

Primary Application

PreMD



School of Medicine

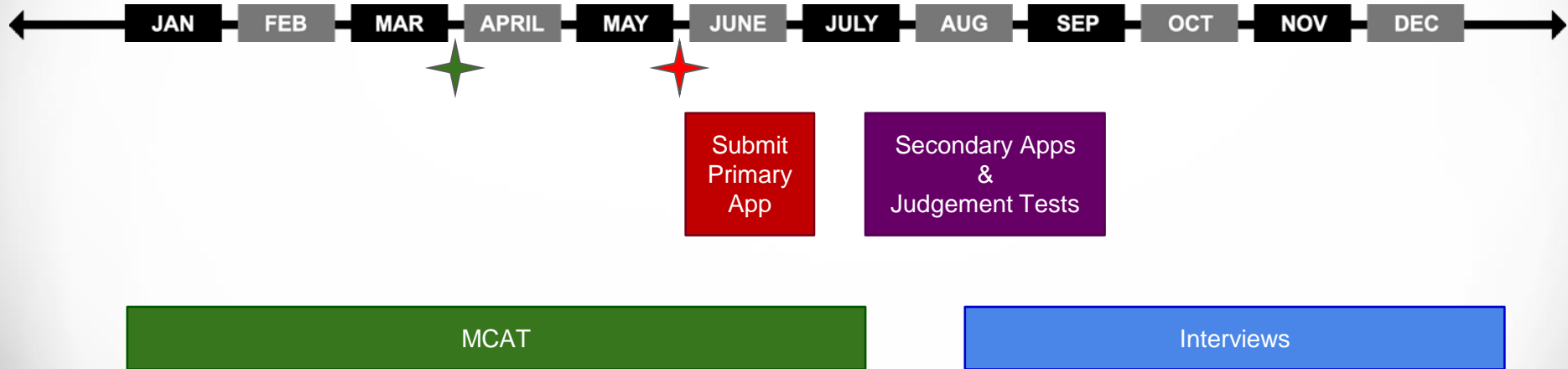
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

Looking for previous PreMD Presentations?

<https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/deans-office/diversity-inclusion/about-us/pre-med-program>

Overview

The Application Cycle



Timeline

The current 2022 application cycle dates are:

- **Monday, May 3:** AMCAS application opens
- **Thursday, May 27:** AMCAS application submission begins
- **Friday, June 25:** Initial transmission of application data to medical schools
- **Monday, August 2*:** Early Decision Program deadline

*(*August 1 is on a Sunday, the deadline date falls to the next business day).*

What is the Primary Application?

- Background information
- Coursework and official transcripts
- MCAT score (previous session)
- Letters of evaluation (previous session)
- Personal statement
- Work and Activities
- Select which schools to send your application to (previous session)

A screenshot of the PreMD application portal interface. On the left, a vertical list of sections is displayed in purple text: 'Identifying Information', 'Schools Attended', 'Biographic Information', 'Course Work', 'Work/Activities', 'Letters of Evaluation', 'Medical Schools', 'Essays', and 'Standardized Tests'. On the right, there are three rectangular buttons with rounded corners. The top button is labeled 'Print Transcript Request Forms', the middle button is labeled 'Print Letter Request Forms', and the bottom button is labeled 'Print Application' and is highlighted with a purple border.

Cost of Applying

Step	Description
Primary Application	\$170 for first school, \$42 for each additional school
Secondary Application	Varies from \$50-\$150
Interview Travel	Varies widely
Total	Expect total costs to be in the \$1,000's

- AAMC's Fee Assistance Program
 - Help with MCAT prep materials, MCAT fee, AMCAS fee, Secondary Application fees

What Do Each of These Sections Include?

Background Info



Section 1: Identifying Information

- Name/birth/sex
- ID numbers for schools (so they can link transcripts)



Section 2: Schools Attended

- High School
- Every Post-Secondary School where you were enrolled for one course (even if no credits given) – need transcripts from each of these schools!



