Applying to Medical, Dental, or PA School

Glossary of Terms

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PreMed/PreHealth Advising Office 3

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Medical School Application Synopsis

- **Primary application** to AMCAS and/or ACOMAS or AADSAS. Earliest is first week of June. You can begin filling it out earlier; read the agency’s instructions!

- You arrange for your UMass transcript to go to AMCAS and/or ACOMAS. Their staff verifies the transcript against your application

- **Secondary Applications** are from individual schools.

- **MCAT scores**: automatically sent by AAMC to the schools you list. Not required for primary application, but can list if known.

- **Letters of Recommendation (LOR)**: Should be on the writer’s institutional letterhead, signed and dated, to avoid delays! These are not submitted with the primary application, but be prepared to identify the letter writers on your application.

- **“Committee Letter”** is sent from our office along with all LORs on your behalf unedited
Med School Admissions Timeline

Take MCAT & Get Scores

Work on and submit application

File Secondary Applications

Interviews

Acceptance

Important Deadlines

In order to have a committee letter written for you for the current application cycle, you must meet the following three deadlines:

April 15, 2016 - Self-assessment must be submitted.

May 6, 2016 - All letters of recommendation must be on file with VE Collect.

August 15, 2016 - Your AMCAS application must be submitted (Pre-Med/Pre-Health Advising must have a copy of your letter request form w/barcode).
Sometimes Timing is Everything

**Medical School Admissions Doctor**

What Late Medical School Applicants Need to Know

Rolling admissions means even strong candidates could end up getting shut out if they wait too long to apply.

Applying early can have big benefits

Almost all med schools practice “rolling admissions.” There are more seats available in August than there are in January.

PreMed/PreHealth Advising Office

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**M.D. and D.O. Medical Programs**

This graphic illustrates many of the similarities and differences between M.D. and D.O. medical school programs. Speak to your pre-health advisor to decide which programs might be right for you.

**Similarities**

- The MCAT™ Exam is used in the admission process
- Students matriculate after completing their undergraduate degree
- Programs typically last 4 years
- Physicians are fully certified after passing board exams
- Graduates can practice any specialty
- Medical degree is followed by 3-7 years of residency

**Just M.D.**

- Applicants apply using AMCAS®
- Most medical schools in the United States and 17 in Canada
- Students take the USMLE licensing exams

**Just D.O.**

- Applicants apply using AACOMAS®
- All D.O. medical schools in the United States
- Students take the COMLEX licensing exams
- Additional training in the musculoskeletal system and Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment (OMT)

- Because application to DO schools requires an additional letter, you must notify the Pre-Med/Pre-Health office of your intention to apply to DO schools (in your self-assessment) by the April 15 deadline.

- You should have a letter from a DO to apply to DO schools.

- You should apply to more than one DO school.
Use Application Instructions!

https://www.aamc.org

https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/applying-medical-school-process/applying-medical-school-amcas/

Choosing Medical Schools

https://services.aamc.org/msar/home#null

https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/applying-medical-school-process/deciding-where-apply/medical-school-admission-requirements/
PreMed/PreHealth Advising Office

**MCAT**
- **Recommended:** Prepare for and take MCAT
  - Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr, May
  - Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep

**Primary Application**
- Online application opens in June.
- Early submission is best.
  - Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov

**Secondary Application**
- Requested after reviewing MCAT scores and AMCAS application.
- Supporting documents include secondary essays, letters of recommendation and official transcripts.
  - Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec

**Interview**
- July-August of Senior Year
- Follows review of secondary application.
- Prepare and dress for success.
  - Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec, Jan

**Acceptance**
- Follows interview
- Timing depends on school.
  - Nov, Dec, Jan, Feb, Mar

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Creating a Study Plan for the MCAT Exam

Preparing for the MCAT exam takes time. It's no surprise one of the most frequently asked questions we get is, "What's the best way to prepare for the exam?"

