

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK DOWNSTATE MEDICAL CENTER

COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

RESIDENCY PLANNING

CLASS OF 2011

OFFICE OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

July, 2009

CALENDAR OF IMPORTANT CAREER EVENTS

YEAR ONE

All Semesters
Spring Semester

EVENTS

Participate in community/medical school events
Attend career and specialty conferences
Sign up for summer research or summer clinical experiences

YEAR TWO

All Semesters

Attend career and specialty conferences, organizations and group meetings
Participate in community/medical school events

January

Note importance of USMLE Step 1 - begin reviewing course material now

March/April

Introduction to the Third Year

Selection of Third Year Schedules

June

USMLE Step 1 (You must pass Step 1 in order to continue in the third year)

YEAR THREE

All Semesters

Review clinical evaluations regularly

Discuss career interests with specialty advisors and faculty in specialty

January

Class meeting to discuss overall residency and clinical years timetable

March

General class meeting to discuss fourth year schedule and electives

April

Fourth Year Program of Study form due with projected fourth year course schedule

April

Selection of fourth year electives

April-July 15

Meet with one of the clinical assistant deans to discuss programs, develop the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (formerly the Dean's Letter), and other residency planning strategies

April

Begin signing up for Step 2 USMLE if you are taking the exam in the summer of the MS 4 year

June

General class meeting to discuss residency planning, NRMP and non-NRMP matches

June

Changes to fourth year program through drop/add procedure

August

Register for NRMP Match on the web

YEAR FOUR

July 15

Deadline to meet with one of the clinical assistant deans for MSPE (formerly the Dean's Letter) for November 1 release date

June - January

Step 2 and Step 2CS (Clinical Skills) of USMLE

November-January

Interview for residency programs (But not during subinternships)

December/January

Order caps and gowns for Commencement

January

Early Match results announced

January

Last time for interviews for NRMP

February

NRMP Rank Order computer entry begins

March

MATCH DAY (third week of the month)

April

Sign contract for residency programs

Take ACLS course if your residency program requires it

May

Commencement

late June

Most programs schedule an orientation program for first year residents

July

Most residencies begin

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GENERAL INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

As you begin your clinical years, it is important to begin thinking about your clinical courses and your eventual career choice. During your third year, you will be exposed to a broad-based educational program, which will give you a “taste” of many different possible career choices.

You may have a particular career which you are leaning towards. Or you may have no idea of what career you will select. You should go through your third year open to all possible choices, with the understanding that you may change your mind many different times. This is all quite normal and nothing to be overly concerned about. By the same token, don't let one negative experience or incident ruin your otherwise positive impressions of a career choice.

What should you do now? You should concentrate on doing your very best in each of your clerkships. You are writing your own Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE), formerly known as the "Dean's Letter," by your performance in your clerkships and the narratives from the clerkships. By doing well in your clerkships, you are creating the greatest number of options for yourself in your residency selection process. The clerkship year is still the most important variable in the residency selection process. The basic science years are not weighed as heavily as your clerkship year in terms of the selection process, for all but the most competitive residencies (who weigh everything to winnow down the applicant pool). If you have a good third year with positive clinical evaluations, you will increase your residency program options.

To do well in your clerkships, you will need to earn **good clinical evaluations** from your faculty preceptors, residents and attendings; and to **do well in the written and oral exams** for the clerkship (this means good time management to budget study time in the evening to prepare for the clerkship exam). **You must do well in all three components, and in your professional conduct.** There is more information on this topic in the general section of the Course Selection Book, which you should read carefully.

WHAT DO YOU DO IF YOU'RE UNDECIDED ABOUT A SPECIALTY?

1. Make an appointment with specialty advisors, clerkship course directors, faculty preceptors, or faculty mentors to discuss career options.
2. Visit several practitioners in the specialties in which you have an interest to see their practices. (There is an Alumni observation program to assist you. Contact the Alumni Office to make arrangements.)
3. Take an elective (2 or 4 weeks) to “test” out your interest.
4. Read:
 - a) How to Choose a Medical Specialty, by Anita D. Taylor; or
 - b) Getting into a Residency: A Guide to Medical Students, by Kenneth Iserson, MD.
5. Also see "Careers in Medicine" on the web (<http://www.aamc.org/careersinmedicine>) Careers in Medicine is an on-line program (<http://www.aamc.org/careersinmedicine>) designed to assist medical students in understanding options for choosing a specialty and applying to residency programs.

