



Personal and Professional Development, Year 4 (PPD4)

Academic Year 2026-2027

Approved by CCS on 01/20/2026

Approved by Curriculum Committee on 01/27/2026

General Course Information

Course code: MEDP 837B

Credit hours: 6 (six)

Prerequisites: Successful completion of all third year required clerkships or approval by the course director.

Strongly recommended: Successful completion of all third year required clerkships and electives.

Dates of course: April 6, 2026 to May 7, 2027 (inclusive)

Students will be enrolled in each term of the course according to semester breaks in the academic calendar.

Course website: <https://d2l.arizona.edu/d2l/home> and <http://comphx.one45.com>

Course Directors

Course Director: Laura Mercer, MD MBA MPH

Email: ltmercer@arizona.edu

Office hours: by appointment (virtual available)

Office location: Health Sciences Education Building (HSEB) B570

435 N 5th St

Phoenix, AZ 85004

Course Co-Director: Currently Vacant

Email:

Office hours:

Office location:

Course Coordinator

Coordinator: Jennalee Wilson

Email: jmwilson7@arizona.edu

Office Location: Health Sciences Education Building (HSEB)

435 N 5th St

Phoenix, AZ 85004

Tutoring services are available to students. More information and contacts for specific course tutors can be found at: <http://studentdevelopment.arizona.edu/>



Personal and Professional Development, Year 4 (PPD4)

Course Description

Personal and Professional Development, Year 4 (PPD 4) is a longitudinal course that challenges senior students approaching their sub-internships, residency match, and transition to residency to hone their scientific medical knowledge and advanced clinical skills as they build their professional identity as a physician in the context of the medical systems in which they will train and ultimately practice. A crucial element of professional development is concurrent personal development, with an ability for an individual student to also focus on their own wellness and goals in the context of their own career.

PPD 4 spans the entirety of the academic year and has a total of 6 dedicated weeks. The course combines a predominately virtual environment with selected high value in-person activities. Some weeks will be entirely on campus and in person with required attendance, while other weeks will be entirely comprised of Focus Time. This is designed to maximize flexibility for the individual student to personalize their progress and accommodate a variety of clinical schedules, recognizing that a career in medicine is a career in self-directed, life-long learning.

Principal Mission

Advance students' basic science, practical knowledge, and clinical skills to help them become competent, responsible, resilient, and caring physicians ready to enter residency.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes:

[Educational Program Objectives](#) (EPO) are a subset of more broadly defined physician competencies, which represent general domains of performance for which the profession and the public hold physicians accountable.

The University of Arizona College of Medicine - Phoenix (COM-P) measures these outcomes both quantitatively (via United States Medical Licensing Exam <USMLE> style assessments) and qualitatively (via graded deliverables and behavioral competency assessments).

Objectives/Outcomes:

1. Synthesize longitudinal curricular themes and clinical experiences to articulate a mature professional identity consistent with the responsibilities of an entering resident physician.
2. Evaluate and refine advanced patient-centered communication and clinical behaviors to manage complex clinical interactions and optimize patient outcomes.
3. Integrate and apply foundational and clinical science knowledge to support independent clinical reasoning, prevention, and management decisions expected of an entering resident.



Personal and Professional Development, Year 4 (PPD4)

4. Evaluate prior clinical experiences to develop a personalized plan for professional growth, career decision-making, time management, and sustainable well-being during the transition to residency.
5. Demonstrate accountability, ethical reasoning, and effective conflict management strategies in complex professional and clinical environments.
6. Apply resilience, wellness, and self-care strategies to sustain professional performance, promote patient safety, and support team well-being during the transition to residency.

Mandatory Dates of Attendance

Students should reference the overview document (posted in D2L Brightspace) for in-person activities to determine specific dress requirements or recommendations. Otherwise, they can reference the COM-P [Dress Code Policy](#) for general considerations.

Personal and Professional Development, Year 4 (PPD 4) is structured to be maximally flexible for the senior medical student at the University of Arizona College of Medicine - Phoenix (COM-P). Acknowledging that fourth year medical students will be juggling sub-internships, away rotations, preparation for residency applications, and residency interviews, three of the six dedicated weeks are structured to allow for complete flexibility.

