



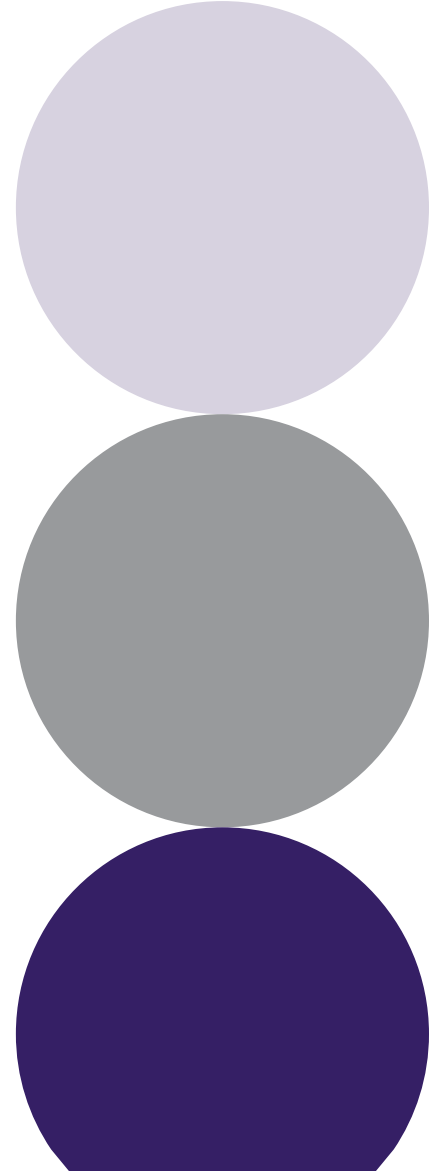
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Advice for the 2024–25 Ophthalmology Residency Match Season

June 5, 2024





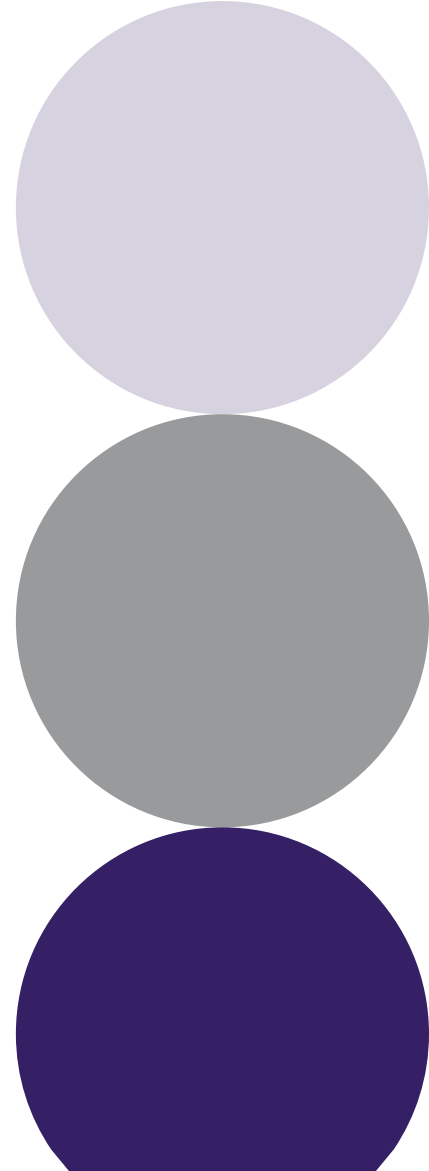
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Welcome

Rukhsana G. Mirza, MD, MS
Ryan-Pusateri Professor of Ophthalmology
Professor of Ophthalmology & Medical Education
Director of Undergraduate Medical Education in Ophthalmology
Feinberg School of Medicine, Northwestern University



Speakers and Moderators



Laura Green, MD, FACS



Janice Law, MD



Jeff Pettey MD, MBA



Saras Ramanathan, MD



Jamie Rosenberg, MD



Jeffrey SooHoo, MD, MBA



Nicholas Volpe, MD



Moderator
Lisa Kelly, MD, MEd



Moderator
Rukhsana Mirza, MD



Q&A Assistance
Dan Knoch, MD



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Purpose of this Webinar

- A diverse panel of presenters, including department chairs, medical student and resident educators in ophthalmology, as well as those who hold roles in the dean's office, will share guidance about applying for this year's ophthalmology residency match.
- Presenters will cover tips related to personal statements, rotations, letters of recommendation, virtual interviews, assessing residency program fit, integrated internships, and more.
- We will give you the latest available information regarding this year's match.
- Attendees will receive a handout with links to useful resources.
- This webinar and associated handout will be posted



Overview of the Topics

- SF Match Timeline and What's New? – **Jeff Pettey, MD, MBA**
- Strategies for Away Elective and Timing– **Lisa Kelly, MD, MEd**
- Identifying Mentors for LORs / What's a Good Letter? – **Janice Law, MD**
- Advice from the Dean's Office – **Jeffrey SooHoo, MD, MBA**
- Ophthalmology Residency Process – Developing (Telling) Your Story/Personal Statement – **Nicholas Volpe, MD**
- Preference Signaling– **Jamie Rosenberg, MD**
- How to Access a Residency Program– **Laura Green, MD**
- Congratulations, you got the Interview! What now?– **Saras Ramanathan, MD**
- Open Q/A

Housekeeping

- Use the **Q&A function** to ask questions and communicate with panelists.
- This webinar is being recorded.



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Q/A

Dan Knoch, MD

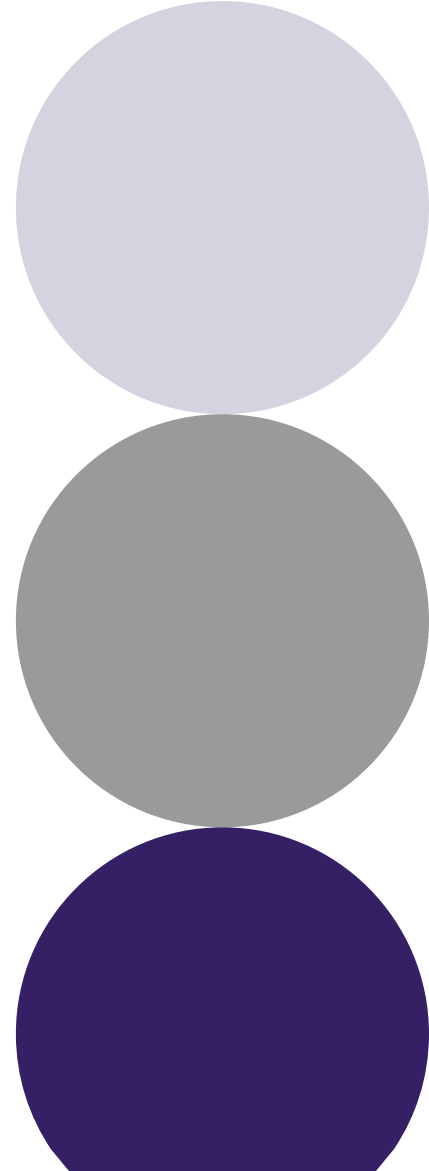
Carl and Mary Ann Berg Family VA Chief Professor of Ophthalmology

