On behalf of the entire Bilby class, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of the students entering the University of Calgary Medicine Class of 2025. Congratulations, you deserve to be here, and we can’t be more excited to welcome you into our Menagerie!

Medical school attracts people from all walks of life. Whether you’ve always been in school or are undergoing a career change, this will be a unique transition for all of you. To help facilitate this process, the Bilbies have compiled this document of tips and tricks to help you become accustomed to this new environment. You’ll have lots of information thrown at you, so don’t try to memorize this entire document. Instead, focus on figuring out where to find this information and who to ask. We will be pairing each of you with a mentor in the Bilby class. Even before classes begin, we encourage you to arrange some time to meet with them (either virtually or in-person) because they will be the best person to ask any questions you have.

The next three years will be nothing short of an exciting adventure, and we are all cheering for your success. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to your Bilby mentor, Undergraduate Medical Education (UME), or myself at any time. We are all here to make your experience as amazing as possible!

Best wishes,
Rudra Patel
VP Events, Calgary Medical Students’ Association
Class of 2024
rudra.patel@ucalgary.ca

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The entire UofC medical curriculum is 3 years long and is split into two components. From July 2022 until December 2023, you will be in the pre-clerkship curriculum where the majority of your learning will be in classroom settings. You’ll attend lectures with your whole class, do case-based learning in your small groups of around 12 students, and get tons of clinical experiences in your core groups of around 5-6 students. During pre-clerkship, your classes will be scheduled on weekdays from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm, with a lunch break from 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm. You will also have some unscheduled time, so make the best use of your free time. The majority of your time in pre-clerkship will be spent at the Health Sciences Center (HSC) at the Foothills Campus at UofC.

From January 2024 until graduation, you will be in the clerkship curriculum where you will be placed in clinical experiences full time. This is where you will practice the skills you learned in pre-clerkship.

At UofC, each class receives an animal name during the annual naming ceremony. The Class of 2023 are the Echidnas, the Class of 2024 are the Bilbies, and you are the baby animals until you receive a name.
COMMUNICATION

The first thing you should do is join the University of Calgary Medicine - Class of 2025 Facebook group. This is a place where all three med classes will share information that is relevant to everyone, including fun events and helpful resources. We also encourage you to join the UofC's Baby Animals Facebook Group which is a place for you to communicate with just your class. Facebook is the main way that we share and receive information. If you don’t have Facebook, this might be a good time to make an account! Just keep in mind that you still need to act professionally in these groups.

Speaking of social media, we encourage you to look through your past posts and make sure they’re professional. You may have not googled yourself yet, but someone else might soon!

If you’re not a big fan of Facebook, no worries! Important notices and reminders will also be shared via email. The IT team will be in touch soon with all the details of your email account, as well as how to synchronize to the main class calendar. Once you are given your class animal, you will also receive your own class listserv, which can be used by staff, UME and students to communicate with everyone throughout the year.
LIVING

If you are moving for med school, you may want to find a place to live that is close to campus. Here are some popular communities within walking distance of HSC:

1. St. Andrew’s Heights (5-10 minute walk to campus): This is the closest community to HSC. There are plenty of residential houses that you can rent. You may also choose to live in Foothills Village which is a townhouse complex that is popular amongst med students.
2. University Heights (10-15 minute walk to campus): a residential community with houses and apartments you can rent. Popular apartments are Boardwalk Heights, Patrician Village, Northwest Pointe
3. Parkdale community (10-15 minute walk to campus): a residential community right by the river with walking and bike paths

If you are planning on driving/bussing to campus, here are some other communities you can consider:
1. 5-minute drive: Banff trail, Montgomery, Point McKay, Capitol Hill, West Hillhurst, Briar Hill, University District
2. 10-minute drive: Brentwood, Charleswood, Sunnyside, Varsity, Bowness, Mount Pleasant, Kensington

Living downtown is also a great option. It is a 15-minute drive to campus and you can also get to HSC using the 90 bus.

Rentfaster.ca is a great source to find places to live in Calgary. If you are looking for roommates, feel free to post on the class Facebook group to find roommates before school starts. Finding a place to live can be challenging and time-consuming, so we recommend that you start searching early!
TRANSIT

Regardless of how you are planning on getting to campus, it is still recommended to get access to a vehicle sooner than later. Mandatory clinical experiences can start as early as the end of July, and they can be at any of the hospitals/clinics across the city, many of which are not accessible by transit. It is feasible to go through pre-clerkship without a car, but most students find it beneficial to have a car for clerkship.