Section 3: Biographic Information

- Contact info
- Ethnicity/race, languages spoken
- Family information

Coursework and Official Transcripts

- They will calculate your overall GPA AND “science” (BCPM) GPA
 - The BCPM GPA is comprised of Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Mathematics courses. All other coursework will be calculated in the AO (All Other) GPA.
- Official transcripts take a little while to get and to be processed by AAMC
 - AAMC says it will take 15 BUSINESS days to process electronic or 25 BUSINESS days to process mail
- Make sure to check the school’s course requirements and that you meet them
- Remember it can also take up to 6-8 weeks to process your application once submitted

Personal Statement - What Is It?

“Use the space provided to explain why you want to go to medical school” (5,300 characters)

- If you're applying to an MD-PhD program, you must complete two additional essays: the MD-PhD Essay and the Significant Research Experience Essay
- Proofread carefully! There is no “spellchecker” in the AMCAS application, and no changes will be permitted to this section after you have submitted your application.
 - Type in Word/Google docs and copy them over -> formatting, sharing with others, saving for future use
 - Formatting doesn't go through -> you can space out your paragraphs but that's it



Tip: Read back on your “why doctor” journal for inspiration

Personal Statement - What Makes It Good?

- Answer the why and the how, not just the what
 - Don't get stuck in the cycle of "I did all these things because I want to be a doctor, and now I want to be a doctor because I did all these things"
- Leave **no doubt** that this is the career for you, especially in the conclusion:
 - Example: ended with "No other career could fulfill my desire to direct care, employ my love for human progress and technology, and satisfy my need to assist in the well-being of others realistically."
- Don't distract the reader or waste your words
 - Not so much what happened but how it changed you and your goals
- Red flags: experiences where they practice medicine before getting the degree (like helping people give birth in other countries)

Personal Statement - What Makes It Good?

- Answer the prompt in the first 5 sentences
- Don't overtly state "I want to help people"
- Have a clear purpose
 - Don't mention other professions
 - Answer the why not another medical profession without actually answering the question
- You can write about your experiences even though you have an activities section
 - You can use it as an opportunity to talk about different aspects of that experience
 - Don't lose sight of the chance to share your story in this statement outside of your activities that you will talk about in the activities section

In Summary:

- **Be honest:** your personal experience is unique, even if you don't believe it
- **Don't say** you want to go into medicine "to help people"
- **Be specific:** Why do you want to be a **physician** *over other health professions*

Personal Statement - Editing

- Start early (months in advance)
- Plan ahead for review
- Identify people that will review
 - Friends can be good because they know who you are and can also be honest
 - Don't let it impact your statement too much - you know your experiences and passion
- Can take it to your writing center/premed advisors
- Talk to current medical students if possible
- Give people a timeline if they're going to review
- You can make different versions but you don't have to
 - You can write over the word limit and then have people tell you what is more or less important to keep/what best aligns with your theme

AMCAS Application: Work/Activities

- Up to 15 work/activities spots with 700 character limit
 - 3 of these are listed as “most meaningful”
- Included Details:
 - Dates, title, organization name
 - Time spent on work/activity
 - Responsibilities and accomplishments
 - Impact
 - Qualities you gained/demonstrated



Tip: Look back to your Activities Journal

AMCAS Application: Work/Activities

Categories:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Artistic Endeavors- Community Service/Volunteer - Medical/Clinical- Community Service/Volunteer - Not Medical/Clinical- Conferences Attended- Extracurricular Activities- Hobbies- Honors/Awards/Recognitions- Intercollegiate Athletics- Leadership - Not Listed Elsewhere | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Military Service- Other- Paid Employment - Medical/Clinical- Paid Employment - Not Medical/Clinical- Physician Shadowing/Clinical Observation- Presentations/Posters- Publications- Research/Lab- Teaching/Tutoring/Teaching Assistant |
|---|--|

