

Medical Student Guide to the Ophthalmology Match

University of Minnesota

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Sandra Montezuma, M.D

Ophthalmology medical student director

Mackenzie Becker, M.D.

And

Luke Dolezal, M.D.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. TERMINOLOGY.....	3
2. TIMELINE.....	4
3. PREPARING YOUR APPLICATION.....	5
A. Letters of Recommendation.....	5
B. Personal Statement.....	5
C. MSPE.....	6
D. Transcripts.....	7
E. USMLE Score Reports.....	7
F. Photos.....	7
4. SELECTING PROGRAMS.....	8
5. SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION.....	9
A. Required Application Materials.....	9
B. Required and Optional Supplemental Materials.....	10
6. ERAS FOR THE OPHTHALMOLOGY APPLICANT.....	12
7. INTERVIEWS.....	13
A. Scheduling Interviews.....	13
B. Packing for Interviews.....	14
C. Preparing for Interview Day.....	14
D. Interview Day.....	14
E. Social Dinners.....	15
F. Thank You Notes.....	16
G. Travel Tips.....	17
8. RANK LIST.....	17
9. MATCH DAY.....	18

The Ophthalmology Match is a unique process for medical students. Unlike your classmates, you will need to apply through two separate application services, the San Francisco Match and ERAS. Since ophthalmology is the only program that utilizes the San Francisco Match service, there is often limited support and resources available to medical students interested in ophthalmology. In addition, your timeline for SF match applications will be earlier than your peers, which will require you to gather and assemble materials sooner. This is why we have assembled a central document which contains everything you will need to know to survive this confusing yet exciting match process.

TERMINOLOGY

San Francisco Match (SF Match): The system used for medical students applying into ophthalmology, neurotology, and plastic surgery. SF Match day is in mid-January.
<https://www.sfmatch.org/>

Central Application Service (CAS): The application process used by San Francisco Match applicants. Although the electronic portion allows you to manage your application, application materials are assembled by YOU and distributed through the postal service. Keep this in mind when considering the timeline of application dates.

National Residency Match Program (NRMP): The system that matches applicants using ERAS. NRMP Match day is mid-March.

Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS): The system used to match into all residency specialties with the exception of ophthalmology and urology. EVERY medical student applies through ERAS because ophthalmology students will need to apply for a preliminary (internship) program, which is only provided through ERAS.

Categorical residency: A residency program that provides both internship and residency training, typically between 3-7 years long. Examples include: Internal medicine, Pediatrics, Surgery, OB/GYN, etc.

Advanced residency: A residency program that provides specialty training and requires prior completion of a preliminary/intern program. Examples include: ophthalmology, dermatology, anesthesiology, etc.

Preliminary/Intern program: An intern/prelim program is required before beginning an advanced residency such as ophthalmology. They can be a transitional year, preliminary medicine, preliminary surgery, or even preliminary pediatrics. Some residency programs will require a certain type of internship, so be sure to check requirements.

TIMELINE

(2013-14 Dates)

	SF Match	NRMP
Early Match Prep	Update CV, begin collecting letters of recommendation, research programs, meet with advisors	
May	Work on personal statement, collect LORs,	Work on personal statement, collect LORs
June	June 3: SF Match registration opens	
July	Work on electronic CAS application, request transcripts and USMLE score reports for CAS	July 1: ERAS opens Work on ERAS application
August	**Aug 15: target date for CAS documents postmarked to SF to arrive by Sept 4	
September	Various program submission deadlines, check for supplementals	**Sept 15: First day to submit ERAS, Target date for LORs, NRMP registration
October	Interviews	Oct 1: MSPE released
November		Interviews
December		
January	January 7: MATCH LIST DUE January 14: Match results sent to program directors and med schools January 15: Match results online	Jan 15: Rank order list opens
February		Feb 26: Last day to submit Match list
March		March 17-21: SOAP for unmatched applicants March 21: NRMP Match Day

PREPARING YOUR APPLICATION

Letters of Recommendation:

Collecting LORs: You will need a minimum of 3 letters of recommendation. When asking for a letter of recommendation, it is best to ask in person. However, email will also work if that is not possible. We recommend at least 2 letters from an ophthalmologist, whether it is someone you have done research with, a mentor, someone from an away rotation, or someone you worked closely with during your clerkship. For ophthalmology, there is no requirement that a LOR be from a program director, but if you can obtain one it does look very good on your application. You should also have one letter displaying your strength from a core rotation (Medicine, Surgery, Pediatrics). Make sure you choose someone who knows you well and can vouch for your character, work ethic, and enthusiasm for the field. If using a LOR from a clerkship, ask the letter writer during or immediately after your clerkship while your work is still fresh in their mind.

