

## Part 7. Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)

### **The AAMC**

The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC, [www.aamc.org](http://www.aamc.org)) represents the 125 accredited U.S. medical degree (M.D.) granting allopathic medical schools and the 17 accredited Canadian medical schools. The AAMC is a non-profit association founded in 1876 to promote reform in medical education. Originally representing only medical schools, the AAMC currently represents the nation's 125 accredited allopathic medical schools, nearly 400 major teaching hospitals, more than 105,000 faculty members in 98 academic and scientific societies, and the nation's 66,000 medical students and 97,000 residents. Additionally, the administrative leadership of medical schools and teaching hospitals is served by a variety of professional development groups housed within the AAMC.

The AAMC is a comprehensive and complex organization. It impacts every facet of most U.S. medical schools and their teaching hospitals. A brief introduction to AAMC divisions and to AAMC-sponsored professional development groups that affect the functioning of a Student Affairs office follows. Much of this information can also be found in publications or on the AAMC Web site.

### **Division of Medical School Affairs (DMSA)**

The Division of Medical School Affairs is under the leadership of Joseph A. Keyes, Jr., J.D., senior vice president and general counsel. Among the sections housed in this division is the Section for Student Affairs and Programs.

### **Section for Student Affairs and Programs (SSAP)**

This section is responsible for the Group on Student Affairs and the national GSA committees, Careers in Medicine, Student Financial Services, and the Organization of Student Representatives. Many of the programs, policies, and topics related to medical school admissions, student affairs, student financial assistance, and student records can be found in this section, which is under the leadership of Robert F. Sabalis, Ph.D., associate vice president. Dr. Sabalis also serves as the executive secretary of the GSA.

### **Careers in Medicine (CiM)**

Careers in Medicine (formerly MedCAREERS) is a Web-based career planning program designed to help medical students choose a medical specialty and select and apply to residency programs. This four-phase process guides students through the elements of career planning, including self-understanding; exploring a variety of medical careers; choosing a specialty to meet the student's career objectives; and making application to residency programs of interest. Students whose choice of career matches their values, skills, and interests tend to be more satisfied and successful in their working lives. This is also true of selecting a specialty.

The program includes a password-protected Web site, hard-copy student manuals, school-sponsored workshops, and assistance for campus-based career advisors. While developed and sponsored by the AAMC, the program is a partnership with the medical school's central administrative offices, usually housed in or affiliated with the Student Affairs office.

### **Group on Student Affairs (GSA)**

The purpose of the Group on Student Affairs (GSA) is to advance medical education and, specifically, to represent the interests of medical schools and medical students in the areas of admissions, student affairs, financial aid, minority affairs, and student records.

The function of the GSA is to provide a means of communication among, and to facilitate interaction of the AAMC with, institutional representatives with responsibilities in these areas. The GSA advises AAMC on matters of policy relating to the GSA's areas of interest and expertise and may recommend such policy to the AAMC governance for consideration. GSA activities involve project analysis, program development, and data-gathering about emerging trends to assist the GSA and the AAMC to anticipate and respond effectively to environmental changes as they affect medical education, medical schools, and medical students in the areas of the GSA's interest and expertise.

**Membership.** Each year the dean of each medical school appoints an institutional GSA representative to represent each of the five GSA roles. The dean may also choose to appoint a sixth GSA institutional representative, a member-at-large, when appropriate to the institutional administrative structure. The member-at-large shall be an administrator in one of five areas of the GSA's interest and expertise. There may also be individual (self-appointed) members of the GSA, as well as affiliate members (who are representatives from AAMC-affiliated institutions, including the Canadian medical schools). For additional information about the organization of the GSA, visit the GSA Web site at: [www.aamc.org/members/gsa/](http://www.aamc.org/members/gsa/).

**GSA Steering Committee.** The GSA Steering Committee comprises the leadership of the GSA. The members of the Steering Committee include the:

- National GSA Officers (Chair, Chair-Elect, Vice Chair, and Immediate Past Chair)
- Chairs of each of the four regions (Northeastern, Southern, Central, and Western)
- National Chair of the GSA-Minority Affairs Section (GSA-MAS)
- Chairs of the GSA National Committees:
  - Committee on Admissions (COA)
  - Committee on Student Affairs (COSA)
  - Committee on Student Financial Assistance (COSFA)
  - Committee on Student Records (COSR)
- Liaison representatives from the AAMC Council of Deans (COD), the AAMC Organization on Student Representatives (OSR), and the National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions (NAAHP)

Members of the GSA Steering Committee are listed on the GSA Web site at: [www.aamc.org/members/gsa/rosters/steering.htm](http://www.aamc.org/members/gsa/rosters/steering.htm).

*Note: The OSR is a separate organizational component of the AAMC governance that has seats on the AAMC Executive Council; it is not a component of the GSA. It identifies liaisons between its membership and a number of AAMC committees and professional development groups, including the GSA. Each medical school can appoint a primary and alternate OSR representative to the AAMC; those representatives serve as the point of con-*

tact between the AAMC and enrolled medical students regarding matters of interest to medical students. Members of the OSR Administrative Board are elected annually by OSR primary representatives in attendance at the OSR component of the AAMC Annual Meeting in the fall.

**National Committee on Student Affairs (GSA-COSA).** The Committee on Student Affairs (COSA) provides guidance on non-curricular issues related to medical students, including counseling (personal and career), student health, the ethical and professional development of students, and preparation of students for the transition to residency. COSA receives regular reports from the AAMC on programs related to students, including National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) data regarding residency selection. The Committee discusses issues of national interest and importance that are brought to its attention by GSA constituents or AAMC staff. COSA develops plans for sessions for the AAMC Annual Meeting for consideration by the GSA Steering Committee. COSA may identify projects, such as a health services survey or an infectious disease resource manual for Student Affairs officers, where an issue is of national importance and interest. In that COSA is advisory to the GSA Steering Committee, it makes regular reports to the Steering Committee and seeks approval of the Steering Committee for special projects. COSA members are listed on the GSA Web site at: [www.aamc.org/members/gsa/rosters/cosa.htm](http://www.aamc.org/members/gsa/rosters/cosa.htm); they are happy to provide information or to relay concerns and suggestions from GSA representatives for discussion at COSA meetings in January, July, and November.

