

### Important Dates:

- Please return to the [Road to Residency](#) website on a regular basis to keep track of important dates. They are also on slide 9 of Dr. Woodruff's presentation

### Financial Aid Updates

- The first loan disbursement for the summer will be June 21<sup>st</sup>. Expect to receive living expense refund a few days later. If you are in need of an advance, you can request that [through the student portal](#).
- Financial Aid will be reaching out in the Fall to schedule a loan repayment strategy session to discuss how to approach loan repayment beginning in residency. You can also schedule with Richard Wilson any time via his Calendly link: <https://calendly.com/rtwilson/>
- If you encounter any financial challenges related to residency application costs or interviewing costs, please reach out to the Financial Aid office directly.
- If you have not completed your FAFSA yet, please do so ASAP so disbursements can occur in June without delays. Reach out to [Richard Wilson](#) with any questions or concerns.
- If you have already received your loan package for 2024-2025, go in and accept the loan amount.

### Residency Process Updates

- Take your ERAS/Graduation photo if you haven't yet! Everyone should have a scheduled time slot by now. These slots are limited, especially now, so it is very important you make your scheduled time. There will not be any additional make up opportunity.
- If you have your first MSPE meeting scheduled, do everything you can to KEEP that time. The schedule is full, so there is very little flexibility for cancellation/rescheduling at this point. Look out for an invitation for your second review **in person** in the second half of July into August.
- CVs – If you have sent your CV to Tyler for review and received feedback, please send him a REVISED copy as soon as possible. These are important for our holistic review process. If you have not sent your CV for review, do so at least 2 business days ahead of your first MSPE meeting. **ALL CVs are due June 30**, regardless of MSPE meeting date.
- Tyler will begin holding weekly ERAS office hours starting June 20. Look for an email soon detailing how to sign up for a time to discuss and/or review your ERAS (or ResidencyCAS or SF Match) application.
- ERAS Tokens will be sent to you today, June 6. You can register your token immediately but you do not necessarily need to begin your application. The next class meeting (June 24) will feature a walkthrough of each section of the ERAS application.
  - **Note for OB-GYN applicants:** You will not apply to OB-GYN programs through ERAS this year. Your application will occur through **ResidencyCAS**. You will still be sent an ERAS token regardless in case you are dual applying, are undecided, or later consider a backup application.
  - **Note for SF Match (Ophthalmology) applicants:** You will likely not need to apply through ERAS. However, some Ophthalmology programs are still “joint” programs and require you to submit an ERAS application as a technicality for your PGY-1 year. This would occur after your match occurs, so you will be sent an ERAS token in case it is needed.

### Career Advising Updates

- See additional Career Advisor Q&A from tonight's meeting!
- You should be meeting with your Career Advisor to finalize your specialty choice if you have not already + sending your personal statement for review with the next month or so.

### Pritzker Chiefs

Jillian Bowman, Simi Ogunnowo, and Anna Thorndike are your new Pritzker Chiefs! They encourage you to reach out to them any time you need to via email, phone, pager, carrier pigeon, etc.

## RESIDENCY APPLICATION OVERVIEW

*Please review the slideshow for a complete review of the meeting; the following notes are meant to expand on certain slides.*

- **Important things to start with**
  - Two organizations most students have to interact with for the Main Match
    - ERAS (Electronic Residency Application System)
    - The NRMP (National Residency Matching Program)
  - Others:
    - OB-GYN: ResidencyCAS
    - Ophthalmology: SF Match
    - Plastic Surgery: PSCA (Plastic Surgery Common Application)
  - Two dates to remember
    - September 4 (date we expect your application to be nearly complete—2 weeks of padding; submission opens this day)
    - September 25 (date that applications are transmitted to programs)
- **Slides 9-11** Please review all timelines and deadlines
  - Do not wait until the last possible moment to certify and submit your application.
- **Slide 12-13:** All necessary paperwork and references are posted on the Residency Resources page on our website. A limited number of physical copies of the [Residency Process Book](#) are available from Tyler.
- **Slide 14-16:** Determine your priorities through researching programs online, and through talking to faculty, residents, career advisors, and recent alumni. Sign up for the [Pritzker Alumni Ambassador Program](#) to connect with alumni at residencies across the country.
- **Slide 15:** Also use the **Residency Explorer tool**, accessible through the ERAS app
- **Slide 18-19:** For preliminary year advising, you can go to your Career Advisor or faculty in that specialty (internal medicine; for transitional program, we have a contact at NorthShore).
  - Your Career Advisor can help you determine the appropriate number of prelim programs to apply to ensure you have a separate PGY-1 year if your specialty requires it.
- **Slide 20:** Apply broadly, *then* narrow down your list. Do not narrow it before you are offered interviews. Create groups of goal programs, realistic programs, and low-risk programs—this is not the time to be picky.
  - If a program you really want offers both categorical and advanced programs, apply to both—don't cut your options short. You can decide how to rank them later, once you interview.
  - It is reasonable to keep your personal lives as priorities as you research residency programs. Don't feel like you have to prioritize reputation if personal or family priorities are also important.
  - You define what "quality" is—a high-quality program for one student may be less desirable for another.