- April 6-10, 2026: Mandatory, in person content
 - OSCE- Clinical Skills
 - OSCE - Simulation
 - Select in-person content
 - Focus Time
- June 8-12, 2026: Focus Time (OSCE remediation/retake PRN)
- September 14-18, 2026: Focus Time
- November 16-20, 2026: Focus Time
- February 1-5, 2027: Mandatory, in person content
 - In order to provide for full focus time in June, September, and November weeks, the February week will be entirely full of in-person, curricular content.
 - Students should plan to be on campus 8a-5p every day, with no scheduled focus time.
- May 3-7, 2027: Mandatory, in person content
 - Scholarly Project and Research Day
 - Select in-person content
 - Graduation celebration activities
 - Focus Time

Attendance is mandatory during the weeks of April 6-10, 2026*, February 1-5, 2027, and May 3-7, 2027 without exception, and students should plan accordingly. There will be no synchronous or in person required activities during any other PPD 4 week in order to allow flexibility for away



Personal and Professional Development, Year 4 (PPD4)

rotations, residency application preparation, completion of asynchronous assignments, and other self-directed personal and professional development.

*During the week of April 6-10, 2026, students will complete their 4th year OSCE, which includes both a clinical skills (“doctoring”) and simulation component. A student who is unable to successfully pass either or both component(s) during this week will be required to make up the OSCE component(s) during the week of June 8-12, 2026, which is otherwise reserved as asynchronous PPD 4 time that can be used for individualized learning including completion of clinical rotations at institutions whose academic calendars do not align with those of the University of Arizona College of Medicine - Phoenix. **Students should note that an absence or failure to successfully pass either or both OSCE components during the week of April 6-10, 2026 will require make up or retake during the week of June 8-12, 2026 and that this may mean that students must drop or reschedule any rotations that overlap this week.** *Students with an off-cycle schedule who are completing third year rotations are not expected to participate in their OSCE during the week of April 6-10, 2026 and must plan to complete both components of their OSCE during the week of June 8-12, 2026.*

Where reasonable, sessions have been designed for asynchronous completion to allow for individualized and student-directed learning. Where necessary, synchronous sessions in person or via Zoom will be held to provide real-time interaction in small groups or with invited guest speakers.

Participation in and interaction with all assigned content is mandatory and is a requirement to pass this course. Successful completion of the course is a requirement for graduation.

Given the complexity of the PPD 4 schedule as it aims to be maximally flexible for varied student scheduling needs and personal learning goals while coordinating with the many contributing faculty and guest speakers along with the doctoring and simulation spaces, students are asked to be similarly flexible during the three required weeks.

Outside of the three required weeks (see above), students should plan for Focus Time. Focus Time allows students flexibility for asynchronous assignments, self-study, and personal and professional development.

Students should note that the posted schedule on D2L Brightspace will always be the most accurate and up to date. Any discrepancies between D2L Brightspace and information found elsewhere is unintentional and students should refer to the posted schedule on D2L Brightspace to supersede and resolve any conflicting information. For any uncertainties that persist after consulting D2L Brightspace, students are asked to contact the course director via the “Ask the Instructor” discussion board in D2L Brightspace, via email or text.



Personal and Professional Development, Year 4 (PPD4)

A session requiring student attendance may be added or rescheduled for good cause (emergent timely content, speaker illness, venue problems, weather, etc.). Students will be given as much notice as possible.

The policy and procedure for mandatory dates can be found here: [Years 3 and 4 Attendance and Absence Policy](#) and is discussed in the section below.

Absences

The COM-P faculty and administration understand that absences from course sessions may not always be preventable. Students can reference the [Virtual One Stop](#) web page for resources related to absences. Please refer to the applicable COM-P attendance policy for additional information: [Years 3 and 4 Attendance and Absence Policy](#)

Students seeking an excused absence from an attendance-required session must request *planned* absence 30 days in advance using the [Formsite Request Form](#). Students requesting an excused absence should submit an absence request through the Formsite link, should update their individual learning plan (found on D2L Brightspace), and should simultaneously email the course director to proactively ensure they have a plan in place to complete all required content.

