

ALPINE-SUMMIT (POST-CLERKSHIP) GUIDEBOOK CLASS OF 2027



University of Colorado School of Medicine

Office of Student Life

Mail Stop C292

Fitzsimons Building– Room Q20-N1219

13001 E 17th Place

Aurora, CO 80045

PHONE: 303-724-6407

FAX: 303-724-6409



School of Medicine

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

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APPENDIX B: SCHEDULING AN AWAY ROTATION

INFORMATION WILL BE SENT VIA YOUR **CUANSCHUTZ.EDU** EMAIL ADDRESS. IT IS REQUIRED THAT YOU CHECK IT DAILY. YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR READING IT AND RESPONDING WHEN APPROPRIATE.



Overview of Alpine-Summit/How to Use this Guide:

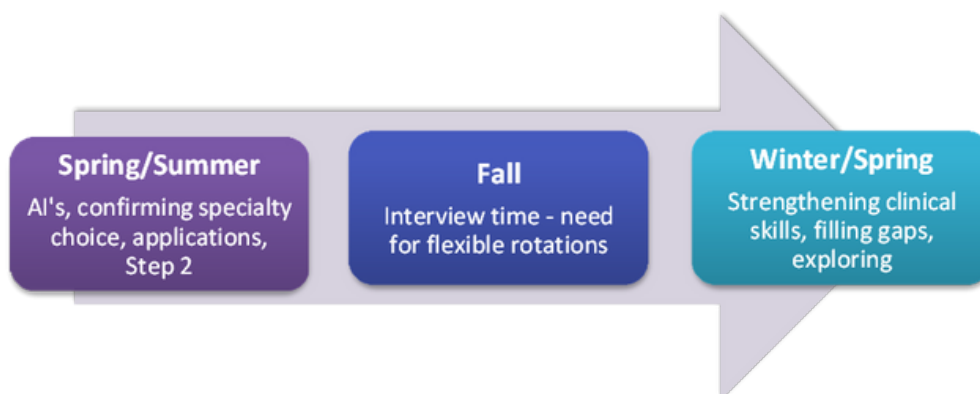
Think of Alpine-Summit as a chance to add both breadth and depth to your education. It is the one part of medical school that is almost completely individualized. We want you to be fully prepared for your chosen internship, but Alpine-Summit is also your opportunity to learn about particular conditions and/or see care in certain settings that you may not see as a resident, deepen core leadership skills, and develop the ability to positively transform the community beyond your direct clinical practice. It is also a time to complete graduation requirements and prepare for the next step in your training. There are a lot of competing priorities, so careful planning is crucial to get the most out of your experience.

In addition to fulfilling the requirements for the CUSOM MD Program, there are at least four additional goals for Alpine-Summit:

- Select a specialty, apply for residency, interview, and match
- Strengthen skills needed for your chosen career and skills needed to lead transformation
- Fill gaps in your education and ensure that you are competent in all core areas before graduation
- Explore areas of medicine that interest you, or that you may not have time to explore in residency

Because of the complexity and individualized nature of Alpine-Summit, students are expected to take an active role in planning and meeting all of the requirements. This can often lead to questions. This guide provides a summary of the phase and expectations of students. It should serve as a resource and reference as you progress through the phase. It complements the MD Policies and Procedures, as well as the course catalog, which includes the options for coursework. An updated version of the course catalog is always available on the electives website (2026-2027 offerings will be posted in August): [https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/education/current-students/curriculum/elective-curriculum#ac-post-clerkship-electives-1\[SC1\]](https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/education/current-students/curriculum/elective-curriculum#ac-post-clerkship-electives-1[SC1])

You can think of the individualized portion of the Alpine-Summit, which occurs after the ASCs, USMLE Step 1, and Trail Immersion 1 as:





Requirements for Alpine-Summit

The general requirements for completing Alpine-Summit are:

- Complete Core Alpine-Summit Courses:
 - 14 weeks of Advanced Science Courses (24 credits, Aug-Nov of year 3)
 - 4 weeks of Leadership Trail Immersions (16 credits, Jan year 3, Sept year 4)
 - 2 weeks of pre-Alpine Basecamp (4 credits, January of year 3)
 - 4 weeks of Transition to Residency Basecamp (8 credits, April-May of year 4)
- Schedule before graduation (Feb year 3 – May year 4)
 - 2 weeks of the designated ICU Course (4 credits) or a 4-week ICU course (8 credits)
 - 4 weeks of an Integrated Science Selective (8 credits)
 - 4 weeks of a Required Acting Internship (8 credits)
 - 28 weeks of additional coursework (56 credits; additional AIs, Aways, Research, Electives, Longitudinal courses)
- Sit for USMLE Step 2 Clinical Knowledge Exam by the July 24 deadline, year 3.
- Complete the intermittent, longitudinal elements of your Trail throughout Alpine-Summit
- Complete the requirements of Mentored Scholarly Activity (or Research Track or approved alternative).
- Comply with SOM policies: No more than 16 weeks of away electives and no more than 12 weeks of research electives.

Requirements for Graduation

The requirements for advancement, retention, and graduation are described in sections 3.7 and 3.8 of the **MD Policies and Procedures**.

- Complete all requirements for the program within the specified time limit of six years of academic enrollment.
- Achieve passing scores on National Board exams by the specified dates.
- Maintain a satisfactory level of performance in all School of Medicine course work.
- Discharge all financial obligations to the University prior to graduation.

