Dear Student Doctors in the Class of 2018,

We hope this important message finds you well!

To assist in long-term planning, we respectfully request that all students reserve April 25-27, 2016 from 8:00am – 5:00pm to ensure availability to participate in the College COMSAE requirement described below.

SAVE THE DATES: Monday 4/25/16 – Wednesday 4/27/16

**What is the requirement?** In 2016, from April 25 through April 27, all students in the class of 2018 with an overall percentile rank less than or equal to 50 (≤50th percentile) will be required to sit for the COMSAE. MSUCOM will provide this exam at no cost to the student. The exam will be administered at all three sites. It will be a proctored, timed, and closed-book exam experience intended to closely simulate the COMLEX testing environment. Students will be expected to exhibit professional behavior and follow all exam rules provided.

**What is COMSAE?** COMSAE* is a 200-question, 4-hour long computer-based self-assessment exam. It is similar to the COMLEX Level 1 in format, content, question style, and scoring.

*Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Self-Assessment Examination
http://www.nbome.org/comsae.asp

**How will a student know if s/he is required to take COMSAE?** Overall percentile rank is recalculated each time points are allocated in a course. Overall percentile rank as of the end of Fall Semester 2015 will be used to determine which individuals will be required to take COMSAE. Affected students will be notified by email when fall grades are confirmed by the MSUCOM Registrar’s Office.

**Can students who are above the 50th percentile also take COMSAE free-of-charge?** Yes, though taking COMSAE is optional for students whose overall percentile rank is greater than 50, MSUCOM will provide COMSAE free-of-charge to any/all MSUCOM OMS-2s who wish to take it (details to be determined).

**Why is taking COMSAE required by MSUCOM?** After careful analysis and benchmarking of best practices of other COMs, the College Curriculum Committee voted unanimously to implement the COMSAE requirement starting with the Class of 2018. The intent is to provide beneficial feedback and guidance to students who are statistically at the greatest risk of either not passing COMLEX Level 1 on the first attempt or achieving a below average score. Historically, up through and including the class of 2016*, student performance in MSUCOM courses and overall class percentile rank during first two years of medical school are the best predictors of COMLEX Level 1 performance success. Though the majority of first attempt failures occur among students who are below the 20th percentile, both failures and under-performance occur at a greater frequency among students who are below the 50th percentile. Students can use the feedback obtained from COMSAE to develop a more effective study plan and/or modify key behaviors to increase the likelihood of passing the exam and obtaining a competitive score. Furthermore, because of the high-stakes nature of licensure exam scores, it is now common
Practice among COMs to require students to sit for the COMSAE prior to receiving authorization to take COMLEX.

*Data from the class of 2017 is not yet available.

**How will the exam be scheduled?** At a later date students will receive instructions via email regarding how to sign-up for a specific 4-hour block of time (e.g., 8am-12 or 1pm-5) on one of the available three days (4/25, 4/26, or 4/27/16). Initially, students will only have the option to sign-up at their site (EL, MUC, DMC). Any student who wishes to take the exam at a different site will be given the opportunity after the students who are assigned to that site have signed-up.

**What if a student is already aware of a schedule conflict?** If a student is not able to take the exam on any of the three days set aside for this experience, **within one week of receipt of this email** s/he must contact both Dr. R. Taylor Scott and Ms. Kim Peck to request permission to take COMSAE on an alternate date and be prepared to provide a valid reason with supporting documentation.

**What happens after COMSAE is taken in April?** Any student who obtains a cut score of 425 or above (≥425) will be eligible to schedule and take COMLEX Level 1. Any student whose score on COMSAE is below 425 (<425) will not be eligible and will be required to attend a “COMSAE Debriefing Event” in May of 2016. This mandatory* session is intended to provide guidance in a group setting and will cover topics such as interpreting exam feedback, developing a study plan/schedule, effective board preparation study methods, maintaining motivation, and coping with stress/anxiety. After attending this session, students will be eligible to schedule and take COMLEX Level 1. This session will be open to, but optional for students who obtained a score ≥425.

*Required for students with COMSAE scores <425

**Will the class receive additional information about the COMSAE requirement?** Yes, students should check their email for messages regarding the COMSAE requirement. In addition, all members of the Class of 2018 will be required to attend a COMSAE/COMLEX Prep event in January. More details and reminders will come during Fall Semester 2015.