Applying to Medical, Veterinary Dental (and other) Schools

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Director of Pre–Health Programs

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Everything you always wanted to know about…. Applying to professional school..

- Timetables
- What are schools looking for?
- How to choose programs?
- How to put together a great application?
- How to submit a great application?
- Some other important stuff....

But were afraid to ask
Application calendar* overview

To enter school in August 2017:

- Spring ‘16 or earlier
  - Pre-Application Workshops
  - Entrance Exams

- May – June ‘16
  - Application Services open
  - Early June ‘16
    - Can submit application

- August ‘16
  - Secondary applications

- October ‘16
  - First deadlines & Interviews

- January ‘17
  - Final deadlines

*medical school dates - although similar for dental and vet
**MD: numerics matter**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>APPLICANTS</strong></th>
<th><strong>MATRICULANTS</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Undergrad</strong></td>
<td><strong>Undergrad</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 3.66 Non-science GPA</td>
<td>- 3.75 Non-science GPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 3.44 Science GPA</td>
<td>- 3.63 Science GPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MCAT</strong></td>
<td><strong>MCAT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 28.3 Overall:</td>
<td>- 31.2 Overall:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*mean for 2012 cycle*
Medical School Admission rates (%) by MCAT and Undergraduate GPA*

Overall acceptance rate: 45%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.8–4.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>80.4</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>91.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6–3.79</td>
<td></td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>78.8</td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>83.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4–3.59</td>
<td></td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>79.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2–3.39</td>
<td></td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>65.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0–3.19</td>
<td></td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>57.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* * All applicants 2010-2012
Is there a correlation between MCAT score and GPA (and admission)?

Admission to MD/DO Schools by MCAT Score and GPA: MHC Graduates Applying 2002-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GPA</th>
<th>MCAT</th>
<th>Accepted</th>
<th>Total Acceptance Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>230</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: AAMC and AACOM data
Application Facts*

- 141 US & 17 Canadian Allopathic Schools (MD):
  - 45,266 applicants for 20,479 spots

- 30 Osteopathic Schools (DO):
  - 14,945 applicants for 5,574 spots

- 30 Veterinary Schools (DVM):
  - 6,681 applicants for 3,000 spots

- 64 Dental Schools (DMD):
  - 12,039 applicants for 5,311 spots

*current number of schools and acceptance data from most recent cycle available (2011 or 2012)
A disclaimer.....
MORE THAN JUST NUMBERS

Source: Dr. Ron Garcia
Stanford University
School of Medicine
Importance of Admission Data to Admissions Officers at 113 Medical Schools in their decisions to invite interviewees and offer acceptances (scale is 1–5 where 5=extremely important and 1=not important)

- GPA: Cumulative Science and Math (3.7)
- GPA: Cumulative (3.6)
- MCAT Total Scores (3.5)**
- Letters of Recommendation (3.4)
- Community Service: medical (3.3)
- Personal Statements (3.2)
- Medical/clinical work experience (3.2)
- Community service: non–medical (3.1)
- Leadership (3.0)
- Completion of premedical requirements (3.0)
- Experience with underserved populations (2.7)
- **affected by new MCAT

Source: AAMC
MHC Health Professions School Acceptance Rate

For the last completed cycle
- All Candidates – 70%
- Medical School Only – 70%
  • (includes MD/Ph.D., MD & DO)
- Well Qualified Candidates* – 100%
- Those Receiving Interviews – 86%

For the most recent cycle
- 88 applied, 59 persisted, 33 interviewed and 19 accepted

*GPA>3.2 and MCAT total >29
# MHC Students went to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arizona</th>
<th>Mt. Sinai</th>
<th>U. Iowa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bay Path</td>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>UMass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston Univ.</td>
<td>PCOM</td>
<td>U. Oklahoma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado State</td>
<td>Royal Vet. College</td>
<td>UNC Chapel Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>Rutgers</td>
<td>UNECOM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornell</td>
<td>Stanford</td>
<td>Uniformed Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dartmouth</td>
<td>SUNY Buffalo</td>
<td>UPenn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drexel</td>
<td>SUNY Stony Brook</td>
<td>U Pitt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emory</td>
<td>Temple</td>
<td>VA Tech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Washington</td>
<td>Tufts</td>
<td>Vanderbilt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvard</td>
<td>Tulane</td>
<td>Virginia Commonwealth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howard</td>
<td>University of Alberta</td>
<td>Vermont</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson</td>
<td>U.C. San Francisco</td>
<td>Wake Forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>U. Florida</td>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U. Hawaii</td>
<td>Yale</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Identifying schools to which you’ll apply

- Curriculum
- Teaching methods
- Specialties
- Affiliations (hospitals, research, service programs)
- Timing of clinical experience
- Average entering GPA, test scores
- Location, size, demographics, cost of living
- Residencies
- Tuition, financial aid
- Reputation
Your Application
The MHC Pre-Application & Your Advising File

- Alerts your advisor and the Committee to your intent to apply.

- Helps get you organized.