Students who are absent from required synchronous sessions during any part (including an entire week) of PPD 4 will be expected to make up the all content and all deliverables. Students should note mandatory attendance dates in the prior section. As mentioned above, students who miss mandatory synchronous sessions may experience subsequent changes to their rotation schedule in order to make up the missed content. Though the course is designed to allow students sufficient flexibility to accommodate away rotations, students must proactively plan their schedules to ensure their ability to participate and complete all deliverables. Students should reference the sections on *Assessment* and *Failure and Subsequent Remediation* in this syllabus for additional details, and students should have a low threshold to proactively discuss their scheduling plans with the course director.

Because of the complexities in scheduling and coordination across units, a student's failure to attend mandatory sessions or tardiness in arrival without timely communication with the course director will result in an automatic formative level 1. A second tardy arrival (without communication) or unexcused absence will result in a summative level 1.

Students will indicate their presence at mandatory sessions as instructed per the course director/coordinator. A student who fails to indicate their presence will be presumed to be absent and will be required to attend the session when it is next offered, which may include holding a grade of Incomplete in the course. Failure to complete the make-up session will result in failure of the course.



Personal and Professional Development, Year 4 (PPD4)

In the event of an extended absence, the maximum amount of time that a student can miss with excused absences and complete a posted grade of “Incomplete” for this course will be two (2) weeks during a single semester, as long as the student has discussed their absences and proactively established an approved plan for completion with the course director.

If a student misses more than the maximum time allowed with excused absences, a grade of “W” will appear on the transcript, and the student may enroll in the same course during the next academic year when it is offered.

Students who have unexcused absences and/or have failed to proactively plan around their excused absences and/or have failed to demonstrate progress in the course requirements will be notified that they are at risk for failure and will be given one week to remedy their status in order to be eligible for an “Incomplete” posted grade (see below).

Exceptions to the [Years 3 and 4 Course Grading Policy](#) must be approved by the dean, clinical curriculum, or respective designee, in consultation with the dean, student affairs, or respective designee.

Readings

Assigned readings and prep materials may be found on the course D2L site:
<https://d2l.arizona.edu/d2l/home>

Other Expected Classroom / Experience Preparations

Several synchronous sessions will require student engagement with preparatory materials in advance of the session. Students are expected to review D2L Brightspace early in the course to determine their own self-paced and independent study schedule.

As clinical professionals, medical students enrolled in the PPD 4 course are expected to respect their classmates, faculty, and the community in which they live and learn by adhering to any public health or mitigating measures that may be in place. This includes respecting others who are wearing a face mask while indoors on campus in simulated patient encounters or wearing one themselves if they are requested to do so by peers, staff, or faculty as an act of respect and kindness.

Please note: All faculty are encouraged to provide a key reference in the lesson plan for every session. Such a reference is one that faculty deem to be the most appropriate in covering the required depth and breadth of the session presented. The academic coordinator and library staff have been advised regarding all readings and will strive to make these materials available electronically.



Personal and Professional Development, Year 4 (PPD4)

Since session presenters distill a large amount of available material to a manageable set of session objectives, it is crucial that students access these readings for complete coverage of the material presented in the assigned topic activities and sessions.

Student Responsibilities

All students should consult the D2L homepage for the most current announcements, schedule, and location of classes, and learning materials. As might be expected, last minute changes in scheduling, etc. are sometimes necessary, and this type of information will be shared with all students via the D2L homepage. In addition, important information may also be shared with students and faculty via e-mail, using the University e-mail system. Therefore, daily surveillance of student e-mail accounts is required.

Culture of Honesty for Remote Instruction

At the University of Arizona, we have an official Code of Academic Integrity on the dean of students website: (<https://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/policies/code-academic-integrity>). In alignment with the Code of Academic Integrity, it is important to remind everyone that we adhere to a culture of honesty even in a virtual or asynchronous environment. You are attending the University of Arizona to learn and to prepare to go out into the world ready to make a difference. We want to make sure you are properly prepared to accomplish your goals.

