

AQA RESIDENCY INTERVIEW SURVEY

~Responses from JMC Class of 2006~

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ANESTHESIOLOGY

Specialty: Anesthesiology

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. McNulty

Did you use: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 12 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 8 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 1/06

Typical structure of interview day: Intro lecture, 3-4 1/2hr interviews with attendings or chief residents, tour, lunch with residents.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Current events, my interests, my history, lots of questions asked by me.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): Pretty straight forward really. Mostly very low-key.

How did you prepare for your interviews? Program website

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes. Did you find this helpful as an applicant? Yes, gives you a chance to see how things are done somewhere else

Additional comments/advice: Keep it realistic and go with your gut.

Specialty: Anesthesiology

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): N/A (Students can see Dr. McNulty if they want an advisor.)

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: ~15 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 9 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/2005 to 1/2006

Typical structure of interview day: Brief orientation/welcome; Tour of hospital; Occasionally a tour of the O.R. (required changing to scrubs or putting on bunny suits); Lunch; Interviews (either before or after lunch). Some programs had a dinner with the residents on the evening prior to the interview.

Popular topics covered in the interviews

-Why anesthesiology?

-Interests outside of medicine?

-Interesting cases that you have seen?

-Plan for 10 years from now?

-Research experience? (research not required; only a common topic because I had done research).

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.):

-Not difficult, but I always hated the "Tell me about yourself" question.

-Why would you be an asset to our program?

-What qualities do you have that will make you a good anesthesiologist?

How did you prepare for your interviews? I went into the interviews knowing what I would say for all of the common questions (listed above). More importantly, I prepared by reviewing the program's website (or whatever info I had on the program) and coming up with questions to ask the interviewer (some interviews were 30 minutes of "Do you have any questions for me?").

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes. One away rotation (Penn) done in Oct/Nov of 4th year (well after the application process had started). Too late to ask for letters of recommendation, but it was worth it because it allowed me to see how the program compares to Jefferson. Also, gave me a chance to see how happy the residents were with the program. I was able to interview while on the rotation so I didn't have to come in on a regular interview day.

Specialty: Anesthesiology

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Stephen McNulty

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 5 Was this number sufficient? Yes, but I only did so after I had Dr. McNulty review my CV and advise me how many programs to apply to.

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 5 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/2005 to 1/2006

Typical structure of interview day: Intro to the program. Rotate through 3 or 4 faculty interviewers (often including the Chair and residency program director). Lunch. Tour. Interview day generally begins 7-8:00 am and ends by 2:00 pm, even at really big academic programs.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Mostly very conversational. Interviewers will usually start with biographical questions. (Where are you from? Etc.). May ask about something from your CV or personal statement. In general, they try to identify a personal interest or experience that you can talk about fluently. For example, I got lots of questions about past research and my interest in travel, international health and foreign language because my CV was heavy on that. At some of my best interviews, I even ended up talking about things like opera and Latin American literature. In general, they are not trying to test medical knowledge; instead they want to gauge how good you are at communicating and interacting with people. I get the feeling they also want to know how engagingly and extensively you can talk about a topic that you know well.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): Most are very friendly. Tougher ones I encountered (and only two people asked these, see program specific info below).

Can a surgeon tell the difference between a nurse anesthetist and an anesthesiologist while they're doing a case?

If you were running a hospital, why would you hire an anesthesiologist instead of a nurse anesthetist?

What happens if a surgeon disagrees with an anesthesiologist about whether a patient should go to the OR?

Do you know what medical students recently cited in a survey as the most important factor in their specialty choice?

Were you ever in a situation where you felt like you needed help but didn't call for it in time? What did that teach you?

How did you prepare for your interviews? I asked other applicants and residents that I met on other interviews (including internship interviews) about what their experience interviewing at such and such a program was like. I asked in particular about their experience meeting with individuals like chairs and residency program directors who everyone interviews with. This yields very useful information and you should do this for all the programs you are most interested in.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes, at UW. Very helpful to develop connections.

The chief resident and attending in charge of med students helped me out by spreading good rumors about me before my interviews. One of my interviewers didn't even get to meet me, but had worked with me and filled out an interview evaluation for me anyways (a long story as to why).

Additional comments/advice: Program Specific Advice (I only applied to west coast programs)

Stanford: My primary interviewer revealed some useful secrets to me: It is your first full 30 minute interviewer who is most important at Stanford because he or she will be the one who presents your file to the committee while the rest of your interviewers only review your file as auxiliaries. He also told me the Chairman interview is not actually very important (and is always very brief). Also, he let me know that I would get an email, sent to a small number of applicants, at the end of interview day saying that they are almost certainly going to get in if they rank Stanford first. If you get this email, you are in very good shape at this program!

UCSF: At this one, everyone is going to spend 30 minutes with the most famous anesthesiologist in the world, Dr. Ronald Miller (their chairman). Gulp! Seriously, although there were rumors

that he's intimidating, I actually found him to be surprisingly nice and he asked no tough questions whatsoever. The only way you can mess this one up is if you defeat yourself with your own anxiety! Dr. Miller and the program director, Dr. Rosen, are known for being poker-faced and many people commented that it didn't seem like they would let you know whether they liked you or not. With that in mind, just be yourself and don't try to impress. They are conversational interviewers like almost everyone else. Also, the interviews at UCSF almost always go overtime, so don't be alarmed if you find yourself held up and half an hour behind schedule: everyone rotates through the same four interviewers, and you're all in the same boat.

UCLA: The chairwoman, Dr. Kapur is also a celebrity in the field because she is president of ABA. She is big on the concept of leadership in anesthesia and likes asking about applicant's leadership experience in extracurricular activities, jobs, research etc.

UCSD and UW: UW grades interviewees on a scale of 1 to 6 for several qualities, including academic competence, personal qualities, and interest in the UW program. If you get straight 6s, they will send you a letter in late January and tell you this puts you in the top 20% or so of the interviewees.

My very first interview was with a very tough UW interviewer (you will not meet him – he was not on the residency selection committee, and it's a long story how I ended up getting him). He absolutely mopped the floor with me, asking the tough questions I mentioned above. When I was unable to satisfy him, he then "gave me the answers" that he was looking for. I felt terrible afterwards, but every other interviewer I had was great (And unlike him, they were actually on the committee! Which is the only way I managed to score straight 6s).

As it turned out, this demoralizing experience proved to be very useful many months later at the coda of my season. The only other tough interviewer I ever met was Dr. Piyush Patel at UCSD, and he asked almost the exact same questions! This time I scored a home run by providing the answers my UW interviewer gave me (Basically: anesthesiologists are doctors and anesthesiologists are nurses. Anesthesiology is a dynamic medical field and the leadership of doctors is needed to constantly improve perioperative medicine and our contributions to other medical fields. Anesthesiologists do great and necessary work but it takes physicians, not technicians, to be able to understand the total perioperative medical context of more complex patients and cases. When surgeons and anesthesiologists disagree, the anesthesiologist is responsible as a consulting clinician for asserting his viewpoint from the perspective of perioperative specialist. But ultimately, you must decide whether you trust the viewpoint of your clinical partner, the surgeon, and whether you wish to stay involved in the case.) He was very pleased with these answers and let me know it. Moral of the story – a bad interview is not the end of the world, and can be a really useful experience if you take advantage and learn from it!

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: Alex.lee@jefferson.edu

DERMATOLOGY

Specialty: Dermatology

Did you use: ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 55 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 18 of 22 invitations Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 2/06

Typical structure of interview day: Residents welcome you to the day. Basic breakfast provided (muffins/bagels/juice). Presentation by program director and possibly chairman. Afterwards, half the interviewees go on a tour of the facilities (outpatient clinics, specialty clinics areas if any [ie surgical suites, phototherapy, etc], inpatient floors). The other half go through the interviews. Usually interviews were about four 10-15 minutes and were 1 faculty to 1 student, or 2 faculty to 1 student. However, this was very variable, going as low as 8 minute interviews to 30 minute interviews. Afterwards, there is lunch, followed by tours and interviews for the other groups.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: "Why dermatology", "I see you worked on a research project with... or on..., tell me about that", "What would you like to know about our program" (have many questions ready, but they don't have to be program specific), "Where else are you interviewing?" (This last one was a bit uncomfortable and I don't know the correct answer. I often listed a few programs but didn't want them to feel they were just one of many programs and that I wasn't too interested. At the same time you want to appear in demand by other programs. It's just a question you need to feel out.)

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): "Who is your hero?", "If you could have dinner with any 4 living people, who and why?", "Tell me about a failure you experienced"

How did you prepare for your interviews? I couldn't. They were so frequent and so much travel was involved, I didn't stress out about investigating the programs before getting there. The good programs give you a proper overview anyway on arrival that you have a sense of them in the first 20 minutes. I'd say, just be on time, very presentable and well spoken, and be ready with the answers to the above "popular topics covered in the interviews." Do have a set of questions ready to ask every interviewer about the program, even if it is the same questions over and over again with each faculty member and each institution. Sometimes it felt like my questions carried us through the interview, making me look interested and shielding myself from awkward questions they could throw my way.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? I did do an away rotation. I found it extremely helpful, getting me an interview at the institution as well as a strong letter of recommendation from a renowned dermatologist/program director. Additionally, it showed continued interest in the field to other programs.

