact Student Affairs or an OMSA representative..

Things to leave behind

- Leave anything you can't carry conveniently or electronics that require a higher voltage.
- Determine the cost of excess baggage/shipping to help make your decision. It is often cheaper to buy new things here and try to sell what you have in Australia rather than ship it over!

COMPUTERS & TABLETS

As we all know, with COVID and online exams, a working laptop is necessary!

PC vs. Mac

- It does not matter! Choose whatever you are most comfortable using.
- Most of the computers in hospitals and libraries are Windows, though compatibility issues are uncommon.
- You can access EPIC from your personal computer, tablet, or smartphone.

eReaders and Smartphones: iPad vs. tablet vs. Kindle?

- Having a Smartphone of some kind is nearly a necessity for Phase II.
- You can access EPIC from your tablet or phone - either the full version using a Citrix XenClient or the limited version using the EPIC app; Canto for iPad and Haiku for Android.
- Most residents and even staff communicate very regularly by text message, so it is very handy to have that functionality, at the very least.
- Many applications are also available for information on drugs, medical calculators, surgical operations, antibiograms, medical references (Medscape, UpToDate), and study material (UWorld, Amboss, etc.).

REQUIRED ATTIRE

Make sure to have your standard forms of government-issued ID and at least a few sets of clinical dress with you available immediately. Wear clinic dress to orientation for your ID photos. Unless you are on a surgical or ICU service, you will be rounding in clinical dress.

Clinical Dress

- For the guys, clinical dress is slacks and a button-down shirt with a tie. There are some services/attendings you can get away without a tie, but for the most part, assume you should be wearing one.
- For the ladies, clinical attire is similar to Australia – closed-toe flat shoes, skirts and dresses at knee length, slacks, blouses, and dress shirts.

Scrubs

- For surgical rotations, scrubs are checked out and returned daily. Scrubs can be found in the locker rooms on campus. Please change into your scrubs on campus and change out of them at the end of the day.
- You will be given access to the scrub machines at Ochsner for your scrubs. You use your Ochsner ID card to swipe and pick up clean scrubs and the same to deposit your dirty ones. You can “check out” a maximum of two sets of scrubs.

White Coats

- You will be given two white coats during the white coat ceremony. These are your only two coats [provided by OCS administration] and if you need to replace them you can pay for additional coats.
- You can machine wash them, but dry cleaning does a better job. Whether the added cost is worth the better job is up to you
- You must wear the white coat at **all times** when you are at any Ochsner location or function in a professional capacity (which is most of the time; when in doubt, white coat). You need to wear either clinical dress or Ochsner scrubs under your white coat.

ID Badge

- You will receive your Ochsner ID badge at orientation.
- Your Ochsner ID badge should be visible at ALL TIMES.
- Your Ochsner ID will also provide you access to restricted areas of the hospital.
- With your Ochsner ID, you will also receive a 20% Ochsner employee discount at the cafeterias. They accept cash, credit card, and Apple/Android Pay.

WEATHER

The sun is not as brutal in New Orleans as it is in Brisbane. However, the summers are HOT, and the humidity is typically very high (commonly in the 90-100% range!). Rain is never far off, and sudden heavy rainfall can come unexpectedly.

- **Winter** (November – March):
 - low of 40-45F overnight, high of 65-70F by afternoon. The temperature rarely falls below 35 at night, or below 55 past mid-morning, though it can reach freezing overnight from time to time in December. The relatively high humidity makes it feel even colder.
- **Spring** (March – May):
 - low of 55-60F overnight, high of 75-80F by afternoon. The humidity creeps up, and temperatures start to rise. This is also a great time of year for outside events, though it can get very warm very early in the year.
- **Summer** (May - August):
 - low of 80-85F overnight, high of 95-100F by afternoon. Very humid, frequent rain, the chance of hurricanes. It can easily be 85F, and 90% humidity at 6am.
- **Fall** (August - November):
 - low of 60-65F overnight, high of 80F by afternoon. Still very humid, still occasional rain. This is when the weather starts to get much nicer. There is a lot of variabilities, but September is often the best month for outside dining.
- HURRICANE SEASON is from June 1st to November 30th
- Flooding is extremely common and can happen suddenly.