The guiding principle for living in a culture of honesty includes:

- Answers to homework, quizzes, online discussions, reflections, stories, and exams are your own work (except for assignments that explicitly permit or encourage collaboration).
- Sources of information, ideas, data, photographs, figures and other media are acknowledged.
- Solutions to homework, quizzes, or exams are not shared with anyone else unless explicitly permitted by the instructor. This includes anything you write or locate on the internet.
- Any activity that will dishonestly improve your results or dishonestly improve or damage the results of others is not tolerated.
- All your work submitted for grading should be original -- created by you personally -- without the use of cheating, plagiarism, fabrication or lying, impersonation or identity tampering, and giving or receiving unauthorized assistance.

Definitions and Examples of Dishonest Behavior

- Cheating is the violation of the rules set by the instructor to provide you or another person with an unfair advantage over others. This could include unauthorized use of information, materials, or devices. *Examples: During a closed book exam using additional resources such as textbooks, notes or the Internet.*



Personal and Professional Development, Year 4 (PPD4)

- Plagiarism is an act of fraud that involves using artificial intelligence or someone else's work and presenting it as your own. *Examples: Submitting a paper you did not write yourself or copying words or ideas and not citing the source.*
- Fabrication (lying) is giving false information to an instructor connected to any academic work. *Examples: Giving a false attestation, a false reason for failure to complete any academic work or inventing/altering the results of a lab or experiment.*
- Impersonation or identity tampering includes intentionally posing as someone else or allowing someone else to log into your university account or take an exam for you. *Examples: Signing in for someone else in the Zoom or in person sessions. Paying to have someone else or a service to take a course in your name, asking someone to use your ID to take an exam, or taking an exam for someone else.*
- Unauthorized assistance is giving or receiving help on any academic work by a means that has not been authorized by an instructor. *Examples: Giving or receiving exam answers or collaborating on an individual assignment.*

In cultivating a culture of honesty, we should keep this in mind:

Anytime a student engages in academically dishonest behavior it undermines the University's ability to certify a student's competency in the subject area and detracts from the professionalism and trustworthiness of the student. This puts the reputation of all students and the University in jeopardy and undermines the value of hard work, the learning experience and the quality of the awarded degree.

Assessment

Students will be assessed on medical knowledge and behavioral competencies during the course. Students will have (an) associated deliverable(s) with all content areas. Students should consult each content's Overview document (found on D2L Brightspace) for specifics about expectations and grading rubrics.

PPD 4 is comprised of a number of smaller sessions and learning modules that individually require successful completion:

- In order to pass the first term of PPD 4, students must have successfully completed their OSCE (both simulation and doctoring components), met with their Career and Specialty Advisor (CSA) and House Advisor at least once each, and must have a submitted learning plan (see D2L Brightspace for details) by June 14, 2026 at 11:59pm.
 - A student who has failed one or both parts of the OSCE by June 14th, 2026 will receive a grade of Fail for this term and will be re-enrolled in the first term of the course when it is next offered.



Personal and Professional Development, Year 4 (PPD4)

