Navigating the Supplemental Application: Data and Recommendations to Help Advisors Prepare

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Today's Agenda

- Background- Goals, Logistics, Program Use
- Past Experiences
- Geographic Preferences
- Program Signaling
- Questions/Discussion

A Program Director's Conundrum: A Hypothetical IM Program

3000 Applicants → **300 Interviews** → **30 Interns Match**

Application Screening and Review

Ranking Process
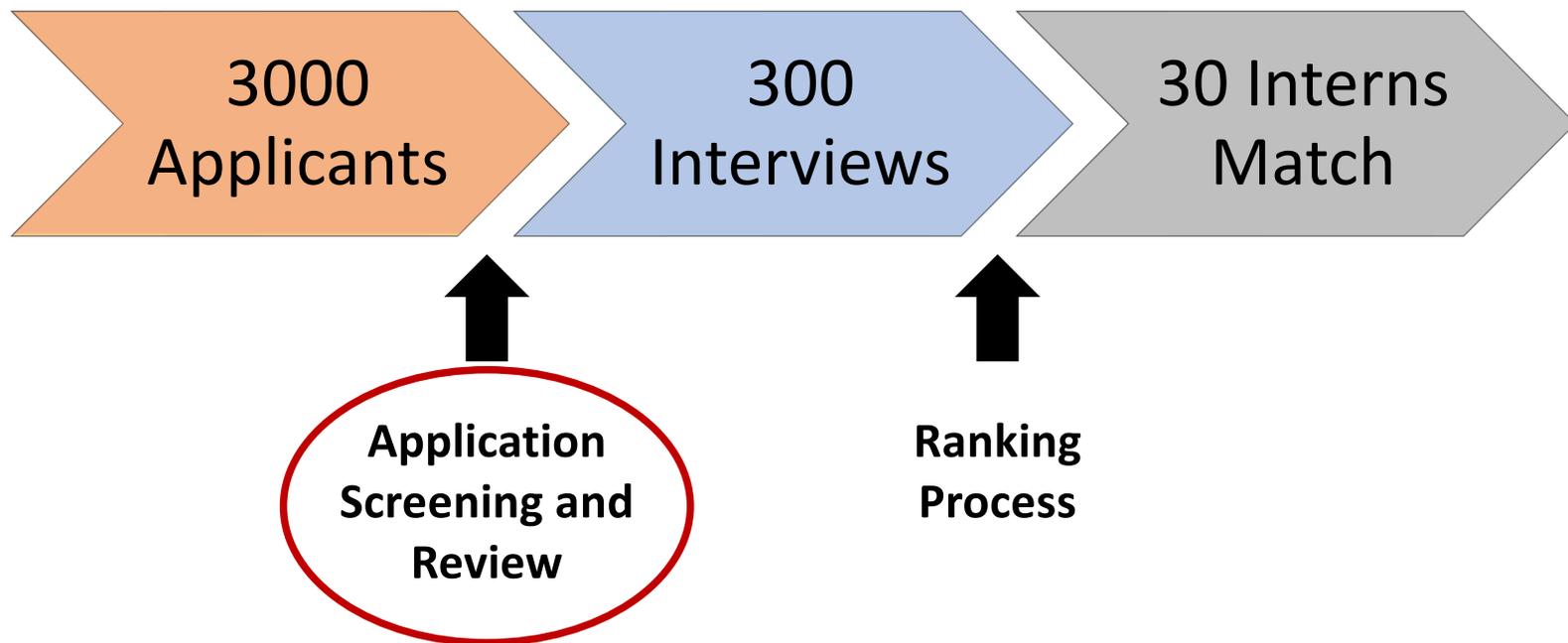
Goals of ERAS Supplemental Application

1 Drive holistic application review

2 Enable applicants to share more information about themselves

3 Help PDs better understand how applicant's experiences and interests align with their program

4 Circumvent application bloat by allowing PDs to focus on applications from truly interested applicants

AAMC Survey on Supplemental Application

In 2021-22 Match Cycle:

- 361/566 of categorical IM programs participated in the supplemental application (64%)

- 15,486/18,986 of categorical IM applicants completed the supplemental application (82%)

Program Type	Internal Medicine % (n*)
Survey Response Rate	
Completed	30% (108)
Total	100% (366)
Geographic Region	
Central	21% (23)
Northeast	37% (40)
South	27% (29)
West	15% (16)
Affiliation	
University-based	48% (52)
Community-based, University affiliated	37% (40)
Community-based	12% (13)
Other	2% (2)
Unknown	1% (1)

AAMC Supplemental ERAS® Application: Final Results of the Program Director Reaction Survey for the 2022 Application Cycle.