WHAT TO DO UPON YOUR ARRIVAL IN NOLA

RELAX and get settled into your new house or temporary accommodation. If you have the energy, go out and listen to live music and try some good local food!

Day after arrival

- Start looking for a permanent place to live or start moving into your new home if you've already found one!
- Start looking for a car, if you don't own one already
- Sign up for NOLA Ready, an emergency text message alert system. Text your zip code to 888777.
 - More info here: <https://ready.nola.gov/stay-connected/emergency-alerts/>
- Get your cell phone working
 - Verizon has the best coverage in and around the hospital
 - AT&T is also a good option
 - T-Mobile can be patchy in the hospital and messages may not go through, which can be problematic if you're trying to contact a resident or attending.
 - Enable Wi-Fi calling to enhance coverage in the hospital

Orientation

Be on the lookout for an email from OCS administration about dates for Ochsner Orientation, White Coat Ceremony, Ochsner Preparation for Practice Week, and the start date for Rotation 1.

Orientation prior to the Preparation for Practice week will be a multi-day event that is *absolutely MANDATORY*. Plan your travel accordingly.

You will have photos taken, do mandatory health and drug screenings, be oriented to EPIC (the electronic medical records system Ochsner and many other health systems use) as well as Ochsner in general.

OMSA will join in on orientation to cover helpful tips for the wards!

Please refer to this website for the most up-to-date orientation information: <https://medical-school.uq.edu.au/current-students/doctor-medicine-students/ochsner-students/phase-2-ochsner/orientation>

NOLA NEIGHBORHOODS

- New Orleans is an amazing city with great people who are very proud to be New Orleanian. The history runs deep in New Orleans, with most houses being at least 50 years old and many over 100 years old!
- There are also still scars from Katrina, both physically in the city and psychologically in its people.
 - *As a side note, many people use the hurricanes as a time reference, so know that Katrina was in 2005, Isaac in 2012, and Ida in 2021). Katrina is known as "the storm" and many relate medical problems as starting before or after "the storm".*
- New Orleans is also unique in that there are very few "good" *neighborhoods* but more often "good" areas or streets. You can be in a beautiful part of town with gorgeous houses and a 24-hour security patrol and be only 500 meters away from a significantly worse area with boarded-up houses where you would not want to find yourself after dark.
- Overall, the city is safe, and people are very welcoming. Still it is important to be very aware of your surrounding and **always check out a potential place to live in person and investigate nearby areas.**
- Many places do not offer off-street parking, and so you may find yourself living in a great area but possibly parking in an unsafe area at night if you don't take that into account when you sign a lease.
- Please refer to the [online interactive map outlining the neighborhoods with comments about them.](#) The map also includes points of interest, from restaurants to bars to Ochsner clinical sites.
- Most houses in NOLA are very old. It is essential to ask what sorts of amenities are available. One significant thing to ask about is the wiring of the house. Many old homes do not have grounded outlets, and you can quickly scope out if there has been an upgrade by looking at the number of prongs in the outlets. If you have an ungrounded house (which many are) you would be wise to invest in a good surge protector as at least one laptop computer has been fried from a power surge during a storm.
- Many houses are either "shotguns" which means that every room is in a line; i.e. you could open the front and back doors and shoot a shotgun through to the back without hitting anything. Shotguns tend to be cheaper and work well if you are living by yourself, but can be bothersome with roommates (even if it has two bedrooms, you will have to walk through one bedroom to get to the bathroom/kitchen/living room). There are stand-alone houses (like the share houses you are used to in Brisbane) but many places are duplexes or even quadplexes; old mansions turned into multifamily homes. These can be great to live in, particularly if you have a good neighbor/landlord (sometimes it is the landlord that lives in the other unit).
- The rental laws here in NOLA favor the landlord, not you. Be careful when you sign a lease to ensure exactly what responsibilities are yours and when and how to pay your rent. The BSB and pay-anyone electronic payments you are used to in Brisbane are not as common around here and by law you can be evicted at any point from your lease for non-payment of rent by as little as 5 days, with only 1 or 2 weeks notice given.
- Street flooding happens often and can occur suddenly, without warning. Many students have had their cars flooded or could not reach the hospital due to flooding on their route.
 - Flood map: <http://maps.lsuagcenter.com/floodmaps/>

OTHER HOUSING INFORMATION

Furnished vs. Unfurnished apartments

- Furnished apartments are uncommon in NOLA and generally extremely expensive BUT some students have had success! The extra rent for furnishings can be as much as \$300-500 *per month*, making it much more economical to just buy your own furniture.
- Regarding furnishings: *The closest Ikea is in Houston*. Many students furnish their apartments using furniture from Amazon, Wayfair, Overstock, Craigslist, Tulane Classifieds (Facebook group), or local discount furniture stores.
- If you need something from Ikea, there is a service called Blue Bag that will fetch items from the Houston store and bring them to New Orleans for a fee. Or Ikea will deliver, also for a fee.

