

Prosthodontics Residency

Notes From the ADEA Residency Series

This information is a result of the annual ADEA Residency Series, co-sponsored with the Office of Career and Professional Development and UCSF ADEA chapter. Faculty, residents and D4s shared their thoughts about the qualities of an outstanding candidate in their specialty, and gave advice to D1s, D2, & D3s about the application process and residency experience.

Q: What's a typical day in the life of a prosthodontics (prosth) resident?

A: Panelists reported that they spend their time doing both clinical and didactics. Residents spend 5 days a week working directly with patients. The number of patients seen varies depending on the day and type of procedure. Residents also reported doing lab work and working with other specialties (case presentations, seminars).

Q: What is UCSF's prosthodontics residency like?

A: According to panelists, UCSF's program is more lab-based than other programs, so residents must know their lab work. UCSF pays residents a \$5,000 stipend and does not charge tuition. UCSF's program admits 3 residents each year. It is a 3 year program with mostly didactic learning in the 1st year, less in the 2nd year, and almost none in the 3rd year. In the 1st year, you do your own lab work (typically outside of normal hours!), which is a good way to learn. In the 2nd and 3rd years, you can send out more of the lab work. Residents generally see patients from 8AM-5PM, and take classes before, after, or during lunch. Residents are starting to place more implants. UCSF is using more and more technology.

Q: What is the VA prosthodontics residency like?

A: Panelists shared that 1 resident is accepted every other year at the VA. The hours are more flexible, but there is less support since there are fewer faculty members and co-residents at the site. Panelists also stated that there are no financial issues with patients because they don't pay for the treatment.

Q: When should students apply for a prosthodontics residency?

A: Prosth programs are starting to transition to MATCH. Panelists recommend students apply in the summer following their 3rd year of dental school.

Q: What constitutes a competitive application for prosthodontics residency?

A: According to panelists, applicants should "do above and beyond minimum requirements in order to succeed" and demonstrate dedication to prosthodontics. Applicants should have a clear idea of what their ideal program would include and be able to communicate that in the application. UCSF's research requirements are minimal, but increasing. Letters of recommendation, personal statements, and grades are important, but more focus should be on professional growth and developing relationships with faculty. The Office of Career and Professional Development can review your CV and personal statement and provide feedback on these documents.

Q: What are prosthodontics residency interviews like?

A: Panelists shared that interviews typically last all day and consist of interviewing with faculty, shadowing current residents, and socializing with the residents and faculty. Some programs will also require a hands-on component, such as crown wax up test or a prep of a crown. Panelists emphasized the importance of getting to know the current residents and faculty, as well as the prosth program at interviews, to see if the program is a good fit.

Q: What opportunities are there after graduating?

A: According to panelists, doing a prosth program enables residents to gain a great deal of exposure to and experience with cases. "The 3 years in residency is equivalent to about 15 years of GP experience." There are also further schooling opportunities, such as a maxillofacial prosthetics fellowship. Prosthodontists work with others or open their own offices. However, recent graduates usually associate at an office before opening their own office. Prosthodontics is unique in that prosthodontists can practice as general dentists after graduating.

Q: How can prospective applicants find out more about prosthodontics?

A: Students are welcome to observe in the PG prosthodontics clinic and attend treatment planning sessions. Interested students should email the clinic director to find out more information. Panelists emphasized talking to prosth faculty and residents to learn more about the field and different programs.