



Leah Hester, Class of 2020

What core rotation was one of your favorites and why? What is the name of the site(s)?

My favorite core rotation was definitely women's health. I had an incredible preceptor that allowed me to gain valuable experience seeing both gynecological visits and care for pregnant patients. I also was able to assist in several laparoscopic surgeries, C-sections, and vaginal deliveries. It was my busiest rotation by far but also the most rewarding.

How did you handle moving from location to location as rotation sites changed every 4 weeks?

Although being constantly on the move was challenging and you were never able to get too comfortable in one spot, it also insured that we never got bored and allowed us to see so many different settings. Of course there were some tough days feeling always like the "new kid" or out of place, but overall I think it was really valuable.

Were you able to communicate with your classmates throughout clinical year, and if so, how?

I kept in touch with all of my classmates, especially while studying for our EORs. We have a class wide group message where people would share unique cases they had come across or just a funny joke about life as a PA student. I also spoke with my close friends almost daily and how rotations were going and different study materials they were using.

How did your first rotations compare with your last rotations? Do you feel you progressed in comfort as well as knowledge?

I absolutely felt more comfortable in my last rotations compared to my first few. Although, it was very clear that your preceptors expected more out of you knowing it was your twelfth rotations versus your first. As we progressed through clinical year, I became more confident in my ability to interview patients on my own, as well as coming up with my own assessment and plan.

Did you have some idea of the specialty you wish to pursue before starting clinical year? Has this changed?

I am not yet 100% what specialty I wish to pursue at this point--likely whichever one offers me a job! I'm most interested in jobs in women's health, orthopedics, or cardiology. Heading into clinical year, I thought I would be more interested in family medicine or pediatrics but it's become really clear that I enjoy working more in specialty settings.

Did you feel you had the time to study and what study tools did you find most useful?

I did feel like I had adequate time to study during rotations. Of course some rotations were busier or had a harder schedule and that made it tougher to balance assignments, work, and studying but overall I felt like I was able to prepare adequately for my end of rotation exams. I relied heavily on our Smarty Pance and Rosh Review subscriptions for study material and practice questions--I found them both to be really helpful.

Any additional comments you would like to share?

Doing all of my rotation out of state, I really enjoyed meeting other PA/medical students on various rotations and hearing their perspective of how school was going and how their rotations were structured. It definitely gave me an appreciation for the trust ISU PA Program puts in us to set up our own rotations and go all over the country for them--many students did not have that opportunity.

Overall I had an incredible clinical experience and really enjoyed the opportunity to see eleven different medical specialties and workplace environments. The experience as a whole was very valuable to my education and allowed me to see what is most important to me as I begin my career as a PA.