You Are Here: *What you need to accomplish during Alpine-Summit*

Below is a checklist for the MD Program and graduation requirements. You can use this checklist to make sure you are on track. Requirements for advancement and graduation are found in sections 3.7 and 3.8 of the [MD Policies and Procedures](#).

| | Check | Requirement |
|---------------|-------|--|
| Overall | | Maintain status as a full-time student for a minimum of four academic years, including payment of tuition for each of the semesters during those academic years. |
| | | Complete the program in no more than six years of academic enrollment. |
| End of Plains | | Successfully complete Plains required courses and <u>achieve</u> passing grades in both required courses and electives. |
| | | <i>Confirm that passing grades are posted on your transcript.</i> |
| Foothills | | Complete the Foothills Basecamp |
| | | Successfully complete Foothills clerkships. <i>Confirm that passing grades are posted on your transcript.</i> |
| Alpine-Summit | | Complete the Advanced Science Courses (ASCs). |
| | | Successfully <u>complete</u> the Clinical Practice Exam (CPE) during the ASCs. |
| | | Achieve a passing score on USMLE Step 1 by January 11 th , <u>2026</u> . |
| | | Complete the Trail Immersion |
| | | Complete the Alpine Basecamp |
| | | Complete at least one SOM-approved Required Acting Internship. |
| | | Complete the Critical Care rotation requirement |
| | | Complete one Integrated Science Selective |
| | | Complete 28 weeks (56 credits) of 8000 level courses. Restrictions and special instructions apply. |
| | | Complete the requirements for MSA or Research Track (Research Track students must complete 2 required electives in the Alpine phase). |
| | | Sit for USMLE Step 2 CK by July 24, 2026. |
| | | Complete the second Trail immersion and Trail requirements |
| | | Meet and review MSPE letter with one of the Deans. |
| | | Apply for residency through ERAS/Urology/Military Match/San Francisco Match |
| | | Complete the four-week Transition to Residency in April-May 2027 |

Dates and Deadlines

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL DATES IN THIS SECTION ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE - UPDATES WILL BE SENT TO YOUR CUANSCHUTZ EMAIL

Registering for Electives and Externships

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Jan 2026 | VSLO Opens Access granted when Individualized Learning Plan and Pre-Away Attestation Form have been submitted in Canvas. |
| Nov 2025 | Oasis Opens for lottery |
| Sept.2025 & Feb.2026 | Scholars Year Applications Due – 2 Exit Dates: Early Jan. 2026 and Late May/Early June 2026 |

MSPE Preparation

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| April – August 2026 | Schedule MSPE Review |
| Late Sep, 2026 | MSPE Letters uploaded into residency match systems |

ERAS/Military/San Francisco Match (Many dates tentative)

| | |
|----------------|---|
| June 2026 | Start Applying to San Francisco Match (Ophthalmology & Plastic Surgery) |
| June 2026 | ERAS opens |
| Summer 2026 | Start applying to MODS (military match) |
| Sept 2026 | Start Applying to residency programs in ERAS |
| Sept 2026 | Residency programs start receiving applications |
| Sept 2026 | NRMP Registration Opens |
| Jan 2026 | NRMP Registration Deadline |
| Early-Dec 2026 | Navy/Army/Air Force Match Released |
| Feb 2027 | San Francisco Match Released |
| Feb 2027 | NRMP Rank order list begins |
| Mid-Jan 2027 | Urology Match Released |
| Feb 2027 | NRMP Rank Order List Deadline (tentative) |
| March 2027 | Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program (SOAP) |
| Mid-March 2027 | Match Day |

Graduation

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| March – April 2027 | Paperwork due for personal hooders |
| Feb/March 2027 | Mandatory Loan Repayment Session & Optional Home Buying Session |
| March – April 2027 | Graduation regalia order |
| May 2027 | Graduation Rehearsal |
| May 2027 | Honors Convocation |
| May 2027 | Graduation |

Financial Aid

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Early 2026 | Renew 26/27 FAFSA (www.studentaid.gov) |
| Spring 2027 | Required: Loan Repayment Session in late Feb./Early March |
| Spring 2027 | Optional: Individual Loan Repayment Planning Sessions & Special Interest Sessions |

Miscellaneous

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Feb-March. 2026 | GHHS Nomination and Selection |
| Aug. 2026 | AOA Applications |
| Jan. 11, 2026 | Step 1 Deadline |
| July 24, 2026 | Step 2 Deadline |



Suggested Timeline of Activities for the Fourth Year

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|---|
| Early Alpine-Summit/ ASC | Fall/Winter 2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meet with advisors in potential specialties and the Office of Student Affairs about your career options. You may also want to contact other faculty members whom you believe will give you good advice.• Schedule Step 1 & 2 CK exam• Plan a fourth-year schedule that is consistent with your career goals; review this schedule with your advisor/mentor• Organize and gather information that you may need for externships or residency programs: Immunizations, HIPAA certification, background checks, transcripts, USMLE transcripts, letters of recommendations, etc.• For information on specialties, career planning, and preparing a competitive application refer to Careers in Medicine, https://www.aamc.org/cim/• Update Curriculum Vitae (CV)• Schedule required Summative Clinical Practice Exam with CAPE (IDPT-7102).• Think about physicians who might be good writers of letters of recommendation / upcoming rotations from which you will request letters. You will need three-four letters minimum.• Required 2-weeks – Basecamp (Beginning of January 2026)• Have Composite photo taken with OSL. |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|---|

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|--|
| Individualized Alpine- Summit | Spring 2026 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-May: ERAS 2026 Applicant Manuals will be available on the ERAS web site. • Research programs, application requirements, and deadlines online. • Visit the FREIDA (www.ama-assn.org) website to research residency programs. • Begin to inquire, research websites, and contact other hospitals/medical schools regarding residency programs and away elective sites – especially ones in early match programs and competitive programs. VSLO (Visiting Student Learning Opportunities) is an Association of American Medical Colleges application for fourth-year clinical away electives. • If you are thinking about doing an early match program, find out about application deadlines by visiting https://www.sfmach.org or www.aunet.org. Keep in mind that deadlines are ultimately determined by each program. • OSL sends you information about the MSPE process. |
| | April-May | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSPE Process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete your MSPE Noteworthy Characteristics Survey ASAP ○ OSL will reach out to you when your letter is ready for review. ○ The process runs all summer, with all letters completed by the end of August. • Letters of Recommendation – At least one typically comes from acting internships. Many will have “Departmental Letters” • Schedule an appointment to have your senior composite picture taken if you don’t take one with OSL. |
| | June | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare your personal statement. Your specialty advisor can provide guidance. Have three to four people review your Personal Statement (plan on multiple drafts). |
| | July - September | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letters of recommendation can start to be uploaded. • Residency letters will need to be uploaded to the relevant portal by the letter writer. |

