



Get in Gear!

2010 Medical School Application Process Workshop

Preprofessional Advising
Career Development Center (CDC)
12-185, 617-253-4733
<http://web.mit.edu/career/www/preprof/>



Workshop Overview

- Application Components
- Application Cycle Timeline
- Relationship with your Prehealth Advisor
- Developing an Application Strategy
- Preprofessional Advising Services for Applicants



AMCAS

- The American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS) is a non-profit, centralized application processing service for applicants to the first-year entering classes at participating U.S. medical schools. Regardless of the number of AMCAS schools to which you apply, you submit just one application to AMCAS via the Web.

<http://www.aamc.org/students/amcas/start.htm>



Secondary Applications

- Secondary (supplemental) applications are sent by medical schools after the AMCAS application has been received.
- Most schools send secondaries to all interested AMCAS applicants.
- Additional short essays are required and should be tailored to each school if possible.
- \$75 - \$100 may be charged for each secondary application.
- Letters of recommendation are expected with your secondary applications.



Credential Service

- Stores your letters of recommendation for health profession programs
- Creates a packet for your prehealth advisor to use when writing his or her letter. Packet includes:
 - MCAT
 - Transcripts, Hidden Grades
 - Essay
 - Letters of Recommendation
- Sends advisor letter and recommendation letters to schools.
 - It does NOT send any other documents to schools.



MCAT Information

- \$225 registration fee, late registration incurs an additional fee.
- Scores returned 30 days after test date.
- AMCAS automatically receives a copy of all of your exam scores.
- Last exam accepted for the 2010 application process is September 2009.
 - If you indicate that you are taking the MCAT between May and September, schools will wait until these scores are received to your review your application.



Timeline: 2010 Application Cycle

January – May 2009

- Provide general letter writers with a Recommender Information Sheet and Waiver Form
<http://web.mit.edu/career/www/preprof/infoandwaiverform.pdf>
 - Allow for at least 2 months writing time
 - All general letters must be received in the CDC by 6/30/09
- Take the MCAT, DAT, etc.
- Begin working on your personal statement
<http://web.mit.edu/career/www/preprof/medprocess.html#essay>
 - 6/15/09 last day for a critique; 6/30/09 final version due to the CDC
- Develop target list of medical schools
 - Attend at least 1 school visit on campus
<http://web.mit.edu/career/www/events/>



Timeline: 2010 Application Cycle

May 2009:

- Work on AMCAS application (available early May)

<http://www.aamc.org/audienceamcas.htm>

- Request official transcript from the Registrar to be sent to AMCAS & to the CDC <http://mit.edu/registrar/records/index.html>

June 2009:

- Submit AMCAS beginning in early June
- Refer to *File Checklist* to make sure you submit all necessary information to CDC

<http://web.mit.edu/career/www/preprof/filechecklist.pdf>



- Check back shortly for directions on how to use CareerBridge to check-in on the receipt of the following for your file:
 - Letters of recommendation
 - Transcripts and exam scores
 - Prehealth advisor letter
 - Packet sent to schools



Timeline: 2010 Application Cycle

July – August 2009:

- CDC sends applicant packets to prehealth advisor
 - Prehealth Advisors are mailed your:
 - Exam score(s) MCAT, DAT, etc.
 - Transcripts, hidden grades
 - Personal Statement
 - Letters of recommendation
- Complete secondary applications
- Submit *School Designation Form* and payment to the CDC within 1 week of submitting secondary applications
 - Multiple School Designation Forms are acceptable



Timeline: 2010 Application Cycle

July – August 2009:

- Keep prehealth advisor informed of your progress
- Participate in a mock interview in the CDC
- Research financial aid options at www.aamc.org/md2
- Stay active in community activities and academics
- Stay abreast of current medical trends and issues



Timeline: 2010 Application Cycle

September – December 2009:

- Continue submission of secondary applications
- Prepare for interviews
- Research and prepare questions for medical school visits
- Send thank you notes to medical schools after all interviews
- Send regular updates to your prehealth advisor
- Keep up with current medical issues
- Stay active in community activities and academics



