

# Applying to Medical School as a Post-Doc/Graduate Student

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# A to Z...

Applying to medical school is a long, arduous, challenging, and expensive undertaking. This presentation will focus on understanding the process of self assessment, applying to medical school, the preparation necessary, and executing the details.

# Challenges of applying as a graduate student

- Working with your home institution
- Undergraduate coursework vs. graduate coursework
- BCPM GPA
- Applying as non-traditional aged
- Letters of recommendation
- Timing—bridge year?

# Some Facts About Medical School Admissions

- \* Allopathic Medicine--entry year fall 2012
  - \* 141 medical schools
  - \* 45,266 - applicants
  - \* 19,517- matriculants
  - \* 53.6% male matriculants; 46.4% female matriculants
  - \* 24 – average age of beginning med students
  - \* 3.54 = mean cumulative GPA of applicants
  - \* 3.68 = mean cumulative GPA of matriculants
  - \* 3.44 = mean cumulative math/science GPA of applicants
  - \* 3.63 = mean cumulative math/science GPA of matriculants
  - \* 28.3 = mean MCAT of applicants
  - \* 31.2 = mean MCAT of matriculants

# Some Facts About Medical School Admissions

- \* Osteopathic Medicine—entry year fall 2013
  - \* 32 medical schools + three branch campuses
  - \* 16,454 – applicants
  - \* 5,577 – available seats
  - \* 2.95 applicants per seat
  - \* 8.36 = mean number of individual school applications per applicant
  - \* 24 = average age of first year osteo students
  - \* 53.6% male applicants; 46.4% female applicants
  - \* 27.4% = applicants age 26 and above
  - \* 3.55 = mean cumulative GPA of 2013 applicants
  - \* 3.34 = mean cumulative math/science GPA of 2013 applicants
  - \* 26 = median MCAT of 2013 applicants

# PERSONAL COMPETENCIES THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO SUCCESS IN MEDICAL EDUCATION AND PHYSICIAN PRACTICE

## Interpersonal Competencies

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

## Thinking and Reasoning Competencies

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

## Intrapersonal Competencies

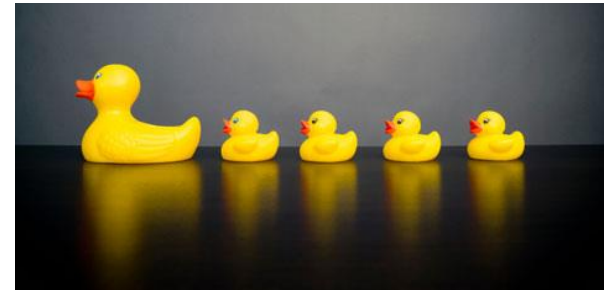
- Ethical Responsibility to Self and Others
- Reliability and Dependability
- Resilience and Adaptability
- Capacity for Improvement

## Science Competencies

- Living Systems
- Human Behavior

# Self-Assessment

- \* Research
- \* Volunteer/community experience
- \* Medically-related experience
- \* Grades and test scores: competitive cumulative and BCPM GPA  
competitive MCAT scores
- \* Strong references
- \* Solid personal statement: “Why do I want to become a physician?”
  - \* *Are you realistic?*
  - \* *Are your “ducks in a row?”*