There are four stages in the program –self-assessment, career exploration, decision-making, and implementation. You may find some of the resource links useful.

If you lost your password for the site, there are instructions on the site on how to obtain it.

We are interested in feedback regarding the usefulness of the Careers in Medicine website to you.

No one can make your career decision for you. You have to choose. Take the time you need to make the correct choice for you. This is a life decision. It is better to take the time to decide than regret your decision later in life.

SPECIALTIES AND FELLOWSHIPS

Ninety percent of all graduates enter residency training in one of 23 specialties; and/or in one of almost 90 permutations of those specialties, if you include all the subspecialties. (See chart below)

Specialty training leads to eligibility for certification; and eventually certification in that specialty (by a combination of experience and passing the specialty examination). The requirements for specialty certification are outlined in the Directory of Graduate Medical Education Programs (also known as the “green book”) reference which is available in the Library and the Office of Student Affairs in hard copy. The on-line computer version of the Directory of Graduate Medical Education Programs is known as AMA-FREIDA. (<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/education-careers/graduate-medical-education/freida-online.shtml>)

The following list of specialties and subspecialties are from the Graduate Medical Education Directory inside front cover, to give you an idea of the myriad of options available to you. More detailed information regarding the length and educational content of fellowship programs is outlined in this directory.

Specialty (Residency Program)	Fellowship (if available)
Allergy and Immunology	Clinical and Laboratory Immunology
Anesthesiology	Critical Care Medicine
	Pain Management
	Pediatric Anesthesiology
Colon and Rectal Surgery	
Dermatology	Dermatopathology
Emergency Medicine	Pediatric Emergency Medicine
	Medical Toxicology
	Sports Medicine
	Undersea and Hyperbaric Medicine
Family Practice	Family Practice Geriatric Medicine
	Family Practice Sports Medicine
Internal Medicine	Cardiovascular Disease
	Clinical Cardiac Electrophysiology
	Critical Care Medicine
	Endocrinology, Diabetes, and Metabolism
	Gastroenterology
	Geriatric Medicine
	Hematology
	Hematology and Oncology
	Infectious Disease
	Interventional Cardiology
	Nephrology
	Oncology
	Pulmonary Disease
	Pulmonary Disease and Critical Care Medicine
	Rheumatology
	Sports Medicine
Internal Medicine/Dermatology	
Internal Medicine/Emergency Medicine	
Internal Medicine/Emergency Medicine/Critical Care Medicine	

Specialty (Residency Program)	Fellowship (if available)
Internal Medicine/Family Practice	
Internal Medicine/Nuclear Medicine	
Internal Medicine/Neurology	
Internal Medicine/Pediatrics	
Internal Medicine/Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation	
Internal Medicine/Preventive Medicine	
Internal Medicine/Psychiatry	
Medical Genetics	
Molecular Genetic Pathology	
Neurological Surgery	Endovascular Surgical Neuroradiology
Neurology	Child Neurology
	Clinical Neurophysiology
	Neurodevelopmental Disabilities
	Vascular Neurology
Neurology/Diagnostic Radiology/Neuroradiology	
Neurology/Nuclear Medicine	
Neurology/Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation	
Nuclear Medicine	
Obstetrics & Gynecology	
Ophthalmology	
Orthopedic Surgery	Adult Reconstructive Orthopedics
	Foot and Ankle Orthopedics
	Hand Surgery
	Musculoskeletal Oncology
	Orthopedic Sports Medicine
	Orthopedic Surgery of the Spine
	Orthopedic Trauma
	Pediatric Orthopedics
Otolaryngology	Otology-Neurotology
	Pediatric Otolaryngology
Pathology (Anatomic and Clinical)	Blood Banking/Transfusion Medicine
	Chemical Pathology
	Cytopathology
	Dermatopathology
	Forensic Pathology
	Hematology
	Immunopathology
	Medical Microbiology
	Neuropathology
	Pediatric Pathology
	Selective Pathology
Pediatrics	Adolescent Medicine
	Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics
	Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine
	Pediatric Cardiology
	Pediatric Critical Care Medicine

