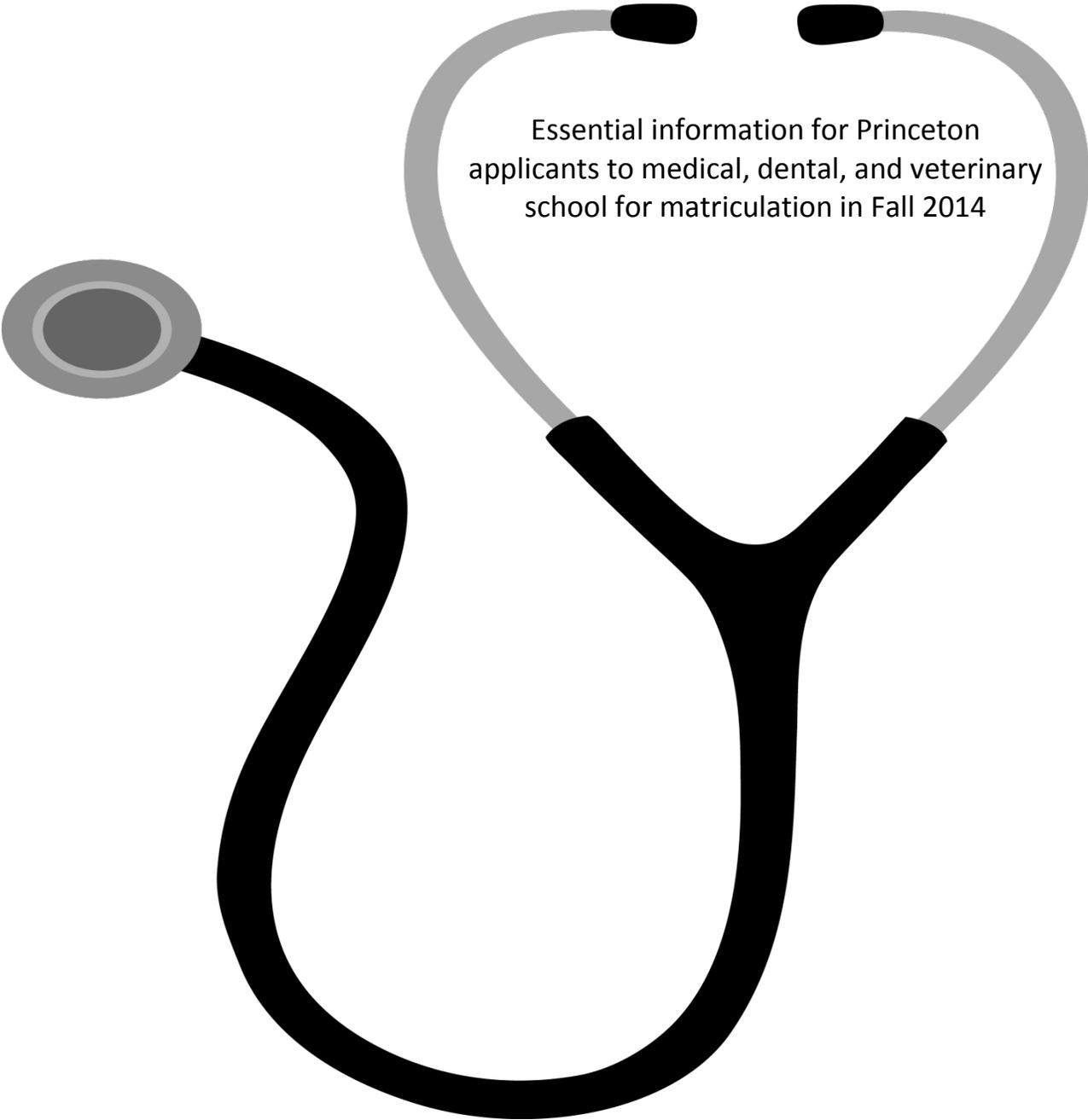


# HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL APPLICATION GUIDE 2014



Essential information for Princeton  
applicants to medical, dental, and veterinary  
school for matriculation in Fall 2014

Princeton University Health Professions Advising  
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Health Profession	Primary Application and Application Service	Standardized Test	Organizing Body
Allopathic Medicine (MD)	<p>AMCAS: American Medical College Application Service  <a href="http://www.aamc.org/students/amcas/start.htm">http://www.aamc.org/students/amcas/start.htm</a>  amcas@aamc.org  202-828-0600</p> <p>TMSAS: Texas Medical &amp; Dental Schools Application Service  <a href="http://www.utsystem.edu/tmsas/">http://www.utsystem.edu/tmsas/</a>  tmsas@utsystem.edu  512-499-2786</p> <p>OMSAS: Ontario Medical Schools Application Service  <a href="http://www.ouac.on.ca/omsas/">http://www.ouac.on.ca/omsas/</a>  519-823-1063</p>	<p>MCAT: Medical College Admission Test  <a href="http://www.aamc.org/students/mcat/start.htm">www.aamc.org/students/mcat/start.htm</a></p>	<p>AAMC: American Association of Medical Colleges  <a href="http://www.aamc.org">http://www.aamc.org</a></p>
Dentistry	<p>AADSAS: Associated American Dental Schools Application Service  <a href="http://www.adea.org/AADSAS">http://www.adea.org/AADSAS</a>  csraadsas@adea.org  202-667-9433/800-353-2237</p>	<p>DAT: Dental Admission Test  <a href="http://www.ada.org/prof/ed/testing/dat/registering.asp">www.ada.org/prof/ed/testing/dat/registering.asp</a></p>	<p>ADEA: American Dental Education Association  <a href="http://www.adea.org">http://www.adea.org</a></p>
Optometry	<p>OptomCAS: Optometry Centralized Application Service  <a href="http://www.optomcas.org">http://www.optomcas.org</a>  optomcasinfo@optomcas.org  617-612-2888</p>	<p>OAT: Optometry Admission Test  <a href="http://www.opted.org/info_oat.cfm">www.opted.org/info_oat.cfm</a></p>	<p>ASCO: Association of Schools &amp; Colleges of Optometry  <a href="http://www.opted.org">http://www.opted.org</a></p>
Osteopathic Medicine (DO)	<p>AACOMAS: American Assoc. of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Application Service  <a href="http://aacomas.aacom.org">http://aacomas.aacom.org</a>  aacomas@aacom.org  301-968-4190</p>	<p>MCAT</p>	<p>AACOM: American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine  <a href="http://www.aacom.org">http://www.aacom.org</a></p>
Pharmacy	<p>PharmCAS: Pharmacy College Application Service  <a href="http://www.pharmcas.org">http://www.pharmcas.org</a>  info@pharmcas.org  617-612-2050</p>	<p>PCAT: Pharmacy College Admission Test  <a href="http://tpc-etesting.com/pcat">http://tpc-etesting.com/pcat</a></p>	<p>AACP: American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy  <a href="http://www.aacp.org/">http://www.aacp.org/</a></p>
Physician Assistant	<p>CASPA: Central Application Service for Physician Assistants  <a href="http://secure.caspaonline.org">http://secure.caspaonline.org</a>  apply@caspaonline.org  240-497-1895</p>	<p>GRE: <a href="http://www.gre.org">www.gre.org</a> or MCAT or none: Check with individual schools.</p>	<p>APAP: Association of Physician Assistant Programs  <a href="http://www.apap.org">http://www.apap.org</a></p>
Podiatric Medicine	<p>AACPMAS: American Assoc. of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine Application Service  <a href="http://www.aacpm.org/apply/apply.asp">http://www.aacpm.org/apply/apply.asp</a>  aacpmas@aacpm.org  800-922-9266</p>	<p>MCAT</p>	<p>AACPM: American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine  <a href="http://www.aacpm.org">http://www.aacpm.org</a></p>
Veterinary Medicine	<p>VMCAS: Veterinary Medical College Application Service  <a href="http://www.aavmc.org/vmcas/vmcas.htm">http://www.aavmc.org/vmcas/vmcas.htm</a>  vmcas@aavmc.org  877-862-2740</p>	<p>GRE</p>	<p>AAVMC: Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges  <a href="http://aavmc.org">http://aavmc.org</a></p>

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October 2012

Dear applicants,

Welcome to the beginning of the application process to medical, vet, dental, and other health professions schools! This handbook will provide important information about preparing your materials, submitting your applications, and completing the next steps in the application process. This handbook is long and full of detail, but it's important that you know everything in here as you apply, so please do read the entire handbook – it will answer many of your basic questions, and then as you work with health professions advisors, you can spend time working on things that are more specific to your own candidacy.

Applying to health professions schools has three principal components that feed each other as you present your candidacy: working with HPA; submitting your primary application; and submitting your secondary applications. You must complete all three to apply to health professions schools.

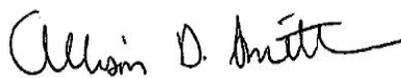
- The first section of the handbook will describe the Princeton process. The items you complete for our office serve three functions: 1) to help you to focus and prepare before you submit your applications; 2) to allow HPA to get to know you personally; 3) to provide information from which a composite letter of recommendation is written on your behalf.
- The second section of the handbook takes you through the actual application processes, that is, completing primary and secondary applications. It also addresses two important decisions that are integral to the application processes: determining when to take your standardized exam and selecting the schools to which you will apply.
- The third section of the handbook is dedicated to steps that happen after you've applied – interviews, financial aid, procedures once you're accepted, and considerations to make if you are not accepted.
- The appendices provide more information on various topics that will likely also be of interest, but do not fit within the narratives of each section, such as reasons to take a glide year (year off between graduation and health professions school), and how to compute your science GPA. Application statistics for previous Princeton applicants to health professions schools are also included.

If you come across any information that isn't included here that you think would benefit future applicant cohorts, please let us know! We are always looking to make improvements and find ways to make this complicated application and acceptance process easier for you!

All the best,



Kate Fukawa-Connelly  
Director



Allison Smith  
Associate Director



Jennifer Samarel  
Administrative Assistant



# WHEN TO APPLY?

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Many students overlook this important aspect of the application process – deciding in what year to apply. There are a number of factors to consider as you make this decision. Here are a few of the questions you should be asking yourself as you honestly evaluate your candidacy.

## Academics

- Are your BCPM (biology, chemistry, physics, math) and overall GPAs competitive? (To find out, see GPA calculation worksheet, Appendix C, and applicant statistics, Appendix D).
- Do you think that your GPA might be much higher after this year? One more year of grades could make you a more competitive applicant.
- Will you have completed all of your pre-requisite coursework with grades of C or better by the time you matriculate? Some schools won't accept C- grades.
- Will you be well-prepared for an early standardized test date?

## Activities

- Have you done enough hands-on clinical work to demonstrate to health professionals that you have realistic understanding of the career?
- Do you have a well-rounded overall profile?
- Have you participated in enough activities to be able to talk about your experiences and your motivation for the health professions if you're invited to interview?

## Letters of Recommendation

- Do you have good relationships with at least four individuals (including two in the sciences) who will be willing to write you strong, positive letters of recommendation in a timely manner?

**Motivation:** if you aren't as sure as you can be that you want to be a health professional (or you're not able to articulate your motivation well), it will be obvious at interviews and likely keep you from gaining acceptances. Don't apply until you're as sure as you can be!

**Intangible Factors:** Admissions committees look at a number of qualities in applicants. These include integrity and ethics, reliability and dependability, service orientation, social and interpersonal skills, teamwork, capacity for improvement, resilience and adaptability, cultural competence, and oral communication skills. Consider your own development in these areas and how well you'll come across in these areas in your application, letters of recommendation, and interview.

This is not meant to intimidate you! If you are truly dedicated to becoming a health professional, HPA will help you achieve your goal – it's just a matter of whether more time will make you significantly more prepared to be successful in a competitive application process (see "Ten Good Reasons to take a Glide Year" in the appendices). Applying to health professions schools is a draining process in terms of your time, finances, and emotional well-being. You only want to have to do it once. While it's impossible to know for sure whether anyone will be accepted or not, it is possible to reflect on the strength of your candidacy.

Once you decide whether or not to apply, *you should apply as early as you can in your chosen application year*. This advice will be emphasized numerous times throughout this handbook – applying early shows that you are committed to the application process and thus to going to health professions school. Additionally, many schools are on rolling admissions deadlines; this means that the later you apply, the fewer seats you're competing for at a given school.