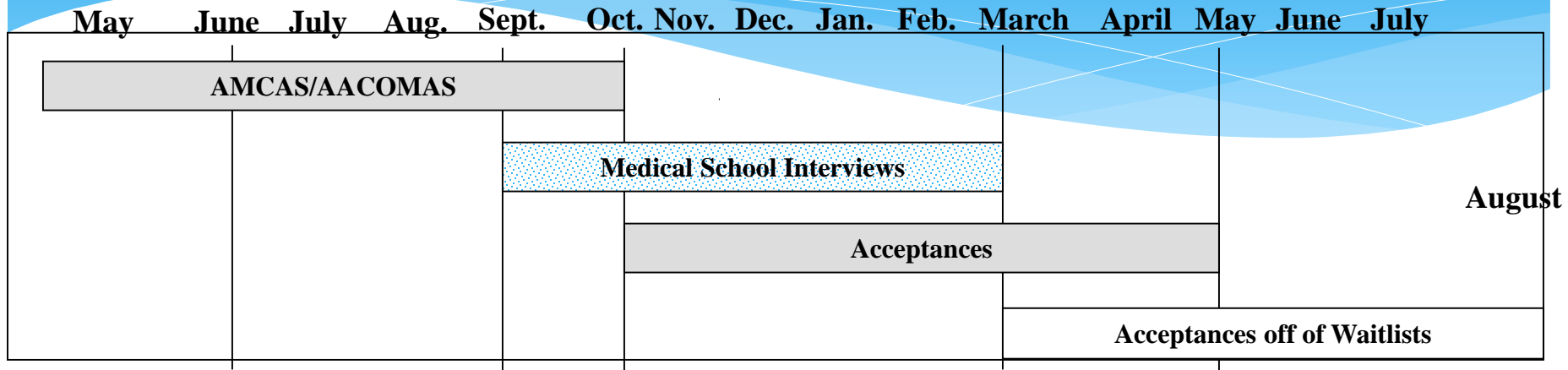
# Ask Yourself...

- Have you engaged in independent inquiry?
- Have you developed meaningful relationships with professors, supervisors, advisors and others who can support you and ultimately be in a position to speak and write on your behalf?
- Have you demonstrated a commitment and passion for serving the needs of others less fortunate?
- Have you engaged in meaningful learning experiences outside of the classroom?
- Have you taken on a leadership role or a position of responsibility in an organization or an initiative that has personal meaning for you?
- Have you challenged yourself to seek experiences outside of your comfort zone?
- Are your abilities and achievements in the premedical sciences apparent upon perusal of your transcript?
- Have you diversified your academic interests in a manner that will reflect your intellectual passions?
- Have you pursued opportunities that help you understand some of the social, cultural, political factors that impact the delivery of healthcare?
- What have you done when you have been faced by challenges and/or obstacles in life?



# 2015 Application Timeline

## May 2014 to August 2015



- **First week of May:** Applications open
- **First week of June:** Begin submitting applications (apply early!)
- **July:** Begin secondaries; complete them thoroughly, accurately, but quickly (within a few weeks of receiving)
- **September:** Interviews begin
- **October 15:** First acceptances sent by medical schools with rolling admissions
- **October 15 – November 15:** most medical school deadlines. See [aamc.org](http://aamc.org) for all deadlines
- **March:** Most interviews end
- **May 15:** Last date to hold multiple acceptances
- **March – August:** Offers from medical school waitlists
- **August:** Medical school begins

# MEDICAL SCHOOL APPLICATION TIMELINE

- While some medical schools will accept students on a rolling basis and notify them as early as mid-October, others wait to notify all of their candidates in March/April.
- Since most schools operate on a rolling basis, it is in your best interest to submit an application well before the deadlines. Aim to submit your application in early June.
- May 15, 2015 is the last day that you can hold multiple acceptances to medical schools; however, you should withdraw your applications as soon as you know you are no longer interested in a particular school.

# MCAT: issues to consider

- The last MCAT in its current format will be January 2015.
- New MCAT will debut in spring 2015... March or April.
- Issues to consider when deciding which date to choose:
- Aim to take the test once; not the SAT, no “superscoring.”
- If take Jan. 2015 and need to retake, you’ll need to restudy with new format.



# LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

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**"Are all of these letters of recommendation from your mother?"**

# Letters of Recommendation

- \* Whom should I ask? (choose recommenders carefully)
- \* How do I ask for a recommendation?
- \* What materials do I give to the recommender?
  - \* Resume, personal statement, transcripts, publications (if any).
- \* What about waiving my right to see a letter?
  - \* Medical schools prefer applicants to waive their right to see letters; this gives the letters more weight.
- \* How many are enough recommendations?
- \* How are my recommendations submitted?
- \* Don't forget thank you notes!

