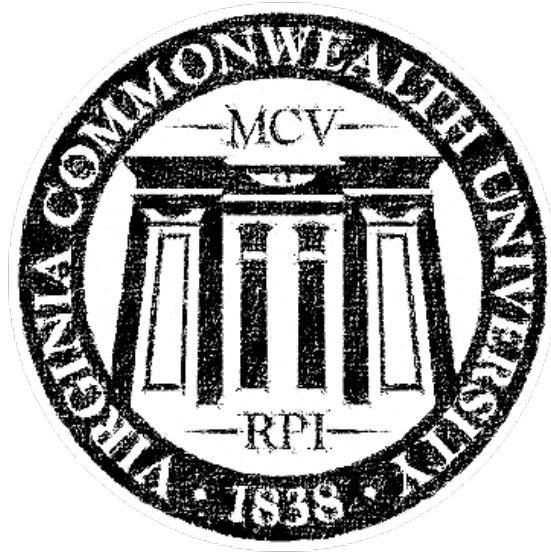


**2015 M3 Book Survey Results
Medical Student Government
The Medical College of Virginia**



NEUROLOGY CLERKSHIP

| | Would not recommend | Would recommend | Would highly recommend | Average Response | Response count |
|---|---------------------|-----------------|------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| USMLE World Q bank | -- | 17 | 19 | 4.06 | 36 |
| PreTest | -- | 26 | 10 | 3.56 | 36 |
| First Aid for the USMLE Step 1: Neurology chapter | 2 | 11 | 6 | 3.42 | 19 |
| Case Files | 4 | 7 | 4 | 3.00 | 15 |
| Blueprints | 6 | 9 | 4 | 2.79 | 19 |
| First Aid for the USMLE Step 2 | 1 | 8 | -- | 2.78 | 9 |
| Online MedEd | 4 | 1 | 3 | 2.75 | 8 |
| Step Up to Medicine | 4 | 4 | 1 | 2.33 | 9 |
| High Yield Neurology | 6 | 1 | 1 | 1.75 | 8 |
| First Aid Neurology | 5 | 2 | -- | 1.57 | 7 |

Other resources

- Lange Clinical Neurology text book

Other comments:

- Smile, ask questions, pretend to be interested even if you aren't.
- Use your time wisely during the day. You will likely have A LOT of down time (depending on what service you are on) but it is a great time to do a lot of practice questions.
- Honestly, if you know your Step 1 Neuro material inside/out, then that will take you far.
- Neurology clerkship study guide by Mark Tuttle (can find by googling)
- Make sure you have a solid grasp on the info presented in the localization workshops on Fridays.
- Help with patient care. Be proactive in getting experience (seeing consults/ doing procedures like LPs). Understand neuroanatomy.
- Use the Cerner ".neuro" shortcut to quickly get your physical exam pulled up and print that out when you go to see a new patient/consult so you can just fill it out as you do your interview. Using Maxwell's handbook backpages can help you as well.
- There can be a lot of downtime, push yourself to read all of your chosen resource early so you can do practice questions.
- I wish I knew about Online MedEd from the beginning of M3 year! He takes a Pathoma approach and gives you the high yield information in a short period of time. Especially in Neurology where you are kind of lost to begin with.

INTERNAL MEDICINE CLERKSHIP

| | Would not recommend | Would recommend | Would highly recommend | Average response | Response count |
|--|---------------------|-----------------|------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| USMLE Q Bank | -- | 8 | 38 | 4.65 | 46 |
| Step Up to Medicine | 3 | 11 | 20 | 4.00 | 34 |
| Online MedEd | 2 | 2 | 5 | 3.67 | 9 |
| PreTest | 4 | 1 | 3 | 2.75 | 8 |
| Symptoms to Diagnosis | 7 | 11 | 3 | 2.62 | 21 |
| First Aid for the USMLE Step 1 | 4 | 7 | 1 | 2.50 | 12 |
| First Aid for the USMLE Step 2 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 2.43 | 7 |
| First Aid: Medicine | 3 | 2 | -- | 1.80 | 5 |
| Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine | 7 | -- | -- | 1.00 | 7 |

Resources with < 5 reviews:

- Blueprints
- Cecil Essentials of Medicine
- Case Files

Other resources:

