

Given Step 1 is now Pass/Fail, what advice would you give to a first-year medical student about what they can or should be doing early on to be competitive in your specialty?

- Get involved in as many things as possible, such as research, community service and find opportunities for leadership.

Would you ever take someone with a Step 1 failure?

- Only under dire circumstances such as death of immediate family member or personal illness.

What advice would you give about getting letters of recommendation in your specialty?

- Everyone needs letters of recommendation from leaders in their chosen specialty, from the chairperson and program director if possible.

What is the value of doing audition rotations in your specialty?

-A Surgery AI rotation is essentially a month long interview and is very important for individuals from outside Tx A&M in the process of seeking an interview for residency.

To what extent does research, publications, or presentations affect one's ability to match in your specialty?

- Clinical research is very important for the applicant to document with a peer review publication (not a case report). Non-peer reviewed publications or posters are second best but still worthwhile.

Is a Step 2CK score needed before you will invite someone for an interview?

- Yes

What does the perfect applicant look like in your specialty?

- A student willing to make maximal effort in their training, with a plan for the future and evidence of leadership and the ability to start and complete a project.

Does a student need to Honor in your specialty to match?

- Yes

The students have significant elective time during their 3rd year for career exploration.

a. What electives would you recommend to a student who knows they are interested in your specialty?

- Multiple surgical related elective rotations and rotations in the critical care and cardiopulmonary areas to provide a solid base of knowledge in those aspects of care that can be utilized in caring for the sickest surgical patients.

b. What electives would you recommend to a student who is undecided but considering your specialty?

- A specialty service will give a non-committed student a view into the lifestyle and skill sets needed for the high level of surgical care required to establish a referral base and function at the highest level of competency. Trauma is not a good rotation for that if the student is not interested in trauma.

Is there anything else I haven't asked that you feel an applicant to your specialty ought to know?

- Reimbursement in today's world of surgery is not going to make a person rich. Don't choose surgery for the money!