



THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

2019-2020 Medical School Application Survival Kit



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Advice from FSU College of Medicine Dean of Admissions

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Overview:

Medical school admissions is a holistic process which takes into account a balance of at least four factors including (1) academic ability, (2) experiences, (3) personal attributes and attitudes, and (4) likelihood to fulfill the mission of the college.

All applicants are equal in one respect – that they all have the same number of hours in a week (or month or year). Admissions Committees evaluate how each applicant chose to spend his or her time. There are no magic numbers in the academic or experiential domains that will assure acceptance, but a lack of numbers can assure that an applicant will not be accepted.

Academic ability:

Undergraduate GPA (especially in science courses) and performance on standardized tests (especially MCAT) should provide evidence that the applicant can successfully complete a medical school curriculum and can pass the Step examinations necessary for licensure.

The undergraduate record should include full course loads (≥ 14 credit hours) in practically all semesters and should include more than one rigorous science course (either prerequisite science courses or upper-level biomedical science courses) in some semesters. There should be very few if any grades of C, and preferably nothing lower.

If the MCAT is taken more than once, the total score should improve with each retake.

Experiences:

A significant amount of medically related experience is a must. Some should involve direct interaction with patients, and some shadowing of physicians should be included. Exposure to primary care or interaction with underserved patients is valuable.

Significant and sustained service experience is a must. Again, some should be “hands-on” service (rather than just fund-raising), and some should involve service to disadvantaged or underprivileged people.

Some leadership is expected though not required.

Research experience is a bonus but not required (and if you have it, you must be able to discuss it knowledgeably). It actually may be required for some colleges of medicine, but not FSU.

Work experience in the public sector is usually also considered a positive. If it was a necessity to work while in college, admissions committees understand that you may have fewer hours in some other activities.

Extracurricular activities such as intercollegiate athletics, cheerleading, marching band, etc., are also taken into consideration as detracting from available time for some of the “required” experiences.

Personal attributes and attitudes:

These are assessed from reading the narratives that the applicant writes in the personal statement and secondary application, from the letters of reference, and from the interview. Desirable traits include empathy, compassion, honesty, dedication, resilience, perseverance, humility, maturity, professionalism, work ethic, self-awareness, etc. (“We hold these traits to be self-evident.”)

The personal statement should be coherent and well written, without grammatical or spelling errors or misuse of words. It should tell something about where you are coming from and where you want to go in life. Being humorous is risky – the reader will need to agree with you about what is funny.

Letters of reference should be from people who (1) know you well enough to write a meaningful letter, (2) like you, and (3) are in a position to compare you with others who have been successful in professional and graduate programs.

In the interview you should try to relax and “be yourself”, and trust that that is good enough. Answer questions as directly and honestly as you can. Avoid giving answers that seem too “rehearsed” or that are tangential to the question that was asked.

ACE Assessment

Adopted from “Does Your School List "Fit?" by Susan Salko, MS, and Jillian Golaszewski, MA

Developed and used in one of our previous positions, the ACE assessment serves as a tool for students to self-assess their candidacy, and in the process learn more about the way the admissions process works.

The "A" in ACE stands for Academics and is the first hurdle an applicant must clear. We explain that students must be sure they have (or will have) taken the necessary prerequisites for each of the schools to which they apply. We then discuss the calculation of the science GPA and the importance it plays in helping admissions officers determine whether an applicant is ready for the academic rigors of their program. And, lastly, entrance exam scores, which signal mastery of necessary concepts as well as the ability to be successful in future standardized exams necessary to achieve licensing, must be taken into consideration.

The "C" in ACE assesses the applicant's exploration of their chosen Career field. We explain to our students that once they have been determined to be capable of successfully completing the science curriculum and obtaining the necessary license to practice in the field, admissions officers want to be sure that they are making an informed career decision.

Aside from personal experiences as a patient, or going through the process with a loved one, it is essential that an applicant know what the day-to-day work and life of a healthcare professional is like. This is usually accomplished through shadowing or other opportunities to gain "behind the scenes" exposure working within a particular health profession. It is usually at this point that we note how valuable the information they learn in the yearlong US Healthcare course is in preparing them to speak knowledgeably about the many challenges facing the healthcare system. And, lastly we emphasize the importance of an applicant having clinical exposure through direct interaction and/or contact with patients to confirm whether this is the setting to which they are most suited and interested in helping.

The final part of the ACE assessment is the "E" which encompasses all of their experiences. This part of the assessment incorporates interests (majors, extracurricular activities), personal background (advantages/disadvantages, obstacles overcome), professional experience (previous work or career exposure outside of medicine), skills developed (leadership, teamwork), and personal identity, values, and beliefs that are relevant to their application. Through this part of the assessment, we emphasize that these experiences are what distinguishes them from other applicants. While most applicants have similar achievements or experiences in "A" and "C", it's their "E" that make them unique and from which they should draw when completing their application.

Allopathic and Osteopathic Medicine **AMCAS and AACOMAS Application Services**

There are two forms of medical education, allopathic and osteopathic medicine.

The application process for both allopathic and osteopathic medicine have similarities and differences. We recommend reviewing the missions and philosophies of both to find the best fit for yourself. Make an appointment with a pre-health advisor to decide which programs might be right for you.

Allopathic Medicine: A system in which medical doctors and other healthcare professionals (such as nurses, pharmacists, and therapists) treat symptoms and diseases using drugs, radiation, or surgery. Also called biomedicine, conventional medicine, mainstream medicine, orthodox medicine, and Western medicine. (<https://www.cancer.gov/publications/dictionaries/cancer-terms/def/allopathic-medicine>)

- To apply to allopathic programs, use the AMCAS: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/applying-medical-school-process/applying-medical-school-amcas/>
- View a full walkthrough of allopathic medicine: <https://med.fsu.edu/outreach/pre-medical-advising-application-information>

Osteopathic Medicine: Osteopathic medicine provides all of the benefits of modern medicine including prescription drugs, surgery, and the use of technology to diagnose disease and evaluate injury. It also offers the added benefit of hands-on diagnosis and treatment through a system of treatment known as osteopathic manipulative medicine. Osteopathic medicine emphasizes helping each person achieve a high level of wellness by focusing on health promotion and disease prevention. (<https://www.aacom.org/become-a-doctor/about-om>)

- To apply to osteopathic programs, use the AACOMAS: <https://aacomas.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login>
- View a full walkthrough of osteopathic medicine: <https://med.fsu.edu/outreach/pre-medical-advising-application-information>

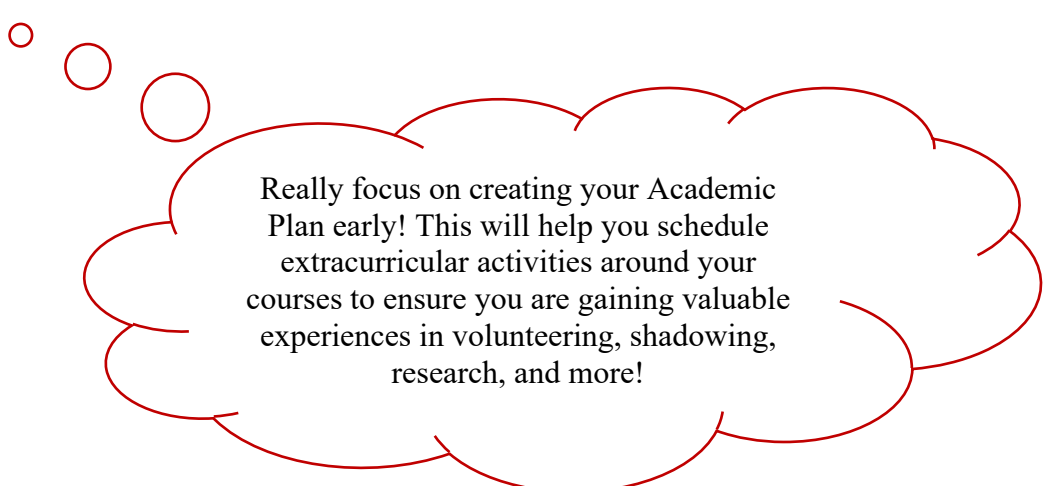
Academic Planning for Success

Working from an organized, well thought-out academic plan will contribute to your success. An academic plan details your premed and "pre-MCAT" coursework, major coursework, MCAT preparation, MCAT date, application timeline, and overall academic goals.