Additional comments/advice: The best thing you could do is be calm and comfortable with your answers. Have your story down cold as to why you want to do dermatology. By the end, it will be like you are on autopilot giving your answer. Only rarely was I challenged with very difficult questions, and those were just curve balls like the ones listed above. I was never 'pimped' about dermatology. Additionally, some programs rely significantly on input from the current residents based on social interactions with you and some disregard their input. That said, be on your best behavior and be enthusiastic all the time! Additionally, if there is an event the evening before (dinner/drinks), go. However, if you cannot make it, do not stress. It is certainly not critical by any means.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: rtanolik@yahoo.com

EMERGENCY MEDICINE

Specialty: Emergency Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Bernard Lopez

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 8 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 5 Was this number sufficient? Yes (but only because I was definitely staying in the Philadelphia area, otherwise this number would probably be too small)

Interview season (month/year): 10/2005 to 1/2006

Typical structure of interview day: Breakfast with overview presentation on the program. Individual interviews, usually 4-5 with program director, 2-3 attendings and at least one resident. Lunch, can include attending a noon conference-always involves opportunity to interact with a lot of residents. Tour of facilities. Sometimes a wrap-up session.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Type of EM you might want to practice (community, academic, etc). How to deal with the ‘fish bowl’ effect (other specialists critiquing care). Qualities you possess that you think makes EM a fit for you. What you think you will need to work on the most during internship after finishing 3rd yr.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): “If you had to remove one state from the country what would it be and why?”---yeah, left field I know.

How did you prepare for your interviews? I did very little to prepare...just read up on the programs and had a few questions ready. I don’t get stressed by interviews and don’t like to be too rehearsed in my answers. Since EM is a stressful field it’s best to prepare in whatever way that you think will make you appear perfectly calm and comfortable—interviewers will remark on this and you can talk up your ability to have “grace under pressure”.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes. My “away rotation” was at an affiliate. It helped because it is good to see how different types of ED’s operate and be able to fall back on that during interviews. I’m not sure how necessary it is as far as getting an interview and your chances of matching.

Specialty: Emergency Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Bernard Lopez

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 20 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 15 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 1/06

Typical structure of interview day: Social gathering usually the night prior to the event with residents. Program Overview. Attending Interviews. Resident Interview(s). Tour of Facility. Lunch.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Why EM? Talk about Research. Difficult problem during med school.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): Describe an ethical dilemma. Give a case description and how you dealt with it

How did you prepare for your interviews? Plane, hotel and car rental reservations. Printed maps of location. Called prior to interview to confirm

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes. Programs liked the comments and grades from programs they were familiar with.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Yes. Email: Kristopher.Lyon@gmail.com

Specialty: Emergency Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Multiple, including Bernie Lopez

Did you use: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 31 Was this number sufficient? Yes (too many)

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 12 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 1/06

Typical structure of interview day:

- Dinner with residents evening prior
- Intro meeting
- Attend portion of didactics
- 4-5 individual interviews (between 20-30 minutes each)
- Lunch with Residents
- Tour
- Wrap Up

Popular topics covered in the interviews:

- Why did you choose this specialty?; Do you foresee any problems with this specialty? What field would you choose if this specialty did not exist?
- Why did you apply to our program?; What can you bring to this program?
- What would you do in this situation (usually re: conflict resolution)?
- What questions do you have for me (sometimes this was asked as the initial question)?
- What do you do for fun; what is your life outside of medicine?

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.):

- What is your biggest concern about this program (what would you change about this program)?
- What would your friends say they don't like about you?
- Create a question for yourself, and then answer it
- Describe a type of patient that you don't like to treat
- Noting a musical interest on my resume, attending asked me to play his guitar

How did you prepare for your interviews?

- Practiced some more common questions
- Extensively read program website, and surveys (such as SAEM, EMRA)
- Ironed my suit

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes or No. Did you find this helpful as an applicant?

- Yes. I found it useful in the sense that I was able to gain experience in different practice environments, as well as to have additional chances to obtain letters of recommendation.

Additional comments/advice:

- Prior to interviewing, the process seemed intimidating, and that as an applicant I would have to "sell myself". However, after even one interview I found that the process is more about finding the best fit for both parties involved. In reality, the applicants have more sway in the match algorithm and you are really at the interview to evaluate all you can about the program and make the best decisions come rank list time. So, as corny as it sounds, be yourself and use the day for your own selection purposes.
- Everyone tries to come up with some complex way to rank programs (i.e. Excel spreadsheet with multiple categories), but most people end up ranking on gut feel (i.e. Where would I be happiest)

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: Yes – jbiggg@yahoo.com

Specialty: Emergency Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Bernard Lopez, MD

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 25 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 15 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 02/06

Typical structure of interview day: 1 to 2 hour program overview with Program Director, three to six interviews (typically 20 minutes each), lunch with residents, and tour of the emergency department and some of the hospital.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Tell me about yourself; tell me about this (part of CV i.e. research, extracurricular activity); strengths and weaknesses; why emergency medicine; what is the greatest problem facing the field; what are you looking for in a program; where do you see yourself in the next ten years; what do you do in your spare time; tell me about an interesting patient; do you have any questions?

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): No unusual tasks; tell me why we should pick you over our other applicants; what physician do you admire most and why; of the 2 programs you rotated at, which would you pick for residency and why?

How did you prepare for your interviews? I read about the program on its website, looked at the information in the SAEM residency catalog (<http://www.saem.org/rescat/contents.htm>) and the EMRA Match guide (<http://www.emramatch.org/index.asp>). You should be prepared for the common questions and also know your CV cold. Try to prepare some specific questions for the program as well as the standard opinion questions you can ask anywhere.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes. Did you find this helpful as an applicant? Yes
Additional comments/advice: Feel free to contact with questions.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: hshah1979@gmail.com

Specialty: EM

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one):

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 20 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 18 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/2005 to 02/2006

Typical structure of interview day: Several variations, 2 main formats are:

- 1) day starts 7-8am intro and powerpoint by program director (PD), followed by brief presentations by other faculty carrying day until noon. Then lunch w/residents and tour. Then interviews and wrap up session w/PD. Finish day around 4pm
- 2) lectures in morning (grand-rounds/morning report/etc.), then interviews, then lunch w/residents, then tour and wrap up session by program director.

Popular topics covered in the interviews:

- why the specialty?
- most difficult patient
- most interesting patient
- why this program/location?
- why are you good for EM?
- any hesitations about this program?

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.):

- 1) tell me about a complex scenario (not necessarily clinical) and how you thought/worked your way through it. Goal is to show me you can reason your way through a complex situation.
- 2) tell me something not on your resume
- 3) why are you going to be my chief resident?
- 4) any questions? They will ask you this, over and over and over and over and over again. Sometimes, this is the only thing they ask. Have at least a few questions burned into your memory and don't be afraid to repeat them over and over again to different interviewers.
- 5) What other programs are you looking at?

How did you prepare for your interviews? Read scutwork.com, look at program web-site, read

studentdoctor.net.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes. Helpful bc was my 2nd rotation in the field (EM). It helped me choose the specialty, it showed the programs I was definitely interested in EM. Also, it allowed me to get to know faculty at the away institution.

Additional comments/advice:

-Always be honest

-Remember you're marketing yourself. There will be opportunity to overtly tell the PD why you're so great (ie. Response to "why will you be my chief resident?"). But, there are also subtle effective ways to play yourself up. For example, if you speak Spanish, instead of asking if they have a large latino population you can ask "I speak Spanish and would like to make use of that during residency...does your program have a substantial latino population?"...just make sure you think ahead of time (ie. If you know the program has zero latino patients, it may make you look uninterested.)

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Of course.

Email: jif001@jefferson.edu, jifischer@hotmail.com, jonisafis@yahoo.com

Specialty: Emergency Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Drs. Lopez, Kolecki, and Griswold

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 20 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 16 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 1/06

Typical structure of interview day: Morning presentation about program, then alternating interviews & tour for rest of day with lunch with residents some time in between

Popular topics covered in the interviews: why EM? tell me about your EM rotations & what you thought of the different places? Where else are you interviewing? What do you see in the future for your career? Tell me about your hobbies outside of medicine.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): No tasks or pimping. Occasional annoying questions like Tell me an ethical dilemma you encountered in medical school. What is the most creative thing you've ever done?

How did you prepare for your interviews? Mostly just thought about my responses to the obvious questions - why EM, etc. I don't think a lot of preparation is necessary. You definitely get better as the season progresses, so I do recommend scheduling some early ones that you are less interested in if possible. Not absolutely necessary though. I also looked over some of the questions in Iseron, but it was worthless and often wrong. Terrible book.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes. Did you find this helpful as an applicant? Yes, very helpful. I did two away rotations and the required one because I was very interested in being in NYC. It was very useful for getting a sense about programs in new york. Also, I was frequently asked about my experiences at the different places and how they compared. Additionally, it seemed helpful to have letters of recommendation from attendings that they knew (worked in same city).

Additional comments/advice:

Do not listen to Iseron. A skirt suit is definitely not necessary for women and neither is black. I wore a brown wool pants suit and got many compliments. Overall, EM interviews are very laid back. Just be yourself! I know everyone says that, but seriously, it is the best advice. They already know everything they need to; they just want to make sure you are someone they could enjoy working with.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Yes. Email: lkwillis44@yahoo.com

Specialty: Emergency Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Drs. Kolecki, Bernard Lopez.

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 30

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 10

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 10/05 to 01/06

Typical structure of interview day: 8 am: sit down and eat something while they give you their spiel on why their program rocks. Interview with 3-6 people from the program for about 20mins each. Eat lunch at noon. Get a tour of the hospital in the afternoon.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Why do you like this program? Why should we pick you? They looked at my CV and tried to ask questions based upon that.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): I think the hardest ones are, "so, tell me about you." How are you a leader? It is new year's eve and you are the attending. Your resident asks to go home early. What do you say?

How did you prepare for your interviews? I accepted an interview early on that was a "practice interview."

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes I did and it was very helpful.

Additional comments/advice: If you are really interested in a program...go there. You may be surprised at what you find. I got burned out interviewing and you should only really go to interviews that you are serious about.