**Check AMCAS and AACOMAS for instructions on uploading letters of rec  
and  
contact your undergraduate institution's Pre-Health or Career Services Office  
to inquire about services they might offer for handling letters of rec.**

# Deciding Where To Apply – slide 1

- Location!
- How many?
- State residency
- Balance across selectivity (reaches, realistics, safeties)
- Cost—see next slide
- Mission and curriculum—see next slide
- Size and composition of student body
- Research vs. clinical emphasis; Special programs
- Prestige (all US medical schools have “prestige”)

## KEY RESOURCES:

Allopathic: Medical School Admissions Requirements (MSAR)

Osteopathic: College Information Booklet (CIB)

# Deciding Where To Apply – slide 2

## \* Cost:

- \* Tuition (including in-state vs. out-of-state)
- \* Living Expenses (cost of living)
- \* Financial Aid Resources\*: need-based or a limited number of merit scholarships

## \* Curriculum:

- \* Traditional – Courses Organized by Single Departments
- \* Progressive – Integrated Courses Involving Two or More Departments:
  - \* Example – Organ Systems approach to teaching basic science
- \* Format – Lecture or Small Group (Case-Based, Problem Based, Discussion Groups)
- \* Clinical Exposure – 3rd and 4th Years of Medical School or Earlier; most schools now offer clinical exposure in the first year

\* For further information contact the financial aid offices at individual medical schools and access their websites.

# What Happens After You Apply? – slide 1

- \* In the Admissions Office -
  - \* File created for application and credentials
  - \* Huge backlog, do not expect a quick notification about decisions
- \* Some Schools Conduct Initial Review -
  - \* Screening of MCAT scores and grades before sending “secondary” applications for students above the threshold; rejection for those below the threshold
- \* Other Schools Send a Secondary to All -
  - \* May include guidelines to help students determine if they are competitive



# What Happens After You Apply? – slide 2

- Complete and return supplementary applications as soon as possible; aim for a two-week turnaround time. Some schools will have deadlines—read the secondaries carefully!
- Be sure all other required credentials, such as letters of recommendation, are sent to AMCAS or the medical schools, as specified.
- Possible Notification - receipt of application, what is needed, completion of application. Ultimately, you are responsible for all that is needed to complete the application.

# Screening 1

Screening -- After all items are received, one or more screeners fully review each application.

- \* Some schools may use a screening formula.
- \* Screening factors:
  - \* Grades and MCAT Scores
    - \* Most important factors during initial screening
  - \* Letters of Recommendation
  - \* Personal Essay
  - \* The Quality (vs. Quantity) of Experiences
  - \* Consideration of parents educational background/occupation(s); economic disadvantage/advantage; ethnic/minority status



The Interview – has the greatest degree of weight at most schools.

# Screening 2

- Initial evaluation of metrics and non-academic criteria from AMCAS and secondary application
- Academic review may include verification of completed pre-requisites, assessment of level of difficulty of courses and course load, academic honors, and relevant research experience
- Verified grade point averages:

VERIFIED GRADE POINT AVERAGES						
<i>GPA Calculations will appear only when your application status is Processed</i>						
Status	BCPM		AO		Total	
	GPA	Hours	GPA	Hours	GPA	Hours
High School						
Freshman						
Sophomore						
Junior						
Senior						
Postbaccalaureate Undergraduate						
Cumulative Undergraduate						
Graduate						
<b>Supplemental Hours:</b>	<b>P/F - Pass:</b>	<b>P/F - Fail:</b>	<b>A/P:</b>	<b>CLEP:</b>	<b>OTHER:</b>	

# The medical school interview – slide 1

- The interview invitation: A BIG first hurdle! Your chances of admission greatly increase, confidence builder.
- Promptly schedule/confirm interview date; request change only if absolutely necessary.
- Interview is used for both assessment and recruitment.
- An opportunity to learn about the school's curriculum, resources, and environment.
- Be courteous to everyone! You are being assessed throughout the interview process.



