

Specialty Advising: Dermatology

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Advising Efforts

Students are encouraged to contact the Specialty Advisor for individualized attention.

Residency Planning Q & A

To be considered for this specialty, what is the Step 1 score range?	The higher the score, the better. There is no shortage of applications to get into dermatology and so one of the methods of "weeding out" applications is to go by board scores. If the score is in the 90 th percentile and above, I think that's generally favorably viewed. Board scores are not the only parameter taken into account though.
Do students need to be at the top of the class to be competitive in this specialty?	Yes. There are exceptions though. If there is something that makes one's application stand out, such as their background, a certain unique experience, etc., that is certainly helpful. In other words, people who are not at the top of their class may still be competitive but the higher the class rank, the better.
Is research a strong consideration for candidacy in this specialty?	Not necessarily if all the other parameters are met (board scores, class rank, letters, etc.). Research is always an added plus to anyone's application though, but I don't think it's an absolute necessity.
How important are away electives? Acting Internships?	Away electives are extremely important. Since we don't have a training program here, I would advise interested candidates to take the dermatology elective here. Let us "get the kinks out" and then I advise doing an away elective at a program that one is interested in applying. This is a chance to shine and make one-self known at a program of interest.
If students did well on Step 1, should they try to take Step 2 before Rank Order Lists are due?	This is a question of detail that might best be answered by calling up a specific program and answering, or even the American Academy of Dermatology offices, and they can either answer this or refer the caller to someone who can.
Should letters of recommendations all come from this specialty or should also have others?	I don't think all letters need to come from this specialty. Of course, some of them should. If there is an opportunity to get a letter from a program head who is well know, that is an added plus.
What do you want students to know about your program in particular	Since we don't have a program here, I advise interested students to take the dermatology elective here as "a practice run". Once completed, they are in a stronger position to do an away elective at a program that they are interested in applying to. This will give them an opportunity to shine (show off their knowledge in an appropriate fashion), participate in journal clubs, present articles, write case reports or participate in research projects. This will make them a known commodity at that institution. At the very least, if they do a good job, they can get letters of recommendation (especially from a well known chair person).
Does your specialty REQUIRE a Chair's letter?	Not required, but is recommended.