Specialty: Emergency Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr Bernard Lopez

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 20

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 10

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 12/05 to 1/06

Typical structure of interview day: The day usually began with an introduction to the program and a pretty detailed explanation of what sets that program apart. There was usually a presentation by the program director and the chair of the dept. This usually lasted for a total of an hour and a half or so. Then the interviews began. I had usually between 3 and 6 interviews. Then there was a tour, followed by lunch with the residents (or vice versa). The days usually ended around 1-2pm.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Just about every interview I went to asked why EM, why are you applying to this program, and what I thought I would be doing in 10 years. Other common questions were – tell me about an interesting pt that you saw, tell me what you think are essential qualities of a good EP, what is your biggest weakness, tell me about a medical error you made, what is your biggest disappointment...

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): Not many, mostly very straightforward and conversational. One person asked me if I was a car what would I be and why?

How did you prepare for your interviews? I would look at the program website to learn about it and see if there were any concerns that I had or things that I should address. Other than that I did not prepare.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? I did one away rotation and I think it was helpful, but not essential. I think that I would have a similar likelihood of matching where I want to without it.

Additional comments/advice: Enjoy the process. It is fun to get to travel around the country and interview with some of the brightest, most ambitious people in your future career.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: james.little@jefferson.edu

Specialty: Emergency Medicine

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 27

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 12

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 01/06

Typical structure of interview day: Meet and greet in the morning, powerpoint presentation of program highlights, interviews with faculty/resident, lunch with residents, tour of facility.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Research (if applicable), outside interests, why that specific program, etc. As a general rule, and with only one exception in my experience, EM interviews are VERY laid back, the faculty is trying to get to know who you are as a person more than trying to challenge you with tough questions. Also, for the most part, the student is in the driver seat so programs are trying to sell their program's strengths to you.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.):

The first question out of a program director's mouth was "Give me examples of how you showed leadership in several different situations."

"If you had to get rid of one state in the US which one would it be and why?"

How did you prepare for your interviews?

Read the program's website thoroughly, then the night before, usually in the hotel, I would read over the website again. I also used www.saem.org for general program information.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes, I did an away rotation in California. I was

hoping to go back out west (because I am from there) and it is very important to make it known to west coast programs that you are serious about their program and geography. I think it was very helpful to do the away rotation because I got a letter of recommendation from that rotation and I know that it helped me get more interviews on the west coast. I don't think it looks as serious if you apply to west coast programs but don't spend any time there doing rotations.

Additional comments/advice: Do away rotations where you think you might want to go!!! I can't stress

this enough. There is nothing like spending a month somewhere to let you know whether that place is for you or not. You get great look at the residents in action, the faculty teaching, the relationships with ancillary staff, etc. Also you have the opportunity to get to know the program director and many other key faculty a lot better than you would in a 30 minute interview.

I think it is better to schedule programs that you think you will like later in the season because you are a fresher face when they create their rank list. This is also a good idea for programs you where you do an away rotation (if they also require an interview) so they don't forget your face and you can say 'hey remember me'.

Write your program directors at the end of your interview season and tell them that you are very interested in their program (obviously only do this if you really are interested!). It is important to stay in contact with the programs you want to be at; it will only help you when it comes to their rank list.

Apply to more programs than you think you will need. It is a lot easier to decline an interview than it is to apply to programs late because you didn't get enough interviews initially. I wasn't sure how strong my application was so I applied to 27 programs and I got 21 interviews so it was great because I got to pick and choose where I wanted to spend my time, money, energy, etc.

Join frequent flyer programs before you apply and try to stick to one or two airlines so you can rack up some miles. The same goes for rental car companies, hotel chains, etc. Southwest (I think) is the best airline for interviewers because they are the cheapest, but they also give you a refund/credit if you need to cancel a ticket and don't charge for changing a ticket. Other airlines charge \$100 to cancel/change a ticket. I did a lot of flight juggling so this was a handy feature of southwest (let it be known that I am not a paid endorser, nor do I own any stock in southwest ☺)

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? YES, anytime

Email: joshua.sheridan@jefferson.edu or josh.sheridan@gmail.com

ENT (OTOLARYNGOLOGY)

Specialty: ENT

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Spiegel

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 52 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 12 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season: 11/22 to 1/27

Typical structure of interview day: ½ day tour, informal Q&A with residents, lunch. ½ day 5-15 interviews, typically 15-25 minutes each.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Why ENT? What are your strengths/weaknesses? Tell me about your research projects. Many times, I got ‘what accomplishment are you most proud of and why?’ MOST OFTEN, they ask you 1-2 quick/nonsense questions and then ask you if you have any questions. This is annoying because then you have to fill the entire 20 minutes stressing to think up questions (that you usually already have the answer to.) Really try to make a list before you start the season. Also, ask subspecialty and physician specific questions if you can.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): Memphis- asked to peel an apple while answering questions. Weird riddle at Cleveland clinic about giving CPR to some guy on the street with AIDS and both of you have open cuts on your mouth. Apparently the right answer is to instruct the guy’s boyfriend on how to give the mouth to mouth since he already has AIDS too. Ohio State- discussed the difference between ‘art’ and ‘science’ for 20 min. Regardless, I think showing your grace under pressure is much more important than your answer.

How did you prepare for your interviews? How to Get Into a Residency by Iserson (red book) has a lot of typical questions in it with the ‘correct’ answers. Don’t buy it, just read it at the bookstore.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes. It’s helpful to see how programs differ, what you’re looking for, and what questions to ask on interviews. Word of caution when going for reaches – sometimes there might be multiple students rotating when you are (esp. at prestigious programs) and you may not have an opportunity to really show off your work ethic. And the attendings may be too high profile to give a shit about you. But if the residents like you, you’ll probably still end up with a good letter from someone famous.

Additional comments/advice: WORK YOUR ASS OFF when you do your Jeff/away rotations. See as many pts. In the morning as you can thoroughly, and try to make everyone’s life easier. Be mindful of your attitude. Be sure to do research projects.

Specialty: Otolaryngology

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Joseph Spiegel

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 44 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 12 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 2/06

Typical structure of interview day: Continental Breakfast, intro talk by Chairman, Residency Director, others. Then, either interviews for three or four hours, lunch, and a tour of the facilities, or the same activities with the interviews and tour reversed in position.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Why ENT, why their program in general, what sets you apart from other applicants, research interests/research conducted, future goals (esp. academics versus private practice), explanations of items mentioned in personal statement, strengths, weaknesses

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): tying knots and identifying temporal bone structures (U of S. Florida), workup of a trauma case (U of Maryland), mind teaser (U of Maryland)

How did you prepare for your interviews? First interview I looked at the prospectus for hours, memorized all the specific areas of each attending, obsessed over my own research projects. Then, for the second interview, I combed my hair neat and made sure my suit was not wrinkled. Maybe I looked at their website for a half hour the night before.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes, very much so. It was addressed in nearly every interview.

Additional comments/advice: Try your best to make yourself stand out as an individual in your personal statement and the outside interests portion of your application (but within reason...surgeons tend to be very conservative in general).

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: Maxwell.furr@jefferson.edu

Specialty: Otolaryngology

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Edmund Pribitkin

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 49

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 14

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 10/05 to 2/06

Typical structure of interview day: Introduction, interviews/tour in AM, lunch, interviews/tour in PM, dismissal

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Research, a "little about me" (ie, my family, where I grew up, went to college, etc), my questions, ethical situations

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): Ethical situations, why should we believe you want to come here, what should I really focus on in your application

How did you prepare for your interviews? Printed out website information, read it so I had a good clue about the program, had questions before interview, GO TO "MEET THE RESIDENT" GET-TOGETHERS – they help get to know if you can hang out with the residents

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes Did you find this helpful as an applicant? Yes

Additional comments/advice: Know your application - especially your research, you don't have to have questions – but if you don't have general BS questions than ask personal questions to the interviewer

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: Cory.Rubin@jefferson.edu

FAMILY MEDICINE

Specialty: Family Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Christine Arenson

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 12 Was this number sufficient? YES

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 8 Was this number sufficient? YES

Interview season: 10/2005 to 1/2006

Typical structure of interview day: Sit in on morning report. One-on-one interviews with faculty (inc. Program Director) and residents (usually a chief, sometimes an intern too). Lunch with residents. Hospital/community tours. Wrap-up with Program Director. *One night in hotel paid for, also dinner with residents night before or after interview.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Why I chose to become a physician/ Why I chose Family Medicine. Describe my ideal Family Medicine program/ What was I looking for in a program. What personal qualities will help me the most as a Fam. Med. Physician. Be prepared to expand upon personal statement and what is in your CV - activities, volunteer work, hobbies, interests (They're really trying to get to know you.). Do you have any questions, do you have any questions, do you have any questions?! The interviews feel like conversations rather than interrogations for the most part.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): No tasks, no questions to assess medical knowledge. When I brought up being Roman Catholic and pro-life and not planning on prescribing oral contraception, I was usually given a case scenario to work through: How would you handle it if a woman came to your office asking for OCPs or pregnant wanting an abortion?

How did you prepare for your interviews? Reviewed the program's website a couple of nights before the interview so I was familiar with the program basics and asked a couple of questions the day of the interview about things on the website that had peaked my interest.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? No.

Additional comments/advice: Just try to relax and be yourself - mostly everyone is friendly and welcoming - they're really trying to recruit you. Try to wear comfortable shoes - those hospital tours are long!

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: sharon.canale@jefferson.edu

Specialty: Family Medicine or Internal Medicine - Primary Care

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): None, although I sought input and advice from mentors throughout Jefferson and Affiliates, including in the Departments of Family and Community Medicine and Internal Medicine.

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 24 Was this number sufficient (choose one)? Yes!

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 14 Was this number sufficient (choose one)? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 10/05 to 11/06

Typical structure of interview day:

1. Introduction and welcome to the hospital/residency from program director and other faculty.
2. Interview with Faculty (anywhere from 1 to 3 interviews)
3. Interview with Residents (anywhere from 0 to 2 interviews). Note these interviews were frequently conducted by the Chiefs.

