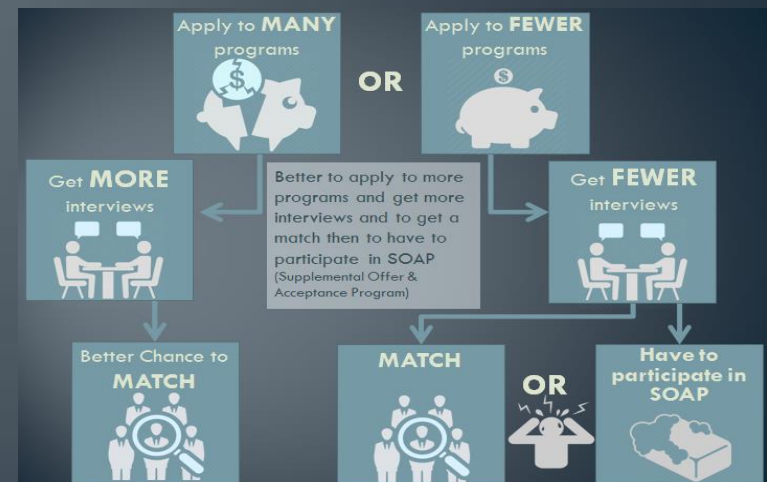


The Application Process

Ali Jones, Office of Surgery Education

- **Where to begin**
 - The application process starts the moment you decide on surgery as a career
 - Networking
 - Check Web Presence
 - Early preparation on CV & Personal Statement
 - Studying for USMLE Step 2 (CK & CS)
 - Nice but not necessary. Note: You must have both CK & CS Step 2 scores before you start a program!
 - Make sure your FULL application is completed on time
 - By September 15th . Waiting even a week could result in being overlooked
- **Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS)**
 - It is an Application for Residency Programs
 - It is a single application that is sent to as many residency programs you choose.
 - Begin uploading and editing applications online in May
 - Deadline September 15th
 - You will be able to start applying to residency programs
 - Programs are able to begin viewing your applications
 - Application Fees
 - Up to 10 = \$97
 - 11-20 = \$11 each
 - 21-30 = \$16 each
 - 31 or more = \$26 each
- Apply to MANY programs!



- **Supplemental Offer & Acceptance Program (SOAP). If you do not match during Match Week you will participate in SOAP to try to obtain an unfilled residency program.**
 - Applicant's express preference by applying to programs using ERAS
 - Based upon the ERAS applications they receive, programs create preference lists of applicants in the Registration, Ranking, Results (R3) system.
 - The R3 system offers positions to applicants in a series of rounds in order of each program's preference list and according to the number of unfilled positions remaining in the program during each round.
 - Applicants can receive multiple offers in any round & have 2 hours to accept or reject an offer.
 - SOAP concludes at 5:00 pm on Thursday of Match Week.
 - The list of unfilled programs will be available in the R3 system beginning at 6:00pm ET on Thursday of Match Week for ALL unmated applicants, regardless of SOAP participation status. All programs will be shown, including those that did not participate in SOAP. Programs can update the number of unfilled positions as they are filled.
- **Selecting Programs**
 - Apply to as many programs as you want
 - Limit your selections to programs that you feel truly interested in and you plan on taking the interview if offered.
 - Listen to advice from faculty on programs to apply; they know what programs are looking for in their applicants.
 - Advice from Residents:
 - "Come up with a list of programs. Look up what each program has to offer." *Tyler Grenda, MD – HO 6 General Surgery*
 - Pick one that has what you need but that makes you glad to be there. Picking a place you'll be miserable for years is not a good plan." *Brian Kelley, MD – HO5 Plastic Surgery*
- ERAS Completed Application
 - Basic demographic information
 - Curriculum Vitae (CV)/Resume, Personal Statement (1 page), Chair Letter of Recommendation, Faculty Letters of Recommendations (at least 2)
 - Deans Letter
 - You have no control when this gets finished
 - Uploaded to ERAS by your Medical School on October 1st
 - USMLE Transcript
 - Step 1 required, nice to have Step 2 CK & CS as well