How did PDs use the Supplemental Application?

▷ Holistic, initial application review (85%-95%)

▷ Help decide whom to interview (81%-95%)

▷ Interview preparation (64%-74%)

▷ Stimulate questions during interview (57%-72%)

What will the supplemental application be like this year?

- Expanded from 3 to 16 specialties

- Free

- Optional for programs and applicants

- Available to MD, DO, and IMG applicants

- Separate from main MyERAS application

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Search   🔍

Choosing a Medical Career   Applying to Medical School   Attending Medical School   Applying to Residency   Training in a Residency or Fellowship   Quick Links

Programs participating in the supplemental ERAS® application

SHARE: f   🐦   in   ✉

Applicants (MD, DO, and international graduates) applying to residency programs in any of the participating specialties are eligible to complete the supplemental ERAS® application, though it is optional.

You can also view a list of specialities participating in the supplemental ERAS application.

🔍 Search   GO ▸

PROGRAM

| All ▾ |

**SPECIALTY**

| All ▾ |

**STATE**

| All ▾ |

SHOW

| 10 ▾ |

Participating Programs
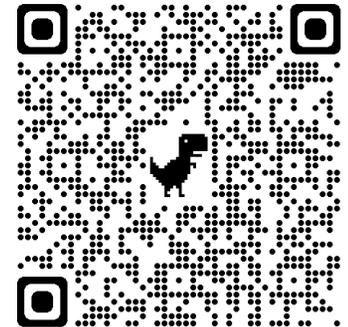
This year, 513 (~90%) categorical IM programs are participating!!!

Specialty	Experiences	Geographic Preferences	# of Program Signals
Adult Neurology	Yes	Yes	3
Anesthesiology	Yes	Yes	5
Dermatology	Yes	Yes	3
Diagnostic Radiology and Interventional Radiology	Yes	Yes	6
Emergency Medicine	No	No	5
General Surgery	Yes	Yes	5
Internal Medicine (Categorical)	Yes	Yes	7
Internal Medicine/Psychiatry	Yes	Yes	2
Neurological Surgery	Yes	Yes	8
Obstetrics and Gynecology	No	No	3 (gold) 15 (silver)
Orthopedic Surgery	Yes	Yes	30
Pediatrics	Yes	Yes	5
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	Yes	Yes	4
Preventive Medicine	Yes	Yes	3
Psychiatry	Yes	Yes	5

Application Timeline: Open Aug 1 to Sept 16

Date	Milestone
Aug. 1, 2022, at 9 a.m. ET	• Supplemental ERAS application opens. • The AAMC begins sending invitations to the supplemental application. Invitations are sent daily (Monday-Friday).
Sept. 14, 2022, at 11:59 p.m. ET	• Deadline for applicants to register an ERAS token to receive an invitation to the supplemental application.
Sept. 16, 2022, at 5 p.m. ET	• Deadline for applicants to submit the supplemental ERAS application. • Supplemental ERAS application closes.
Sept. 28, 2022	• Program Director Work Station (PDWS) opens to programs. • Supplemental ERAS application data available to programs along with all other ERAS data in the PDWS.

How much time will the supplemental application take?

- ➢ 5%   <1 hour
- ➢ 27%   1-3 hours
- ➢ 27%   3-5 hour
- ➢ 41%   >5 hour

Supplemental ERAS Application

Past Experiences	Geographic Preferences	Program Signals
(Available to programs except for EM and Ob/Gyn)	(Available to programs except for EM and Ob/Gyn)	

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Meaningful Experiences

▷ Include up to **5 experiences**

▷ Position and Organization

▷ Start and End dates

▷ Frequency of Participation

▷ Setting

▷ **"Tags"**
- ○ Experience Type
- ○ Primary Focus Area
- ○ Key Characteristic

New this year

▷ Essay

EXPERIENCE 1

Please enter the following information about EXPERIENCE 1.