- Complement studying with UpToDate and Access Medicine (offered free by VCU). Access Medicine has free quizzes, textbooks, and cases.
- Pocket Medicine

Other comments:

- Uworld should definitely be your first priority. If you have time for Step up to Medicine as well, even better. But you can do pretty well on the shelf with just qbank.
- First Aid: Medicine is a really generic and broad overview but was good for the week before the shelf just to refresh my memory.
- Do Qbank as much and as many times as you can.
- Step up is super in depth. Would not recommend trying to master this text but rather use it as a resource for following up on areas you are weak in.
- You have to start studying at the beginning of this clerkship! Two months of wards leaves very little time to study. There are a lot of QBank questions to get through. It averages out to about 30 per day if you start on day 1. On wards, really know your patients well. Look up papers or guidelines that are pertinent to the management of your patients and present this during rounds, and you will look like a superstar.
- Make sure you practice a timed exam because the shelf stems are LONG. If you do better with textbooks, read them. Likewise for questions. I would stick with one or the other despite what the clerkship leaders say because there is not enough time to get through everything.
- Don't start studying too early- it is hard to remember all of the details 8 weeks later. Spend the first month reading up on patients and familiarizing yourself with the bread and butter cases then as you progress through the rotation start to narrow in on the details. Also study your microbio!!
- Do Uworld Questions. Remember that the subjective score is worth the exact same as the objective/shelf score. If your T score is below 50 for either section, then you end up with a pass, no matter how well you did on your shelf.
- Do QBank 2x, read through Step Up to Medicine once and you will be set for the shelf. Don't blow off the OSCE!

- ALL of the TBLs are all extremely high yield - fully prepare for them and get the most out of it. I even had multiple questions on joints. Everyone should have Pocket Medicine and use it daily - I found it more helpful than UpToDate and it helped with both the wards and the shelf. Do ALL of the IM U-World questions once and read the explanations, but don't waste time taking extensive notes. Hit the highest yield Step-Up Medicine chapters a couple of times (CV, GI, Pulm, ID) and hit sections that are relevant to your patients for a quick overview. Anything else in step-up is low priority. Just quickly skim whatever else you haven't covered at some point. Work hard. Read as many EKGs and CXRs as possible and learn to interpret them. Knowing the data that supports decision making will score you major points with IM attendings and is important for your career anyways. (Honors, 94th percentile shelf)
- MKSAP questions worked great for me. I liked being able to concentrate on and practice one subject at a time and enjoyed the way the MKSAP book explained the answers and pulled out the most important points.
- Finish step up during month 1. Do Qbank during month 2 and review step up when you get a chance
- Qbank and Step up. Try to use step up consistently on the wards.
- There are tons of Qbank questions. I just did about 1/2 of those (no books) and wound up getting a score good enough to get honors in the clerkship.
- Step up - use for reference, not to read through necessarily, Symptoms to diagnosis - use for TBLs, Qbank - use to study for shelf, Online medEd - great for reference and getting the big introductory picture
- Step one pharm cards to review
- Use symptoms to diagnosis for TBLs. Step up was really dense but really good for the shelf. Would recommend at least reading the side notes on step up if you cant get through it. Pretty much every shelf question is in step up one way or another
- Start early! 8 weeks goes fast and this is an all-encompassing shelf. Think Step 1-style.
- Finish step up during month 1. Do Qbank during month 2 and review step up when you get a chance
- Think simply on this rotation. Don't get bogged down in the details like dosing and minutiae and stuff you can easily look up. Think very very broadly with common sense. You have way more knowledge in your brain than you think, given you just finished step 1, and you can use this to help patients out in a huge way.
- FINISH THE MEDICINE QBANK. Start from day 1 of the clerkship because there are a lot of questions. Symptom to diagnosis is excellent for ward knowledge.
- Just make sure you are learning from your patients and that you understand the TBLs.
- Do all UWorld questions before the shelf and you'll be fine
- Make sure you're actively thinking when doing patient interviews and physical exams and reviewing charts and labs. Don't just run through checklists in your head, otherwise you won't know what the next step is.
- Start Qbank EARLY!!! Like over half the step 2 qbank is just IM.
- Start qbank immediately and do some each day. This is all I used, they actually have some of the same questions on the shelf.
- Just read through Step up 2x. Do the qbank questions. You use symptoms to diagnosis for TBL sessions
- If ever asked "do you want to see/do X ?" always say "yes" even when you don't want to (this applies to all rotations but especially medicine). The residents will expect you to come enthusiastic and wanting to do more and more without being prompted. Also, sometimes it helps to ask questions about topics you already know the answer to in order to start a discussion with your team about the patient.
- Learn from your patients. It's not absolutely necessary to read StepUp because you likely won't have time.
- Make it through step-up once early (quick read mainly the "quick hits") then read the sections on your patients.
- I wish I knew about Online MedEd for this clerkship! Q bank has >1200 questions in medicine.. do as many as you can!