**Apply when you are the strongest applicant.  
Apply early in the application cycle.**



## SECTION I: THE PRINCETON PRE-APPLICATION PROCESS

### Overview

As stated above, the process through which you'll work with HPA at Princeton will help you prepare your application materials. This process also helps HPA get to know you better, so that a unique, detailed composite letter of recommendation may be prepared on your behalf. All of the materials you're asked to provide, along with the HPA Pre-Application Interview (PAI), feed into the overall application process. A comprehensive checklist will be provided to you. Here is a condensed version of the most important steps:

### HPA Pre-Application and Medical School Process Timelines

Fall semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend an Applicant Workshop.</li> <li>Sign up for a 20 minute intake session (bring Intake Form).</li> <li>Register for MCAT in October/November.</li> </ul>
Nov. 2012 – Jan. 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin drafting your autobiography, short essays and activities list.</li> <li>Begin to ask for letters of recommendation.</li> <li>Apply for Fee Assistance Program (if applicable, for MD applicants).</li> </ul>
Jan. 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sign up for your Pre-Application Interview (PAI) with HPA.</li> </ul>
One week before your Pre-Application Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deadline for submitting to HPA (by email or hard copy):             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>your autobiography, short essay answers and activities list (resume optional)</li> <li>Form 1 (Pre-Health Student Information Sheet)</li> <li>Form 2 (Request for Composite Letter/Waiver Statement)</li> <li>Form 3 (Release of Information/Disclosure of Institutional Action)</li> <li>Form 4 (Preliminary School List)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Feb. – Apr. 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview with HPA.</li> <li>Work on your personal statement.</li> <li>Study for and take standardized test</li> </ul>
June 10, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deadline for submitting to HPA by email for fastest composite letter processing:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre-Health Course list: Should be typed and submitted electronically with spring grades included.</li> <li>Letters of recommendation from each recommender</li> <li>Form 5 (File Completion Form): when all letters and other materials have been received</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
June – Aug 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit verified primary application to <a href="mailto:hpa@princeton.edu">hpa@princeton.edu</a>.</li> <li>Composite letters will be prepared by HPA. The order in which they are written is based on a combination of date of PAI, date of file completion, date of standardized exam, and date of processing of primary application. AMCAS will notify you when your letter is sent to your schools.</li> </ul>
June 15, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HPA's absolute deadline to schedule Pre-Application Interview in order to receive a composite letter.</li> </ul>
Sept. 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If your file was completed late, there will be a delay in submitting your committee letter. Once the new academic year is underway, the demands of advising limit the time we have to write letters.</li> </ul>
October 1, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HPA's absolute deadline to submit your AMCAS and receive a composite letter.</li> </ul>

## ***The Composite Letter of Recommendation & Recommendation Packet***

The letter of recommendation written by HPA on an applicant's behalf is often called a composite letter or committee letter. Composite letters are preferred by medical and dental schools, and accepted by some veterinary, optometry and other health professional schools. The letter is referred to as a "composite" because it incorporates information from several different sources including the applicant's overall engagement with the HPA office, an autobiography and short essays, a list of activities, the academic transcript, a number of HPA-specific forms, letters of recommendation from faculty and other individuals and a Pre-Application Interview. The more detailed an applicant's materials are, and the more specific the individual recommenders' letters are, the more unique and distinctive the composite letter is likely to be.

### **Purpose of the composite letter**

The composite letter serves many purposes, all of which are valuable to students in the application process:

- It provides a clear narrative of the applicant's candidacy, addressing his/her motivation for pursuing a career in medicine, and his/her qualifications for admission to health professions schools.
- It is an avenue through which HPA can address any anomalies in the applicant's candidacy, so that admissions committees have the full context of, for example, a semester of lower than average grades or a disciplinary sanction.
- It gives admissions committees a clearer understanding of the candidate in the context of other Princeton applicants and highlights strengths and addresses areas that s/he is working to improve.
- The process of preparing the composite letter gives HPA advisers more familiarity with each applicant's candidacy, which may be helpful in guiding him or her through the application process.

### **Eligibility for a composite letter for new applicants**

In order for a composite letter to be written for a new applicant (i.e., an applicant who has never received a composite letter), the following criteria must be met:

- The applicant must have taken at least half of the pre-requisite science courses at Princeton in the past seven years.
- The applicant must secure at least one letter of recommendation from a faculty member (or preceptor) who taught him/her in a science course.
- The applicant must meet all paperwork deadlines:
  - Seven days prior to Pre-Application Interview: HPA forms 1-4, essays, activities list
  - June 15: Absolute deadline for HPA Pre-Application Interview scheduling (preferred scheduling is in February)
  - October 1: Absolute deadline for AMCAS submission (ideal submission is in June)
- The applicant must sign up for and participate in a Pre-Application Interview.
- The applicant must release his/her application information to HPA through the primary application process (instructions to do so will be provided in an AMCAS workshop) and send HPA a copy of the verified primary application(s).

Please note that while there are no GPA or MCAT cut-offs to receive a composite letter of recommendation, HPA strongly encourages students to engage in the composite letter of recommendation process when they feel confident that they are competitive applicants. A committee letter will provide an honest evaluation of academic performance and readiness for success in the rigorous medical school curriculum.

### **Timing and contents of composite letters**

The composite letters of recommendation are prepared beginning in May; preparing them is a time-intensive process for the HPA office, and this is the reason that we ask for much information from applicants well before the application season truly begins with submitting your application in June.

Once your letter is written, a packet of materials is sent to the applicant's schools, The packet includes:

- Composite letter of recommendation.
- Individual letters of recommendation.
- Pre-health Course Form with description of Princeton's grading policies, independent work requirements, and other highlights of the academic program.
- Letter addressing disciplinary/academic institutional action, if applicable.

For allopathic (MD) schools, composite letters are sent through the AMCAS letter writer service. For osteopathic (DO), veterinary, and other health professions schools, composite letters are sent via paper mail, after applicants provide HPA with a copy of their verified application and a list of their schools (see p. 23).

### **Eligibility for an updated composite letter for reapplicants**

In order for an updated composite letter to be written for a reapplicant (i.e., an applicant who has received a committee letter in a previous year but was unsuccessful in the health professions school application process), the following criteria must be met:

- The reapplicant must have significantly improved his/her candidacy since the unsuccessful application, as determined through consultation with HPA (see ***Considerations for Reapplicants*** handout).
- The reapplicant must secure at least one new letter of recommendation from someone with whom he/she has worked since the previous application.
- The reapplicant must meet all paperwork deadlines:
  - Seven days prior to Pre-Application Interview: HPA forms 1-4, **updated** activities list and essays
  - June 15: Deadline for HPA Pre-Application Interview scheduling
  - October 1: Deadline for AMCAS submission
- The applicant must sign up for and participate in a Pre-Application Interview.
- The applicant must release his/her application information to HPA through the primary application process (instructions to do so will be provided in an AMCAS workshop) and send HPA a copy of the verified primary application(s).

Once the letter is written, a packet of materials is sent to the applicant's schools. The packet includes:

- Addendum to composite letter of recommendation, highlighting the steps the student has taken to become a more competitive applicant.
- One to two additional individual letters of recommendation.
- Original composite letter of recommendation.
- Original individual letters of recommendation.
- Pre-health Course Form with description of Princeton's grading policies, independent work requirements, and other highlights of the academic program.
- Letter addressing disciplinary/academic institutional action, if applicable.

### **Individual letter collection for students who do not meet the criteria for a composite letter**

HPA will collect letters of recommendation on behalf of students who do not meet the criteria for a composite letter, and send the individual letters out to schools with a brief cover letter. There are no deadlines or other criteria required for individual letter collection. Please be aware that many schools (especially allopathic medical schools) will see it as a 'red flag' if the applicant does not receive a composite letter for reasons other than not completing the requisite course work to be eligible for a composite letter.

## *Instructions for Completing HPA Materials*

### **Due in Fall Semester (bring to intake appointment or email to [hpa@princeton.edu](mailto:hpa@princeton.edu))**

- Intake Form:** Basic information on this form helps HPA advisers to get to know you. This form and all others are available on the HPA website.

### **Due Seven Business Days before the Interview**

(in HPA, 36 University Place, Suite 230 or by email to [hpa@princeton.edu](mailto:hpa@princeton.edu))

- Form 1: Student Information Sheet**
  - Fill in each item completely.
  - List the names and relevant information for recommenders. This can be changed later – just give us an idea of who you are thinking of asking. You can have 4-6 recommendation letters. At least three recommenders must be academic references, one of whom has taught you in a science class at Princeton.
  - Include the approximate number of hours per week that you spend in co-curricular activities (work, student groups, volunteering, etc). The number will probably be between 0 and 40 (there are 168 hours in a week). Do not include total hours over the course of the semester – we need an average per week number.
- Form 2: Request and Waiver Statement**
  - Read and sign EITHER indicating that you waive or do not waive your rights of access. Not both. You're making a choice between two options.
  - It is preferred by health professions schools that you waive your rights of access to your letters of recommendation.
- Form 3: Release of Information and Disclosure of Institutional Action**
  - Read and sign part I.
  - **In Part II, report any disciplinary or academic action on your record.** This means any action beyond warning (e.g., probation, suspension, etc). It is critical that you disclose such actions at this point in the application process, so that we can discuss them with you and consider how they may affect your candidacy. If you are unsure of whether there is an action in your record, consult with your Dean or Director of Studies, or with the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students.
- Form 4: Preliminary School List:** This will probably change as you research schools – we just want a general idea. See “Selecting Schools” section below for pointers.
- Activities List:** Include your name and today's date on each page. More details below.
- Short Essay Questions**
  - Include your name and today's date on each page.
  - Submit answers to 2-3 of the short essay questions. More details below.
- Autobiography:** Include your name and today's date on each page. More details below.

**Due during the summer ASAP (by email to [hpa@princeton.edu](mailto:hpa@princeton.edu))**

- ❑ **Pre-Health Course List. Fill out and email to HPA after spring grades are posted.**
  - This list will be sent with your committee letter, so we must have an electronic version.
  - Include all courses that you took to fulfill pre-requisites for health professions school. If you used AP credit, write “Advanced Placement” in the corresponding section.
  - Your Writing Seminar & an additional literature-based course will satisfy the English requirement.
  - In the “Others” section, include anything that you want to highlight to your schools. This could include language, health-related courses, upper-level sciences. Don’t just include courses because you got high grades in them. They should be relevant to your application.
  
- ❑ **Form 5: File Completion Form. Fill out and email to HPA only after:**
  - You have had your Pre-Application Interview.
  - You have completed and submitted forms 1-4.
  - All of your recommendations have been received.

*To be the most competitive applicant, we advise that all of your letters of recommendation be submitted to us by June 10, in order for us to submit your committee letter over the summer. We write letters in an order based on when your file is complete, when you had your PAI, when your application has been submitted, and when your standardized test scores are available. If the letters of recommendation and Form 5 come in after June 10, your committee letter would likely be sent mid- to late August or September. Once school begins, the demands of advising limit the time we have to write letters.*

- ❑ **Copy of the standardized (primary) application once it has been verified/processed**
  - AMCAS: Can be saved as a .pdf by logging on and choosing the “Print Application” option.
  - AADSAS/AACOMAS: Choose “Save Page As...” on your browser, and send as an .html document.

**Instructions for Completing HPA Materials: Activities List**

You must submit a copy of your activities list at least seven business days prior to your interview with HPA. This list is like an expanded version of a resume. It gives you an opportunity to tell HPA about your non-academic experiences such as awards, internships, volunteer or paid work, travel, or significant hobbies. Include significant endeavors from high school, college and beyond (if you are an alum). You’ll include a similar list on your standardized application.

We ask that you format entries in your list as follows:

- The title of the activity or position.
- The beginning and ending date(s) of the activity.
- The organization you worked for and its location. For activities at Princeton University it is sufficient to just note “Princeton University.” For activities off campus, include the city, state, and, if outside of the United States, the country.
- The average number of hours you committed to this activity per week, and the total hours.
- Supervisor/contact name and title (if there was one) and contact information.
- A brief description of your activity. The AMCAS limit for each activity is 700 characters. Your description should include your job responsibilities, a description of why the experience was meaningful to you, what skills you used or improved in this venue, and any other information you think is relevant. You will be asked to select the three most important experiences and write an additional 1325 characters to explain why these are the most meaningful experiences. Using this format will allow you to easily transfer information to your AMCAS, AADSAS, or other application.

A typical entry might look something like this:

Description of Activity: Shadowing  
Dates: July 2012  
Contact Name & Title: Jane Tiger, MD, Chief of Surgery  
Hours/Week: 20 hours total  
Contact Email: jane.tiger@gmail.com  
Contact phone: 609-555-1234  
Organization Name: University Medical Center Princeton at Plainsboro  
City/State/Country: Plainsboro NJ

Experience Description: Though this was a brief, two-day experience, for a total of twenty hours, I appreciated the full range of activities that I was able to observe. On trauma rounds with the Chief of Surgery, I saw patients with massive, life-threatening injuries. The cooperative interaction among the medical staff, as well as strong sense of teamwork and intellectual sharing, impressed me; I look forward to this atmosphere as a clinician. In the ER, complex cases required rapid assessments of patients who were often unable to communicate their symptoms. Physicians quickly determined a plan of action and spoke to the family with utmost patience and compassion. Clearly, the role of physician is broader than treating just the patient's illness; it includes providing information, reassurance, or solace to the family.

