

Selecting A Medical School

MIT Global Education & Career Development Ctr. ♦ 12-170 ♦ (617) 253-4733 ♦ <http://careers.mit.edu>

Once you have determined that you are well-suited to a career in medicine, how should you choose which medical schools to apply to? Programs vary significantly; before looking at specific schools, consider which program characteristics are most important to you. Assessing your desires first will help you identify those schools that best match your needs and professional interests. Factors to consider include:

- Academic program and curriculum
- Faculty make-up (e.g., research interests, full-time)
- Institution's strengths and specialty areas
- Student population (e.g., age, size, diversity)
- Geographic location (e.g., Midwest, Northeast, urban, rural)
- Cost and financial aid
- Size of the program and faculty/student ratio
- Extra-curricular activities & student support services
- Special or joint degree programs
- Opportunities for International/global experiences

Visit <http://web.mit.edu/career/www/preprof/medapply.html> for more details on each of these criteria.

Strategize your Selection

To maximize your chance of acceptance to one or more medical schools, it is critical to think strategically and practically about the list of schools to which you apply.

- All schools will give you the training required to practice medicine. If you are considering a career in academic medicine, you should give extra consideration to a school's reputation.
- Only apply to schools that you would actually attend if accepted.
- Apply to a broad range of programs in terms of likelihood of acceptance. Do your homework to determine your competitiveness as an applicant. Select only a few schools at which admission may be a long shot and more schools at which acceptance is more realistic.
- Determine if any of the schools in which you are interested consider state residency as a criteria or advantage for admission. Check carefully to see if you meet their residency requirements. Applying to several schools for which you do not meet the residency requirement is not a good strategy.
- Speak with the Preprofessional Advising Staff and your prehealth advisor for more guidance.

Research Medical Schools & Programs

Following are some of the resources available to you to assist in your school research. We strongly encourage you to make use of these resources and to meet with a Preprofessional Advising staff member to discuss your school selection strategy.

1. *Medical School Admission Requirements (MSAR)*

Distributed by the AAMC, this guide to all U.S. and Canadian medical schools provides detailed information on application procedures and deadlines, school selection factors such as MCAT and GPA data, class profiles, costs and financial aid options, dual degree options, graduates' specialty choices and more. A copy of this resource is available for your review in the Careers Office (12-170) or for purchase through the AAMC.

2. *AAMC Curriculum Directory* (<http://services.aamc.org/currdir/start.cfm>)

"The AAMC's Curriculum Directory provides a comprehensive description of medical student education programs at the 125 U.S. and 16 Canadian medical schools. It includes information on curriculum characteristics and current trends and innovations of interest to applicants, faculty and deans. This updated online directory enables searches for instructional and curricular innovations, grading intervals, required courses and clerkships, and combined degree programs."

Selecting A Medical School *(cont.)*

3. **Medical School Marketing Materials**

Read through individual schools' marketing materials such as their website, printed brochures, etc. Materials for many medical schools can be found in the file cabinet that is located in the waiting area of the MIT Careers Office or you may request materials from school admissions offices. Be sure to review each school's mission and vision statements to determine if your values and interests match the school's stated values and goals.

4. **Medical School Visits to MIT**

During the academic year, medical school representatives will occasionally visit MIT to speak with prospective medical school applicants. Attending these information sessions offers a great opportunity to learn about a school and ask questions to an admissions representative. Visit the MIT Careers Office online events calendar at <http://careers.mit.edu> for the most up-to-date information about these visits.

5. **Medical School Locator for MIT Applicants**

Created using MIT student data provided by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), this locator is a tool to help you identify your Reach, Competitive, and "Safety" schools based on your GPA and MCAT scores only. This matrix is based on only MIT applicants (undergraduates, graduate students, and alums) and only includes schools that accepted five or more MIT candidates for matriculation in Fall 2005 and 2006. To receive this document, we require that you meet with a Preprofessional Advising staff member to discuss an application strategy best suited to your candidacy. To schedule an appointment, call the Careers Office at 617-253-4733.

6. **Campus Visit**

Though most medical school applicants will not be able to visit every school they apply to before their interview, visiting a few medical school campuses may help give you an idea of what you seek in a medical school program. Speak with current students and faculty while on campus. Alternatively, some school websites offer an online virtual tour of the campus to give you a sense of the physical facilities.

7. **Institute Career Assistance Network (ICAN)** (<http://alum.mit.edu>)

ICAN can help you identify MIT alumni who are currently enrolled in medical school programs. Contacting these individuals for in-person or telephone informational interviews will allow you to learn about a school from the perspective of the student. Ask questions about what they liked and disliked about the curriculum, extra-curricular opportunities, location, campus and more!

8. **Minority Student Opportunities in U.S. Medical Schools (MSOUSMS):**

(<http://www.aamc.org/students/minorities/resources/msousms.htm>)

"This publication provides up-to-date information and descriptions of programs designed to provide opportunities for racial/ethnic groups underrepresented in medical education to pursue careers in medicine. The information in this book is supplied by individual medical schools in response to a questionnaire from the AAMC Division of Community and Minority Programs. For most school entries, the narrative descriptions cover the following topic areas: (1) Recruitment, (2) Admissions, (3) Academic Support Programs, (4) Enrichment Programs, (5) Student Financial Assistance, (6) Educational Partnerships, and (7) Other Pertinent Information."

Organize the Information You Gather

It may be helpful to make a school comparison chart to compare basic information about various programs of interest to you. Following is a sample of such a chart:

School	Location	Residency requirement?	Tuition/Financial Aid	Size of program	Specialties	Research	Other