Public Transit
As part of your tuition, you are paying for a UPass that gives you unlimited access to the Calgary Transit System. This will become activated in September, so you will need to purchase tickets if you plan on using the transit system before then. The bookstore on the Foothills Campus sells bus tickets at a discounted student price. The Foothills campus is served by many buses including:

8 – Foothills Medical Centre
9 – Foothills Medical Centre/Dalhousie
40 – Crowfoot/ North Hill
90—University of Calgary/Bridgeland
91 – Brentwood/Lions Park
104 – Foothills Medical Centre/Sunnyside

If you plan on taking the train, you can consider getting off at the Lions Park station or the UofC main campus, as both are serviced frequently by most of the above busses.

Biking
Lots of people bike to campus! There are racks at the front door that most students use, and there is a secure bike cage accessible through a key card behind the HSC building that you can get a pass for ($30/year) on from the Main Campus - https://www.ucalgary.ca/ancillary/sites/default/files/teams/16/secured%20_bicycle_parking.pdf

Driving
Many Bilbies drive to campus, but parking can be expensive. Here are places that you can park on and around campus:

1. Foothills Campus: It costs $14.25 to park at Foothills for 24 hours. There is an AHS Parking App that makes payment quicker and easier when you’re running late for classes. You can also pay at the pay machines to purchase a weekly pass for $40.
2. MacMahon Stadium: A parking pass can be purchased for $214/semester through the UofC website. The stadium is around a 20-minute walk from campus
3. Foothills Village: Ask a fellow med student who lives at Foothills Village if they have a parking spot they can rent to you!
CAMPUS LIFE

As mentioned previously, the majority of your pre-clerkship time will be at HSC which is conveniently attached to the Foothills Hospital. Once you get your UniCards (student IDs), you will receive 24/7 access to HSC (though we really don’t recommend spending the entire time on campus). There are plenty of classrooms that you can use for study space and there is a library that is open on weekdays from 8:30 am to 6 pm. Med students also have their private lounge that has a shared kitchen, lounge space, and tons of games! It’s a great hang-out space during lunch. You will also receive a personal locker in HSC where you can store your items.

There are lots of options on or near campus to eat including PurEatery in HSC, Good Earth Café, Timberline, and Garden Deli in the Foothills Hospital. The cafe at the Women’s Health Center has the best food on campus with a menu that changes every day. You have to try the butter chicken on Thursdays and Fridays!

HSC is also home to the Kinetix gym where you can get limited access within certain hours for $100/year or unlimited access for $540/year. There is also a “Dungeon” gym in the basement of HSC which has a one-time fee of $30. Your tuition also gives you access to the recreational facilities on the main campus. All of this information can be found here: https://active-living.ucalgary.ca/. The class also participates in many intramural sports such as basketball, volleyball, hockey, and dodgeball. Calgary’s big on hockey, so if you have a pair of skates, feel free to bring them with you.

While med school is usually hectic, we always try to do enjoyable activities whenever possible. This looks like post-course exam parties, skating nights, hockey tournaments, intramurals, summer/winter formals, Halloween parties, and much more. In fact, every picture in this welcome document is from a time when the Bilby class had some fun!
In the Bilby class, some students take notes on pen and paper, and some students use the full Apple ecosystem. The list below are suggestions by students in our class, but please don’t feel pressured to purchase all of them. For our education, we mostly use technology for note-taking, watching lectures, attending virtual meetings, and completing some assignments. It is not necessary to purchase the newest and most expensive versions of what’s available. The only technology that you really need is a reliable personal computer that you can use to access lecture slides and other course content.

1. Computer: some popular options in our class include Macbooks and Dell laptops. Any reliable laptop will work, just make sure you get at least 8 GB (probably more) if you like having many tabs open.

2. Tablet: handwriting notes on tablets is becoming an increasingly common notetaking method. The iPad (with the Paperlike screen protector) and Apple Pencil are popular within our class, though any tablet will do the job. Samsung tablets are more affordable and some models can be purchased for around $300.

3. Colour Printer: if you are someone who likes having hard copies of documents, it can be worthwhile to invest in a colour laser printer. The Brother brand ranges from $300-500, but any printer will do. You can also print for free at Calgary Public Library.

If you are buying any Apple products, make sure to use the Apple Student Pricing option which gives you a great discount. During back-to-school season, Apple also runs promotions where you get free headphones or accessories with the purchase of a Macbook or iPad. [link]

Wireless Network
Here’s how you can access internet on campus:

1. AirUC-Secure (preferred): This is a secure network (all traffic is encrypted). The first time you connect to this network you will be prompted to authenticate and accept a network certificate. Subsequent connections DO NOT require you to authenticate (as your info is saved). To set it up take a look at: [link]
   a. IT username: email ID (ie.first.lastname)
   b. Password: webmail password

2. Eduroam (preferred): This network allows you to access the internet at participating universities around the world, including most Canadian institutions. To set this up go to: [link]. Scroll down to “Support Documentation.” Find the document that is most applicable for your computer/platform and follow the instructions. Your username and password are the same as for the Air-UC networks.

