

Specialty Advising: Psychiatry
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Advising Efforts

<u>First and Second Year Students</u>	<u>Third and Fourth Year Students</u>
	<p>3rd Year: Students Invited to Meet with Specialty Advisor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Outline Timeframes for 4th Year (e.g. Setting up AI's) ⇒ Types of Programs ⇒ Competitiveness ⇒ Electives/AI's ⇒ Letter of Recommendation ⇒ Personal Statement <p>4th Year: Late Summer Individual Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Review of Above ⇒ Program Identification (realistic) <p>Departmental Dinners and Annual Meeting and Presentation with Psychiatry Club</p>

Residency Planning Q & A

To be considered for this specialty, what is the Step 1 score range?	I mostly prefer to see rising scores on USMLE's as they become more clinically oriented (USMLE III > USMLE II > USMLE I). Psychiatry is becoming more competitive, so a lower Step 1 score can limit chances for interviews with more competitive programs.
Do students need to be at the top of the class to be competitive in this specialty?	No, though it certainly doesn't hurt. It has become a less useful marker, as many, if not most, schools no longer post class standing so one loses any benefit of comparisons.
Is research a strong consideration for candidacy in this specialty?	Not required, but raises an applicant's ranking in our selection if they have published.
How important are away electives? Acting Internships?	Most important to me is grade or evaluation from Psychiatry clerkship where students are compared to a large number of other students. We also like to see some evidence of having tried out an AI in Psychiatry while recognizing most AIs receive an honors grade for their work. Away electives are an excellent way to let other schools you want to get into know who you are. We like someone we know better than someone we only meet for a day and on paper. Consider doing a medicine or neurology AI as well for practice and development of a good foundation, as six months of intern year is medicine/neuro, and 40% of the psychiatry boards are neurology as well.
If students did well on Step 1, should they try to take Step 2 before Rank Order Lists are due?	I am very reassured by applicants who show me they can perform on clinically focused exams. As above, I prefer those with patterns of rising scores on USMLEs.
Should letters of recommendations all come from this specialty or should also have others?	I very much prefer LORs from psychiatrists, preferably psychiatrists trained in the American system.
What do you want students to know about your program in particular	We are convinced that there is more to being an effective physician than high grades and "knowing the right answers." Knowing how to develop a therapeutic relationship is integral in psychiatry. Studies in Psychiatry have shown that grades and USMLE scores have limited predictive value for who will be considered excellent psychiatrists by the end of training. We spend a lot of time teaching the importance of developing effective working alliances with our patients and remain committed to our residents becoming competent psychotherapists as well as being effective psychopharmacologists.
Does your specialty REQUIRE a Chair's letter?	Do not require a Chair's letter. We prefer letters that show the referee knows the medical student about whom they are writing.