File contents (accessible to advisor):

- Pre-application—[www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/prehealth/process-timeline](http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/prehealth/process-timeline)
  - Alums – due January 4, 2016
  - Undergraduates and Postbac students – due January 22, 2016
- Resume – with pre-app (prepare with CDC)
- Transcripts – request from all colleges
- Letters – begin asking in Jan-Feb, need by June 1st
Things your application should reflect

- Every aspect of your qualifications
- Solid, consistent performance
- Exceptional traits, personal experiences
- That you have chosen this career through a thoughtful, fully-informed process
- Enthusiasm, motivation, professionalism
- Exquisite attention to detail
The main parts of your application

- Biographical data
- “Resume” section
- Exam scores
- Official transcripts
- Essay(s)
- Recommendation letters
- Interview
- FOCUS on competencies (see handout)

There are a large number of resources important to your planning, preparation and submission of applications, and they can be found at: http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/prehealth/resources.html
## How it all fits together

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Application</th>
<th>Secondary Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biographical Data</td>
<td>School-specific Essay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resume Section</td>
<td>Letters of Recommendation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Scores</td>
<td>Primary Essay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Official Transcripts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interview
- **Biographical Data** – self explanatory

- **Resume Section** – blocks to provide dates, locations and brief descriptions of work, internships, activities, etc.
  - * most meaningful experiences – go for variety

- **Exam scores** – MCAT, DAT internally reported through application service and attached to your primary application. GRE must be sent from ETS to schools.
  - Practice tests determine if you are ready

- **Transcripts** – Official transcripts from every institution sent directly to application service (or to school if not using application service)
Essays

- The most personal (and personalized) part of your application package
- Your best chance (other than the interview) to stand out from the pack
  - Catch the reader’s attention
  - Tell a compelling, original story
  - Highlight pertinent biography, but don’t be redundant
  - Make your essay memorable

Homework #1 due
First draft should be reviewed soon!
Recommendations

- 4–5 individual, one committee (MD, DO, DMD only)

Individual:
- Professors (1 in science) who know you well
- Research mentors
- Clinical internship mentors
- Leadership/Community Service

Committee:
- Authored by a faculty member on behalf of the Committee, draws from individual letters, scores, transcripts
Recommendaions

- All of your letters should go directly to your account at Interfolio: [www.interfolio.com](http://www.interfolio.com)
  - $19.00 for one year
  - $39.90 for three years
  - $57.00 for five years

- Recommenders can submit electronically or in hard copy

- We pull copies back into your file for your committee letter author’s reference

- Once your individual letters are all in, you must formally request your committee letter

- You send letters from Interfolio to the schools (or to the centralized application service)

** see handout for more detail
Interviews

- Sign up for MOCK interview with Pre-Health Office once you are offered an interview.

- Individual or Group…Open file or Blind, some schools are now doing “Multiple Mini Interviews”

- Tours, “informal” aspects of the day, insider information and the duality of the acceptance decision

- Be prepared:
  - Know as much as you can about their program
  - Know your application inside and out
  - Prepare topics you want to cover
  - Have questions for them
  - Practice beforehand
  - Dress properly
  - Write a thank-you note
Entrance Exams

- What do the schools require?
- Know about the contents of the exams
- Complete courses *first!*

Preparation
- Self-study
- Online practice
- Commercial prep courses

Scheduling
- Opportunity to re-take but used as last resort
Entrance Exams

- Medical School, Osteopathic Medical School: MCAT
  - Register at [www.aamc.org](http://www.aamc.org)
  - **MCAT:** February 10 for April–June exam dates
  - Late April for July – September exam dates
  - First test dates: Apr 1 & 23, May 6, 14 and 20, Jun 2 & 18
  - Last possible for this cycle: Jul 8, 9, and 22

- Dental School: DAT
  - Register at [www.adea.org](http://www.adea.org)

- Veterinary, Nursing, Public Health: GRE (usually)
  - Register at [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org)

- *Foreign students may need to submit TOEFL scores*
On-line Application Services

- American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS)
- American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Application Service (AACOMAS)
- Associated American Dental Schools Application Service (AADSAS)
- Veterinary Medical College Application Service (VMCAS)
- School of Public Health Application Service (SOPHAS)
- Pharmacy College Application Service (PHARMCAS)
- Physical Therapy College Application Service (PTCAS)
- Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA)
- Optometry Centralized Application Service (OptomCAS)
- Nursing Centralized Application Service (NursingCAS)

Links to all can be found at:
http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/prehealth/health_professions.html

NOT ALL PROGRAMS USE THE CENTRALIZED SERVICES!
These should be obvious........