Popular topics covered in the interviews:

1. Why have you chosen this specialty?
2. Special needs/concerns including what you are looking for in a residency program
3. What are your future plans (i.e., where do you see yourself in 5 years, 10 years, etc.)?
4. Describe a particular patient interaction.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.):

1. Do you think that (your) empathy may be a barrier in providing care?
2. Can you please explain XXXXXXXX on your resume/transcript/other?

How did you prepare for your interviews?

1. Research the program online and read all materials that they mail to you.
2. Review the research and special interests of the faculty (and residents) in the department.
3. Know your Personal Statement and Resume!
4. RELAX the night before the interview.
5. Wear clothes that are comfortable and that make you feel professional (look smart – be smart ☺)

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? No. It would be helpful if you are interested in the most competitive residency programs in the most competitive specialties if you are an otherwise “bubble” candidate to obtain an interview. However, what is probably most important is that an away rotation can provide you with insight into what the field is like in non-Jeff institutions which may help clarify your interest.

Additional comments/advice:

1. Select appropriate programs! Discuss what you are looking for with trusted mentors, friends, and colleagues and obtain recommendations as to which programs you should investigate.
2. Try to avoid getting caught up in the “Oh my g-d! Have you heard back from XXXX? Or, You haven’t done XXXX yet?!?” It will all work out OK!
3. Be yourself! Remember, you will be working with the people in any program for the next 3+ years; if you don’t vibe now, it may be a pretty good indicator that its not a good match for you regardless of the reputation of the program. Also, most people can pick up on dissembling by interviewees, if you try to put on any sort of act it will likely make for a poor interview. Finally, should you land that residency, you will find it awfully difficult –especially during the trials of intern year- to maintain that façade.
4. Programs are lucky to have you interviewing! You are a compassionate, intelligent, curious, and dedicated individual who will be working for low wages. Make sure that the residency program offers the atmosphere and training that you are looking for. If you have special needs/interests, do not hesitate to express them to the Program Directors.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Yes; I’d be happy to field any questions.

Email: kevincscott@hotmail.com

Specialty: Family Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): McManus, Harwood

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 24 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 13 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 10/05 to 1/06

Typical structure of interview day: 2-4 Interviews usually at least one faculty member and resident.

Lunch. Tour.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: All casual conversation.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): None, all interviews were very laid back.

How did you prepare for your interviews? Knew what was in my application.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? No.

Additional comments/advice: I also did the couples match and interviewed at two Med-peds programs.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? YES Email: jdc005@jefferson.edu

GENERAL SURGERY

Specialty: General Surgery

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): unofficial – Dr Ronal Weigel

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 29 Was this number sufficient? Yes (too many)

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 11 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 12/05 to 1/06

Typical structure of interview day: varied from program to program. Introduction - distribution of training (number of cases, affiliated hospitals, etc). 3-4 faculty interview - chairman interview. Tour.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Why surgery? - Tell us about your background (i.e. research, schooling, travel, experiences). Where do you see your career going? - What are you looking for in a residency?

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.):

- What is going to be the hardest part of this process for you?
- These types of questions are unpredictable and somewhat personal (i.e. based on your history)?
- Michigan asks you at lunch to stand up and tell either A) a funny non-medical story, B) if you could have dinner with anyone living or dead, who and why? C) if you could go on a trip anywhere, where and why?
- MGH: panel interview, 30 minutes pimping intermixed with personal questions (more how you think than your knowledge)

How did you prepare for your interviews? I read up on the faculty profiles online and the faculty research interests (I am personally interested in research opportunities), but know the programs at which you're interviewing

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? **Yes** Did you find this helpful as an applicant?

ABSOLUTELY!!!!!! I learned about programs that I liked and also ones that I did NOT like (better after 1 month rather than 5 years)

Additional comments/advice:

- Be yourself. My motto was "I'm not selling anything". I don't want to be in a place that doesn't want me.
- That said, be aware that every part of the day, the night before, the dinners and drink are ALL part of the interview
- And don't let all the mind games with Pds and others mess with your head – it all works out.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? **Sure**. Email: Gboland10@hotmail.com

Specialty: General Surgery

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Kairys

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 50 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 16 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 01/06

Typical structure of interview day: Presentation in morning, followed by 2-4 interviews, and finished with a tour.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Why you want to be a surgeon, research, how would you deal with conflict.

How did you prepare for your interviews? Look over website, know cv inside and out.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes, it helped me make contacts.

Additional comments/advice: Be relaxed and don't come off arrogant during interviews.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: mro1000@yahoo.com

Specialty: General Surgery

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): none

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 34

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 16

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): nov/05 to jan/06

Typical structure of interview day: Introduction to program, perhaps a lecture to the residents, interviews, tour, lunch

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Topics mentioned on CV, why I want to go into the field, why I want to go to that program, how'd you hear of us, what are your future goals, hobbies, strengths/weaknesses

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): Recite the Gettysburg Address and the Declaration of Independence, I experienced no pimping or demonstration of manual skills...most interviews were pretty benign

How did you prepare for your interviews? I led a full and varied life

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? No.

Additional comments/advice: Don't give the interviewers what you think they've heard from all the other applicants...it gets boring.

INTERNAL MEDICINE

Specialty: Medicine (categorical)

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Rattner

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 10 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 8 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season: mid-November to mid-Jan

Typical structure of interview day: participate in morning report, overview of program, interviews (1-3),
tour of hospital, participate in rounds, lunch with residents, wrap-up session in afternoon

Popular topics covered in the interviews: why I chose internal medicine, why I'm interested in their
program, my strengths/weaknesses, etc – everyone is always asking me if I have any questions
about their program

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): none

How did you prepare for your interviews? Didn't (just made sure suit was clean)

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes Did you find this helpful as an applicant? Not
really

Specialty: Internal Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Kane and Dr. Caruso

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 24 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 10 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 1/06

Typical structure of interview day: Breakfast around 7 or 8, welcome and overview by program director,
rounds with ward team, interview, tour, lunch (but not always in that order)

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Extracurricular activities, especially my role and why I chose to
Participate. Description of research. What I thought of some of the comments from my letters of
recommendation. The question portion is very short in internal medicine interviews. The
interviewer asks a few questions, it lasts about 10-15 minutes and then they describe why they
think that their particular program is so wonderful and ask if you have questions. Always go
prepared with some questions to ask.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): "So, like, do you really know what it's like to
be intern?"

How did you prepare for your interviews? Reviewed my CV and research abstracts, thought about my
strengths and weaknesses.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Not early in the year

Additional comments/advice: Internal medicine interviews are really nothing to worry about. I've heard
very few horror stories. The programs just want you to get a feel for what they are about. Just be
able to give a good answer for why you did or didn't things during medical school.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: abj002@jefferson.edu

Specialty: Internal Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): None technically, met with Dr. Kane multiple times though

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 17 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 11 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 1/06

Typical structure of interview day: About 50% of my interviews went all day, i.e. 7:30-4:30. The other 50% were much shorter, i.e. 8-1. The longer days typically allowed more time to attend conferences and maybe even round with a team. I would also say the programs were fairly evenly split between those that had one and those that had two interviews. Almost all interviews allowed ample time for talking to the housestaff. If you don't get to do this, I would take it as a bad sign!

Popular topics covered in the interviews:

- “Why are you interested in Internal Medicine?”
- “What draws you to our program?”
- “Could you see yourself living here?”
- “Where do you see yourself 10 years from now?”
- “Tell me about your interests outside of medicine”

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): I was never pimped on an interview, although when I was at Montefiore, there was one cardiologist who asked every person he interviewed about the management of A. fib. For me, the most difficult question was being asked to explain my lack of research at some of the more competitive programs. I also found the really broad “tell me about yourself” question excruciating!

How did you prepare for your interviews? The night before each interview, I would read the programs website and take down some notes. Notes are not a must, it was more for my own sake and was helpful to review after the interviews.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes or No. Did you find this helpful as an applicant? No, I did not. I sometimes wish that I did. I am interested in New York, and for non-New Yorkers this can sometimes be a tough city to get your foot in the door. I think that doing a rotation there might have opened some doors and demonstrated my interest. I think this is even more true if you are interested in applying on the west coast. I also wish I had rotated in a New York hospital just to get a feel for it. You always hear how awful their ancillary staff is, but it is hard to get a true sense from residents.

Additional comments/advice: I wish I had read up on programs a little more before I applied in September. There were a couple programs that as soon as I did some research I learned were not at all what I was looking for. What a waste of time and money! On the flip side, there were other programs that might have been a good fit, but I didn't consider at application time.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Of course.

Email: aimee.bennis@jefferson.edu

Specialty: Internal Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Kane

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 23 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 11 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 1/06

Typical structure of interview day: Breakfast/Meet and Greet; Morning report; interview; lunch with housestaff; tour; wrap-up

Popular topics covered in the interviews: What are you looking for in a program, what do you enjoy most about internal medicine, questions about research/other activities done in med school, career goals, hobbies.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): None that I encountered

How did you prepare for your interviews? Reviewed my CV and personal statement, reviewed research, prepared answers to what I thought common questions would be (i.e. strengths/weaknesses, hardest or most surprising part of med school, if I could change something about my medical education, what would it be, etc.)

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes, I did an away in cardiology, but it didn't really help for the interview process.

Additional comments/advice: Be yourself, be nice to EVERYBODY, know your application, don't be afraid to ask questions about things that are important to you, try to get to know as many of the residents as you can. Most importantly, trust your gut instincts.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: Yes – scott.haas@jefferson.edu

Specialty: Family Medicine or Internal Medicine - Primary Care

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): None, although I sought input and advice from mentors throughout Jefferson and Affiliates, including in the Departments of Family and Community Medicine and Internal Medicine.