Director of Ophthalmology Medical Student Education

Vice Chair of Education and Faculty Development

Chief of Ophthalmology- William S. Middleton Memorial Veterans' Hospital

University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health





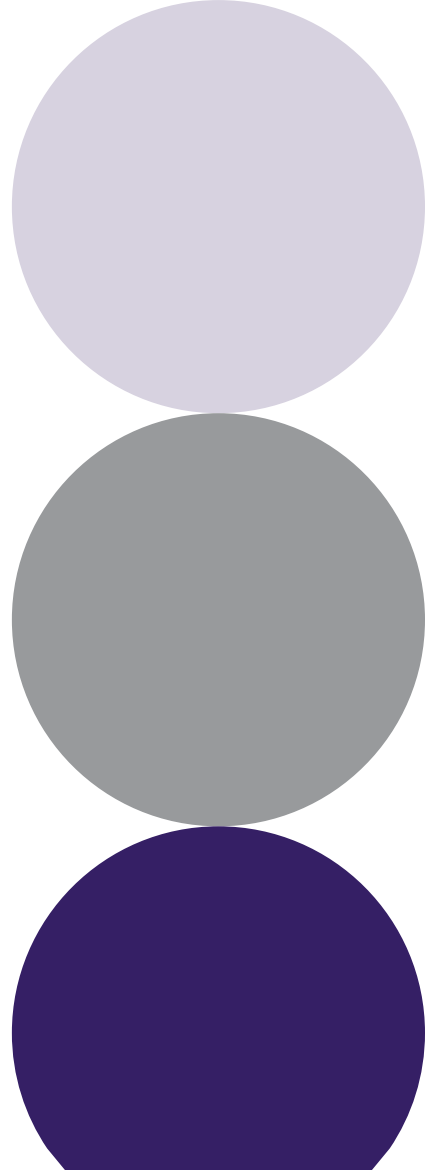
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SF Match Timeline and What's New?

Jeff Pettey, MD, MBA
Clinical Vice Chair
Past Program Director
Moran Eye Center, University of Utah
June 5, 2024







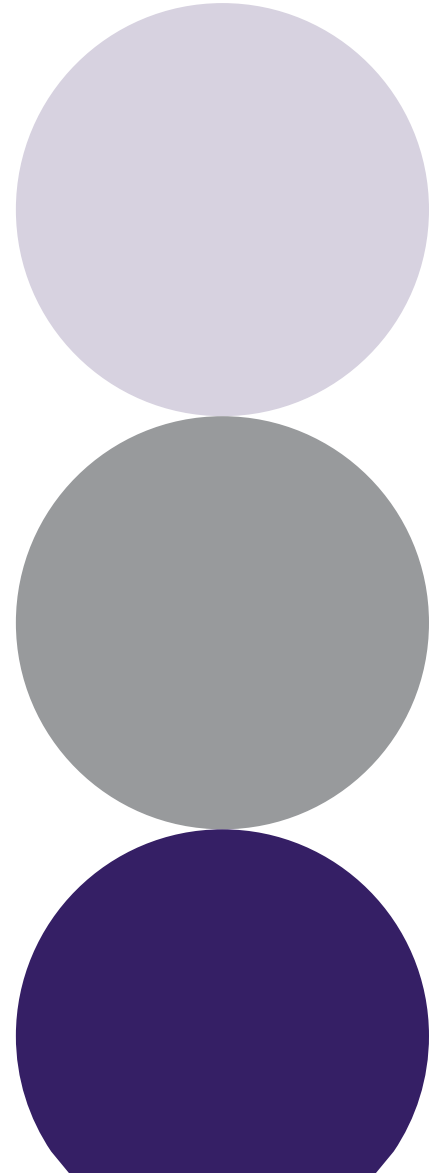
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Away Electives: Strategy and Timing

Lisa Kelly, MD, MEd
Taylor Asbury Professor
Director of Medical Student Education
Department of Ophthalmology
University of Cincinnati College of Medicine





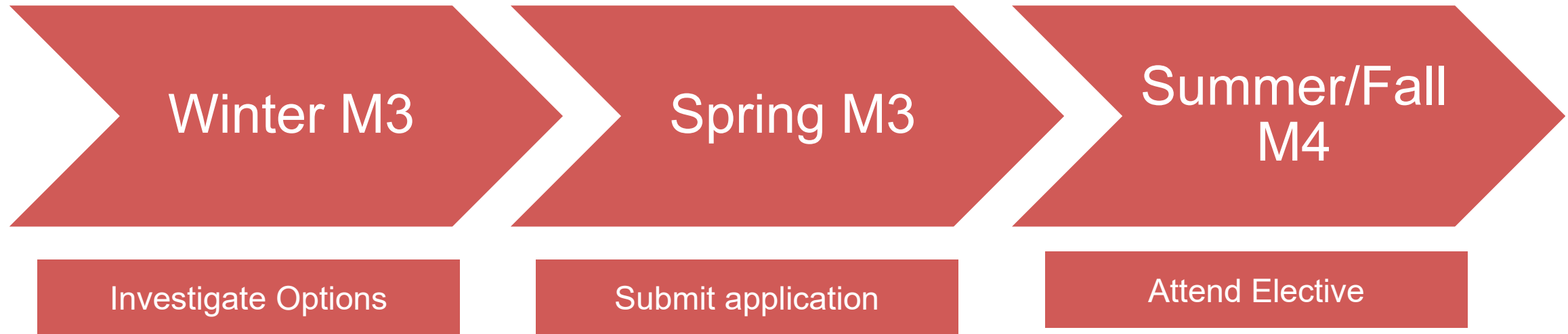
Ophthalmology Electives

Home Institution Electives

Away Electives

- Not required to successfully match in ophthalmology
- M4 elective at a location other than your home institution
- An opportunity to broaden your experience and exposure to ophthalmology.
- Coordinated by the AAMC VSLO (Visiting student learning opportunities) via application process

Away Elective Timeline



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Why Do an Away Elective?

Pro

- Exposure to a new ophthalmology learning environment
- Opportunity to work with a mentor
- Concentrated exposure to a particular topic of interest in ophthalmology
- Increased chance of being offered a residency interview

Con

- Financial cost
- Opportunity cost
- Schools have different academic calendars
- You may not get your first choice of program(s)

Determining Where to Do an Away Elective

- Consult with your mentor(s)
- Seek advice from older students and residents
- Consider desired geographic locations
- Consider locations where you will have social support
- Consider programs with clinical strength in your area of interest
- Consult Texas Star or Doximity for program information



How to Ace the Application Process

- Study and understand the VSLO application process
- Visit individual program websites for additional information
- Start your investigation early
- Stay organized – consider creating a spreadsheet
- Know which immunizations are required
- Arrange a social support system if possible - housing, transportation and daily living.



Put your Best Foot Forward on Away Electives

- Know as much as you can about the program
- Read about the faculty that you will work with
- Review the syllabus and know what will be expected of you
- Have a support system in place for housing and transportation
- Make sure that your clinical ophthalmology skills are polished
- Practice your presentation skills
- Review your fund of knowledge
- Be pleasant to everyone that you interact with



Long-term Benefits

- Let faculty and residents know of your interest in the away residency program
- Send thank you notes/ follow-up email letting key faculty know that you appreciated the opportunity
- Stay connected via research projects or other opportunities. This is an opportunity to enhance your professional network and identify potential mentors.



