

**Specialty Advising: Surgery**  
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**Advising Efforts**

<u>First and Second Year Students</u>	<u>Third and Fourth Year Students</u>
<p>Surgery Club encouraged as a way for students to “test the waters” of surgery.</p> <p>Shadowing experiences arranged upon request.</p>	<p>During surgery clerkship, students interested in surgery are encouraged to meet with chair and/or residency program director.</p> <p>The Student Education Coordinator works with third year students to select electives.</p> <p>The Residency Program Administrator is happy to meet with students who have questions about program requirements, ERAS, and our own program.</p>

**Residency Planning Q & A**

To be considered for this specialty, what is the Step 1 score range?	Our program requirement is a minimum Step I score of 225 on the first attempt. However, with the we are seeing Step I & II scores much higher than the minimum. The median score has increased and students with Step 1 scores above the mean (228) are “more competitive.”
Do students need to be at the top of the class to be competitive in this specialty?	As surgery is currently very competitive, class rank is important. It is best to be, at a minimum, in the top half of their class.
Is research a strong consideration for candidacy in this specialty?	Research is not mandatory, but it makes the student more desirable showing a diverse background and variety of interests, along with increased knowledge from the experience. However, the student needs to be well versed in his/her research to be able to discuss during an interview.
How important are away electives? Acting Internships?	Acting Internships in the specialty for which the student is applying are very important. We look for an honors grade and also for comments referring to their performance. An away elective can be extremely important if the student has a particular program in mind. It gives the program faculty a chance to meet and work with the student for an extended period. An advantage over the brief interview experience.
If students did well on Step 1, should they try to take Step 2 before Rank Order Lists are due?	This is “controversial”. Some students with a high Step I score will “hold off” taking Step II for fear it will “hurt them”. If you do “poorly” on Step I, it is important to do well on Step II to show you were able to “self-correct” your poor performance on the first test. Having a high Step II score can be one of the deciding factors when putting together a rank list. Obviously doing well on both tests is the best.
Should letters of recommendations all come from this specialty or should also have others?	Letters of recommendation should preferentially come from specialists in the area of medicine to which the student is applying. It is best if these individuals have a national or regional reputation in terms of the “weight they carry”.
What do you want students to know about your program in particular	The clearly established objective of this residency program is to prepare the participants to be skilled, ethical, safe and effective surgeons and to enable them to embark on a successful and satisfying career in their chosen field of surgery.
Does your specialty REQUIRE a Chair’s letter?	We do not specifically require a Chair’s LOR, but it is pretty much a given that any student truly passionate about Surgery will include a Chair’s letter with his/her application.