

# 2023-2024 ERAS® Application Cycle: Results of the Program Director Reaction Survey

## Overview

Program directors from the programs participating in the ERAS program for the 2023-2024 cycle were invited to complete a survey about their experiences from Dec. 13, 2023, to Feb 2, 2024. The purpose of the survey was to collect feedback from program directors to better understand their experience with the ERAS application data within the Program Director’s Workstation (PDWS). The survey took about 15 minutes to complete.

Responses were analyzed in aggregate and by specialty. This report summarizes overall and select specialty-specific results from the program directors’ survey. Specialty-specific results are included in the supplemental appendices. Results with smaller sample sizes should be interpreted with caution. (Percentage values in tables may not total 100% due to rounding and cells with fewer than five observations. Results for specialties with less than 10 responses were not included due to small sample sizes.)

## Sample

Program directors from 1,422 programs responded (28% program response rate). Response rates by participating specialties varied (Table 1). Specialties with less than 5 responses are not shown individually, but those responses are included in the total number of responses.

**Table 1. Survey Response Rate, Overall and by Specialty**

Specialty	Percentage (Number) of Programs That Responded	Number of Programs Participating in the ERAS program
Adult Neurology	28% (49)	176
Anesthesiology	35% (58)	166
Child Neurology	19% (15)	77
Dermatology	26% (36)	138
Diagnostic Radiology and Interventional Radiology	19% (53)	282
Emergency Medicine	34% (95)	280
Family Medicine	32% (235)	733
General Surgery	27% (94)	343
Internal Medicine	29% (181)	624
Internal Medicine/Pediatrics	29% (22)	77
Neurological Surgery	11% (13)	116
Obstetrics and Gynecology	31% (89)	287

**Table 1. Survey Response Rate, Overall and by Specialty (continued)**

<b>Specialty</b>	<b>Percentage (Number) of Programs That Responded</b>	<b>Number of Programs Participating in ERAS®</b>
Orthopedic Surgery	18% (37)	201
Otolaryngology	22% (28)	125
Pathology	27% (37)	138
Pediatrics	35% (74)	211
Pediatrics/Medical Genetics	27% (6)	22
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	47% (50)	107
Plastic Surgery	16% (9)	55
Psychiatry	33% (101)	304
Radiation Oncology	12% (10)	85
Transitional Year	30% (49)	165
Urology	26% (37)	145
Vascular Surgery	13% (10)	76
<b>Overall percentage (total number) of respondents and number of programs that participated in ERAS application</b>	<b>28% (1,414)</b>	<b>5,126</b>

## Findings

**Table 2. How important were each of the following application components to your decision about whom to invite to interview?**

Application Component	N	Did Not Use % (n)	Not Important % (n)	Somewhat Important % (n)	Important % (n)	Very Important % (n)	Important or Very Important % (n)
Medical School Attended	1,409	3% (35)	8% (111)	36% (504)	32% (451)	22% (308)	54% (759)
Selected Experiences (10)	1,393	3% (46)	7% (96)	35% (470)	40% (563)	16% (218)	56% (781)
Experiences: Focus Areas	1,395	10% (144)	14% (201)	38% (532)	28% (391)	9% (121)	37% (512)
Experiences: Key Characteristics	1,385	11% (149)	17% (228)	39% (538)	26% (364)	8% (106)	34% (470)
Meaningful Experiences (3)	1,402	4% (58)	7% (103)	34% (469)	38% (534)	17% (238)	55% (702)
Meaningful Experience Essay	1,385	10% (132)	12% (163)	39% (541)	28% (384)	12% (165)	40% (549)
Other Impactful Experience Essay	1,378	11% (157)	14% (192)	38% (526)	25% (350)	11% (153)	37% (503)
Personal Statements	1,408	1% (17)	3% (35)	23% (318)	38% (540)	35% (498)	74% (1,038)
Program Signals	1,401	10% (133)	5% (76)	18% (248)	23% (318)	45% (626)	67% (934)
Geographic Preference	1,402	7% (92)	9% (131)	26% (370)	31% (434)	27% (375)	58% (809)
Setting Preference (Rural/Urban)	1,395	17% (233)	28% (387)	31% (428)	17% (242)	8% (105)	25% (347)
Degree (MD vs. DO)	1,405	14% (193)	39% (542)	23% (329)	14% (196)	10% (145)	24% (341)
Medical School Reputation	1,393	8% (117)	14% (198)	39% (546)	28% (389)	10% (143)	38% (532)
Step 2 CK or Level 2 Score	1,406	2% (23)	6% (81)	19% (262)	33% (460)	41% (580)	74% (1,040)
Step 2 CK or Level 2 Pass/Fail	1,388	8% (104)	3% (35)	15% (207)	29% (397)	47% (645)	75% (1,042)
AOA or SSP Membership	1,396	18% (245)	26% (367)	33% (460)	18% (253)	5% (71)	23% (324)
GHHS Membership	1,393	20% (275)	24% (331)	31% (428)	20% (277)	6% (82)	25% (359)
Number of First Author Publications	1,395	10% (145)	28% (384)	37% (518)	20% (273)	5% (75)	25% (348)
Number of All Publications	1,402	9% (127)	23% (324)	41% (569)	22% (303)	6% (79)	27% (382)
Journal Reputation of Publications	1,392	16% (221)	36% (503)	31% (435)	13% (184)	4% (49)	17% (233)
MSPE	1,400	3% (38)	6% (79)	22% (310)	32% (445)	38% (528)	70% (973)
Letters of Recommendation	1,405	1% (19)	4% (55)	19% (271)	35% (485)	41% (575)	75% (1,057)
Standardized Letters	1,393	17% (243)	14% (198)	27% (380)	22% (302)	19% (270)	41% (572)

