UCSF SCHOOL OF MEDICINE CAREER EXPLORATION AND ADVISING RESOURCES

This document provides information for UCSF School of Medicine medical students and their coaches and other faculty advisors on the timeline for career exploration and residency application, and serves as a reference for career advising resources at UCSF and beyond.

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**1. TIMELINE FOR CAREER EXPLORATION AND RESIDENCY APPLICATION (AND GENERAL CORRELATION WITH ARCH WEEKS)**

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| **Early F1/SOM1 Tasks** | • Access the AAMC Careers in Medicine (CiM) website and resources, and:  
  o complete the Medical Specialty Preference Inventory Revised Edition (MSPI-R)  
  o complete the Physician Values in Practice Scale (PVIPS)  
  • Consider attending the Student Organization Fair in August |
| **ARCH 1** | • **Meet with your Coach and use the results of the above inventories** to inform your next steps in career exploration  
  • **Set a goal** to do one exploratory activity--attend at least one student interest group and/or sign up for a shift in a student-run clinic, etc. |
| **ARCH 2** | • Explore the UCSF Career Advising website (https://meded.ucsf.edu/md-program/current-students/resources-current-students/advising-and-career-development/career-advisors) and **schedule a meeting** with either one confidential advisor or a Faculty Career Advisor.  
  • If interested in a **competitive specialty** (examples include dermatology, psychiatry, orthopedics, plastic surgery, urology, head and neck surgery/ENT, emergency medicine, etc), meet with the confidential advisor within the first three months of F1/SOM1 to learn what types of activities/projects might strengthen your application  
  • If you are considering a **non-clinical career**, schedule a meeting with your Coach and with the Faculty Career Advisors to discuss plans/options  
  • Meet with your Coach or Faculty Career Advisors to discuss what your plans are for the **summer between SOM1 and SOM2**. Some options might include: research with a mentor in a specialty that may interest you as a specialty; projects in quality improvement, medical education, community health, health advocacy, health policy, public health and epidemiology, health IT; working with a healthcare startup; global health experience and many others. |
| **ARCH 3** | • **Perform at least one informational interview** in Late F1 prior to the start of F2 |
| **ARCH 4** | • **Choose CiEX’s** to help explore career interests |
| **ARCH 5** | • As you progress through F2, use the **AAMC Clinical Evaluation Worksheet** to record your likes/dislikes about various specialties, as well as which factors contribute to that impression  
  • After block 3, **revisit the MSPI-R and PVIPS** to clarify if your preferences are stable or evolving |
TIMELINE/ARCH WEEKS | TASKS
---|---
| • If you identify people you admire or who might serve as potential mentors/advisors (faculty, fellows, residents, senior med students, etc), **notify the mentor in person** about your interest and and follow through after the clerkship for career advice, potential sources for letters of recommendation
• Meet with your Coach or mentors to discuss whether or not you are interested in a **gap year**

ARCH 6 | • After completing Block 6 of F2, **if you are still feeling very undecided** about your career path, consider scheduling an appointment with one of the School of Medicine Faculty Career Advisors
• Towards the end of F2/SOM 3A, consider how your Inquiry/Deep Dive project can align with career exploration and/or goals and **identify a mentor for Inquiry.**
• Consider which Career Launch experiences can enhance career exploration and/or strengthen your skills/knowledge/CV and what the appropriate timing should be for your residency application

ARCH 7 | • **Ensure that you are on track to get all of your residency application materials in ON TIME, by SEPT. 5TH.** Sample timeline (for Main NRMP Match only - for other specialties, discuss this with your Coach):
  o April – Meet with the specialty advisor
  o May – Request letters from letter writers
  o June – Update CV*
  o July – Complete near-final draft of personal statement
  o August – Remind all of your letter writers and send them your CV/statement
  o September – Confirm all materials, including letters, are uploaded and submit on time.
• Post Residency Application Submission: evaluate how residency application process is progressing. **If not scheduled for at least 8-10 interviews by Nov 1st**, schedule a meeting with the Faculty Career Advisors and/or Dean Jones
• Consider accessing the Office of Career and Professional Development for **assistance with crafting your CV and preparing for residency interviews**, link to website here: [https://career.ucsf.edu/medical](https://career.ucsf.edu/medical)

