

# Career Planning and Counseling Session

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# VSLO – Visiting Student Learning Opportunities (aka VSAS)

- Host institutions that accept medical students for away rotations
- US and International rotations combined
- April 15<sup>st</sup> is the date to submit applications – May 1<sup>st</sup> institutions will review
- Some institutions do NOT participate in VSLO
- <https://students-residents.aamc.org/attending-medical-school/article/about-vslo/>

- Recommendation 1 (Unchanged):
- The work group recommends that for the remainder of the 2020-21 academic year (ending June 30, 2021), away rotations should be discouraged, except under the following circumstances:
- Learners who have a specialty interest and do not have access to a clinical experience with a residency program in that specialty in their school's system.
- Learners for whom an away rotation is required for graduation or accreditation requirements.
- Individuals meeting these exceptions should limit the number of away rotations as much as possible. Students should consider geographically proximate programs, when appropriate, to meet learning needs.

## Recommendation 2:

- Away rotations resume no earlier than Aug. 1, 2021
- After April 15, learners may begin applying for and scheduling in-person away rotations with a start date of Aug. 1 or later.
- Programs hosting learners for away rotations are encouraged to adhere to May 1 as the date to begin processing away rotation applications that begin on or after Aug. 1.
- Medical schools are encouraged to limit approved away rotations in any specialty to one per learner
- Residency programs are encouraged to take into consideration if a learner exceeded the one away rotation limit during the residency selection process.
- Programs may continue to offer virtual electives to provide opportunities for learners to explore the specialty and program.
- The work group will continue to monitor the information and plan to provide an update to the community no later than April 15, either confirming that Aug. 1 remains an acceptable start date or creating a new start date.

- Students do not apply before April 15 for in-person rotations that start on or after August 1, 2021
  
- Host institutions do not begin processing incoming applications before May 1, 2021
  
- Exemptions to this policy include:
  - Learners who have a specialty interest and do not have access to a clinical experience with a residency program in that specialty in their school
  - Learners for whom an away rotation is required for graduation or accreditation requirements

# VSLO

- Universal application, photo
- Vaccination record
- Cover letter
  - Dermatology
- Submitted by Student Affairs
  - Verification of complete background check
  - Transcript
  - Some programs: Letter of Good Standing, Proof of Malpractice Insurance
- Cost per program (per elective)
  - \$40 for up to 3 programs
  - \$15 for each additional program
- **Get advice from CO2021 in similar specialty**

# VSLO: How to Use the Application Service

<https://students-residents.aamc.org/attending-medical-school/article/how-use-vslo-application-service/>





# Objectives

- Discuss requirements of the curriculum vitae (CV)
- Review particulars of the personal statement
- Review details of Letters of Recommendation
- ERAS and VSLO

# Curriculum Vitae

- Succinct summary of your qualifications
- Put effort into it now and add to it over your career
- Will not place directly into ERAS (cut and paste) but will provide to us to help create the MSPE (Medical Student Performance Evaluation)
- Will provide to those physicians who prepare a letter of recommendation for you for residency application

# Curriculum Vitae - Components

- Contact info: (full legal name, address, email, phone number)
- Everything is in reverse chronological order
- Education: All universities attended for medical school, graduate and undergraduate education (most recent first)
  - Name and location of institution
  - Degree earned
  - Date of completion (anticipated)
  - Major/minor field of study

# Curriculum Vitae

- Leadership Experience
  - President, Treasurer of Student Interest Group
- Work Experience
  - Most recent first
  - Position, title, name of employer, location, dates employed
- Research Experience
  - Title describing project
  - Research mentor's name
  - Location and dates
  - Your title (research assistant, fellow)

# Curriculum Vitae

- Community Service Activities/Extracurricular
  - Most important activities and the dates
  - Include pre-medical school activities only if extraordinary OR applicable to health care
- Publications
  - List all published articles you've authored
  - If accepted but not published yet, "In press"
  - May include manuscripts in the works
  - Be consistent throughout the CV
  - Peer Reviewed Journal Articles/Abstracts(Other than Published)

# Curriculum Vitae

- Presentations
  - List research or poster presentations at conferences, lectures, specialty association meetings, including virtual
  - List title, authors, audience
  - May consider combining with 'Abstracts' section
  - Be sure to include Cultural Immersion poster presentation
- Professional Memberships
  - Be sure to include 'Student Member'
  - i.e. American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons – Student Member

# Curriculum Vitae

- Hobbies and Interests
  - INCLUDE this information (especially on ERAS application)
  - Your interviewers will thank you!