Specialty (Residency Program)	Fellowship (if available)
	Pediatric Emergency Medicine
	Pediatric Endocrinology
Pediatrics (continued)	Pediatric Gastroenterology
	Pediatric Hematology/Oncology
	Pediatric Infectious Diseases
	Pediatric Nephrology
	Pediatric Pulmonology
	Pediatric Rheumatology
	Pediatric Sports Medicine
Pediatrics/Dermatology	
Pediatrics/Emergency Medicine	
Pediatrics/Medical Genetics	
Pediatrics/Psychiatry/Child & Adolescent Psychiatry	
Pediatrics/Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation	
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	Pain Management
	Pediatric Rehabilitation Medicine
	Spinal Cord Injury Medicine
Plastic Surgery	Crainofacial Surgery
	Hand Surgery
Preventive Medicine	Aerospace Medicine
	Medical Toxicology
	Occupational Medicine
	Public Health & General Preventive Medicine
	Undersea and Hyperbaric Medicine
Psychiatry	Addiction Psychiatry
	Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
	Forensic Psychiatry
	Geriatric Psychiatry
	Pain Management
Psychiatry/Family Practice	
Psychiatry/Neurology	
Radiology - Diagnostic	Abdominal Radiology
	Cardiothoracic Radiology
	Endovascular Surgical Neuroradiology
	Musculoskeletal Radiology
	Neuroradiology
	Nuclear Radiology
	Pediatric Radiology
	Vascular and Interventional Radiology
Diagnostic Radiology/Nuclear Medicine/Nuclear Radiology	
Radiation Oncology	
Surgery - General	Surgical Critical Care
	Hand Surgery
	Pediatric Surgery
Surgery (continued)	Vascular Surgery
Thoracic Surgery	
Urology	Pediatric Urology
Transitional Year	

GETTING MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SPECIALTIES

Once you have narrowed down your choices to one, two or three, you can obtain more information about the specialty from the specialty itself (many have web sites), from a faculty specialty advisor (see the 2007-08 list on our website at http://sls.downstate.edu/registrar/class_mtg/index.html). You should also do a Medline search for articles pertaining to the specialty, its future and its competitiveness. Many of the medical specialty boards have web sites or email addresses. The “Green Book” is the Directory of Graduate Medical Education Programs. It is called the “Green Book” because the cover is always a shade of green. There are two paper copies on reserve in the Library. There is also an on-line version that provides information about residency programs as well. It is called AMA-FREIDA, the American Medical Association’s Fellowship and Residency Electronic Interactive Database Access) and is available at website www.ama-assn.org//ama/pub/category/2997.html.

WHAT DO RESIDENCY PROGRAM DIRECTORS LOOK FOR

Competitiveness to enter a particular specialty program varies by the specialty, the geographic area you decide to apply in, your overall academic record and how you handle the application process. Remember, this is a job application process and all factors pertaining to a job application apply (how you treat support staff, how you dress for the interview, how you handle the interview, etc., etc.). The Wagoner and Suriano article is a good overview of what residency directors look for in 14 specialties. You can also do your own research in the specialty journals and speak with your faculty specialty advisor or other faculty in the department regarding the specifics pertaining to your specialty choice. A survey of internal medicine program directors is reported in the Adams, et. al. article.

Wagoner, Norma E. and J. Robert Suriano, “Program Directors’ Responses to a Survey on Variables Used to Select Residents in a Time of Change,” Academic Medicine, Vol. 74., No. 1, January, 1999, pp. 51-58.

Adams, Lorraine J., Suzanne Brandenburg, and Marcia Blake, “Factors Influencing Internal Medicine Program Directors’ Decisions about Applicants,” Academic Medicine, Vol. 75, No. 5, May, 2000, pp. 542-43.

CLINICAL ASSISTANT DEANS AND SPECIALTY ADVISORS

CLINICAL ASSISTANT DEANS

One of five clinical assistant deans are assigned to each student during your third year of medical school (during the spring semester). Assignments to the clinical assistant deans are made through the Office of the Registrar. You will schedule a meeting in late spring of your third year, with your clinical assistant dean, to begin discussing your career interests/goals and to ask any individual questions which you might have about the fourth year. The clinical assistant deans also draft your “Medical Student Performance Evaluation” (MSPE – formerly known as the Dean's Letter) for your residency application.

