



## Cardiothoracic Surgery Pathway 2021-2022

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1. Requirements:
  - a. Emergency Medicine Subinternship
  - b. DUCOM-required Subinternship – Medicine or Surgery
  - c. Transition to Clinician II
  - d. Cardiothoracic Surgery Rotation
2. Recommended Electives:
  - a. Strongly Recommended: 2<sup>nd</sup> Cardiothoracic Surgery rotation, Cardiology, Pulmonary Medicine, Radiology
  - b. Recommended: Pediatric Cardiothoracic Surgery, Pediatric Cardiology
3. Scheduling (\*Timeline applies to ERAS only. Please notify your Pathway Director and your Student Affairs Advisor if you will be entering the military match for individual advising.)
  - a. Blocks 1-3 are most likely to appear on your transcript for residency applications.
  - b. Blocks 1-3 should be used to help you make a decision if you are considering multiple specialties.
  - c. Blocks 1-4 are good blocks to get letters of recommendation.
  - d. Most interviews take place in December – January. If possible, keep Block 7 or 8 open for interviews.
4. Letters of Recommendation (LOR):
  - a. Must come from faculty/attending, NOT from resident or fellow
  - b. While most letters come from 4<sup>th</sup> year rotations, letters from 3<sup>rd</sup> year attendings can also be used.
  - c. Ask for LORs towards the end of the rotation or as soon as you finish the rotation to give ample time to letter writers (and allow them to best remember details from their work with you).
  - d. When asking for letter, include CV, ERAS Letter Request form (or MODS form, as applicable), and DUCOM LOR instructions (available on Student Affairs & Career Advising website). You can also include a more detailed letter writer guide, “Guidelines for Writing Letters of Recommendation: A Guide for Faculty” which is also available on the Student Affairs & Career Advising website.
  - e. LOR specifics: Cardiothoracic Surgery program applications:
    - i. Most programs require 3 LORs but some may require 4 LORs.
    - ii. Most of these LOR should come from Cardiothoracic Surgery attendings you have worked with. A strong general surgery LOR is also a good option.
    - iii. Review program websites regarding their LOR requirements or preferences, if any.
  - f. LOR Specifics: General Surgery program applications:
    - i. Most programs require 3 LORs but some may require 4 LORs.
    - ii. These LOR should be from surgery attendings you rotated with, including CT surgery attendings.
    - iii. Review program websites regarding their LOR requirements or preferences, if any.
5. Research is recommended to match into a Cardiothoracic Surgery Residency and can strengthen your application in a highly competitive field.
6. Step 2 CK and CS:

- a. Timing depends on the individual student. Discuss with your Student Affairs Advisor and/or the Pathway Director for individual advising.
- b. Charting Outcomes in the Match data:
  - i. Mean USMLE Step 1 score = 250
  - ii. Mean Step 2 CK score = 255
  - iii. Please note that medical students with lower scores have matched successfully. Your Student Affairs Advisor and/or Pathway Director can advise and assist you with backup/parallel plan(s).

7. Away Rotations: Strongly Recommended

An away rotation is not “required,” but it is standard practice. Most applicants complete 2-3 Away rotations. These may be useful students to:

- a. Obtain a Letter of Recommendation for their residency applications.
  - i. A strong LOR from an “away” site/school can have impact by stating your strengths as demonstrated at an outside school/institution (in addition to your home school, i.e. DUCOM).
- b. Assess a residency program to determine if it is a good match for them.
- c. Complete a rotation in a desired geographic location to show interest (in a specific program) and/or to explore and open up opportunities for other geographic locations.
- d. “Audition” for a residency program:
  - i. A strong performance may enhance a student’s chances of interviewing/matching with a program.
    - 1. May be helpful for “reach” programs, but unlikely to be useful for programs that are “out-of-reach.”
  - ii. Be aware that an Audition rotation could also be detrimental. You never know who your attending will be, if it will be a good match for you, if the rotation is a good one, etc.
  - iii. In determining whether to pursue Audition rotations, it is important to know yourself. Consider how well/quickly you adjust to new sites, learn new EMRs, etc.

8. Advising Timeline (Again, applicable to ERAS only. Please notify your advisor if you will be entering the Military Match for individual advising):

- a) January/February: Meet with Pathway Director regarding pursuing a career in Anesthesiology and relevant specifics for the 4<sup>h</sup> year: Schedule a phone or in-person meeting to discuss your career goals/interests, competitiveness for specialty, other specialties you are considering, if any, and proposed rotation selections.
- b) July/August: 1<sup>st</sup> Required meeting with Pathway Director to review the residency application process, program selection, etc. Prior to meeting, you should send your personal statement and an initial list of potential programs for review with the Pathway Director. In addition, you should also share all relevant academic, scheduling and/or other relevant updates during the meeting. **Deadline for Required Summer meeting with Pathway Director and completion/submission of [Pathway Form](#) is in August.**
- c) August/September: If needed, meet with Pathway Director to finalize ERAS application.
- d) Fall of Senior Year: 2<sup>nd</sup> Required meeting with Pathway Director to review interview numbers, questions, concerns, etc. **Deadline for Required Fall meeting with Pathway Director and completion/submission of [Pathway Form](#) is in November.**
- e) January: Correspond with Pathway Director, as needed regarding programs and rank list.
- f) Schedule individual meetings throughout application and interview process as necessary.

