

Clerkship Selection

Selecting clerkships for 3rd and 4th year:

- 1) Do you select and then receive a schedule at the beginning of the year?
- 2) Do you select clerkships as you go? Or are you given specific paths to choose from?

Chicago Medical School at Rosalind Franklin University

We have a Lottery Committee (made up of 13 students elected by the class). The Lottery Committee manages the entire process through the 3rd and 4th year. Our system is designed this way because we have the option to rotate at over 6-7 different hospitals. Each student is given 20 points for their entire 3rd/4th year to use as they please when bidding for either a Track or Hospital during these lotteries.

In the spring of our M2 year, we hold a lottery for students to select their Track. The Track determines what order they will do the core rotations in the M3 year (so some combination of Med, Surg, EM/Neuro, Peds, OB/Gyn, Psych, Family). This Track order is then set for the entire M3 year. Afterwards, we hold 4 more Hospital Lotteries throughout the end of M2 year and M3 year. At each of the Hospital lotteries, students select the hospital they would like to do their next 1-2 rotations (based off of the Track order they already have). The Hospital Lottery process is a bit complicated to explain, but if you would like more details, I can definitely provide them (or even better, if you will be at the meeting in Denver, I'll tell you then!)

For our 4th year, we basically have to select what month we'll do our Sub-I in. That selection is basically like another Track selection (the way it was in our 3rd year) and then we have 1 Hospital lottery to determine where the Sub-I will take place.

Cleveland Clinic / Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine

Students select their entire year schedule for M3. As at most places there is then a computer generated lottery/selection process to determine exactly which core rotation and at what hospital students are assigned. For the M4 year rotations are chosen more as you go.

Duke University School of Medicine

We receive our core clerkship schedules at the beginning of the year. The schedule is random unless you have compelling conflicts preventing a given clerkship from occurring at a given time (i.e. getting married during surgery clerkship). Registration for electives occurs on a semester basis using our online registration software with courses being filled on a first come first served basis.

Indiana University School of Medicine

Second year students submit order preferences for clerkship order. An algorithm is then used to give people different schedules. From there, students then submit preferences for where they would like to be placed for each clerkship. We're moving towards a system where students are told at the beginning of the year where each of their clerkships will be, but we're currently only capable of telling students the location a week or so beforehand (a month if they will be placed out of town). Again, students do know what order their clerkships will be for the year -- it's only the location that is given later.

A similar system operates for the fourth year, but since we only have 3 required clerkships the fourth year, the scheduling system for electives is slightly different.

SUNY Downstate College of Medicine

At downstate, you are given a list of tracks. The tracks have the clerkships listed in different orders. At the end of second year you rank the tracks based on the order you want and then your ranking goes into a lottery system. You get a number of when you can put in your rank list and so the earlier the number of your registration apt the better chance you get of having your track. Then the computer generates the order of clerkship for you and a number of classmates that are placed in the same track. You do the same for sites, you rank them and the computer generates a site list. If you had last picking for sites you get first picking for tracks and vice versa.

Texas A&M HSC College of Medicine

We rank pre-arranged sequences of rotations in the latter part of M2. There's some variety as far as starting with the big stuff first (medicine, then surgery, then ob/gyn), or somewhat (surgery first, medicine last), or something totally different (psych first, medicine and surgery towards the end). Something like 20+ or 30+ different sequences. Our ranks are run together; most people get one of their top few choices out of eight rankings. Not 100% sure about M4.

Texas Tech University HSC School of Medicine

Med students are split up into 3 campuses during our third year, Amarillo, Lubbock or Permian Basin (odessa/Midland). They all do it differently, for Lubbock and Amarillo you are with the same people for all 6 clerkships (8wks each), for Permian Basin you have more flexibility to which ones you want to do and when.

At the end of 2nd yr we choose which path we want to take first, options being A: Surgery, Family med, Peds or B: Internal, Obgyn, and psych. For the most part you get your "Path" but within that you can also choose which you want to do first, second or third, and these are a little harder to match - and mostly only available for those at Permian Basin as you are stuck with the same people at the other campuses.

The Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University

We select all of our clerkships prior to starting the year. All of the students pick the order of their clerkships and the administration attempts to match all of the students with their preferred schedule by plugging in the students 1st choice and seeing if there are appropriate numbers in each rotation. Each student lists 3 potential schedules as alternatives and they plug in the schedule for the whole year when attempting to work it out not parts of a student's schedule. Students can swap entire schedules with other students after the administration sorts out the schedules.

For example students can list alternative schedules as following:

Choice 1: Surgery, Medicine, Psych, Peds, Family, OB/GYN

Choice 2: Surgery, OB/GYN, Peds, Medicine, Family, Psych

Choice 3: Surgery, Family, Psych, Family, Peds

(The schedules do not have to be completely different).

2 downsides:

1. If none of your schedules fit you may end up with a completely random schedule.
2. Some rotations may have a lot of students while others will have significantly less if the administration attempts to match student preferences over equal numbers in each rotation.

UCLA / David Geffen School of Medicine

We have three steps to choosing our clerkships. The process starts near the end of 2nd year. First we put in a request for track A or B. Track A has Surgery, Ob/Gyn, and Pediatrics during the first half of the year. Track B has IM, Amb/Fam medicine, Psych, and Neuro during the first half of the year. Everyone does the same rotations, just different halves of the year. Second we put in our request for the "continuity" that we want. There are ~6 pre-determined continuities to choose from. A continuity means that you will have a specific set of rotations at the same hospital so that you get a chance to learn how the system works and so you have a better chance of getting to know people there who can write you a letter of recommendation. For example, I have the "Cedars continuity" which means that I have surgery and Ob/Gyn at Cedars Sinai. People with the "Harbor continuity" have Ob/Gyn and Peds at Harbor. Once you have been scheduled into a track and a continuity, the third step is to put in your requests for which sites you want to be at for the rest of your clerkships. You can rank them by site location or by dates during the year. The school then schedules you into your clerkships for the entire year and you get the full schedule before third year starts. The only exception is surgery. If you have a continuity that includes surgery then you know where you will be for that rotation. Otherwise, you get your surgery sites a few days before the clerkship starts.

Occasionally there are spots that open up for the clerkships (if somebody takes time off or switches sites) and you can request to be switched to that site any time during the year as long as there is an open spot. Say I got scheduled for Pediatrics at Riverside and I really wanted to be at Harbor. I can watch the online system, which tells me where there are open spots, and when a spot opens up at Harbor I can request to be switched. There really aren't that many spots that open up, but sometimes you get lucky.

University of Colorado School of Medicine

We are able to rank when clerkships will happen and given a schedule of when they happen during third year. Then, 4-6 weeks prior to the start of each rotation, we rank which sites we want and only find out where we'll be rotating 2-3 weeks prior to the start of the clerkship. For third year, we are not able to select which clerkships to do, but we are able to select where. Fourth year is largely elective.

University of Colorado School of Medicine

We get to make one selection i.e. Surgery in block 1 or Medicine in block 4. After that we get our schedule for the whole year.

University of Kentucky College of Medicine

We have a lottery for roughly 10 preset clerkship schedules. People put in their choices in order of preference up to 7 (I think)...all through online server.

University of Minnesota Medical School

We use a mixed lottery/draft type of system. Student schedule all of their required rotations followed by all of their elective rotations during designated scheduling windows over the course of a week or so. Required rotations can be taken at any time except during the last block of MS4. We select our clerkships as above but are able to switch them throughout MS3/4 (as long as spots are open to move things around). Our school is talking about starting specific paths for students that are set on one field or another but these are not in place yet.

University of New Mexico School of Medicine

We complete a month-long transitions block which involves just that: skills and preparation for "transitioning" from the classroom to the bedside. During this block we receive our schedule for third year clerkships which is randomized by computer. I believe students used to have the choice of rotation order, etc but this was too cumbersome on our dept. of student affairs and it all turned out to be easier to just randomly assign.

As far as I can tell, our class is fairly satisfied with this approach because there are pros and cons to any order of rotation. If a student has a pressing need to alter their clerkship schedule, he/she is certainly welcome to visit with our Dean of Students to explore various options. I "floated" a four-week block of psychiatry in order to take paternity leave earlier this year, which means I'll complete the four week rotation after my last third year clerkship. It will not delay my graduation date or interfere with fourth year scheduling.