For your information, AMCAS asks that you identify each experience within one of the following categories. You do not have to identify these for Princeton process, but it gives you an idea of what medical schools deem important:

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

You may also submit a copy of your resume/CV as a supplement to this activities list, but you must complete the activities list in this format as well.

***Instructions for Completing HPA Materials: The Short Essays***

These essays are meant to give you a chance to provide more detailed information that might not fit within the autobiography. These essays will also aid in preparation for secondary applications to health profession schools during the summer, as many of the prompts were taken directly from questions asked by schools (in which case the school is indicated in parentheses). Please submit answers to two to three of these short essays before your PAI. Some are fairly similar in content – try to choose questions that will tell HPA two different things about you. Answer for the health professional program to which you're applying.

**Please answer 2-3 of the following. Submit to HPA one week before your PAI. Be sure to put your name and the date on each page of your answers. Answers should be approximately 250-500 words.**

1. What has been your most humbling experience and how will that experience affect your interactions with your peers and patients? In your response, identify both the coping skills you called upon to address the situation, and the support person(s) from whom you sought advice.
2. Health professions schools strive to ensure that their students become respectful physicians who embrace all dimensions of diversity. Please describe how any personal characteristics or life experiences will contribute to the diversity of, and bring educational benefits to, our student body. (Georgetown)
3. Medical schools are committed to building a superb educational community with students of diverse talents, experiences, opinions, and backgrounds. What would you as an individual bring to our medical school community? (U Michigan)
4. Briefly describe your single, most rewarding experience. Feel free to refer to an experience otherwise described in application. (Johns Hopkins)
5. The ultimate goal of our institution is to produce a population of physicians with a collective desire to improve health of all segments of our society through the outstanding patient care, research and education. In this context, where do you see your future medical career (academic medicine, research, public health, primary care, business/law, etc.) and why? Your answer need not be restricted to one category. If your plans require that you complete a dual degree program, please elaborate here. (NYU)
6. Reflect upon experiences, activities or accomplishments that demonstrate each of the pre-professional competencies listed below. Your responses will be limited to one paragraph for each personal competency, and should include: 1) examples of situations in which demonstrated each competency; 2) your actions and resulting consequences; and 3) what you learned as a result.

Pre-professional Competencies:

- Integrity and Ethics
- Reliability and Dependability
- Desire to Learn
- Service Orientation
- Social Interpersonal and Teamwork Skills
- Cultural Competence
- Resilience and Adaptability

(adapted from RWJMS)

7. Tell us about something you are passionate about and why. (U Michigan)
8. What has been the ONE most important volunteer endeavor you have done and why was it meaningful? (UCLA)
9. How did you reach your decision to enter medicine (dentistry, veterinary medicine, etc.)? Describe your participation in any health care or other activities which reinforced your decision.
10. Tell us about leadership positions you have had and what you have learned about your strengths and areas to improve as a leader.
11. If no career opportunities were available in health care right now tell us what your career plans would be and why.
12. What satisfactions do you expect to receive from a career as a doctor (dentist, vet, etc.)?

### ***Instructions for Completing HPA Materials: The Autobiography***

Write an essay describing yourself. Some aspects of your life that you may choose to address: your cultural or familial background, significant experiences in your life, obstacles or challenges that you have overcome, activities or hobbies you especially enjoy, intellectual pursuits including your research (both the project and what you find interesting about it). Think about experiences and personal characteristics that this office may not already know of, as well as things you feel distinguish you.

This autobiographical essay serves as a warm-up for the personal statement required on the standardized application. It also gives HPA insight into the personal qualities that you will bring to your chosen profession. The content of this essay is important for writing your committee letter. Your autobiography should be written well in advance of completing the AMCAS, AADSAS, VMCAS, etc.; it should be broader in scope than the personal statement asked for on these applications, and may serve as a starting place for the more focused and concise personal statements.

The personal statement for allopathic medical schools should be no more than 5,300 characters (4,500 for osteopathic medical schools). However, you may submit a longer autobiography for your interview with HPA. It is understood that the autobiographical essay you present to HPA is a work-in-progress that may evolve into your personal statement. At the same time, though, it's the first impression HPA gets of your personality and candidacy and should be fairly polished by the time you hand it in; the content may change, but the grammar, spelling and mechanics should work.

You must submit a copy of your essay to HPA, with your name and the current date, at least one week before your interview. Your autobiography and short essays will be reviewed by HPA, and you will receive valuable feedback that should help you prepare your actual personal statement.

### ***Instructions for Completing HPA Materials: Letters of Recommendation***

Professional schools use letters of recommendation as important tools for getting to know applicants. These letters give professional schools valuable information about you that cannot be gained from grades or test scores, especially in terms of those intangible qualities that are so important. Letters of recommendation are also important to HPA when writing your overall evaluation.

You must have **a minimum of three academic letters** (one recommendation must be an individual who taught you in a science course at Princeton); **four to six letters** will be included in your committee letter and sent to your schools with the committee letter. Quality is far more important than quantity.

Recommendation letters should be solicited from people who know you well. Vague, generic, or noncommittal letters are of relatively little value. Your letters should provide information about your motivation and dedication for pursuing your health career, and describe personal characteristics such as academic potential, maturity, integrity, empathy, communication skills, and leadership ability. Think carefully about who knows you best and who can write a good letter for you.

#### **Types of Recommendation Letters**

A. Academic Recommendations: These letters are written by individuals who can attest to your academic potential but who cannot comment in detail about your personal characteristics. They should be able to go beyond stating what grade you received in a class or your class rank, and focus on your strengths and weaknesses on examinations, projects, classroom participation, and/or laboratory work. It's okay to ask faculty whose courses you did not receive the top grade in – if they can speak about how hard you worked, or your improvement over the course of a semester, that can be just as valuable as earning an A.

You need not focus only on science faculty – don't be afraid to go to professors in other areas of interest. If you majored outside of the sciences, it would be helpful to have a letter from a professor of a course within your major. Professors of classes and supervisors for independent research are examples of persons who may write this type of letter. Letters from preceptors are given more credence if co-signed by a professor, but even if they aren't, a detailed letter from a preceptor or Teaching Assistant is preferable to a vague, generic letter from a professor.

**B. Personal/Extracurricular Recommendations:** These letters are written by those who know you in a non-academic setting, but still in a professional/supervisory capacity. They may write about your leadership potential, organizational skills, maturity, and other character traits, as they relate to your career decision and potential in a health profession. Persons who might write these letters include employers, student organization advisors, community service coordinators, or supervisors in health-related activities.

**C. Combined Academic and Personal Recommendations:** These letters are often more powerful than purely academic letters. They are written by individuals who can evaluate your academic ability as well as comment on your personal traits. People who might write such letters include your academic advisor or lab supervisor, faculty members whom you've kept in touch with outside of class, your thesis advisor, etc.

The recommenders that you choose should present a balanced picture of you, and should also address areas that may be of concern. For example, if your science grades weren't as high as they could be, it may be helpful to have two professors who can talk about your ability in the area, and note that your grades may not be indicative of your ability. At the same time, your letters should not focus only on your sciences, and not touch on your personal qualities, relevant co-curricular experiences, etc.

Start by brainstorming a list of people who you could ask for recommendations and which of the above categories they would fall into. Strive for a combination of the above types of letters that will provide a balanced perspective. For example, there is good balance in the following scenario: one Princeton science professor you had for class (largely academic), your thesis adviser (academic/personal), a professor who taught you in a small literature courses (academic/personal), the volunteer coordinator at a hospital where you volunteered (personal/extracurricular), and the supervisor of a lab where you did an internship (academic/personal).

Letters from congresspersons, clergy, family physicians, or other "influential" persons are usually not acceptable unless they are based on a long-standing relationship during which you have worked for them or they have mentored you. Letters from people who you know from your high school experiences are generally less effective than letters that describe who you are now. Similarly, if you were supervised by a post-doc in a lab run by a "big name" professor who barely knows you, it's still preferable to have the post-doc write the letter.

### **Approaching Recommenders**

Once you have selected your recommenders, you should approach potential recommenders in a way that will make a favorable impression. Keep the following in mind:

- Ask for recommendation letters in person if possible and as early as possible. Email or call a potential recommender and set up an appointment to meet with him/her.
- Ask recommenders if they are willing to write you a detailed, positive letter of recommendation. Being this specific is important – you don't want any vague, lukewarm or negative letters.
- Provide recommenders with additional information about your background and interests (i.e., giving them a copy of your resume, or a biographical sketch, is helpful). Some recommenders will ask for a copy of your autobiography, transcript, or resume.
- Discuss your qualifications with each recommender and ask if they have questions for you.

- Agree on a basic timeline for completing the letters and turning them in to the HPA. Timing is very important when applying to professional schools. It is reasonable to request that recommendations be submitted within three to four weeks.
- Give the recommender a copy of the recommendation form, and explain that guidelines for what to write are included with the form. Provide a copy of the Guidelines for Writing a Letter of Recommendation (on our website) if you think it is warranted.
- Let your recommender know whether you've chosen to waive your rights of access to the letters, so that they know whether what they're writing is or is not confidential. It is preferred that letters be confidential – it is seen as a matter of trust that you waive your right of access. Recommenders are more likely to be candid if you have waived your rights of access. Sometimes your recommender will choose to share their letter with you whether you have waived your rights or not, which is also fine, but do not ask them to do so! It is their option, and you should not try to push to read your letters.
- It is your responsibility to request letters of recommendation and make sure that they are submitted in a timely fashion. In addition, it is your responsibility to remind your letter writers to write! It is recommended that you touch base with your recommenders a week before an agreed-upon deadline.
- A polite e-mail message or telephone call should do the trick if a letter is late. If major difficulties arise with your writers, contact HPA.
- Follow up with recommenders after their letters have been received, and throughout your application process. They are interested in what you decide to do! Send a thank you note to each of your recommenders, as well!

### **Recommendation Guidelines and Forms**

You can download and print recommendation guidelines and forms from the website. It is also polite to provide your recommender with a stamped envelope addressed to HPA if s/he is off-campus, in which s/he may return the recommendation form. On-campus recommenders are encouraged to email their letters as attachments, typed on letterhead and signed.

### ***The Pre-Application Interview (PAI)***

Your interview will be with an HPA adviser. When you sign up for your interview, you will be able to choose the date and time, and you will know which adviser will be interviewing you. Interview times will be given out on a first come, first served basis.

The interview is approximately 30 to 45 minutes long. It is not meant to be stressful; rather, it is designed to help HPA become familiar with you, and give you the opportunity to gain feedback about your candidacy. It is also a chance for you to practice before interviews at health professions schools. The impressions of applicants are included in the composite letter of recommendation.

Interviews are unstructured, meaning there is no set list of questions. Questions stem largely from the materials that you submitted, but you may also be asked about motivation for a career in the health professions, understanding of professional school (what you're getting yourself into), and experience in a health care setting (see sample questions in Appendix D). You should think about your motivation for pursuing a career in the health professions ahead of time and be prepared to discuss your personal goals. This is a semi-formal interview and all interviewees are encouraged to dress for an interview and act appropriately.

## SECTION II: THE APPLICATION PROCESS

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### *Overview*

Applying to health profession school is a detail-oriented, logistics-heavy, time-intensive process, but it is also completely manageable, and plenty of people have been through it and lived to tell! Here is the basic rundown of what you will do in order to apply:

1. Complete the HPA processes up to and including your Pre-Application Interview (outlined above).
2. Study for and take your standardized exam.
3. Finalize your personal statement and activities list.
4. Research and select the schools to which you'll apply.
5. Receive standardized test scores.
6. Ensure that all letters of recommendation have been received. Follow up with recommenders if they have not sent in their letters.
7. Complete and submit your primary (also called standardized) application.
8. Wait for the application service to verify your application and then send a copy to HPA.
9. Receive and complete secondary applications.
10. Ensure that all of your materials have been received at your schools and your file is thus complete.
11. Wait for interview invitations.
12. Interview, write thank you notes.
13. Get accepted, work out financial aid.
14. Matriculate to health professions school!

It looks simple in that format. The trickier part is that much of what you're doing doesn't happen sequentially, and often is happening simultaneously. Plus, you have the rest of your life going on around this. For example, you'll be studying for your standardized exam at the same time that you should be finishing your personal statement, and you'll be writing secondary applications while working during the summer, and probably even as the next fall semester begins and your interviews start. The key is to create a system, and manage your time. All of those time management skills you've developed as a college student will be critical in this process. Many students find that starting a binder, with a separate section for each school's materials (copies of emails sent, copy of the secondary, printouts from websites, etc.) is useful.