Advising: Meet with your academic and pre-health advisors to review your overall plan. You've put so much work into your plan, why not have it checked by an official advisor? Review the overall plan and requirements checklists. Update your plan regularly with an academic advisor for your major and a pre-health professions advisor.

Premed Timeline: Start your timeline by planning when you will complete all pre-med course requirements, MCAT prep, MCAT test, medical school applications, graduation.

1. **MCAT Course Checklist:** Thoroughly review and examine courses needed to prepare for the MCAT. We recommend using the Pre-MCAT Course CHECKLIST found on pages 7-8.
2. **Major Coursework Checklist:** Thoroughly review all of the courses needed for your major, and document which courses you have completed already and which ones you still need to complete. Use the official documents provided by your major department's webpage or advising office.
3. **MCAT Prep & Date:** Start researching the various prep resources and find one that will fit your study style. Identify the date you plan on taking the MCAT by reviewing the exam schedule on the AAMC website. Remember the MCAT exam is typically offered from January through September and scores usually take a month to be released.
4. **Academic Goals and GPA:** The AMCAS GPA provides the medical schools with a standard way to compare each applicant's background. The science (BCPM) GPA is comprised of Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Mathematics courses. All other coursework will be calculated in the AO (All Other) GPA. Be sure to know your different GPA's, not just your overall GPA from FSU coursework. Refer to the Course Classification Guide on page 9 for more details.



Really focus on creating your Academic Plan early! This will help you schedule extracurricular activities around your courses to ensure you are gaining valuable experiences in volunteering, shadowing, research, and more!

Pre-Medical Course Checklist

The following FSU courses are appropriate for preparing for medical school admission and the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT). The MCAT is composed of four major sections which, according to the AAMC, test the use concepts and skills to **solve scientific problems**. It is organized around foundational concepts for learning in medical school and tests use of concepts in **biochemistry** and includes introductory **psychology** and **sociology**. The test asks students to work with narrative information, graphs, tables, and charts to solve scientific problems. It also tests **analysis and reasoning** skills using passages from a wide range of **humanities** and **social sciences** disciplines.

Please review each programs' specific requirements for prerequisites.

BIOLOGY: 8 HOURS W/LABS

- _____ BSC 2010 Biology I (3): **Natural Science, Statewide Core**
- _____ BSC 2010L Biology I Lab (1): **Computer Competency, Natural Science Lab (Pre/Co-reqs: BSC 2010)**
- _____ BSC 2011 Biology II (3): **Natural Science, Statewide core (Pre-req: BSC 2010)**
- _____ BSC 2011L Biology II Lab (1): **Natural Science Lab, Scholarship in Practice (if taken with BSC2011) (Pre-reqs: BSC 2010/L; Co-req: BSC 2011)**

- _____ MCB 4403 (3): Prokaryotic Biology (**Co-req: MCB4403L**) *recommended*
- _____ PCB 3134 (3): Cell Structure and Function (**Pre-reqs: BSC2011/L and CHM 1046/L**) *recommended*
- _____ PCB 4024 (5): Molecular Biology (**Pre-reqs: BSC2011/L and CHM 1046/L**) *recommended*
- _____ PCB 3063 (3): Genetics (**Pre-reqs: BSC 2011/L and CHM 1046/L**) *recommended*

CHEMISTRY: 8 HOURS W/LABS

- _____ CHM 1045 General Chemistry I (3): **Natural Science, Statewide core (Pre-req: MAC 1105 or higher)**
- _____ CHM 1045L General Chemistry I Lab (1): **Computer Competency, Natural Science Lab (Pre-req: MAC 1105; Co-Req: CHM 1045)**
- _____ CHM 1046 General Chemistry II (3): **Natural Science, Statewide core (Pre-req: CHM 1045 or CHM 1050)**
- _____ CHM 1046L General Chemistry II Lab (1): **Natural Science Lab (Pre-req: CHM 1045/L or CHM 1050/L; Co-req: CHM 1046)**

ORGANIC AND BIOCHEMISTRY SEQUENCE: 8 HOURS W/LABS **Check programs for specific organic and biochemistry requirements

- _____ CHM 2210 Organic Chemistry I (3): (**Pre-req: CHM 1046/L**)
- _____ CHM 2211 Organic Chemistry II (3): (**Pre-req: CHM 2210**)
- _____ CHM 2211L Organic Chemistry II Lab (3):(**Pre- or co-req: CHM 2210**)
- _____ BCH 4053 Biochemistry I (3): (**Pre-req: CHM 2211**)

- OR**
- _____ CHM 3217 One Semester Organic Chemistry (3): (**Pre-reqs: CHM 1047/L**)
- _____ CHM 3217L One Semester Organic Chemistry Lab (1): (**Pre-req: CHM 3217**)
- _____ CHM 3218 One semester Biochemistry (4): (**Pre-req: CHM 2211 or CHM 3217**)

PHYSICS: 8 HOURS W/LABS (Choose either college or general):

- _____ PHY 2053C College Physics A (4): **Natural Science Lab, Statewide Core (Pre-reqs: MAC 1114, MAC 1140; Co-req: PHY 2053L)**
- _____ PHY 2054C College Physics B (4): (**Pre-reqs: PHY 2053 or PHY 2048C; Co-req: PHY 2054L**)

- OR**
- _____ PHY 2048C General Physics A (Calculus based) (5): **Natural Science Lab, Statewide Core (Pre-req: MAC 2311)**
- _____ PHY 2049C General Physics B (Calc based) (5): **Natural Science Lab, Statewide Core (Pre-req: PHY2048C, MAC2312; Co-req: PHY2049L)**

MATHEMATICS: 6 HOURS

- _____ MAC 1105 College Algebra (3): **Quantitative & Logical Thinking, Statewide Core**
- _____ MAC 1140 Pre-calculus Algebra (3): **Quantitative & Logical Thinking, Statewide Core (Pre-req: MAC 1105)**
- _____ MAC 1114 Trigonometry (3): **Quantitative & Logical Thinking, Statewide Core (Pre-req: MAC 1105 or MAC 1140 or MAC 2233)**

- _____ MAC 2311 Calculus with Analytic Geometry I (4): (**Pre-reqs: MAC1147; or MAC1140 & MAC1114; or suitable mathematics exam placement score**)

STATISTICS: (Choose at least one course)

- _____ STA 2122 Intro to Applied Statistics (3): **Quantitative & Logical Thinking, Statewide Core (Pre-req: MAC 1105)**

- OR**
- _____ STA 2171 Statistics for Biology (4): **Quant & Logical Thinking, Statewide Core (Pre-reqs: MAC2311 & Bio Major Status/Dept. Approval)**

PSYCHOLOGY & SOCIOLOGY: (Choose at least two courses)

- _____ PSY 2012 General Psychology (3): **Social Science, Statewide Core**
- _____ PSB 2000 Brain and Behavior (3): **Natural Science**
- _____ SOP 3004 Social Psychology (3)
- _____ SYG 1000 Introductory Sociology (3): **Social Science, Statewide Core**
- _____ SYG 2010 Social Problems (3): **Social Science, Diversity in Western Experience (Y)**

HUMANITIES/HISTORY (choose at least two courses)

- _____ PHI 2630 Ethical Issues and Life Choices (3): **Ethics**
- _____ PHI 2100 Reasoning and Critical Thinking (3): **Quantitative and Logical Thinking**
- _____ PHI 2635 Bioethics (3): **Ethics, Diversity in Western Experience (Y), "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- _____ REL 3160 Religion and Science (3): **History**
- _____ REL 3170 Religious Ethics and Moral Problems (3): **Ethics, Cross-Cultural Studies (X), "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- _____ AMH 2097 Nationality, Race, and Ethnicity in the United States (3): **History, Diversity in Western Experience (Y), "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- _____ HIS 3491 Medicine and Society (3): **History, Diversity in Western Experience (Y), "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- _____ HIS 3464 History of Science (3): **History, Diversity in Western Experience (Y), "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**