SPECIALTY ADVISORS

Each department chair has identified a list of specialty advisors. A current list is on the web under the Office of the Registrar (http://sls.downstate.edu/registrar/class_mtg/index.html). You may meet with a specialty advisor at any time during your medical school education. These individuals will assist you with what program of study you should follow in your fourth year in order to strengthen your credentials for your desired career field; they will advise you on residency programs which you should consider applying to; and they will answer any other questions you might have regarding your career choice.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ALUMNI OBSERVATION PROGRAM

Contact the Alumni Office (by email or by telephone) to make arrangements for observation visits in specialties you are interested in.

RESIDENCY PLACEMENT LISTS

The Downstate seniors residency placements (last 13 years) are posted on the institutional web site (www.downstate.edu) in the Student Affairs section, Student Services. There are also 2 paper copies of the last five years of placements, on reserve in the library.

ALUMNI LISTS

A list of Downstate graduates (College of Medicine Academic Faculty Alumni) who hold faculty positions at medical schools outside of New York State is also available in the Student Affairs section of the SUNY Downstate website. These individuals should be a good resource if you are looking at residency programs outside of New York City. There is also a national medical school faculty online directory (maintained by the Association of American Medical Colleges), which is searchable by last name, at: <http://services.aamc.org/facsearch/>

DEPARTMENTAL MEETINGS

In Spring of your third year, we will notify you of departmental meetings sponsored by each department to discuss the residency application process and how to apply in the particular specialty. You will be able to attend more than one departmental meeting, if you desire.

FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

The Department of Health and Human Services offers, through the Financial Aid Office, low interest Primary Care Loans (PCL) for medical students entering a primary care field. **The loan must be obtained before you graduate from Medical School. Inquire at the Financial Aid Office if you are interested.**

For the purpose of these financial aid programs, primary health care has been defined by law as:

General Internal Medicine, Family Practice, Pediatrics, Preventive Medicine

The Department of Health and Human Services also offers a number of Primary Care and Community Service Scholarships, as well as Loan Repayment Programs. Students who are interested should call or write the Department of Health and Human Services. If you are interested, you should file your application as soon as possible as some of the application deadlines are early.

Dept. of Health & Human Services
Recruitment Program
8201 Greensboro Drive, Suite 600
McLean, VA 22102
(800) 221-9393

Another program run by the Dept. of Health and Human Services is the Indian Health Service. This program also offers a Loan Repayment Program. For more information contact:

The Indian Health Service
Loan Repayment Program
12300 Twinbrook Parkway, Suite 100
Rockville, MD 20852
(301) 443-6197

New York State Health Department Residency Funding: Medical students who enter primary care residency programs (family practice, general internal medicine, general pediatrics, primary care obstetrics) are eligible for awards which can be paid in their 2nd and 3rd year of training. Residents must agree to practice primary care in

New York State after completion of residency training, but practice can be anywhere in New York State and is not tied to underserved areas. There are no limits on the number of these awards

CHECKING EMAIL REGULARLY

You need to check your school email account on a regular basis (at least once a week) throughout the third year as we will be sending you information about any career opportunities, announcements pertaining to clerkships, and notices about any class meetings or materials which you should be aware of. It is medical school policy that you must check your school email account at least once a week. So make sure your inbox is not full.

Almost all aspects of the residency application process now require use of the World Wide Web and email. Many residency programs now notify students of their residency interview dates by email. Therefore, you need to be proficient in how to access the web and learn to check your email on a regular (daily basis).

If you experience difficulties with your email account, see if your questions are answered by the helpful documentation on the StudentHelp FAQ (Frequently Asked Question) server at <http://studenthelp.downstate.edu>, or by one of the help links on the Welcome tab page that is available when you log into email using a web browser. If you still require assistance, contact the campus HelpDesk at 718-270-HELP (4357). **QUICK TIP:** Once you have reached your email storage limit, deleting messages and then emptying the trash folder will not actually free up the storage space until the next day, after the mail server has run the nightly 'compaction' event. So be sure to keep up with reading and deleting, and don't use your Downstate email to store file attachments for long periods of time.

