

# Applying to Pathology Residency

## Options and Advice for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year Medical Students

The role of the Pathologist in modern medicine is that of a team leader who facilitates evidence-based diagnosis and management of patients. 70% of medical decisions are based on laboratory results. Pathology is a broad and expanding field with a wide variety of subspecialties, including surgical pathology, cytology, forensics, neuropathology, hematopathology, transfusion medicine, molecular pathology, medical microbiology, clinical chemistry, toxicology, and informatics. As diagnostic technology evolves, so does the critical role of Pathologists in guiding the optimal use of medical testing in everyday practice.

Several pathology elective rotations are available to students. These include:

- **PMD 435** (3rd year selective) – Two weeks of Anatomic Pathology and two weeks of Clinical Pathology
- **PMD 475** (4th year acting internship) – Four weeks of concentrated experience in surgical pathology with responsibility for patient cases
- **PMD 464** (4th year advanced clinical clerkship) – Two weeks of Anatomic Pathology
- **PMD 465** (4th year advanced clinical clerkship) – Two weeks of Clinical Pathology
- **PMD 407** (4th year advanced clinical clerkship) – Two weeks of Neuropathology
- **PMD493/SUR 493** (4th year special study module) – Four weeks of in-depth study of gastrointestinal, hepatic, and pancreatic cancer

Please contact course coordinator Jennifer Black [jrblack@ucdavis.edu](mailto:jrblack@ucdavis.edu) to

- arrange a shadowing experience
- get information on the MS3 selective or MS4 clerkships/AI

The 4<sup>th</sup> year acting internship (AI) is strongly recommended for any student who wishes to apply to pathology training programs *and should be taken early in the summer*. Our AI provides significant experience and exposure to pathology as well as opportunities for letters of recommendation for residency applications. Of the required three letters of recommendation, at least one of the letters should be from a Pathologist. The Pathologist letter should be from one the student has had direct experience within a clerkship. Additional letters should be from a physician of any specialty who knows the student well and can write a strong letter regarding their individual character, skills, and abilities.

Away rotations are not necessary but could be considered if a specific program or location is highly desired. The number of programs a student applies to is different for each student and dependent on their goals; this, as well as more program specifics, can be discussed with the pathology residency advisor.

The majority of pathology training programs are four years of combined Anatomic Pathology and Clinical Pathology (AP/CP). Some larger programs offer other tracks, including three-year AP-only, three-year CP-only, and four-year combined Anatomic Pathology/Neuropathology (AP/NP). Combined AP/CP training is strongly recommended as it provides the best training for future career opportunities. Students who are interested in other tracks should discuss them with an advisor.



### Residency Training Includes

**Surgical Pathology**  
**Autopsy**  
**Cytology**  
**Transfusion Medicine**  
**Hematopathology**  
**Microbiology**  
**Molecular Pathology**  
**Chemistry**

### Department Contacts

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