OTHER LIBERAL STUDIES COURSES WITH PRE-MED AND PRE-HEALTH RELATED CONTENT

- BSC 2085 Anatomy and Physiology I (3): **Natural Science, Statewide Core recommended**
- ANT 2410 Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (3): **Social Science, Cross-Cultural Studies (X)**
- ANT 2511 Introduction to Physical Anthropology and Prehistory (3): **Natural Science**
- ANT 4468: Bones, Body, and Disease (3): **Natural Science (Pre-req: ANT 2511)**
- ANT 4525: Human Osteology (3): **(Pre-req: ANT 2511)**
- BSC 3402L Experimental Biology Laboratory (3): **Oral Communication Competency, Upper Division Writing Competency (Pre-reqs: BSC 2011/L, CHM 1046/L)**
- BCH 4053L General Biochemistry I Lab (3): **Scholarship in Practice, Upper Division Writing Competency (Co-req: BCH 4053)**
- CHM 1050 Honors General Chemistry I (3): **Natural Science, Statewide Core (Pre-req: MAC 1105; Co-req: CHM 1050L)**
- CHM 1051 Honors General Chemistry II (3): **Natural Science, Statewide Core (Pre-reqs: CHM 1050/L or CHM 1045/L; Co-req: CHM 1051L)**
- CLT 2049 Medical Terminology (3): **Humanities and Cultural Practice**
- FAD 2230 Family Relationships: A Lifespan Development Approach (3): **Social Science**
- IDH 3702 Becoming and Being Leaders: Motivating Self and Others (3): **Social Science, E-Series, "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- IDS 2322 Sexual Health in the Modern World (3): **Social Science, E-series, "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- IDS 2321 The Blindness Experience (3): **Quantitative & Logical Thinking, E-Series, Scholarship in Practice, Diversity in Western Experience (Y), "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- IDS 2490 Social Responsibility (Rhetorically Speaking) (3): **Ethics, E-series, Oral Communication Competency, "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- IDS 2456 Who is Human? Culture, Gender, and Human Rights (3): **Humanities & Cultural Practice, E-series, Cross-Cultural Studies (X), "W" (State-Mandated)**
- IDS 2651 Language, Body, Mind, and World (3): **Social Science, E-series, Scholarship in Practice, "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- IDS 2104 Foundations of Research and Inquiry (3): **E-series, Scholarship in Practice, "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- IDS 2132 Busting Common Biology Myths (3): **Natural Science, E-series, "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- IDS 2419 Cultures of Medicine (3): **History, "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- IDS 2134 Evolution, Medicine, and Evidence (3): **Natural Science, E-series, "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- IDS 2135 Genetics in Society (3): **Natural Science, E-series, "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- IDS 2136 Biotechnology: Impact of Life Sciences on Society (3): **Natural Science, E-series, "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- IDS 3493 Empowering Health Consumers in the Ehealth Era (3): **E-series, Scholarship in Practice, "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- IDS 3700 Broken Clocks and Disrupted Sleep: Impacts of Technology (3): **Natural Science, E-series, "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- IDS 3364 Yesses and Noes: The Ethics of Consent (3): **Ethics, E-series, "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- IDS 2156 Environment and Society (3): **Quantitative and Logical Thinking, E-Series, "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- IDS 3433 Modern Death (3): **Social Science, Ethics, E-Series, "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- IDS 2419 Cultures and Medicine (3): **History, "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- IDS 3137 Politics of Reproduction (3): **Ethics, E-series, "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- LDR 2213 Leadership for Social Justice (3): **Scholarship in Practice, Cross-Cultural Studies (X)**
- LIT 3438 Literature and Medicine (3): **Humanities and Cultural Practice, Ethics, "W" (State-Mandated Writing)**
- NUR 3076 Communication in Health Care (3): **Oral Communication Competency (Pre-req: ENC 1101)**
- PHY 3091 Communication in Physics (2): **Oral Communication Competency (Pre-reqs: PHY 3101, PHY 3045)**
- SPC 1017 Fundamentals of Speech (3): **Oral Communication Competency**
- SYD 3800 Sociology of Sex and Gender (3): **Social Science, Diversity in Western Experience (Y)**
- SYD 4700 Race and Minority Group Relations (3): **Social Science, Diversity in Western Experience (Y)**

AMCAS® Application Course Classification Guide

The following guide provides examples of how courses are often categorized. Please select course classifications based on the primary content of the course.

In the case of interdisciplinary courses, where two or more subject matters are combined into one course, refer to the description of the course on your school's website or consult with your Pre-health Advisor to choose the most appropriate course classification.

Biology (BIOL)

- Anatomy
- Biology
- Biophysics
- Biotechnology
- Botany
- Cell Biology
- Ecology
- Entomology
- Genetics
- Histology
- Immunology
- Microbiology
- Molecular Biology
- Neuroscience
- Physiology
- Zoology

Chemistry (CHEM)


- Biochemistry
- Chemistry
- Physical Chemistry
- Thermodynamics

Physics (PHYS)

- Astronomy
- Physics

Mathematics (MATH)

- Applied Mathematics
- Biostatistics
- Mathematics
- Statistics

 Biology-Chemistry-Physics-Math (BCPM) Courses

Behavioral & Social Sciences (BESS)

- Anthropology
- Economics
- Family Studies
- Psychology
- Sociology

Business (BUSI)

- Accounting
- Finance
- Human Resources Studies
- Management
- Marketing
- Organizational Studies

Communications (COMM)

- Journalism
- Media Production & Studies
- TV, Video & Audio

Computer Science & Technology (COMP)

- Computer Science
- Computer Engineering
- Information Systems
- Telecommunications

Education (EDUC)

- Counseling & Personnel Services
- Curriculum & Instruction
- Educational Administration
- Educational Policy
- Health Education
- Human Development
- Physical Education (Except for sports courses.)
- Special Education

Engineering (ENGI)

- Aerospace Engineering
- Biomedical Engineering
- Chemical Engineering
- Civil Engineering
- Electrical Engineering
- Environmental Engineering
- Nuclear Engineering

English Language & Literature (ENGL)

- Composition & Rhetoric
- Creative Writing
- Literature

Fine Arts (ARTS)

- Art
- Art History
- Dance
- Fine Arts
- Music
- Photography
- Theatre

Foreign Languages, Linguistics, & Literature (FLAN)

- American Sign Language
- Comparative Literature
- Foreign Language(s) & Literature
- Linguistics

Government, Political Science, & Law (GOVT)

- Criminology & Criminal Justice
- Government
- International Relations & Studies
- Law/Legal Studies
- Political Science
- Public Affairs & Policy
- Urban Policy & Planning

Health Sciences (HEAL)

- Allied Health
- Chiropractic
- Dentistry
- Hearing & Speech Studies
- Hospital Administration
- Kinesiology
- Nursing
- Nutrition
- Occupational Therapy
- Optometry
- Osteopathy
- Physical Therapy
- Physician Assistant

- Public Health
- Pharmacology & Pharmacy
- Sports Medicine
- Veterinary Medicine

History (HIST)

- History

Natural & Physical Sciences (NPSC)

- Agriculture
- Animal & Avian Sciences
- Environmental Science & Policy
- Forestry
- Geography
- Geology
- Horticulture
- Landscape Architecture
- Meteorology
- Natural Resources
- Oceanography

Other (OTHR)

(All courses that do not fit appropriately in another classification)

- Architecture
- Library Science
- Military Science
- Sports (tennis, golf, aerobics, etc.)

Philosophy & Religion (PHIL)

- Ethics
- Logic
- Philosophy
- Religion
- Theology

Special Studies (SSTU)

- Afro-American Studies
- American Studies
- Gender Studies

Checklist for Applying to Medical Schools your Application Year

Apply one calendar year before school begins.

1. August/September: Meet with an advisor to assure your readiness to apply.
2. Consult AAMC's Medical School Admissions Requirements (MSAR) and individual program sites to identify programs to apply to.
3. Prepare your study plan for taking the MCAT; get the AAMC's "MCAT Essentials" handbook.
4. Register to take the MCAT. Schedule your test date to ensure that your scores will be available and the AMCAS application is complete by the deadline. You will want to take it earlier in the semester in case of any unforeseen issues with taking the test so that you have the opportunity to retake it as necessary if needed.
5. Establish your letter of recommendation file with the Pre-Health Advising Office.
6. Start drafting your personal statement.
7. Have people review and proofread your personal statement; ask for feedback and make revisions accordingly. The Career Center pre-health liaison can help.
8. Update resume or CV of your educational history and experiences.
9. Print copies of your unofficial transcripts.
10. Create an information packet to give to professors and people when asking for a letter of recommendation that includes:
 - a. Cover letter or note to the writer (include how they know you, thank them for their help and time, your contact information in case they need to reach you, when you would like the letter to be submitted, and instructions on how to submit their letter)
 - b. Your resume
 - c. Final personal statement
 - d. Copy of unofficial college transcript
 - e. List of future courses you plan to take
11. Schedule personal meetings with faculty and professionals to request your letter of recommendation.
12. Access the AMCAS application in MAY with the account used to register for the MCAT.
13. Review the deadlines for each school you are applying to. Remember to consult the MSAR.
14. Complete and submit the AMCAS application in JUNE, or at the earliest date possible.
15. Send reminders and thank you notes to letter writers.
16. Complete the secondary applications as soon as you receive them.
17. Prepare for an interview by reviewing current topics in medicine and brushing up on interview skills.