HOW DO YOU OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT SPECIFIC RESIDENCY PROGRAMS?

AMA-FREIDA (the “official” directory)

The information in The Directory of Graduate Medical Education Programs is provided electronically and is known as AMA-FREIDA (American Medical Association's Fellowship and Residency Electronic Interactive Database Access). The web address is <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/education-careers/graduate-medical-education/freida-online.shtml> AMA-FREIDA contains detailed educational and demographic information. Included are as many as 116 pieces of information on each program and 164 facts about each teaching institution. Many programs now have websites which are also listed.

Program Information includes:

- Program Director Name and Address
- Length of Program and Number of Positions
- Educational Environment
- Work Environment
- Compensation and Benefits

Institutional Information includes:

- Teaching Staff
- Clinical Resources
- Patient Population
- Institutional Features
- Community Characteristics

A paper copy of the Directory of Graduate Medical Education Programs will be available for review in the Library, one on reserve and one at the reference desk, later this summer.

Private Resources

There are private services such as the IRIS (Internship & Residency Information Site at www.i-r-i-s.com) web site, and CareerMD.com (www.careermd.com) also available. The primary difficulty with these services is that

residency programs have to pay for their listing so there is some concern about the completeness or accuracy of the information, and who is featured.

Specialty Resources

Some specialties provide resource materials or enhanced information about their residency programs.

1. The Directory of Family Practice Residency Programs published by the American Academy of Physicians is available at <http://www.aafp.org/residencies/>
2. A copy of the Directory of Pathology Training Programs is available on line at <http://www.pathologytraining.org/>
3. A copy of the Directory of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Residency Training Programs is available at http://www.physiatry.org/Publications_Residency_Training_Directory.cfm
4. A copy of the Directory of Preventive Medicine Residency Programs is available on-line at http://www.acpm.org/education/ge_resources1.htm
5. The Association of Academic Women's Health Programs has developed a Directory of Women's Health Residencies and Fellowships as a resource for medical students. A copy is available on line at <http://www.womenshealth.gov/pub/directory.cfm>
6. A copy of the Transitional Year Programs Directory (purple book) is in the Office of Student Affairs.

AWAY OR “AUDITION” ELECTIVES

The common convention is that in support of your specialty choice, you will do one elective or subinternship in that specialty area at your home school (here) and one elective away at the program you rate most highly. The “away” or “audition” elective is a double edge sword. Highly competitive specialties and programs use the audition elective as the way to decide how they will rank applicants on their rank order lists.

SUNY Downstate has an academic policy that limits the number of away (extramural) electives to a maximum of 8 weeks (8 credits) if you are doing the minimum number of electives for graduation. For most specialties, doing more than two electives in that specialty is not beneficial to your education or to getting a residency.

You are generally not eligible to sign up for an elective as a “visiting student” until the students at the home institution have registered for their senior year courses. This means that you probably not be able to sign up for an “away” or “extramural” elective until mid Spring, 2010. To sign up for an elective at another medical school, contact the other medical school for their procedures. There is a list of the contact persons in the Office of the Registrar. Read the “extramural elective” section in the Course Selection Book. Remember that most medical schools require malpractice insurance coverage (we provide it to you free of charge with the appropriate paperwork in place) and proof of health insurance. Some schools also require a "**school**" or "**dean's letter**" of **good standing**. This is available via form letter from the Office of the Registrar.

The AAMC has a Extramural Electives Compendium at <http://services.aamc.org/EEC/student.cfm> in the "Students and Residents" section of the AAMC website. This lists the contact person, name and mailing address, for away electives at other medical schools.

VSAS: The Visiting Student Application Service (VSAS) is an AAMC application designed to streamline the application process for senior "away" electives at other U.S. LCME medical schools. This service requires students to submit just one application for all schools, effectively reducing paperwork, miscommunication, and time. VSAS also provides a centralized location for managing offers and tracking decisions. For a list of participating schools and for more information, see <http://www.aamc.org/programs/vsas/students/about.htm>

TYPES OF RESIDENCY PROGRAM MATCHES

Figure out if you are interested in a specialty, which is an “early” Match or a “regular” Match since this will affect your task list and timetable.