The best piece of advice is to ask for letters of recommendation *early*. Remember, your letter writers are busy people. Give them *at least* four weeks' notice before you need the letter. Make it easy for your letter writer by providing everything they need: Your CV, A signed copy of the ERAS LOR cover sheet (attached to this document***), and a postmarked and pre-addressed envelope for where to send your letter. **You will need to obtain two copies of each LOR**, one copy for Scott Davenport daven016@umn.edu to submit to ERAS and one copy for yourself to send to CAS for SF Match. Your CAS copy must remain in a sealed, signed envelope (ask the letter writer to sign his/her name across the seal of the envelope).

SF Match: You will need 3 letters of recommendation for the SF match before you submit your application around **August 15**. These same 3 letters of recommendation will be sent to ALL the programs you apply to. Because CAS distributes your application, you cannot send different combinations of letters to specific schools. However, if you wanted to send an additional LOR, some programs will allow you to send it directly to them as supplemental materials after you have been offered an interview. Check with these programs first and ask which address to send it to. Then ask Scott Davenport to send a copy of the additional LOR to the address they provided.

ERAS: You can use up to 4 letters of recommendation for each program you apply to through ERAS. Unlike with CAS, you are able to individually select which letters you want sent to each program you apply to through ERAS. Letters will be uploaded into ERAS by Scott Davenport by **September 15**. Just because a letter is uploaded into ERAS does not mean you have to use it in your application. For this reason, it is always nice to ask for more LORs than you need.

Personal Statement:

Writing the personal statement can be one of the most daunting tasks of the entire application process. This is the best opportunity for you to express your unique personality and

experiences and how they have shaped your path to ophthalmology. You will pour many hours into your personal statement. The key is to revise, revise, revise! You should aim to have all application materials complete by **August 15**, so start working on your personal statement as early as May or June so you have plenty of opportunities to revise. Ask friends and mentors to proofread your personal statement. There are no *requirements* for length on the personal statement, but the people who will be reading this will have *hundreds* of personal statements and applications to review. For this reason, it is best to aim for less than one page, single spaced.

For your ERAS application, most ophthalmology applicants use the same personal statement they used for SF Match with a few minor revisions in the last paragraph saying why they would like to do a specific intern program or go to a certain city. You can upload as many personal statements to ERAS as you would like and select which personal statement you would like to send to each program in ERAS, thus making it easy to tailor your personal statement to each program you apply to in ERAS. You do NOT have this same luxury with the SF Match; you will submit the same personal statement to all programs so do not include anything in your personal statement about program or location preference.

Other tips for writing personal statements can be found on the Residency Match website through the University of Minnesota.

MSPE (Dean's Letter)

The MSPE, or Dean's Letter as it was formerly named, is the Medical Student Performance Evaluation. It consists of an introduction written by you the applicant, your Years 1&2 Grades, Clerkship scores and comments, and a letter written by your assigned advisor summarizing academic achievements. The only part of this you are responsible for is writing an introduction (usually 300 words or less) which is called the "Unique Characteristics" portion of your MSPE. Like the personal statement, this is a brief opportunity to highlight your academic accomplishments, leadership, research experiences etc. You may also use this section to reflect on personal or academic challenges you faced in medical school. Try not to just list achievements, but rather illustrate how they have shaped you into a star applicant. Some general guidelines for writing the Unique Characteristics section are:

- 1) It should not exceed 300 words
- 2) It is to be written in first person
- 3) Do not reiterate things you already highlighted in your personal statement.
- 4) It is *not* specialty specific. Do not talk about why you want to be an ophthalmologist; save that for your personal statement. Pretend that you could use this section to sell yourself to any department.

(Refer to the U of MN Residency Match website for further instructions)

You will submit this introduction to Scott Davenport who will assemble the rest of your MSPE. You will also have an opportunity to proofread your entire MSPE, including the clerkship evaluations and letter written by your advisor before it is completed. The Office of Student Affairs will release your MSPE to ERAS and SF Match on **October 1**. Because of the timeline of SF Match, you may already have interview offers at the time the MSPE is released so many programs do not rely heavily on the information contained in the MSPE for interview selection.