Timeline: 2010 Application Cycle

January – May 2010:

- Update Preprofessional Advising staff on your interviews & application status
- Be a proactive applicant (e.g., sending updates to schools, transcripts, etc.)
- Send thank you note to prehealth advisor
- Decide which medical schools you will matriculate by May 15 deadline
- Share your essay and application with CDC for use in advising future applications



Recommendation Letters

- 3-5 letters (2 science, 1 humanities, activities, research, etc.)
- Professors are preferred recommenders
- Review the Recommender Information Sheet and Waiver Form with each individual
<http://web.mit.edu/career/www/preprof/credential.html#forms>
- Letters are only accepted by mail. (no faxes or emails.)



Recommendation Letters

How to Ask for a Letter...

1. Set up a phone or in-person meeting
 - Ask the person if they can write you a strong letter of recommendation.
2. Identify specific information you want conveyed
3. Supply recommender with:
 - Updated resume
 - Personal statement or essay (draft if necessary)
 - Relevant documents to help the person in writing their letter (class assignments, exams, publications, awards, etc.)
4. Provide recommenders with at least 2 months writing time



Recommendation Letters

Common Issues:

- Missing signature
- Not submitted on letterhead
- No indication what the recommender is recommending the applicant for
- Lack of contact information for the recommender



Relationship with Prehealth Advisor during the Application Cycle

April – July 2009:

- Submit all application materials on File Checklist to the CDC office by June 30th.
<http://web.mit.edu/career/www/preprof/credential.html#forms>
- Meet with your prehealth advisor in late spring/early summer to:
 - Discuss your personal statement
 - Discuss your school selections for application
 - Provide updates on your recent activities and further career exploration.



Relationship with your Prehealth Advisor during the Application Cycle

July 2009 – April 2010:

- Notify your Advisor and CDC of any changes in your application, including if you decide to no longer apply.
- Participate in a mock interview and review your past interview experiences with your advisor or Preprofessional Advising.
- Provide updates to the CDC and your prehealth advisor about the status of your applications. (acceptances, rejections, etc.)
- Send thank you note to your advisor



Application Strategy

- Consult with your Prehealth Advisor & the Preprofessional Advising Office for guidance
- Create a tiered approach (reach, competitive and safety schools)
 - Average applications per student = 18
- Organize the information you gather (notebook, binder, spreadsheet, etc.)



Application Strategy

- School characteristics to consider:
 - School's mission
 - Institution's strengths (e.g., specialty areas)
 - Academic program
 - Curriculum
 - Clinical experiences
 - Electives
 - Joint degree programs
 - Methods of instruction/evaluation
 - Research opportunities
 - Opportunities for international experience



Application Strategy

- Characteristics to consider:
 - Geographic location and environment
 - Student support services
 - Student population
 - Number of students; student-to-faculty ratio
 - Attitude of students
 - Diversity of students (age, ethnicity, state of residence, etc.)
 - Faculty make-up
 - Research Interests
 - Full-time?
 - Cost and Financial Aid



Application Strategy

- Research Schools

- Medical School Admissions Requirements (MSAR)
- Health professions student surveys on CareerBridge Resource Library
- School websites & marketing materials
- AAMC Curriculum Directory
- Medical School Locator (available at CDC)
- Campus visits & School visits to MIT
- Informational interviews with students and alums of programs (ICAN)
- Minority Student Opportunities in U.S. Medical Schools (MSOUSMS)



AMCAS Application Information

- AMCAS cost:
 - \$160 processing fee for 1 medical school designation
 - \$30 for each additional designation
- Important Dates:
 - **May (beginning)**: AMCAS 2009 becomes available
 - **June (beginning)**: 1st day to submit completed AMCAS
 - **June (mid)**: 1st day AMCAS will send verified applications to medical schools