| | | |
|--|-----------|---|
| | August | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSPE APPOINTMENTS END IN EARLY AUGUST • AOA applications take place • Registration for the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) is an online process which begins in August. You will need to complete the form, pay, and agree to the Terms and Conditions. The NRMP website is: http://www.nrmp.org/. • Non-ERAS: If you're applying to a non-ERAS program, follow directions and application procedures established by the program. Please note: In order to participate in SOAP, you must have registered with the NRMP. Be sure to reach out to OSL to ensure your documents are uploaded accordingly. • Review your transcript when prompted to do so by email. • If you are couples matching, we recommend meeting with OSL to provide additional guidance |
| | September | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete your supplemental application if needed for your specialty. It will be due in mid-September. • ERAS opens to program directors in late September. Plan to have your application completed prior to this date. • Proofread your application multiple times. You may submit parts of your ERAS application without waiting until all items are available, but please note that once applications are submitted, you can no longer make changes. • You will apply to the programs by designating them in ERAS. Apply to programs that range in competitiveness from "stretch" to "backup." • Early Match specialty applications should be completed and submitted. • Prepare for residency interviews. Think about appropriate clothing for a professional appearance, and if you will be interviewing in-person, don't forget to consider the weather conditions. Consider participating in the mock interview session organized by the Office of Student Life and the Advisory College Program. • Most residency programs ask for photos and you can use your senior composite picture. • Proofread your MSPE final draft in early September. • OSL will upload your MSPE letter and transcript to ERAS |

| | | |
|--------|----------|--|
| | October | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular match specialties applications should be completed and submitted. Start scheduling interviews, make travel arrangements. |
| | November | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue scheduling interviews. Start interviewing (continue through January for regular match). |
| | December | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview Military match results are announced in mid-December May graduates apply for your diploma. Email notification will be sent by Student Affairs. |
| | January | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue interviewing Finalize and submit Rank Order Lists for early match programs. Urology match results announced |
| | February | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ophthalmology match results announced Graduation Check: Make sure that everything shows on your transcript, and you have completed (or scheduled) everything you will need to graduate. (Note that Spring grades will not be entered until closer to graduation) Finalize and submit Rank Order List for regular match (NRMP) programs |
| Summit | March | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Order graduation regalia (cap and gown) for both you and your personal hooder. This should be done before Basecamps (IDPT 8061) in early March-April. Match Day: Mid-March 2027. Residency programs require a lot of paperwork. They will send out contracts and multiple forms (health insurance, tax forms, etc.) immediately following the match. If you plan to travel after the match, talk to your program re: timely completion of paperwork. Please bring your paperwork to Student Life if you need it notarized. |
| | April | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MSA Capstone Event Individual Loan Counseling Explore options for housing for residency Short break after Match to prep for residency Required 4-week Transition to Residency Course |
| | May | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time off to Prep for Residency Senior Skits Honors Convocation Cap and Gown Pick-up Graduation rehearsals: Week of graduation (Required) Graduation- May 2027! (Attendance is required) |



Acting Internships, Electives, and Other Courses in the individualized portion of Alpine-Summit

Following the Advanced Science Courses, Step 1 exam, Trail Immersion 1 and Alpine Basecamp, students enter the individualized portion of the Alpine-Summit, which is divided into three important phases:

Spring and Summer (February-August)

This is prime time for acting internships and rotations to help in determining specialty choice and obtaining letters of recommendation, including optional away rotations starting in June. Due to the lottery system for acting internships, you may not get the rotation in the exact month that you would prefer, so remember to be flexible in thinking about your fourth-year schedule.

Fall (September-December)

Starting as early as mid-October, students will begin receiving interview requests. A flexible schedule comprised of research and longitudinal courses will enable students to do interviews while also meeting school requirements. Students who did not complete an AI that was in an ICU setting may also complete a 2-week Critical Care course during this timeframe. Students also complete their second two-week Trail immersion during September of graduation year.

Spring of Year 4 (January-May)

Most interviews are completed by the end of January; therefore, the spring semester allows students to take rotations that will strengthen their clinical skills, fill gaps in their education, and to explore areas of interest that they won't experience in residency. There are several popular electives that are only offered during this semester. Students can put themselves on the waiting lists for these courses in Oasis if they are not assigned to them via the lottery.

Types of Courses in the Individualized Alpine-Summit

There are several different types of courses available to students in the individualized portion of Alpine-Summit. When designing your schedule, make sure to pay attention to the specific requirements for each course, as well as overall restrictions, including limits on the total amount of research or away coursework. Unless a course is designated hybrid or remote in Oasis, students are expected to attend all scheduled course events in-person.



Acting Internships

Four-week rotations devoted to the care of hospitalized patients. Students assume primary patient care responsibilities and must take call, similar to the interns on the team. Although the SOM offers numerous “Acting Internships” and “Advanced Career Electives,” students must complete one Required Acting Internship which are courses specifically designed to provide and assess certain core, required graduation competencies. Required Acting Internships receive the “Course Type -> Alpine/Summit (Post-clerkship) Acting Internship” in Oasis. Courses can work with the Assistant Dean for Medical Education Alpine-Summit (Post-Clerkship) Curriculum to apply to change their designation to count as a Required Acting Internship; however, this process leads to a change in designation for the next Academic Year and cannot be given retrospectively.

Trails

In order to enhance their ability to positively transform the health of their future community beyond their direct clinical practice, students will complete one of the following Trails across the course of the Alpine-Summit: Bioethics & Humanities, Medical Education, Health Systems & Community Leadership (Anschutz or Fort Collins Branch), Research, One Health (Fort Collins Branch). Trails utilize common learning concepts in leadership, curiosity, and commitment to prepare students to be change agents in a given context. Trails include two 2-week immersions (January of third year and September of fourth year) and intermittent, longitudinal elements throughout Alpine-Summit.

Critical Care/ICU Course

In order to identify and stabilize critically ill patients, describe the unique processes of care in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU), and engage in interprofessional learning and care in an advanced clinical setting, all students complete a longitudinal acute and critical care learning experience in Alpine-Summit. This experience includes at least two weeks rotating in one of the ICUs at a SOM core site and participating in didactics/simulations addressing essential topics and skills. To meet this requirement, students can complete a 4-week Acting Internship that is exclusively in one of the core ICUs (this counts toward both the required Acting Internship requirement and the Critical Care requirement), a 4-week Elective that is exclusively in one of the core ICUs, or complete one of the 2-week Critical Care courses in a core ICU.