Transcripts:

Undergraduate Transcript: You will need **two copies** of your undergraduate transcript, one for Scott Davenport to submit to ERAS and one for yourself to submit with your CAS documents to SF Match. Be sure to keep your copy for CAS sealed in the original envelope.

Medical School Transcript: Again, you will need **two copies** of your medical school transcript, one for Scott Davenport to submit to ERAS and one for yourself to submit with your CAS documents to SF Match. Be sure to keep your copy for CAS sealed in the original envelope.

The copy for Scott MUST be printed on white paper, be sure to make note of this on your transcript request form, which can be found

[here. http://www.meded.umn.edu/residency/documents/MedicalSchoolTranscriptRequestForm001.pdf](http://www.meded.umn.edu/residency/documents/MedicalSchoolTranscriptRequestForm001.pdf).

The University charges \$12 for each transcript request, and remember to allow at least one week processing before you need the transcript

USMLE Score Reports:

You must submit a report of your USMLE Step 1 score with your CAS materials. Hopefully you printed this off from the NBME website when you received your score report. If not, check your NBME account to see if you can still access your score report. Unfortunately, this score report eventually expires, and if that is the case, you must now request an official USMLE transcript.

The instructions for doing so are provided [here. http://www.nbme.org/Cert-tran/Scores-and-transcripts.html](http://www.nbme.org/Cert-tran/Scores-and-transcripts.html). SF Match does not require this score report to be in the original envelope, so I recommend making a copy for your own records once you receive it.

Photos:

You will be asked multiple times throughout the match process for a photo. The medical school will offer professional residency photos in mid-July and they will be available later in August or September. You do not need to have a photo submitted to CAS at the time you submit your application; this can be updated at any time. You will need to ask Scott Davenport to send you the electronic file of your photo so you can upload the photo to CAS/SF Match, as the medical school is not able to access your SF Match account like they are able to access your ERAS account. Scott Davenport will upload your photo into ERAS for you.

In addition, I recommend getting a dozen or so wallet-sized copies of this photo to send for supplemental materials and carry with you during interviews, as some programs will request a

photo during your interview day.

SELECTING PROGRAMS

Selecting the programs you are going to apply to can be a tough process. Start by printing a list of all the ophthalmology residency programs (available on SF Match portal under “Program Directory”). Bring this list to your advisor and go through the list together, picking out a reasonable number of “top, medium, and lower” tier programs to apply to. Your advisor (and other faculty from your home department) are excellent resources to get opinions about certain residency programs, and they are happy to help you out. Other resources with information about program size, pay, and other statistics are: FREIDA, SF Match Program Directory, and the program’s website.

You can find lists of “top ranked ophthalmology residency programs” online, which often consists of the same top schools permuted in different orders from year to year.

<http://health.usnews.com/best-hospitals/rankings/ophthalmology>

<https://login.ama-assn.org/account/login>

It is true these programs consistently match top-notch applicants, but it is not necessarily a reflection on the quality of training you will receive. You must figure out what kind of residency program you are looking for: academic vs community, whether or not doing research is of high importance to you, and what location you want to be. For this reason, apply to a variety of programs from all tiers of schools.

As with other competitive specialties, you will quickly realize that you have to apply to more ophthalmology programs than your colleagues applying to other specialties. Most applicants aim for getting 10 interviews because this coincides with a fairly high match rate. Consider these statistics from the SF Match webpage: In 2013, the average matching applicant’s USMLE Step 1 score was 239 and the average applicant applied to 58 programs. Consider your own USMLE Step 1 score as a kind of guideline to how many programs you should apply to.

SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

The SF Match uses the Central Application Service (CAS) to collect all documents and distribute them to the programs you have selected. [Detailed instructions for the CAS](#) can be found on the SF Match website.

https://sfmatch.org/PDFFilesDisplay/CASInstructions/2013_2014CASInstructionsROPH.pdf

The deadline for some programs to have materials submitted is as early as September 1, which means that you must have mailed your materials to SF, they must have processed it, and then mailed it to the program by Sept 1. This whole process takes 2-3 weeks to process, which is why we are using the date of **August 15th to have all materials assembled and postmarked to San Francisco**. Of course this is not a hard deadline as many programs' deadlines go later into September or October, but it is always better to be prompt as you may be eligible for the first round of interview offers by submitting your materials early.