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 24 Was this number sufficient (choose one)? Yes!

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 14 Was this number sufficient (choose one)? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 10/05 to 11/06

Typical structure of interview day:

1. Introduction and welcome to the hospital/residency from program director and other faculty.
4. Interview with Faculty (anywhere from 1 to 3 interviews)
5. Interview with Residents (anywhere from 0 to 2 interviews). Note these interviews were frequently conducted by the Chiefs.

Popular topics covered in the interviews:

5. Why have you chosen this specialty?
6. Special needs/concerns including what you are looking for in a residency program
7. What are your future plans (i.e., where do you see yourself in 5 years, 10 years, etc.)?
8. Describe a particular patient interaction.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.):

3. Do you think that (your) empathy may be a barrier in providing care?
4. Can you please explain XXXXXXXX on your resume/transcript/other?

How did you prepare for your interviews?

6. Research the program online and read all materials that they mail to you.
7. Review the research and special interests of the faculty (and residents) in the department.
8. Know your Personal Statement and Resume!
9. RELAX the night before the interview.
10. Wear clothes that are comfortable and that make you feel professional (look smart – be smart ☺)

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? No. It would be helpful if you are interested in the most competitive residency programs in the most competitive specialties if you are an otherwise "bubble" candidate to obtain an interview. However, what is probably most important is that an away rotation can provide you with insight into what the field is like in non-Jeff institutions which may help clarify your interest.

Additional comments/advice:

5. Select appropriate programs! Discuss what you are looking for with trusted mentors, friends, and colleagues and obtain recommendations as to which programs you should investigate.
6. Try to avoid getting caught up in the "Oh my g-d! Have you heard back from XXXX? Or, You haven't done XXXX yet?!?" It will all work out OK!
7. Be yourself! Remember, you will be working with the people in any program for the next 3+ years; if you don't vibe now, it may be a pretty good indicator that its not a good match for you regardless of the reputation of the program. Also, most people can pick up on dissembling by interviewees, if you try to put on any sort of act it will likely make for a poor interview. Finally, should you land that residency, you will find it awfully difficult –especially during the trials of intern year- to maintain that façade.

8. Programs are lucky to have you interviewing! You are a compassionate, intelligent, curious, and dedicated individual who will be working for low wages. Make sure that the residency program offers the atmosphere and training that you are looking for. If you have special needs/interests, do not hesitate to express them to the Program Directors.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Yes; I'd be happy to field any questions.
Email: kevincscott@hotmail.com

Specialty: Internal Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one):

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 10 Was this number sufficient (choose one)? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 5 Was this number sufficient (choose one)? Yes

Interview season: 11/7 to 1/23

Typical structure of interview day: Arrive around 7, morning usually consisted of welcome and informative session about the program, usually lasting about 1-2 hours. Some programs brought us to listen to morning report, then usually 2 interviews before lunch and then a tour afterwards. Most days I was finished by around 1-1:30.

Popular topics covered in the interviews:

- why do you want to do internal medicine?
- why do you want to come to this program?
- what are your strengths/weaknesses?
- what do you like to do in your spare time?
- what are you looking for in a residency program?
- tell me about your research.
- where do you see yourself in 10 years?

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): what is your biggest regret?

How did you prepare for your interviews? I went on some residency interview websites and made a list of frequently asked questions. I also made a list of five things about myself that I would like the interviewer to know about me - this really helped to focus myself and regardless of the questions, I made sure that these points were brought up during the interview.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? **No.**

Additional comments/advice: None of my interviews were difficult, the interviewer really just wants to get to know you and how you would fit into their program. There really were no tricky questions, just be yourself.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: laura.share@jefferson.edu

Specialty: Internal Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Kane – incredible advisor!!

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 30 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 13 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 01/06

Typical structure of interview day: Arrival around 8, Intro/Breakfast, Morning Report, sometimes joining rounds, Lunch, Interviews (typically 2), wrap-up/questions with Program Director, Done around 3 at most places

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Why do you want to do medicine? Are you interested in any

specialties? What brings you to this city? Most of the interviews were actually focused on if you had any questions about the program, so make sure to have some basic questions that you can fall back on if you don't have specifics to ask.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): I didn't find anything too crazy in any of my interviews. The only challenges I really found were when the interviewer very obviously hadn't read your application yet, so you were trying to tell them everything about yourself. Also, I had a couple who allowed multiple interruptions during the interview, and this threw me off sometimes.

How did you prepare for your interviews? I read the information on their websites and wrote down important names (i.e. Program Director, Chief Residents) so that I would know who they were. Also, if there were Jeff graduates at the program, I tried to get in touch with them either beforehand or during the interview day.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? I did an away rotation for a Med/Peds elective, but this was more to help me figure out what I wanted to do with my life. Maybe it helped me get a Medicine interview at that school, but I'm not sure. At the interview itself, the interviewers hadn't thoroughly looked at my application, so I had to make it a point to let them know that I had rotated there – very annoying!!

Additional comments/advice: Nothing major to add.. The only thing that I was surprised about was that at most places they are trying to get your interest just as much as you are trying to get their interest. It was almost like you were interviewing them as well. It was much more of a relaxed environment than I thought it would be.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Absolutely. I was looking mostly at Chicago programs, so I would know the most about those, but I applied to a few others as well. I would love to help out if I can. Email: shruti45@yahoo.com

MEDICINE-PEDIATRICS

Specialty: Med-Peds

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Keith Mann (informally)

Did you use: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 17

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 12

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 1/06

Typical structure of interview day:

There was quite a bit of variation between programs, but most included the following:

Night before welcome dinner

Welcome meeting with Program Directors

Morning Report (Med or Peds)

Rounds (Med or Peds)

Meeting with Medicine and Peds Program Directors

Lunch/Noon Conference

Interviews (2-5)

Tours

Wrap-up

Popular topics covered in the interviews: What I like to do in my spare time. Why Med-Peds? How will I handle being overwhelmed next year/stress reduction. What's my learning style? Why a particular geographic location? What am I looking for in a program? Questions about things that stood out in my resume.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): This shouldn't have been difficult, but at Duke, they asked us to say something about ourselves that wasn't on our application, which I found a little hard to think of on the spot. Sometimes interviewers just asked me if I had any questions; sometimes I'd run out of questions.

How did you prepare for your interviews? Got as much rest as possible beforehand. At first I read the programs' websites, but by the end I stopped bothering because they usually cover everything in the introduction.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? No. I kind of wish I had, but I didn't decide on Med-Peds till relatively late, and I couldn't arrange it. If you have an idea where you'd like to go, though, I think it's a great idea, cause you'll get a much better picture than you would on one interview day.

Additional comments/advice: My interviews were really laid back. At least in Med-Peds, the interviewers are really interested in getting to know you, answering questions, and getting an idea of what it would be like to work with you. They already have all your academic accomplishments listed in your application, so it's more of a social visit.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: Yes. After graduation, I'll keep the following address: Jeb2@alum.dartmouth.org

Specialty: Med-Peds

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Friedland, Christiana

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 10

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 6

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/date): 9/19 to 12/29

Typical structure of interview day: Overview; Medicine morning report; Interview(s); Medicine Tour; See the continuity clinic; Pediatrics noon conference (lunch!); Tour; Interview(s); Wrap-up

Some Med-Peds programs have 2-day interviews. I did not interview at any of these programs, however.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: My undergraduate thesis. "Tell me about *blank* on your cv". How did I like Jefferson/Philadelphia? Was I applying to just Med-Peds programs? Was I interested in a fellowship?

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): When they would ask "do you have any questions for us" for the tenth time that day. How did you prepare for your interviews? Reviewing my application. The program's web page. <http://www.med-peds.org/> Reading current articles in journals about Med-Peds residency education.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes Did you find this helpful as an applicant? Yes. Additional comments/advice: Almost all interviews had dinner/some activity with the residents the night before. Residency Programs did not always mention this when sending the confirmation email for the interview day. Inquire about this before booking travel (flights especially!) Do away rotations (I did at 3 of my 6 programs). Get a sense of a "second look" at the interview day example: at 1/6 of my programs I felt like I was required to do a second look there if they were going to rank me high.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: jennifer.pelli@jefferson.edu

Specialty: Med-Peds

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Friedland, Christiana

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 18 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 11 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 1/06

Typical structure of interview day: Go to dinner with residents the night before. The interview day would start with a med-peds program talk or a morning report. Usually have a med interview and a peds interview or one of the program directors. Go on rounds then lunch with categorical residents. Tour in the afternoon. Two programs used a two-day format, which is exhausting but you get a much better picture of the place.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: "What questions do you have?/ How can I help you?"- every interview, usually how they start the interview. Interesting points on your CV, activities. "where do you see yourself in 10 years?"- very often.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): No difficult/ethical/technical questions. Always very friendly, usually informal. Never like med school interviews (even at competitive places). Maybe "how you handle stress" or "what do you not want to give up for residency?" or "what's the best and worst about med and about peds?" or "how will you contribute to med-peds?"

How did you prepare for your interviews? Read their websites, write down basic info, come up with a few specific questions to ask (different ones for attendings vs residents and med vs peds). Mostly, relax and enjoy it, you're evaluating them as much (if not more) than they're evaluating you

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? No, if I had known where I wanted to go I would have, I think it helps. I did do one 2nd look

Additional comments/advice: When you're scheduling them, do a couple safe ones first (maybe Jeff affiliates that you know) then schedule them early if you want to go there and later if you're less interested. You will get burned out at some point and go to less than you think you will. The dinner the night before is VERY helpful, you get a great idea of whether you'll like the place even before the interview day.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: John.ragsdale@jefferson.edu, esp regarding southern programs

MILITARY

Specialty: Orthopaedic Surgery

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Didn't have one

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS and Military(Army)

Number of programs applied to: 17(6 army) Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 5(2 army) Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season: July/2005 to Jan/2006

Typical structure of interview day: Breakfast, tours/interviews, dinner

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Why do you want to do ortho?, What should I know about you that makes you a good candidate? Can you handle long hours and little sleep?, Tell me a good joke., What are 3 important innovations in ortho in the past 20 years?, Tell me about compartment syndrome., What questions do you have for me?