Air Conditioning

- Central air is not uncommon, but is not the norm. Most homes are retrofitted with window AC units.
- Ceiling fans are everywhere and will be your best friend, even with the AC on, during the summer.

Documentation for signing a lease

- The documents you had for your lease in Brisbane will cover most, if not all, of what you need.
 - Electronic and a physical copy of identification(s): driver's license, passport, bank card, student ID, etc.
 - Proof of income (i.e. financial aid letter)

Realtors

- The prominent realty companies in New Orleans are Keller Williams, Gardner Realtors and Latter&Blum. They can be excellent resources if you want help in finding a place to live. In general they do not require money for their services as they get a commission from the property owner that has listed the rental property.
 - In the past, students have used Todd Tedesco of Keller Williams Realty and have been very satisfied with his service. He is well aware of our program, who we are, and our general needs, and is willing to take on Ochsner students to help them find places to rent or buy. You can reach him by text or call at his cell (504-250-9053) or by email at toddtedesco@kwrealty.com.
- [Students have also used Craigslist and Facebook Marketplace with success – always be wary of any scams and try to bring a friend/family member along with you.](#)

Utilities

- Discuss this with your landlord
- Utilities may be included in your rent; your landlord may pay upfront and expect reimbursement, or you may transfer utilities to your name ([or a combination of these](#))

TRANSPORTATION

Fast and easy transportation to Ochsner Main Campus (OMC) - **1514 Jefferson Hwy, Jefferson, LA 70121** - is of utmost importance in the first few weeks. After that, reliable transportation to OMC, other Ochsner facilities across South Louisiana, and community clinics will also be necessary. This is why a car is absolutely vital to your Phase II career.

Buying a Car

You absolutely need a car for your time here in NOLA. *The program rules state that you must have a car and be able to drive!* Unlike Brisbane, you cannot rely on public transportation here. Public transportation here is minimal, unreliable, and incompatible with your hours at the hospital. Carpooling is **not** an option. Even if you and your roommates are on the same rotation, you will unlikely be on the same schedule. Your rotations will take you to hospitals and clinics all over South Louisiana. Consider purchasing and registering a car in your home state in order to save on insurance as it is *very expensive* in Louisiana.

Parking

Parking for the hospital is across Jefferson Highway from the hospital, behind the Tansey Breast Center. It is Parking Lot B. **Do not** park in the hospital parking garage – it is reserved for patients, and you will be ticketed. Repeated violations are reported to the clinical school faculty.

Driving in NOLA

In New Orleans, everything is at least 10-15 minutes away unless you can walk it. The streets are always falling apart, with **HUGE** potholes everywhere and the maximum speed limit anywhere in the city is 35mph (and if you are going that fast, it will seem *very fast* to you). During rush hour transit times can be greatly exaggerated. Driving from Audubon to OMC can take 5 minutes at 5am but 20 minutes at 7:45am. Also, there are cameras in School Zone's throughout the city and they **WILL** ticket you in some areas if you go >24mph.

Driving in NoLa takes some getting used to due to the way major streets are laid out (google "neutral ground"), but once you figure it out and get the hang of a few major streets you will find it easy to navigate around.

There are heaps of bad drivers. Not signaling, cutting across multiple lanes of traffic and running red lights and stop signs are common occurrences. **Be defensive and assume people will do stupid things because they will.** Pause for a few seconds before proceeding after the light turns green. **Leave plenty of room.**

Car Insurance

As previously mentioned, the quality of the roads is poor. Additionally, residential areas tend to be narrow. An ideal car is a compact SUV with ample ground clearance. Sports cars and full-sized SUVs/Trucks are doable, but may be difficult to use long term without getting your vehicle scratched.