Take Aways

- Consider doing an away elective early
- Study the VSLO process – know it well
- Be clear about your goals and objectives
- Optimize your application
- Be prepared to do an outstanding job during your away elective

References

- VSLO application process <https://students-residents.aamc.org/visiting-student-learning-opportunities/visiting-student-learning-opportunities-1>
- Texas Star <https://www.utsouthwestern.edu/education/medical-school/about-the-school/student-affairs/texas-star.html>



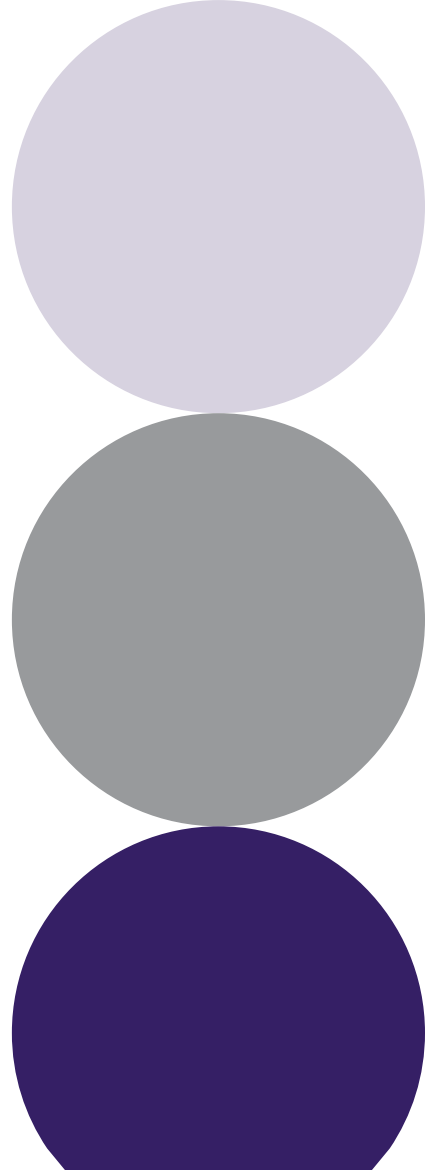
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Identifying Mentors for LORs: What's a Good Letter?

Janice C. Law, MD
Vanderbilt Eye Institute
Vice Chair for Education
Director of Medical Student Education
June 5, 2024



What's in a letter?



- The **context** the letter writer knows you
- Review of **relevant** achievements
- What **you will bring** to the program
- Explain any **hardships** or challenges
- Specific and personal examples
 - of your performance
 - qualities that set you apart
 - observed behaviors and strengths

Who should write the letter?



- **Someone who knows you well**
- One letter must come from an ophthalmologist
- Who has seen and interacted with me in these areas
 - Patient care team (clinical reasoning, teamwork)
 - Research (Analytical skills, writing, deadlines)
- Who has witnessed my abilities/strengths?
 - Leadership/Service
 - Communication skills
 - Professionalism/Integrity
 - Passion, determination

How do I ask? When do I ask?

- Initiate in person or email, follow up with email and a deadline
Let mentors know your intentions early (i.e. after a rotation or before a rotation)
- Give letter writers enough time (4 - 6weeks)
- Set up a one-on-one meeting
 - Discuss key attributes you want to highlight
 - What concerns you have about your application
 - Send an updated professional CV
 - Provide your personal statement or autobiography
 - Ask if you need to prepare anything else to help them
- After the meeting:
 - Follow up with thank you email
 - Include deadline reminder, submission details (ie. Match ID) & short summary of meeting
 - Ask if it would help to send a reminder email when deadline is closer

Unique situations

- What if mentors say no?
- What if they ask you to draft your own letter?
- What if you mainly worked with residents/fellows?
- How do you address the following in your letter?
 - Reapplying
 - Probation
 - Remediation
 - Hardships

Opportunities to enhance or deepen interactions

- Virtual mentoring
- Research or case reports/Eyewiki
- QI projects
- New initiatives
- Invitations and outreach
- Shadowing



Mentee expectations

Screen shot this!



- **Commitment:** To fully participate in the mentoring relationship
- **Responsibility:** To accept responsibility for his/her career development
- **Honesty/Authenticity:** To communicate honestly with the mentor and communicate often
- **Proactive:** To take initiative in seeking help and feedback from the mentor
- **Receptive:** Willingness to listen, learn, and change
- **Follow through:** To implement feedback and complete tasks



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Thank you and Good luck!

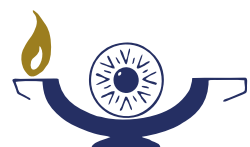
Janice.Law@Vanderbilt.Edu



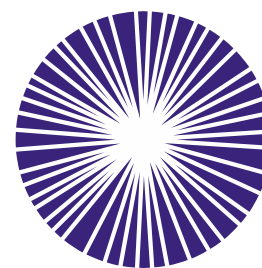
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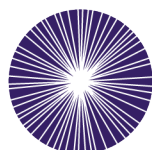


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Advice from the Dean's Office

Jeffrey R. SooHoo, MD, MBA
Assistant Dean of Student Affairs

University of Colorado School of Medicine



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Is ophthalmology right for me?

- Local interest group
- Identify a mentor(s)
- National programs
 - AAO MOM
 - Rabb-Venable
 - Women in Ophthalmology

**Minority
Ophthalmology
Mentoring**

 **WOMEN**
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How do I compare?

- Data, data, data
- Be realistic about the overall competitiveness of the field

2024 SUMMARY REPORT

Ophthalmology Residency Match

Ophthalmology Residency Match

Feb 2024

TOTAL APPLICANTS
REGISTERED AND PARTICIPATED
PER CATEGORY

	Registered #	Participated	Matched	Matched/ Participated (%)
US Allopathic Seniors	620	595	444	75%
US Allopathic Graduates	68	52	27	52%
US Osteopathic Seniors	73	59	19	32%
US Osteopathic Graduates	19	9	6	67%
International Applicants	137	64	22	34%
TOTAL	917	779	518	66%



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Application and Position Summary

	2022	2023	2024
AVG # APPLICATIONS PER MATCHED INDIVIDUAL	81	88	85
AVG # APPLICATIONS PER UNMATCHED INDIVIDUAL	82	87	85
AVG # INTERVIEW INVITES PER MATCHED INDIVIDUAL	10	12	12
AVG # INTERVIEW INVITES PER UNMATCHED INDIVIDUAL	4	4	4
TOTAL # POSITIONS OFFERED	509	516	520
TOTAL # POSITIONS FILLED	507	514	518
TOTAL NUMBER OF UNFILLED POSITIONS	2	2	2