Position Title

Organization Name

Start Date   mm/dd/yyyy

End Date   mm/dd/yyyy

Ongoing? (Please select "Yes" if this experience has not yet ended. If this experience has ended, skip this question)

Frequency of Participation

Setting

Experience Type

Focus Area (Choose the one focus area that best describes the experience for you)

Key Characteristic (Choose the most important characteristic that you demonstrated or developed during the experience)

Reflect on EXPERIENCE 1 and explain:

- Why was the experience meaningful and how it influenced you.

- Weave in the focus area or characteristic you tagged.

300 characters left

Experience **Type** "Tag"

- **Research**

- **Volunteer/service/advocacy** (unpaid experiences, service, advocacy)

- **Work** (paid clinical, nonclinical, business, or entrepreneurial experiences)

- **Education/training** (clinical training such as clerkships, away rotations, subinternships, structured observerships, etc.)

- **Military service**

- **Professional organization** (local, regional, national, or international societies or associations)

- **Teaching/mentoring** (paid teaching positions such as HS teacher, TA, tutor)

- **Other extracurricular activity, club, hobby** (sports, music, theater, student government, etc.)

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Primary **Focus** Area "Tag"

Choose the _one_ focus area that _best_ describes the experience for you.

- Basic science
- Clinical/translational science
- Community involvement/outreach
- Customer service
- Healthcare administration
- Improving access to healthcare
- Medical education

- Music/Athletics/Art
- Promoting wellness
- Public health
- Social justice/advocacy
- Technology
- Quality improvement

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Key **Characteristic** "Tag"

Choose the _most important_ characteristic that YOU demonstrated or developed during the experience.

- Cultural Humility and Awareness

- Empathy and Compassion

- Communication

- Teamwork and Leadership

- Reliability and Dependability

- Ethical Responsibility

- Self Reflection and Improvement

- Resilience and Adaptability

- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

- Ingenuity and Innovation

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Meaningful Experience Essay Tips

Reflect	Why was the experience meaningful, how has it influenced you, and what you will bring to residency because of it?
Weave	Weave in the focus areas or characteristic you tagged.
Don't List	Do not just list what you did or the set of skills developed.
Be Succinct	Note the 300-character limit.
Summarize	Focus information and avoid extraneous info.

PD Opinions of Meaningful Experience Essays

Choice	Dermatology % (n)	General Surgery % (n)	Internal Medicine % (n)
Lacking important information	13% (6)	30% (22)	15% (15)
Just about right	62% (29)	55% (40)	43% (42)
Included extraneous information	26% (12)	15% (11)	41% (40)
Total	100% (47)	100% (73)	100% (97)

Other Impactful Experiences Essay

Please describe any challenges or hardships that influenced your journey to residency. This could include experiences related to family background, financial background, community setting, educational experiences, and/or general life experiences: *(750-character limit)*

Meant to capture information not otherwise described in PS, MSPE, LORs, CV, etc.

Additional opportunity to demonstrate determination and resilience

PDs do not expect all applicants to reply to this question

30% of applicants did not reply in 2022 cycle.

Other Impactful Experience Essay

Family Background	Financial Background	Community Setting	Educational Experiences	Other General Life Circumstances
• First generation to college	• Worked to support family growing up	• Food scarcity • Lack of access to medical care	• Limited access to advisors/mentors	• Loss of a family member • Serving as a caregiver while working or in school

Additional insight and context

Meaningful Experience Tags

Paint a picture of an applicant…

What is important to them?

What specific qualities do they bring to residency?

Meaningful Experience Essay

Tell a story about each applicant…

Why was the experience meaningful

How did it influence them?

Other Impactful Life Experience(s) Essay

Provide context to the application…

What other impactful experiences have they encountered or overcome on their journey to residency?

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What's the difference between personal statement and past experiences?