- Professionalism
- Financial records
- Criminal background checks
QUESTIONS
American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS)

- http://www.aamc.org
- Application Opens: May 1st, 2016
- Submit in early June (usually 1st Thursday)
- Deadline: Aug – Dec (depends on school)

- Application Fee: $160, +$37 each additional school
- Finding a school: MSAR online
  - https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/requirements/msar

Financial Assistance
- Also helps with MCAT fees, Self-Assessment package
- https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/applying-medical-school-process/fee-assistance-program/
- https://apps.aamc.org/first-gloc-web/#/landing
- https://nhsc.hrsa.gov/loanrepayment/
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Application Service (AACOMAS)

- [http://www.aacom.org/](http://www.aacom.org/)
- Application opens: May 1, 2016
- Submit after June 3, 2016
- Deadline: Oct ‘16 – March ’17

- Application Fee: $195, +$35 each additional school
- Finding a school:
  - 2016 Osteopathic Medical College Information Book

- Financial Assistance: Fee Waivers available
  - APPLY EARLY (Before you complete application, limited number available)
  - [http://www.aacom.org/become-a-doctor/applying/aacomas/fee-waiver](http://www.aacom.org/become-a-doctor/applying/aacomas/fee-waiver)
Associated American Dental Schools Application Service (AADSAS)

- [http://www.adea.org/](http://www.adea.org/)
- Application Opens: June 1, 2016
- Submit: as early as possible
- Deadline: begin admitting Dec 1

- Application Fee: $244, +$90 each add’l school
- Finding a School:
  - 2015–2016 ADEA Official Guide to Dental Schools

- Financial Assistance: search on FAP
  - [http://www.adea.org/dental_education_pathways/aadsas/Applicants/GeneralInstructions/Pages/FeeAssistanceProgram.aspx](http://www.adea.org/dental_education_pathways/aadsas/Applicants/GeneralInstructions/Pages/FeeAssistanceProgram.aspx)
Veterinary Medical College Application Service (VMCAS)

- [http://aavmc.org/vmcas/vmcas.htm](http://aavmc.org/vmcas/vmcas.htm)

- Application Opens: May 11, 2016
- Submit: as early as possible
- Deadline: September 13, 2016, midnight
- Processing begins after 3 LORs and transcript arrive

- Application Fee: $195, +$100 each additional school
- Finding a School: VMSAR
  - [http://aavmc.org/Publications/VMSAR.aspx](http://aavmc.org/Publications/VMSAR.aspx)

- Financial Assistance: fee reimbursement of $195 for first school, if qualify. Opens on May 11th, (limited number—financially disadvantaged applicants on a first-come, first-serve basis, and the program will close once the allotted funds are exhausted).
  - [http://www.aavmc.org/Applicant-Responsibilities/Fees.aspx#reimbursement](http://www.aavmc.org/Applicant-Responsibilities/Fees.aspx#reimbursement)
Schools of Public Health Application Service (SOPHAS)

- [http://sophas.org/](http://sophas.org/)
- Not all PH schools participate in SOPHAS

- **Application Opens:** continuously, but with a blackout period typically in August & September
- **Submit & Deadline:** all materials before each due date

- **Application Fee:** $120, +$45 each add’l school
- **Finding a school:** Use “Search for Academic Program” link
- **Financial Assistance:** Fee Waivers available
  - APPLY EARLY (Before you complete application, limited number available)
Optometry Central Application Service (OptomCAS)

- [www.optomcas.org](http://www.optomcas.org)
- All 21 Optometry schools participate
- Application Opens: July 1, 2016
- Deadline: differs by school, CAS closes June 2, 2016
- Application Fee: $160, +$60 each add’l school
- Finding a school: Association of Schools & Colleges of Optometry [www.opted.org](http://www.opted.org)
- Financial Assistance: No Fee Waivers available
Pharmacy College Application Service (PharmCAS)

- [http://www.pharmcas.org/](http://www.pharmcas.org/)

- Application Opens: June 2016
- Deadline: differs by school
  - Generally Nov – Mar

- Application Fee: $150, +$55 each add’l school
- Finding a school:
  - [http://www.pharmcas.org/collegesschools/schoolpages.htm](http://www.pharmcas.org/collegesschools/schoolpages.htm)

- Financial Assistance: Fee Waivers available
  - APPLY EARLY (Before you complete application, limited number available)
Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service (PTCAS)

- www.ptcas.org
- Not all PT schools participate in PTCAS

- Application Opens: July 6, 2016
  - Re-applicant information will NOT be pulled forward from 2015
  - Deadline: differs by school

- Application Fee: $140, +$40 each add’l school

- Financial Assistance: Fee Waivers available
  - APPLY EARLY (Before you complete application, limited number available)
Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA)

- https://portal.caspaonline.org/
- Not all PA schools participate in CASPA

- Application Cycle Runs: April 2016 – March 1, 2017
- Deadline: differs by school

- Application Fee: $175, +$50 each add’l school
- Finding a school: http://directory.paeaonline.org/

- Financial Assistance: Fee Waivers available
  - APPLY EARLY (Before you complete application, limited number available)
Central Application Service for Nurses

- [http://www.nursingcas.org](http://www.nursingcas.org)
- Not all Nursing Schools participate

- Applications Cycles: are on a rolling basis.
- Deadlines: differ by school

- Application fee: UG – $45/$30  Grad – $65/$33
- BA/BS to BSN and Accelerated BSN programs same cost as UG. There will be additional fees charged by each school

- Finding a school:
  - [http://www.nursingcas.org/how-to-search-programs.html](http://www.nursingcas.org/how-to-search-programs.html)