# The Medical School Interview – slide 2

- If invited to stay overnight – a good way to learn about the school, get insight about student life.
- Interview day: usually a tour and lunch with students and/or faculty, and an information session about financial aid.
- Meet other applicants as *colleagues* not *competitors*.
- One or more faculty interviews, possibly a student interview.
- A number of schools have a “Multiple Mini Interview” format.
  - Doesn’t predict cognitive performance; measures competencies rather than academics
  - Questions: What would you do OR tell me about the situation?  
<http://www.multipleminiinterview.com/>
- Go to the interview prepared to ask questions and learn more about the school; questions also show you have done your homework.

# How Applicants are Assessed at the stage of the Interview and Beyond

- Social and communication skills
- Clarity and flexibility of thinking
- Evidence of motivation for a career in medicine
- “Isms”: professionalism, humanism, altruism
- Probe depth of activities (e.g. research, volunteerism, other areas that show talent)
- Are you a good “fit” for the school?

# Applicant Rights and Responsibilities

## Key Considerations:

- May 15 - deadline to make a final decision and reduce multiple acceptances to just one school. Keep schools informed of your plans.
- Immediately withdraw applications, interviews, and acceptances from all schools you do not plan to attend.
- Be considerate to medical schools and other applicants, who may be desperately waiting for an acceptance.

## Official documents:

- \* [AAMC Recommendations for Medical School and MD-PhD Applicants](#)
- \* [AAMC Recommendations for Medical School and MD-PhD Admission Officers](#)
- \* <https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/recommendations/>

# Key Resources

## Medical School Admission Requirements

\* <https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/requirements/msar/>

## The Costs of Applying

\* <https://www.aamc.org/download/111812/data/applyingcost.pdf>

## Generic FAQ for MD/PhD Applicants (University of Penn)

<http://www.med.upenn.edu/mstp/applicantfaq.pdf>

## AMCAS - The American Medical College Application Service

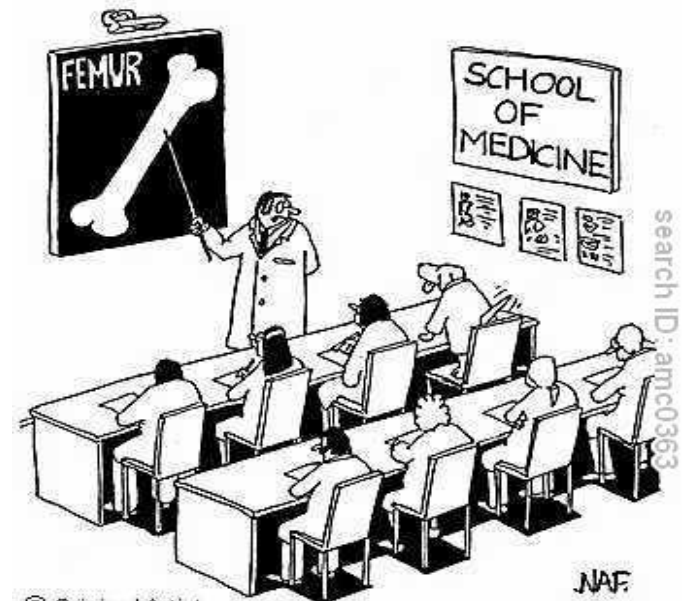
\* <https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/amcas/>

## \* AACOMAS—for osteopathic schools

\* <https://aacomas.aacom.org/>

## \* The Texas Medical & Dental School Application Service (TMDSAS)

\* <http://www.utsystem.edu/tmdsas/>



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# One-Time Pre-med Advisor Consultation Appt. (non-JHU Undergraduate)

- \* Visit Home Page of Pre-Professional Advising
- \* Select “Schedule an Appointment”
- \* Select Ms. Snyderman if A-L
- \* Select Ms. Cruik if M-Z
- \* Select Session “One-Time, Grad Student, SOM, SPH”
- \* Select date and complete information for “new user”

Questions?