Hello!

I hope that all is going well!

I wanted to check in with a few tips on how to approach these upcoming weeks as you wind down a busy season of interviewing and begin to prepare your rank order list. If you're in town in January and you've completed interviews, please use that time to talk/meet with me and your advisors. Also- I'll be available to meet with you when you return to the classroom. Often an objective ear can help you sort out some tough decision making. You can e-mail me (susan.harper@dartmouth.edu) if you'd like to set up an appointment to meet. In addition, you can call me at home in the evenings at 603-643-9339. Also----you can reach me through Polly Moran or Elizabeth Johns in the Office of Clinical Education at 603-650-8802.

NRMP RESOURCES
The NRMP site is an extremely valuable resource during the ranking process. (www.nrmp.org). On the web site there is a nice discussion of the algorithm of the Match as well as information that can help you navigate this challenging time. In particular I’d like to refer you to the “Program Code of Conduct” which presents Match communication guidelines for programs (http://www.nrmp.org/code.pdf) as well as “Match Tips”, which offers information on what applicants should know and do to promote success in the Match (http://www.nrmp.org/matchtips2.pdf).

THANK YOU NOTES
I encourage you to write thank you notes to the programs as you visit them. If you've already written a thank you note and you would like to write a follow-up note reiterating your interest, consider waiting until you've completed your interviews to ensure that you've assessed all programs. Sometimes in the follow-up note, students like to let a program know that they'll be ranking them high on their list. That's a personal decision on whether to share that information and there should be no pressure to do so as that’s your own confidential information. If you'd like to express that to a program, that's certainly your choice but again----don’t feel pressured to do so. In the past, some students have let a program know that they plan to rank them number 1. If you choose to do this, please be confident with that decision. Other students, have written that they're ranking the program "highly" or in their "top group". Alternatively, some students opt not to say anything to programs about their rank list. If you decide to send follow-up notes to programs I think that the most efficient way to do so is via e-mail to the program director (cc the coordinator).

SECOND LOOKS
Another question that arises is whether a student should take a second look at a program. I feel that it's important to take a second look at a program if it's going to help you differentiate between your top choices. Otherwise, I discourage it as it can be expensive and difficult to fit in with a hectic travel/academic schedule. Some specialties do encourage second looks ---so if a program offers one ----then assess how it fits into your travel plans/academic responsibilities---
and determine what you'll gain from it---as these are voluntary---so don’t feel obligated to accept. (refer to www.nrmp.org Match Tips).

**RANK ORDER LIST**
The process to enter rank order lists through the NRMP opens today, January 15, at noon. As you know, this period extends for several weeks until February 20 at 9PM. Up until this deadline you can enter your rank list, certify it and then change it as often as you’d like. Just ensure that at the end of this process your final rank order list entry is certified. I’ll be holding a rank order list question and answer session on February 5 at noon in Auditorium G. As general perspective from years past, most students have submitted their rank order lists in early/mid Feb. We'll set an internal deadline for rank order list completion--likely about a week in advance of the true deadline. This has worked positively in the past and has helped to avoid last minute problems.

I recommend that you contact faculty/advisors as you make decisions regarding your rank order list. In particular, I also encourage you to review your rank order list with me as well as your specialty advisors. Sending follow-up thank you notes via e-mail to faculty who have written a letter of rec or have helped you in the process is an easy way to keep faculty in the loop. Through thanking them and letting them know your options---many faculty will take the initiative to contact people at other institutions and/or offer advice. Please don't ask anyone to make a phone call for you----some faculty like to do so----others aren't comfortable with that.

**COMMUNICATIONS FROM PROGRAMS**
Programs sometimes call/e-mail an applicant to let them know that they will be ranked highly. In this communication it might even be shared where the applicant is on the rank list. It's OK for programs to volunteer that info---and it's OK for you to volunteer your intentions---but never feel like you have to divulge your plans. Programs don’t expect you to commit to anything. Likely, they want to share information on where you stand with them with hopes that it might impact favorably on your decision making.

If you'd like to share your plans when a program from the top of your list calls, you can--just don't feel pressured to do so. For those calls that come from programs in the middle or bottom of the list, don't feel flustered, just thank them and let them know that you enjoyed your visit and you're working on your list. Calls often come in the evening--sometimes by the chair or program director who's checking in to see in you have any questions about the program--or directly telling you where you stand. If you receive an e-mail from a program that lets you know how much they enjoyed meeting you or would like you in their program etc, ----don't feel like you have to respond---but it seems like with the current climate of e-mail communication etiquette, many students do want to respond and will take the same tact as the phone call responses—but again---don’t feel obligated to divulge the details of the order of your rank list. Students have often felt disappointed if they don't hear from any programs but please keep in mind that many programs don't call or e-mail.

**STEP 2 SCORES**
If you've recently received your Step 2 CK score ---and the score is similar or higher than Step 1--- and if you haven't already requested an automatic update of your score to be sent to programs via ERAS-- then I would encourage you to update your application through ERAS soon so the
scores can be sent officially to the programs. The score can't be selectively sent to any one program---and it will go out to all of them. If you have any specific questions about when to send the score--just send me an e-mail---and we can sort it out. Also-----in years past---many students have included the Step 2 CK score as an update in a follow-up thank you e-mail to program directors. I'd be happy to review a note with you if you opt to go that route. I would encourage everyone to ensure that their Step 2 CK and CS scores are updated to programs via ERAS by mid-February so programs can be assured that those components towards licensure have been completed.

Please contact me with questions anytime. I'll look forward to hearing from you!

Susan Harper