The AMCAS Application

Check the AMCAS application guide for information on the current cycle.

Application Dates

Application Deadlines

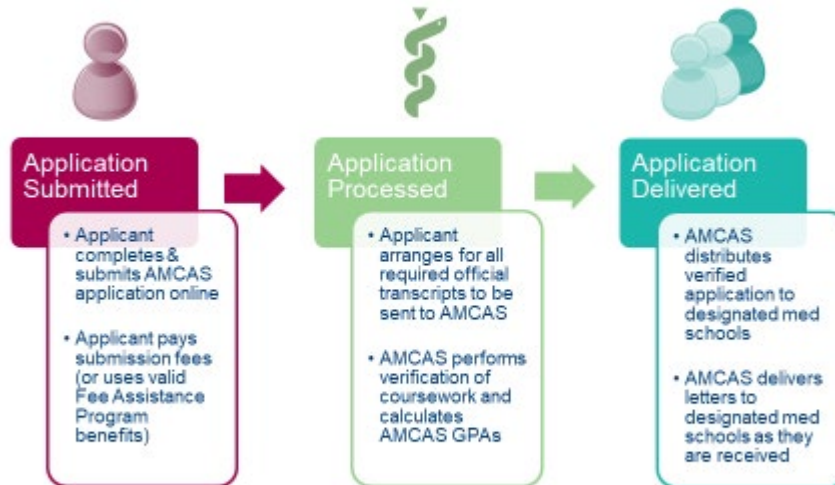
- Application must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. ET of the deadline date
- Transcript deadlines: must be received by AMCAS within 14 calendar days of the application deadline date
 - Must be received by August 1 for EDP applicants
- Visit www.aamc.org/amcasdeadlines

| Date* | Event |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Middle of April | 2020 AMCAS resources available |
| Beginning of May | AMCAS application opens |
| End of May | AMCAS application submission begins |
| Late June | Initial transmission of application data to medical schools |
| August 1 | Early Decision Program deadline |
| Sept.-Dec. | Application deadlines |

*Dates subject to change



How does AMCAS work?



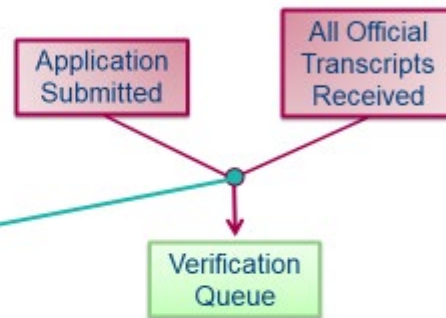
AMCAS Verification Process

Transcripts

- All required official transcripts are required before an application can join the verification queue
- AMCAS accepts PDF eTranscripts from approved senders

Processing

- From date of **“Ready to Review”** application status, about 6 weeks
- Find processing updates on Twitter (@AMCASinfo) and on the AMCAS application sign in page



The AMCAS Application

- Identifying Information
- Schools Attended
- Biographic Information
- Course Work
- Work/Activities
- Letters of Evaluation
- Medical Schools
- Essay(s)
- Standardized Tests




Finding the Right Program

[Medical School Admissions Requirements by AAMC](#): The Medical School Admission Requirements (MSAR®) is an online database that enables you to browse, search, sort, and compare information about U.S. and Canadian medical schools and BS/MD programs, and more.

The Medical School Admission Requirements website is available for [purchase through AAMC Publications](#).

Alternatively, you can [purchase The Official Guide to Medical School Admissions](#) which includes chapters on deciding if a career in medicine is right for you, how to prepare for medical school during your undergraduate years, and an overview of medical school education. The guidebook contains some national data, but school-specific data and individual school profiles are only available in the Medical School Admission Requirements site.

FSU College of Medicine MSAR Profile:



Florida State University College of Medicine
Tallahassee, FL

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Combined Degrees Not Provided | Also Accepts Out-of-state | School Type Public | Median MCAT 507 |
| Tuition & Fees \$26,310 In-state \$60,861 Out-of-state | Application Deadline 12/01/2019 | Men / Women 51 / 68 | Median GPA 3.77 |
| General Information | | | |
| Year founded 2000 | Total enrollment ⓘ 490 | Campus type Urban | Classes begin May 26, 2020 |
| Contacts | | | |
| Main campus FSU-Tallahassee Division of Student Affairs and Admissions 1115 West Call Street Tallahassee, FL 32304-3556 USA ☎ (850) 644-7904 | | Regional campus(es) FSU-Daytona Beach Daytona Beach, FL FSU-Fort Pierce Fort Pierce, FL | |

Identify the Right Program

Peter S. Cahn, PhD

Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and Director and Professor

Center for Interprofessional Studies and Innovation at the MGH Institute of Health Professions in Boston

Centralized application services make it easy to apply to dozens of graduate programs with minimal effort; but that doesn't mean you should. Even if they all look alike to you, graduate schools tend to think of themselves as having distinct profiles with students who "fit" their values. Therefore, it's likely that your interests, aptitudes and goals will match with a small number of programs. To determine which ones, first figure out the type of institution where you will thrive and take into account all of these factors:

- Location: Would you like to study in a small or larger city? Near family or friends? Which affiliated hospitals and practices are nearby?
- Size of the Institution: Small? Medium? Large?
- Facilities: Do the program's facilities meet your needs and expectations? Are simulation resources available?
- Faculty: What projects, studies, or experience of the faculty interest and inspire you? Do the faculty have deep experience in both health care practice and research? Remember, faculty members tend to play a role in admissions, so it's important to identify a few whose profiles match yours.
- Teaching Philosophy: Does the program employ interactive, team-based learning or a traditional lecture format? Is there an inter-professional emphasis?
- Career Path: Do you see yourself pursuing research after graduation? Teaching? Private practice? What type of advising would you receive?
- Financial Aid: What percentage of students receive aid? What is the school's overall financial aid budget? How much will you need?

Once you have answered these questions, you will have your own personal profile that you can use to evaluate any program. It will also provide you with specifics to weave into a personalized and compelling application essay.

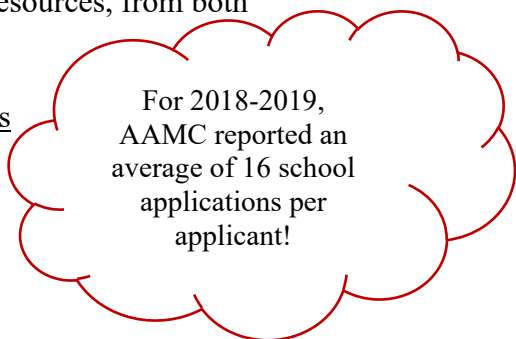
Finally, although some sources may pretend otherwise, there is no definitive ranking of graduate programs. Selecting a graduate school is about finding the right fit for you with no single set of criteria applying to everyone. Here are some resources, from both private and public sources, to help you:

[Database of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions and Programs](#)

[National Research Council](#)

[US News and World Report](#)

[National Center for Educational Statistics](#)



For 2018-2019,
AAMC reported an
average of 16 school
applications per
applicant!

Crafting Your CV or Resume

Make sure you keep an up-to-date CV or resume to tell your story when applying to opportunities, asking for letters of recommendation, and completing your applications.

The FSU Career Center has great resources for writing tips and examples:

<https://www.career.fsu.edu/>

Adopted from “Prepare a Strong CV” by Peter S. Cahn, PhD.