Early Matches (non-NRMP Programs)

Child Neurology (PGY-3), Ophthalmology (PGY-2), Urology

These are called the “early” matches because the specialties in these matches interview in November and December. Rank order lists are completed in January. Applicants are notified of the results in mid to late January. Even though these are “early” matches, the national release date for the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE) is still November 1.

SF (San Francisco-Colenbrander) Specialty Match

There is a separate matching program for subspecialty programs in Child Neurology, Ophthalmology (OMP), and Plastic Surgery. Information regarding the San Francisco Specialty match is available from the clinical department and from the web site (www.sfmatch.org).

Remember, even if you enter the Colenbrander Match, you still need to also enter the NRMP Match. You may match to your PGY-2 position through the Colenbrander Match and may still need a PGY-1 position through the NRMP Match. You may need to plan on a back-up in case you don’t match in the Colenbrander Match.

AUA Residency Matching Program for Urology

You apply through the NRMP but you are notified of your match results in January, from the AUA. If you match to a Urology program, you will be informed if you are to rank the preliminary surgery year(s) for Urology through the NRMP match. To register for the AUA match, you will have to register via the internet with a credit card. At the web site, you will find a list of accredited urology training programs as well as a list of the programs participating in the AUA Match.

The internet address is <http://www.auanet.org>. Select the option “Students & Residents” when you get to the web site.

NATIONAL RESIDENCY MATCHING PROGRAM (NRMP)

This is the match program used by 98% of the class. All students are included in the NRMP Match, unless they are eligible to formally withdraw from the match. (i.e. receive a residency program which is outside the Match or through the Armed Forces, or the Canadian Match.)

Interviews for NRMP (regular) residency programs take place in November, December, and January. This makes July through January viable for elective choices applicable to your residency plans.

Helpful NRMP Information

The NRMP has helpful information on the web at <http://www.nrmp.org>. There are tables describing the historical trends in the number of programs and applicants participating in the Match over the years. Remember that not all programs in all specialties listed participate in the NRMP Match. You may be interested in a residency program which does not participate in the NRMP Match. The NRMP Directory of Residency Programs is available on the web beginning September 15, 2009.

ARMY and NAVY MILITARY MATCH

100% of all United States Army and Navy residency PGY-1 programs for all specialties participate in ERAS. Applicants should consult their military advisor for specific additional instructions.

OTHER MATCHES

Armed Services Residency

Military programs not in ERAS all have an early match (December). However, the deadlines for release of the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE) is the same as programs in the NRMP Match. Consult your military advisor for specifics.

Canadian Match

Students who wish to enter into the Canadian Matching Program, or select a program in Canadian hospitals at the appropriate time may do so. You should check with the Dean's Office for specific information. The Canadian Match takes place prior to the NRMP match. If you are selected by a Canadian hospital, you will be removed from the list of participants in the NRMP match.

This is another example of when you would enroll in two Matches. You would enter the Canadian Match and the NRMP Match as a back-up.

RESIDENCY PROGRAM TERMINOLOGY

C - Categorical

P -Preliminary

A- Advanced Student Programs

An explanation of these terms is on the NRMP website.

C - Categorical: Programs in a specialty which meet all the specific requirements for that specialty. Although the residency contracts or agreements are renewed annually, a categorical program provides the appropriate number of years of training to satisfy certification requirements (for example, 3 years of Medicine, 3 years of Pediatrics, 5 years of Surgery). A categorical Radiology program would be one which would include the first (PGY-1) year in addition to the Radiology training (PGY 2 through 4).

P - Preliminary: Offers one or two years in a general specialty prior to your taking an advanced specialty. For example: 2 years of general surgery [preliminary] then 3 years of ENT; or 1 year of medicine [preliminary] followed by ophthalmology. Sometimes a preliminary year can be obtained by special arrangement with specialties not listed as preliminary options in the NRMP Directory (Pathology, Pediatrics and OB/GYN). Transition Year programs (formerly known as rotating internships) are also listed as preliminary programs.