## ***Ideal Medical School Application Timeline***

Timing is critical in the allopathic medical school application process, and important in the other health professions. Applying early shows your commitment to getting in, allows you to compete for all available seats in the class, and reduces your stress level. Here's the ideal situation for MDs:

Jan–Apr 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Apply for Fee Assistance Program, if relevant.</li></ul>
Mar–May 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complete the HPA pre-application processes up to and including your PAI.</li></ul>
May–June 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Study for and take your MCAT.</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Finalize your personal statement and activities list.</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Finalize the list of schools to which you'll apply.</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Receive standardized test scores.</li></ul>
June 10, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that letters of recommendation have been received. In the ideal world, they have (be prepared to follow up)!</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complete and submit your primary (also called standardized) application.</li></ul>
June–July 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wait for the application service to verify your application. Send to HPA once it has been verified.</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Receive and complete secondary applications.</li></ul>
July–Aug 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that all of your materials have been received at your schools.</li></ul>
Sept 2013–Mar 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interviews</li></ul>
Oct 2013–Aug 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Acceptances</li></ul>

Unfortunately, only about half of the applicants in a given year manage to stay more or less on the idealized timeline, and the rest do not, for various reasons. Turning in the primary application is the most important aspect of timing. The later that it is submitted, the longer it will take the application service to process. (Their reviewers process your application by hand, and this slows as the summer progresses and more applicants have submitted their materials.) The longer the application service takes, the slower your schools receive your application (and the slower HPA completes your composite letter). Some schools will want a verified primary before they will send you secondary applications. Secondaries can require a fair amount of time, depending on the school, and as you get bogged down in working on them, this further slows the process. Your file won't be considered complete at a school until your secondary has been received, and you can't be invited for an interview until your file is complete.

### **MD Fee Assistance**

Most health professions' standardized exams offer financial assistance for students who qualify based on their family's income. It's important to research the deadlines and requirements for the process well ahead of time. For MD schools, fee assistance is granted by calendar year; the application for 2013 should be available in January, and will require information from your family's 2012 tax documents. It reduces the cost of MCAT and AMCAS applications: <https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/fap/>.

## *The MCAT*

### **MCAT Timing**

Students who plan to go to medical or other health profession schools will need to take a required standardized test. See the chart in the front of this booklet for information on what test(s) you'll be expected to take for your health profession school. For most exams, timing is less critical than it is for the MCAT, so only the MCAT will be addressed here. Students should read all registration instructions provided on the test registration websites.

Students who plan to apply to allopathic or osteopathic medical schools take the MCAT.

<b>Test Date</b>	<b>Exam Start Time</b>	<b>Registration Opens</b>	<b>Regular Reg. Closes* 11:59 p.m. ET</b>	<b>Late Reg. Closes** 11:59 p.m. ET</b>	<b>Tentative Score Release Date</b>
January 24, 2013	8 a.m.	October 16, 2012	January 10, 2013	January 17, 2013	February 26, 2013
January 26, 2013	1 p.m.	October 16, 2012	January 12, 2013	January 19, 2013	February 26, 2013
March 23, 2013	8 a.m.	October 16, 2012	March 9, 2013	March 16, 2013	April 23, 2013
April 4, 2013	8 a.m.	October 16, 2012	March 21, 2013	March 28, 2013	May 7, 2013
April 26, 2013	8 a.m.	October 16, 2012	April 12, 2013	April 19, 2013	May 29, 2013
April 27, 2013	1 p.m.	October 16, 2012	April 13, 2013	April 20, 2013	May 29, 2013
May 11, 2013	1 p.m.	October 16, 2012	April 27, 2013	May 4, 2013	June 11, 2013
May 18, 2013	1 p.m.	October 16, 2012	May 4, 2013	May 11, 2013	June 18, 2013
May 23, 2013	8 a.m.	October 16, 2012	May 9, 2013	May 16, 2013	June 25, 2013
May 30, 2013	8 a.m.	October 16, 2012	May 16, 2013	May 23, 2013	July 2, 2013
June 20, 2013	8 a.m. and 2 p.m.	TBD	June 6, 2013	June 13, 2013	July 23, 2013
July 2, 2013	8 a.m.	TBD	June 18, 2013	June 25, 2013	August 6, 2013
July 13, 2013	1 p.m.	TBD	June 29, 2013	July 6, 2013	August 13, 2013
July 25, 2013	8 a.m.	TBD	July 11, 2013	July 18, 2013	August 27, 2013
July 26, 2013	1 p.m.	TBD	July 12, 2013	July 19, 2013	August 27, 2013
August 2, 2013	8 a.m.	TBD	July 19, 2013	July 26, 2013	Sept 4, 2013
August 3, 2013	8 a.m.	TBD	July 20, 2013	July 27, 2013	Sept 4, 2013
August 9, 2013	8 a.m. and 2 p.m.	TBD	July 26, 2013	August 2, 2013	Sept 10, 2013
August 15, 2013	8 a.m.	TBD	August 1, 2013	August 8, 2013	Sept 17, 2013
August 16, 2013	1 p.m.	TBD	August 2, 2013	August 9, 2013	Sept 17, 2013
August 22, 2013	1 p.m.	TBD	August 8, 2013	August 15, 2013	Sept 24, 2013
August 28, 2013	8 a.m.	TBD	August 14, 2013	August 21, 2013	October 1, 2013
September 7, 2013	1 p.m.	TBD	August 24, 2013	August 31, 2013	October 8, 2013
September 11, 2013	8 a.m. and 2 p.m.	TBD	August 28, 2013	September 4, 2013	October 15, 2013
September 12, 2013	1 p.m.	TBD	August 29, 2013	September 5, 2013	October 15, 2013

**The ideal time to take the MCAT is on or before May 11.** This way, you will have your scores early enough to submit your application knowing the results. You will also have the test completed before more aspects of the application process begin (such as completing your primary and secondary applications), which will help your time management. The main drawback to the April/May dates is that you will be studying while also taking classes. The fact that you haven't finished the last few weeks of classes is less problematic – most students are finishing up their final semester of the requisite premedical courses when the test is offered,

and this does not compromise preparedness for the test, since studying for the exam by whatever study methods you choose will take you through any concepts you need to know.

The late June and July dates are definitely attractive, since you will be done with classes and your test results will still be back before schools begin interviews. If you opt for a June/July MCAT, **you should turn in your AMCAS before you have your scores**. Since the AMCAS can take up to six weeks to process, it's best to have it in the processing pipeline while you wait for your MCAT results. It costs \$34 per school to apply, and it's possible that your list of schools will change based on your MCAT score. So, it's fine to apply to just a few schools via AMCAS in June (e.g., your public state schools, any schools that you would apply to regardless of your MCAT score), and then add more schools (and pay the requisite fees) once you know your scores – this will allow your AMCAS to be processed in a timely manner, but still give you flexibility in your school list (and the cost of applications).

The biggest risk in taking a later MCAT is the possibility of having to retake. A later retake will put you at a disadvantage time wise. For example, if you take the MCAT in April and get your scores in May, you'll still have time to retake in June/July, and have a score in a reasonable amount of time. If you take the test for the first time in June/July and your score is not competitive, then you will be forced to take an August or September MCAT, which would put you even later in the cycle.

An MCAT taken August or later is not preferred for this application cycle, as your candidacy will not be considered until relatively late in the admissions process. If you are not confident in your ability to do well at an earlier MCAT test administration, it may be better to wait a year and apply early in the 2015 matriculation cycle, rather than late in the 2014 matriculation cycle. You should meet with an HPA adviser and make the decision based on your specific circumstances.

Take a look at the chart on the next page for possible MCAT and AMCAS timing options and their implications. The bottom line is, the earlier your file is complete at your schools (that is, your MCAT score, primary and secondary application, and letters have been received by the school), the more likely you are to gain an interview and an acceptance. This is especially true for schools with rolling admissions.

### **MCAT 2013 Registration**

You should register AS SOON AS POSSIBLE once registration opens. MCAT states, "it is our goal to guarantee an examinee who registers 60 or more days prior to an exam date a seat at a test center within 100 miles of his/her requested site...Seats will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis, so it will be important to complete registration as early as possible." (<http://www.aamc.org/students/mcat>). One hundred miles is a long way – better to register as early as you can and try for the best possible test site. You are only allowed to be registered for one administration of the test at a time.

### **Standardized Exam Preparation**

Many students prepare for the DAT, MCAT and other exams by enrolling in test-preparation courses, such as those offered by Examcrackers, Kaplan or Princeton Review. MCAT courses are very expensive, but do provide a structured learning environment. Other students prepare by studying on their own, which is far less expensive, but requires that they be able to make the time to study, and follow a disciplined schedule. Study guides are available in bookstores everywhere. Books are available at HPA that may be borrowed for two weeks at a time.

The real key to success on the MCAT is just being prepared for the test environment, length, and pacing of the exam. Students who have taken the test recommend studying well, but more importantly, taking as many practice exams as possible, in simulated test conditions. The AAMC, the organization that administers MCAT, releases a number of practice exams, with diagnostic results and other useful materials, for far less than a test prep class costs. Their website is: <http://www.e-mcat.com/>

### Implications of various MCAT Dates and AMCAS Submission Timelines

	Take MCAT	Submit AMCAS	MCAT Score Released	AMCAS Verified	Return Secondaries	File Complete at Schools	Earliest Consideration for Interviews	Implications
<b>IDEAL TIMELINE</b>								
May MCAT, Early AMCAS	By May	June	June	June/ July	July/ Aug	August	August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time to repeat MCAT if necessary without being late in application cycle.</li> <li>• Allows easiest time management of all processes.</li> </ul>
<b>OTHER OPTIONS (by order of preference)</b>								
June MCAT, Early AMCAS	June	June	July	June/ July	July/ Aug	August	August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will require balancing MCAT study with completing AMCAS.</li> <li>• Can add more schools to AMCAS after you receive your MCAT score without being late at those schools.</li> </ul>
June MCAT, July AMCAS	June	July	July	Aug/ Sept	July/ Aug	Aug/ Sept	September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AMCAS verification slows down in July – much better to have the AMCAS in the queue to be verified early!</li> </ul>
July MCAT, Early AMCAS	June/July	June	August	June/ July	July/ Aug	August	Sept/Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will require balancing MCAT study with completing AMCAS.</li> <li>• Better to have AMCAS in early so you can work on secondaries while waiting for MCAT score.</li> <li>• Not enough time to study and retake MCAT in timely manner for this application cycle.</li> <li>• Should try to include most of your schools with initial AMCAS submission rather than wait for MCAT scores to add more (so your file is complete at schools in a timely manner).</li> <li>• Interview invites may be later due to other applicants being completed and considered earlier.</li> </ul>
July MCAT, July AMCAS	July	July	August	Aug/ Sept	July-Sept	Aug/ Sept	Sept/Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AMCAS verification slows down in July – much better to have the AMCAS in the queue to be verified early!</li> </ul>
Summer MCAT, Late AMCAS	June/ July	August	July/Aug	Sept	Aug-Oct	Aug-Oct	Nov/Dec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many interview slots will already have been given away if you're reviewed this late, so you may not get interviews before January.</li> </ul>

## **Repeating the MCAT**

Repeating the MCAT is not recommended unless you were ill on the day of the test, you did not get enough sleep the night before the test and were stressed during the test, you recorded the answers to the test incorrectly, there was a disturbance during the test at the testing center, you did not adequately review for the test, you did not complete all the coursework necessary before taking the test, or scored significantly lower than your grades or practice tests would otherwise predict. Most students who repeat the test just to see if they can do better end up with similar scores--going up a point or down a point here and there. These changes are not considered significant and will not help your candidacy. All scores are reported to medical schools. If you are not sure whether or not to re-take the MCAT, consult with HPA.

## **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Students with documented disabilities may apply for accommodations; some standardized test services are more stringent than others regarding who is granted accommodations. It's important to research the deadlines and requirements for the process well ahead of time. More details may be found on the websites for the standardized exams.

## ***Other Standardized Tests***

### **The Dental Admissions Test (DAT): <http://www.ada.org/dat.aspx>**

The DAT is designed to measure general academic ability, comprehension of scientific information, and perceptual ability. It consists of four sections: Natural Sciences, Perceptual Ability, Reading Comprehension and Quantitative Reasoning. It includes material learned in introductory biology, general chemistry and organic chemistry, as well as math through algebra/trigonometry, as well as perceptual (spatial) ability and reading comprehension. Official score reports are available within about 3-4 weeks of taking the test; unofficial scores and percentiles are provided to you as soon as you take the test. Pre-dental students should try to take the DAT no later than early August of the year that they submit the AADSAS; others should consult with HPA, and do research on specific schools' recommended timelines as well.

### **The Graduate Records Examination (GRE): <http://www.ets.org/gre/>**

The GRE general test is required for vet, public health, and physician assistant programs, as well as many other graduate programs. The GRE is similar to the SAT—it is an aptitude assessment designed to measure your potential for success at the graduate level. It consists of three sections: verbal, quantitative, and analytical writing; no materials from specific courses are tested in the general test (some graduate programs will require individual subject tests). Official score reports are available within about two weeks of taking the test; preliminary verbal and quantitative scores are shown to you on the screen when you take the test.