- You may also want to have a low risk or back-up specialty if you are applying in a very competitive specialty. This is a decision that you should discuss with your career advisor or Dr. Woodruff.
- **Slide 22:** Components of the application – take note of the components YOU are responsible for (ERAS application, PS, LORs, ERAS photo, USMLE transcript) and those that Pritzker is responsible for (MSPE letter, Pritzker transcript).
- **Slide 23:** Changes to the ERAS Application for 2024-2025
  - New fee structure – see slide
  - ERAS Fee Assistance Program – if you qualified for FAP on AMCAS, you are automatically qualified for a 60% discount on ERAS this year (you do not need to apply for anything). Unfortunately, there are no *new* applications this year.
- **Slide 24:** Personal statements:
  - Tell the program about *you* and why *you like the discipline*; do not talk about the discipline itself
    - For instance, do not say, something like, “I like Internal Medicine because it is a field that provides comprehensive care to patients over a long period of time...”
    - Instead, say, “I am interested in the field of Internal Medicine because when I did my clerkship, I met a patient who... and that experience taught me...which ended up being incredibly meaningful to me because...”
    - This shows more about you as a person and introduces you to the reader
  - The personal statement can also prepare you for the interview process by forcing you to think about your priorities and your motivations
  - Make sure that your Career Advisor reviews your personal statement. Do not submit a personal statement that has not been reviewed by at least your Career Advisor.
  - **Clarification:** 12-point, Arial font, single spaced is recommended to closely replicate one page in ERAS. If you paste your PS into ERAS and it’s less than one page, you have a bit more room if needed. If it is more than one page in ERAS, you probably need to trim further.
  - **Final Personal Statement Workshop: Thursday, June 13 at 5 p.m. via Zoom**
- **Slide 25:** How many letters do I need?
  - Aim for 3 clinical letters; you really only need 4 if you did a research year or a PhD program
  - For EM, you need 2 clinical letters plus the SLOE, which counts as a Chair's letter
  - Letters from NorthShore faculty are fine
- **Slide 26:** When you approach a faculty member to write a Chair’s letter, tell them upfront you would like them to write the Chair’s letter
- **Slide 27-34:** LORs
  - Requesting an LOR is both verbal and written: you ask the faculty member (in person if possible) if they can write you a **strong** LOR,
  - If the faculty members says, “yes,” you then email them a Letter Request Form, along with your CV and Personal Statement (it is OK if they are drafts). If they say no, that’s OK—you'd rather not have their letter; it will not be very strong.
    - We **do NOT recommend** using the “Email Letter Request” option in ERAS. Sending a separate email with a Letter Request Form attached allows you to also include your CV and Personal Statement + better track what correspondence you have had with your letter writers.
    - A template email is written and available on the Road to Residency website.