There are four main portions to your application:

1. Electronic CAS application form (On-line via sfmatch portal):

Filling out the electronic CAS application form is much like copying and pasting parts of your CV. Many sections of the CAS are open text blocks with not many options for formatting, like you might see in ERAS. DO fully utilize **bolding**, *italics*, and underlining functions to format your sections to make them easily readable. DO NOT use large blocks of text or paragraphs except in your personal statement. DO use lists, numbering, or bullet points when listing multiple thoughts. DO multiple previews of your CAS application, as the text appears different after you submit it.

2. Payment and list of programs (On-line via sfmatch portal):

Once you select the programs from the program directory, you must also select "apply to programs." The fees per number of programs is seen below (see SF Match website for most up-to-date fees):

<u># of programs</u>	<u>Processing Fee</u>
1-10	\$60 total
11-20	\$10 per program
21-30	\$15 per program
31-40	\$20 per program
41 and up	\$35 per program

If you want to apply to additional programs after you have submitted your application, you will be charged \$35 per program *regardless* of how many programs total you have already applied to.

3. Submission of documents (via postal service):

The documents required for submission to CAS/SF Match have been outlined in detail previously. Here is a checklist for you to ensure you have all the required materials in hand before mailing them (documents must all be mailed at once):

Required Documents:

- College Transcript (in sealed envelope)
- Medical School Transcript (in sealed envelope)
- A copy of each of 3 letters of recommendation in a sealed, signed envelope
- USMLE Step 1 Score report
- Your Name and SF Match ID # should be included somewhere in this packet

Optional Documents:

- AOA Election Letter
- USMLE Step 2 CK Score report (only if you have received a score by this date)

Documents are to be sent in ONE envelope to:

CAS – SF Match
655 Beach Street
San Francisco, CA 94109

For ease of mind, we recommend paying the extra \$ to track your envelope and ensure its timely delivery to CAS. You can check the SF Match portal to see the status of your documents and when they are uploaded. Again, aim to have these documents postmarked by August 15th if you want them to arrive at the programs with deadlines as early as Sept 1.

4. MSPE (submitted by your medical school):

Required Supplemental Materials:

Many residency programs require supplemental materials in addition to those submitted via CAS. Some common examples includes:

- Recent eye exam with stereopsis
- Photo
- Brief essay outlining why you are interested in their program
- CV

Be prepared and research every program you are applying to ahead of time, including required supplemental materials and deadlines. It would be a bummer to pay the application fee for a school but to not be considered just because you forgot to send them your recent eye exam!

To find required supplemental materials: Once you have an account with SF Match, you can view the complete list of ophthalmology residency programs for your match cycle by going to your account, click on “Program Directory,” leave the Search criteria blank and click “Search.” There will be descriptions about each program, including application deadlines, supplemental materials, interview dates, and program coordinator contact info.

Optional Supplemental Materials:

After interviews are offered, you may also choose to send the programs supplemental materials such as:

- Additional letters of recommendation
- Letters notifying program of recent AOA election (if applicable)
- USMLE Step 2 CS and/or CK score reports

Check with the program beforehand if they will accept additional LORs and what address they can be sent to. Then ask Scott Davenport to distribute supplemental LORs for you, because he will have all of your letters on file.

AOA letters and Step 2 scores received early enough may also be distributed to all the programs to which you are applying by submitting it to CAS.

ERAS FOR THE OPHTHALMOLOGY APPLICANT

After completing the application for SF Match and facing the formatting of CAS, ERAS will seem like a breeze in comparison. You can use most of the same information you used in your CAS application and personal statement for ERAS; programs will know you are primarily interested in ophthalmology and will understand when your application is repeatedly referring to ophthalmology.

Transitional Year vs Prelim Year?

One of the biggest challenges will be in deciding which intern positions to apply for. The terminology is often very confusing so here is a brief review of the different types of intern programs you can apply for:

Transitional Year: This intern year usually consists of ~5 ward months and allows a lot of time for electives (ED, surgery, radiology, dermatology, etc). This route is desirable to people who want a so-called “easier” intern year, as transitional year programs are designed for those pursuing advanced residencies in another specialty. The fallback is that many cities do not have transitional year programs available.