Comprehensive car coverage is recommended. Accidents are common due to how bad the drivers are in Louisiana. Additionally, parts of the city have flooded during storms resulting in serious damage for some students. Due to the absolute necessity of having your own vehicle as well as the risk of a car being damaged, rental car coverage is worth considering should your car need repairs.

Alternative Transportation

The streetcar is fun to ride, but not a particularly practical way of getting around. You should definitely go for a ride to see the houses on St. Charles and it is a good way to ensure you don't need a designated driver.

A bicycle can come in handy, but this is not a bike-friendly city. Additionally, you will have days when you need to be in the hospital at 5am and not finish till well into the evening. Besides being exhausted, riding around at night is dangerous because the drivers here are not accommodating to cyclists. In other words, a bike is nice and you can use it to commute from time to time, but is **not** a substitute for a car.

FINANCES

Now that you are back in the US, this should be much more familiar and need less explanation. In general, the cost of living is a lot less in New Orleans than in Brisbane, though the utility costs tend to be a bit higher, particularly during the summer (depending on how much you can tolerate that southern heat).

Banking

It is important to note that there are *no* Bank of America or Wells Fargo branches anywhere in Louisiana.

- In general, the leading banks here are: Whitney, Capital One, First NBC Bank, IberiaBank, Chase Bank.
- The most commonly used banks/ATMs around the hospital are Capital One and Whitney Bank.
- If you have a Charles Schwab account, remember that all the ATM fees are reimbursed monthly..

Very generalized budgeting

- Rent: \$500-1,200/month
- Utilities: \$125-250/month (variable based on how "green" you live and whether it is summer or not)
- Internet: \$40-60/month (split between whomever you live with)
- Groceries: \$50-\$100 per person/week (if you live with a few roommates shopping at Costco and splitting the cost can save a lot of money)
- Car insurance: extremely expensive here! Lots of people keep their car registered in their home state to save money!!!
- Phone: \$15-\$75/month
- Entertainment: going out at night is much cheaper than in Brisbane. Most places do not charge a cover and the drinks can be inexpensive. Obviously you can spend money at expensive places, but there are plenty of happy hours with \$1 beers and plenty of places that have \$2 beers regularly. Not to mention 50 cent oysters.

Ways to save money

- Do not get cable TV
- Getting a Chromecast (\$35) and a Hulu and/or Netflix subscription will cover pretty much all of your TV watching needs (except for sports, which may be important enough to you, although there are plenty of sports bars around town. If you have roommates the split cost may well be worthwhile.)
- Satellite TV is also a less-expensive option, as a 2 year contract is viable
- Buy in bulk from Costco or Sam's Club and split the cost with roommates
- Look for happy hours and special meal deals that are always ongoing in New Orleans.
- Spend time wandering around at the free festivals, art shows, and music instead of spending money on events at venues. New Orleans has an average of 400 festivals a year, so there is always something to go to.
- Invest in a fuel-economical car to save money daily and on long road trips when you have the time
- Apartment complex housing tends to be more expensive than duplex houses or shotguns
- Use your Winn-Dixie rewards card to save on gas, or purchase your gas at Costco or Sam's which is typically 30 cents cheaper than anywhere else

MOVING TO NOLA WITH A FAMILY

For those students who are planning to move to New Orleans with family, please contact your OMSA officers or Student Affairs ASAP. We will address any issues or questions on a case-by-case basis. We can provide resources and guidance on neighborhood selection, school districts, daycares, etc. Please contact OMSAliason@ochsner.org for more information.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA



UQ Ochsner Behavioral Health Resources 2022

1. EAP

You are entitled to 5 free counseling sessions with a social worker at Ochsner through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). To arrange for EAP services, first contact ComPsyc, which is the insurance company providing the services, at 1-877-595-5284.

You will ask them for an EAP appointment at Ochsner, **Jefferson Hwy location**. (You will not be asking them for a specific provider, as the Ochsner EAP is listed as a group.) They will give you an EAP number. Then call our Department of Psychiatry at 504-842-4025 and say you want to make an EAP appointment with a social worker. They will ask for the number ComPsyc gave you. (It is important to make sure you give them the EAP number; otherwise they will book this as a regular appointment, and you will be charged for it). When you check in for your appointment in Brent House Suite 400, you will need that EAP number to check in. The appointment should be booked under that number, not under your name, for confidentiality purposes.