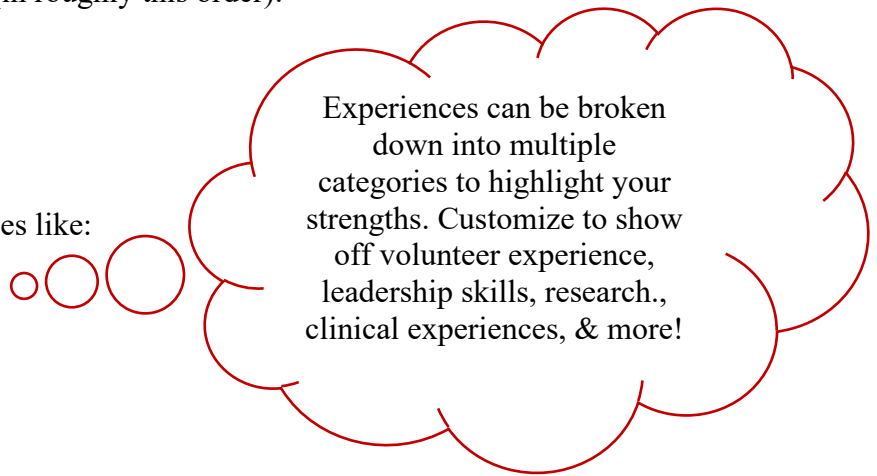
The CV differs from a standard job resume in that it grows along with your accomplishments. It also is more focused on academic achievements, which is why many graduate programs request one from applicants.

At a minimum, a good CV should include (in roughly this order):

- Educational Credentials
- Health Care Experience
- Extracurricular Activities
- Honors and Awards
- Publications and Presentations

You may also have items to add in categories like:

- Research Experience
- Leadership Roles
- Community Service
- Professional Society Memberships
- Computer Skills
- Languages



Always exclude content that sends the wrong signal:

- Personal information
- High school activities (unless at a regional or national level)
- Local organizations or awards that contain no explanation
- Irrelevant work experience

And avoid formatting errors that will distract your audience from the content itself:

- Inconsistent date formats
- Cramped text
- Illogical ordering and/or no section headings
- Typos, multiple fonts, images, and other distracting elements

There is no single format for CVs. You can usually find the CVs of faculty in programs where you're applying on departmental websites. These may give you ideas, but don't assume that faculty have clear, concise CVs. You can also visit these career services sites for models:

Cornell University
Microsoft Word Templates
Purdue Online Writing Lab

Guidelines for Writing Extracurricular Activities for AMCAS Application

Summarizing your extracurricular activities is one of *the most important components* of the AMCAS medical school application. The AMCAS application manual, the instructions are as follows:

Section Five: Work and Activities

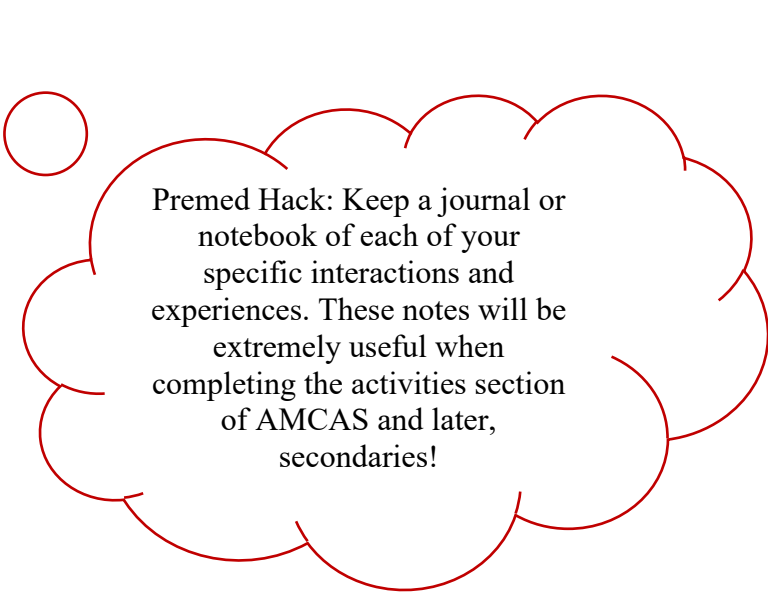
The Work and Activities section of the application is designed to give you the opportunity to include in your application any work experience, extracurricular activities, awards, honors, or publications that you would like to bring to the attention of the medical schools to which you are applying. A maximum of fifteen (15) experiences may be entered. Enter only significant experiences, knowing that medical schools are more interested in quality than quantity. Enter each experience only once. Repeated experiences should also be entered only once. For example, an applicant who makes the Dean's List each term should enter this only once, noting in the description that this occurred multiple times.

Most Meaningful Experiences

You may identify up to three (3) experiences that you consider to be the most meaningful. If you have two or more entries, you will be required to identify at least one (1) as the most meaningful. When you designate an activity as being Most Meaningful, you will be given an additional 1325 characters to explain why. When writing your response, you might want to consider the transformative nature of the experience, the impact you made while engaging in the activity, and the personal growth you experienced as a result of your participation. “

For each experience entry, choose from the following list the experience type that best describes each experience.

- Paid Employment – Not Military
- Pay Employment – Military
- Community Service/Volunteer – Not Medical/Clinical
- Community Service/Volunteer – Medical/Clinical
- Research/Lab
- Teaching/Tutoring
- Honors/Awards/Recognitions
- Conferences Attended
- Presentations/Posters
- Publications
- Extracurricular/Hobbies/Avocations
- Leadership – Not Listed Elsewhere
- Other



Premed Hack: Keep a journal or notebook of each of your specific interactions and experiences. These notes will be extremely useful when completing the activities section of AMCAS and later, secondaries!

Advice for Writing Extracurricular Activity Descriptions

Elizabeth Foster, Ph.D.
FSU College of Medicine

There is a simple but effective format for writing your descriptions in three succinct sentences:

- 1) use the first sentence to describe the major details: the activity (e.g. volunteer; elected position in an organization; award for outstanding service), the context or place (e.g. hospital, clinic, FSU campus, Habitat for Humanity) the time frame (e.g. fall semester 2010; summer; a week-long camp for children with disabilities).
- 2) use the second sentence to describe what you specifically did or accomplished (e.g. helped build a home; tutored three elementary school children in math and science; shadowed Dr. Smith daily while seeing patients in her primary care practice)
- 3) use the third sentence to describe how this contributes to your preparation for medicine (e.g. was exposed to an internal medicine practice and the types of patients seen in this specialty; gained valuable patient contact; gained a deeper understanding for the needs of the uninsured).

Activity Description Example: “I worked in Dr. Alan Spector’s neuroscience lab at Florida State as a research assistant during Spring 2019 after taking his Intro to Brain and Behavior course in Fall 2018. I was paired with a graduate student to assess taste function in mice with genetic deletions of taste receptors. The weekly lab meetings were my favorite. It was here that all the hard work in the lab overlapped with the science behind the research that made me realize the value and excitement associated with advancing knowledge in a particular field. Watching members of the lab think critically as a group inspired me to seek out opportunities that would help me develop my own academic interests.”

Most Meaningful Activity Description Example: “I completed a 12-hour per week internship during the Fall of 2018 semester with the Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation Program at Tallahassee Memorial Hospital to apply information learned in my Exercise Science coursework. Half of my time was spent working with cardiac rehab patients, while the other half was spent with bariatric patients. My responsibilities included writing exercise plans for special populations (under supervision), interacting with patients from triage to check-out, reading and applying lessons in an EKG book, and creating a reference document that listed and described the multitude of diseases that accompanied cardiovascular disease in the cardiac patients’ charts.

On my first day as an intern, I was asked to triage patients as they came in, which included taking their blood pressure, heart rate, discussing their exercise plan, and getting them started on their session. At first was scary to touch the patients and ask them questions because I thought they might think I wasn’t qualified because I was so young. But I quickly learned that confidence and gentleness is key, and they began to see me as a vital part of the team. Another aspect of my internship that impacted me was forming relationships in a professional setting with the patients. As they began to trust me, they shared their struggles with following the doctors’ orders such as losing weight, lowering cholesterol, and exercising more. It made me realize how societal factors come into play in a patient’s healthcare and how physicians must be understanding of those factors to create an encouraging atmosphere. I noticed that patients who left the doctor’s office with an understanding of their diagnosis and the consequences of not following treatment were most successful. The most meaningful part of my internship was being able to see my textbook come to life in the patients. Seeing results in patients who implemented concepts I learned about in class was exciting and made those concepts easier to remember.”

