

Special Interest Group (SIG) Event Ideas

from the American College of Surgeons
Medical Student Community

Surgical Special Interest Groups

provide medical students with information and resources to learn more about the field of surgery and surgical specialties, and to engage with fellow students and other members of their institution around like interests. Many groups regularly coordinate events to stimulate these learning and networking opportunities. Here are some ideas generated by the ACS Medical Student Community.

Surgery Clinics

Work with your SIG faculty advisor or a faculty or resident surgeon from your institution to develop an event that allows medical students to function as members of a patient care team composed of attending surgeons and residents. This event should allow medical students to practice the surgery-focused patient interview, patient care, and patient presentation skills to attending surgeons for just-in-time feedback and mentoring.



Case Talks

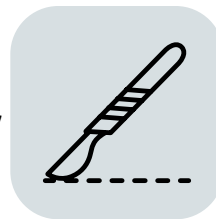
Invite a surgical resident or surgical faculty from a specific specialty to present a deep dive into a particular specialty. You might ask them to discuss:



- What a surgeon in their specialty does
- The pathology of their specialty
- What a career in their specialty entails
- Different sub-specialties that you could ultimately pursue
- Personal qualities/experiences that make a competitive applicant
- Applying for residency and fellowships in their specialty

Mixers

Host skills demonstrations or skills competitions with medical students, residents, and faculty to compete in a team-based environment. Check with your surgical mentors for specific resources when preparing your skill primers.



Skills Series

Watch recordings from our [National Tutorial Seminar library](#) and host case discussions with students, residents, and attendings after viewing.



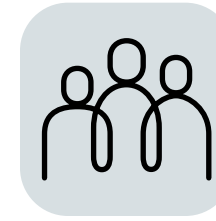
Preparing for Residency Talk

Invite a resident or faculty to speak to your group about preparing for residency applications, writing a personal statement or how to interview. Similarly, relationships with faculty, peers, and lifestyle expectations are another good series of talks. Consider using materials from the Downloadable Resources section of this document.



Recommendations for Partnering with Other SIGs

Does your school have any of these special interest groups? Consider partnering with one or more of them for a multi-disciplinary event.



- **Disaster/Emergency Response:** Introduce medical students to techniques of disaster medicine and management from both the clinical and political leadership standpoints, and consider attending a [STOP THE BLEED®](#) training in your area to learn how to control bleeding immediately after major injuries occur.
- **Public Health and Preventive Medicine:** Work with public health and preventive medicine SIGs (or peers in MPH programs at your school) to host journal clubs or discussion groups about the connections between public health, preventive health, and surgery.
- **Global Health:** Design an event to educate medical students about global health and human rights issues. Events should facilitate medical students' exposure to global health through special avenues, which could include lunch talks, informational sessions on global health opportunities at your school, hosting a cross-disciplinary global health case competition with other SIGs from your school.
- **Rural Medicine:** Plan lunch & learns or discussion sessions to introduce private practice/rural medicine career paths to medical students also interested in surgery.

Downloadable Resources

The American College of Surgeons has a library of [free-to-access resources](#) your group can use for education and events, including:



- A Medical Student's 4-year Timeline to Surgical Residency Application
- Anatomy of the Operating Room
- A Medical Student's Guide to Advocacy
- Feedback in the OR

Connecting with ACS Fellows and Associates

ACS Fellows and Associates are committed to helping educate the next generation of surgeons. Contact Anita Johnson (anita.johnson@facs.org) or Alison Powers (apowers@facs.org) to help find attendings or surgeons in your geographical area who may be willing to offer their time for events.



Other SIG Programs

Pre-shadowing Programs: Connect students to practicing surgeons to get hands-on experience with patients by observing a day in the clinic with a surgeon attending or resident. Before you reach out, check out this resource on [How to Shadow a Surgeon as a Medical Student](#).



Research Program: Work with your faculty advisor to devise a formal mechanism for students to connect with surgery faculty mentors. Students should identify what type of time commitment they have for research and if they have any prior experience with research.