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): Covered above

How did you prepare for your interviews? I didn't.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes Did you find this helpful as an applicant? Yes

Additional comments/advice: You won't usually need it, but take a CV and Personal statement and picture to each interview just in case. Make sure you get there in plenty of time and have good directions and know exactly where to go.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: toddfeathers@aol.com.

Specialty: Transitional Year before Flight Surgery with the AirForce

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 22 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 9 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season: 12/10 to 2/1

Typical structure of interview day: Welcome>brief introduction to hospital/program> 1/2 group to interview and 1/2 on tour, then switch > lunch > final questions/debriefing

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Schedule and elective choice, patient population, the local city, what I was looking for in a program

How did you prepare for your interviews? Made a list of questions I wanted to ask residents and program director

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? No.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: srinzler@hotmail.com

NEUROLOGY

Specialty: Neurology

Did you use: ERAS or SFMatch or Other: SF match

Number of programs applied to: 7

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 5

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 12/05

Typical structure of interview day: Welcome/ Breakfast at ~7:30. Morning report from 8-9. Occasionally grand rounds from 9-10, otherwise information about the program and area from 9-10ish. Interviews usually started around 10 or 11, were ½ hour long, and ran up until lunch. After lunch, more interviews, followed by the hospital tour. Finally, a wrap-up session or wine and cheese hour usually around 3 or 4 o'clock. Most interview days were over by 4:30.

Popular topics covered in the interviews:

“Tell me about yourself.”

“Why do you want to be a neurologist?”

“Are you interested in research?”

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.):

“What question do you wish you had been asked, and what would your answer be?”

“Trace out the path of a cranial nerve.”

How did you prepare for your interviews? I read the residency program’s website thoroughly. I googled “residency interview tips”, and read some of the articles with info about what to wear, what not to wear and common interview questions. After I interviewed, I found a blog site by googling “neurology residency forum” that had some interesting info about programs and other’s experiences.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? No.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: Sure, hdh001@jefferson.edu

NEUROSURGERY

Specialty: Neurosurgery

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: SFMatch

Number of programs applied to: 42 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 14 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 10/05 to 1/06

Typical structure of interview day: Dinner the night before the interview. Full day of interviews with every attending at the program and then 1 or 2 residents. Every place gave a tour. Loyola had us come out the day before (optional, but “strongly recommended”) and had us spend a day rotating through the ORs with all of the attendings (I really enjoyed this format). Dinner was that night and then we had interviews the next morning. NYU recommended we come in a day early and go to their conference day and then the interviews followed the next day. By far, the dinners are the hardest part. They try to overstuff you with food, keep you out late, and at two places, tried to get the applicants drunk the night before the interview. Some of the applicants liked that, some didn’t. Personally, I think midnight to 1 AM is a good time to call it quits and head for the hotel. The following day is grueling. The interview process is brutal and exhausting, but there are a lot of enjoyable moments too. You’ll have some pretty famous people devoting all of their attention to you for 15-20 minutes. So try to enjoy yourselves.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Why do you want to be a neurosurgeon?? What makes you stand out as an applicant? Compare your home school program with a program you did an away rotation at? (THAT’S A POPULAR ONE) You always want to show that you are interested in pursuing academic neurosurgery. Your desire to go to a geographic area will be tested. Some places will really pick at research you’ve done (definitely read over stuff you’ve done in the past and that’s on your application).

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): Be ready for anything. At Loyola I scrubbed in and retracted. I also helped lock the head into place before the procedure. If someone asks you to scrub in, tie, etc – do it, but it is extremely rare for it to happen (don’t worry about it). The best thing you can do on an interview and even on your Sub-Is is to go with the flow. Just do whatever anyone asks, stay calm, show interest, and be yourself.

Be ready to defend your choice of away rotations (why didn’t you pick their program to spend time at)?

People saw that I was born, lived, went to school, college, and med school in the Philly/Jersey area and people questioned my desire to leave the area. Even though I ended up at Jeff, I still wanted to give other areas a serious look and when I was asked I showed them that I had applied to the entire country, from California to Philadelphia. Let them know that you are seriously considering them. After all, you put in all that effort to get there, so you are serious.

Always be honest with them. But be well-thought out. Don’t rock the boat, but definitely share your thoughts on what you are looking for in a program. Another nice technique is to read about the place, know kind of what they may be looking for, and shape your views to help you show that there are certain things about you that would make you fit in there. I learned so much during the interview process, that I realized I wasn’t entirely sure what I wanted in a program at the start. So don’t eliminate yourself from contention by giving them the idea that you don’t like their approach. I know it may be difficult to realize now, but you probably don’t have as firm a grasp on the approach you want to take as you might think.

How did you prepare for your interviews? Program websites and anything they sent me in the mail. Schedule a few programs that you are pretty sure you won’t want to go to (b/c of location, etc) early on, so that you will have some practice. By the end you will have answers memorized for every question, but you want to be smooth on the “big days.” Do at least two “practice” interviews, I did two. But remember it’s competitive and a small community, so never take an interview day lightly.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes, one. I picked an away rotation in the most competitive program that was in the geographic area that I wanted to end up in. It is a necessity in neurosurgery. It is important to get multiple letters from Chairmen and this is where you'll get your second (the first comes from your home program). It gave me a tremendous advantage when being considered for interviews and then the match.

Additional comments/advice: It is going to be hard to find rotations here at Jeff that will be understanding of the fact that you are going to need to do ~14-15 interviews, each requiring about 2 days. Neurosurgery, for some ridiculous reason, doesn't count as an inpatient sub-I either, even though you'll be working more hours and be in the hospital everyday for a month. So scheduling is going to be a problem. You probably have to take one month off (I recommend November – that's when the majority of your interviews will be). The other interviews you have to squeeze in and work with the different departments. Additionally, you may have to drop/add until it drives you crazy. This aspect is one of the hardest parts of the process.

Programs will contact you as the match grows near and want to feel you out as to where you might be interested in going. If there is ONE program that you ARE SURE that you are going to rank #1, then it does not hurt to tell that program. I would wait until interviews are nearly over before doing that. Do not tell more than one program that you are ranking them #1. Tell all other places that you are "excited" that they are interested, you enjoyed your time there, you are ranking them very highly, or something to that effect. If a program contacts you and they are showing interest, I think you should send the resident an e-mail saying you are interested, or thank them, or something along those lines. It's polite and you don't want to offend anyone.

Send thank you notes. I sent them to the chair and the residency program director if he/she was different than the chair. It's not necessary to send one to every person that interviewed you.

If something of yours gets published or you win an award, etc. during the interview season. I would send a cover letter and a copy of the article or some other proof that you achieved this new honor. It's also a nice chance to remind people that you are still interested. But don't start sending stuff out every week. I had two pieces published, one in basic science and the other a letter to the editor of a good journal, I sent them out together.

You want these programs to know that you are motivated and hard working and that neurosurgery is your life, but you also don't want them to think you're crazy. Don't go out of your way to be overly impressive, or kiss-up, just be yourself. I heard this line at three different interviews (I swear), "basically, today is about making sure you aren't crazy" (one attending said "a maniac")

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: Of course.

peter.amenta@jefferson.edu. I'll be at Jefferson for another 7 years. I look forward to seeing all of you on the service. Good luck to everyone.

OBSTETRICS & GYNECOLOGY

Specialty: Ob/Gyn

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 14 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 12 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 2/06

Typical structure of interview day:

- informal breakfast
- formal presentation of residency program (program structure, faculty, residents)
- interview with faculty and/or residents (range from 3-6 interviews per program)
- informal time with residents to ask questions
- lunch with faculty and residents
- tour of facility
- plus or minus dinner with residents the night before interview (most programs have this, should definitely go to them if possible. You get to know the residents better and they remember you better. You can also ask lots of questions that you might not ask during the actual interview day)

Popular topics covered in the interviews:

- your strength, weaknesses
- why you chose to apply to this program
- what makes you stand out, why they should choose you as a resident
- 10 year (or future) career plan? E.g. general practice, academic position, specialty
- fellowship interest?
- why you chose Ob/gyn
- what do you do for fun? (say something interesting!)

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.):

- ethics questions (they are pretty straight forward, you know what they want you to answer)
- one or two of the programs asked some technical questions, but most programs are very laid back.

How did you prepare for your interviews?

- talked to current residents to get tips
- look over your resume to make sure you can talk about EVERYTHING and ANYTHING on it without hesitation. In another word, know what you put down in the CV
- think about your weakness, they like that question.
- read about the programs (many of them have websites now so it's pretty easy) so at least you know basics about they (e.g. program director's name, chairman's name, number of residents per year, what fellowships they have) You don't want to appear unprepared by asking obvious questions that are all over their websites.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes. Did you find this helpful as an applicant?

- yes, if you think you want to go to a program and want to learn about them, doing an away rotation would help you find out the dirty facts they you won't get during the one day interview. Also, they get to know you so it's easier, I think! I don't think it ever hurts to do an away rotation. If you are afraid to do it because you think they might end up not liking you because of the rotation, do you really want to end up at a place where people don't like you anyway?

Additional comments/advice:

- Be yourself.
- Be nice to other applicants, some of them will end up being your fellow residents
- Relax! It's fun (everything says this and nobody believes it until they have gone through the interview process, but it's true!)
- Be polite and respectful at all times

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Yes, absolutely!