ARCH 8 | • **Continue your best efforts in the remainder of Career Launch clinical rotations** as your application can be updated later with your improved performance in the case that you do not match and participate in SOAP.
### 2. IMPORTANT INQUIRY, STEP EXAM AND RESIDENCY APPLICATION DEADLINES

| INQUIRY | • Summer F1 Deep Explore  
|         |   o March 15—Summer Explore Grant application due for summer between SOM1 and SOM2  
|         | • Career Launch Deep Explore  
|         |   o December F2/SOM 3A-Preliminary Deep Inquiry project title and mentor due  
|         |   o February F2/SOM 3B-Final Deep Inquiry project title and mentor due  
|         |   o End of March CL/SOM 4A-Final Deep Inquiry project proposal due  
|         |   o April SOM CL/SOM 4B-Deep Explore abstract and poster due  
| STEP EXAMS | • By end of February—take Step 1  
|           | • By first week of September—take Step 2 CS  
|           | • By end of November—take Step 2 CK  
| RESIDENCY APPLICATION | • June—ERAS opens  
|                      | • Early June—Emergency medicine applicants will register for the Standardized Video Interview (SVI) when completing their ERAS application  
|                      | • July 16—Emergency Medicine applicants must have completed the SVI  
|                      | • July 1—MODS opens  
|                      | • Aug 30—Plastics opens  
|                      | • Aug 31—MODS (Military residency match program) application due  
|                      | • Sept 15— ERAS application due  
|                      | • Sept 15—NRMP opens  
|                      | • Oct 1—programs receive MSPE  
|                      | • Oct 15—MODS application locked  
|                      | • Nov 13—Urology rank lists open  
|                      | • Nov 30—NRMP standard registration closes  
|                      | • Dec 12—MODS Match Day  
|                      | • Jan 2—Urology rank list due  
|                      | • Jan 3—Ophthalmology rank list due  
|                      | • Jan 11—Ophthalmology Match Day  
|                      | • Jan 15—NRMP rank lists open  
|                      | • Jan 18—Urology Match Day  
|                      | • Feb 20—NRMP rank list due  
|                      | • Mar 11—NRMP SOAP  
|                      | • Mar 15—NRMP Match Day  
|
3. WHEN TO ACCESS SCHOOL OF MEDICINE FACULTY CAREER ADVISORS

UCSF School of Medicine Faculty Career Advisors Brent Kobashi and Heather Whelan are available at all times and can be an ongoing resource from F1-Graduation, specifically for:

- guiding Coaches and students regarding career advising resources, including the AAMC Careers in Medicine website and tools, the UCSF Career Advising website and Specialty Advisors, the UCSF Office of Career and Professional Development (https://career.ucsf.edu/medical-students), and for questions regarding any other career advising resources that might be needed by the Coach or student
- answering any questions that the Coach feels is beyond their knowledge, skills or capacity
- meeting with and answering any student questions at any point along their medical school career development path, but particularly helpful in advising students in these more nuanced scenarios:
  - student struggling academically and wants to apply to very competitive specialty (at any time, particularly in Late F2/SOM 3A before taking Step 1)
  - student who is not interested in any specialty or uncertain if wants to stay in clinical medicine (usually by mid to late F2/SOM 3A)
  - student who is interested in multiple, particularly if seemingly disparate, specialties/career paths (usually by mid to late F2/SOM 3A)
  - students considering alternate career paths (at any time)
  - students considering gap years, including possible activities, goals for the year and how would support career or life path, logistics (usually by mid to late F2/SOM 3A)

SOM Levels
- SOM 1: August-July F1
- SOM 2: August-December F1
- SOM 3A: January-December F2
- SOM 3B: January-February F2
- SOM 4A: March-February Career Launch
- SOM 4B: March-May Career Launch
4. ROLE OF SPECIALTY ADVISORS

There are CONFIDENTIAL and NON-CONFIDENTIAL specialty advisors for each specialty. The main distinction is that CONFIDENTIAL advisors are not on the residency selection committee and do not share information about students with whom they have met with the selection committee. Meeting with the CONFIDENTIAL advisor in a specialty is ideal for students who have not yet made up their minds about whether or not to pursue a specialty but need to be able to speak openly and honestly with a faculty person in the field to get advice.