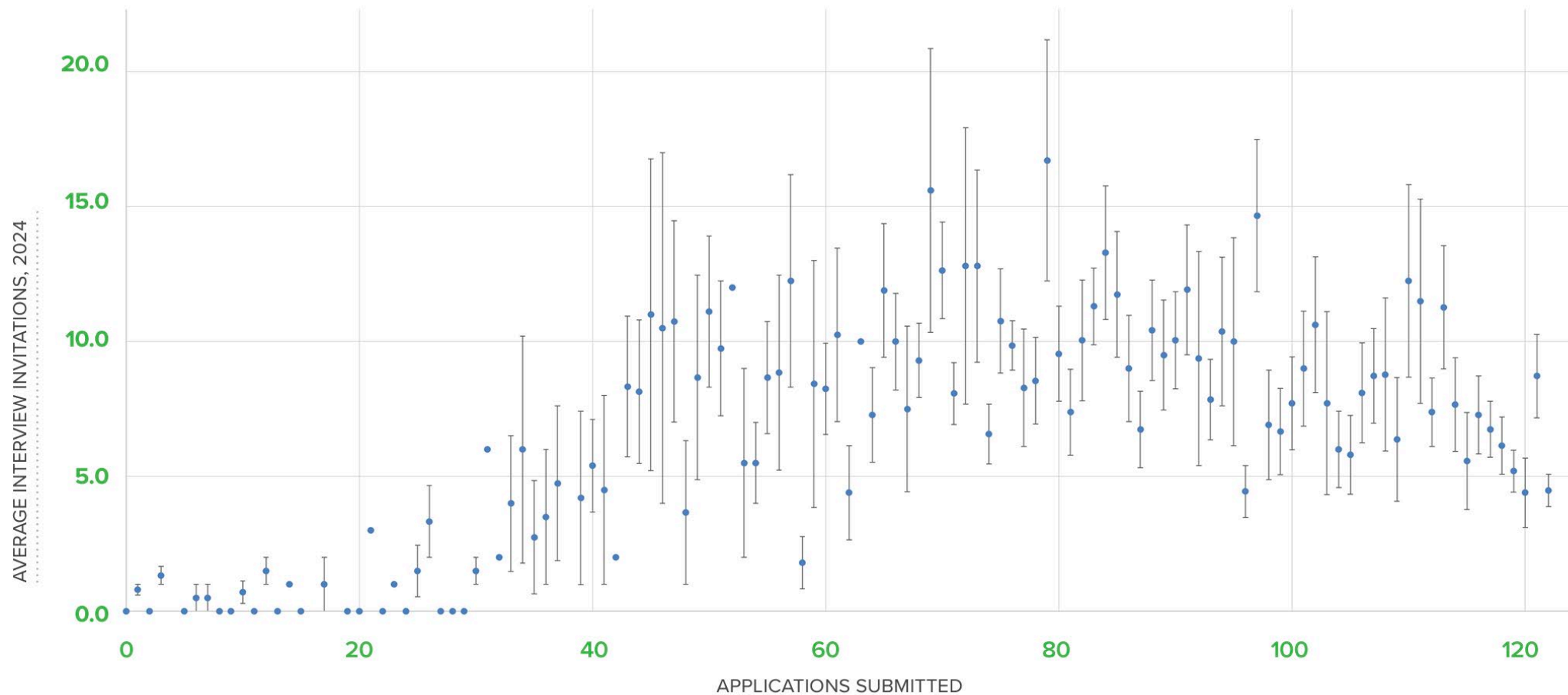
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Interview Invitations vs Number of Applications Submitted

Average number of interviews offered as a function of the number of applications distributed
(with “standard error” bars calculated).

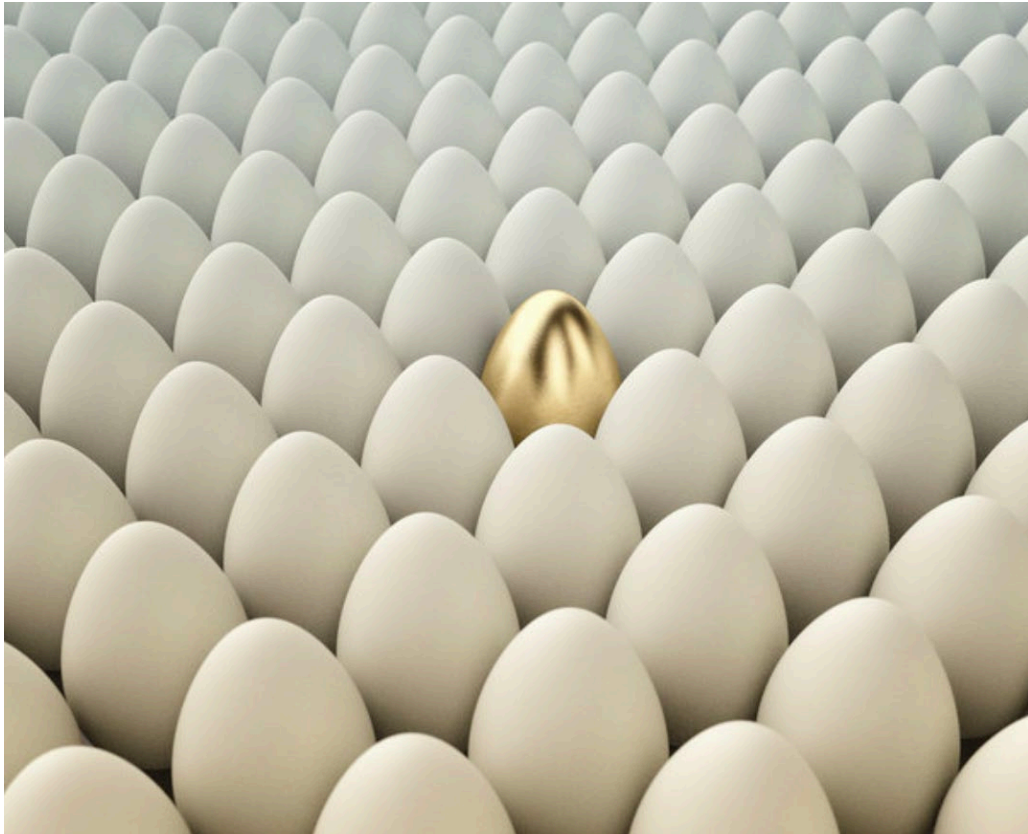


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How do I compare?



- Factors to consider (not exhaustive):
 - Class rank/grades
 - Research
 - Unique interests/talents
 - Supportive mentors/LoRs
 - Adversity overcome
 - Leadership/service
 - USMLE Step 2 CK

How do I improve my odds?

- Speak to a mentor/advisory dean – not one size fits all
- Some things you can't change
- Demonstrate dedication, passion, etc
- Away rotations
- Signals



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USMLE Step 2



Step 2 CK

- How important is it?
- When should I take it?
- How long should I prepare for it?



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What if I don't measure up?

- What can you change (and what can't you)?
- Ophthalmology or bust?
 - Research year?
- Happy in other clinical settings?
 - Dual apply?



Taking a year off (research, etc)



- Find a mentor or program with a track record of success
- Needs to be productive
- Be realistic about the timeline



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MSPE

- Noteworthy characteristics
- Review grades/clerkship narratives for accuracy
- Try not to stress about things you can't change




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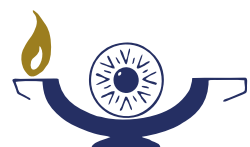
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Where to apply?

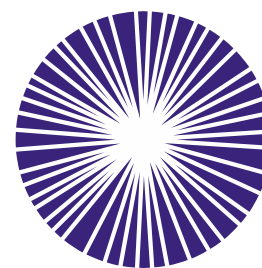
- Try and ignore the rankings or hearsay about programs
- Reflect on your learning style and career goals
 - Supervision style, graduated autonomy, sites of practice
 - Research?
 - Fellowship?