Example Experience Entry

Experience Type:	Leadership - Not Listed Elsewhere	Most Meaningful Experience: Yes
Experience Name:	Girls Leadership Forum Student Director	Dates: 08/2014 - 05/2018 Total Hours: 400
Contact Name & Title:	[REDACTED], Director, Women & Girls Leadership	Contact Phone: [REDACTED]
Contact Email:	[REDACTED]	
Organization Name:	Dixon Girls Leadership Forum	
City / State / Country:	Salt Lake City / UT / United States	
Experience Description:	<p>Dixon Girls Leadership Forums encourage leadership forums, teaching lessons, and included creating the curriculum, planning, and leading forums. We conduct communication, group dynamics, and problem solving. My responsibilities included managing volunteers, and mentoring the girls.</p> <p>I was a participant in this program for my high school. It has been one of the most influential programs that shaped me into the leader I am today. The strong mentors I met through this program pushed me to dream big and pursue my goals in engineering, despite being a female minority.</p>	
Most Meaningful Experience Remarks:	<p>After graduating high school, I wanted to stay involved and give back to the organization that opened so many doors for me. For the first year I was a mentor, leading forums at various schools. I became Co-Chair my sophomore year and was involved with developing the curriculum. After the director retired, I helped facilitate the transition process and served as an advisor my junior year, teaching the new directors how to effectively run the forum. Throughout this, I continued to volunteer. During my senior year, I established a partnership with the Pioneer Volunteer Center at the University of Utah to expand the program and recruit more volunteers. Collaborating with Hoon</p>	

Average
hours/week or
months can be
listed here to save
space in
description.

Example Experience Entry

EXPERIENCE			
Experience Type:	Research/Lab	Most Meaningful Experience: Yes	
Experience Name:	Research Assistant in Vascular Biology Lab	Dates: 09/2010 - 08/2011 01/2012 - 06/2012 09/2012 - 06/2013	Total Hours: 440 Total Hours: 400 Total Hours: 550
Contact Name & Title:	Principal Investigator		
Contact Email:	Contact Phone:		
Organization Name:	Geisel Medical School, Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center		
City / State / Country:	Lebanon / NH / United States		
Experience Description:	<p>I researched the molecular interactions and signaling pathways of rPAI-123, an anti-angiogenic protein that may treat atherosclerosis.</p> <p>Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sectioned tissue samples, analyzed experimental data, converted confocal images of murine arteries to 3-D digital models of the arterial plexus. - Implemented experiments: utilized IHC (Immunohistochemistry) techniques to assess how rPAI-123 affects macrophage congregation in the aortic arch. <p>Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Published in two abstracts and one medical journal (see Publications). <p>Leadership: Lab Team Leader</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ran monthly meetings with PI to track progress in lab - Served as student liaison between PI and other assistants <p>Most Meaningful Experience Remarks:</p> <p>Excerpt from my research journal, February 2012: Procedure #27 did not work - monocytes failed to visualize on aortic arch, not pink enough. Amended technique: Will adjust levels of Eosin to 2/75 dilution. Keep incubation time at 11 minutes. Assess results. NOTE: Running out of aortic slides! Make it count!</p> <p>For three years, I never wasted my failures. If an experiment failed to produce viable results, I would assess whether the experiment required technical or conceptual revision. Rinse, repeat.</p> <p>But my work was never finished - My P.I. held me to the strictest standards in her lab, and I emulated her work ethic; between experimental incubations, I scrubbed flasks, washed counters, keeping my mind busy to rub away regrets, rinse thoughts, and repeat my experiences with new direction. The routine of learning from failures instilled in me methodical discipline, meticulous organization, and perseverance towards a greater goal. The joy of visualizing successful results: the perfect stain on the slide and the underlying evidence for a hypothesis well amended. More so than the success, however, was the knowledge that my painstaking praxis paid off: my methodical approach set the standard in her lab. I am confident that my discipline and determination will help me excel in future research settings.</p>		