- Faculty members expect to hear from students about writing LORs; ask and ask early, without being nervous
  - Ask face-to-face if possible. It allows you to demonstrate professionalism and respect, and to engage in a conversation about your goals.
- Reminders are OK—once you do your initial ask, you can send a reminder two weeks before 9/13 to confirm the deadline and ask if they need more information
- Only in certain circumstances should you ask for more letters than you might use. Our faculty are busy and if they take the time to write you a letter, it should be used in your application.
- The faculty member uploads the LOR directly to ERAS
- PSOM staff cannot see the LOR, but can see whether it has been uploaded
- We **strongly recommend having all your letters submitted by Sept. 13; ask for letters by mid-July and absolutely before July 31!**
- **Slide 35:**
  - 1) Only programs read your LORs; neither you nor Pritzker staff can read them
  - 2) Sending a draft of your CV and personal statement when you ask for an LOR is most helpful—faculty probably will not remember to start thinking about writing your LOR until they have those items in front of them. You can ask them if you can send them a reminder at some point
  - 3) If you do not hear back, work with your Career Advisor or Dr. Woodruff to prompt the letter authors. It is OK if your LORs come in after Sept. 13, but it is crucial that you have a complete application by September 25, when programs receive your application.
- **Slide 42:** Now is not the time to limit your list; you can always narrow your list of programs once you begin getting interviews. Apply broadly and err on the side of caution.
  - When we encourage you to add “low risk” programs, it is not because we do not have faith in you. It is because we want to maximize everyone’s odds of matching.
- **Slide 43:** Again, **focus on the things you can control**. There will be uncertainties in this process, so assemble your materials the best you can and know that you did your highest quality work.
- **Slide 44:** **Next class meeting on Monday, June 24** – ERAS Overview – This meeting will include a walkthrough of the ERAS Application. **Note:** Applicants in applying in a system other than ERAS will still benefit, as we discuss content and how to translate your CV into an application; we just use the most common platform for this session.

### Q&A

- How do I determine what constitutes a “Dream” program vs. a “Target” program? How can I learn how competitive a program is compared to others?
  - Your Career Advisor and Specialty Advisor are great resources for this. Your Career Advisor, especially, because they have access to a database of information going back 7+ years that features student outcomes in the Match based on applicant profile (specialty, grades, Step scores, MSPE designators, AOA, etc.). This includes outcomes (interview/rejected/waitlisted) at specific programs. (This database is not accessible by students for confidentiality)
  - Additionally, keep in mind that “Dream” program for you may not necessarily mean a highly competitive or “prestigious” program. Your “Dream” program should be one where you know you will be a fit, get the training you want, have the support you need, and can thrive

as an intern and resident.

- Do my letter writers need to specifically recommend me for Preliminary year programs, or can they use their letter recommending me for a specific specialty advanced program?
  - We recommend that your letter writers specifically recommend you for Preliminary (or Transitional) year programs in their letter. They can use the same letter to recommend you for advanced programs/specific specialty by changing the intro and conclusion of their letter to mention that specialty specifically.
    - Example: A letter writer for a student going into Dermatology writes a letter recommending a student specifically for Transitional year programs. They write a separate letter specifically recommending the student for Dermatology programs. **Both** letters require a Letter Request Form and upload to your ERAS application; be sure to carefully label these letters in ERAS so you know which you are assigning to programs.
  - You *could* ask a letter writer to write one generic letter recommending you so that it could be used for Preliminary/Transitional programs and advanced programs, but you would lose out on the specificity that a letter for advanced programs allows, and that can be important to a strong letter.
- For a Chair's Letter, who can serve in that role? Does it need to be a full Professor, or is an Associate Professor/Assistant Professor OK?
  - Most specialties are not concerned with the rank of the letter writer. What you should pay attention to is the instructions for individual specialty. In Internal Medicine, for example, the person who write's your Chair's letter is a faculty letter writer who you have worked with and then Dr. Vokes signs off on it. In Surgery, conversely, the Chair's letter is written by Dr. Matthews, not a faculty at-large. Who you work with to get a Chair's letter varies by specialty; refer to the Residency Process Book for specific specialty instructions.
- If you are applying to Preliminary and Categorical programs, you need 6-7 letters total, but is that from 6-7 separate people?
  - No, individual letter writers can write you multiple letters, so there will be overlap between prelim and advanced or categorical letters.
  - Example: You are applying in Dermatology, with Internal Medicine prelim programs, you cannot have 3 dermatologists write 3 prelim letters and 3 advanced letters because the IM programs want to understand your performance through the eyes of IM faculty. Thus, you could use 1 dermatologist for your prelim application, but you'd still need 2 letters from IM faculty for the prelim application.
    - Prelim app: 1 dermatology letter, 2 IM letters (+ research letter if appropriate)
    - Advanced app: 3 dermatology letters (+ research letter if appropriate)
    - 5 letter writers total (3 dermatology, 2 IM)