AMCAS- Deadlines

- Early Decision Program (EDP) – deadline August 1st
- The Regular Admissions deadlines vary. Applications must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) of the deadline date.
 - List of individual school deadlines - <http://www.aamc.org/students/amcas/deadlines.htm>



Early Decision Program (EDP)

- May apply to only 1 U.S. medical school through EDP
 - Must attend that medical school, if accepted
 - Application deadline: August 1
 - Notified by: October 1
 - If not accepted under EDP, you:
 - Will be placed in regular applicant pool
 - May then apply to additional schools
- <http://www.aamc.org/students/amcas/faq/edp.htm>



Application Process Expenditures

Average application costs:

- MCAT: \$225
- AMCAS: \$160 first app; \$30 each additional
- Secondaries: \$75 - 100 each
- Interviews: \$300- 400 each (average), includes:
 - Clothing
 - Transportation: flights or train
 - Meals
 - Taxis
 - Accommodations: hotel/motel
 - Haircut

Cost of applying to 15 schools:

- MCAT: \$225
- AMCAS: \$580
- Secondaries: \$1125 - \$1500
- Interviews (assuming 5 interviews): \$1500 - \$2000

Note: The numbers above provide only a rough estimate. The actual cost may be more or less depending on number of interviews, location of schools and more.



Application Process Expenditures

Ways to save money:

- Apply early for greater flexibility in scheduling of interviews
- Stay with alumni for your school interviews
- Find out a school's flexibility in scheduling your interview around the same time as another school.
- Request fee waivers, if applicable
- Borrow or buy interview attire at used clothing stores or through MIT Women's League (male & female interview clothing):
<http://web.mit.edu/womensleague/>



Fee Assistance Program (FAP)

- For applicants who qualify:
 - MCAT reduced from \$225 to \$85
 - Applicant receives up to 13 free medical school designations through AMCAS (\$30 per school beyond 13 schools)
 - Most schools waive secondary fees
- In past, 1477 applicants submitted applications for FAP and 1296 of these applications were accepted (i.e., applicants qualified for FAP)



Financial Aid Resources

- (MD)²
 - <http://www.aamc.org/students/financing/md2/start.htm>
- AAMC Fee Assistance Program (FAP)
 - <http://www.aamc.org/students/applying/fap/>
- National Institutes of Health (NIH) Loan Repayment Programs
 - <http://lrp.info.nih.gov>
- FAFSA - Free Application for Federal Student Aid
 - www.fafsa.ed.gov/



Preprofessional Advising Services for Applicants

- Essay Critiques for Primary Application
- Letter Selection strategy
- School Application Strategy
- Credential Service
- Mock Interviews
- Post-mortem review of application cycle



Essay Critiques

Preprofessional Advising provides the service of personal statement/essay critiques in two ways:

- Option #1: **Appointments**
Call 617-253-4733 to make an in-person or phone appointment with Erin Scott or Tamara Menghi. Front desk staff will assist you with making an appointment. Please send your essay 24 hours prior to your scheduled appointment to your assigned counselor.
- Option #2: **Email Critiques**
Email [Erin Scott](#) or [Tamara Menghi](#) with a Word document copy of your essay. (Please no PDFs.) Critiqued essays are typically returned via email within 3-4 days of the request for an email critique.



Essay Critiques

DEADLINES

June 15, 2009:

Last day to request an essay critique

June 30, 2009:

Final copy of personal statement/essay is due to the CDC.

Critique Restrictions:

2 essay critiques per applicant (medical, dental, vet, etc.)

3 essay critiques per joint degree applicants (ex. MD-PhD)



Useful Websites

- **Preprofessional Advising**
 - <http://web.mit.edu/career/www/preprof/premed.html>
- **National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions**
 - <http://www.naahp.org/>
- **American Association of Medical Colleges**
 - <http://www.aamc.org>
- **American Medical Association**
 - <http://www.ama-assn.org/>
- **American Medical Student Association (national)**
 - <http://www.amsa.org>
- **The Student Doctor Network**
 - <http://www.studentdoctor.net/>