PEDIATRICS CLERKSHIP

| | Would not recommend | Would recommend | Would highly recommend | Average response | Response Count |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| USMLE World Q Bank | -- | 19 | 26 | 4.16 | 45 |
| PreTest | -- | 23 | 19 | 3.90 | 42 |
| Case Files | 2 | 10 | 5 | 3.35 | 17 |
| Online MedEd | 5 | 2 | 3 | 2.60 | 10 |
| First Aid for the USMLE Step 2 | 2 | 6 | -- | 2.50 | 8 |
| BRS: Pediatrics | 9 | 14 | 2 | 2.44 | 25 |
| Blueprints | 5 | -- | 1 | 1.67 | 6 |
| First Aid Pediatrics | 5 | 2 | -- | 1.57 | 7 |

Other resources

- NMS pediatrics (organ chapters)

Other comments:

- Save pretest til the end of the rotation once you have a good base.
- This is a fun clerkship, so just enjoy yourself! An honors student will go the extra mile and look up papers or clinical pearls that are relevant to their patients. Cite those papers or resources in your notes and they will love you even more!
- Get good evals! Study hard, this is a tricky shelf!
- BRS was very dense, I did not get through it. I did pretest and uworld twice, but that was not enough to get a shelf score in the honors range. Study during your ambulatory week. Try to pick an elective week that is not too intense (PICU was long hours compared to outpatient electives).
- I usually shy away from older books, but BRS is still relevant. U-World is better than Pre-test, but try to do both. Pre-Test is filled with zebras that are surprisingly low yield for this exam. I don't think I had any questions dealing with some of the esoteric syndromes, but the inborn errors of metabolism do show up. Try to get the most out of the rotation, show interest, do some reading and/or questions every day, and you will do well. I like to have a solid pocket guide, so I bought Harriet Lane even though I'm not doing peds and found it helpful. It is not a big deal at all though if you don't want to spend the money. (Shelf raw score = 96)
- BRS was very dense but very good. most shelf topics are addressed in this book
- Take the initiative/ come up with a plan for your patients
- NMS pediatrics (organ chapters) + Qbank got me a great score
- Pretest and q bank are NOT enough
- Save pretest til the end of the rotation once you have a good base.
- Blueprints and Pre-test worked well for me. Made a 99 on this shelf.
- My outpatient preceptor gave me Zitelli/Davis Atlas of Pediatric Physical Diagnosis. I didn't use it extensively but it has ALL the pictures in the world. Really good for a resident, but as a student I think it is good to look at the pictures maybe for skin stuff or a weak section for you. You could probably find a copy at the library or even online.
- I would not highly recommend any of the resources I used (qBank and BRS) BRS was more detailed than necessary, especially if you are not interested in going into peds.
- I just used pretest and uworld and was able to get mid-80s on the shelf. BRS peds is really thorough and a great resource, but it does require a more serious time commitment.
- Do Qbank 2x, Pretest 1x, and read through a book like Case Files. BRS is too much information but if you read the first few chapters about milestones, you'll be good for those questions.
- Definitely take the time to study for this shelf as it can be tricky. I mainly used Pre Test and Case Files. I used BRS as a reference. There's a lot of downtime on this rotation, so try really hard to utilize it so you won't have to study as much at home