BOTH CONFIDENTIAL AND NON-CONFIDENTIAL advisors can provide guidance:

- about requirements for residency application and selection criteria for residency
- about clinical shadowing experiences, informational interviews, electives, research opportunities and other extracurricular activities that can help students become a competitive residency applicant
- about how to find a Deep Explore Inquiry project and/or mentor related to a student’s desired specialty
- about most recent data for those matching in this specialty in the previous year’s Match, both nationally and at UCSF, including average Step 1 scores, grades, extracurricular activities, which programs are most competitive
- to students whose academic performance is not optimal for a competitive application in the specialty
- about necessary or desired away rotations for students to pursue in their desired specialty
- about specific residency programs in which the student might be competitive
- in reviewing a student’s personal statement and CV for residency application
- about creating and finalizing student Match lists
5. ADDITIONAL CAREER ADVISING RESOURCES

- AAMC Careers In Medicine website (https://www.aamc.org/cim/)
  - Online self-assessment questionnaires for students to complete in their first year and after they have completed a few core clerkships
    - Medical Specialty Preference Inventory
    - Physician Values in Practice Scale

- UCSF Career Advising website (https://meded.ucsf.edu/md-program/current-students/resources-current-students/advising-and-career-development/career-advisors)
  - Links for student to make appointments with School of Medicine Career Advisors Heather Whelan and Brent Kobashi
  - Link to contact Associate Dean of Student Affairs, Lee Jones
  - Links to Department/Specialty Advisors and Confidential Advisors
  - Links to specialty specific career information, including:
    - descriptions of what types of career paths are available in this specialty
    - what a “typical day” might be like
    - competitiveness of residency applications and recommended electives or other preparation for application
    - requirements for residency applications and Match process
    - culture
    - types of personality traits that are common amongst physicians in this specialty
    - lifestyle considerations such as work hours
    - expected income
    - ability to integrate personal and family life into a career in this specialty

- Residency Application and Matching Resources at UCSF (https://meded.ucsf.edu/md-program/current-students/resources-current-students/advising-and-career-development/residency-application-matching-resources)
  - Includes links to information relevant to residency applications, including:
    - Timeline
    - Application and Match Procedures
    - Post-Match Reports (data from UCSF students who have recently matched into residency programs, and their advice for applicants in that specialty)
    - Match Results Summary (summary data on number of UCSF students matching into each specialty over the past 20 years)
- FREIDA Online (AMA’s database of graduate medical education programs)
- MSPE’s (information on the UCSF Medical Student Performance Evaluations, aka “the Dean’s letter,” and what’s included in these)
- Guidelines for Writing Letters of Recommendation for Residency Applications (with new guidance on how to avoid implicit bias in letter-writing)
- AAMC Report on Residents

  - Includes information from most recent Match about percent of applicants matching, percent getting their top ranked choice, characteristics of successful applicants in different specialties, number of residency positions available by specialty

- Office of Career and Professional Development website ([https://career.ucsf.edu/medical-students](https://career.ucsf.edu/medical-students))
  - Online resources and in-person advising on how to create a CV ([https://career.ucsf.edu/application-materials-online-workshops-health-professional-students](https://career.ucsf.edu/application-materials-online-workshops-health-professional-students))
  - Resources for preparing for residency and other interviews ([https://career.ucsf.edu/medical-students/residency-search/interviewing-effectively](https://career.ucsf.edu/medical-students/residency-search/interviewing-effectively))

- Resources for planning summer projects or gap years
  - LabSpot ([https://meded.ucsf.edu/tee/labspot](https://meded.ucsf.edu/tee/labspot))
    - Website to help students connect with research projects and mentors
  - UCSF Profiles website ([https://profiles.ucsf.edu/search/](https://profiles.ucsf.edu/search/))
    - Searchable website that includes faculty and their research interests—a good place for students to generate additional ideas and connections when looking for possible mentors and projects
  - Inquiry funding website ([https://meded.ucsf.edu/inquiry-funding-office](https://meded.ucsf.edu/inquiry-funding-office))
    - Provides multiple links to possible projects and funding sources for students hoping to pursue research or other creative academic endeavors
  - Popular MPH programs for UCSF students:
    - UC Berkeley MPH program ([https://meded.ucsf.edu/md-program/prospective-students/admissions-md-program/degrees-and-programs/education-programs#MD/MPH](https://meded.ucsf.edu/md-program/prospective-students/admissions-md-program/degrees-and-programs/education-programs#MD/MPH))
    - Other programs include Johns Hopkins and Harvard
    - Point of contact if interested in a MPH program is Cha Esguerra ([cha.viloria@ucsf.edu](mailto:cha.viloria@ucsf.edu))