

Applying To A General Surgery Residency



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1. Choosing A Specialty

a. Training Requirements

- i. General surgery residency is 5 years

b. Research Requirements

- i. Don't necessarily have to take years off for research in residency
- ii. Many academic programs might require or offer research years (average is 2 years)
- iii. Might have to seek out your own grants/funding
- iv. Think about your project and funding during your intern year (most often go into research after PGY-2 year)

2. How To Approach Your Residency Application & Interviews

- a. Ask questions and don't be afraid to be aggressive!
- b. See how well you get along with the residents in your Sub-Is and interviews
 - i. What do you do for fun? When you last hung out with a co-resident what did you do? Do you have pets? Are you happy? Would you pick this program again?
- c. Good questions to ask:
 - i. When do you get to do a lap chole from start to finish?
 - ii. How long have you had a partnership in this country? What's the nature of that partnership? Do you have a long-term project?
 - iii. For the residents who excel here, what do they do differently?
 - iv. Is there a formal global surgery curriculum here?
 - v. Where does the majority of your funding go?
 - vi. Is salary support available during research years?
- d. Virtual interviews
 - i. Virtual meet & greets: 100% try to attend as much as you can
 - ii. Find ways to network with residents or faculty before formal interview (i.e. Twitter, one-on-one Zoom call)
 - iii. Make phone calls and send emails with questions or reasons why you like the program and why you could be a good fit

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3. Choosing A Residency Program

- a. Clinical training (case volume, early surgical experiences) should be perhaps the biggest factor when you are ranking
- b. Program might not have everything you want but they should be flexible for you to seek out the experiences for yourself (as long as you have solid reasoning)
- c. Things to consider related to getting a good global surgery experience: safety net hospital that serves underserved patients in your own community, trauma experience, wide variety of experience (private vs community vs county hospital), flexibility to have global surgery experiences
- d. Different programs might have an emphasis on a special field (i.e. people interested in trauma often go to X for residency) so look where residents match for fellowship if you're interested in a subspecialty
- e. Availability to obtain other degrees (ex. MPH)

4. Seeking Mentorship

- a. You're never doing this alone, find mentors that will support you
- b. Don't be afraid to seek mentors not at your institution
- c. Specialty mentors are/can be more important than global surgery mentors
- d. Many institutions have global health programs where you can find mentors

5. Resources

- a. Program in Global Surgery and Social Change (PGSSC) at Harvard- don't necessarily have to be in Harvard hospital system
- b. Baylor Global Surgery Track: 2 years general surgery then 1 year global surgery clinical/research then 3 years general surgery then 1 year global surgery clinical/capacity building
 - i. Rotate in various fields (includes orthopedics, urology, OBGYN, burn, anesthesia, and ultrasound) to mirror the 44 'essential' surgeries
- c. Lifebox: NGO, surgical quality improvement, infection prevention
- d. UCSF Center for Health Equity in Surgery and Anesthesia (CHESA), UCLA, University of Washington, Vanderbilt
- e. University of Utah, UC San Diego and UC Davis have funding but no formal curriculum
- f. Funding: American College of Surgeons, AAS, NIH pathways, T32 training grants