Personal Statements

AMCAS Personal Statement Guidelines

Elizabeth Foster, Ph.D.
FSU College of Medicine

Use the Personal Comments essay as an opportunity to distinguish yourself from other applicants. Some questions you may want to consider while writing this essay are:

- Why have you selected the field of medicine?
- What motivates you to learn more about medicine?
- What do you want medical schools to know about you that hasn't been disclosed in another section of the application?

In addition, you may wish to include information such as:

- Special hardships, challenges or obstacles that may have influenced your educational pursuits.
- Commentary on significant fluctuations in your academic record that are not explained elsewhere in your application.

Consider and write your Personal Comments carefully; many admissions committees place significant weight on this section. To avoid formatting issues, we recommend typing your essay directly into the AMCAS application rather than cutting and pasting your essay from other software.

Please keep the following in mind

- Proofread carefully! No changes (including grammatical or typographical errors) may be made after your application is submitted to AMCAS.
- You cannot run a spell check in the AMCAS application.
- Applicants who plan to cut and paste their essays into the application should draft their essays in a text-only format, preferably in text-only word processing software, such as Microsoft Notepad. Copying formatted text into the application may result in formatting issues that cannot be edited once your application is submitted.
- Applicants should enter all text responses into the application just as they would like the medical schools to see them, avoiding use of all capital or all lower-case letters. Medical schools have indicated that they prefer to receive applications that follow normal writing practices regarding case.
- This essay cannot be added to or changed after your application is submitted to AMCAS.
- Plagiarism or misrepresentations will prompt an investigation.
- It is not necessary to repeat information reported elsewhere on your application.
- This essay will be sent to all of the medical schools to which you have applied.
- The available space for this essay is 5300 characters, or approximately one page. You will receive an error message if you exceed the available space.
- The formatting of this section does not allow indentation; therefore, extra spaces can be included between paragraphs. Spaces are counted as characters.

AMCAS Personal Statement: Getting Started

Elizabeth Foster, Ph.D.

FSU College of Medicine

Your statement should include your motivation, preparation (experiences and achievements) and illustrate your sincere desire to practice medicine. Consult the “Core Personal Competencies for Entering Medical Students” and the AMCAS Personal Statement Guidelines to help guide your writing.

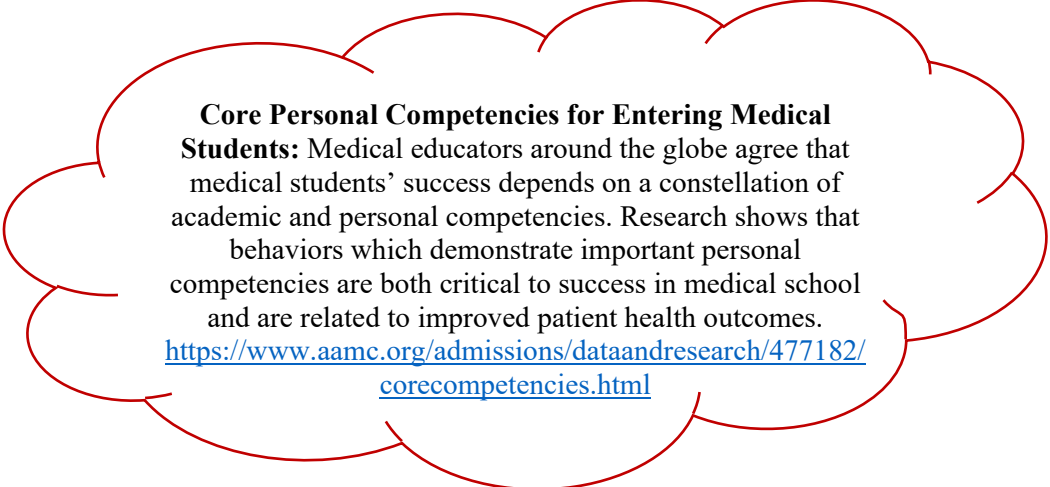
Use the prompts to reflect on your personal motivation and preparation for a career in medicine, and your core values consistent with the art and practice of medicine.

PROMPTS:

- Jot down quick notes as you think about the experiences in your life that have led up to the point where you are sitting in this class. How did you get here?
- What the events in your life that got you started on the path toward a health profession.
- Is there one experience that stands out? Actually there may not be just one, and that’s okay.
- Think about what has attracted you to the idea of becoming a healthcare provider.
- What started you on your path, and what kept you going on that path once you had already started?
- What words would you use to describe how you felt during these experiences?
- What do you want to achieve through your career?
- What do you value? What’s important to you?
- Has your vision of healthcare changed as you changed?

Please keep the following in mind:

- Proofread carefully! (including grammatical or typographical errors)
- Run a spell check.
- Applicants who plan to cut and paste their essays into the application should draft their essays in a text-only format.
- Plagiarism or misrepresentations will prompt an investigation.
- It is not necessary to repeat information reported elsewhere on your application.



Core Personal Competencies for Entering Medical Students: Medical educators around the globe agree that medical students’ success depends on a constellation of academic and personal competencies. Research shows that behaviors which demonstrate important personal competencies are both critical to success in medical school and are related to improved patient health outcomes.
<https://www.aamc.org/admissions/dataandresearch/477182/corecompetencies.html>

Personal Statement Samples

SAMPLE 1:

Before entering college, I would have been paralyzed with hesitation if I were to assume the life that I live today. Partly through demonstration and partly through assumption, I was recognized as a very studious and hard working high school student. However, grades are not the measure of a person, and in my case they masked over an important character flaw that I had refused to address and sometimes even acknowledge. It had only taken a brief exchange with one of my teachers to open my eyes and take an honest look at myself.

"Could you please read your answer to the homework problem?"

I did, suddenly very conscious of the all the attention focused upon my voice. After I read aloud my answer, the teacher then said, "You know, I think that's the first time I have ever heard you speak!"

A few of my peers lightly laughed, and I knew it was meant as a joke; it was, after all, a fairly accurate statement that could have been said by a number of people at the time. Still, I knew that I wasn't going to school just to become a machine that could chug numbers and store facts for later recall. Looking back, I didn't realize how much harm being strictly silent had inflicted on me. There was hardly a point in receiving a public education if everything I learned could be read from textbooks while sitting in the privacy of my bedroom.

The education in my self-esteem began in my first year at FSU when I joined the Filipino Student Association, or FSA. For many reasons, this was a step outside of my comfort zone. My intention was to try and learn a culture I had little understanding of and embrace its values and language, thus broadening my perspective of other people's lives. After a year with FSA, I had not only developed a second family of friends in its members but also gained a lot of confidence in myself. My fellow FSA members recognized the change and reflected their support by helping me obtain the position of Co-Public Relations Officer for my sophomore year. This gave me the opportunity to speak in front of a large audience, as well as head the maintenance of a strong relationship with all of FSA's members and other student organizations.

The first time I was supposed to speak in front of a room full of new FSA members, my voice was tighter than I had anticipated. My fidgeting hands and sweaty palms kept reaching up to my tie, which I swore was about to strangle me on the spot. After the meeting, I was proud of myself nonetheless because at least I managed to tackle my fears head on, and it would only become easier from that day forward. I quickly learned how to time manage all of my obligations like my life depended on it, and in a way it did. For the past two years, my life has been tightly bound to a schedule that oftentimes squeezed two or even three meetings in one evening. I was juggling student activities in one hand and my GPA in the other, but I found the challenge both thrilling and rewarding. Starting with a lesson on self-confidence, I ended up learning how to trust in myself. The power to have a voice is a very liberating one. It grants the ability to have confidence in myself. This confidence lets me realize my potential to achieve my goals, the same confidence that encourages me to take risks and to challenge myself to be better than who I am.

No one defining moment in my past directed my drive towards becoming a physician. Instead, it felt like a natural path that started with my childhood fascination with the Discovery Channel and the excitement I felt when I volunteered at the Bethesda Memorial Hospital. Time and time again I was warned of how arduous this path was going to be, but the anticipation in my chest swelled whenever I thought about the future I set out to achieve. Balance always seems to be the key word; grades can carry you so far, but your spirit to become a physician is just as necessary. Gathering all of my college experiences to date, I feel more determined than ever to pursue this passion. I believe that, while my classes have given me the tools to prepare for medical school, my commitments to FSA have fostered a healthier mentality towards connecting with other people.