- Only those students who are off-cycle and missed the week of April 6-10, 2026 due to other required third year coursework will be eligible for a grade of Incomplete prior to remediation and a second opportunity to complete each OSCE component. This will be so that this population, like those students on a traditional calendar, has a total of two opportunities to successfully complete their OSCE components prior to a grade of Fail being posted.
- Any exceptions must be approved by the associate dean, student affairs, and the associate dean, clinical curriculum in conjunction with the course director.
- In order to pass the second term of PPD 4, students must meet with their CSA twice, and demonstrate ongoing progress with asynchronous assignments by completing an updated learning plan by November 29, 2026 at 11:59pm.
- In order to pass the third and final term of PPD 4, students must successfully complete all course deliverables AND earn a composite score of equal to, or greater than, 70% by May 7, 2027 at 11:59pm.
 - By February 7, 2027 at 11:59pm (at the end of the February 2027 dedicated PPD4 week), students must be entirely up to date on course work. This is to ensure that students are on track to successfully complete the course.
 - This includes completion of a Match and Advising Feedback form (through Student Affairs) and completion of a debrief meeting with their CSA after the Match.
 - All deliverables must demonstrate professionalism and integrity. Students not meeting these standards on any individual assigned deliverable will be given the opportunity to remediate the content as assigned by the course director.
- Students should have a low threshold to proactively discuss their scheduling plans with the course director and must always update their individual student learning plan (see D2L Brightspace) to reflect these plans *in advance of any deadlines*.
 - Each student must take responsibility for their own personal plan for completion of all deliverables, including adhering to posted deadlines.
 - Failure to successfully remediate an unsatisfactory deliverable will constitute a failure of the course. This includes a failure to submit one or more deliverables and/or a failure to submit an approved plan for future completion of outstanding deliverables without timely communication with the course director.
 - Any outstanding deliverables on February 8, 2027 will trigger a remediation plan as successful completion of the course is in jeopardy. **This may make a student ineligible to be certified for the residency Match.**
 - If a student has not satisfactorily completed all deliverables by May 7, 2027 at 11:59pm, a grade of Fail will be posted for the third term of PPD 4 and the student will be eligible to re-enroll in the course when it is next offered. **Students should note that a failure in PPD 4 will make the student ineligible to graduate in May of 2027.** Students who anticipate they will not be able to satisfactorily complete all course requirements by this date should proactively put in place an approved plan with the course director to adjust



Personal and Professional Development, Year 4 (PPD4)

this timeline. Requests for accommodation or adjustment that are received after Wednesday, May 4, 2027 will not be entertained.

Students who have unexcused absences and/or have failed to proactively plan around their absences and/or have failed to demonstrate progress in the course requirements will be notified by email that they are at risk for failure and will be given one week to remedy their status to be eligible for a posted grade of “Incomplete” or “Pass”. If a student needs more than one week to accomplish the outstanding tasks, they should proactively discuss with the course director to modify the deadline. Requests for extension of the deadline received after the deadline will not be considered.

If a student does not successfully remediate their missing deliverable(s) and/or successfully submit an approved plan for future completion by the above deadline, a grade of Fail for the course will be posted to the student’s transcript and the student will be re-enrolled in the course the next time it is offered.

If a student has more than one summative level 1 in a single competency domain, a grade of Fail for the course will be posted to the student’s transcript and the student will be re-enrolled in the course the next time it is offered.

The student’s grade (Pass, Fail, or Incomplete) will be posted within six weeks of the conclusion of each term of the course, [Per the Final Grades Reporting Timeline Policy](#)

For additional details regarding grading, retakes and course failure refer to the section below and the [Years 3 and 4 Course Grading Policy](#)

Course Failure and Subsequent Remediation:

In the event of course failure, or if a student drops with a “W” (see above), the student will be re-enrolled in the course when it is next offered.

Curriculum:

Every medical knowledge component of the failed course, including theme content, must be included in the retake plan. All course material must be assessed at the end of the remediation period regardless of how the student managed this material during the regular course. Please see the applicable remediation policy for complete details on remediation [Years 3 and 4 Course Grading Policy](#)

The course director will, on a case-by-case basis, determine if some material covered in the original failed course can be reviewable by remediation-eligible students without replication of the actual experience.



Personal and Professional Development, Year 4 (PPD4)

Course Evaluation by Students

Students will be required to complete a mid and end of course evaluation in all courses.

This system is designed so that all teaching faculty are provided feedback and student survey fatigue is minimized. Students can evaluate any session at any time as an optional and additional source of professional feedback: <http://comphx.one45.com>

For more information, refer to the [Assessment and Evaluation of Students, Faculty, and Curriculum Policy](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Medical students are required to follow the policies and codes of conduct governing all students at the University of Arizona. In addition, medical students are also bound by the COM-P [Honor Code Policy and Committee Procedures and Process for Dismissal](#).