## Program Signals

**Table 3. Did your program opt in to use program signals for the 2024 ERAS season?**

Choice	Percentage (n)
Yes	91% (1,141)
No	9% (107)
Total number	1,248

**Table 4. How did you use program signals? (Select all that apply.)**

Choice	% (n)
<i>As an initial screen, without examining other data, before conducting holistic review</i>	19% (218)
<i>As part of an initial screen, alongside other data, before conducting holistic review</i>	41% (461)
<i>As part of a holistic process to help decide who to interview</i>	53% (599)
<i>As a tiebreaker when deciding whom to interview</i>	26% (293)
<i>During the interview to learn more about why an applicant signaled my program</i>	17% (186)
<i>Only those who signaled our program received an interview invitation</i>	4% (45)
<i>Other</i>	3% (30)
Total Responses	1,129

**Table 5. Who had access to program signal information? (Select all that apply.)**

Choice	% (n)
<i>Program coordinator</i>	91% (1,028)
<i>Program director</i>	98% (1,104)
<i>File reviewers</i>	56% (638)
<i>Interviewers</i>	39% (436)
Total Responses	1,132

**Table 6. What guidance did you give applicants with regard to signaling?  
(Select all that apply.)**

Choice	% (n)
<i>Signal our program if you are interested, regardless of whether it was a home program or if you completed an away rotation here</i>	66% (652)
<i>Do not signal our program if this is your home institution because you will automatically be interviewed</i>	31% (309)
<i>Do not signal our program if you completed an away rotation because that was your signal of interest</i>	17% (169)
<i>Only those who signal our program will receive an interview invitation</i>	3% (25)
Total Responses	995

**Table 7. How did you interpret gold and silver signals?**

Choice	Percentage (n) <sup>1</sup>
<i>Did not differentiate between gold and silver signals</i>	18% (41)
<i>Gold and silver signals had equal value</i>	11% (25)
<i>Gold signals were more valuable than silver signals</i>	69% (154)
<i>Other</i>	1% (3)
Total number	223

1. Anesthesiology, Dermatology, Diagnostic and Interventional Radiology, and Obstetrics and Gynecology offered Gold and Silver program signal distinctions.

**Table 8. Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:**

N	Strongly Disagreed % (n)	Somewhat Disagreed % (n)	Neither Agreed nor Disagreed % (n)	Somewhat Agreed % (n)	Strongly Agreed % (n)	Agreed or Strongly Agreed % (n)
<i>Program signals helped me identify applicants whom I would have otherwise overlooked.</i>						
1,113	6% (66)	8% (84)	16% (177)	44% (490)	27% (296)	71% (786)
<i>Based on a review of their application, applicants who signaled my program were better aligned than those who did not.</i>						
1,113	7% (72)	12% (134)	40% (449)	31% (348)	10% (110)	41% (458)