Integrated Science Selectives

These 4-week courses integrate biomedical and clinical science learning in various didactic and clinical settings to help students learn about cutting-edge and basic medical science in a given field, provide a way of thinking about how to advance the edge of the evidence and advanced clinical care, and engage in self-directed learning. Students must complete one Integrated Science Selective during Alpine-Summit.



Clinical Rotations

Two- or four-week rotations in which students work in a clinical setting but may not have as high a degree of responsibility as in an acting internship. These rotations are a good way to confirm specialty choices and to fill gaps in your clinical education.

Two-week clinical rotations are not available for all courses and are only offered at certain times of year. In the [Course Catalog](#), if a course duration is “2 or 4 weeks”, you can reach out to the course director to request a 2-week section. If the course duration is “4 weeks”, that is the only duration offered. These rotations must be scheduled manually with the help of Curriculum (email som.schedule@ucdenver.edu).

Didactic Courses

There are a few didactic courses that focus on strengthening skills – procedures, leadership skills, wilderness medicine concepts, etc. These rotations usually do not involve direct patient care.

Longitudinal Courses

There are several longitudinal courses which students complete over an entire semester while simultaneously completing other electives, doing research, or interviewing. Examples in this category include: Physician as Educator, Advanced Foundations of Doctoring, etc..

Research Courses

There are several options for getting credit for research. **The maximum total number of weeks of research courses allowed is 12 (24 credits).** For all research courses, you must submit the electronic approval form in Oasis at least six weeks prior to the start of the rotation. Mentor approval is required and must be uploaded to Oasis.

- **MSA Research Electives** – There are two different four-week electives that can be taken to complete your MSA project: IDPT 8091 and IDPT 8093. You can take just 8091 or both 8091 and 8093.
- **Research Track Electives** – Students in the Research Track are required to take two 4-week Research Track Electives to work on their projects: IDPT 8601 and IDPT 8602. IDPT 8601 must be taken prior to IDPT 8602.
- **Department-Specific Research Electives** – Most departments have specific electives that you can take if you want to do research above and beyond what you need to do for your MSA. Students who complete 12 weeks of research usually use eight weeks of MSA research and then an additional four weeks in a departmental research course.



Away Rotations

These are four-week rotations at other institutions, also referred to as Audition Electives. Students may complete virtual away rotations at other institutions and should contact the Assistant Dean for Medical Education, Alpine-Summit (Post-Clerkship) Curriculum and Office of Student Life before completing these virtual rotations to see if they are eligible for CUSOM credit.

Students usually identify away rotations through VSLO. Some institutions do not use VSLO, and students must apply to these schools and facilities directly. In either situation, the electronic approval form must be completed in Oasis. ***Note: students must complete the Away Rotation module and be approved (not on the waitlist) in a CU "Away Elective" course in the appropriate CU department before going on the away rotation to receive CU credit and be covered by CU malpractice insurance. Failure to secure this approval before starting the away rotation is a professionalism violation.**

- You will be provided with a list of institutions that we currently have an Affiliation Agreement with. If the program is on the list of approved institutions, the form must be completed at least six weeks prior to the start of the rotation.
- **If the institution is not on the approved list, the form should be completed as soon as possible (a minimum of six weeks - but preferably at least two months - before the rotation begins) and the student should contact Student Life immediately so that an affiliation agreement can be established prior to the start of the rotation (som.schedule@ucdenver.edu).**
- If CUSOM cannot establish an affiliation agreement, you will **NOT** be able to participate in the away rotation.
- The maximum number of weeks at other institutions is 16 (32 credits).

Reasons to do Away Rotations

- Allows you to meet faculty and residents, learn about programs first-hand, and find out if a program is a good fit for you and your career goals.
- For highly competitive residency programs, you make yourself known to the program. If the program is a reach for you and you may not get an interview based on your application alone, an away rotation may allow you to make a good impression and get an interview.
- If you need/want to be in a specific geographic area, making yourself known to the programs may help and may also allow you to better determine where you want to be for residency.

Some potential negatives

- You can't do audition electives at all the programs that you are considering, so you need to consider this before accepting offers.
- You must perform at your best; you can make a negative impression just as easily as you can make a positive impression.
- There are costs associated with transportation and lodging while on electives away.
- It is hard to plan away rotations when you are uncertain about your specialty choice.



Some Advice

- Ask your specialty advisor for their thoughts on away rotations, as every specialty is different.
- Carefully consider if you want to do an acting internship or a clinical elective at another site. Acting Internships have high stakes - you really must be at your best - but they could have more potential benefit. Clinical electives still allow you to get a feel for the residency, but with slightly less risk.
- Apply early and stay organized with all your application materials, such as HIPAA certification, immunization records, background check, transcript, USMLE transcript, and photograph
- Away rotations may not correspond exactly to our course/block schedule, and you may need to plan an extra week (or two) so that they don't overlap with other courses on your schedule in Oasis.

International Rotations

There are a limited number of international experiences in Alpine-Summit. For students not in the Global Health Track, the only course that can be taken to receive credit is IDPT8035 International Experiences. There is a stringent process for vetting all proposed international experiences which includes completing an application through the University of Colorado Office of Global Education. You must start the application process for international courses **at least 90 days in advance of the elective's start date.**

Developing Your Initial Alpine-Summit Schedule

- Initial individualized Alpine-Summit scheduling is done through a lottery in Oasis. During your third and fourth years of medical school, you will have two lotteries. The first during the Advanced Science Courses, the second will be the following fall. The first Alpine lottery will allow you to select course preferences for the entire calendar year ahead. This period is longer than an academic year and will be adjusted to reflect both academic years next fall. You will receive more instructions and details about the lottery in early Fall of your 3rd year.
- Student Life reconciles your schedule in Oasis with the Registrar to assure that you have an accurate transcript.
- **Students must enroll in at least one course each semester to receive financial aid and to meet graduation requirements.**



All students must complete the Individualized Learning Plan and meet with their Compass Guide and a Specialty Advisor to be eligible to submit choices for the lottery. This involves reflecting on your interests, passions, strengths, experiences, achievements, and areas for further development given your career and personal goals. Specialty Advisors are specific faculty in each department who are willing to help you think about your chosen career plans. Moreover, specialty advisors are a key resource for information about the skills and competencies needed to enter residency. Some specialties have created national lists of suggested experiences for the post-clerkship timeframe – ask your specialty advisor if your field has one.