The University of Arizona COM-P recognizes the existence of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT & Grammarly) and the educational benefits they can provide when used ethically. It is imperative any use of generative AI is appropriately disclosed and referenced (e.g., APA, Chicago, MLA). Use of generative AI without citation may be considered a form of plagiarism and therefore a breach of Academic Integrity. Students are advised to review assignment instructions for specific guidelines concerning the use of generative AI and the U of A guidelines and principles at: <https://artificialintelligence.arizona.edu/ai-arizona/ai-guidelines-principles>

The COM-P requires medical students to abide by the professional standards required of physicians under Arizona law students must also abide by A.R.S 32-1401, et.seq. which can be accessed at: <http://www.azleg.gov/arsDetail/?title=32>

Learning Environment Office (LEO)

The [Learning Environment Office](#) (LEO) provides guidance, support, and information to students on professionalism issues. LEO supports students in the development of strong, positive professional practices with peers, faculty, patients, and the broader community through effective communication and conflict management.

- Have a question or are unsure how the LEO process works, call or text (602) 827-2328.
- Learning environment concerns may be reported directly to the course director, dean, student affairs/or designee, or LEO.



Personal and Professional Development, Year 4 (PPD4)

- The [Learning Environment Feedback Form](#) is an additional online mechanism for students to report any concerns, including supervision, across the four-year curriculum. This mechanism ensures confidentiality within LEO.
- A professionalism lanyard card with a QR code for the Learning Environment Feedback Form is distributed to all students. This QR Code is also included below.



The COM-P is committed to creating and maintaining an environment free of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation that is unlawful or prohibited by university policy. Please see the [Reporting Mistreatment or Harassment of Medical Students Policy](#), the [Anti-Harassment and Nondiscrimination Policy](#) for additional information. In addition, professional attributes are expected of all students. These attributes are within the [Teacher Learner Compact Policy](#).

Student Use of University Sponsored Educational Material

All University sponsored educational material, including but not limited to, lesson plans, lecture notes, PowerPoint slides, podcasts, digital videos, exams, etc. are under copyright protection. See the [Use of University-Sponsored Educational Material Policy](#).

Use of class materials

Statement of copyrighted materials: All lecture notes, lectures, study guides and other course materials (besides the required readings) disseminated by the instructor to the students, whether in class or online, are original materials and reflect intellectual property of the instructor or author of those works. All readings, study guides, lecture notes and handouts are intended for individual use by students. You may not distribute or reproduce these materials for commercial purposes without the express written consent of the instructor. Students who sell or distribute these materials for any use other than their own are in violation of the [Arizona Board of Regents Intellectual Property Policy](#). Violations of the instructors' copyright may result in course sanctions and violate the Code of Academic Integrity.



Personal and Professional Development, Year 4 (PPD4)

Use of video recordings of students

Recordings of certain simulation activities, by the University of Arizona College of Medicine-Phoenix, for the purposes of academic assessment are required and students may not opt-out. These videos and/or audio recordings are a part of the educational record, and are subject to the privacy provisions under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). If you have questions regarding the video recording of classroom simulations, please contact the Office of Clinical Curriculum for Years 3 and 4.

Inclusivity Statement

The COM-P supports an inclusive learning environment where diversity and individual differences are understood, respected, appreciated, and recognized as a source of strength. We expect that students, faculty, administrators, and staff will respect differences and demonstrate diligence in understanding how other peoples' perspectives, behaviors, and worldviews may be different from their own.

Students with Disabilities

At the University of Arizona, we strive to make learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience barriers based on disability or pregnancy, please contact the Disability Resource Center (520-621-3268, <https://drc.arizona.edu/>) to establish reasonable accommodations.

In addition to the Disability Resource Center, students are welcome to contact the associate dean of student affairs or the director of student development to learn more about available college resources and to discuss any physical or academic barriers which may impact their learning.

[Disability Accommodations Within Curriculum Policy](#)

Student resources

Dean of Students - Tucson ([Link](#))

Student Affairs - Phoenix ([Link](#))

Safety on campus and in the classroom

For a list of emergency procedures for all types of incidents, please visit the website of the [Critical Incident Response Team \(CIRT\)](#). Also watch the video ([Link](#)).

[COM-P Security-Emergency Planning](#)