3. AirUC-guest: This unsecured network requires you to log on every time you access it (when you try to access a web page or your email client, it will prompt you with the login page).

Wi-Fi in the medical buildings: When you are at the Foothills hospital or other hospitals, you will likely be prompted to connect to healthspot as a wifi connection. If you need help:

1. Check out the IT support pages at [link]
2. Submit a support ticket to itsupport@ucalgary.ca or online at [link]
3. Go visit the IT helpdesk, located around the front-right corner of the Libin Theatre (if you are facing its main entrance)
Notetaking
Notetaking is such a personal approach, and we encourage you to find a method that works for you. We have students who take notes on pen and paper, annotate on tables, and type on laptops. The most important thing is to keep your notes organized. We prefer notetaking apps over saving notes on your internal storage because notetaking apps allow you to synchronize notes across devices so that you can readily access them from your phone/tablet during clinical placement. Here are some popular notetaking apps:

1. Office 365 is free for all university students and gives you access to the Microsoft Office package. You can use your UofC credentials to receive access. Office 365 also gives you access to OneNote which is a popular notetaking app that allows you to embed PDFs into note pages and organize sections based on units. Even if you don’t want to use OneNote, we encourage all of you to download Office 365 using this link: https://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/guide-services-students
2. GoodNotes: one-time payment of $11USD for the full version. It allows you to upload PDFs and images into your notes and has lots of neat features for moving and copying notes between files. You can also do a dual-screen to look at multiple sets of notes at a time. It works great with an iPad. GoodNotes is free for up to 3 notebooks, so you can save a notebook on Google Drive once you’re done with it and re-use it to keep the free version.
3. Remnote: it has a bit of a learning curve and is a relatively new app so occasionally has some minor bugs, but it lets you take notes and then make spaced repetition flashcards from those notes in the same app. Free for basic use, $6 USD/month for full use (you’d likely need the paid version as the free one doesn’t let you upload PDFs) - https://www.remnote.com/
4. Other popular apps include Notability and Evernote. Google Drive is also a great way to organize notes

Academic Resources
Everything you need to know for your tests will come from material that is taught to you directly, so focus on that the most. However, many students use external academic resources to help their understanding. There are tons of resources and it is impossible to use them all. Many of them are also paid, so it is important to budget accordingly. We are listing some common resources here for you to be aware of, but we recommend you find resources that work for you.

1. Flashcards: if flashcards and spaced repetition is your preferred method of learning, Anki is by far the most popular app used by medical students. You can access it on your laptop and your phone. The AMBOSS extension gives you access to high-yield information. Upper-year students will often kindly share their decks as well, so keep an eye out.
2. Osmosis: provides concise lectures on many high-yield concepts and practice questions. Summary videos are also posted for free on their youtube channel.
4. X-ray/imaging: https://www.radiologymasterclass.co.uk/
5. UpToDate: provides peer-reviewed summaries on various conditions
Textbooks
Just like all other resources, textbooks are a highly personal choice - some people swear by them, and others go the entire time without touching a single textbook. If you have any anatomy or physiology textbooks from previous education that you loved, feel free to bring them along! If you haven’t already, you will receive a long list of textbooks from the UofC bookstore that are deemed relevant to your education. You will receive a similar list at the start of each new course. This is a guide, not a shopping list. Feel free to explore textbook options and purchase the ones that you think will help your learning. It’s also a good idea to ask your classmates before purchasing any textbooks because many people have PDF copies. The UofC library also gives you access to many online textbooks.

UofC Websites
The pre-clerkship curriculum requires you to use various different websites for different components of your education. Once you get your credentials, you will slowly get access to these websites, but we wanted you to be familiar with them before school starts.

1. Osler: this is the most important website that you will use every day. Here, you will find your daily schedule, your lecture slides and links to recordings, course outlines, surveys, class lists, notes shared by past students, and links to other external websites. Link: https://osler.ucalgary.ca/
2. Core: this is where to find course content for specific courses like anatomy, physical exam skills, and procedural skills. Link: https://core.ucalgary.ca/
3. UME Podcasts: a repository for all recorded lectures/presentations, pre-recorded lectures, and instructional videos from all previous years. The recordings from your lectures will also be posted on Osler. Remember that not all lectures will be recorded, so remember to check the ones that will not be recorded when planning your non-academic schedule. https://umepodcast.ucalgary.ca/
4. Dolphin: exam marks will be released here. You will also occasionally get formative exams (mandatory practice exams that don’t count for marks) that will be released on Dolphin.
5. One45: evaluations for clinical experiences (clinical core, family med days, career development weeks) will be released here
6. Cards: optional practice questions for each course will be released here. https://cards.ucalgary.ca/
9. UCalgary student portal: find your financial information here, like instructions for how to pay tuition and download important tax forms.