Other standardized tests for other health professions are listed on the inside front cover of this booklet.

## ***AMCAS: The MD Primary Application***

Most health professions require a standardized application, also referred to as the “primary application,” which must be completed prior to the “secondary applications” that are required for some schools (and are described below). Most U.S. allopathic medical schools require that students complete an application from the American Medical College Application Service, or AMCAS. The web addresses for application services are included on the inside of the front cover of this handbook. You’ll notice that the standardized application asks for both basic biographical information (name, address, parents’ education background, etc.), and for more detailed information that you will have prepared during the HPA PAI process.

The AMCAS is comprised of nine sections:

1. Identifying Information
2. Schools Attended
3. Biographic Information
4. Course Work
5. Work/Activities
6. Letters of Evaluation
7. Medical Schools
8. Essay(s)
9. Standardized Tests

More tips for filling out the AMCAS application will be provided at a workshop once this year’s application has been released to students (in May), and the Powerpoint presentation will be made available to applicants. The application services also have very comprehensive FAQs and Help sections for applicants on their websites, and phone assistance, although the wait time is often very long to speak to a human being.

**Apply early.** Note that different health professions, and schools within each health profession, have different deadlines for the final date on which they will accept standardized applications. Rather than focusing on deadlines, you should focus on submitting your application as early as possible, usually on or around June 1st. If you wait until the deadlines, you’re very late in the application process. Of course, don’t rush through the application in ways that will cause you to make careless errors – accurate is always better than fast.

### ***Part 1-4: Identifying Information, Schools Attended, Biographic Information, Course Work***

**Don’t underestimate the amount of time it takes to fill out the application** – you’ll probably need at least six hours to complete these sections, as there is a lot of data entry to be done. You are responsible for having your transcripts sent to your standardized application service for most health professions schools, which will then disseminate your grade information to schools. You do not need to send a transcript to each school individually. You can request a Princeton transcript from the Registrar’s Office in West College. Check with other schools that you have attended for their specific requirements (e.g., how to make a request, amount of time required to process a request, requisite fees).

### ***Part 5: Work/Activities***

Here, you will input your activities list that you prepared for HPA. If you have more than fifteen items, you might be able to combine some. Consult with HPA if you’d like guidance on crafting your final list.

## Part 6: Letters of Evaluation

Because all of your letters are sent by HPA, you should not list individual letters of recommendation in the AMCAS. When asked to identify what types of letters your undergraduate institution will be sending, select **Committee Letter**. Include the following information for the author:

Author: Kate Fukawa-Connelly

Email: [hpa@princeton.edu](mailto:hpa@princeton.edu) Phone: 609-258-3144

Address: Health Professions Advising, 36 University Place Suite 230, Princeton University, Princeton NJ 08544

### Letters of Recommendation Guidelines for Non-AMCAS schools

- **TMDSAS:** your committee and individual letters will be mailed by our office to TMDSAS, and TMDSAS will distribute the materials to your schools. On your TMDSAS application, select “Committee Letter” and list its author in the same way as AMCAS.
- **OMSAS:** your committee and individual letters will be mailed by our office to OMSAS after we receive a copy of your verified OMSAS application, and OMSAS will distribute the materials to your schools. **Additionally, you will need to have three individuals complete the OMSAS Assessment Forms and send them in separately.** Two of these individuals (or all three) can certainly be the same people who have already written letters. An HPA adviser may serve as the third. For Canadian applicants who are applying outside the OMSAS system, Jennifer will mail your letters to the schools directly; however, some of these schools have unique requirements, so please check with Jennifer at HPA.
- **Osteopathic medical schools:** your committee and individual letters will be mailed by our office to individual osteopathic medical schools after we receive a copy of your verified AACOMAS application. AACOMAS does not currently distribute materials to schools.
- **Veterinary schools:** your committee and individual letters will be mailed by our office to VMCAS after we receive a copy of your verified VMCAS application, and VMCAS will distribute the materials to your schools.
- **Dental schools:** your committee and individual letters will be mailed by our office to AADSAS after we receive a copy of your verified application, and AADSAS will distribute the materials to your schools.

## Part 7: Medical Schools

### Strategies for Selecting Health Professions Schools

On your standardized application, you will indicate the schools to which you want to apply. There is no quick way to arrive at the list of schools that is appropriate for YOU. It takes time and research. There is no standard list that can simply be handed to you.

**The Road Map.** All students should purchase a copy of their health profession’s guide to schools.

Premed: Medical School Admissions Requirements (MSAR) for allopathic (MD) schools (\$20, online)  
<https://services.aamc.org/30/msar/home>

Osteopathic College Information Book (CIB) for osteopathic (DO) schools (free online)  
<http://www.aacom.org/about/colleges/Pages/default.aspx>

Predental: ADEA Official Guide to Dental School  
<http://www.adea.org/publications/Pages/OfficialGuide.aspx>

Prevet: Veterinary Medical School Admission Requirements  
<http://www.aavmc.org/Publications/VMSAR.aspx>

These are the only publications endorsed and authorized by the schools themselves, and available through various professional organizations. They provide a comprehensive place to start your school research.

**How many schools to apply to?** Nationally, most medical school applicants apply to about fourteen schools. Princeton students, however, tend to apply to 15-20 schools. The number of schools that you apply to is up to you, but bear in mind that it can get very costly. Application fees and interviewing costs add up quickly. Filling out a secondary application can take upwards of eight hours (you will often need to do research on the schools, and depending on the number of essays may spend quite a bit of time polishing your answers). Additionally, numerous interviews can take valuable time away from your studies during the semester if you're applying while you're still a student.

**The initial narrowing of the list should be based on the following criteria:**

- ✓ **Public vs. Private and Residency Preference:** About 84 of the 138 US allopathic medical schools and are affiliated with state universities (if you look in the publications mentioned above, public or private designation is stated for each school). Most of the state medical schools give preference to their state residents, or residents of states with whom they have contracted. Of the dental schools, 30 have some residency preference, most of which are based on state residency. This makes it easy for you to begin narrowing down your list since your chances of being accepted to a state medical school for which you are a nonresident are low. It also follows that you should add your own state school(s) to your application list.
  - Taxpayer dollars also subsidize the cost for in-state residents at public school. Attending your state school may mean a significantly lower tuition and subsequent debt load. Attending a public school where you aren't a resident, conversely, may be very expensive.
  - There are, however, always exceptions; there are some state medical schools that accept a high number of nonresidents, and some private schools that must give preference to in-state applicants. This is another factor that you should keep in mind as you look at schools. The MSAR will list the number of in- vs. out-of-state interviewees and matriculants to each school.
  - Also be sure that you research what is required to be considered a resident of the state – generally, you'll need to have lived in the state for at least a year, have a driver's license, be registered to vote, and pay taxes in the state. Specific information should be available on schools' websites, or by contacting admissions representatives.

**Contract programs:** Some health professions schools give tuition breaks or preference to residents of other states with whom they have specific contracts.

- UConn Med and Dental Schools participate in a New England Regional Program whereby they give a tuition break to residents of RI, ME, and NH (<http://www.nebhe.org>).
- Tufts has a Maine track, with seats reserved for Maine residents (<http://md.tufts.edu/Education/Maine-Track-Program>)
- On the West Coast, the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, WICHE (<http://www.wiche.edu/psep>) and WWAMI ([www.montana.edu/wwwami/#WAMI](http://www.montana.edu/wwwami/#WAMI)) have exchange programs that foster collaboration and resource sharing among states.

**Coursework prerequisites:** Different schools require different prerequisite courses, especially when it comes to dental and veterinary schools. If you have not taken prereq courses for certain schools, and don't plan to take them, then these schools may be crossed off of your list.

**Additional considerations may be made on these factors:**

- ✓ **Your Surroundings:** Think about the kind of place you would be most comfortable living in. Is it a big city (see the HPA website for maps with the big city schools)? A smaller town (Rochester NY or MN, Albany NY, Omaha NE, Toledo OH)? The southeast or southwest? The far west? Is it important to be close to family? For some applicants these things don't matter; for others, they are of paramount importance. If you have an interest in working with certain populations (e.g., rural, underserved, people of color), look for schools in areas where members of these populations that the majority of medical schools are in the east, and there are few private MD schools in the western states.



[www.findyourspot.com](http://www.findyourspot.com) is a fun online quiz and a way to research new places.

- ✓ **Family Ties:** Students who have physicians, dentists, or vets in their families should consider applying to a relative's alma mater – it doesn't hurt to try! Family ties to the undergraduate or graduate school are considered less significant than ties to the professional school. If you know someone personally who is a faculty member or member of a medical school's administration, consider applying there as well, and let that person know if you do.
- ✓ **Cost/Aid:** Tuition, fees, and cost of living vary widely among medical schools, as do their financial aid packages. Although a professional education is still considered a sound financial investment, you should give serious thought to the amount of debt you are willing to take on, and how that may affect your lifestyle in the immediate future. The admission guides mentioned above provide statistics on the average aid package and debt load for current students.
- ✓ **Mission:** While all medical schools provide excellent all around medical training, you will find that some focus more heavily on certain aspects of health care than on others. Some schools will have a strong emphasis on research while others – particularly state schools (and osteopathic medical schools, see below) – hope to train physicians to work in primary care within the state. You can easily find mission or values statements on the schools' websites, and they are also included in the MSAR and other publications.
- ✓ **Curriculum and pedagogy:** Schools vary in their presentation of the curriculum. Here are some considerations that may affect your decision on "best fit" for your learning style and academic preferences. Keep track of academic aspects of different schools, and ask students what they think of them if invited to interview.
  - Teaching style: some emphasize group learning while others are more traditionally lecture-oriented.
  - Time in the classroom: some require mandatory class attendance, some emphasize individualized learning, some publish all lectures online to watch from home.
  - Curricular design: some present the basic sciences on a body systems basis (e.g., cardiovascular, neurologic) as opposed to a more traditional discipline-based program of studies (e.g., anatomy, biochemistry, genetics). Some combine the two.
  - Timing and type of exposure to hands-on patient care: when you start to see patients, in what environments, and with what frequency differs from school to school.
  - Grading policy: from two "intervals" (e.g., pass/fail) up to five (e.g., grades, or honors/high pass/pass/low pass/fail). Grading can affect the culture/level of competition in the class.
  - Freedom of choice: some schools provide more opportunities to take courses outside of the "basics," to engage in research for credit, or to pursue a graduate degree between years two and three.

**Med Schools with Religious Missions**

Loma Linda  
St. Louis Univ

**Med Schools with Religious Roots**

Creighton  
Georgetown  
Einstein  
Loyola

- ✓ **Clinical Elective Options:** If it is important to you to have some elective time in your final two years of training, you should see what options are available at the schools you are interested in. Though medical schools all require clinical training in specific medical specialties (e.g. surgery, pediatrics, psychiatry), they allow students to spend additional time in areas of their choosing. You will find some variation in the amount of this elective time allowed from school to school.
- ✓ **Residency placement and success on board exams:** In addition to considering clinical training opportunities, you might ask about the success of students on the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE), or National Board Dental Exam (NBDE), and subsequent success in being placed in residency positions.
- ✓ **Support Services:** A lot of services can fall into this category, and those that may be important likely differ for each applicant. Some that students may look for include psychological counseling, tutoring services, specific disability support services, athletic facilities, child care facilities, maternity/paternity leave, domestic partner policies for housing/benefits.
- ✓ **Culture of school:** Different schools may feel collaborative versus competitive, fairly relaxed versus high-pressured. Schools also vary considerably in their student demographics. Be sure to check the percentages of women and students of color, if this is important to you. The student organizations on campus may also give you a clue as to what is important to the student body. Note that HPA has in-depth information regarding LGBT student resources available at allopathic medical schools.
- ✓ **Popularity of Princeton students:** Statistics regarding acceptance rates and admissions data on individual schools can be discussed with HPA advisers. If Princeton students have been accepted (and even better, if they have matriculated) in recent years, it may be an indication that the school is a good fit for Princeton applicants, and your peers are (hopefully) setting a good precedent as medical school students, so that those schools will want to bring more of you into their classes. There are no “quotas” – it would be logistically unreasonable for schools to try to decide to only bring x number of students from a given undergraduate institution into the class.
- ✓ **See “35 Questions I Wish I Had Asked”** – a survey of medical students who, in retrospect, wished they had known various things when choosing a school:  
<https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/programs/>

<b>Historically Black Universities</b> Morehouse Meharry Howard
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**An alternative to allopathic medicine:** Osteopathic physicians, or DOs, provide the same care that allopathic physicians (MDs) do, drawing on the founding philosophy that all body systems are interrelated and dependent upon one another for good health. 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 therapy known as osteopathic manipulative medicine. Osteopathic Medicine emphasizes helping each person achieve a high level of wellness by focusing on health education, injury prevention and disease prevention.