There's no right or wrong way to study and prepare for the exam. But to help you get started, we've created a sample study plan:

1. **Explore the content outline of the exam and necessary skills that you will be tested on using the interactive tool What's on the MCAT Exam?**
2. **Get a complete introduction to the exam with The Official Guide to the MCAT Exam at home or on-the-go.** The Official Guide, in print or e-books, provides important information on registration, scoring, exam content, and includes 120 practice questions.
3. **Start studying! Use the UMass Amherst MCAT Video Collection,** which covers all the content of the exam. Customize your study by digging deeper into the content categories, watching the more than 900 videos, and answering over 3,000 review questions.
4. **Don't forget about the resources already available to you through textbooks and class notes from completed courses, your campus library, academic support, and study groups.**
5. **If necessary, learn the concepts not included in your current coursework.** The new section of the exam includes content covered in introductory psychology and sociology. Consider looking into the Psychology and Sociology Textbook Resources, a list of introductory psychology and sociology textbooks (many of them sponsored) that show where in those textbooks the MCAT topic is included.
6. **Begin practicing! Use the UMass Amherst MCAT Sample Test to simulate the best day experience.** The Official Sample Test offers you the ability to practice taking the test with the same tools and functionality you will see on the actual exam. It can be taken in a variety of ways to customize your practice.
7. **As the saying goes, practice makes perfect.** The Official Question Banks provide 120 questions each in six subjects. They include solutions with each question. These Question Banks provide practice reasoning questions (and can help you get comfortable with the exam look and functionality)
8. **Continue your study and practice, targeting weaknesses and reinforcing strengths.**

Remember, the best study plans are those that are tailored to your learning style and schedule.

Good luck!

Start Early in Preparing!

Give yourself 3-6 months!

Set aside time every day!

Take several timed practice exams!

PreMed/PreHealth Advising Office
What’s on the MCAT Exam?

This document draws from the online resource What’s on the MCAT2015 Exam? at www.aamc.org/mcat2015exam. It contains a complete description of the competencies you are responsible for knowing on the MCAT2015 exam. It describes the new exam’s content and format. It also lists and discusses the new exam’s conceptual framework — which is organized around foundational concepts, content categories, and scientific inquiry and reasoning skills. Also included are sample test questions that demonstrate how the competencies are tested on the exam.

Self-Assessment & Waiver

https://secure.cns.umass.edu/webforms/pre-med-pre-health-self-assessment

We need this from you to write your committee letter!

It is similar in format to the AMCAS and AADSAS Applications.
Are You a Competitive Candidate?

Check % of out of state matriculants for schools you are interested in – if it is low (under 20%) you need to be **well above** the medians for GPA and MCAT.

Talk with Pre-Med/Pre-Health advising about being a competitive candidate.

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What you Need to Demonstrate to the Admissions Committee

From the AAMC* Admissions Initiatives

* Association of American Medical Colleges

- **Interpersonal Competencies**
  - Service Orientation
  - Social Skills
  - Cultural Competence
  - Teamwork
  - Oral Communication

- **Intrapersonal Competencies**
  - Ethical Responsibility to Self and Others
  - Reliability and Dependability
  - Resilience and Adaptability
  - Capacity for Improvement

- **Thinking and Reasoning Competencies**
  - Critical Thinking
  - Qualitative Reasoning
  - Scientific Inquiry
  - Written Communication

- **Science Competencies**
  - Living Systems
  - Human Behavior

Your experience needs to DEMONSTRATE that you have these qualities
### Submitting Application

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<th>What you need at time of Application:</th>
<th>What you DON'T need at time of application:</th>
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<td>Application Fee</td>
<td>Complete list of schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Essay</td>
<td>Committee Letter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Completed sections</td>
<td>MCAT score</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### AMCAS Letter Request Form

Student Name  
Your Address  
Your City, State, Zip Code  
United States  

AMCAS LETTER REQUEST  
June 30, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For AMCAS 20XX applications only</th>
<th>For AMCAS 20XX applications only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMCAS ID: XX00000XX</td>
<td>AMCAS Letter ID: XX00000XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Name: Student</td>
<td>Letter Type: Committee Letter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TO:  
MS Catherine Eden  
University of Massachusetts-Amherst  
627 North Pleasant Street  
Amherst, MA 01003-9246  
United States

Visit [www.aamc.org/amcasletters](http://www.aamc.org/amcasletters) for guidelines on writing letters.  
Medical Schools may require your letter(s) to be on official letterhead and include your signature.
Admission Application Timeline (AADSAS opens in June)

- **Take DAT**
  - Junior Year, Spring (May-June)
- **Apply Submit AADSAS**
- **Secondary Materials / Interviewing**
- **Offers Made**
  - Dec 1, Jan 15, Feb 15
- **School Begins**

