Personal preparation for the 2016 Match

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Preparing for the Match

• Understand the big picture of the Match – increasing competitiveness for positions
• Assess your interests – choosing specialty or specialties
• Assess personal competitiveness
• Know and use resources
• Ask for help and advice early and often!
Competitiveness of the Match is Increasing!

• First of all, many schools are increasing their class size and there are new medical schools starting up.
• There are fewer new residency positions than the increase in medical students.
• Hence a tighter match.
• 18,000+ US allopathic Seniors, plus all other categories: previous US grads, Osteopathic, and IM Grads bring the total to 41,334 applicants competing for 30,000+ spots.
Match Statistics

- **2015** - US Seniors: 93.9% matched; ?% in top three choices, 51.6 % to their top choice
- **2014** - US Seniors: 94.4% matched; 81 % in top three choices, 54% to their top choice
- **2013** – US Seniors: 93.7% matched; 75% in top three choices

What about the unmatched US Seniors?

In 2014, 609 accepted offers of residency positions in the match and 412 had no position after SOAP.
Choosing a specialty

• A career decision carries with it a lifetime commitment to care for specific types of patients in specific ways
• One of the most difficult decisions in medical school
• Seek counsel from many sources to get a broad perspective
Factors to consider

• Content: Types of diseases, patients and interactions, duties of the job
• Lifestyle – hours, call, financial reimbursement
• Geographic location
• Training requirements
• Career opportunities
• Reimbursement
SOS for specialty choice decision – talk to multiple advisors

• Friends / Family
• Faculty – seek out the known student champions in each area
• Interns/ Residents / Fellows
• Med 4s – who are still here
• Jane Trask, Career advisor
• Dean’s staff – good for big picture/ reality check

Websites:
  – AAMC Careers in Medicine
  – OSU student life – career advise – CiM – specialty information
Strategy for Choosing Program

• This again requires an honest multidimensional assessment of your own competitiveness – grades, board scores, quintile, LORs, activities, ability to interview well

• Need a list with:
  – ‘reaches’
  – reasonable competitiveness
  – ‘safeties’
Competitive fields

- Neurological surgery, plastic surgery, orthopedic surgery, dermatology, otolaryngology, and ophthalmology were the most competitive fields.
- Diagnostic Radiology was less competitive in 2015

- 2012: 0 unfilled positions for Derm, Ortho, EM
- 2013: 0 unfilled positions for Ortho, PMR!
- 2014: 0 unfilled – Ortho, PMR, NS, Oto, Plastic
- 2015: 0 unfilled – Derm, OB, Ortho, PMR,
  – <5 open spots – Gen Surg, Neuro Surg, Oto, Plastics, Rad Onc
NRMP 2014 Program Director Survey – interviewing screening criteria

- Step 1 score
- LOR in specialty
- MSPE
- Step 2 Score
- Personal statement
- US MD Grad
- Grades in required clerkships

- Gaps in medical education
- Honors in clinical clerkships
- Perceived commitment to specialty
Competitiveness for a particular specialty

- Honest self-assessment of your strengths and weaknesses
- Ask faculty member in the department about your personal competitiveness
- Beware about relying too much on one person in specialty - they may not be accurate or have difficulty with giving realistic odds
- Use national resources (see next slide)
- **Get a reality check from a dean!** Will discuss during the MSPE meeting or earlier
Charting Outcomes in the Match -

Characteristics of Applicants Who Matched to Their Preferred Specialty in the 2014 Main Residency Match

OSU COM Student Life Career Advising - NRMP Charting Outcomes 2014

* Available at OSU Student Life match area or NRMP website *

- Match rates for US grads per each specialty
- Average USMLE step 1 score for seniors who match in each specialty
- Percentage of AOA members matched to each specialty
Assess Competitiveness continued

• 2014 Residency Directors Survey:
  • Also posted at the OSU COM Student Life > career advising > tool kit section
  • Gives survey results of how residency directors in each specialty rank the importance of various applicant features:
    – MSPE, Letters of recommendation, grades in required clerkships, grades in desired specialty rotation, class rank/cluster, step 1 and 2 scores, medical school reputation, personal statement, research experience, etc.
• **OSU Match data base** - maintained in the Associate Deans Office (OSU student Match performance over past 8 years)
Do you need a parallel plan?

- Is there another way to accomplish what you want? (Ortho vs. FM-sports)
- Would a year of research, MPH help? When should it be done?
- Needs to be considered sooner in the process because of increased competitiveness of the Match
- At the MSPE meetings, we will ask everyone what they plan to do if they don’t match, if they have considered a back-up plan B.
Average numbers of applications per applicant by specialty:

- How many you apply to depends on a lot of factors including your competitiveness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialty</th>
<th>2015 Average Numbers of Applications – US Seniors</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anesthesiol</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthopedics</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surgery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dermatology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Otolaryngol</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thor Surg</td>
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<td>Emergency</td>
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<td>Pathology</td>
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<td>Urology</td>
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<td>Family Med</td>
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<td>Pediatrics</td>
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<td>IM/Peds</td>
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<td>Internal Med</td>
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<tr>
<td>Radiation Onc</td>
<td>55</td>
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Special Circumstances

• Limited acceptable geographical needs
  – I must be in a certain city because of my significant other, other family needs, hobbies, etc.

• Couples match – how will this affect my competitiveness in the Match?

• Couples in 2015 Match – 94.8% match rate
  – Talk to Jane Trask if you are thinking about Couples matching. And Lora Eberhard is also available for couples’ counseling/ discussions.
IN the end….

• What specialty will challenge you to grow?
• What can you do for 30 years without burnout or boredom?
• What will allow you to achieve your vision of life balance?
• Where do you feel at home?

No one can tell you the secret of how to choose – you must take many factors into consideration and in the end, choose from your heart (gut).
Choosing Programs to apply to

Consider:

- Location
- Size, Patient mix
- Academic vs. Community
- Areas covered
- Competitiveness
- Call schedule, intensity
- Research opportunities
General Facts about LORs

• At least one to two letters must come from **faculty members** in the chosen specialty.

• Some specialties want all letters from that specialty (like EM)

• Choose letter writers who know you personally and can speak to your clinical performance.

• **Make an appointment** to personally meet with and ask for letter. Ask your writer if they feel they can write a strong letter of recommendation. Bring a CV and personal statement with you. This doesn’t need to be the finished product, but it should be a good draft. Help your letter writer – make some suggestions about things that make you stand out.
More Facts about LORs

• If a faculty member volunteers to write a letter, always say yes.

• Add research or volunteer preceptors as a 4th letter only.

• Thank your LOR writers later – and give them follow-up about where you matched.
Specific Specialties LOR Habits

• Find out about your specialty’s LOR quirks!

• For the most part, EM and Orthopedics want all letters from their own specialty.

• Emergency Medicine doctors who compile the departmental sLORs do not write individualized letters. Individual letters need to come from other members of the department.
Departmental LORs

Departments that require a departmental letter
- Internal Medicine
- Pediatrics
- Emergency Medicine sLOR
- Orthopaedic Surgery
- IM/Peds requires both Internal Medicine and Pediatrics

For the most part, departmental letters will be submitted later than other recommendation letters. Be sure your department is aware of your earliest program deadline.
Do I need a chair’s LOR?

Specialties that may require a Chair’s letter:

• OB (all students meet with chair, residency director, and clerkship director)
• Surgery (may substitute Clerkship Director or Residency Director)
• Urology
• PM&R does not write a Chair’s letter unless the student worked directly with the Chair.