If you have seen already an Ochsner Psychiatry social worker through the EAP for 5 free sessions, you have the option of continuing to see that provider, but will have to pay out of pocket for the services as your insurance will not cover individual therapy with an Ochsner social worker.

2. Psychiatric Medication Management

If using your Cigna insurance offered through Ochsner:

Please contact Integrated Behavioral Health at (504) 322-3837 or <https://www.ibhnola.com/>. They have several psychiatrists on staff that can see UQ students and accept your insurance. Please mention that you are a UQ student when calling to schedule your appointment.

3. Ongoing Individual Psychotherapy

If you need/desire individual psychotherapy in addition to the EAP and medication services above, the following providers (social workers) are covered by your Cigna insurance and recommended by Ochsner Psychiatry staff. You will be charged a copay for each visit.

William Arendell – 504-358-0377
Louis Irwin – 504-837-7474
Paula Sheinberg – 504-834-3488

Everett Taylor Aultman – 504-866-3003
Randy Hess – 504-835-6450
Barry Pilson – 504-834-2455

4. Crisis Hotlines

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255
Metropolitan Human Services District 504-826-2675

5. If you do not have the Cigna insurance, cannot get in with one of the aforementioned providers, or have used your EAP visits and would like other affordable options:

- Algiers-Fischer Behavioral Health Center, (504) 568-3130, www.mhsdla.org
- Assurance Care Provider, (504) 472-0068, 2145 Rev. Richard Wilson Dr., Kenner
- Beacon Behavioral Health, (504) 581-4333, 3200 Ridgelake Dr., Ste 100, Metairie 70002
- Central City Behavioral Health Clinic, (504) 568-3130, www.mhsdla.org
- Chartres-Pontchartrain Behavioral Health Center, (504)-568-3130, www.mhsdla.org, 719 Elysian Fields, New Orleans, 70117
- Common Ground Health Clinic, (504) 361-9800, Latino Health Outreach Project: (504) 377-7281, 1400 Teche St., Algiers
- Counseling and Training Center at Our Lady of Holy Cross College, (504) 398-2168, 4123 Woodland Dr, New Orleans (Algiers)

The most up-to-date information on this topic can be found on Blackboard under Ochsner: Phase 2 >> Student Wellness

ROTATIONS

In short, there is no such thing as a "typical" rotation schedule. Each rotation will be different, each service within each rotation will be different, and the same service will be different from week to week and, depending on your attending, resident, and patient flow.

In general, the surgical services are the busiest and start the earliest. The outpatient clinics are typically less strenuous and have more predictable hours. You are expected to (and should want to – this is how you learn!) be part of the team, which means that if an emergency surgery comes in just as you are about to leave at 7pm after you've already been there for 13 hours you may well need to stay.

Whether your attendings/residents say anything about it or not your attitude, work ethic, and how much of a team player you are *will* be noticed. And it *will* be talked about behind your back (whether good or bad). Since many times whether you pass or fail depends on professional behavior, this can really matter. And even if you manage to make it through, your Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE or Dean's Letter) for your residency applications is largely based on the evaluations and comments about you during your rotations. In every sense imaginable, it is in your best interest to make yourself an asset to the team.

Sometimes this may mean "scut" work or just standing around wasting your time. A little bit of this is unavoidable and may be worse with some residents or attendings. In general though, Ochsner physicians are quite good at understanding when your time is wasted and cut you loose. A good strategy is to say up front that you are willing to stay as long as it takes to learn, help patients, and help out the team but that you would like to leave so you can read and study at other times.

However tempting it may be do NOT fabricate "lectures" you have to go to in order to leave service. Most of the time you can get away with it, but besides being unethical, the attendings know that not every time is legit and if you get caught there will likely be heavy consequences.

USMLE

Step 1 is behind you now! Congratulations!!!

There are some legitimate reasons to put off taking Step 1. These include repeatedly failing practice exams, personal or family health concerns, or extreme circumstances outside of your control.

Put simply ***you will not have time to study for Step 1 during Year 3.*** In most instances that someone has put it off they have fared worse, done no better, or fallen into a self-perpetuating spiral of continually putting off the exam. You also make yourself ineligible for any leadership position (elected or appointed) and any research at Ochsner.