| |
|--|
| Complete the Individualized Learning Plan. This will be provided to you in the Fall. |
| <u>Schedule a time to meet</u> with your Compass Guide and a Specialty Advisor in your preferred specialty. (See Appendix A for a current listing.) Consider speaking with more than one specialty advisor when considering more than one specialty. |
| <u>Take your personal statement ideas, CV, and a copy of your transcript and/or clerkship evaluations</u> to your meeting with a Specialty Advisor. |
| <u>Be prepared to discuss a realistic plan</u> – which programs are better suited for you, your competitiveness for the specialty and specific programs, and what you might do to strengthen your application for each program. |
| <u>Meet and discuss</u> your completed form. Have the Compass Guide and Specialty Advisor sign the form. |
| Upload the signed form in Canvas on the Student Life Page. |

Additional Resources:

- Your Compass Guides, or other student advisors.
- ["The Intricacies of Fourth Year"](#) is a student-created fourth-year planning guide specific to the University of Colorado and is available on the electives website
- [Careers in Medicine](#) has several pages with helpful information on planning your fourth year



Modifying Your Schedule during the Year

First, plan your schedule so that you build in the flexibility that you need at the time when you need it. In other words, take research or longitudinal courses, during the interview season for your specialty or when you have a planned major life event (e.g., a wedding).

Second, be aware that CUSOM courses and the start and end dates for all courses are fixed for the academic year. This means that requests for new courses or modified course dates are not allowed. This is important in the case of away rotations because the start/end dates of courses at other institutions may not align with those at CUSOM. Find out the start/end dates at other institutions EARLY and plan your schedule accordingly. You must be registered in the CU Oasis system for your away rotation (within the appropriate Department's away rotation course). If the away institution's schedule does not align with CU course blocks, you will do the rotation based on the schedule from the away institution and you can choose one of the CU course blocks that overlaps with the away rotation schedule.

Third, interview season is not an exception to the policy. Again, plan ahead: Take courses that allow you the flexibility that you need during this time. All Alpine-Summit classes are effectively "locked" against adds starting 42 days before the course starts. Any adds of a course within that 42-day window require approval from a Dean in Student Life, or the Assistant Dean for Medical Education, Alpine-Summit (Post-Clerkship) Curriculum . **This means you should plan to make any adds/drops as early as possible.**

What is the Alpine-Summit Add/Drop Policy?

The policy states that 28 days prior to the start of a course, students are considered enrolled. Once enrolled, students can only drop due to extenuating circumstances and need to get approval from a Dean in Student Life, or the Assistant Dean for Medical Education, Alpine-Summit (Post-Clerkship) Curriculum. See the [Policies & Procedures](#) for this policy and further important details.

Remember this policy when signing up for courses. Pay attention to your schedule in Oasis and make sure it is always accurate.

Attendance, Absences, and Make-Up Work

Please see sections 1.4.2.2 and 1.4.2.3 in the [Policies & Procedures](#) for more information on Post-Clerkship Absences.



Fulfill Your Scholarly Requirement

All students must complete a scholarly project, either as part of the Mentored Scholarly Activity (MSA) or through the successful completion of the Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP) or the CUSOM Research Track.

Mentored Scholarly Activity Project

The MSA project is aimed at fostering self-directed scholarship, developing skills to address gaps in the medical literature or implementation of best practices, developing key communication skills, and handling challenges that invariably arise during the conception, planning, and completion of a successful project. Students will complete an in-depth scholarly project in an academic area of interest related to medicine or health care with the mentorship of a CU faculty member. The syllabus and course goals can be found on the MSA website:

<https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/education/current-students/curriculum/mentored-scholarly-activity>

MSA Dates and Deadlines

| Deadline | Work to be completed |
|-------------|--|
| Aug. 2025 | Complete Phase III Project Update survey via Canvas |
| Nov. 2025 | Watch Video Recording: How to Write an Abstract via Canvas Panopto |
| Jan. 2026 | Present 10-minute Work in Progress presentation on the status of your project to a small group of classmates and an associate director. |
| March 2026 | Phase III Narrative Reflection due via Canvas. |
| Dec. 2026 | Submit first draft of MSA paper via Canvas. Draft paper to be reviewed by mentor and appropriate Associate Director. |
| Feb. 2027 | Submit final MSA paper, 10-25 pages, 20 references. First authored paper published in a peer-reviewed journal may substitute. If the student is not the first author, a description of the student's contribution to the project and paper will be required as a separate uploaded document if not already included in the published manuscript. |
| April. 2027 | Develop a poster describing your scholarly work for the MSA capstone event. |
| | Present your work at your assigned poster session during the MSA capstone event. |
| | Evaluate peer presentations at the MSA Capstone event. |

What Constitutes an MSA Project?

There are three parts to the MSA final product. The specific details regarding formatting, required elements, and other specifics can be found on the [MSA website](#).

Manuscript Summarizing Your Project

10-25 pages depending on your thematic area, or a published paper in a peer reviewed journal. The minimum paper length for an unpublished manuscript is 10 pages (double-spaced, may include abstract, tables and figures, does not include title page or references). Projects that use a critical analysis methodology (as in the Humanities) may be longer in page length.

Poster Presentation

For most projects, the poster will summarize your paper. For MSA projects in the arts – the poster will include a brief description of your project and the dates/location of your presentation.

Presentation

For most MSA projects, the presentation is of your poster, including a brief project summary (< 3 minutes, you'll have a lot of traffic/visitors) and time for answering questions. For MSA projects in the arts, the presentation will be the actual exhibit or performance followed or preceded by a summary of the work and answering questions.

How do I know if I successfully completed this requirement?

The MSA is graded pass/fail, and your MSA final product is evaluated based on whether it is below, meets, or exceeds expectations. Both faculty and students will evaluate your presentation and poster on the following criteria:

- Selection of an appropriate problem/care gap: statement/question/hypothesis/aim
- Selection of an appropriate methodology to answer the problem/ statement/question/hypothesis/aim
- Background literature search and critical review
- Application of appropriate methodology
- Results
- Clarity of poster
- Clarity of presentation
- Ability to answer questions about the work and field

Can I get elective credit to complete my MSA project?