Personal Statement

- Why this specialty
- Your fit for the specialty
- What will make you successful

Past Experiences

- Who are you
- What will you bring to a residency program
- What is most important to YOU
- Allows elaboration on the characteristic area that you tagged

Geographic Preferences

Goals:

- Provide an opportunity to share preferences for regions and location setting

- Communicate the importance of geography for an applicant

Response Options and Related Descriptions

- **Pacific**: AK, CA, HI, OR, WA
- **Mountain**: AZ, CO, ID, MT, NM, NV, UT, WY
- **West North Central**: IA, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, SD
- **East North Central**: IL, IN, MI, OH, WI
- **West South Central**: AR, LA, OK, TX
- **East South Central**: AL, KY, MS, TN
- **South Atlantic**: DC, DE, FL, GA, MD, NC, PR, SC, VA, WV
- **Middle Atlantic**: NJ, NY, PA
- **New England**: CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT
- **I do not have a division preference**

Indicate your preference (or lack of preference) for up to three (3) U.S. Census divisions:

- [ ] Pacific
- [ ] Mountain
- [ ] West North Central
- [ ] East North Central
- [ ] West South Central
- [ ] East South Central
- [ ] South Atlantic
- [ ] Middle Atlantic
- [ ] New England
- [ ] I do not have a division preference

Geographic Preference Essay
(300 characters)

**Please describe your preference for [1st, 2nd, then 3rd divisions]**

▷ *"I am interested in training in the Pacific Northwest to be closer to the support of my family during residency training."*

OR

Describe lack of division preference. If you pick "I do not have a division preference" **all programs see this essay.**

▷ *"I have no geographic preference. I am looking for the program that is the best fit for my long term goals."*

What do programs see?
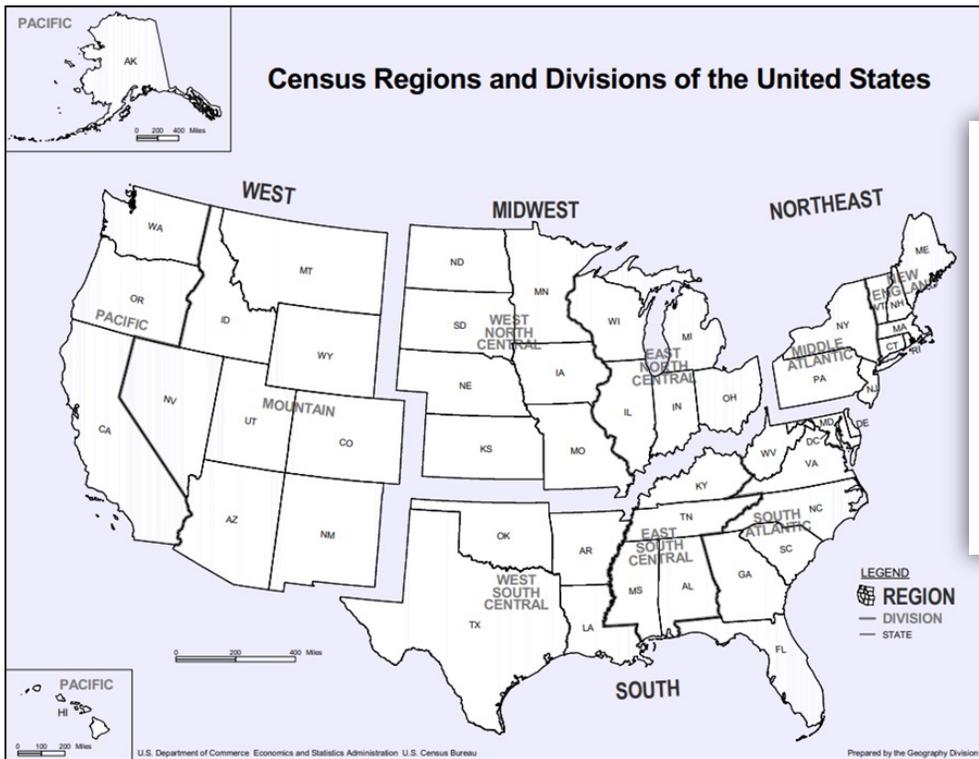
Your program sees:

Applicant indicates preference for your division	Applicant indicates preference for another division	Applicant indicates no division preference.	Applicant skipped question or didn't participate in SuppApp
↓	↓	↓	↓
Yes + Explanation	**No information is displayed**	**No Preference + Explanation**	**No information is displayed**

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Geographic Preferences

Census Regions and Divisions of the United States

Response Options and Related Descriptions

- **Pacific**: AK, CA, HI, OR, WA
- **Mountain**: AZ, CO, ID, MT, NM, NV, UT, WY
- **West North Central**: IA, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, SD
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- **I do not have a division preference**

Source. https://www2.census.gov/geo/pdfs/maps-data/maps/reference/us_regdiv.pdf

Geographic Preferences: Urban vs. Rural

Geographic Preferences: Setting Preferences

In this section, you may indicate your level of preference for urban or rural settings.