DOs work in partnership with their patients to promote wellness, and work with patients to gain a holistic understanding of their individual situations. They take a different licensing exam, but are fully able to see patients, diagnose, treat, prescribe, perform surgery, and do everything else that MDs do. About 60% of DOs work in primary care and the rest specialize.

While America’s 52,000 DOs account for only 5 percent of the country’s physicians, they handle approximately 10 percent of all primary care visits. DOs also have a strong history of serving rural and underserved areas, often providing their unique brand of compassionate, patient-centered care to some of the most economically disadvantaged members of society. About one in five medical students in the US is attending an osteopathic medical school.

The official website for osteopathic medical education is <http://www.aacom.org>.

To apply to DO schools, students must complete the AACOMAS primary application, which asks for similar information to the AMCAS application to allopathic medical school. Many DO schools also require that students shadow a DO and have a letter of recommendation from a DO submitted on their behalf.

There is a web resource for finding DOs to contact and potentially shadow at <http://www.osteopathic.org/>.

**Considering an overseas school?** As stated in an article published by the National Association for Advisors in the Health Professions<sup>1</sup>: “At their best, international medical schools give their students the education and training needed to enter a residency program in the United States, and those graduates who become physicians go on to serve many patients. At their worst, international medical schools take unfair advantage of desperate students, by accepting candidates who are woefully unprepared for the rigors of medical education, the USMLE, or the practice of medicine.” There are a number of things to be wary of if you’re considering applying to a health professional school outside of the United States:

- High attrition rates: It’s difficult to be away from home and the familiar, especially when embarking on something as stressful as attending medical school. Attrition rates tend to be higher at foreign schools, partly due to the emotional stress, and partly because some students who are admitted are not academically prepared for the rigors of the curriculum. If you know that you need to improve your background science knowledge to do well, it may be better to do that rather than begin a program that you aren’t ready for, just because you were accepted.
- Questionable facilities: Be sure to learn more about the curriculum, the faculty and facilities, and how these compare to a US school. The US, Canada and Australia are the only countries that have strict, government-sanctioned licensing bodies that oversee the quality of their schools.
- Additional obstacles to State-side practice: Students who pursue an international education must obtain certification from the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG, <http://www.ecfm.org/cert/certfact.html>) to be eligible for residency programs and licensure in the US.
- Bias in residency process: Proportionally more international medical graduates go into less competitive residency programs, and some residency directors may have a bias against students from foreign schools. That said, Princeton students have gone on to successfully graduate from foreign medical schools and become licensed practitioners. As with any program, take the time to do your research and learn more about the schools on a case-by-case basis.

### Final thoughts about school selection

- You will find that some medical schools will have higher average MCATs and GPAs than others, and will have very low acceptance rates relative to the number of students who apply. These schools are easy to identify, and you should not apply exclusively to these “most competitive” schools even if you have very high scores and grades.
- Conversely, you should not rule out your “dream school” just because your statistics don’t match its profile. If you have certain reasons that you think that a school would be perfect for you based on your research, in terms of a fit for your personal characteristics or aspirations, experience at the school, word of mouth from peers or mentors, etc., don’t let numbers keep you from applying (but don’t base your entire list on these dream schools).
- In the end... no matter where you end up going to medical school, you will receive excellent training, even if the school is not at the top of the *U.S. News* rankings.

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<sup>1</sup> International Medical Schools for U.S. Citizens: Considerations for Advisors and Prospective Students. Retrieved online December 20, 2005 from <http://www.naahp.org/>

## Part 8: Essays

The personal statement is your opportunity to *personalize* your application. The guidelines differ slightly depending on the application:

- **AMCAS:**
  - For MD candidates, one essay, 5300 character maximum. They suggest you consider questions like:
    - “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 other sections of the application
    - *Note that HPA will address fluctuations in your academic record within your composite letter; if addressing them does not fit in the flow of your essay, know that they will be included by HPA.*
  - MD-PhD candidates will write the above essay, as well as two additional essays:
    - MD-PhD essay: state your reasons for pursuing the combined MD-PhD degree. Your responses will only be forwarded to your designated MD-PhD program(s). This essay is limited to 3,000 characters.
    - Significant Research Experiences essay: specify your research supervisor's name and affiliation, the duration of the experience, the nature of the problem studied, and your contributions to the project. This essay is limited to 10,000 characters.
- **AACOMAS:** personal statements are limited to 4500 characters.
- **TMDSAS:** The personal essay asks you to explain your motivation to seek a career in medicine. Be sure to include the value of your experiences that prepare you to be a physician. Limited to 5000 characters. Also included are two optional essays. Texas DO-PhDs write additional essays similar to the MD-PhD essays.
- **VMCAS:** Discuss briefly the development of your interest in veterinary medicine. Discuss those activities and unique experiences that have contributed to your preparation for a professional program. Discuss your understanding of the veterinary medical profession, and discuss your career goals and objectives. Limited to 5000 characters.
- **AADSAS:** The personal essay provides an opportunity for you to explain why you desire to pursue dental education. Limited to 4500 characters.

### Basic Pointers for Writing Your Personal Statement

- Recognize that writing the personal statement will take a lot of time and multiple drafts.
- Remember that you have limited space; think carefully about what you will write.
- Be sure that your essay is united by a theme or thesis.
- In preparing to write your statement, think about the characteristics that an admissions committee might be looking for: academic ability, knowledge of the field, personal commitment and integrity, interpersonal skills. In addition to these characteristics, they will also be concerned with presentation, including writing abilities, grammar, and spelling. Please be sure to take the time to proofread your statement.
- Do not use your essay to simply list all of the activities that you’ve been involved in. Write your activities list first so that your personal statement doesn’t sound like an activities list. An essay focused on a particular theme, idea, or thesis that cites specific examples of your experiences, while also reflecting upon those experiences, will be much more effective.
- Allow readers to draw their own conclusions about you. The examples that you give should show your readers what qualities you have, which is more meaningful than you telling the reader what to look for. To this end, you should avoid using direct statements—such as “I’m good at working with people,” or “I like science.” Instead, illustrate these points by telling stories of times that you’ve successfully led or collaborated with others, or demonstrated your interest in science.

- Have many people read your statement and tell you: a) what impression you give to the audience; b) what they think your main thesis is; c) whether they'd want to interview you out of the thousands of candidates they'll screen, based on this essay. This will help you to gauge how clearly your ideas are coming across.

More information regarding personal statements will be provided in a workshop and in handouts provided later in the process. Appointments at the Writing Center are set aside specifically for applicants, and HPA trains Writing Center consultants to work with applicants.

### ***Part 9: Standardized Tests***

Nothing much to be done in this part of your application. You must indicate the date on which you plan to take or retake the MCAT, if you have a test upcoming. Most schools will not evaluate your application until all scores have been received. Your scores will be populated in your AMCAS automatically as soon as they are available, and AMCAS notifies medical schools that they are available. If you apply to DO schools, or Texas or Ontario MD schools, you need to send your score to AACOMAS, TMDSAS, or OMSAS (respectively) through the AAMC's MCAT Test History system – the scores are not automatically forwarded to these application services.

### ***Other Primary Applications***

There are a number of other primary applications that you may need to fill out. They might include:

- AACOMAS for osteopathic medical schools
- TMDSAS for allopathic medical schools in Texas
- OMSAS for allopathic medical schools in Ontario, Canada
- AADSAS for dental schools
- VMCAS for veterinary schools (other than Tufts, which has an individual application)

See the inside front cover of this booklet for more information about other application services. Individual students filling out any primary applications are welcome to work with HPA advisers with their specific questions.

### ***Secondary Applications: Medical School***

After you have completed your standardized AMCAS (or for DO programs, AACOMAS) application, it is sent by the application service to the schools that you indicated. It is sent as soon as you certify and submit your standardized application, even though the service has not yet processed and verified your grades. The schools will then decide how to proceed with your candidacy. Most schools require you to complete their own application materials, which are generically referred to as secondary applications (or sometimes supplemental applications).

#### **Timing of secondary applications**

Some schools will send secondaries automatically to every student who has submitted the standardized application, so you may get secondaries as soon as you certify and submit this application. Some schools may decide not to admit you on the basis of your standardized application alone; this is especially true of some state schools with strict residency policies, who accept few or no students who are not residents of their states. In these cases, schools will send a rejection notice rather than a secondary application. Others will wait until your grades are verified and then send secondaries. Still others may continue to screen post-grade verification, before inviting students to submit secondaries.

When you receive a secondary application, the length of time that you take to complete it is seen by some medical schools as a gauge of your interest in their institution. Keep this in mind as you decide how quickly to

complete your secondaries, and in what order. Check *Medical School Admissions Requirements (MSAR)* to see what the secondary application policy is for each of the allopathic schools that you apply to. Note that each school will charge an application fee upon submission of your secondary application. This will be in addition to the application service fees.

### **Content of secondary applications**

Schools differ in what they ask for; some simply want an additional application fee, some ask for additional biographical information, and some ask you to write from one to several additional essays.

For those schools that have essay questions, take your answers seriously! Many schools use the secondary as a more significant means to evaluate candidates than they do the personal statement. As mentioned above, it's better for schools to have as unique and descriptive a picture of your candidacy as you can give them, so take advantage of the opportunity to share more, even when a question is optional.

Secondaries are meant to further enhance and personalize your application. Make sure that your answers are polished, and give more insight into who you are and not just generic answers that don't say anything about you or the specific school. Schools are looking for applicants who will be a good fit for their institution. Do not repeat (or cut and paste) information from your primary into your secondary – they have all of that information already. It is fine to expand on what you wrote in your primary application, though, giving new details, or providing an update on an activity you mentioned that has been ongoing since you submitted your application.

For a preview of what you may be asked on secondary applications, <http://www.studentdoctor.net> is a good place to start. This website offers a bulletin board style forum where students share their opinions on the application process, among other topics. In general, the forums can be an anxiety-inducing place for a pre-med to spend his or her time – rumors are established and perpetuated, stress levels build in a collective environment, and there is little quality control, verification or moderating of what is said. Even so, there are a few useful tidbits there, including secondary application prompts and interview reports.

## ***Supplementary Information Guidelines: Other Health Professions Schools***

### **Dental School**

Dental schools are more variable in what is required of applicants after submitting the primary than medical schools. There is information on the AADSAS (dental application service) website once you create an account and log in, which outlines exactly what is needed for each school, and when materials need to be sent. It is recommended that you either print out the information, or keep it in a spreadsheet or other file that helps you organize your information.

### **Veterinary School**

The guidelines for veterinary school supplemental information is available on the VMCAS website: <http://www.aavmc.org/Students-Applicants-and-Advisors/Veterinary-Medical-College-Application-Service.aspx>

## SECTION III: THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

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### *The Next Step: August through December*

- ✓ Make sure that your file is complete. Most schools will have an online system where you can check on your candidate status.
- ✓ Remain active in your activities. You can continue to send updates to schools throughout this year that may be the difference between an interview invitation and a rejection. Continue to address weak areas in your candidacy – this may mean taking additional courses, doing more clinical work, volunteering in the community, or working on ‘intangible’ qualities.
- ✓ Maintain contact with HPA. The more communication there is, the better – we can provide guidance and we can strategize together throughout the admissions cycle.

Once your file is complete at a school, the admissions committee will review everything (standardized application, test scores, composite letter, secondary application) and make an initial decision regarding your candidacy. The main areas into which your application may fall are: reject, hold, and invite for an interview. You may receive notification from schools at any time after your file is complete, from the same day to months later. For awhile, you just have to be patient, and keep checking your email.

The “hold” category is the most nebulous of the three. Generally, medical schools will try to interview their strongest candidates early in the admission cycle. Being placed on “hold” means that you may not be among the top candidates, but your file will continue to be reviewed as the cycle proceeds, and further decisions will be made to either reject or invite to interview. This is also an opportunity for you to remain in touch with the school, providing additional new information that may help them to reach a decision. Do this with discretion – too many updates can make you seem desperate or a nuisance. An email once a month in which you state your continued interest and provide updates on classes, activities, awards, publications, etc., is a good rule of thumb.

By the end of the fall semester, if you submitted your materials and your file was complete fairly early, you will likely have heard from many of your schools.

### **Interviewing at Medical and Other Health Professions Schools**

Admissions committees meet regularly throughout the application cycle and decide who to interview. Completing your applications early will certainly increase your chances of being interviewed early in the cycle. However, even if your applications are finished early, invitations to interviews can come at any point in the cycle, which runs roughly from August through early April.

If you receive an invitation – congratulations! You’ve made it past one of the toughest parts of the screening process. Most schools only interview about 20% of their candidates. An invitation for an interview means that your application was compelling and that the school would like to learn more about you, while also giving you a chance to learn more about them.