**GSA-Minority Affairs Section (GSA-MAS).** The GSA-MAS was established in recognition of the essential role minority issues play within academic medical centers. The purpose of the GSA-MAS is to serve in an advisory and resource capacity, to all facets of the AAMC, on issues of minority concern at both national and regional levels. The GSA-MAS accomplishes its purpose by:

- Providing a means by which minority constituents' views on matters of interest to the AAMC may find expression
- Assisting and facilitating in the development and implementation of methodologies that will enhance the recruitment, enrollment, retention, and postgraduate education of minority medical students
- Providing a means of interchange of ideas and perceptions between minority educators and administrators and others concerned with medical education
- Identifying and advising the AAMC on matters of importance relating to minority affairs for consideration by the AAMC governance
- Creating and distributing guidelines, position statements, and documents on a variety of relevant and important topics for use by Minority Affairs administrators in their positions at their individual medical schools
- Planning and implementing professional development conferences
- Collecting data and disseminating information on issues of importance to GSA-MAS representatives and their institutions

There are unique aspects to the GSA-MAS organization. Although it is a part of the GSA, the AAMC support staff for GSA-MAS resides in the AAMC Division of Diversity Policy and Programs. From its inception, it was felt that the goals and objectives of the GSA-MAS — the recruitment, admission, retention, and graduation of minority students — were best incorporated within the ideals of the Group on Student Affairs. However, the goals of GSA-MAS were also broader in scope and encompassed faculty, residency, practice, and general medical education concerns. The business of the GSA-MAS is conducted through a national coordinating committee, which has regional representation and other liaison representatives. Members of the GSA-MAS Coordinating Committee are listed on the GSA Web site at: [www.aamc.org/members/gsa/rosters/mas.htm](http://www.aamc.org/members/gsa/rosters/mas.htm).

### **Division of Diversity Policy and Programs (DDPP)**

The Division of Diversity Policy and Programs (DDPP) focuses primarily on making the case for, and building, diversity in academic medicine. The division works to create opportunities in medicine for students, faculty members, and physicians from groups with limited access to educational opportunities and health care. In this context, the division has an interest in addressing breaks in the educational pipeline and disparities in health

status and medical care. DDPP also supports the GSA-Minority Affairs Section (GSA-MAS), which is part of the AAMC Group on Student Affairs (GSA). Charles Terrell, Ed.D., serves as DDPP vice president; Lily May Johnson is the DDPP staff member responsible for the GSA-MAS.

### Division of Medical School Services and Studies (DMSSS)

The Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS), FindAResident (FAR), and the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) are administrative components of DMSSS, which operates under the direction of Vice President Robert F. Jones, Ph.D. Also administratively housed in this division are the Section for Medical School Application Services (the American Medical College Application Service [AMCAS]) and the Section for Applicant Assessment Services (the Medical College Admissions Test [MCAT]), as well as other AAMC data resources.

### AAMC Meetings

There are several different types of meetings planned and implemented by the GSA:

**AAMC Annual Meeting.** The AAMC Annual Meeting is held annually in the fall (usually in late October or early November). It provides programming for all AAMC constituents. The meeting provides an opportunity to hear nationally and internationally known speakers make presentations on topics that relate to medicine and medical education. The meeting is also an opportunity to meet, and share information with, medical school colleagues from the United States and Canada. Information about the AAMC Annual Meeting, including locations of future meetings and forms for registration and lodging can be found on the AAMC Web site at: [www.aamc.org/meetings/start.htm](http://www.aamc.org/meetings/start.htm).

**GSA Regional Meetings.** GSA regional meetings are held annually in the spring, usually during the month of April. These meetings are planned by the planning committee chairs for each of the four GSA regions and include programming for all GSA representatives to share issues, discuss solutions, and interact with their regional medical school colleagues. Information about GSA regional meetings can be found in late winter and early spring on the GSA Web site, under Regional GSA, at: [www.aamc.org/members/gsa/](http://www.aamc.org/members/gsa/).

**GSA National Spring Meeting.** A GSA national spring meeting is held in the spring approximately every four years in lieu of the four separate GSA regional spring meetings. This meeting provides an opportunity for all five GSA components to come together to work on national issues that affect all GSA representatives.

**Professional Development Conferences (PDCs).** PDCs typically present opportunities for the professional and career development of members of one area of GSA expertise. In recent years, however, joint PDCs have focused on two or three areas of GSA expertise. PDCs are held periodically, usually every three to four years.

### AAMC Publications, Databases, Electronic Applications, GSA Resources, and Web Links

**Publications.** For an extensive directory of the numerous publications available through the AAMC, visit the AAMC Web site: <https://services.aamc.org/Publications>. Special reading lists have been established for Student Affairs officers.

**Databases, Applications, and Resources.** The GSA Resources and Publications Web page on the GSA Web site located at: [www.aamc.org/members/gsa/resources.htm](http://www.aamc.org/members/gsa/resources.htm) provides information on a variety of GSA-related publications, guides, “best practices” recommendations, searchable databases, electronic applications, and other resources. In addition, consult the “Resources” section of this handbook for additional information.

**Web Links.** For the exact location of Web page links noted in the handbook, as well as links to other medical education and Student Affairs-related sites, please consult the Bibliography section of this handbook.