A - Advanced Student Programs: Programs that have arranged positions through NRMP for the second year of training (PGY-2) only, rather than the first post-graduate year (PGY-1). The specialty's first year of training begins in the second year residency or later. For these programs, you will need a PGY-1, preliminary year position in addition to your specialty position (advanced position) which won't begin until two years after graduation. This means that you will have to file two types of applications to separate programs -- to preliminary programs and to advanced/specialty programs. For example, Anesthesiology is an Advanced Program which begins in the PGY-2 year. A preliminary year of medicine is required for the first year.

**Most NRMP programs are now using ERAS (Electronic Residency Application System)
Additional information for your class will be provided in the MS 3 class meeting in Spring, 2010**

LETTERS

MEDICAL STUDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION (MSPE)

The Medical Student Performance Evaluation (formerly known as the Dean's Letter) is drafted by your Clinical Assistant Dean. The letter includes information from your Curriculum Vitae; a summary of your academic performance from the first two years of medical school; narratives from your third year clerkships; and information from any elective evaluations received by September 15 of your senior year. To see the format of the MSPE, go to <http://www.aamc.org/members/gsa/mspeguide.htm> for the template

Content

The majority of the letter is based on the information from your third year clerkships. Your third year clerkship information included in the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE) is the narrative submitted by the departments on your grade evaluation form in your academic file, not the notes from your preceptors and residents which are collected by the departments as part of your clerkship clinical evaluations, unless these comments are also included in the official clerkship evaluation narrative submitted to the Registrar's Office. The MSPE is an **EVALUATIVE** summary, not a promotional letter. Therefore, positive **AND** negative comments are included in the letter.

You should go to the Office of the Registrar (Room 112, BSB) throughout your third year to read your clerkship evaluations. The MSPE focuses on your clinical performance and in this sense, by the end of your third year, you will have already written the Medical Student Performance Evaluation yourself.

FACULTY LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Generally, residency programs require an average of three faculty letters, at least two from faculty in the department of your specialty choice. Sometimes an additional letter is needed if you are applying to a preliminary (PGY 1) program as well as your career specialty (example: PGY-1 Medicine, PGY-2 Ophthalmology).

Students generally request faculty letters from a subinternship attending, or a senior year elective preceptor, or a department chair. It is advisable to ask for a letter from a faculty member who has observed you in the clinical setting and who can comment on your performance in that setting. Letters from residents or fellows are not acceptable. Because letters of recommendation from subinternship or "audition" electives are preferred, students should not request letters from clerkship preceptors or attendings during the third year rotations.

Letters of recommendation will be discussed in more detail during the MS 3 meeting in Spring, 2010.

WHAT IF YOU DON'T WANT TO GO INTO A RESIDENCY RIGHT AWAY?

Not everyone goes directly into a residency program. Some graduates may opt for the following -- taking a year off (e.g. starting a family), doing a research year, doing a one year Master's program in Public Health, doing a Masters in Business Administration, etc.

If you are interested in exploring a non-traditional career path or not going into a residency immediately, you should schedule an individual appointment with Associate Dean of Student Affairs Sophie Christoforou or Dr. Lorraine Terracina (Dean of Students) to discuss your future plans.

How to Contact Us

Lorraine Terracina
Sophie Christoforou

Lorraine.Terracina@downstate.edu
Sophie.Christoforou@downstate.edu

MS 3 SCHEDULE CONSIDERATIONS

INTERNATIONAL HEALTH

If you are interested in taking the “Health Care in Developing Countries” elective (see Course Selection Book) during your MS 4 year, the application process occurs during the fall semester of your MS 3 year. Application materials are generally mailed to your student mailbox in October. An email announcement is made regarding the application period.

To arrange for an international elective other than “Health Care in Developing Countries,” see the information in the Course Selection Book.

INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE ROTATIONS

If you are interested in applying for an elective rotation in Alaska, this is a separate application process which is done through the Alaskan Indian Health Service. Application is generally started in the spring semester of your MS 3 year for a rotation to be done in the MS 4 year. It is competitive.

If you are interested in applying for a rotation through the Indian Health Service (this is separate from the Alaskan Health Service), you must apply to the Indian Health Service.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions or feel that you have a specific problem not covered in this booklet, please contact the Dean of Students (Lorraine Terracina) or the Associate Dean of Student Affairs (Sophie Christoforou). We are available by email or by appointment.

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