The nature of the interview day varies from school to school. It will usually include an introduction from an Admissions Dean and other activities such as a tour of the facilities, presentation regarding financial aid, meals, and a chance to talk to current students. You may sit for more than one interview during your visit. Interviews will generally be with members of the admissions committee, which is typically composed of faculty and administrators, and sometimes students or members of the community who are affiliated with the school. Some schools are adopting the multiple mini interview format (MMI), which is a series of six to ten minute stations with a different scenario at each station. Additional information about interviewing will be shared through information sessions and handouts later in the process.

## ***The Waiting Game Continues: January through May***

Toward spring, you will have a better idea of your standing at most or all of your schools, and further communication will depend on your status with the school.

If you have heard nothing:

1. Call/check online to confirm receipt of application if you have not done so.
2. Send fall term grades as long as they reflect strong academic performance.
3. Send an update of your activities since the secondary application.
4. Send an additional letter of recommendation directly to the school, but only if it truly adds substance to your file. Consult with HPA on potential additional letters, and send a copy of the letter to HPA in the HPA as well, in case you need it for future reapplication.

If you have been placed in a HOLD category:

1. Same as steps 2-4 above.
2. Write to reaffirm your interest in attending the institution.

If you have been interviewed by one or more top choice schools and have an acceptance from another school:

1. Same as steps 2-4 above.
2. Send a follow up note to the Office of Admissions and state that you have received other offer(s) of acceptance, but that their institution continues to be your first choice. Do this only if this is true.

If you have been placed on a waitlist after the interview:

1. Check with HPA for individual schools' policies on students on the waitlist. Sometimes schools will look at new information, and sometimes they won't.
2. Do not call admissions offices. If you have questions or concerns, discuss them with an HPA advisor.

A note on waitlists. Similar to being placed on hold, waitlist status has no definite time frame. Most medical schools begin taking applicants from wait lists in May, though the most movement occurs in June and July. In addition, schools vary in the amount of information that they will give to applicants on the waitlist. Again, talk to HPA about waitlist status. When sending materials to supplement your application, be sure that the information you provide is current, relevant, and significant. Additional grades or letters of recommendation can be helpful, as can information regarding new publications, job opportunities or awards such as thesis and graduation honors, Phi Beta Kappa, etc. Do not send materials that add nothing new to your application.

Once you have followed the above guidelines, the only thing left to do is just wait! Although this is difficult to do, be patient and involve yourself in activities unrelated to medical school to take your mind off the process. Students continue to be accepted throughout the summer months and may hear as late as August.

## ***Financial Aid***

If you haven't already, as you're waiting and interviewing, research financial aid policies at your schools. The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) has a full portion of their website devoted to financing your medical education: <https://www.aamc.org/services/first/>. Most health professions schools will include financial aid information presentations as part of the interview day. Some basic tips regarding financial aid, from Ms. Kathleen Baer, former Director of Admissions and Financial Aid at Brown Medical School:

1. Educate yourself about financing options starting in the summer that you apply to medical school. Be open-minded, thorough and persistent.
2. Have a frank discussion with your family regarding their level of support.
3. Gauge the level of financial support that schools offer to their students by asking for data such as:
  - percent of students who receive financial aid from institutional loans and scholarships;
  - average annual loan amount for financial aid recipients;
  - average need-based scholarship for financial aid recipients;
  - mean, cumulative educational debt for most recent graduating class;
  - types of personal financial planning services offered.
4. Make friends with financial aid staff members at medical schools. Discuss special circumstances that you are facing. They are experts in helping you to navigate the complexities of financial aid.
5. Ask schools for a preview of your financial aid award. First, calculate an estimate of your expected family contribution (EFC) via web-based calculator (<http://www.finaid.org/calculators/finaidestimate.phtml>) Then send your estimated EFC to the schools that you are considering and ask them to estimate a typical, need-based award.
6. Learn the differences among loan programs. Don't assume that all loans are the same. Consider initial processing fees, interest rates, interest accrual while in medical school, deferment options, add-on fees at repayment, payment plans, repayment incentives, and other factors. Ask lenders to "run the numbers" to help you determine the long-term costs. Remember, too, that payments on most types of federal student loans for medical school (e.g., Stafford) may be postponed until completion of residency.
7. Educate yourself about the importance of good credit.
  - Obtain a free copy of your credit report ([www.myfico.com](http://www.myfico.com) or [www.AnnualCreditReport.com](http://www.AnnualCreditReport.com)). Review it for errors and negative information.
  - Stay current with your credit card payments and try to pay off your credit card debt before you begin medical school. Why? Students with a history of credit problems may not be eligible for certain student loans. In addition, financial aid cannot cover credit card payments and other consumer debt.
8. A debt-free education in some health professions is possible. Consider:
  - Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarship Program (HPSP)
  - National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program (NHSC)
  - Indian Health Service Corps Scholarship Program (IHS)
  - MD/PhD programs through the Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP)
  - Merit scholarships (often given on a rolling basis – another reason to apply early!)
9. Loan repayment programs may help you to retire or significantly reduce your educational debt soon after residency. These programs require either patient care in underserved areas of the United States or clinical research in areas of national "need" for a minimum of two years in return for repayment of a portion of your educational debt.
10. While student loans are the primary source of financial aid, balance the weight of your educational debt with realistic estimates of your future income as a health professional.

## ***Acceptances***

Starting October 15 for medical school, and December 1 for dental school (others schools' dates vary), you may begin to receive acceptances from schools. A few DO schools are sending acceptances starting in late summer. First of all, if you've just been accepted, congratulations! Go and celebrate, and then come back to this section!

If you are offered a seat at a school and wish to accept it, you should write an acceptance letter to the Dean of Admissions, stating that you accept the position. Include your name (obviously) and your relevant contact information for the time from acceptance to matriculation, as well as any other information that you are asked to provide. If you haven't done so already, this is a good time to get a permanent (non-Princeton) professional email account, so that if your Princeton account expires, the school will still know where to find you. Most schools require a deposit, which is often refundable, to hold your seat. Send your response by certified mail, with a return receipt, so that you know when the school receives it. At this point, you should also send letters withdrawing your candidacy from any school that you haven't heard from, that you would not attend given your current acceptance. This gives them a more realistic idea of their applicant pool, and may be of benefit to others who are still waiting for interviews and acceptances.

Also note that acceptances are contingent on continuing to do well. Don't fail classes, maintain your good academic and disciplinary standards, and in general avoid things that could result in having your acceptance rescinded.

### **Multiple Acceptances and Traffic Rules**

This may sound obvious, but accept the first seat you're offered, even if it isn't at one of your top choice schools and you're confident that you'll receive another – it's always better to have one seat than none at all. If you later get accepted by another school that's higher on your list, send professionally worded emails or letters 1) withdrawing from the first school, and 2) accepting the second school's offer. The longer you hold a place at a medical school that you have no intention of attending, the longer someone else has to wait for an acceptance (which may include your classmates), and there's no reason to keep someone else waiting. This principle holds true for other health professions, though deadlines may vary. On May 15, medical schools are provided with a list of students who they have accepted, who are still holding acceptances at other schools. You may be contacted by schools at this point with a firmer deadline by which, if you have not made a decision, the seat will be given to someone else. Further information regarding the guidelines set by the AAMC for applicants and for medical schools (often called "traffic rules") can be found at <http://www.aamc.org/students/applying/policies/start.htm>.

### **Deferment**

Schools have varying policies on deferment. Some will grant you a deferral of one year if you have a well thought-out plan for what you will spend that year doing. However, schools vary in their flexibility. You should check the deferment policy for each of the schools you apply to and call the admissions office to ask about the types of situations that they have typically allowed a deferral for. In almost all cases, if you choose to defer, you are expected to attend the school in the following year – you are not allowed to defer, and apply to other schools in your deferral year. If you have plans for something you'd like to pursue in the year or two before entering medical school, you should consider postponing your application. If you are not sure what to do, consult with HPA.

## ***If You Aren't Accepted***

In 2010, 43,919 individuals applied to allopathic medical school, and 20,176 were accepted for matriculation in 2011 – about a 46% acceptance rate (all national data in this handout comes from the AAMC, <https://www.aamc.org/data/facts/applicantmatriculant/> ). The number of well-qualified applicants far outweighs the number of seats available in US medical schools. For those who were not admitted, there are a number of next steps to consider. If you receive no offers of admission to medical school, you should work with HPA advisers to think carefully about whether or not you wish to reapply, and be strategic about when to reapply, and what to do to prepare for reapplication.

If you decide that you want to try again, you should first find out what the weaknesses were in your application. Was it grades? It may be worthwhile to consider post-bac programs (see “Post-bac Paths: Record Enhancement” handout). Were your grades fine but your MCATs (or other test scores) less competitive? Perhaps the interviews didn't go as well as they could have. In a number of cases, everything was fine, and the timing of application was just too late. Whatever the case may be, you might want to contact one or two of the schools you applied to and find out what their impressions were. You can also meet with an HPA advisor; who can help you evaluate your application. Once you understand the weaknesses in your application you must, if at all possible, remedy and improve your credentials in that specific area of weakness if you hope to gain admittance upon reapplying. You can continue to use the composite letter service at Princeton if you choose to reapply. In many cases, this may take you more than a year to do.

Students who reapply to medical school generally stand a lower chance of being admitted than applicants applying for the first time. It is better to start with a “clean slate” as an applicant, which, again, is why you should only apply when you're the strongest applicant that you can be. If you do end up planning to reapply, you must be even more conscious of what you are doing in the time between applications. Schools look very carefully for signs of improvement from a student's previous application.

If improvements are slight, or are not discernible, applicants are generally rejected the second time around. This is also why you must stay engaged for the year after you have submitted your application (during interviews and admissions decisions – if you don't use that year well, and need to reapply, you've put yourself at a disadvantage). A separate handout, *Considerations for Reapplicants to Health Professional Schools*, is available for potential reapplicants.

## APPENDICES

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### *Appendix A: Ten Good Reasons to Consider a Glide Year*

1. You'll have more time to study for the MCAT if you haven't taken it yet. MD applicants: to be as early as possible in this application cycle (which, as we already know, gives you a better shot at getting into schools on rolling admissions), you should be focusing on MCAT no later than April if you want your scores before you submit your AMCAS, or May if you are comfortable submitting AMCAS before you have MCAT scores back. Applying for '15 rather than '14 means you could spend all summer studying MCAT, and still have time to retake it if necessary before applying.
2. You can use next year to solidify your GPA. The numbers part of your applicant profile almost always improves in your senior year if you're a junior because you have more control over the courses you take and you're more acclimated to the college environment. If you're a senior whose GPA is not competitive at schools of interest, you may want to look at various options to improve your GPA before applying.
3. You might secure stronger letters of recommendation. Again, if you're a junior, your classes are likely to get smaller next year, and you'll have more opportunity to forge relationships with your faculty, especially your thesis advisor. You'll also have this summer to work on garnering a letter from a supervisor or volunteer coordinator in a summer activity. If you're a senior, going on to post-bac class work could give you more chances to get to know faculty, or if you go on to work, you could have an excellent professional reference.
4. You can get your finances in order. Health professions school is expensive, as is the process of applying. Taking time away from school means that you may have to start repaying any student loans, but working full-time should allow you to make payments on loans (to defray some debt load) while also saving some money to put toward applications and future expenses. If you have poor credit, spending some time rebuilding your credit record may also pay off when it comes to taking out professional school loans.
5. You'll have more time to focus on the preparations required to apply. You have essays to write, letters of recommendations to gather, MCAT to study for, schools to research, as well as the rest of real life and figuring out what to do this summer. If you can't spend the time you need on application prep now (and secondary essay writing this summer), it might be better to start getting organized this year, but focus on applying next year.
6. "Everyone else is doing it." Only about 1/3 of Princeton applicants currently planning to apply for '13 are class of 2013 – the rest are taking or have taken some time off before matriculating. Every student with whom we have talked about taking time off has benefited from it. They have all found something productive to do in their "glide years," and may be more attractive to admissions committees because of this new experience as well as the maturity gained from being in the 'real world' for awhile.
7. You can gain more experience and practice articulating your career interests, on paper and aloud. Without having participated in some activities that allow you to serve the community and to build the skills you need to be a health professional, it will be hard to convince schools that you have a realistic understanding of what you're about to undertake. The more time you spend in these settings, the better you'll be when interviews come, and the easier it will be to focus on applications, since you'll have a more solid goal to work toward. If you need more experiences to back up your "gut feeling" that you "must" be a doctor or dentist or vet, by all means take the time to find those experiences. If you're having trouble writing your essay, or practicing interview answers, you may just need more time and experiences behind you to put your thoughts together.
8. It can be hard for a junior to compete favorably with alums and post bacs who have rich life experience, and with seniors who have their complete academic history...graduation honors, undergrad thesis presentations, etc. Admissions committees have acknowledged that younger applicants often "suffer by

comparison” to the older, more experienced applicant (the average age of successful applicants to US MD programs at anticipated matriculation is 24).