Career Planning microsite – link in D2L coming  
Many examples to choose from

# Personal Statement

- Integral part of your application
- Is your chance for the program to “know” you
- Want it to help you stand out – *but not too much*
- **Values-Experiences-Goals**
- Communicate passion for your specialty
  - Specific experiences
- Address sensitive issues and take responsibility
  - Remediation, repeat attempt on Step 1 (may or may not include)
- Provide information the interviewers can use for questions



# Personal Statement

- Be personal – tell about you
- Slip in marketable abilities
- Include specialty-specific attributes
  - ‘cool under pressure’
  - enjoy variety and pace of the ED (avoid “I have ADD and the ED is perfect for me)
- Professional
  - **NO** grammatical or spelling errors (some screen out immediately)

# Personal Statement - AVOID

- Online services that promise you the perfect PS
- Copy from others
- Run-on sentences
- Quotes
- Begging - “please grant me an interview”

# Personal Statement - Specifics

- ENT – No longer requiring a specific paragraph on why you are interested in their program (this meant separate PS for each)
- Surgery and surgical subspecialties – Shorter the better
- Don't go over 1 page (a bit more leeway with psychiatry)

# Personal Statement

- Have at least one, and perhaps more, reviewers
  - Spouse, close friend, parent, sibling, buddy who was an English major (and you can trust), etc.

# Letters of Recommendation

- Letters need to come from physicians
  - Exception – long-term research mentor
- Writers need to know you well
  - Clinically
  - Can describe your clinical abilities
  - Attest to your personal attributes (team player, problem solver)

# Letters of Recommendation

- How well did I perform?
- Did I develop a close relationship with this person?
- Does this person think highly of my clinical skills?
- Does this person care about my plans for the future?
- Does this person have good communication skills that will be reflected in my letter?
  
- \*\*Does this person procrastinate (i.e. multiple delinquencies from medical staff for overdue chart signatures??)

# Letters of Recommendation

- Discuss your list of letter writers with multiple people
  - MSPE Interview
  - Student Affairs Dean/Asst Dean
  - Campus Dean
- Asking letter writers:
  - “Would you feel comfortable writing a strong letter of recommendation in support of me for residency application?” I know you are ultra-busy, but would you have time?”
  - Easy way out
- If you don't get a strong “YES” – use your options

# Letters of Recommendation

- Ensure each letter writer is familiar with requirements of a LOR
- Provide them a copy of your CV, PS, copy of your evaluations
- Form from ERAS that instructs them how to upload the letter
- Thank you notes afterward
- Deadlines – September 14<sup>th</sup>



# LOR – Who is required?

- Most specialties require Department Chair
  - Surgery chair – ALL surgical subspecialties, anesthesiology
  - EM – need program director's LOR (exception in SD but use anyway)
  - Internal Medicine Chair – needed for IM
  - Dermatology – not required
- LIC preceptor
- Sub internship attending
- Away rotation attending
- Should have some LOR from physicians in your specialty but all don't have to be from them (this may vary based on specialty)

# Letters of Recommendation

- Remember – most faculty write numerous LOR
- Ask letter writers when their memories are VIVID
- Ask a minimum of 4 weeks (but 4-8 is better)
- Need at least 3 LOR (max of 4)
  - May have many more if applying to multiple specialties or you want certain letters to go to specific programs
- Student Affairs will follow up in September and send reminders
  - Will need to let me know who you have asked

# Email to tardy letter writers

- Hi Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ ~

Thank you so much for agreeing to provide a letter of recommendation for residency for \_\_\_\_\_. She is a great applicant, as you are aware!

I am sure you are super busy this time of year but I am just sending out a request to letter writers to be sure letters are uploaded well before September 14th, as residency programs have access to applications on September 15th. If a letter of rec is missing on September 15, the application isn't considered "complete," and some residency programs won't consider those applications.

Thanks again and please let me know if you have questions!

# Letters of Recommendation

- Standardized letters of recommendation
  - Orthopedics – letter writers do not need to submit additional letter
  - Ophthalmology
  - Emergency Medicine - SLOE

# Letters of Recommendation

- Always, always waive your right to see the letters
  - Residency directors expect you to do so
  - We expect you to do so

## Letter of Recommendation Portal

[https://www.aamc.org/services/eras/282520/lor\\_portal.html](https://www.aamc.org/services/eras/282520/lor_portal.html)

# MOCK INTERVIEWS

- Recorded by Jason Kemnitz EdD
- Performed with faculty from the campus
- Required
- Taped
- Class of 2017 - 2021 students assert WAY harder than the actual interviews
  
- More information on these coming in our March session and emails out with sign ups in Spring/Summer 2021