SF Match Central Application Service Specialty: Ophthalmology Residency	APPLICATION FORM Jeffrey R. SooHoo 33-879 
PERSONAL DATA Name (Last, First, Middle) SooHoo, Jeffrey Raymond	

- Practical matters (location, location, location)
- Talk to mentors, recent graduates
 - Ideally, current residents



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Thank you

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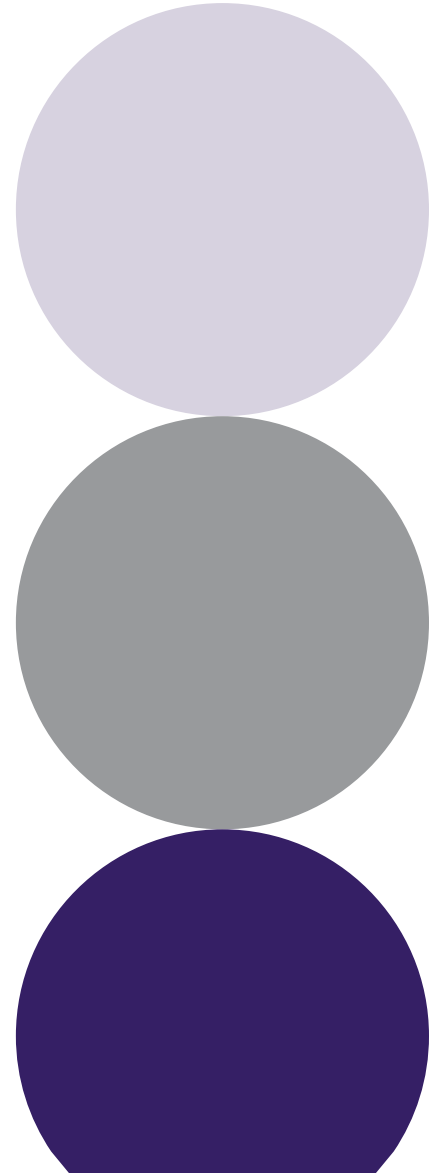


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2024 Advice for the Ophthalmology Residency Match

Presenter Group 1 Question & Answer

Webinar Handout Link in Chat





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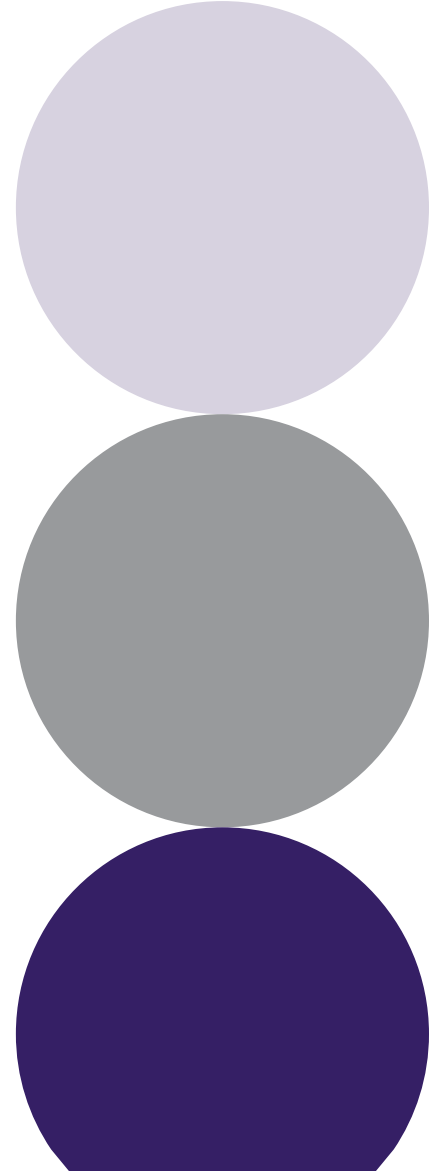


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Ophthalmology Residency Process

Developing (Telling) Your Story/Personal Statement

Nicholas J. Volpe, MD
Professor and Chair
Department of Ophthalmology
Northwestern University
Feinberg School of Medicine



YOUR Story-- 20-30 years in the Making

- Don't minimize the whole story by over playing the “checking the box” things you did when you decided to apply to ophthalmology
- Authenticity is critical
- Prior to filling out your application, it is important to reflect on your experiences
- How have you gotten to where you are now?----Your unique pathway
- What have you overcome?
- What drives you?
- What experiences will demonstrate the person you are now and the resident and physician you will be?
 - Life events, experiences in school, research, clinical care, community service, advocacy etc.
- Your dreams and aspirations, role models



Considerations

- If there is a noticeable gap or concern in your application this could be addressed in the autobiographical statement or short answer section.
 - Examples: time off for medical or academic reasons, academic probation
 - This is a personal decision.
 - Discuss this with a trusted advisor
- Remember this is a sophisticated audience looking for likeminded applicants
- Talk to residents and mentors about what they love and why they chose
 - Do you agree and can you capture that vision and energy?



Personal Statement

- **Autobiographical Statement:**

- A chance to share your journey to ophthalmology and what distinguishes **you** as an applicant
- 500 words

- **Short Answer Questions:**

- Applicants will choose **two short answer questions** (250 words each)

Personal Statement



- If you're inspired now and want to get started...
 - Work on an outline of your proudest accomplishments
 - Look over your CV for experiences to highlight
 - Reflect on the personal qualities you want to share with the committee
 - Character and uniqueness
 - Tell your story-specific and most recent better than generic and old
 - Have a theme better than chronological rehash
 - More current issues and future aspirations less history/steps
 - Series of crucibles—events that shaped your story and decisions
- Work through drafts and revisions
- Solicit opinions
 - Ask mentors, family and friends to review
- Don't misspell O-p-h-t-h-a-l-m-o-l-o-g-y
- These steps will help you gather your thoughts for your interview



Personal Statement: Short answer questions

Last Year's Questions (Choose 2 - - 250 words each):

- *What does resilience mean to you? Describe a situation in your personal or professional life where you have demonstrated resilience.*
- *If you were to start an ophthalmology residency program, what would be the three core values you would base it on?*
- *Describe a way in which you will add diversity to your residency class. This may relate to your background, upbringing, life experiences, professional/personal interest, or educational path.*
- *Describe an important mentor and relate how that person has been helpful to you.*

Personal Statement: Do's

- Customization
- Applicants may create and save multiple personal statements and assign specific statements to specific programs
 - Can be a way for you to “signal” your interest to certain programs
- ✓ Do use this as a chance to tell **your** story
 - Prior careers
 - Impactful experiences especially service, research, international
 - Gaps in your training
 - some idea of your plan
 - Weak spots in your application (carefully)
- ✓ Do have a second set of eyes on your work

Personal Statement: Don'ts

- ✓ Careful with personal ophthalmology stories (grandpa's cataract)
- ✓ Don't be redundant, over confident or lacking purpose, don't plagiarize!
- ✓ Don't explain why ophthalmology is interesting in general
- ✓ avoid empty statements- "I am a hard worker that likes taking care of people"
- ✓ Don't over-customize or spend time on a negative-think first impression
- ✓ Don't use cliché phrases that are likely overused- "The eyes are the window to the soul"
- ✓ Be careful about non traditional statements (poems, songs etc)
- ✓ Remember this may be the only things some of your interviewers look at

Definitely Not!!

chat.openai.com



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Box | Login



Google Docs - Home



Member Login - Sk...



APTA Chicago



Cart 0



IRIS - Login to IRIS



Certainly! Here's a concise personal statement for an ophthalmology residency application:

As a dedicated and compassionate individual, I am thrilled to apply for a residency position in ophthalmology. My journey into medicine has been shaped by a profound fascination with the intricate complexities of the human eye and a genuine desire to improve patients' quality of life through vision care.

