

## OPHTHALMOLOGY RESIDENCY ADVICE

Initial Advisor to contact: Annie Baik, MD ([akbaik@ucdavis.edu](mailto:akbaik@ucdavis.edu))

Background: Ophthalmology is a highly competitive specialty that integrates longitudinal clinical care with microsurgery.

- Early match through San Francisco Match (not ERAS) (<https://www.sfmatch.org/SpecialtyInsideAll.aspx?id=6&typ=2&name=Ophthalmology>)
- A successful match requires *early* planning (prior to MS3)
- Key aspects of application prep:
  - Strong preclinical course grades and high USMLE scores
  - Clinical/basic science research
  - Meet faculty in the department as early as possible; there are many mentors willing to help
  - Short time frame to decide and ask for letters of recommendation
  - Decide on away rotations, a double-edged sword that needs to be carefully considered

UC Davis School of Medicine Ophthalmology Clinical Rotation:

- Aim to complete several MS3 rotations prior to ophthalmology clerkship
- Shadowing, small group learning, and case presentation
- Try to do the rotation as early as possible (end of MS3, earliest possible MS4), contact Dr. Baik as soon as you know you will want to do a rotation to secure a spot
- Spend concentrated time with faculty to obtain a strong letter of recommendation

Preparing/Submitting Your Ophthalmology SF Match Application:

- Programs often screen more than 100-150 applications/position
- Meet with faculty and talk to residents for honest advice about your chances to match
- Aim to submit application by mid-August of MS4 at the latest
- Develop a realistic Plan B, as even very strong candidates sometimes will not match and matching upon reapplication is rare
- Consider taking a gap year to do research to strengthen your application

Interviews:

- Invites extended late August/early September and offers trail off by early October
- Interview season extends from late September to mid-December
- Set up mock interviews with faculty (contact Dr. Baik for more information)
- Budget time for PGY-1 interviews (apply through ERAS); in the future, integrated internships will be required by the ACGME (same institution as residency, ophthalmology rotations begin in internship year)
- Prepare for all formats of interview (individual, small panels, large panels of up to 20)
- Record impressions of programs immediately and form a preliminary rank list as you go
- Avoid the inaccurate information on [www.studentdoctor.net](http://www.studentdoctor.net)

Rank List:

- Due in January
- Meet with faculty and residents to discuss your rank list

Ophthalmology Match Day is in January!