**Table 9. The number of signals available to applicants in my specialty was:**

Specialty (Maximum Number of Signals)	Too Few % (n)	About Right % (n)	Too Many % (n)	Not Sure % (n)	Total Number
Adult Neurology (3 signals)	32% (15)	62% (29)	0% (0)	6% (3)	47
Anesthesiology (5 Gold, 10 Silver)	15% (8)	67% (35)	10% (5)	8% (4)	52
Child Neurology and Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (3 signals)	8% (1)	69% (9)	0% (0)	23% (3)	13
Dermatology (3 Gold, 25 Silver)	0% (0)	76% (25)	18% (6)	6% (2)	33
Diagnostic Radiology and Interventional Radiology (6 Gold, 6 Silver)	8% (4)	56% (28)	18% (9)	18% (9)	50
Emergency Medicine (7 signals)	7% (6)	66% (58)	17% (15)	10% (9)	88
Family Medicine (5 signals)	7% (14)	60% (121)	2% (4)	31% (63)	202
General Surgery (5 signals)	59% (48)	26% (21)	0% (0)	16% (13)	82
Internal Medicine (7 signals)	17% (26)	52% (81)	13% (20)	19% (29)	156
Neurological Surgery (8 signals)	9% (1)	64% (7)	27% (3)	0% (0)	11
Obstetrics and Gynecology (3 Gold, 15 Silver)	5% (4)	61% (52)	29% (25)	5% (4)	85
Orthopedic Surgery (30 signals)	0% (0)	63% (20)	19% (6)	19% (6)	32
Otolaryngology (25 signals)	0% (0)	85% (23)	11% (3)	4% (1)	27
Pathology (5 signals)	0% (0)	87% (26)	0% (0)	13% (4)	30
Pediatrics (5 signals)	13% (9)	69% (46)	5% (3)	13% (9)	67
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (5 signals)	31% (15)	54% (26)	6% (3)	8% (4)	48
Psychiatry (5 signals)	33% (28)	51% (43)	2% (2)	14% (12)	85

## Experiences

**Table 10. How did your program use the 10 selected experiences section? (Select all that apply.)**

Choice	% (n)
<i>As part of a holistic application review to decide whom to interview</i>	75% (1,042)
<i>As a tiebreaker in deciding whom to interview</i>	5% (68)
<i>To identify applicants whose focus areas align with our mission</i>	36% (492)
<i>To identify applicants whose key characteristics align with our mission</i>	33% (450)
<i>To identify applicants whose meaningful experiences align with our mission</i>	40% (557)
<i>To prepare for the interview</i>	54% (742)
<i>Other</i>	2% (29)
Total Responses	1,384

**Table 11. How did your program use the other impactful experiences section? (Select all that apply.)**

Choice	% (n)
<i>As part of a holistic application review to decide whom to interview</i>	72% (988)
<i>As a tiebreaker in deciding whom to interview</i>	4% (52)
<i>To put the broader application in context</i>	43% (596)
<i>To prepare for the interview</i>	51% (702)
<i>Other</i>	2% (28)
Total Responses	1,373

## Geographic Preferences

**Table 12. How did your program use the geographic preference information? (Select all that apply.)**

Choice	% (n)
<i>As an initial screen, without examining other data, before conducting holistic review</i>	10% (139)
<i>As part of an initial screen, alongside other data, before conducting holistic review</i>	30% (399)
<i>As part of a holistic process to help decide whom to interview</i>	53% (713)
<i>As a tie breaker when deciding whom to interview</i>	17% (231)
<i>To prepare for the interview</i>	21% (279)
<i>Only those who report a preference received an interview invitation</i>	1% (14)
<i>Other</i>	10% (130)
Total Responses	1,353

**Table 13. Who had access to geographic preference information? (Select all that apply.)**

Choice	% (n)
<i>Program coordinator</i>	89% (1,226)
<i>Program director</i>	96% (1,324)
<i>File Reviewers</i>	58% (795)
<i>Interviewers</i>	45% (622)
Total Responses	1,377



**Table 14. Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:**

<b>N</b>	<b>Strongly Disagreed % (n)</b>	<b>Somewhat Disagreed % (n)</b>	<b>Neither Agreed nor Disagreed % (n)</b>	<b>Somewhat Agreed % (n)</b>	<b>Strongly Agreed % (n)</b>	<b>Agreed or Strongly Agreed % (n)</b>
<i>Geographic preference information helped me identify applicants whom I would have otherwise overlooked</i>						
1,370	18% (242)	17% (236)	27% (364)	30% (414)	8% (114)	39% (528)
<i>Geographic preference information helped me more easily identify applicants who have geographic ties to my location compared to old location data</i>						
1,375	11% (149)	8% (113)	18% (248)	40% (556)	23% (309)	63% (865)
<i>Setting preference information (Rural/Urban) helped me identify applicants whom I would have otherwise overlooked</i>						
1,367	29% (393)	19% (253)	37% (504)	13% (175)	3% (42)	16% (217)
<i>Setting preference information (Rural/Urban) helped me more easily identify applicants who have geographic ties to my location compared to old location data</i>						
1,365	26% (356)	16% (214)	34% (467)	18% (250)	6% (78)	24% (328)