Preliminary Medicine Year: This is a one-year internship in an internal medicine department where you will be doing essentially the same work as the categorical medicine interns. There are usually ~7 ward months and electives are done in medicine specialties like cardiology, pulmonology, rheum, ID, etc. People who complete these prelim years typically work a little harder, but in return they also report having learned much more than those completing transitional years.

Preliminary Surgery Year: This is a one-year internship in surgery with more electives being in the surgical subspecialties. Fewer ophthalmology interns pursue this route, but occasionally you will find certain programs (such as Rush University) who require completion of a surgical year.

Preliminary Pediatrics Year: This is a one-year internship in pediatrics. I only recommend this if you are *very* serious about pursuing pediatric ophthalmology.

Most ophthalmology applicants apply to a combination of transitional and prelim medicine programs. You can take advantage of this one year to live in an exotic, fun new city or try to coordinate your NRMP match with SF Match. There is no recommended number of programs you should apply to for intern positions. My best advice is to apply to several you are serious about initially, and then apply to more by geography as interview offers from ophthalmology programs begin to roll in. In ERAS, you can apply to up to 10 programs in one specialty before you have to pay extra, which means you can apply to 10 transitional year programs and 10 prelim medicine programs for the same price as 1 transitional year program and 1 prelim medicine program.

INTERVIEWS

Waiting for interview offers to come can be the most anxiety-provoking part of the entire match process. Although you will submit your SF Match application long before your NRMP classmates, your interview offers will probably still come *after* theirs do. The best advice I can give you is DO NOT FRET. Interview offers come slowly; trickling in starting mid-September and peaking in mid to late October.

Scheduling Interviews:

Ophthalmology interview season starts earlier than your NRMP colleagues, with the first interviews being in early October and going up until December 20th or so. During the 2012 interview season, the busiest weeks were the week after Thanksgiving and the first full week of December. It will be important to have a flexible schedule during this time, as there are not many ophthalmology interview dates.

Sometimes programs will extend more interview offers than they have space for, which means you could miss out on an interview opportunity if you do not promptly reply to an interview offer. Smartphones definitely make responding to these offers easier, and I would consider getting one if you do not have one already. Prompt responses to interview offers help you to get the interviews *when* and *where* you want them.

Anticipating Interviews

Because many ophthalmology programs have only 3-4 spots, often there may be only 1, 2, or 3 interview dates per program. It is helpful to do a little bit of planning beforehand to avoid as many overlaps as possible later down the road to ensure you can attend as many interviews as possible.

If you like to be organized, many people create a master calendar of all the interview dates for the programs they applied to. This allows you to flag certain dates for programs you are very serious about interviewing at so you can leave that date available. There are several possible places to find the interview dates posted:

- SF Match website under "Program Directory"
- FREIDA. <https://login.ama-assn.org/account/login>
- The program's residency website
- Other candidates will post the dates on Student Doctor Network what's the link? as offers begin

Overlapping Interview Offers

Interview season is tight, and you will likely have two (or more) interview offers that conflict with each other. This is when having a "master calendar" of interview dates is helpful, so you can look for alternative interview dates. Call or email the program coordinator and explain that you

are very serious about interviewing at their program and would like to move to another interview date if possible. If their other dates are full, ask to be put on a waiting list. If none of these work, you will have to choose the program you are more interested in.

Packing for your Interviews:

If you are flying, we recommend traveling with a carry-on and personal item to avoid losing luggage along the way (garment bags do count as a personal item). If it cannot be avoided and you must check your bag, try to at least keep your suit and shoes in your carry-on. Below are some more suggested items for packing:

- Suit and dress shirt
- Interview day shoes (comfortable enough for walking tours)
- Coat
- Umbrella
- Wrinkle-release spray for suit
- Tide-to-go pen
- GPS, car charger for phone (if you will be getting a rental car)

Preparing for Interview Day:

Aside from making all of your travel plans, we recommend doing a little research about the program before your interview by looking over the program's website. During your research, formulate 5-10 questions about the program. Avoid questions about information clearly presented on the website or elsewhere so you do not look like you didn't do your research on the program.