Shopping List
You might be tempted to buy every piece of medical equipment that Amazon has to offer, but we encourage you to wait until school starts. You can purchase your white coat and a stethoscope from the UofC bookstore on the Foothills campus (Littmann Cardiology IV is recommended). Eventually, you will also want to get a suturing kit. However, there are lots of events that give out suturing kits for free.
WELLNESS

At one point or another, all of you will find some aspect of medical school challenging. There are tons of resources available to you, and we encourage you to use them as much as you need. Here are a few popular resources:

1. **Student Advising and Wellness (SAW) Office**: An incredible resource and excellent first step when you need any form of guidance during your time as a medical student. SAW is a team of physicians and wellness specialists who are there to support all of us through academic difficulties (from finding study strategies to what to do if you fail a course), career planning (choosing electives, finding people to shadow), and even personal issues that may not be related to our medical careers. The SAW team is always willing to advocate on students’ behalf and help students find the right solution to any problem. You can book an appointment through Rachel at md.studentaffairs@ucalgary.ca, https://cumming.ucalgary.ca/mdprogram/current-students/student-advising-wellness

2. **Alberta Medical Association Physician and Family Support Program (AMA PFSP)** - a 24/7 assistance line open to all physicians/residents/medical students in Alberta and their families. They offer peer support and can connect you to counselling services.

3. If you encounter any professionalism-related issues with classmates or faculty, you can bring up issues to the Student Professionalism Committee: https://wpsites.ucalgary.ca/mistreatment/student-professionalism-committee/

4. If you encounter mistreatment from any faculty members, you may submit a complaint to the Faculty Advocates Against Mistreatment: https://wpsites.ucalgary.ca/mistreatment/i-need-help/

5. The University of Calgary offers additional wellness services through the main campus which can be found here: https://www.ucalgary.ca/wellness-services/services/mental-health-services

6. **Student Success Center**: https://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success This team can set up one on one study and testing taking strategy sessions.

**Academic Accommodations**

1. Students with accommodations please reach out to Dr. Tottle at jltottle@ucalgary.ca to access accommodations for your individual accessibility needs.

2. The Canadian Association of Physicians with Disabilities has created transition documents to support learners: https://www.capd.ca/?page_id=255

**Finding a Family Doctor**

If you’re looking for a family doctor in Calgary, here are some ways to find one:

1. Alberta Medical Association Physician and Family Support Program (AMA PFSP) can help you find a family doctor: https://www.albertadoctors.org/services/pfsp

2. **Student Wellness Services** on the main campus has family physicians for UCalgary students: https://ucalgary.ca/wellness-services/medical-services

**Resources for Indigenous Students**

The Indigenous Health Program, which operates through the Indigenous, Local, and Global Health (ILGH) office in the Cumming School of Medicine (CMS) works to support Indigenous students, staff, and faculty on campus, in addition to supporting various Indigenous initiatives within the CSM. Within the ILGH Office, you’ll find the Indigenous Hub (HSC G801F), which is a warm, welcoming, and
smudge-friendly space for you to utilize during your time here. Throughout the year, the Indigenous Health Program hosts a variety of events that are a great way to connect with Elders, community members, Indigenous peers, and other relatives. These events range from social gatherings to cultural teachings and ceremonies, and everything in-between. The Indigenous Health Program Coordinator, Holliston (Holly) Logan, is a great person to connect with as you begin your medical school journey. She is here to support you, connect you with resources or additional support you may need, and be your advocate whenever and however she can. Feel free to connect with Holly at hilogan@ucalgary.ca or 403-860-3784 (cell).

Here are some additional resources that you can check out:

- **Writing Symbols Lodge**: located on the University of Calgary main campus, the mandate of Writing Symbols Lodge is to provide a culturally appropriate environment that encourages and supports the success of Indigenous students in their pursuit of knowledge and higher education. Writing Symbols Lodge provides academic, personal, and cultural support services and programs to prospective and current First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students, and offers a welcoming and supportive learning environment for the whole campus community.

- **Elbow River Healing Lodge** at the Sheldon M. Chumir Health Centre: The Elbow River Healing Lodge offers a full range of primary care services and visiting specialists to First Nations (Status and Non-Status), Métis, and Inuit peoples and their families. The clinic offers primary care services and specialist services. This includes traditional healing approaches, health promotion, disease prevention, curative care, rehabilitative care, and social resource advocacy (supportive care).

- **Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary**: AFCC provides Indigenous cultural connection through programs and services for the urban population.

- **Miskanawah**: Miskanawah is a multi-service organization, offering programs for children, youth, families, and community. Guided by Indigenous teachings, Miskanawah offers evidence-informed, supportive services to people in the Calgary area as they strengthen their circles of self, family, community, and culture.