My email address is wingkan.so@jefferson.edu

Specialty: OB/GYN

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 20

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 14

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 01/06

Typical structure of interview day: Arrive between 7-8am, overview of the program by the program director, introduction of key faculty member (i.e. chairman and department heads), 2-5 interviews (mostly one on one with a faculty member or resident, but there were several group interviews, 2 on 2s, 2 on 1s), lunch and then a tour of the facility. Most interviews days ended by early to mid afternoon

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Specifics about activities mentioned in your CV (knowing a short, entertaining story about extracurricular activities is a good idea). What is your greatest strength and your greatest weakness? Why Ob/Gyn? Give an example of an ethically challenging situation and how you handled it? What do you do in your spare time? Why did you apply to this specific program? (Make sure you have a good answer, not just location!). What are you looking for in a program? Where do you see yourself in the future?

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks: If you had a million dollars, which charity would you support and why? Who has been the most fascinating person of the year in your eyes? Do you have a nickname and what is the reason behind it? What is the most difficult problem facing the healthcare field? What is the most difficult problem facing doctors? Currently, what are the three biggest women's health issues and what can we do to fix them? (This was the worst!)

How did you prepare for your interviews? Reviewed my CV and Personal Statement at the beginning of interview season, the night before an interview I would review the program's website on-line/print out some highlights of the information online to read while I was traveling, write down anything that pops out at you as a strength or weakness to the program and ask about it

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? No.

Additional comments/advice:

- 1) Before you start interviewing, take a couple of minutes to brainstorm a list of general questions you can use in any situation. The most uncomfortable part of interviewing is when there is silence. If you have a bunch of generic questions in the back of your mind, then you will be able to quickly cover over any lulls in conversation.
- 2) Try to make your questions level-specific, i.e. think about your audience. A chairman won't know specific details about the curriculum or call schedule. An MFM attending won't know about the surgical facilities. It can be a pain in the butt, but try your best to ask the right questions of the right people.
- 3) Make travel arrangements as early as possible to save money! Traveling with friends is cheaper and way more fun.
- 4) Even though you may have preconceived notions about a program, because of things you will hear through the grapevine (for example – a program is very malignant), give every program you interview at a fair chance. You've spent the time and money to be there, so you may as well try.
- 5) Don't be afraid to ask tough questions. Ask the Program Director - "Has anyone left the program in the past five years and if so, why?" Ask the upper year residents- "Do you feel that you have gotten a good, well-rounded education? Do you feel you have the skills to pursue the next stage of your career? Are you still happy with your choice of programs? What things could be done better? How responsive is the administration to change?"
- 6) Try to meet as many people as possible, especially residents. When all is said and done, you will be able to get a good education at a variety of programs. What will make the difference is how you felt about the people and the environment. Can you see yourself there for the next 4 years?
- 7) If something stands out in your mind during the interview day, good or bad, write it down. The programs will definitely start to blend together and these little notes can help trigger your memory when you sit down to go through your interview day folders (on almost every interview they give you a packet full of information about the program) later.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: michelle.knight@jefferson.edu

Specialty: Obstetrics and Gynecology

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Abigail Wolf

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 27 Was this number sufficient? YES

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 18 Was this number sufficient? Probably a bit overkill – but I haven't matched yet. Most people only do 10-12 interviews for Ob/Gyn.

Interview season: 11/4/05 to 1/17/06

Typical structure of interview day: Breakfast, introduction by program director, 3-5 interviews with faculty and residents, lunch, tours. Occasionally we were sent on a bus to distant affiliated hospitals and had to suffer through more tours...

Popular topics covered in the interviews:

1. What would you bring to this program?
2. What brought you to Ob/Gyn?
3. What are you looking for in a program?
4. Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.):

1. Give an example of a conflict in medical school and how you resolved it.
2. Describe your hardest day in medical school.
3. What were things you liked or didn't like about your medical school?
4. What three words would your friends use to describe you?

How did you prepare for your interviews?

1. I read about the program online, took notes on any unique features and thought of good questions.
2. I bought a grey suit - many interviewers commented that they like it when people don't wear black.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? I did three away rotations in California, and this was absolutely essential for getting interviews and for being taken seriously as an applicant. If you plan to match somewhere not on the East Coast, then you must do away rotations!

Additional comments/advice: At every interview I went on, people asked about a billion times: "Do you have any more questions?" The most important part of your interview process is coming up with a countless number of intelligent, original, personalized questions. Get started.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Any applicants interested in matching in Ob/Gyn, especially in California or Colorado, please email me: emicks@gmail.com

Specialty: Ob/GYN

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Wolf and Sultana

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 9 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 9 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 01/06

Typical structure of interview day: occasionally there was morning report or grand rounds, then breakfast and welcome to program including program info sometimes introductions by all the sub specialists then interview (anywhere from 2-6)! Then lunch and a tour.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: do you have any questions about our program???? Asked detailed questions about publications

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): tying knots, using laparoscopy instruments

How did you prepare for your interviews? Did not prepare.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes. Did you find this helpful as an applicant? Yes

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: frances.baylson@jefferson.edu

OPHTHALMOLOGY

Specialty: Ophthalmology

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Edward Jaegar at Wills

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: SF Match

Number of programs applied to: 50 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 16 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 10/05 to 12/05

Typical structure of interview day: Breakfast, introduction to program, interviews (usually 3 panel interviews with 2-3 interviewers), lunch and tour

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Why do you want to do ophthalmology? Describe an ethical dilemma you faced. Current events. Select items from your CV. Know your research topics

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): How would you resolve the problem of 40,000 uninsured Americans? How would you solve the nuclear situation in North Korea? What sort of schedule would you propose to the president for troop removal in Iraq? If you were Terry Schiavo's physician, how would you have handled that situation? Jefferson used to have women sign contracts that if they were unwed and got pregnant in medical school, they would be expelled—if you were asked to sign that contract, how would you respond?

How did you prepare for your interviews? Made sure I had something to say about everything on my CV, reread my research, read Newsweek every week.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes. Did you find this helpful as an applicant? No

Additional comments/advice: Take Ocular pathology early in your 4th year and get an amazing letter from Dr. Eagle.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: keb005@jefferson.edu

Specialty: Ophthalmology

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Edward Jaeger and Dr. Tara Uhler at Wills Eye Hospital

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: SFMatch for Ophthalmology and ERAS for Transitional Year

Number of programs applied to: 40 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 13 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 10/05 to 12/05

Typical structure of interview day: Usually Intro Talk from program director or chair of program.

Since Ophthalmology programs typically only have 2-3 interview days, there are a larger number of applicants at each interview (20-30). At most of my interviews, half the interview group interviewed while the other half went on a tour, then the groups switched. There also was usually a lunch during which you could meet the current residents and ask questions. For about 5 or 6 interviews, there was a reception/dinner the night before or the night after the interviews. Don't forget to dress nicely for these receptions (not your interview suit, but no jeans). The reception and luncheon are key times to get to talk to the program director and residents in a laid back setting. This is not only the time to ask questions you may not feel comfortable asking in an interview setting, but this is the program's time to get to know you as a person and to see how you interact with other applicants/current residents. Many ophtho programs are quite small (average about 3-4 residents per year) so make sure you portray yourself as friendly and a "team player" all day.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Why I decided to go to Jefferson, college experience, volunteer activities, research, hobbies, recent books read (make sure you've read at least one non-textbook this year and be able to talk about its poignant parts).

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): 1. Pretend you are the program director, how would you: choose applicants, confront a resident that is not performing well, improve the current program, etc. 2. Talk about an ethical dilemma you encountered in medical school. 3. What is the

worst mistake you ever made in life, in medical school. 3. Sing a song. 4. Talk about a difficult situation in your life and describe how you handled it.

How did you prepare for your interviews? The night before I would look up information about the program on the internet or read the brochures sent by the program. I also tried to get in touch with Jefferson alums who may have interviewed at the program to get advice. If there are current residents at the program who are Jefferson grads, I often tried to contact them as well. It always looks good to know something solid about the program on interview day. The most important info to know is the name of the Chair and Program director, names of residents if possible (alumni connections are key-college or med school), curriculum, hospital sites (is there a VA? How much time is spent there?).

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes. Did you find this helpful as an applicant? Yes.

It is important to get to know key faculty and residents while you are away. This is basically a month long interview. Make sure you get along with the residents very well and keep in touch if you are interested in the program. You are most likely guaranteed an interview if you do an away rotation at a particular program, so make sure it is a program you are interested in going to.

Additional comments/advice: Interview season is a long and arduous process. Always stay positive, attend as many interviews as you physically can, and always look happy and energetic even if it's your 14th interview of the year.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Yes, please contact me with any and all questions. I'd be happy to help. Email: Linda.Ohsie@jefferson.edu

ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY

Specialty: Orthopaedic Surgery

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Didn't have one

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS and Military(Army)

Number of programs applied to: 17(6 army) Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 5(2 army) Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season: July/2005 to Jan/2006

Typical structure of interview day: Breakfast, tours/interviews, dinner

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Why do you want to do ortho?, What should I know about you that makes you a good candidate? Can you handle long hours and little sleep?, Tell me a good joke., What are 3 important innovations in ortho in the past 20 years?, Tell me about compartment syndrome., What questions do you have for me?

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): Covered above

How did you prepare for your interviews? I didn't.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes Did you find this helpful as an applicant? Yes

Additional comments/advice: You won't usually need it, but take a CV and Personal statement and picture to each interview just in case. Make sure you get there in plenty of time and have good directions and know exactly where to go.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: toddfeathers@aol.com.