Every physician I have shadowed thus far has demonstrated, above all, the importance of having a trustworthy bond with their patients. Whenever a patient turned towards me and praised the physician I was shadowing, it was almost always regarding their welcoming character and willingness to listen. From this, I knew that all of the time I invested in my duties as Co-Public Relations Officer was just as important as the time I spent studying in the library. My love for FSA has continued to grow, and I have since been elected as the new Vice President of FSA for the 2010 to 2011 school year. Reflecting upon where I have been in the past two years, I will aspire to continue learning all that I can so that I may eventually be amongst the practicing physicians that I have always admired.

SAMPLE 2:

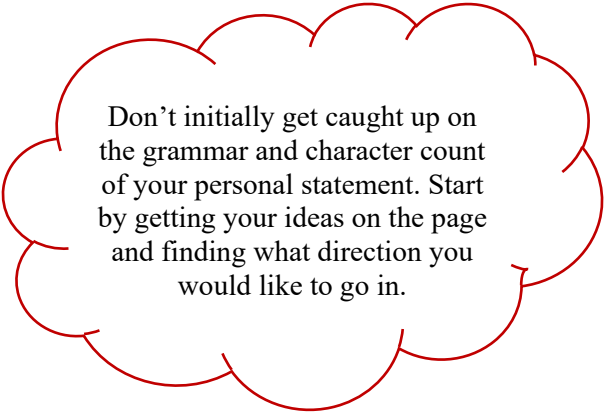
Growing up, I always had a heightened curiosity about the world. My unkempt backyard was a jungle waiting to be explored, and I made myself an expert on the many animals that made it their home. As I grew older, my curiosity expanded, encircling various aspects of history, art, literature and science. Strangely, I was not initially drawn towards medicine. My father and most of his family are physicians, and my daily exposure to medicine meant that it didn't have the same mystery as the Amazon Rainforest or the Oregon Trail. Furthermore, my limited understanding of medicine was of filing and making copies for my father's office staff. Nevertheless, being surrounded by physicians meant that there were moments of brief curiosity in which I would fleetingly try to listen for a heartbeat in a stethoscope or attempt to understand how an x-ray machine could see inside a child's arm to reveal a fractured bone. But the idea of working in an "office" still didn't appeal to me, and I turned my interests in learning elsewhere. It wasn't until high school that I began to see medicine in a different light.

Working at my Dad's office, I found him calling me in to meet one of his patients. This was unusual; my father never invited me into the room with his patients, perhaps because his daily dealings as a pediatrician were typically ear problems, streptococcal infections, and other standard pediatric cases. This girl, only a few years younger than me, was a very different case. Born with one leg significantly shorter than the other, she had been fitted with a leg brace that extended pins through her skin and muscle, into the bone of her leg. Her mother turned these metal pins every night, lengthening her leg millimeter by painful millimeter. The visit changed my understanding of medicine completely. The bulky contraption, that would one day allow this girl to walk, run, and jump as she never could before, fascinated me. Even more compelling than the brilliantly simple mechanism was the little girl's faith that, in spite of the pain and discomfort caused by the leg-pinning procedure, her doctors were going to make her better. The meeting left an impression on me; it was from this visit that I began to see medicine not as an office job, but as a career in which doctors use their knowledge of the body and disease and problem-solving skills to positively affect the lives of their patients. The idea that

understanding medicine and the human anatomy allows doctors to make a significant impact on their patients' lives intrigued me from then on.

As time went on, however, I threw myself into other endeavors, and my experience with the girl undergoing a leg-lengthening procedure slipped to the back of my mind. I planned on going to art school after graduating high school. During this time, I continued to work for my father in his pediatric office and shadowed him on his more unusual visits. In my junior year, my church organized a mission trip to volunteer with orphans in Mexico. The experience was incredibly moving, and I returned from the trip with a newfound sense of servitude towards my local and global community. Combined with my passion for learning, it seemed natural that I seek a medical degree; medicine would fuse my passion for learning with servitude towards others, making it a field that is both mentally and personally satisfying. My curiosity about the world around me, along with this aspiration to better serve those in need, led to a desire to become a physician.

Medicine is built upon altruism, compassion, and duty, and my belief that it is the right career for me has only been fortified by my volunteer work in college. I have always been actively invested in both my learning and my volunteer work, whether talking to guests at the local shelter or dissecting various specimens in Animal Diversity lab; I hope to continue to live and learn actively as a doctor. Through my extra-curricular activities, I have been exposed to many of the medical issues faced by societies on a community, regional and global level and gained a better understanding of them through my active involvement in patients' lives. Over the years; my views of the world have evolved and become less black and white, my interests have shifted significantly and my understanding of medicine as a field has changed. These changes have further solidified my intentions to become a physician. Through my passion to learn, I can acquire a unique and fascinating array of skills that I can use to positively affect the lives of my patients and lead an active life of servitude towards my community, on both a local and universal level. The combination of learning, serving others, and living actively cannot be experienced through any other career path, and I look forward to expanding my knowledge and understanding of the body, disease and the individual. I want to live a life of duty towards the patient as a medical physician.



Don't initially get caught up on the grammar and character count of your personal statement. Start by getting your ideas on the page and finding what direction you would like to go in.

Letters of Recommendation

Advice for Getting Letters of Recommendation

Elizabeth Foster, Ph.D.

FSU College of Medicine

A common mistake that I have seen as students prepare to apply to med school is in letters of recommendation. Some students don't think about the importance of letters of recommendation early enough in their undergraduate career. They neglect trying to establish professional relationships with their professors until it's almost too late. This leads to panic in their junior and senior years when they realize that good letters of support are hard to get.

Here are things to do to secure strong letters:

- Get to know all of your science professors while you are in their classes. Make appointments and visit their office hours to review subject material, and let them get to know you. This will require at least 3 visits to their office so that they can remember you. It's unrealistic to think that they will remember you from their class unless you meet with them regularly. Here's a formula: make one office visit for each test that you have in the course.
- Each semester, follow-up with those professors that you get along with really well. This continues the relationship and will help them remember you as a person. Start by sending them an email to keep them updated, and then stop by during their office hours.
- Be professional at all times - with email and interactions. You'll be surprised at what a professor will remember about you, especially if they have to evaluate you for a highly prestigious career like medicine. Saying things like "I hate research," or "That evolution class was a waste of time," will cost you. Your professor probably LOVES research, and your casual comment may make them think that you aren't serious about science, or that you lack the perseverance required of a professional.
- Ask for letters in person. Ask if they would feel comfortable writing a "strong letter of recommendation", not just a "letter of recommendation" for you for medical school. Give them an option to say no. Any pressure from you to write a letter may affect the strength of the letter, and you only want strong ones.
- Be prepared to give them your personal statement, an unofficial transcript, and resume. Having these on hand will make it easy for them to highlight your strengths.
- Your resume (curriculum vitae) should be no more than 2 pages and should include headings like:
 - Education Experience and highlights
 - Work Experience
 - Awards and Honors
 - Leadership Experience
 - Community Service
 - Physician Shadowing
 - Hobbies and Interests

- Give them at least 6 weeks to write the letter. They need time to plan. Give a gentle reminder at least 2 weeks before your deadline, and follow-up regularly, but gently.

Write a sincere thank you and visit them to give them status reports of your admission.

Process for Letters of Recommendation

The FSU College of Medicine Premed Advising Office offers a “letter packet” service for all FSU students advised by them.