SURGERY CLERKSHIP

| | Would not recommend | Would recommend | Would highly recommend | Average response | Response Count |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Pestana's | 2 | 12 | 30 | 4.27 | 44 |
| USMLE World QBank | 2 | 23 | 17 | 3.71 | 42 |
| PreTest | 7 | 12 | 14 | 3.42 | 33 |
| Surgical Recall | 5 | 14 | 11 | 3.40 | 30 |
| NMS | 5 | 12 | 7 | 3.17 | 24 |
| Case Files | 4 | 8 | 3 | 2.87 | 15 |
| Step Up to Medicine | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2.80 | 10 |
| Online MedEd | 4 | 4 | 2 | 2.60 | 10 |
| First Aid: Surgery | 5 | 6 | 1 | 2.33 | 12 |

Books that received <5 reviews:

- Blueprints

Other Resources:

- MEDICINE q bank
- Access Surgery

Other comments

- Learn good OR etiquette!! That will take you surprisingly far. Briefly read for your cases the night before (use surgical recall for this) and make sure you know about your patient too. Don't ask too few or too many questions in the OR, and never ask questions when the surgeons seem stressed during a case. Try really hard not to break sterile field, but know that if/when it happens, it's not the end of the world.
- Pestana's is the most high yield. Do it at least twice.
- Show up early even if it's just to do scut work ("the list"). Ask the interns what particular chiefs and attendings like/want from med students then do that! Choose OR cases that you think are interesting so that you don't have trouble paying attention and staying involved in the cases.
- Be proactive, study early, do questions and be confident in your knowledge no matter what number rotation it is for you.
- The shelf was not similar to anything taught in Pestana, PreTest, or uworld. It was random stuff that we hadn't learned before or wasn't emphasized in any of the lectures or review sessions held by the clerkship
- The shelf is almost identical to the medicine shelf. Definitely go through Online MedEd and Pestanas for the basic surgery information but spend the bulk of your study time going back to your Internal Medicine study materials. You will be surprised at how few surgical questions show up besides a little bit of trauma.
- Get to know the entire OR staff- introduce yourself and ask how you can help
- Pestana is gold. If you can find his audio or video lectures, watch them at least twice. If you haven't had medicine yet, do GI, ENT, Derm, and Endo IM qs in q bank.
- All I used was pestanas and uworld. This was admittedly risky on my part but it paid off. Read through pestanas over and over. Look up anything that you don't understand fully in it (it only gives a basic overview). If you know that book front to back then you are golden on the shelf.
- If trauma surgery gives you an adrenaline rush I would highly recommend it. Schedule your time well during this clerkship. If you have your specialty month before your general month then be prepared to frontload a lot of your studying for the shelf as you will not have much time during your general month to study.
- I liked Surgery: A competency based companion. It is very helpful if you find yourself struggling to form differentials based on a given presentation.
- For ortho the website orthobullets is a great review of the relevant anatomy and pathology of all things bones.
- Honestly, I was a big devotee of surg recall in the hospital, and I think it taught me more than I know. Use it! Since Surgery is an internal medicine shelf exam, I would just say look over your Step 1 First Aid or even pathoma before the exam. That will be so clutch for you.

- Read Pestanas during the first week. It's quick and a good background. Pick one source and read it multiple times. NMS was probably the best. Do the GI sections of Qbank and Step up to medicine.
- Essentials of General Surgery by Peter Lawrence is excellent for reading up on cases the night before. If you can, try to read it cover to cover, but this isn't realistic in most cases. Read what's relevant to your patients during general surgery month.
- Pestana and pretest are good for shelf prep. I tried first aid surgery and NMS but neither worked well for me so I ended up subbing in random readings from access surgery for things I needed more details on
- Recall is truly for pimping. This shelf is medicine heavy, don't expect to just study surgical information and be set.
- Actually care for your patients; don't just do things to impress attendings. You'll feel more fulfilled and your actions will be reflected in your grade. Also, don't worry about getting pimp questions wrong. Just smile and laugh. Your impression is more important than the percentage of questions answered correctly. More specifically, always ask to put in IVs and suture in the OR. Most of the time, they'll gladly let you.
- The greatest prep for the shelf is having shelves before it- it's a random test. For the clerkship: study surgical recall and access surgery sources for cases, it helps to be prepared. Be prepared for clinics, know those patients. Don't complain.
- Pestanax2, UWorld, Surgical recall for pimp questions/case prep
- Take medicine first if you want to honor surgery.
- Lots of people recommended Pretest, but I found it to be completely useless for the shelf. This is a medicine shelf, you may want to start IM qbank.
- Basically, read Pestana's x3. Do practice questions for internal and surgery on qbank. Read step up for things that aren't clear. It's a medicine shelf. NOT surgery so pretest is too detailed.
- Spend 45 minutes a night after getting home studying (especially on your general month if you have surg onc)...once you eat dinner you'll be riding the alkaline tide to sleep.
- Get there at five, never ask to leave.
- Surg recall for wards. NMS case files for shelf - know it cold. Also used nbme surgery practice questions which cost money but were helpful
- Online MedEd, Pestanas, and MEDICINE q bank are money. (surgery q bank is fine but they are only basic trauma questions and are too easy for the shelf)
- The shelf is hard because it's pretty medicine heavy, but I did my surgery rotation first and got honors so it's definitely possible. I mainly used Pestana's, PreTest and NMS. I liked using Access Surgery (found through the library website) to prepare for surgeries. Surgical recall was also good for pimping questions. I tried to study some every day (whether in pre-op waiting for patients or at home), but give yourself a break. It's a longer rotation and you're going to burn out fast if you don't cut yourself some slack. Regardless of how much you study, I can guarantee that you're going to walk away from the shelf feeling like you haven't and it will end up being fine.