Yes, there are electives you can take to provide you with course credit and time to complete your MSA project. These are IDPT 8091 and IDPT 8093.

How do you sign up for an elective?

1. Put yourself on the "waitlist" in Oasis and include mentor approval communication and project information at least 42 days prior to the beginning of the block. The MSA Coordinator will approve you from the wait list.
2. If you are still on the wait list in Oasis 42 days before the course begins, contact the MSA Coordinator: **som.msa@cuanschutz.edu**
3. **You may only take IDPT 8091 one time.** If you need more time to focus on your project, you can enroll in IDPT 8093. Completion of IDPT 8091 is required prior to enrolling in IDPT 8093.

***Note if you are a student who traveled in Plains/Foothills for a Global Health MSA and plan on traveling again in Alpine-Summit, please email **som.msa@cuanschutz.edu** to get additional details on registration.



Research Track

Research Track students meet their scholarly requirement by successfully completing the requirements of the Research Track. Students in this track work closely with a faculty member to develop a research project, collect data, analyze, and interpret that data, and disseminate the information in both written and oral form. More details about the Research Track, including expectations for electives, grading of electives, and presenting at national meetings, and can be found in the syllabus which can be accessed from the Research Track website:

<https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/education/current-students/curriculum/tracks/research-program>

Important Research Track Dates and Deadlines

| Deadline | Work to be completed |
|-------------|--|
| Dec. 2026 | Submit a draft of a first authored (or 1 st co-authored) manuscript to Canvas. Acceptable submissions are one of the following: a pdf copy of a 1 st authored manuscript already published, a pdf copy of a manuscript submitted for review to a peer reviewed journal, or a draft of a 1 st authored (or 1 st co-authored manuscript). |
| Feb 2027 | Submit a final first authored (or 1 st co-authored) manuscript. Acceptable submissions are one of the following: a pdf copy of a 1 st authored manuscript already published, a pdf copy of a manuscript submitted for review to a peer reviewed journal, or a final 1 st authored (or 1 st co-authored) manuscript not yet submitted to a journal. |
| April 2027 | Submit a first-authored abstract to a national scientific meeting |
| Spring 2027 | Participate in the spring Capstone activity. Students will make a poster and give an oral presentation to poster attendees during Capstone. |

Further Restrictions and Details on Requirements

Abstract Submission & Presentation at a National Scientific Meeting

Please see the Research Track syllabus for full details regarding abstracts submitted to national meetings prior to submitting an abstract.

For your national meeting expenses to be covered by the Research Track, the national meeting must be in the 48 continental United States and comply with other guidelines. Please contact the Research Track coordinator before submitting your abstract to make sure the meeting will qualify for expenses to be reimbursed

Planning for Meeting Travel

Please see the Research Track syllabus (available in Canvas or on the Research Track website) and contact the Research Track coordinator before making any travel plans for meetings or we may not be able to reimburse your expenses.

Research Track Electives in the Alpine-Summit Phase

IDPT 8601 and IDPT 8602 are 2 required Research Track electives that must be taken in the Alpine-Summit phase. These Research Track elective months are similar to the summer experience you had between your first and second year. You will be working with your mentor to complete your project, submit your abstract to a national meeting, complete a first authored or first co-authored manuscript and submit it to a journal. Please put yourself on the waiting lists for these courses in Oasis and complete the electronic forms. The add deadline is 42 days prior to start and the drop deadline is 28 days prior to start of the elective.

Can a Research Track student withdraw from the Research Track and switch to completing a MSA project?

If a student is unable or unwilling to continue with the Research Track, the student must meet with the Research Track Director to discuss the issue(s), and only at that time will a decision be made as to whether or not the student is to continue with the program. If it is decided that the student will withdraw from the Research Track program, the student must meet with an Assistant Dean in the Office of Student Life to discuss this plan. If approved, the student must then immediately contact the MSA director to discuss a plan for completing the MSA requirements.



Alpine-Summit Money Matters:

Dear Class of 2027,

We hope this section helps you navigate the complexities of financial matters specific to your final year at the University of Colorado School of Medicine. If you have questions or concerns about your financial aid, please call or email. The information included in this section is accurate as of February 2025 and is subject to change without notification.

A friendly reminder: when in doubt or if you are even just a little curious about something related to financial aid or student debt, please ask! I want you to receive the most accurate information possible.

If you need assistance outside of advising hours, please email our office and we will work to accommodate your schedule.

Sincerely,
Deedee Colussy
Associate Director of Financial Aid Advising
Financial Aid & Scholarships Office
fin.aid@cuanschutz.edu | 303.724.8039

Living Expense Refunds

Remember the date posted online and **in your loan disclosure statement(s) is approximately seven days before the new semester begins**. This is not the date you will receive the funds in your direct deposit account.

Students should expect to receive their living expense deposit the first, full week of classes each new semester. Students must be in good standing with the School of Medicine and all necessary financial aid information and/or paperwork must be completed in a timely manner. Missing or incomplete requests will delay your living expense refund, and your account is subject to late fees if it is not paid by the due date established by the Bursar's Office (bursar@udenver.edu or 303.315.1800).

Common issues for a delay in refunds

1. Missing FAFSA application and/or additional documentation. You can view your current award and application status in UCD Access in the Student Center.
 - www.ucdenver.edu/ucdaccess
 - You will need to submit the 25-26 FAFSA for the fall 2025 through summer 2026 semesters. This information is available online at www.studentaid.gov.
 - Your "To Do List" details unresolved items.
2. Financial aid award(s) have not been accepted. Student loans must be accepted by the student in UCD Access to initiate the processing the funds. You are notified via email when an award offer is available for you to accept.
 - Note: School-based institutional loans (Perkins, Loans to Disadvantaged Students, CU Medical School Loan, etc.) can take longer to process due to the loan forms required. Be sure to contact Debt Management at 303.315.1830 if you have questions about these loans. If you accept an institutional loan, watch for an email message from ECSI (often found in your junk/spam folder) for directions to complete the entrance counseling and promissory note online.
3. Enrollment: You are expected to be a full-time student each semester. If you are not enrolled or your registration is delayed this will prevent your financial aid funds from being disbursed.

