

# Class of 2024: Planning your 4th year



WAYNE STATE  
School of Medicine  
Office of Student Affairs  
and Career Development

## Anesthesiology



### Priority scheduling

- Anesthesia electives early in 4th year - April, May, June are best. July and August are also fine. September would be the latest.
- Two anesthesia electives are standard and will help you get two letters.
- A 3rd anesthesia month is not necessary (esp. with mandatory 2-wk rotation) but can help you see multiple programs and explore different residencies.
- An "Audition Rotation" may be helpful if you have a specific program or geographic location to which you are strongly interested in applying but is not necessary at all. Remember, you are doing a 30-day interview during an audition rotation. You have to shine the entire month.
- For Away rotations, students should get in touch with programs early and set up the rotation through VSAS/ VSLO.



### Recommended year 4 electives

- Cardiology
- ICU: SICU, Cardiac ICU, Neuro-ICU, Medical ICU
- Emergency Medicine
- Trauma Surgery
- Pulmonary
- Radiology
- Critical Care
- ER Ultrasound



### Suggested interview months

Most interviews occur in October through January. Many students take November off as dedicated interview month. Try to take lighter rotations for the other months so that you won't have a problem scheduling interviews.



### USMLE Step 2CK: timing/target scores/etc.

Take Step 2 as early as possible to have scores back for applications. April can be a good month to study for and to take STEP 2CK. Latest time for taking Step 2 would be August. Some programs will not interview you without your Step 2 CK score. For the 2020 application cycle, the average step 2 score of those that matched was 246.

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## Letters of Recommendation

- Minimum of 3 letters (maximum of 4).
- The sooner you ask for them, the better! You should start the rotation discussing your strong interest in anesthesia and potential requests for letters of recommendation. Ask for 15–20-minute meetings with faculty, PDs, Chairs to get “career advice”. Try to work with board runners or schedulers to work with the same folks more than once. It is very hard to write a letter for someone if they have only met you once.
- At least one letter from a non-anesthesiology physician (e.g. MICU/SICU/General Surgery)
- Having your anesthesia letters from different hospitals or anesthesia subspecialties will show variety but not essential.
- Try to have one letter from a program director, asst PD, chair of a department, PhD with whom you may have done research. But, a strong letter from someone without a title is ALWAYS better than an average or weak letter from someone with a bigger title. Keep this in mind. It is not inappropriate to ask someone if they feel comfortable writing you a strong letter of recommendation.



## Recommended Documents and Links to Specialty-Specific Resources

- Speaking to current and former residents and looking up the individual program’s website is best to get to know a program. That said, here are two sites with residency information:
- FREIDA™ Allows you to search for a residency from more than 12,000 programs - all accredited by the ACGME. <https://freida.ama-assn.org/specialty/anesthesiology>
- Doximity Residency Navigator gives a look into U.S. medical residency programs, powered by peer nominations, ratings and hand-written reviews. <https://www.doximity.com/residency/>



## Additional Interview Recommendations

- For zoom interviews, make sure you have good lighting and a quiet space free of interruptions and outside noise. Dress in full formal interview attire.
- American College of Physician’s Site for preparing for interviews: <https://www.acponline.org/membership/medical-students/residency/preparing-for-residency-interviews/commonly-asked-residency-interview-questions>
- Anesthesiology specific interview tips blog: <https://interviewgenie.com/blog-1/2017/10/17/how-to-answer-anesthesiology-residency-program-interview-questions>
- From current WSUSOM year 4 students: Many programs asked which (if any) fellowships are you considering. Almost all programs asked “Why us, why this city.”

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