During my undergraduate studies in biology, I developed a solid foundation in the sciences and cultivated a deep curiosity for the field of ophthalmology. This drove me to pursue clinical experiences, shadowing esteemed ophthalmologists, and witnessing the transformative impact they had on patients' lives. These encounters solidified my passion for ophthalmology and ignited my determination to become an accomplished ophthalmologist myself.

Regenerate response



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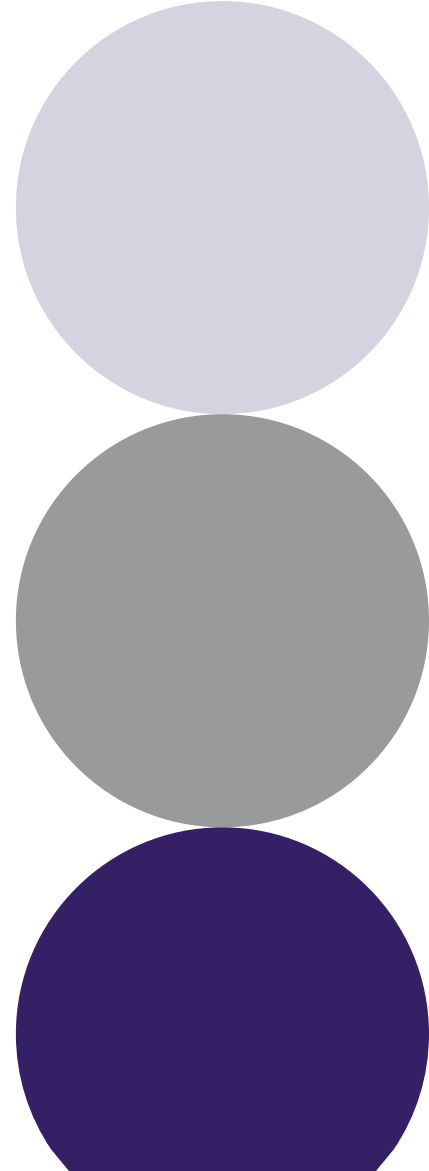
Preference Signaling

Medical Student Advising Webinar 2024

Jamie Rosenberg, MD

Member, AUPO Program Directors Council

Residency Director, Einstein/ Montefiore, Bronx, NY



What is preference signaling?

- Applicants can send signals to express particular interest in a set number of programs
- Piloted by ENT in 2021
- Has expanded to many other specialties for the coming application cycle
- Applicants in fields that have used it have found it a positive addition to the match process



How does it work?

- Ophthalmology applicants will have **7 signals** to use
- All signals carry equal weight
- When you send in your application to a particular program, you will also have the option to signal that program
 - You cannot retract a signal once it has been sent
 - You cannot add a signal if you have already submitted an application to that program
- We recommend using all 7, but that is not required

What about programs where I rotated?

- You should signal your home program and anywhere you did away rotations if you are particularly interested in matching there
- Programs are being instructed to tell you this as well

What about on the program side?

- Programs will decide how they use signals – some possibilities:
 - To determine interview invitations
 - To develop their rank list
 - Not at all
- Programs may not know how they plan to use signals, especially since this is the first year
 - Programs don't know how many signals they will receive
 - We have encouraged programs to tell applicants if they plan to not use signals at all
- Programs are not permitted to share information about who signaled them with other programs



How should I choose where to send signals?

- This will vary for each candidate. Some possible factors:
 - Geography
 - Partner requirements
 - Particular information about programs
 - Please see SF match site and individual program websites
 - Strength of your clerkship grades / scores / etc
- Please use your signals strategically
- Speak to your advisors about programs that they see as a good fit for you
- Dr. Laura Green will discuss how to evaluate a program later in this webinar



Thank you

- We hope this will be a positive addition to the ophthalmology match
- Thank you for your attention



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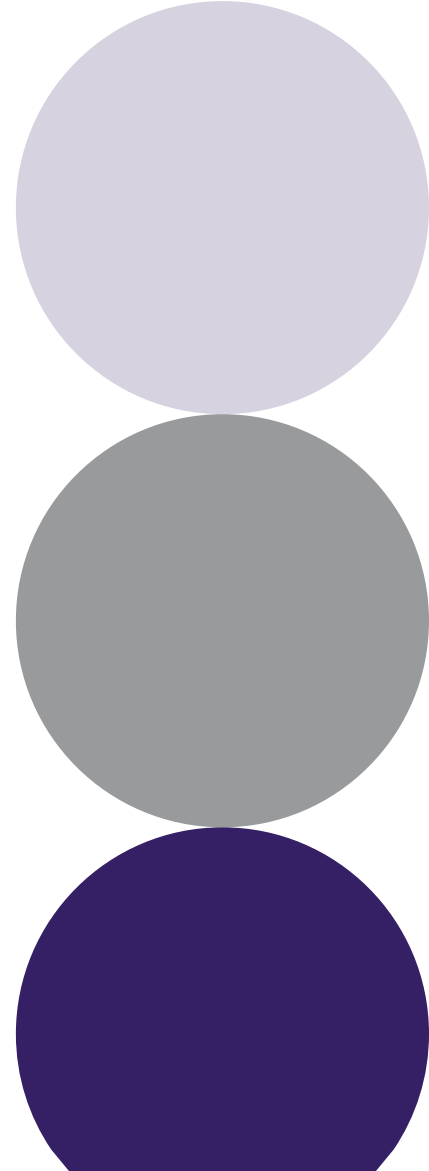


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2024 Advice for the Ophthalmology Residency Match

Presenter Group 2 Question & Answer

Webinar Handout Link in Chat



How to Assess a Residency Program

- Laura K. Green, MD, FACS
- Chair, ACGME Review Committee for Ophthalmology
- Sinai Hospital of Baltimore/Krieger Eye Institute
 - (until July 1) Ophthalmology Residency Program Director
 - (as of July 1) Vice Chair for Faculty Development
 - Chair Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Awareness subcommittee of GMEC
- Clinical Associate Professor, George Washington School of Medicine and Health Sciences

How to Evaluate Residencies

- Geography
- Program size
- VA
- Eye ED
- Call structure
- Family/partner
- Rankings/Perceived prestige



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Consider Your Core Values

- What do you want when it comes to:
 - Leadership
 - Research
 - Community Service
 - Quality Improvement
 - Mentorship
 - Autonomy





What environments are best for your learning?

- Lectures? Flipped classroom? Case based?
- Resident clinic vs. attending clinic
- Large or small group
- Hierarchical or collaborative?