Indicate your preference (or lack of preference) for urban and rural settings:

○	○	○	○	○
Strong Preference for RURAL	Slight Preference for RURAL	No Preference	Slight Preference for URBAN	Strong Preference for URBAN

Please describe your setting preference (or lack of preference): *(300-character limit)*

70% of programs used geographic preferences during the application process

~60% of respondents agreed the geographic preference information helped their program identify applicants they would have otherwise overlooked.

~30% of respondents agreed applicants who stated a preference for their region were more likely to accept interview invitations.

Geographic Preferences: Use by Programs

Geographic Preferences

Screen before application review (87%)

To help decide whom to interview (88%)

Tiebreaker when deciding whom to interview (86%),

To send interview invitations **to every applicant who selected their program** (74%)

To prepare for the interview (56%)

To stimulate questions during the interview (51%)

Preference Signaling

2023 Preference Signaling for IM Programs

▷ Helps convey genuine interest in a program

▷ 7 IM program signals

▷ No signal order or "double signals"

▷ Programs do not see whether you participated, only if you signaled them
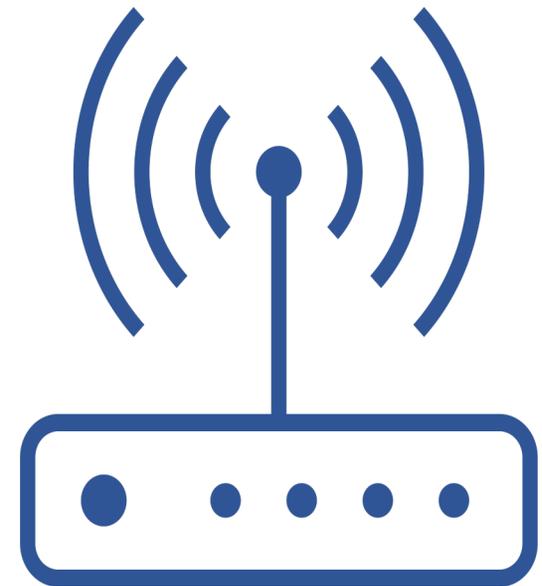
Program Preference Signaling: PD Perspectives

89% (93) of IM PDs responding to AAMC survey used preference signaling

▷ 88% as a **screening tool** before application review

▷ 82% sent **interview invites to every applicant** that selected their program

▷ 96% as a part of a **holistic process** to help decide who to interview

▷ 88% as a **tie breaker** when deciding who to interview

▷ 82% stated signals helped identify applicants they would have otherwise overlooked