9. Career Advising Resources:

- a. **Drexel Career Advising Website** - <https://webcampus.drexelmed.edu/cdc>
  - i. Requesting Letters of Recommendation Guide (Residency and Away Rotation)

- ii. Interview Guide and [InterviewStream](#) (mock interview practice tool)
- iii. CV & PS Writing Guides and Samples
- iv. Residency Timelines and Checklist
- v. **“Advice from Upperclassmen”**
  - 1. List of Senior Away Electives, Interviews and Match Data, Graduate’s Contact information, Application information and interview timing by specialty
  - 2. List of 4th year medical students willing to be contacted by third year students with similar interests.
- vi. Couples Match Guide
- vii. Military Match Guide and timeline
- viii. List of Funded Away Rotations for Underrepresented Students in Medicine (URIM)
- ix. Research resources
- b. **Careers in Medicine (CiM) Program- AAMC** -<http://www.aamc.org/students/cim>
  - i. Contains information, assessments, checklists, and other tools to help students through the transition to residency
    - 1. **Specialty Pages**
    - 2. **Characteristics of Entering Residents Data-** provides competitiveness data on many of the main medical specialties, including mean scores for USMLE Step I and Step II CK, number of programs applied to, and prior work, volunteer, and research experiences via [Characteristics of Entering Residents](#)
    - 3. **Residency and Fellowship Program Search Tool** - Includes expanded level of program detail within the profiles of thousands of residency/fellowship programs.
- c. **VSAS (a.k.a. VSLO)** <https://services.aamc.org/20/vsas>
  - i. Catalog of away electives at participating host institutions by location, keywords, specialty, and more
- d. **On-Line Extramural Electives Compendium - AAMC** - <https://services.aamc.org/eec/students>
  - i. Comprehensive list of extramural electives available at US medical schools
- e. **AMA FREIDA – Residency/Fellowship Database-** <https://freida.ama-assn.org>
  - i. General Program Information and Requirements: Deadlines, Letters Required, USMLE Requirement for Interview, Interview period etc.
- f. **Residency Explorer Tool– Developed by the AAMC/NRMP**
  - i. Explore and compare residency programs in 23 specialties and compare your profile to applicants who matched at each program – **WARNING:** You will be limited to 3 entries of your scores for USMLE Step 1 and Step 2CK. This entry limit will be applied across all specialties not per specialty. Once you have reached the maximum of three entries, you cannot enter more <https://www.residencyexplorer.org/>
- g. **Specialty Response to COVID-19-** The AAMC has created a page that will be a centralized hub for specialty-specific COVID-19 updates. This is particularly relevant for rising M4s applying to residency. <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-residency/article/specialty-response-covid-19/>
- h. **Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS) -AAMC** - <http://www.aamc.org/students/eras/>
  - i. Program Search: Includes: website URL, program director, email, training offered and additional program information
- i. **Military Match Information-** <http://medicineandthemilitary.com/>
- j. **SF Match (Early Match)-** Ophthalmology Matching Program and Application Service <http://www.sfmatch.org>
- k. **AUA Urology Residency Match Program (Early Match) -** <http://www.auanet.org/>
- l. **Residency Program Websites** (web resource)
  - i. Program specific information, description & requirements, list of residents
    - 1. Get a sense of the culture and unique qualities of the program

- m. **Apply Smart for Residency-AAMC:** <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-residency/apply-smart-residency/>
  - i. Develop a Smart Application Strategy when determining how many and which programs to apply to
- n. **National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) Resources – Match Data and Reports -** <http://www.nrmp.org/>
  - i. Explore the website for a variety of information
    1. Charting Outcomes in the Match- Characteristics of Matched Applicant to Preferred Specialty
    2. Program Director Survey - Survey of Program Directors on the factors used to select applicants for interview and ranking
    3. NRMP Applicant Survey: Factors identified by applicants and mean importance rating of each factor in selecting residency programs for applications and in making residency program ranking decisions:
- o. **Podcast: The Undifferentiated Medical Student:** <https://www.undifferentiatedmedicalstudent.com/>
  - i. A good podcast series for anyone undecided about specialty choice

*Please review the pathway website for complete information and additional information.*