**Senior Year**
- June
- July
- Aug
- Dec
- Jan
- Feb
- Aug

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**DAT**

- Number of Students
- DAT Score Distribution:
  - 0.1% reduced chance of admissions
  - 2% reduced chance of admissions
  - 14% reduced chance of admissions
  - 34% reduced chance of admissions
  - 34% reduced chance of admissions
  - 14% reduced chance of admissions
  - 95% increased chance of admissions
  - 2% increased chance of admissions
  - 0.1% increased chance of admissions

Figure 1: Typical Overall DAT Score Distribution (Approx.); No. of Test Administrations Annually = 13,000 (Approx.)

PreMed/PreHealth Advising Office
Dental Admission Test (DAT)
2015 Program Guide

Choosing Dental Schools

www.adea.org/officialguide
AADSAS, CASPA, ACOMAS send email requests

- Dear Ms. Catherine Eden:
  - Student NAME, 2016XXXXXXX, who is currently completing an application to the 2016 American Dental Education Association (ADEA) Associated American Dental Schools Application Service (AADSAS) Application cycle, has requested that you complete an electronic Letter of Evaluation (LOE).
  - To complete the online evaluation or to decline the offer to submit a Letter of Evaluation on the applicant’s behalf, please utilize the following URL: https://portal.aadsasweb.org/aadsaseforms2016/
  - You may login to your pre-created account using:
    - Username: cedusername
    - Password: cedenpassword
  - Thank you,
  - ADEA AADSAS Staff
# What you need to apply...

- Access to AMCAS, AACOMAS, AADSAS, CASPA, etc
- Competitive GPA **AND** Competitive EXAM score (talk with us about this)
- Letters of Recommendation LORs (aka: Letters of Evaluation LOEs)
- Personal Comments Essay (more in April meeting)
- Descriptions of all of your work, volunteer, research and clinical experiences
- Copy of undergraduate transcripts from all schools attended
- Applications can be submitted BEFORE you have your MCAT score (*However, this is NOT ideal*) **AND** before you have a finalized list of all of the schools you plan to apply to

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# Letters of Recommendation (LORs or LOEs)

Give a minimum of **1 month** notice when requesting an LOR

Have a variety of letter writers:
- Professors
- PI
  - Supervisors from TA, ExSEL, or Res Life positions
  - Supervisors from work in a clinical setting

Sign up for a VE Collect account
VeCollect for Collecting LOR

VeCollect

VeCollect is The Pre-Med/Pre-Health Advising office now requires that students register for VE Collect to manage their letters of recommendation.

VeCollect is a fee-based service that collects, stores, and packages a student’s letters of recommendation. Once you log in, fill in the simple form. After you receive the invoice, you will be allowed to pay by credit card or check.

Your account will be activated after payment is processed; this is where letter-writers submit their letters.

$20/year


Choosing PA Programs: PAEA online directory

http://directory.paeaonline.org
Discipline Record and Social Media

Medical Schools look at EVERYTHING...

Go to the Dean of Students Webpage and request a copy of your Discipline Record. Make sure that your Social Media profile presents an image that you would want medical schools to see.

1. Some admissions committees really do look at applicants' online profiles.

According to Scott M. Rodgers, M.D., Associate Dean for Medical Student Affairs at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, "Every student should assume that admissions committees look up applicants online, and sometimes come across information that can either hurt or help a candidate."

Barbara Fuller, M.P.H., Director of Admissions at The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University agrees. She notes that sometimes information acquired through internet searches has "changed an acceptance to a rejection". She says that "as an applicant, you are responsible for [your] public and online face."

Gap Year Opportunities

Pre-Med/Pre-Health Advising can help you identify Gap Year opportunities.

- EMT / CNA / phlebotomy / medical assisting work
- Clinical Research
- Peace Corps
- Graduate degree programs
- Post Bacc programs
- Combination of paid work and a volunteer commitment
- Go on an adventure (Sail around the world, etc.)
- Travel and become fluent in a foreign language
Important Links

Self-Assessment Link
Submit no later than April 15, 2015
https://secure.cns.umass.edu/webforms/pre-med-pre-health-self-assessment

VE Collect Link
All LORs must be received by May 6, 2015