▷ Survey did not ask if/how this influenced development of rank lists

Preference Signaling

Distribution of Preference Signals by Program
2022 Match Cycle
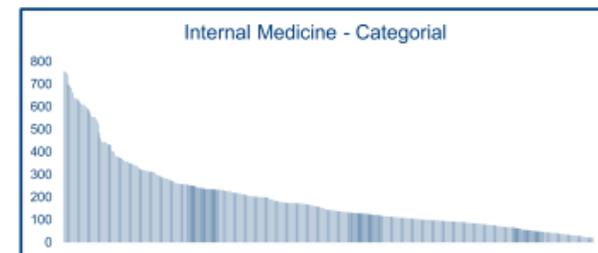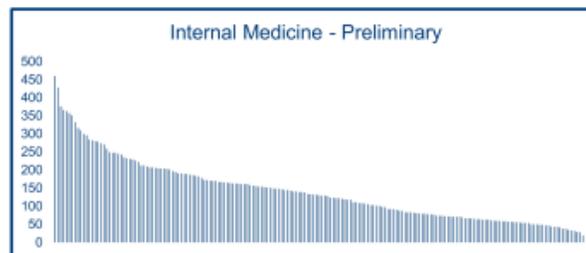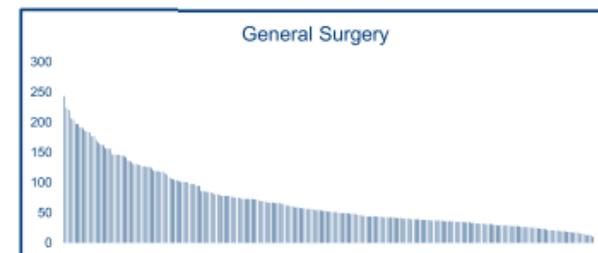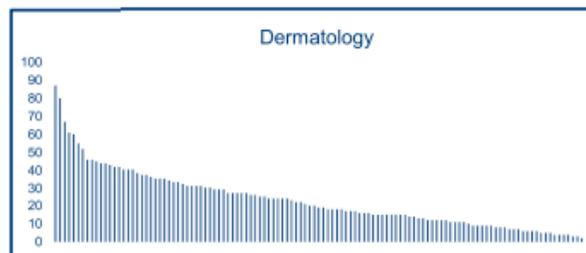
25% of IM Categorical Programs received 53% of all signals sent

Q: Is the any downside to program signaling?

▷ Applicants can choose not to signal but **there is NO benefit in not signaling.**

▷ Programs only see **whether or not an applicant signaled their program.**

▷ Programs **do NOT know the number of signals used or where a students sent them.**

▷ **USE ALL SIGNALS!!!**

Applicant sends a signal to the Program	Applicant *does not* send a signal to the Program	Applicant skips this question or does not complete the Supp App
↓	↓	↓

Program sees:

Yes*	No information is displayed	No information is displayed
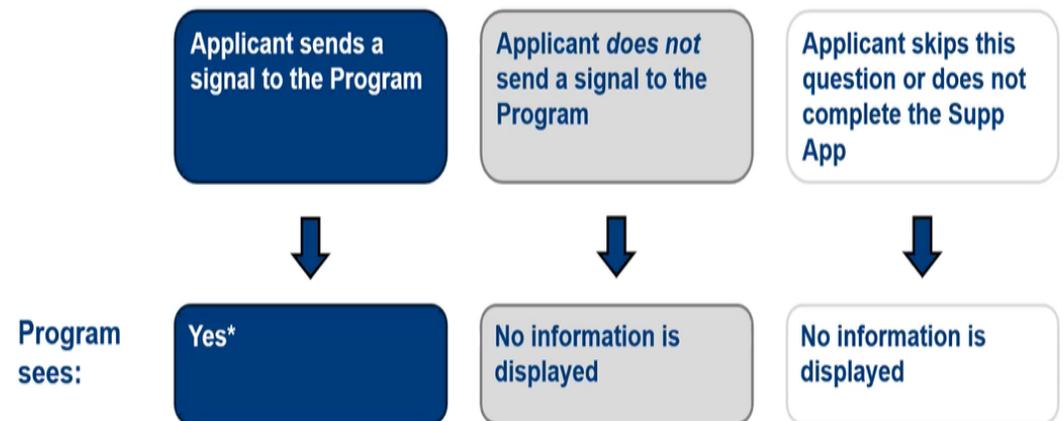
Q: Are there strategies for using signals effectively ?

▷ Preference signals intended to **facilitate interviews only**, not ranking.

▷ Applicants should consider their **application strength, career goals, and personal circumstances,** as well as the relative **competitiveness, mission, and goals** of the residency programs to which they apply.

▷ Signals may be **especially useful** for a program that is a good match for a student's application, but for which the student's interest may not be readily apparent (ex. geographical area is far away).

▷ **IM applicants should not signal their home institutions or institutions where they completed away rotations.**

○ Many (but not all) institutions offer interviews to their own students and to students who successfully completed visiting rotations.

What are reliable resources to help with program selection?

Q: What if a student is applying to 2 specialties?

▷ All programs in **both** specialties see the **same** past experiences sections and the **same** geographical and urban/rural preferences.

▷ Applicant have separate signals to use for each specialty.

▷ Example:
  ○ A student applying to IM & EM residencies completes **one supplemental application**.
  ○ **Both IM & EM residency programs** see the **same** meaningful/impactful life experience information/essays and geographical preferences.
  ○ The student has **7 signals for IM** programs <u>and</u> **5 signals for EM** programs.