To use the letter packet service, visit this link for instructions: <https://med.fsu.edu/outreach/pre-medical-advising-letters-recommendation>

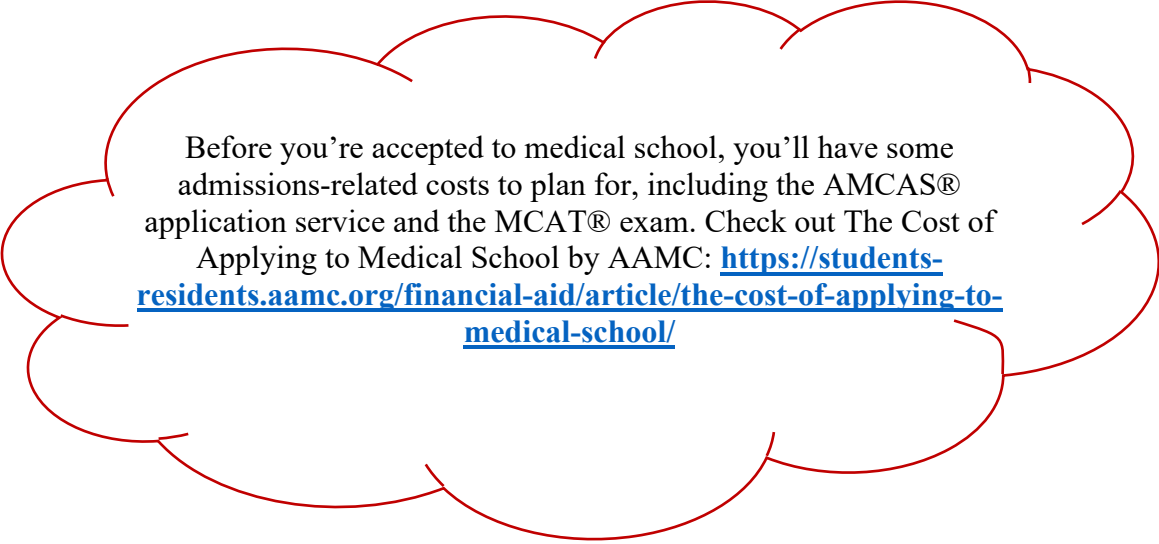
Keep it Real

Adopted from “Identify the Right Program” By Peter S. Cahn, PhD

It is important to consider some of the significant realities involved in attending graduate school:

- **It's expensive.** Enough said, other than to add that the rigors of the curriculum often mean that you will have limited time to work while earning your degree.
- **It's demanding.** Professors expect you to manage your time and to assimilate large amounts of material. Furthermore, unlike undergraduate studies, graduate school curricula tend to be lock step. That is, all students in a cohort take the same sequence of classes. This means that if you fail one, you may have to drop back an entire year to retake it. You really want to be fully committed to your graduate study when you begin.

If you keep these realities in mind, crafting a compelling health professions graduate school application will be possible! And you will be ready to being the next stage of a meaningful and fulfilling career.



Before you're accepted to medical school, you'll have some admissions-related costs to plan for, including the AMCAS® application service and the MCAT® exam. Check out The Cost of Applying to Medical School by AAMC: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/financial-aid/article/the-cost-of-applying-to-medical-school/>

Med School Interviews: Overview and Tips

Elizabeth Foster, Ph.D.
FSU College of Medicine

Types of Interviews

Better to know what to expect from the situation ahead of time. Ask admissions office how the interviews are structured, length of time, if AMCAS application is available to interviewer, etc.

One-On-One Interview

This assesses how your skills fit with medicine; there is time and opportunity to establish rapport with the interviewer.

Committee Interview

Candidates face several members of committee. This format is designed for candidates to demonstrate problem-solving and communication skills.

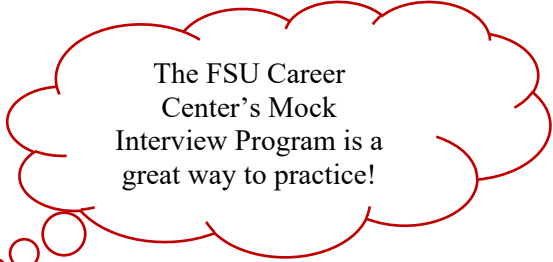
Multiple Mini Interview (MMI)

Consists of a series of six-10 interview stations, each focused on a different question or scenario. The MMI is designed to measure competencies like oral communication, social and non-verbal skills, and teamwork that are important indicators of how an applicant will interact with patients and colleagues as a physician.

It's OK to be nervous; it's not OK to get in your own way.

TIPS BEFORE THE INTERVIEW:

- Be early!
- Know the surroundings and setting
- What is the mission or goals of the school/organization?
- What is the region/area/town like? How will this affect the people, their outlook, attitudes, etc.
 - Rural, big city, commuter, etc.
- Dress professionally, but comfortably



The FSU Career Center's Mock Interview Program is a great way to practice!

TIPS FOR PROFESSIONAL DRESS: Your appearance and behavior reflect upon you. Professional attire consists of clothes consistent with community norms, no jeans, seductive or revealing clothes, shorts or casual sandals. Closed toe shoes are required in clinical settings.

- For men, slacks and a collared shirt. In clinical settings, a tie is also required.
- For women, dress, skirt, or slacks with a blouse.
- They don't need to know your swag; they need to know that you are professional
- Don't wear something that you have to fuss with (poor fit, too much going on, not enough fabric)

- They don't care about your clothes unless YOU draw attention to them
- Wear sensible shoes

TIPS DURING THE INTERVIEW:

- Be attentive, but not bug-eyed
- Listen carefully
- Be sure you understand what they are asking and then answer it!
- Speak slowly and deliberately
- If you know that you tend to talk a LOT, then practice giving more brief answers with friends
 - OR if you know that you can freeze up at times, be sure you always have something to say (OK, I need to think about that for a second...)
- If you think you talk too fast (and 20 somethings do!), practice now on slowing yourself down. They want to understand you.

You won't know the type of interview style a person has until the interview gets going, so be prepared to expect different situations. Different interviewer styles do not affect whether or not you will be successful in an interview – it's how you handle any style. DON'T get thrown off your game by different interview styles.

Common Interview Questions:

- How did you investigate a career in medicine?
- What made you decide to pursue a career in medicine?
- What branch of medicine most interests you?
- Who knows you the best in this world?
- How would that person describe you, and what advice have they provided you?
- What teamwork experiences have you had?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- What skills have you developed outside the classroom?
- Where do you see yourself in 10 years?
- What is the greatest obstacle you have had to overcome?
- What issues confront medicine today?
- What has been your greatest achievement?
- What person, past or present, would you like to meet?
- What have you read recently in the press about health care?
- What makes you a better applicant than others?

FAQ's on the Application Process

By Aspiring Docs

How do I start the application process?

To apply to most medical schools in the United States, you will need to use the AAMC's centralized application processing service, the American Medical College Application Service® (AMCAS®).

AMCAS collects, verifies, and delivers application information and MCAT® exam scores to each school you choose. AMCAS does not make admissions decisions; each participating school is responsible for making its own individual admissions decisions.

To apply to an MD program at a public medical school in Texas, you will need to apply using the Texas Medical and Dental Schools Application Service (TMDSAS).

How much does it cost to apply?

There is an application fee to process your application and this includes one medical school designation. For each additional medical school selection there is a separate cost. For all current AMCAS application fees visit the AMCAS website and review the information below the "AMCAS® Application Fees" subheading. AMCAS fees may vary from year to year. Applicants in need of financial aid may apply to AAMC's Fee Assistance Program. Fee Assistance Program awardees receive a waiver for AMCAS fees (for up to 16 medical schools), reduced registration fees for the Medical College Admission Test® (MCAT®), and more.

What is a secondary application?

This is an additional school-specific application completed after a medical school receives your primary application. It helps explain why you're interested in that particular institution; how your goals, experiences, and plans align with their mission and goals; and how/what you would contribute and develop as a learner at that institution. Basically, it's an opportunity to answer the question, "Why this school?" A secondary application will likely have an associated application fee. Fees and required forms will vary from school to school.

Will I need to interview?

Most medical schools require an interview, though the process varies by school. Interviews can take place on or off campus. They can be conducted by one admissions committee member, by multiple members of the committee, or by off-campus interviewers, such as practicing physicians. Generally, the interviewers complete evaluations that are added to the rest of your application materials.

We have more information on interviewing here, and in The Official Guide to Medical School Admissions as well as the Medical School Admission Requirements website.

What is the timeline for applying?

The AMCAS application typically opens during the first week of May each year for the following year's medical school class. Since AMCAS submission doesn't open until the first week of June, you'll have about a month to begin working on your application before you can submit it. You'll begin the application process in the spring in order to begin medical school in the fall of the following year.

For specific application dates and deadlines, visit the Medical School Admission Requirements, the AMCAS website, and the websites of your potential medical schools.

How do I choose the right medical school for me?

U.S. medical schools offer a variety of excellent educational experiences in a variety of settings. Some schools, whether public or private, vary in size, curriculum, and character. To find out which schools might best meet your needs and goals, you can read more on deciding where to apply and use the Medical School Admission Requirements.

Good luck!
You can do this!