We cannot stress enough how vital it is to bite the bullet and take the exam before Year 3 starts. *If you do have to put off the test, for any reason, please get in touch with your society head for further guidance.*

Step 2

Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK) is a multiple choice exam similar to Step 1, but more clinically focused. Preparing for your third-year shelf exams and working through UWorld (provided) will be integral to your success. CK is dependent much more on your clinical knowledge, so it is essential that you participate as much as possible in each clerkship.

- It is not unreasonable to take this exam between Years 3 and 4. Optimal timing will depend on yourself and the rotation order you end up with in Year 4. The earlier, the better – you never know when a pandemic or hurricane will interfere. You can always discuss this with people who have already taken the CK for more personalized guidance. However, you should sit the exam **no later than April of Year 4**.
- Due to the changes in Step 1 scoring, residency programs may begin requiring Step 2. It is **very** much in your best interest to have your CK score back in time for your applications.
- If taking before January, apply around June/July for a spot. If taking in January, spots open up around September.
- The Step 2 Study Guide can be found on Blackboard under Ochsner: Phase 2 >> USMLE Study Guides

OSCES

Due to Step 2 CS's recent discontinuation, ECFMG created Pathways to ensure IMGs meet the clinical and communication skills requirements for ECFMG certification. This includes participation in Year 3 OSCEs and the OET (discussed on the next page).

Aim of Phase 2 OSCE

- The aim of the Phase 2 OSCE is to provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate that you are able to:
- Perform the clinical skills essential in your role as a medical practitioner appropriately and safely at the level expected at graduation.
- Engage in sound clinical reasoning to inform patient care and ongoing patient management.
- Communicate clearly and in a culturally sensitive way with patients, caregivers, and other team members.

What is an OSCE?

- Objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) is a performance-based exam that allows for the standardized clinical skills assessment.
- Objective – in a controlled environment, all candidates complete the same examination stations in the same amount of time, and content and mark schemes are standardized.
- Structured – the marking scheme for each station is structured; specific domains are tested at each station e.g. history taking; explanation; clinical examination; procedures
- Clinical examination – demonstration of clinical capabilities

Why do we use an OSCE?

- There are two key reasons why OSCEs are used in Phase 2:
- The Phase 2 OSCE complements the other assessments used in Phase 2. Different assessment tools, like various diagnostic tools, are used for various purposes. For example, multiple choice questions may be used to assess factual knowledge, and how to apply this knowledge. While, workplace-based assessments (WBAs), such as mini-clinical evaluation exercises (mini-CEXs) and direct observation of procedural skills (DOPS), are used to assess how you perform your clinical capabilities in day-to-day practice.
- OSCEs create an opportunity for you to be directly observed while demonstrating a broad range of clinical skill, and is considered to be a fair test of your overall clinical capabilities

*****Year 3 OSCEs***** are a graduation requirement. They will be held for two-days at the end of Semester 2 in Year 3. All students will attend **both days** completing stations 1-5 one day and 6-10 the next. **All students must pass the OSCEs.** Should a student fail, they may be allowed to take a remedial OSCE in Year 4.

Please visit MD Community Site 2022- Assessment Literacy- OSCE Literacy for OSCE resources, videos and materials [HERE](#).

OET

Applicants are required to attain a satisfactory score on the Occupational English Test (OET) Medicine to satisfy the communication skills required for ECFMG Certification. All Pathway applicants, regardless of citizenship or native language, must satisfy this requirement.

- The exam consists of 4 sections: Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing
 - Regardless of English being your native language, please study and use the resources provided for this exam. Unfortunately, students have failed this exam.
 - There are 3 scheduling options: computer-based at home, computer-based at a testing center, and written at a testing center. You are **strongly recommended to take a computer-based exam at a testing center**. You will schedule the listening, reading, and writing sections together, and the speaking portion will be taken at home on Zoom at a separate time. Be aware that this exam is delivered by Australia when scheduling your speaking exam – the times will be in their time zone and are often offered in the evenings.
 - Plan to begin booking this exam in June/July of Year 4 and **take this exam by October of Year 4**. Again, hurricanes and COVID can unexpectedly interfere so the earlier, the better.
- More info can be found at the following sites:
 - [Assessment of Communications Skills, Including English Language Proficiency](#)
 - [OET website](#)