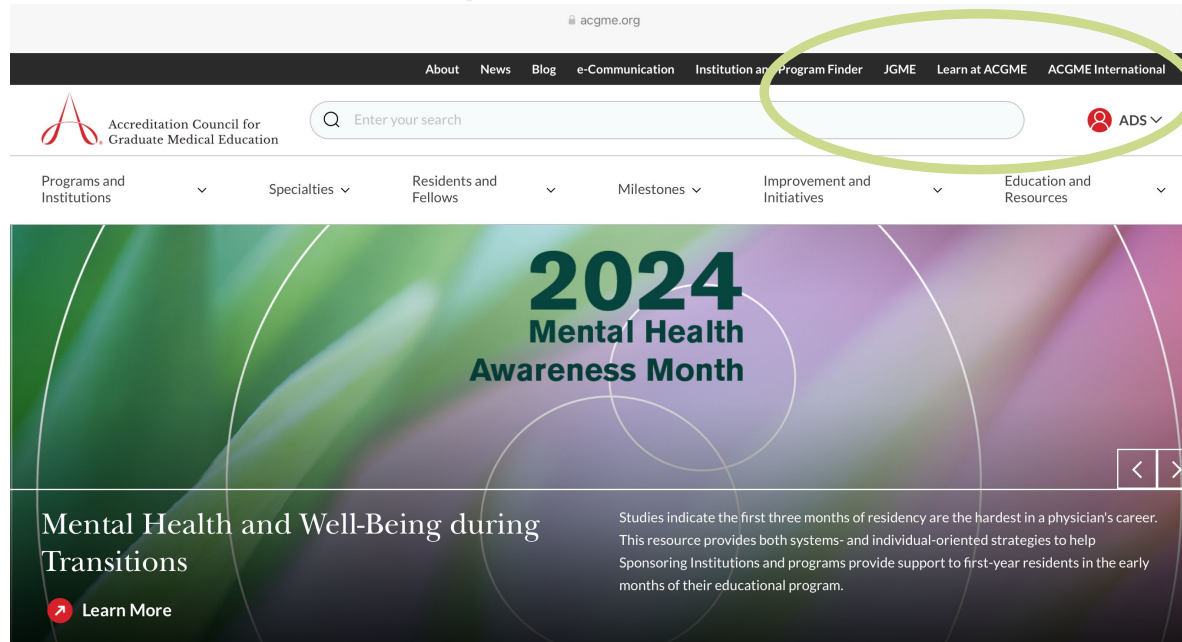
PGY-1 – Joint or Integrated?

- Joint
 - PGY-1 in IM or GS then PGY-2 through 4 in ophthalmology
 - May need to register for NRMP
 - Some programs have exemptions – ASK or look at SF Match
- Integrated
 - PGY-1 through 4 all in one program
 - No need for NRMP

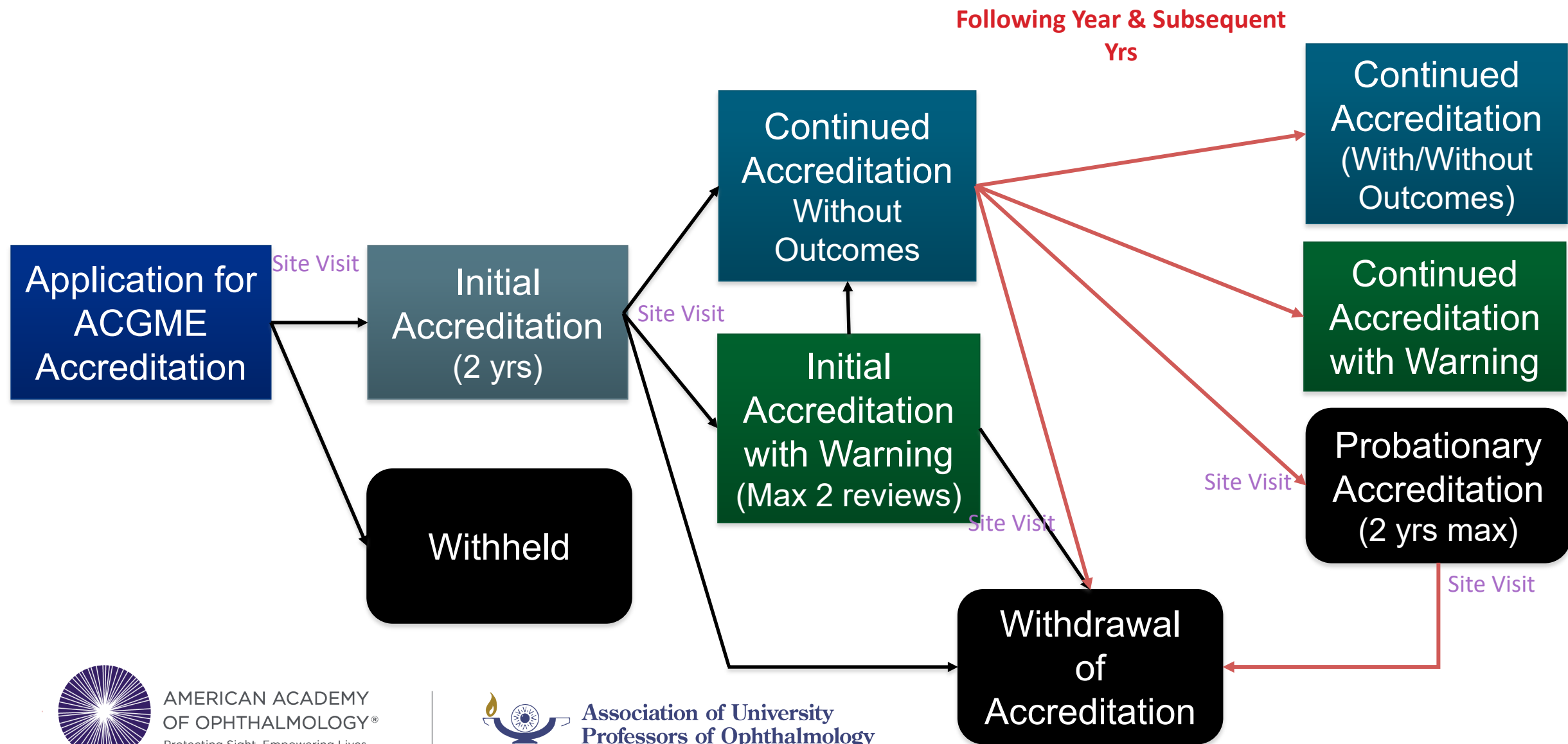
What makes a program “good”?

- Accreditation
- Happy trainees and faculty
- Good working environment/culture
- Resident input in their education
- Surgical and clinical volume
- Leadership
- Mentorship

ACGME.org Institution and Program Finder



Accreditation Process



Other Sources

- FREIDA
- SF Match
- StudentDoctor.net
- Doximity
- *always consider what these sites value*



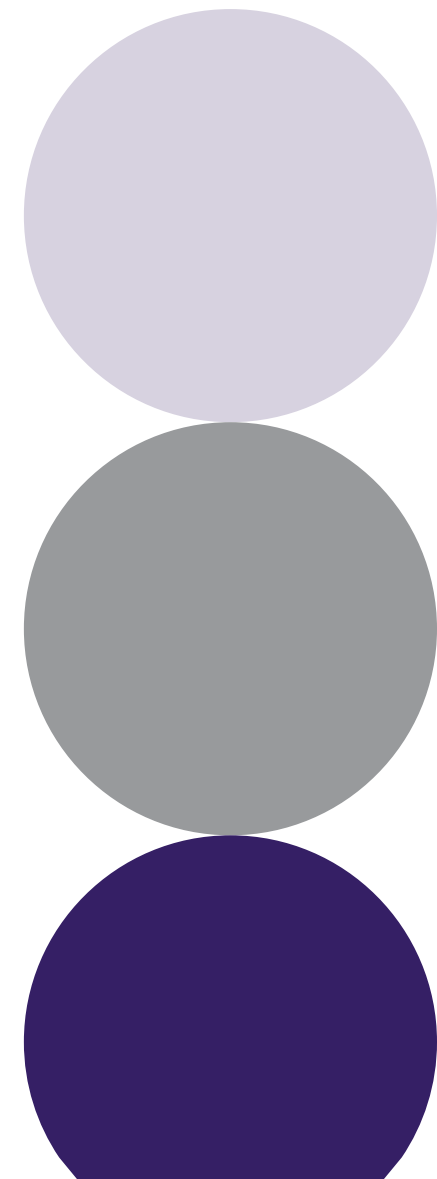
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You've been invited to interview...What Now??