Specialty: Orthopaedic Surgery

Did you use: ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 45 Was this number sufficient? Yes, too many actually

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 17/42 offered Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 12/05 to 01/06

Typical structure of interview day: Usually programs hosted an informal social get together the night before for applicants to meet residents and sometimes attendings. I felt this was a great way to get to know the program and the people before the actual interview day in a relaxed atmosphere. The interview days started very early (anywhere from 6 am to 8am). Half of the day was spent interviewing and the other half was touring the facilities. Most of the interviews were 1 on 1. A few programs were panel interviews with 4-8 attendings and 1 applicant and others were 2-3 attendings and one applicant. The actual interview lasted anywhere from 10-30 minutes, average was 20. The number of interviews in a day varied from 2-3 to 10. The average was about 6 interviews.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: The standard interview questions included: why ortho?, strengths/weaknesses?, why our program?, what are you looking for in a program?, tell me about yourself?, discuss your research, what would you change about it?, what did you find?...Know your research!

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): Only unusual situations were reading xrays, some clinical questions (compartment syndrome, etc.). Difficult questions were ethical situations and how you would handle them, because there really is not a right answer. One program gave me a model of the spine and asked me what level it was. Some programs that I did not interview at had applicants sew cheese, mold things out of clay, etc. You will hear about these rumors along the interview trail and these weird things tend to be the exception, not the rule. Most places really just want to get to know you.

How did you prepare for your interviews? Just prepare answers to the typical questions. Read about the program ahead of time and have questions prepared to ask them. The more prepared you are, the less nervous you'll be and the more confident you'll seem.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes. I did find it extremely helpful because you get

to see how different programs can be and you learn what you like in a residency program and what you don't. Also, it's the best way to get a good look at a few programs that would be a top choice for you and a way to sell yourself to those places.

Additional comments/advice: Apply to a variety of program types. Take notes after each interview because they will all blend together in the end. The important things I looked for in a program were location, size, well-balanced experience in all subspecialties that were well covered, adequate trauma experience, strong didactic curriculum, and if I felt like I would fit in with the group of people there. In the end, location and gut feeling play a lot in the decision making.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: Amy.Herz@jefferson.edu

PEDIATRICS

Specialty: Pediatrics

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Angela Allevi

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 25 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 16 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 1/06

Typical structure of interview day: Welcome, Morning Report, Meeting with Program Director and or Chiefs with Overview of the Program, Interviews, Lunch, Tour, Q&A with interns/residents

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): 1) What were the 3 hardest times in your life and what did you learn from them 2) Name 3 people who you think are good examples of leaders and what traits make them so 3) Who would you run through a brick wall for and why?

How did you prepare for your interviews? Just read up on my CV and research

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? I did an away rotation in peds I.D. at CHOP. I found that this helped me figure out more about the program at CHOP, but I don't think it necessarily helped them get to know me better.

Additional comments/advice: For less competitive specialties, don't go on too many interviews. I went on 16 pediatric interviews and this was too much. I was very exhausted during the last couple of interviews and as a result, did not end up liking them as much.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Yes. Email: kxg149@hotmail.com

Specialty: Pediatrics

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Keith Mann

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 14 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 7 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season: 11/3 to 12/2

Typical structure of interview day: from AM, one hour of introduction, 2 interviews from 10a-noon, lunch, tour from 1-2p, wrapup at end

Popular topics covered in the interviews: patient population, feedback, most challenging ward experience, why the specialty

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): hell no, I did peds!

How did you prepare for your interviews? I thought of my most memorable ward experiences/patients, I reviewed my personal statement each time before the interview, I checked out the program residency webpage the night prior

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? No.

Additional comments/advice: Dress professionally!! It's still quite hard for your uniqueness to shine through in interviews so I thought of three characteristics about myself or aspects of my personal philosophy that I wanted the interviewers/programs to know and managed to somehow work them into the interview

Specialty: Peds

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one):

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 12 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 9 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 2/06

Typical structure of interview day: Morning report, meet chiefs, intro to program, meet PD, tour, 1-3

faculty interviews, +/- resident interview

Popular topics covered in the interviews: What subspecialty I wanted to do, interesting things on my CV
Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): One PD asked me why my 3rd year grades
weren't as good as my 1st/2nd years.

How did you prepare for your interviews? none

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? No.

PLASTIC SURGERY

Specialty: Plastic Surgery

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): none

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 41 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 9 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 12/05 to 2/06

Typical structure of interview day: Powerpoint introduction to program, why their program is the best, interviews

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Why do you want to be a plastic surgeon? Tell me about your research.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): What should be done about the 40million uninsured in the US? What do you believe? What would do you if you won \$500 million? What is your greatest achievement/failure?

How did you prepare for your interviews? Read about the faculty and their research interests.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? No. It probably would have been helpful though.

Additional comments/advice: Sometimes there were only 2 interviews, and sometimes there were many more. At one place I had 13 interviews, at another, 9. Be prepared for a long day. Have lots of questions to ask of the faculty interviewers.

RADIATION ONCOLOGY

Specialty: Radiation Oncology

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Rani Anne

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 35 Was this number sufficient? YES

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 10 Was this number sufficient? YES

Interview season: 11/2 to 2/10

Typical structure of interview day: Really variable, most places start with an overview of the program given by the program director followed by a short philosophical anecdote by the chairmen. The day proceeds in one of two ways: you either start the interview carousel by meeting with each one of the attendings/physicists/radiation biologists for approx. 20 mins each for the rest of an exhausting day that at some point includes a tour of the department/hospital or you wait around with the other applicants for your 45 min or so with the residency selection panel and do a group interview followed by a tour and more waiting around.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Why chose radiation oncology, rotations in the field, research experience, explanation of any research projects, why you chose to apply to their program, interest in their geographical location, hobbies/outside interests, strengths/weaknesses, prefer academic vs. private practice.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): A lot of questions aimed at trying to figure out if Jefferson (as my home school and a very strong radiation oncology program) was going to be my top choice. A lot of “well you probably want to stay at Jefferson, don’t you” comments.

How did you prepare for your interviews? Tried to learn which attendings specialized in what disease sites from the web- not always possible. Otherwise just printed out good maps so that I wouldn’t get lost/be late

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? YES at Memorial Sloan Kettering.

Did you find this helpful as an applicant? Yes, very helpful, be prepared to compare and contrast the away institution with the other places you have done rotations. Rad onc is a small field so getting a letter of rec from someone famous can be beneficial though not ‘necessary’.

Additional comments/advice: Good luck, sometimes you will wonder if you will match but things worked out for me so overall it has been a good experience. There are a ton of good applicants and many with extensive research experience/phd. I don’t know how you compete with that as an MD with modest/trivial research experience- but have something (anything) to talk about for research and sell your strengths as a bright person, hard worker, dependable, easy to get along with, gregarious person with dedication to cancer care.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: anytime- ejw104@jefferson.edu.

I matched at Jeff and will be doing a TY at Einstein so look me up I’d be happy to help you out.

RADIOLOGY

Specialty: Radiology

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Lev Nazarian

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 12 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 8 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 1/06

Typical structure of interview day: Program Overview, interviews, tour, sit in on noon conference, lunch

Popular topics covered in the interviews: medical school background, research interests, and personal hobbies

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): What type of circus performer would you be and why? What do you think is an ethical challenge in the field? Is there an area of radiology you see yourself pursuing?

How did you prepare for your interviews? Looked over website, a good night’s rest the night before

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? No. Did you find this helpful as an applicant? I think I would have, it was a mistake that I didn’t

Additional comments/advice: It’s a competitive field. Having some research or something to bring up is valuable. Be ready to talk about your hobbies, how you got into them. Have an answer for what you’re good at and what you’re weak at. Also have a reason for the question—Why radiology? Having those “in your pocket” will make things all that much more smooth.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: Of course! Jeffweinstein@mac.com

UROLOGY

Specialty: Urology

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one):

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 42 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 14 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 10/05 to 12/06

Typical structure of interview day: Some programs had dinner the night before (good to attend for programs you are really interested in because gives you a chance to speak with residents and sometimes attendings before interview day) Interview days started in a.m. with talk about program given by some combination of chair/program director/residents (sometimes day began by attending weekly grand rounds). Following talk were the actual interviews typically with most/all attendings in department (anywhere from 5-17 individual interviews depending on size of dept). Usually during interviews residents were available for answering questions and took candidates on tours of facility. All had breakfast and lunch!!

Popular topics covered in the interviews:

- Why urology?
- Describe an interesting case.
- Be able to explain any research you have done.
- Biggest challenge, greatest achievement, proudest moment, etc?
- Often the most difficult and sometimes only question is “what questions do you have for me or about the program” so come prepared with some questions even if you ask the same one(s) to multiple people.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.):

- Oregon Health Sciences – knot tying
- UCSF – knot tying

How did you prepare for your interviews?

- Review your CV and be able to describe all things on it.
- Be able to describe all research
- Read about the program from info found online and generally have an idea of what important people in the dept (chair, program director) specialize in.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? I did and found it very helpful. I ended up matching at the program I did an away rotation at. I think doing an away at a program you are interested in helps you learn more about the program and give the program a chance to get to know you. Also if you could get a letter from the chair/program director from the away it is one more letter from someone in urology (likely a well-known someone if they are a chair or PD) and that goes a long way in a field as small as urology. If a well-known urologist supports you it is worth more than great boards, grades, etc.

Additional comments/advice: If you get interested in urology early enough try to get involved in some research (even a clinical project that could be done at nights on an easier clinical rotation later in third year or early fourth year) because it shows interest in the field and gives you something to talk about on interviews. Also helps you to get to know the dept where you do the research.

- Do at least two rotations in Urology (one home and one away) to not only see multiple programs but also to get letters (preferably from chairs and PD's)
- Be sure to apply to a broad range of programs and while most people apply to 30-40 programs I was advised that if you get 12-15 interviews you probably have enough to match at one of them.
- Send thank you letters to all programs (definitely those you are interested in).
- Some good info could be found on urologymatch.com but take the info on the site and discussion board with a grain of salt.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: jxa130@jefferson.edu