Example Experience Entry

Experience Type:	Community Service/Volunteer - Medical/Clinical		
Experience Name:	Shadowing Doctors	Dates:	06/2005 - Until Present Hours/Week: 4
Contact Name & Title:	Dr. A		
Organization Name:	Multiple Hospitals		
Country:			
Experience Description:	<p>Philippine General Hospital: Infectious Diseases Section (July 2009 - January 2010)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shadowed at in-patient and out-patient consultations and grand rounds - Attended international infectious disease conferences <p>Main Contact: Dr. E (Head, Infectious Disease Section)</p> <p>Massachusetts General Hospital: Emergency Room (Summer 2008)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attended patient consultations around the emergency room <p>Main Contact: Dr. A</p> <p>Stanford University: Pediatric Cardiothoracic Surgery (Summer 2007; Summer 2005)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observed open heart surgeries <p>Main Contact: Dr. M (Division Chief)</p> <p>Private-practice: Nephrology (June 2006)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attended patient consultations during doctor visits and at dialysis centers - Observed board meetings with private health clinics to address administrative concerns <p>Main Contact: Dr. R (Partner)</p> <p>Charles Drew Medical Center (Summer 2005)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shadowed Geriatrics and Gerontology Division Chairman <p>Main Contact: Dr. A (Division Chair)</p>		

Most Meaningful Experiences

- Opportunity to write about 3 of your “most meaningful” experiences
- More space to write - 1,325 character prompt
- Often have letter writers from these experiences to further prove the impact of this activity – but don’t have to
- What do you want to include in these responses?
 - Everything you write about from your other activities
 - How you grew from the experience
 - What makes it stand out from the other listed experiences

Work and Activities - How to Prepare Beforehand

- Do what you're passionate about!
 - Ultimately you need to do what brings you joy and the readers/interviews will be looking to see how genuinely excited you are about your activities
 - Shadowing is probably the only must have activity
- Follow your curiosity
 - It gives you a story to tell and will change you for the better
- Do not add “fluff”
 - Do not stress about finding other things to do to make sure you have 15 activities
 - Do not write about activities you wouldn't be excited to talk about in an interview
 - Do not participate and seek out opportunities to simply “check the box”

Work and Activities - What Makes it Good?

- Write your experience as a **story rather than a resume**
 - Show rather than tell the impact/result, qualities demonstrated, what you learned, and how it changed you
 - Often good to describe a meaningful experience you had in that activity rather than what you did
 - You need to convince the reader that you gained something from each experience
 - Ex. for research you don't have to spend the whole box describing your project
- Certain activities to highlight
 - Activities that you engaged in for a long time are good for most meaningful experiences
 - Activities that aren't likely to be in anyone else's application
 - You **can include hobbies** that are meaningful to you! (reading, fencing, etc)
 - Activities that demonstrate intentional pursuit
- You don't have to use all of the characters provided, it shows that you can clearly and concisely convey an idea

Characteristics of a Medical Student

AAMC Competencies

Thinking & Reasoning:

- Critical Thinking
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Scientific Inquiry
- Written Communication

Interpersonal skills:

- Service Orientation
- Social Skills
- Cultural Competence
- Teamwork
- Oral Communication

Science:

- Living Systems
- Human Behavior

Intrapersonal Skills:

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

TMDSAS: Texas Medical Schools

- Application opens **May 17**
- Similar but different categories:
 - **Personal essay:** 5000 characters - this is shorter than AMCAS or AACOMAS
 - Has **TWO** additional essays. 2nd essay “optional”
 - Chronology of Activities - 300 characters for regular, 500 characters for “most meaningful”
 - 5 yr old MCAT accepted
 - Match system: Schools and students match based on ranking in order of preference from both parties
- Flat fee of \$200 - Fee waiver unavailable

AACOMAS: D.O. Schools

- Application opens **May 4**
- Similar but different categories:
 - **Personal statement:** 5300 characters
 - **LORs:** LOR will be submitted to every school; DO LOR highly recommended
 - **Activities:** 600 characters - No limit on amount
 - **Influences section:** mention DOs or MDs that influenced commitment to medicine
- Primary: \$197 for first program + \$48 for each additional - Fee waiver available
- Secondary: Varies \$65-150

AMCAS WORK AND ACTIVITIES - THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE



SECTION FIVE: AMCAS WORK AND ACTIVITIES

For this section of the AMCAS application, you will be able to select 15 experiences covering:



And you can enter up to four occurrences for each type of experience. So, for example, if you have had five volunteer experiences, you can only include four of these, so be sure to prioritize effectively.