I have not yet experienced fourth year, but I know that there is a required ambulatory New Mexico preceptorship as well as an ICU rotation that is required. There exist many options for electives and sub-i rotations, including credit for away rotations. These are typically set up in December of third year I think. It seems like the sooner, the better chances are for getting it.

University of Oklahoma College of Medicine

We use a lottery system first of all to produce the order which students get to select their clerkships. Then, for 3rd year, there are 140 templates (one template/student) that students get to select from in the order they fell in the lottery. For 4th year, there is the same lottery and template schedule for required 4th year clerkships. But because there are only 3 months worth of those, the remainder of the year is scheduled as we go. Hope this helps.

University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine

We have different systems for 3rd and 4th years. Both are based on lotteries after a ranking of preferences, but the 3rd year system allows us to rank what we want when, while the 4th year system just allows us to rank what we want and say whether we prefer it in the 1st or 2nd half of the year. (The 4th year system kind of sucks, IMO.) Anyway, we get our schedule for the following year all at once in the spring, so we know way far in advance what we're going to be doing. And there aren't any specific paths to choose from; we can do our core clerkships in any order.

University of Tennessee HSC College of Medicine

We have freedom to select any rotation in any order. We do it all on a computer scheduler on own.

University of Utah School of Medicine

1) We have required clerkships for third year that are standard. We are given the chance to rank the order in which we want to take the required clerkships. This list is submitted to a lottery, which then determines our final schedule, which is sent to us in Feb/Mar of second year. You are allowed to make changes throughout third year on an as needed basis.

2) We have no specific paths. For fourth year, we are required to meet with a mentor who suggests and approves elective clerkships. Again, we can adjust our schedule as needed throughout the year.

University of Vermont College of Medicine

- 1) Everyone fills out a form with their top choices in terms of order, location (we have 3 clerkship sites) and timing. We then go through a series of lotteries prior to the beginning of the year to determine selection order.
- 2) All clerkships are scheduled at the beginning of the year.
- 3) In 4th year, you can choose to follow a Surgery Subspecialty track, which would determine different requirements (additional anatomy and research requirements) for fourth year.

University of Washington School of Medicine

3rd year- Our third year is comprised of four three-month blocks: medicine, surgery, OBGYN/Peds (6 weeks each), and Neuro/Psych/Elective (1 mo each). Everybody has to take the same classes except for the elective. Towards the end of second year, there is a lottery for students to pick what order they want to take the blocks in and also to sign up for that one elective. Each student puts his or her preferences into a computer scheduling program and it sorts everybody out somehow. This is run by the same office that helps people with residency applications at our school. You get your schedule of what general order your blocks will be in before you start third year.

For specific sub-blocks of each block (like, exactly what you will be doing for each month of your three months of surgery, etc), students submit preferences to the clerkship coordinator a week or two before they start the clerkship. There is another lottery and you find out what you are scheduled for on the first day of that clerkship.

4th year- Our fourth year is completely elective. Towards the end of third year, the deans pass out books of all the courses we can take. Then, there is another lottery, but this one is not by computer. Every upcoming fourth year is randomly assigned a number. Then, one afternoon, the entire class sits in an auditorium and when the dean calls your number, you yell out what class you want to take. This process creates your preliminary schedule for the upcoming year; however, you are still free to switch around your schedule if there are open spots in other rotations or you decide to do away rotations, etc.

Wake Forest University School of Medicine

We are provided with twelve different schedule options for third year that we are allowed to rank order. The schedule includes all the different combinations of our required clerkships for that year (Internal, Family Medicine, Neurology, Psych, Pediatrics, Surgery, Ob/Gyn, ED). Our rank order lists are then processed by a Monte Carlo simulation program that works through every student's schedule and comes up with an assigned schedule for each student that ends up maximizing the satisfaction amongst all students. Almost all students wind up with a schedule that is in their top 3 choices.

As for fourth year, we schedule our year at two different times. We have one period whereby we register for six of the twelve four-week electives for the upcoming year. This is the period where you register for the courses you really want to have during a specific block. A month or so passes, and then you register for your remaining six courses. You are allowed to change any block up to 30 days in advance on the PeopleSoft computer application. Our mandated fourth year courses are: 2 acting internships, 1 ICU rotation, and study block. We are also allowed one four-week block of our choosing for vacation/interviewing.