



Professional Enrichment Course

University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine

Office of Medical Education

Medical Advocacy Writing Flex Week PEC

Goal:	Provide students with tools and resources related to rhetoric and key principles in persuasive written communication to promote health and wellness through advocacy.
Brief Description:	This interactive advocacy flex week is focused on promoting conversations around advocacy and offering different mechanisms through which students can use their voices to support and advocate for their patients and/or a specific cause. Students will be introduced to useful tools used to communicate their viewpoint (i.e., Letter to Editor, Op-Ed, Letters, Resolution, Local/National Newspapers, etc.) and then choose a topic of their own to work on throughout the week, which they will present to the class on the last day. Students can also expect to hear from individuals who have published their work through local or national press and social media.
Class Year:	Spring 2025/Fall 2025
Organizer:	Dr. Bui
Administrator/Coordinator contact info:	Administrator: Elizabeth Dakan Student Coordinators: Social Medicine Advocacy Fellows → Elijah Brown (brown.elijah@medstudent.pitt.edu), Elizabeth Dakan (dakan.elizabeth@medstudent.pitt.edu), Coley Lameman (lameman.coley@medstudent.pitt.edu)
Department:	Medicine and English
Capacity (# of students):	20
Location:	Hybrid (Remote/Zoom & In-Person)
Reporting Info/First Day Location	02/24/2025 (Zoom)
Maximum # of students	20
Minimum # of students	4

MS1 (Class of 2028)			
Week	Start Date (Mon)	End Date (Fri)	Available?
5	TUE 9/3/2024	9/6/2024	
12	TUE 10/22/2024	10/25/2024	
26	1/27/2025	1/31/2025	
30	2/24/2025	2/28/2025	X
59	9/16/2025	9/20/2025	

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
AM	10a-12p Zoom	10a-12p Zoom	10a-12p Zoom	10a-12p Zoom	9a-12p **Potentially in-person
PM	Independent Study Time	Independent Study Time	Independent Study Time	Independent Study Time	Independent Study Time
Schedule splitting:			Partial acceptable (students need to attend the first 2 sessions and the last session)		
If so above, please designate which parts of your schedule this would impact					

Medical Advocacy Writing Professional Enrichment Course Spring

Course Facilitator: Thuy Bui

Contact Information: Coley Lameman LAMEMAN.COLEY@medstudent.pitt.edu

Student coordinators: Elijah Brown (brown.elijah@medstudent.pitt.edu), Elizabeth Dakan (dakan.elizabeth@medstudent.pitt.edu), Coley Lameman (lameman.coley@medstudent.pitt.edu)

Registration: Denise Downs, Office of Medical Education ddowns@medschool.pitt.edu

Location: Hybrid (Zoom/In-Person)

Description:

Physicians are natural advocates for public health and social justice issues. An op-ed allows you to share an interesting opinion, potentially change minds, and even reshape public policy. Similarly, a letter to the editor can correct misinformation, state a difference of opinion, promote an issue, or support a previously expressed view. They are among the most widely read sections of a newspaper. Medical students can be very persuasive by writing from a place of unique personal experience and expertise.

This workshop will cover basic op-ed and LTE structure, general tips, ledes and news hooks. Participants will receive peer and faculty writing mentors to help you pitch your op-ed/LTE, and make a difference.

Course Objectives:

1. Define advocacy and explain its role in improving patient care and advancing causes within the healthcare system.
2. Identify and describe various tools and platforms (e.g., Letter to the Editor, Op-Ed, Resolutions, etc.) used to communicate advocacy efforts.
3. Choose a topic of personal or professional interest, conduct background research, and outline an approach to effectively advocate for it.
4. Create a draft using one of the advocacy tools learned, incorporating feedback during working sessions or office hours.
5. Share advocacy piece(s) with peers, articulate the significance of their chosen topic, and reflect on lessons learned through the process.

Course Outline: Medical Advocacy Writing

Session 1: Approaches to advocacy and writing blogs, letters to the editor, and op-eds (Bui)

Session 2: Rhetoric and key principles in persuasive written communication (April Flynn)

Session 3: Topic and motive (Dakan, Lameman, Brown)

Session 4: Mentor-editor feedback on your drafts (Dakan, Lameman, Brown, Bui)

Session 5: Presenting and publishing (participants, workshop organizers and special guests)