Direct deposit provides students with the quickest access to living expense funds. Sign up for direct deposit UCD Access. If you have any issues, please contact the Bursar's Office for assistance.

When you receive your refund deposit it is imperative to plan your finances carefully to last you through the next deposit. If you do not have a personal budget or need to revise your plan, you can obtain a comprehensive worksheet from the AAMC – FIRST program.

Consider using a free digital budgeting tool to reduce the effort and stress of tracking your spending, bill due dates, and financial goals.

The simplest method to manage your living expense refund is to have your entire deposit sent to your savings account. Then schedule a recurring transfer for your living allowance (\$2800* - or less - for the 2024-2025 academic year) to avoid overspending. * The 25-26 living allowance will be finalized in summer 2025.

Residency Interviews and Relocation Expenses

The financial aid package for your fall and spring semesters of your M4 year will include funds to assist interview related expenses (applications, airfare, clothing, accommodations, etc.). During the 2024-2025 year, \$1200 was provided in the standard student budget to cover application expenses and virtual interviews; this amount will be reevaluated prior to the 2026-27 school year to determine necessary adjustments. If you need additional funds to cover these types of expenses, please contact me to discuss your circumstances and possible options. You may need to consider borrowing a Residency and Relocation (R/R) loan after speaking with me. These loans are considered private financing, and you would apply with a lender of your choice. The lender will determine your creditworthiness and set the loan repayment terms and conditions. These loans are not like the federally guaranteed loans you have access to through my office. R/R loans do not qualify for income driven repayment (IDR) or loan forgiveness like your federal student debt.

It is advisable to check your credit report before applying for a R/R loan, because they are private loans and do require the applicant have a good credit rating and/or a cosigner with a good credit rating.

It has become more difficult to obtain private student loans regardless of how strong your credit rating is. Numerous lenders have stopped making private student loans altogether, and most others are increasing credit requirements, raising interest rates and fees, and/or otherwise restricting to whom they will lend.

We have a section of our student loan webpage dedicated to R/R loans, please carefully review the information provided to ensure you're making the best consumer decision possible about this type of borrowing. The listing of lenders is not intended to be a comprehensive list, nor is it a recommendation of one lender over another. To view our current information please visit our [student loan page](#) and select the 'Residency and Relocation Loans' arrow.

Unusual Circumstances

Occasionally, a medical student experiences unforeseen computer/technology, health, family and/or automobile expenses. It is advisable for students to contact me to discuss their situation prior to submitting a request for an increase to better understand the required documentation along with possible funding sources. Health-related appeals will require Explanation of Benefit (EOB) statements from your insurance company; credit card receipts do not detail the necessary information. Car-related expenses can only be considered for major repairs, but not maintenance (oil changes, mileage service, etc.). Maintenance expenses (along with insurance and registration) are covered by the personal transportation allowance within the cost-of-living budget. Approved increases will be processed as reimbursement after the charges are incurred.

Finding Essential Information

1. UCD Access: ucdenver.edu/ucdaccess
2. Finances for Medical students: students-residents.aamc.org/financial-aid/
 - a. MedLoans® Organizer and Calculator, Budgeting, Credit, Student Loan Repayment and Finances for Residents
3. Credit Report: annualcreditreport.com
 - a. This website allows you to obtain your three free credit reports. This site does not give you your credit score; this is a summary of your credit history. It is advisable to review one of the three reports every four months to have an ongoing look at your credit history. Carefully review your report for errors or inaccuracies. If you find an error or incorrect information you need to follow the dispute directions detailed in the report.
 - b. Graduate PLUS loan(s) require adverse-free credit history for you to receive this type of funding. Generally: delinquencies, bankruptcies, court judgements against you, or other negatively perceived information about your ability to repay a debt could prevent your ability to borrow this loan. Students who are not approved for this type of loan will likely experience a shortfall of funds to pay for their schooling and/or living expenses.

Spring 2027

You will be required to attend a loan repayment strategy session to better understand the options available to manage your debt after graduation. You will have the opportunity, if you wish, to meet for an hour to discuss your loan repayment strategy, as it relates to your future career plans and financial matters after Match Day. Individual loan repayment counseling will be available to schedule after you have completed the required homework and gathered the necessary information.

Optional sessions will be hosted throughout the remainder of your spring semester. Topics covered in these optional sessions may include financing a home purchase and estate planning.

* Watch for additional information during the spring of 2027.

**Subject to change based upon student interest and availability of subject matter expert presenters.*

Office of Student Life Staff

LAURA BRYANT



laura.bryant@cuanschultz.edu

Team Lead-Student Programming & Events

MARILYN NZOIWU



amarachukwu.nzoiwu@cuanschultz.edu

Student Affairs Events Coordinator

YASMINE PUGH, M.Ed



yasmine.pugh@cuanschultz.edu

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Principal Prof.

SHEA ROODBERG



shea.roodberg@cuanschultz.edu

Student Life Coordinator

VICTORIA SAVAGE



victoria.savage@cuanschultz.edu

Clinical Badging Coordinator

Office of Student Life Staff

DANIELLE SCHMIDT



danielle.m2.schmidt@cuanschultz.edu
Team Lead-Student Affairs Principal Prof.

MELANIE TRINKWALD, MA



melanie.trinkwald@cuanschultz.edu
Manager of Student Affairs and Events

Curriculum Staff

JESSICA ACKELS



jessica.ackels@cuanschultz.edu
Pre- & Post-Clerkship Curriculum Manager

SABRYNNE BUCHHOLZ



sabrynne.buchholz@cuanschultz.edu
Curriculum Coord.- ASCs & Global Health

MARITZA CASILLAS



maritza.casillas@cuanschultz.edu
Curriculum Coordinator - Electives

Curriculum Staff

JESSICA DUNCAN



jessica.2.duncan@cuanschultz.edu

Curriculum Coord. - Fort Collins Branch ASCs

KELLI HARRIS



kelli.harris@cuanschultz.edu

Curriculum Coord.- Fort Collins Branch Electives

DEBORAH JACKSON, PhD, MEd



deborah.jackson@cuanschultz.edu

Curriculum Content and
Records Program Manager

MARY McGINNIS



mary.mcginnis@cuanschultz.edu

Curriculum Coordinator Lead-
Scholarship (MSA and Research Track)

