

Advisor's Note to Current and Prospective Medical Explorer Leaders

Your first priority is Academics and your grades. Please be careful with your time, and don't hurt your chances of becoming a health professional by taking on the responsibilities of a Medical Explorer officer or liaison when you may not be in a strong academic position. There are only so many hours in a day and your duties as an officer or liaison may require more than you can contribute to anything other than your academic studies. You can always participate and be a contributor without taking on the time requirements of an officer or liaison.

That said there are benefits of being an officer or liaison. Opportunities will naturally come your way first. If you are a leader of an activity, you'll need that experience before you can help other members take advantage of the opportunity. And, as an officer or liaison, you'll be among the first to hear about new opportunities that open to us.

Be a wise steward of your time. Some Medical Explorer leadership positions may require more of your time than you can afford to give. We try to make your time as an officer or liaison worthwhile. There will be benefits. However, if you are a Medical Explorer leader and discover that your position is taking more time than you have to give, please let a senior advisor know. Your advisors will suggest a solution. They have many years experience in helping solve such problems. One solution may be to add an assistant to your position. Splitting a position between two people is an easy solution.

The balancing act can become too much to handle, especially when you may need to have a job while going to school. We like students who can hold down a job, perform well in their classes, and be a leader in our Medical Explorer program. But many students can find themselves in trouble, especially if taking a full load of academic courses. Your pre-health curriculum is demanding of your time. You have many courses that required a lab.

Please be careful. Your objective again is "Admission to an Academic Healthcare Professional" program. Guard your time carefully. Maybe taking fewer semester credit hours is a solution. As a former department chair, we were in the business of providing courses, but we believe that there is value in experiential learning that comes from focused volunteer service. Again, we want to see your success and admission to a professional program. Only you can know what you can do. Don't waste your time and money enrolling in too many demanding courses and getting a grade lower than you will need for admission to a professional program. Focus on what is necessary. You can still be a Medical Explorer member and enjoy the training and volunteer opportunities.

And then there is the problem when a Medical Explorer leader wants to join too many organizations, or worse, become a leader for two or more student organizations. We would

never tell you that you can't do that, but we have seen problems in time management. Again, your first priority is your academic courses and getting a grade that will help with admission to a health profession program. Becoming an outstanding leader in one organization may best enhance your career goals. **Your purpose is academics, not joining student clubs.** Choose one organization that best helps you achieve your career goals, become the best member that organization has ever seen, and gain everything there is to gain from that extra-curricular activity. **Being a member of too many organizations will mean you're not getting the most from any extra-curricular activity.** Ask yourself which extra-curricular activity will enhance your career goals the best, and then focus what it takes to gain all the benefits that organization may provide. Make sure the benefits are worth the time you're investing. We would rather see you achieve your career goals than be a member of too many student organizations. You can always join our Medical Explorers later in your academic career.

Never join an organization just to list it on a professional school application. Professional school admission committees know that game and it will not help you in admission. Think like an Admission Committee Member. Ask your self the questions they will be asking you during your admission interview. "What was the most valuable benefit of being a member of _____? Is there some contribution you are especially proud of while a member or officer of _____? Did you help make the organization better in some way? In what way did the organization make you a better person or future health professional?

One benefit we hope you would list is "My experiences as an officer or liaison helped me become a better leader. I understand the differences in leadership style, and I hope I've learned how to be the best "servant leader" I can be." We hope we hear from our alumni members that leadership skills may be a result of service as an Omega Leo Medical Explorer.

Don't join too many organizations where the time commitment interferes with your courses. Don't join organizations just to list another organization on a professional school application. Make sure everything you do while a college student contributes to your success as a future health professional. Focus your time and energy!

Our advisors sincerely want to see you succeed as a future health professional. We've seen too many students not make good choices in extra-curricular activities. If you find yourself in academic trouble, our advisors are good resources to help you work your way out of trouble and achieve your career goals. Please let them help.

Charles Johnson, PhD., Senior Advisor
Omega Leo Medical Explorers