Program Signaling Take Home Points
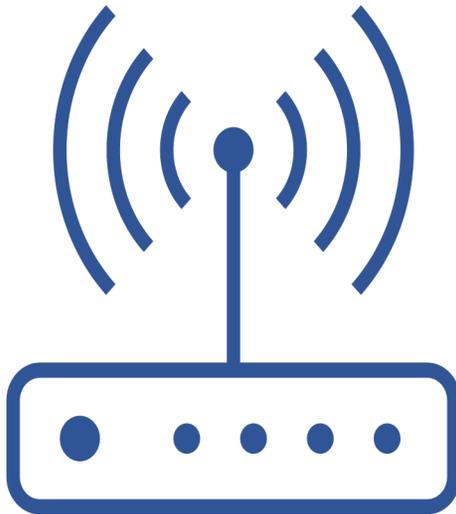
▷ **Use the signals!!!**

▷ Students should signal programs they have **strong interest** in, especially if interest might not readily come across in the application.

▷ Signaling highly competitive programs at which a student would otherwise be unlikely to get an interview may be **low yield**.

▷ Ensure students only signal programs that are **participating** in the supplemental app!

Why go through all of this extra work?

Impact/Utility of Supplemental Questions on PD

AAMC Supplemental ERAS® Application: Final Results of the Program Director Reaction Survey for the 2022 Application Cycle. https://www.aamc.org/media/58896/download

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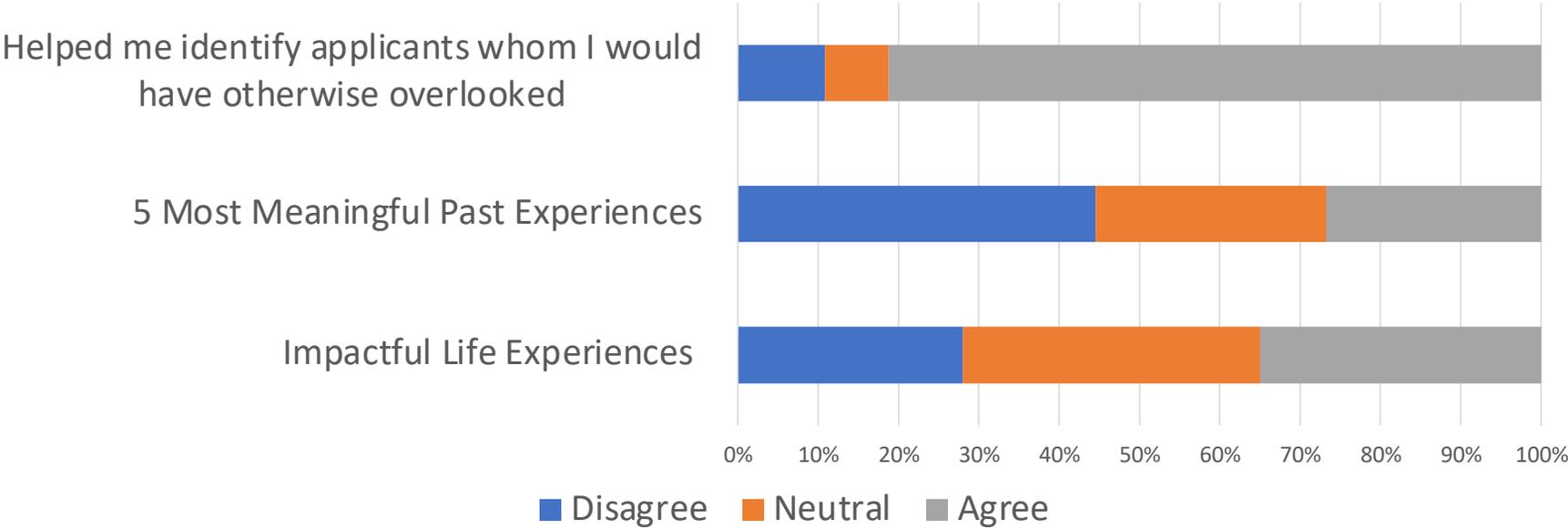
Questions?

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