Saras Ramanathan, MD
Residency Program Director
UCSF



Interview Scheduling

- **Yay! Relish your success!**
- Review Interview calendar on SFMatch
 - **Plan ahead** what your preferred interview dates would be
 - Preview which target schools have overlapping interview dates—**Google Calendar!**
 - Answer your interview request as soon as possible to get your preferred spot
 - **Don't stress** if you didn't get your first choice---it will all work out!
 - Contact programs directly --- we often know if other candidates are flexible on their dates and we will try to work with you.



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Interviews

- Virtual Interviews only
- Interview Cap = 15
- Schedule interviews through the SFM Central Scheduler
 - No overlapping interviews
 - **Invitations** to interview: Tuesday, October 8, 2024 - Monday, December 2, 2024
 - **Interviews**: Tuesday, October 22 - Friday, December 20, 2024



Interview Success

- **Be Yourself**---we want to know who you are!
- **Practice** ON ZOOM with faculty/mentors---especially those you know less well
 - Be prepared to discuss **every topic on your CV**
 - Be prepared with at least one or two **questions** for each interviewer
 - Try to make the questions unique to each interviewer in the program if possible
 - If this is the program you really want, don't be shy---**let us know!**
- Review your research about the program and why you chose to apply there
- Verify that Your goals and Program goals align



Post Interview Process

- Open House Sign Up: October 23 - January 25, 2025
- *Program Rank Lists Due: Friday, January 3, 2025*
- Open Houses: January 4 - January 25, 2025.
- *Applicant Rank List Due: Tuesday, January 28, 2025*
- **Match day: Tuesday, February 4, 2025** (and post-match vacancies)
- NRMP/ERAS applications for internship or SOAP

Live Open Houses

- **Optional** for Programs and Applicants
- Tours, socialize, assess culture, meet in person with faculty, residents, see the city
- NO interviews, discussion of rank lists, or coercive activity permitted
 - Coercive activity should be reported to AUPO
- Easily scheduled like interviews through SF Match platform
- When?
 - **After** programs submit their rank lists
 - **Before** applicants submit their rank lists



Generating Your Rank List

- Alignment of your learning goals and program teaching goals
 - Clinical/Surgical volumes and complexity
 - Supervision
 - Clinical sites
 - Research/Global/Advocacy/Public Health exposure
- Mentorship/Teaching---look for longterm/career mentors
- Residency Culture (will you be happy there?)
- Geography
- Family/Partner
- *Applicant Rank List Due: Tuesday, January 28, 2025*



Match Day and After

- Congratulations on a successful Match!
- Internship
 - Integrated vs. Joint Internship
 - Integrated internships do not need NRMP
 - Joint internships guarantee a spot, but you still have to register for NRMP
 - Can join after Match Day with \$50 late fee
- What if you don't Match
 - Dual application
 - SOAP (Supplemental Offer After Match) through NRMP/ERAS
 - Reapply



Good Luck!

- Feel free to reach out:
 - Saras.Ramanathan@ucsf.edu



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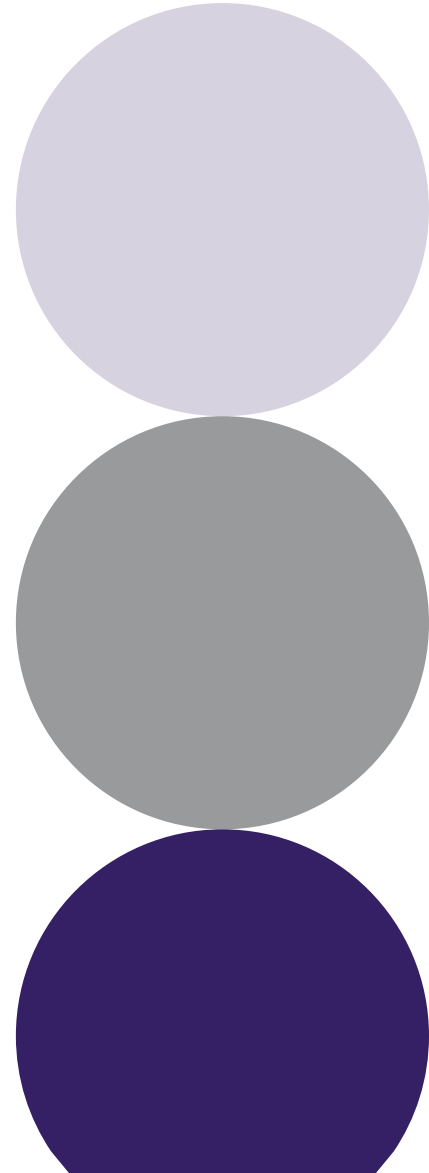


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2024 Advice for the Ophthalmology Residency Match

Presenter Group 3 Question & Answer

Webinar Handout Link in Chat





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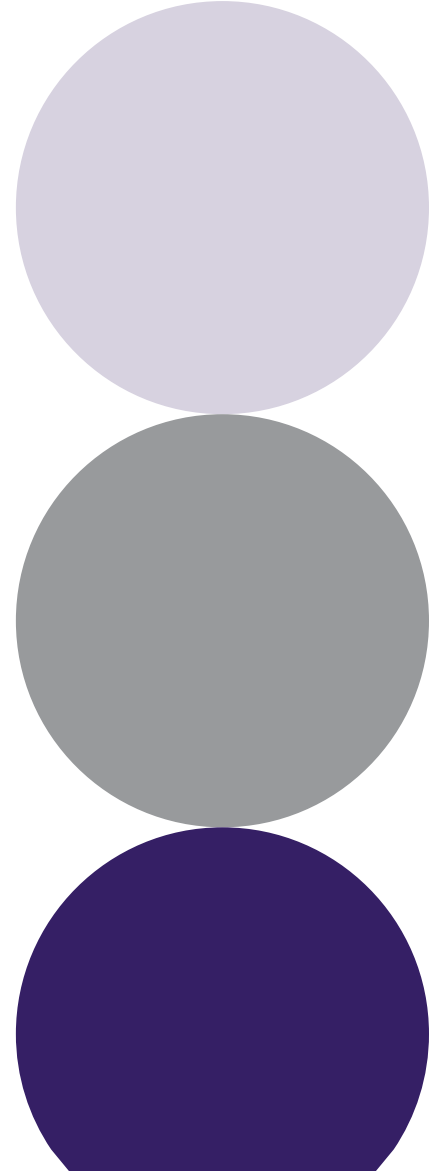


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Question & Answer

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Thank you for attending!

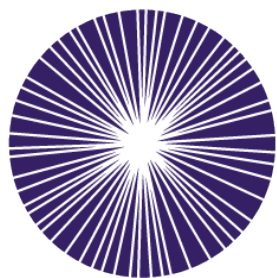
Webinar Handout & Recording Will Be Posted



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