These qualities can be identified by looking at the AAMC Core Competencies, which are spread across three areas:

PRE-PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

(service orientation, social skills, cultural competence, teamwork, oral communication, ethical responsibility to self and others, reliability and dependability, resilience and adaptability, and capacity for improvement).



THINKING AND REASONING COMPETENCIES

(critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, scientific inquiry, and written communication), and

SCIENCE COMPETENCIES

(living systems, human behavior).

Each of your entries must be something you've done since starting your undergraduate degree.



Standard AMCAS Work and Activities Entries



Once you've decided what to include in your AMCAS Work and Activities entries, you have 700 characters (including spaces) – or about four to five sentences – to discuss each experience.

Most Meaningful AMCAS Work and Activities Experiences

You will also be able to identify three of your entries as "Most Meaningful Experiences". In this crucial element of your application, you are given an additional 1325 characters (including spaces), or about half a page, to discuss the impact and transformative nature of three of your experiences or activities.



PreMD Exit Survey



Thank you!

Questions?

Questions We Received in the Survey:

- Where can I find the zoom recording after the session has ended?
 - <https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/deans-office/diversity-inclusion/about-us/pre-med-program>
 - Search CU Anschutz Office of Diversity and Inclusion -> Click on Pre-Med Program on the home page
- How to write a great personal statement? How to phrase hardship?
- Could you include travel time for your work/experiences hours?
 - **In the recording, this was answered incorrectly. The CUSOM perspective is that you should not include these hours. The idea is similar to if you work a full-time job (40-hour work week), those 40 hours do not include your commute.**
- How many community service and shadowing hours should be on your application? If you had a business during undergrad, could you put that under your extracurricular section of the application?
- When should one start working on their primary application when applying for medical school?
- Estimated range of mcats scores and GPA for students that get accepted? When is the best time to submit your primary application? If the GPA is not in a competitive range, do you recommend to do special masters or post bacc?
 - <https://www.aamc.org/media/6091/download>
 - <https://www.shemmassianconsulting.com/blog/average-gpa-and-mcat-score-for-every-medical-school> (A little bit off compared to MSAR, but a good general reference if you don't want to buy MSAR yet)
- How/where to take the MCAT, if necessary? How to start searching for programs?
 - Also view our second session recording (MCAT) and third session recording (LORs and how to choose where to apply)

Appendix

What is the Early Decision Program

TLDR: You apply to one school by August 1st - you should be very competitive for that school - if you don't get in you can apply to additional medical schools starting October 1st (this is very late in the cycle)

To apply through the Early Decision Program, applicants must follow these guidelines:

- Apply to **only one** U.S. medical school by the stated deadline date (August 1* for schools that participate in AMCAS);
- Not to apply through the Early Decision Program if they have already submitted an initial or secondary application (AMCAS or non-AMCAS) to a U.S. medical school for the current entering class.
- Attend only this school if offered a place under the Early Decision Program to familiarize yourself and comply with the school-specific Early Decision Program policies and agreements of the program to which you were accepted, including any school-specific impacts if you decide to change programs types and apply to other medical schools.
- If these guidelines are met, applicants will be notified of the school's admission decision by October 1.
- Not all medical schools offer admission through the Early Decision Program. Since most participating schools only admit a small portion of their entering class through the program, only applicants with an excellent chance of admission to a particular school should apply under this program.

Resources

- University of Utah PreMedical Website
(<https://advising.utah.edu/preprofessional/pre-medical/>)
- Activities Diagram: <https://bemoacademicconsulting.com/blog/amcas-work-activities-definitive-guide>
- AAMC Core Competencies: <https://www.aamc.org/services/admissions-lifecycle/competencies-entering-medical-students>
- AAMC Overview of the Application: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/how-apply-medical-school-amcas/how-apply-medical-school-amcas>
- Early Decision Program: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school-amcas/early-decision-program>