MICHELLE PRADO-FERRIN



michelle.prado-ferrin@cuanschultz.edu

Curriculum Coordinator - Fort Collins Branch
Basecamps, Trails, & Selectives

Curriculum Staff

NOMI POPRISH



nomi.poprish@cuanschutz.edu

Curriculum Coordinator Lead-
Clinical Experiences (ASCs & Critical Care)

MEGAN RHYNE, CHES, MSEH, MA



megan.rhyme@cuanschutz.edu

Curriculum Coordinator Lead - Longitudinal and
Health & Society (Basecamps & Trails)

CHAD STICKRATH, MD



chad.stickrath@cuanschutz.edu

Associate Dean for Medical Education
Alpine-Summit (Post-Clerkship) Curriculum

JODIE WANG, MPA



jodie.wang@cuanschutz.edu

Alpine-Summit Curriculum Coordinator

KELLEY YSETH



[kelley.yseth@cuanschutz.edu](mailto:kelly.yseth@cuanschutz.edu)

Fort Collins Regional Campus Manager

Specialty Advisors by Department

| | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Anesthesiology | Mario Villaseñor | mario.villaseñor@cuanschutz.edu |
| Child Neurology | Tim Bernard | Timothy.bernard@childrenscolorado.org |
| Dermatology | Aditi Murthy | ADITI.MURTHY@CUANSCHUTZ.EDU |
| Emergency Medicine | Mike Overbeck | Michael.overbeck@ucdenver.edu |
| | Grace Lambert | Grace.lambert@denverem.org |
| Family Medicine | Roberto Silva | Roberto.Silva@ucdenver.edu |
| | Cleveland Piggott | CLEVELAND.PIGGOTT@UCDENVER.EDU |
| | Mark Deutchman | mark.deutchman@ucdenver.edu |
| | Melissa Johnson | MELISSA.N.JOHNSON@UCDENVER.EDU |
| | George Olsen | GEORGE.OLSEN@CUANSCHUTZ.EDU |
| | Heather Brougham | HEATHER.BROUGHAM@CUANSCHUTZ.EDU |
| General Surgery | Mark Nehler | Mark.nehler@cuanschutz.edu |
| Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery | Chris Kaoutzanis | CHRISTODOULOS.KAOUTZANIS@CUANSCHUTZ.EDU |
| Internal Medicine | Sarah Wachtel | sarah.wachtel@cuanschutz.edu |
| Internal Med-Peds | Eleanor Comfort | ELEANOR.COMFORT@CUANSCHUTZ.EDU |
| Military | Christina Olson | christina.olson@childrenscolorado.org |
| Neurology | Jeanne Feuerstein | jeanne.feuerstein@cuanschutz.edu |
| Neurosurgery | Samy Youssef | samy.youssef@cuanschutz.edu |
| Ophthalmology | Michael Puente | MICHAEL.PUENTE@CUANSCHUTZ.EDU |
| Ob/GYN | Jill Liss | JILL.LISS@CUANSCHUTZ.EDU |
| | Emily Rosen | emily.rosen@cuanschutz.edu |
| | Amy Markese | Amy.markese@cuanschutz.edu |
| Orthopedic Surgery | Frank Scott | frank.scott@ucdenver.edu |
| Otolaryngology | Andy Johnson | ANDREW.P.JOHNSON@CUANSCHUTZ.EDU |
| | Amy Schell | AMY.SCHELL@CUANSCHUTZ.EDU |
| Pathology | Lindsey Westbrook | Lindsey.westbrook@cuanschutz.edu |
| | Nicole Draper | Nicole.Draper@CUAnschutz.edu |
| Pediatrics | Jennifer Soep | jennifer.soep@cuanschutz.edu |
| PM&R | Stephanie Ryder | Stephanie.ryder@va.gov |
| Preventive Medicine | | |
| Psychiatry | Austin Butterfield | Austin.butterfield@cuanschutz.edu |
| Radiation Oncology | Tim Waxweiler | timothy.waxweiler@cuanschutz.edu |
| Radiology | Katherine Marchak (Interventional) | Katherine.marchak@cuanschutz.edu |
| | Zachary Trenbeath (Diagnostic) | zachary.trenbeath@cuanschutz.edu |
| Urology | Janine Oliver | janine.oliver@cuanschutz.edu |

Scheduling an Away Rotation

1. Visiting Student Learning Opportunities (VSLO) was created by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) to make it easier for students to apply for fourth-year clinical away electives. Approximately 120 host institutions use VSLO to review visiting student applications. CUSOM is also a host institution in VSLO, which means that we accept students from other institutions.
2. If the school you want to visit does not participate in VSLO, you may apply directly to the host school or use the Extramural Electives Compendium (EEC) (<http://services.aamc.org/eec/students/>). The EEC is a searchable database containing information about the scheduling of elective opportunities at AAMC-member medical schools in the United States.
3. Once you are approved for a rotation by an institution in VSLO and have accepted specific dates, **you must enroll in the appropriate CUSOM elective course (ANES 8100, ORTH 8100, etc.)**. CUSOM departmental approval must be obtained at least one month in advance of starting the externship. Approval will only be granted once you have completed the electronic form in Oasis.
4. All away rotations require an affiliation agreement. You will be provided with a list of institutions who we currently have established agreements with. **If your chosen site is not on the list, complete the electronic form in Oasis as much in advance of your rotation as possible and contact Student Life immediately so that an affiliation agreement can be initiated.** Note that if an affiliation agreement cannot be established, you will not be able to participate in the rotation.
5. Enrolling in the CUSOM course also assures that you will be covered by malpractice insurance for your away rotation. Make sure to remember this step, as being approved in VSLO is **NOT** the same as enrolling in the course in Oasis and **you will not receive credit or have malpractice coverage unless you enroll in Oasis.**
6. When you have finished the clerkship, it is your responsibility to ensure that an evaluation is sent to the University of Colorado departmental course director and coordinator responsible for your away rotation. You will not get credit for the course until and unless we receive this verification.
7. **All away electives are only eligible for pass/fail grading** even if the institution at which you rotate at assigns a grade of honors.