There are also many helpful websites with sample interview questions you may be asked. Spend time thinking about your answers. Questions you can count on being asked are:

- Tell me about yourself
- Why do you want to go into ophthalmology?
- Why are you interested in our residency program?
- Why should we pick you for our residency program?
- What are you looking for in a residency program?
- Tell me about one of your biggest failures
- Tell me about your biggest accomplishment
- Where do you see yourself in 5/10 years?
- Do you plan to complete a fellowship?
- Tell me more about <insert something from your application>
- Where else are you interviewing?

The night before, review every component of your application (CV/CAS, MSPE, personal statement, research papers) because any of it is fair game for interview questions. If you arrive to town the night before, drive to the hospital campus to make sure you know where to go and where to park.

Websites

<http://www.mrcophth.com/interviewsuccess/interview.html>

<http://www.studentdoctor.net/2007/04/20-questions-ophthalmology/>

Interview Day:

Relax. Be yourself. Remember that they are most likely looking for a colleague who is personable, friendly, professional, and pleasant to work with during your three years at their program. You have made it this far and have a stellar application; sell yourself and back it up with your friendly personality. Remember that the ophthalmology program you are interviewing is trying to create a good impression of the faculty and facility as it is also important for them to be rank highly.

Interview attire: Business professional is the universal attire for interview day. Suits with tie for men and pants or skirt suit for women. Make sure your shoes are clean. Since interview season takes place in the fall/winter, you will most likely need a coat. Suit coats all look the same, so find one way to distinguish your coat from the others (whether it be a scarf, lapel pin, etc), otherwise you may find someone else has mistaken your coat as their own at the end of the day!

What to bring: Here are some suggestions on things to bring to your interview day:

- Copies of your CV
- Wallet sized photos (programs will either take their own picture or ask for a copy)
- Copies of supplemental materials that were added to your application later, since many interviewers may not have been aware of Step 2 scores or AOA status updates
- Copies of research papers, you have published that you can give to interviewers who are particularly interested in your work. Printed poster presentation with nice pictures that facilitate explaining your research work. A tablet can also be helpful if several pictures are presented.
- Copies of recent eye exam (some programs will check your vision on interview day)
- Breath mints
- Blank paper

Interview day format: Many programs will send you a schedule beforehand, but expect to be there the entire day. There will be some sort of presentation about the program as well as a tour of the facilities. Some programs will also have you attend Grand Rounds or resident education sessions. There are many possible formats for the interviews themselves; most commonly I saw “speed dating” interviews, where you will rotate between 10-15 different faculty members for 10-15 minute interviews a piece. There may be 1:1 or 2:1 interviews, occasionally there are also panel interviews.

At the end of your interview day, assemble your notes about the program and make a “Pro and Con” list about the program. This will especially come in handy when you begin assembling your rank list and all the programs begin to blend together.

The Social Dinners:

It's awesome that many programs host dinners the evening before or after the interview for applicants to have further time to talk to residents and faculty. I found these to be some of my favorite moments along the interview trail. Although not required, it does give the applicant an opportunity to show their commitment to the program. I recommend attending as many of these dinners as you can, but unfortunately due to the hectic nature of interview season, your travel plans between interviews will often keep you from attending. Remember to be on your best behavior at all points during the interview process, including the social dinners even if no faculty is present. Programs are looking for ANY sign that you might not be a good fit for their program, and this includes any unprofessional behavior towards the secretaries, residents, or other applicants.

Thank You Notes:

There is no consensus about whether or not to write thank you notes to interviewers. At many programs, they sit down together immediately after the interview and rank the applicants right then and there while they are still fresh in their mind. Thus, a thank you note will not have any impact on the way you are ranked by a program, nor will telling the program you will rank them highly. However, if you would still like to send a thank you note, my best advice is to ask the program coordinator/secretary on interview day or after if they accept thank you notes and whether to send them by mail or email. I did send thank yous to every interviewer, and found it helpful to write down one or two things we talked about during the interview immediately so when I went to write my 20 thank yous I could remember who was who and mention something personalized to our conversation in the thank you.

