Shadowing at UMDNJ SOM Protocol

 Dear PreSOMA member, thank you for showing interest in shadowing a medical student at UMDNJ SOM. To keep this opportunity open to future members and to maintain a professional and friendly relationship with UMDNJ SOM, we are asking you to follow these guidelines while you shadow students.

1. **Please dress appropriately.** Jeans and a nice top for women and nice slacks and a collared shirt for men are acceptable. Also dress comfortably, oftentimes the student will take you around on a quick tour of the campus. Finally, do not wear anything you would not wear to lab at TCNJ; the medical school students will try to take you to their OMM lab, and possibly around other anatomy labs.
2. **Get there early.** Arrange transportation well before the date or dates you will shadow. Try very hard not to be late, these students are taking time out of their day to take you around, so be courteous and punctual. If you have never been to the campus before or are unsure about where to park/where to meet the student, ask for directions and check the campus map online (<http://som.umdnj.edu/about/directions.html>) before you get there. Also make sure you have the student’s cell phone number or some other means to contact him/her if you are running late/have an emergency/get lost.
3. **Do some research.** The students may take you to speak with admissions personnel and you want to make a good impression, for yourself and for TCNJ. Understand how the basic curriculum of UMDNJ SOM is organized and look over <http://som.umdnj.edu/about/index.html>. You may want to come prepared with a few questions you have about the school for both the student you are shadowing and any faculty you meet.
4. **If you want to do something specific, just ask.** These students have agreed to take you around and will accommodate you within reason. If you want to see an OMM lab, or a PBL class, or meet an admissions officer let the student know ahead of time (via email). If s/he cannot take you him/herself, s/he can make arrangements or point you in the right direction. Also, it gives them an idea of what you are interested in and shows that you have done some research on medical school life. However, please do not ask to see a student’s apartment, etc.
5. **Be courteous and professional.** Make sure that the emails you send to the student are formal, concise and edited. Bring some quiet work you can do in class when lecture becomes hard to follow. You may want to listen in (after all you hopefully will be learning the same or comparable material in the future), but make sure that anything you do is not distracting to other students. Do not text. **Treat shadowing like you would treat an interview** because oftentimes admissions officers take note on who comes to shadow and the general impressions staff and students had of that individual.
6. **Send the student you shadowed a thank you note.** It can be a simple email but it should include a thank you for their time, their consideration, an appreciation for their hospitality and at least one specific thing you especially enjoyed or learned from the student.
7. After you have completed all these aforementioned steps, send us (presoma@tcnj.edu) an **email about your experience**. This is still a fairly new system and we could use all the feedback we can get. Let us know what you liked about the experience and also what you did not like/did not find helpful. The responses will only be read by the PreSOMA Exec board in order to fine tune this program.

We hope these pointers give you a sense how seriously we take the opportunity to be able to shadow medical students on demand. These are not meant to intimidate or discourage you, they are only guidelines and specific steps to help your shadowing go smoothly and make your experience as beneficial as possible. We thank you in advance for following them and helping cement TCNJ’s reputation as an excellent undergraduate institution and PreSOMA’s reputation as a serious organization on campus. If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to email attaar2@tcnj.edu or presoma@tcnj.edu.