- **Curriculum Vitae (CV)/Resume**
 - Include anything you feel is relevant
 - Educational Activities, Hobbies, Volunteer Activities, Research Experience, Publications, etc.
 - List Honors from High School or Undergrad
 - It's nice to see your whole story, Valedictorian, Phi Beta Kappa, etc.
 - Update CV on a regular basis
- **Personal Statement**
 - This could be one of the most important pieces of your application. Topics to include:
 - Why do you want to be a surgeon? What makes you unique? What are you looking for in a training program? i.e. academic, etc. What are your long term career goals? i.e. fellowship, academic career, etc.
 - 1 Page length limitations
 - Personal Statement advice from Residents
 - “Write your personal statement and get feedback early.” - *Tyler Grenda, MD - HO6 General Surgery*
 - “Don't put anything odd, weird, quirky, or creative. It should be simply stated and personal. Stories with creative writing or graphic imaging are much more likely to repel reader and worsen your application than it will be to improve it.” - *Brian Kelley, MD – HO5 Plastic Surgery*
- **Letter of Recommendations** - This is the most important part of your application
 - Chair Letter
 - Get to know your Chair to insure a more personalized letter
 - Faculty Letters
 - From surgeons in the field you are applying
 - Who to pick as a Surgical Faculty Mentor?
 - Ideal letters would be from well-known & respected surgeons who can speak to your skills. It will not help your application if you have a letter written from someone who barely knows you. Your best opportunity for letter writers will likely come from your 3rd year & Sub-Is. Don't be afraid to ask them if they can write a strong letter of recommendation
 - Letter of Recommendations advice from Residents
 - “Set up meetings and obtain letters of recommendations early.” - *Tyler Grenda, MD - HO6 General Surgery*
 - “Get someone who really knows you well rather than a “famous person” who doesn't know you.” - *Brian Kelley, MD – HO5 Plastic Surgery*

- **Letter of Recommendation Meetings**

- Set up meetings. Create an agenda for the meeting and give to faculty/chair in advance
 - Be clear your goal is to obtain a good letter of recommendation
 - Meet with 3-4 Faculty members you have worked with, start meeting early spring of your M3 year, might be more than one meeting, maintain a continued presence with the faculty
 - Meet with the Chairman, meet at least 3-4 months before the application deadline (May), most likely will only be one meeting
- What to take to the meetings
 - Draft of CV, Draft of Personal Statement, Clerkship Performance Records
 - Be prepared to answer: Reasons for going into surgery? What are your long term goals (career goals)? Are you prepared for the rigors of clinical training?
 - Questions you may want to ask: Suggested Surgery Residencies for you, Surgery lifestyle, what to expect
- Once recommendation authors are selected, you will send them a *Letter Request Form* from ERAS
- Letter of Recommendations advice from Residents
 - “Set up meetings and obtain letters of recommendations early.” - *Tyler Grenda, MD - HO6 General Surgery*
 - “Get someone who really knows you well rather than a “famous person” who doesn’t know you.” - *Brian Kelley, MD – HO5 Plastic Surgery*
- Dean’s **Letter** (a.k.a Medical School Performance Evaluations (MSPE)), Standard letter written by your Dean’s office
 - Includes: Preclinical & Clinical grades, Class Rank, Information on how your medical school distributes grades for Core Clerkship.

- **USMLE Transcript**

- Step 1 is required
- Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS) & Clinical Knowledge (CK) is not required but taking it early and DOING WELL may help your application. If you didn’t do as well on Step 1 a strong Step 2 score will assist your application. Students often reflect that taking Step 2 sooner to completing the Core Clinical year helps in doing better on the exam.

- **USMLE Score Averages**

- U-M USMLE Average scores from 2015-2016 Applicants who were invited to interview.
- National USMLE Average scores from 2014 Matched applicants:
<http://www.nrmp.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Charting-Outcomes-2014-Final.pdf>

Programs	Step 1 Score		Step 2 CK Score	
	2015-16 U-M Avg	2014 Nat'l Avg	2015-16 U-M Avg	2014 Nat'l Avg
General Surgery	247.5	232	256.9	247
Integrated Vascular Surgery	246.3	239	254.9	249
Integrated Thoracic Surgery	247.8		251.1	
Plastic Surgery	254.6	248	258.8	253

- **Application Timeline**

- Most programs set their application deadlines on either October 15th or November 1st – be sure to apply to additional programs before their application deadline
- Dates may change each year, check the AAMC website for accurate dates

- **Interview Advice from OSE**

- Reply right away to interview invitations, spots fill up quickly and you may not get your first interview date choice if you wait
- If you need to cancel an interview do so at least 2 weeks in advance. Last minute cancelations or no shows may result in the program contacting your Chairman (It's a small world)

- **Interview Advice from Residents**

- Have your “elevator speech down” - this is your pitch for employment in 30 seconds or less. Tell a Story – The “what” is already contained in your application. Be as simple and concise as possible. Are you capable of “suffering”? - *JR Montgomery, MD – HO1 General Surgery*
- There is no shame when it comes to interview season. You are your own best advocated during interview season. You don't want to walk away from interview season asking yourself if there as something more you could have done. - *Arielle Kanters, MD – HO3 General Surgery*

- **After Match Responsibilities:** Best policy is NOT to assume that the time between Match Day & showing up at your new program is free time

- Some things may be snail mailed to you, this varies per state
 - Credentialing application paperwork: Required by the beginning of April
 - Medical & Controlled Substance License: Submit License paperwork to the state ASAP; issued licenses are required by Mid-April
 - Institutional Application (eApplication): Required by the end of April
 - Drug Screening Process: 30 days prior to your start date, generally around mid-May
 - Personnel Paperwork & VAH Applications: Required by the end of May
 - Fundamentals of Surgery Curriculum: Required by Mid-June