Travel Tips:

Some advice to minimize stress during interview season and tips for traveling on the dime:

- Drive between interviews to minimize flight expenses (This could save you hundreds of dollars)
- Look into airline credit cards and saving your miles with the airline so you can receive benefits from all the miles you will rack up. For example, the Delta American Express card gives you double miles when you book a Delta flight, allows you to check a bag for free (saves \$50 round trip), as well as priority boarding.
- Try to book hotels through the same hotel chain and join their rewards account to earn free nights at a hotel
- Book your hotels through hotels.com; no matter what hotel you book through, once you book 10 hotels you will receive one free
- Avoid hotel expenses by staying with family, friends, or using an alumni network to locate someone in the area
- Getting a rental car (if possible, depending on the city) can be much cheaper than taking cabs everywhere. Bring your own GPS or smartphone; driving in a foreign city is confusing and you can't afford to get lost on the morning of your interview. Additionally, rental car companies charge extra money to use their GPS.
- Ask your hotel if they have a shuttle service to/from the airport, and to/from the hospital for your interview. Again, this could save you money on rental cars or cab money.
- Ask the hotel about cabs, sometimes this will get you a discount to use a recommended cab service

-Make friends with other applicants, you will cross paths many times throughout the interviews, so ask around and see if others are going to the same interviews as you. Maybe they'll be interested in sharing a cab or hotel room.

-The Smartphone app Triplt is an amazing free tool that automatically organizes your flight, hotel, and rental car itineraries for you

-If you have a badge from the VA Hospital, you can leave your car in the VA Hospital parking lot and take the lightrail to the airport. This will eliminate long-term parking costs. Be sure to check in with the hospital security, show them your badge, and give them your license plate number.

RANK LIST

Many factors go into formulating an individual's rank list. There is a great article highlighting the main factors to consider when making your rank list, titled [Ophthalmology Residency Rank List Pearls](#) by Ruben Sanchez. In brief, these are 1) Personal Goals, 2) Family, 3) Culture of program, 4) Location, 5) Program Size, 6) Surgical Numbers and Clinical Variety, 7) Laser Experience for Residents, 8) Call schedule, 9) Benefits, and 10) Research opportunities. Some people use their gut instinct and some create algorithms awarding points to programs based off of the categories listed above. In the end, only you can decide which programs are the best fit for you.

MATCH DAY

Match day for SF Match applicants typically occurs in mid January. Here is a rough timeline of what to expect match week:

One week prior to Match day:

Rank lists due

Day before Match day:

Early that morning, you will receive an email stating YES/NO you matched.

That morning, the program directors also receive a list of the applicants that matched into their program. The program directors may choose to contact you at any point after they receive the results, and most applicants find out their match results from a phone call or email from their new program director.

Around late morning, your medical school dean will receive a list of where applicants from their schools matched. At the University of Minnesota, Scott Davenport will call the applicants to tell them match results if they have not been notified yet.

Official Match day:

Match results are posted to the SF Match website

Tips for med students interested in ophthalmology research at the UMN

- To do an ophthalmology research rotation during medical school. The sooner and the more time you can spend on this rotation the better
- The medical student should contact several attendings from the department of ophthalmology to find what type of research opportunities exist. Medical students can choose to do basic research or clinical research or both. We are trying to create a list of research options available for medical students and to post them in the research medical site online, but in mean time, please contact the attendings directly.
- During the ophthalmology rotation let the attendings, fellows and residents know that you are interested in ophthalmology, so they will try to get to know you more.
- Considering to do an ophthalmology rotation outside the university. Again this requires a significant amount of preparation; so the sooner you make the decision and start working on this, the better.
- Try to attend our grad rounds on Fridays afternoon even if you are off the rotation, this way people at the department will remember you easier the day of the interview and will realize that you are really interested in ophthalmology
- You can obtain a list of the lectures given on Fridays with Trisha Horsmann at horsmann@umn.edu or Lori Van der Merwe at vanderme@umn.edu
- Look for community or volunteer services. For instance consider Joining the lions club.
- Apply for medical student grants

UMN contacts

Scott Davenport

Trisha Horsmann. horsmann@umn.edu. Administrative Assistant

Faculty ophthalmology advisors

Sandra Montezuma. smontezu@umn.edu. Clerkship director of the ophthalmology rotation

Dara Koozekanani. dkoozeka@umn.edu

Additional websites

<http://www.aao.org/careers/envision/residency101.cfm>

https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B7H5dY4OIWITNTQwZDVhMmYtNGEzZi00ZDBILWI0M2UtMzRiNmM2MDhjMzRh/edit?hl=en_US&pli=1

<http://webeye.ophth.uiowa.edu/eyeforum/tutorials/Iowa-Guide-to-the-Ophthalmology-Match.pdf>