PSYCHIATRY CLERKSHIP

| | Would not recommend | Would recommend | Would highly recommend | Average response | Response count |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Lange Q and A | -- | 7 | 12 | 4.26 | 19 |
| First Aid: Psychiatry | 2 | 9 | 12 | 3.87 | 23 |
| USMLE World Qbank | 2 | 7 | 6 | 3.53 | 15 |
| Case Files | 3 | 5 | 3 | 3.00 | 11 |
| PreTest | 5 | 3 | 3 | 2.64 | 11 |
| First Aid for the USMLE Step 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2.60 | 5 |
| First Aid for the USMLE Step 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2.60 | 5 |
| Online MedEd | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2.20 | 5 |

Books that received <5 reviews:

- Step Up to Medicine

Other comments:

- Read First Aid 3x. Know it cold and you will rock the shelf. Also make sure you know pharm!
- Be enthusiastic even if you have no intention of going into this field!
- Lange Q and A x2. Honors. Did not need Psych first aid at all. It's super dense and some of the information is wrong, so don't use it for the in-class quizzes.
- I used First Aid + Lange Q&A like a lot of people recommend. First Aid hits the high points very well. Lange Q&A is okay, but I thought it was really over-rated. More objectively though, the questions in Lange are NOT representative of the shelf questions. The shelf has much more complex questions with more convoluted presentations where the right answer is not nearly as obvious as in Lange.
- Used the "required" book for learning pharmacology because other review sources are inadequate
- This is a really good rotation to start the year on. It is fairly easy, so take advantage of the extra time you get to practice writing notes and talking to patients.
- I used first aid psychiatry and online med ed and together was super prepared for the shelf.
- Lange Q and A + First Aid Psych =>honors.
- Make sure you get started early learning the drugs
- First Aid 3x, Lange questions 2x and 90+ on the shelf.

OBGYN CLERKSHIP

| | Would not recommend | Would recommend | Would highly recommend | Average response | Response count |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Uwise online questions | -- | 9 | 22 | 4.42 | 31 |
| Case Files | 1 | 6 | 15 | 4.36 | 22 |
| OBGYN At A Glance | 3 | 7 | 7 | 3.47 | 17 |
| USMLE World Qbank | 3 | 18 | 10 | 3.45 | 31 |
| PreTest | 4 | 4 | 5 | 3.15 | 13 |
| Online MedEd | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3.00 | 6 |
| Beckmann | 8 | 8 | 5 | 2.71 | 21 |
| Blueprints | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1.86 | 7 |
| First Aid for the USMLE Step 2 | 2 | 3 | -- | 1.60 | 5 |

Books that received <5 reviews

- First Aid for the USMLE Step 1

Other comments:

- It's a fun clerkship - embrace it even if it's not what you want to do with your life! Keep in mind that OB will be similar to surgery in that you need to keep presentations very short and to the point. The residents will be very annoyed if you go on and on. If you haven't had surgery before you do OB, then make sure you learn some OR basics (e.g., how to scrub in, gown and glove, etc) before you start.
- Do Uwise and Qbank with At a Glance just to tie things together and the shelf will be easy.
- Study hard!
- Read through the Beckmann chapters for the assigned topics week to week, keep up with Uwise questions, and use At a Glance as a brief overview of everything.
- Focus more on the Uwise questions. I did not read the required textbook unless there were specific assignments.
- Uwise was the best, do all of them.
- Learn this stuff cold. OBGYN questions tend to show up on your other shelves too.
- The Uwise questions are great representations of what you'll see on the shelf
- OB/GYN is a different set of info, art, and craft compared to other rotations for me...It was really hard at first because it was its own language and so much stuff I didn't really know. But by the end of it, I felt things were really straightforward and made sense. It all clicked. Try to get to that point as early as you can, but if you can't as long as you study along the way, it will happen before your exam. It felt straightforward.
- Be enthusiastic but take cues from the residents, sometimes the OB residents get frustrated with the med students so (this goes for all of third year) make sure you're "reading the room"
- Ask to do stuff. Move fast on L&D. Be humble and cool. The Ob/Gyn residents are some of the best at VCU.
- Do UWISE at least twice. Always be available to your residents
- Uwise and Qbank were great for questions. Atlas of pelvic surgery (website) was very helpful to prep for cases. Read At a Glance a few times if you can.
- I did uwise x2, read the relevant Beckmann chapters for CBC, read Case Files and did the qbank problems. It was my best shelf!
- The online questions that Dr. Rigby and Dr. Marko require are a great practice resource.
- Get through Beckmann early just to get the highlights then do questions...Beckmann authors write the free online questions who write the shelf questions too. Pretest was a good broad assessment too.
- Make sure you use at least one weekend day to study each week
- Case files and blueprints are all you need. I made a 99 on this shelf using those two books.
- The only text I used was OB/GYN at a glance. Otherwise I just did question via Uwise and Qbank.

- ObGyn at a glance is money.
- Do the free online questions
- Beckmann too detailed. At a glance not detailed enough. Casefiles was good in between
- Case files, uworld, and Uwisewill be plenty to pass this shelf. I got my highest shelf score with this combination.

FAMILY MEDICINE

| | Would not recommend | Would recommend | Would highly recommend | Average response | Response count |
|--|---------------------|-----------------|------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| PreTest | -- | 12 | 19 | 4.23 | 31 |
| Step Up to Medicine Ambulatory Chapter | 2 | 9 | 10 | 3.76 | 21 |
| Case Files | 4 | 3 | 9 | 3.63 | 16 |
| Online AAFP Questions | 3 | 10 | 5 | 3.22 | 18 |
| Online MedEd | 4 | -- | 2 | 2.33 | 6 |
| First Aid for the USMLE Step 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2.20 | 5 |

Books that received <5 reviews:

- First Aid for the USMLE Step 1

Other resources:

- Aside from the recommend study books, try to read the book they give you. I did not utilize it as much as I think I should have.

Other comments:

- Lucky you won't have to take this shelf!
- The exam was difficult despite doing Qbank and Pretest twice. I would supplement with another source.
- The clerkship director has a list of commonly tested topics on the resources page on ecurriculum. The topics are exactly those she listed, so know those inside and out!
- There are some inpatient/surgical type questions on the shelf exam, if you have gone through all of case files and pre-test you should be able to handle the questions even if family med is your first clerkship.
- Get through Case Files first. Do NOT try to read through the textbook book they give you, but it can be okay for looking something up. Get Pocket Medicine and use it regularly, you should have it for IM anyways. Pace yourself to finish Pre-Test once. Some people said that the AAFP questions were "resident level," but I actually think they were great preparation for the shelf and were very relevant for students - do as many as possible. The Ambulatory chapter in Step-Up and Preventative questions in U-World were okay and can be each be done in an evening, but shouldn't be a priority. Like on every rotation, being enthusiastic, trying to do things on your own, and being nice to everyone in the clinic will get you far. (Honors)
- Pick one source and stick to it because you won't have much time to do a lot
- You might not want to travel, but in general rotations farther away from Richmond will let you do more with patients.
- Again, make sure you are actively thinking when doing patient interviews, physical exams, reviewing charts/labs. Be proactive in the direction you want to take in a patient care plan. Be nice.