



Icahn
School of
Medicine at
Mount
Sinai

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- “What I wish I knew then that I know now” - tales of year 1-4 lessons learned

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FALL 2013

What is CPS?

Career Planning Services is housed in the Department of Medical Education. The human resources component of CPS consists of a core group of faculty, staff and students from each year that work to develop resources, tools, information portals, databases and milestones to aid medical students in the process of approaching career decisions and assessing their annual progress. The CPS team also works with student specialty interest groups to help support their goals of providing and disseminating specialty-focused information to students – one specific initiative has been to create short videos available on Blackboard for students to hear about a specialty from a practicing physician.

In addition, CPS partners with both Faculty and Specialty advisors, providing resources for faculty advisors to work with students in determining short and long term goals and assist with one-on-one discussions. In addition to promoting interactions between all classes through the advising cohort network.

CPS works closely with the creators of such tools as the mentoring database, allowing students to identify mentors/sponsors through various dimensions. There are also a variety of in person sessions CPS oversees – Career Planning Day and the Alternative Careers Panel to name a few, bringing professionals and tools directly to students. CPS always welcomes your direct input - feedback, suggestions and ideas to better serve you. Career Planning Services is your go-to hub for accessing a variety of resources and people available to help guide you in envisioning and pursuing your ideal career.

CPS Organization on Blackboard

Check out the new, improved CPS Organization on Blackboard!

Here you will find resources for each step of career planning—from faculty advisor meeting preparation to choosing your specialty to the residency application process.

How do you get there?

Blackboard>Student Resources>Career Planning

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Spotlight:

“What I wish I knew then that I know now”

Tales of lessons learned

“What I Wish I Knew As a First Year”

Alexa Mieses, MS2



- It is reasonable in the fall to begin to think about what interests you for a summer experience. Review the Sinai website, visit the Medical Student Research Office and CMCA office, consider global health opportunities.
- As a first-year, I wish I had been more efficient with my study time. Literally blocking out study time on my calendar and defining goals for each study session before the session begins, is particularly useful.
- I'd suggest joining student groups and activities that suit your interests. Towards the end of your second semester, firmly commit to a few and consider taking on a leadership role. The same advice applies for finding a mentor. You can use the mentor database on Blackboard to find faculty members who are specifically interested in serving as mentors and share your interests. Once you have found good mentors, don't let them go! Keep in touch and update them periodically about your progress.



“What I Wish I Knew As a Second Year”

Sean Llewellyn, MD/PhD

Do not talk to members of your class about studying, classes, and Step I

Second year is a stressful time for everyone and many people end up talking about what materials they are using and what they are studying. This is to help them cope with that stress. I found that talking about these topics to be more stressful. I was always wondering if I was using the best materials and if I was studying enough. Once I stopped this, the extra stress went away and I was able to focus on doing what I knew how to do... study and learn the material.

Learn to stop and take a break to have fun

There were days when I was forcing myself to study when my mind was telling me no. Looking back on those days, I wasn't productive and I did not retain the information that I studied. It would have been better to stop studying, do something fun for a couple of hours/the day, and then hit the books later. Listen to your body because it will tell you when it has had too much. If you can find a balance of work and fun, you will be able to be much more productive and happy.

Relate the material from class to patients

It is so easy to get caught up in knowing all of the tiny details for the exams and Step I. All of these details can drag you down and make you hate what you are studying. If you remember that you are studying these details so that you can become the best doctor that you can be, it can make studying it easier. Think about patients who you've interacted with or who you will interact with and how the information relates to them. It makes the information more memorable and you can put a name, face, and story to the disease and its minutia.

"What I Wish I Knew As a Third Year"

Antonio Polanco, Bertille Gaigbe-Togbe, John Finnigan, MS4

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We polled three students about their third year experiences and summarized their answers below.

Clerkships: what are the characteristics to have and actions to take as a year 3 student to be successful?

Be assertive and let house staff know your personal learning goals at the start of a rotation. Assume realistic responsibilities to help out your teams. Learn from your patients and don't focus solely on material for the shelf exam. Develop an individualized curriculum based on reading articles. Be a team-player, especially with your fellow students. Approach each rotation with an open mind, taking initiative and ownership of your learning by asking questions and being willing to teach your team when appropriate. Spend time with patients to get to know them well and advocate for their needs.

What are some tips for helping to choose a specialty?

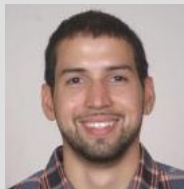
Consider each of the fields you are rotating through and think about what patient populations you like to work with most. Do you like fields that are more, or less, procedural? Try to assume the identity of a provider in each specialty you rotate through. Use elective and selective time as well as the early part of fourth year to explore options.

What advice do you have away rotations and scholarly years?

Away rotations early in fourth year are expected for certain surgical specialties like orthopedics and ENT. Seek out opportunities early, as applications can begin as soon as February. Many schools have their own application processes (as opposed to using VSAS, the Visiting Student Application Service) and it is good to have time to arrange the rest of your schedule and secure housing if needed. Away rotations can really help you learn more about another medical center and another part of the country. Speak with fourth year students and interns about where they visited.

Note: If interested in a scholarly year speak to Dr. Zier in the MSRO and seek out interesting projects and fellowship opportunities. Be clear as to why you want to pursue a scholarly year.

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"What I Wish I Knew As a Fourth Year"

Harold Paredes, Icahn Alum

Make sure you enjoy your 4th year, since it will be the most free time you will have in a while. As far as applying for internship and making the final decision for ranking programs: make sure that you rank programs highly where you see yourself happy and where it feels like a good fit. The "gut feeling" is never to be underestimated. Also make sure that you have back up programs in order to give yourself a good chance at matching.

"What I Wish I Knew As a Third Year" continued from page 3

What did you enjoy most about the year, and what were unique challenges?

It is great to assume more responsibility and have the opportunity to put into practice knowledge and skills learned in the first two years. Learning from patients leads to really durable learning, but shelf exams are very important so make sure to take time during the clerkship to study for them. Being part of a team is also very satisfying. Don't be overwhelmed by what may be an inevitable sense that you are being constantly observed and critiqued. Overcoming this sense reduces anxiety and allows third year to be a wonderful learning experience. Time for exploration is limited so make the most out of your experiences and elective time, and make sure to seek out advice from the faculty and house staff with whom you work.

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For more information on any content, you can
contact your CPS Class Representatives
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**Blackboard>Student Resources>
Career Planning Services**

www.mssm.edu/education/medical-education/student-affairs

Upcoming CPS Events:

December 5

5 pm in I3-30

Year 4 Class Meeting: Early Match - What
to
consider when ranking programs

January 27-31

Year 1 - InFOCUS 2

January 14

3 pm in I3-01

Year 2 Class Meeting: A Deeper Dive into
Preparing for Step 1 (Mandatory)

January 14

5 pm in I3-01

Year 4 Class Meeting: The Match
(Mandatory)

January 22

12 pm in I3-01

Year 2 Class Meeting: Planning for Third
Year: Lottery and Electives (Mandatory)

February 6

4 pm in I3-01

Year 3 Class Meeting: Preparing for Fourth
Year: Lottery and Electives (Mandatory)