# MSPE Interview

- Sessions are available summer 2021
- 60-minute sessions
- Provide CV and personal statement
- Bring questions
- Bring 3 Noteworthy Characteristics (watch for email with more information on this)
- Be prepared to hear recommendations and suggestions for a successful match
  - May differ from your expectations

# ERAS

- Electronic Residency Application Service
- Token from Kay Austin, SSOM Registrar
  - One-time access code used to register for MyERAS
- ERAS does not include the Match services
  - Must register for NRMP (starting September 15<sup>th</sup>) **OR**
  - Must register for Military Match, San Francisco Match, Urology Match
- Does not include:
  - Urology
  - Ophthalmology
  - Military Match



# ERAS

- Letters of Recommendation uploaded by writers into portal
- Form letters to print off ERAS website to hand to letter writers
  - Includes directions for uploading letters
- Assign documents to various specialties/institutions
  - Medical School Transcripts
  - Letters of Recommendation
  - Personal Statements
  - USMLE Transcripts

# ERAS

- Assignment Checklist
  - Identify missing documents
- MyERAS Message Center
  - Notification when each LoR is uploaded
  - Also email notification to applicants from programs
  - ERAS Interview Scheduling Tool
    - Not used by all residency programs
    - Thalamus
    - Interview Broker

# ERAS

- USMLE Transcript requests
  - Enter your USMLE ID
  - Assign transcript to programs
  - Pay one-time \$80 transcript fee
  - Usually transaction completed by USMLE within 5 business days

# ERAS - Tips

- Do not certify and submit until you are sure all information is complete and correct
- ERAS does not have a spell check or grammar check feature
- Once you certify and submit, you may only change information in the Personal Information section
- Residency programs will not have access to any information until Sept 15<sup>th</sup>



# Mentors

- Necessary for all specialties!!
- Especially important for surgery and surgical subspecialties
- Student Mentors (CO2021)(coffee card)
- Physician Mentors
- Send your CVs and/or Personal Statements for editing



# Final Words of Wisdom

- If you are unhappy with the comments on your final evaluations from Pillar 2, you can consider appeal when released!
  - Not when they appear on your MSPE and you are sent a copy in August to read and review prior to sending out to residency programs
- Be sure your Pillar 2 final comments are plentiful in the discipline you are contemplating for residency
  - Not just, “student did well”

# Final Words of Wisdom

- Everyone has had the same curriculum, exams, requirements to this point in medical school.
- This all changes in Pillar 3!
- No student has the same residency plan – even within the same specialty!
- We will advise you – in attempt to give you the best chance of:
  - Matching to your preferred specialty
  - Matching to your preferred program



# SAVE THE DATE

Career Session #4 – MARCH 2021

- Zoom
- Program Director Panel
- Newly-matched student panel
- Information on Mock Interviews

# Texas STAR Project

(Seeking Transparency to Application in Residency)

- Nationwide survey and online tool for navigating the match more effectively
- Recently matched MSIVs provide real data
  - Step scores
  - AOA
  - GHHS
  - Publications
  - Volunteer experiences
  - Programs they applied to
  - Programs they received interviews at
  - Program they successfully matched to



# Second Look Visits

- Read about on Careers in Medicine website
- Students with few interviews should consider this
  - Must be allowable by programs
  - Must be within the student's budget
- Discuss with mentor/Student Affairs prior to planning
- **Whether an applicant opts to attend a 2<sup>nd</sup> look at a program, generally has no bearing on that program's opinion of the applicant.**

# Second Look Visits

- You are under no obligation to attend a 2<sup>nd</sup> look visit – but if you do:
  - Rank you higher
  - Maintain your previous rank (programs see same qualities as 1<sup>st</sup> visit)
  - Reduce your rank (if 1<sup>st</sup> interview didn't go well, 2<sup>nd</sup> usually doesn't either)
- If offered 2<sup>nd</sup> look, do not feel compelled to respond definitely
  - Sample script: “Thank you for telling me about this opportunity. I need to process my experience here and look at my academic and clinical responsibilities before making that decision. I will be in touch if I can participate.”

# Second Look Visits

- You can request a 2<sup>nd</sup> Look Visit unless programs state they don't offer visits.
- Be clear about what you want or why you need the experience to help you make the decision about ranking their program
- When asking:
  - Is it possible to have a 2<sup>nd</sup> look visit?
  - Outline specifically what you need in the visit

“I'm in the process of making my final decisions on my rank list and I really liked your program. I would like to visit and take a 2<sup>nd</sup> look. I would be happy with any experience you could provide, such as shadowing an intern for a day. If the PD is available, I'd like to chat but nothing formal.”