9. Life is short! Once you get to medical school, it becomes more difficult to take time off – you're more likely to have financial concerns, family concerns, and a professional schedule that will keep you from, say, traveling to Africa for six months, or learning to skydive, or pursuing independent research, or going to culinary school. Princeton has many fellowships that you can look into as well, which provide funding for a one- to two-year service/work opportunity.

10. Your brain could use the break! Princeton academics are rigorous, perhaps even grueling at times. You may just want some time to take a break from academics after 18 years of school, so that you can return renewed to the rigor of health professions school course work. Health professions school (and the support your alma mater provides in working with you to get there) will still be there for you if you go and do these things and return to the application process later.

### ***Sample glide year opportunities pursued by Princeton graduates***

#### **Mid-Atlantic**

- Participating in Post-bac Intramural Research Training Award (IRTA) fellowships at the National Institutes of Health in the Washington DC area.
- Working as an ORISE Research Fellow at the National Institutes of Health, volunteering at HIV clinic, running as an EMT with Bethesda Rescue Squad.
- Evaluating neurosurgical care in wartime environments with INOVA Health Systems in Washington DC.
- Enhancing science preparation for medical school in the Georgetown University Special Masters Program in Physiology.
- Working as a Teach for America fellow teaching 8th grade science in Washington DC.
- Serving in a Project 55 fellowship at Aeras Global TB Vaccine Foundation in the DC area: organize journal club meetings, provide updates on relevant activities and issues on TB, and connect Aeras staff and collaborating organizations.
- Managing health-related projects at the American Institutes for Research (AIR), a behavioral and social science research organization in Washington DC.
- Working full-time as a Medical Assistant with D.C. area physician while retaking MCAT, and taking science courses at Howard University.
- Working as an assistant in a small animal veterinary clinic in Richmond, Virginia.
- Performing bench and clinical research with veterans at the Naval Medical Research Center (NMRC), Regenerative Medicine Department.
- Working as a Research Assistant at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine Department of Pediatric Hematology
- Coordinating grants and fundraising for a low-cost Charm City Clinic in Baltimore.
- Doing research and clinical work with Oncology Hematology Associates (POHA) in Philadelphia with alumnus David Henry.
- Participating in the Pre-health Specialized Studies Post-Baccalaureate program at University of Pennsylvania.
- Working as a Community Support Specialist in Mental Health Division of Step-by-Step, a non-profit organization in Pennsylvania that provides services to children and adults with mental illness, intellectual disabilities, and autism, and taking Biochemistry.

## **New England**

- Working on cancer treatments and outcomes at the Laboratory for Quantitative Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School.
- Combining business and health care interests as a consultant with Trinity Partners outside of Boston.
- Doing clinical work as Children's Health Watch Fellow in Boston.
- Working as a Domestic Violence Advocate at St. Luke's Roosevelt, Provisional New York State Rape Crisis Counselor, and volunteering in a general practice.
- Pursuing a Masters degree in public health from Columbia University's Mailman School.
- Serving as a Parent-Community Outreach Fellow at New York Center for Child Development.
- Working as the Principal's Assistant at St. Marks the Evangelist School in West Harlem: managed school's funding, acted as a liaison between the parents and the school board, and ran extracurricular after-school programs.
- Studying children with autism and ADHD as a Research Assistant at the NYU Child Study Center.
- Researching pathogenesis and treatment of sarcomas under a MD/PhD at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in NYC.
- Participating in a Princeton Project 55 Fellowship at the Norwalk Community Health Center, an organization providing primary care, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, and dentistry to the underserved.
- Full-time intern at Manna Christian Fellowship at Princeton.
- Working as Logistics manager for the Center Stage Student Program at Princeton.
- Serving as a Teaching assistant at Princeton for MOL 460: Disease in Children, pursuing painting, and conducting private tutoring.
- Training with the Senior National Rowing Team, tutoring, and working in running store.
- Working at Rocking Horse Rehabilitation Center, using music therapy to treat children with physical, developmental, and behavioral problems and volunteered at Hackensack University Hospital (Hackensack NJ), with the Hackensack Elderly Life Program.

## **Midwest**

- Taking science classes at the University of Minnesota and working as a cardiovascular monitoring technician at Abbott Northwestern Hospital in Minneapolis.
- Pursuing genetics research at the Stowers Institute for Medical Research (Kansas City MO).
- Participating in clinical neuroscience research (interviewing and working with patients) and on a study of transplant patients at the University of Michigan Medical School.

## **South, West and Southwest**

- Serving as a Teach for America fellow in a high-need school district in Georgia, while also volunteering at a local hospital.
- Pursuing a clinical research project at the University of San Francisco Breast Cancer Center through a Princeton AlumniCorps Project 55 Fellowship.
- Working as a research associate at Close Concerns, a Diabetes consulting firm in San Francisco.
- Managing projects and assisting the Chief Operations Officer at Axis Community Health in the San Francisco Bay Area.
- Interning with Doximity, Inc (San Mateo CA), a startup company designing a professional social networking tool for physicians to share information, while also volunteering at a local hospital.
- Working as a Research Analyst and Project Coordinator for Acumen LLC (Burlingame CA), a health policy consulting firm that investigates physicians who commit Medicare fraud.
- Participating in dental research at University of Southern California.

- Participating in the California Postbaccalaureate Consortium Program at UCLA, while volunteering at UCLA's Ronald Reagan Medical Center, and teaching classes on health issues and founded youth group for "at-risk" youth in church.
- Serving in a Teach for America position in Oakland, California.
- Working as a Scribe at Methodist Dallas Medical Center, following a doctor on all patient visits and recording all chart notes.

### **International**

- Working as an Au Pair in Australia.
- Founding a non-governmental organization in Zimbabwe (Upenyu, which focuses on schistosomiasis treatment).
- Pursuing an MSc in Medical Anthropology at Oxford, having been awarded scholarship through the Weidenfield Scholarship and Leadership Programme offered by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue.
- Teaching high school chemistry at Ngee Ann Polytechnic in Singapore on a Princeton in Asia fellowship. Also served as an adviser to first-year students as well as a mentor to third-year students doing internships at large corporations in the city.
- Teaching in Chiang Rai, Thailand, on a Princeton in Asia Fellowship.
- Grant writing and assisting in the clinic for Associacao Saude Crianca in Rio de Janeiro on a Princeton in Latin America fellowship.
- Working with Instituto Mexicano de Investigación de Familia y Población (IMIFAP), a non-profit, fighting poverty in Mexico City on a Princeton in Latin America fellowship.
- Taking courses at the National University at Córdoba in Argentina and volunteering in local public schools, funded through a Rotary Scholarship.
- Conducting research on transgender health in Brazil on a Fulbright Scholarship.
- Studying public health in Tel Aviv, Israel.
- Participating in neuroscience research at the Technion University in Haifa, Israel.
- Working on HIV education in Botswana on a Princeton in Africa fellowship.

## ***Appendix B: Application Alphabet Soup for Medical, Dental and Veterinary School***

- AACOM – American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
- AACOMAS - American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Application Service
- AADSAS – Associated American Dental Schools Application Service
- AAMC – Association of American Medical Colleges
- AAVMC – Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
- AMCAS – American Medical College Application Service
- BCPM GPA – Biology, Chemistry, Math, Physics Grade Point Average
- DAT – Dental Admission Test (QRT: Quantitative Reasoning, PAT: Perceptual Ability Test, RCT: Reading comprehension; SNS: Total Science) (standardized test for dental school admission)
- GRE – Graduate Record Examination (required by vet schools)
- MCAT – Medical College Admissions Test (PS: Physical Sciences, BS: Biological Sciences, VR: Verbal Reasoning, WS: Writing Score) (standardized test for medical school admission)
- MD/JD – dual degree program combining medical school and law school
- MD/MBA – dual degree program combining medical school and a Master of Business Administration program
- MD/MPH – dual degree program combining medical school and a Master of Public Health degree program
- MD/MS – dual degree program combining medical school and master’s level graduate study
- MD/PhD – dual degree program combining medical school and doctoral study
- MSTP – Medical Scientist Training Program: MD/PhD program funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- OMSAS – Ontario Medical School Application Service
- TMDSAS – Texas Medical and Dental School Application Service
- URM – underrepresented in medicine: a term used by the AAMC to indicate those from racial and ethnic populations that are underrepresented in the medical profession relative to their numbers in the general population
- USMLE – U.S. Medical Licensing Examination (standardized test for medical licensure)
- VMCAS – Veterinary Medical College Application Service

## ***Appendix C: Calculating your Overall and Science GPAs***

### **Grade Equivalencies**

Grade	A+, A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	F
AMCAS Value	4	3.7	3.3	3	2.7	2.3	2	1.7	1	0
Princeton Course (4 semester hours)	16	14.8	13.2	12	10.8	9.2	8	6.8	4	0

### **Semester Hours**

Each Princeton course is equivalent to 4 semester hours (GER 1025, FRE 1027, ITA 1027, and SPA 1027 are exceptions and are equal to 8 semester hours) – these courses show as 1.0 units on your transcript. Senior Thesis is equivalent to 8 semester hours (and shows as 2.0 units). Independent work equals 4 semester hours for each term. If reported only in the spring for a year-long project, it equals 8 semester hours. The Senior Departmental Exam equals 0 semester hours. For courses taken at other institutions, consult the Registrar’s Office (or check your official transcript from that school) for semester hour equivalencies for your course(s).

### **Calculating Your Overall GPA**

If you took all of your courses on a four semester hour system (e.g., all of your courses at Princeton), you can simply add the AMCAS value for each grade you received, and divide the total by the number of courses you took.

If you took courses at other schools whose semester hour system differs, you will have to adjust for this. If all courses that you took were four semester hours, follow directions above. If some courses had different semester hours, multiply the AMCAS value for each course you took by the number of semester hours for the course. Add the products and divide by the total number of semester hours. Do not include courses with grades of AUD, P, Inc, or W, or courses taken abroad for which grades are not reported on a US transcript. Each course should be included, even if you repeated the same course.

### **Calculating Your BCPM (Science) GPA**

Do the same as described above for any course in which at least 50% of the course material was derived from biology, chemistry, math or physics (BCPM). So, a statistics course like PSY 251 would count as a Math course, and thus be part of your science GPA. Use your judgment to determine whether courses in disciplines such as neuroscience and engineering “count” as BCPM.

The AMCAS staff will compute your GPAs based on their own judgment of the information that you enter on your AMCAS, verified by cross-referencing your official transcripts. Your GPAs will be reported in the following table to you and will be provided in this format to your medical schools:

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

## ***Appendix D: Statistics for Princeton Health Professions School Applicants***

### **Health Professions Schools where Princeton University applicants matriculated or deferred matriculation, 2009–2012**

*Note: if more than one student was accepted to a school the number admitted is noted in parentheses*

#### **US & CANADIAN ALLOPATHIC MEDICAL SCHOOLS**

Alabama	Emory (7)	Michigan (2)	Texas / Galveston
Albany	Florida (2)	Minnesota	Texas / San Antonio (6)
Albert Einstein (6)	Florida International (2)	Mississippi	Texas / Southwestern (6)
Alberta	George Washington (2)	Mount Sinai (11)	Texas Tech
Arizona / Phoenix	Georgetown	New Jersey/NJ Med (5)	Toronto (2)
Baylor (3)	Harvard (16)	New Jersey/RWJ (20)	Tufts (6)
Brody – East Carolina	Howard	New York Med Coll (3)	Tulane (7)
Brown (5)	Illinois (5)	New York Univ (18)	UC Davis
Boston University (3)	Indiana	North Carolina (5)	UC Irvine (3)
Calgary (2)	Iowa (3)	Northwestern (5)	UCLA (2)
Case Western (14)	Jefferson (8)	Ohio State (2)	UCSD (1)
Chicago – Pritzker (4)	Johns Hopkins (19)	Penn (28)	UCSF (9)
Cincinnati (2)	Kansas	Penn State	Vanderbilt (4)
Colorado (3)	Keck USC (6)	Pittsburgh (3)	Virginia (4)
Columbia (27)	Loyola Stritch (4)	Rochester (2)	VA Commonwealth (3)
Commonwealth	LSU New Orleans	St. Louis (2)	Virginia Tech Carilion
Connecticut	Marshall	Stanford (6)	Wake Forest (10)
Cooper (2)	Maryland (4)	Stony Brook (2)	Wash U (6)
Cornell (6)	Massachusetts (3)	SUNY Buffalo	Washington (State) (2)
Dartmouth	Mayo	SUNY Downstate (3)	West Virginia
Drexel (10)	Med Coll Georgia	SUNY Syracuse (2)	Wisconsin
Duke (7)	Meharry (3)	Temple (5)	Wright State
Eastern VA	Miami	Tennessee	Yale (5)

#### **US & CANADIAN MD/PHD PROGRAMS**

Columbia MD/PhD (2)	Mount Sinai MD/PhD (2)	Stanford MD/PhD	Virginia MD/PhD (2)
Duke MD/PhD	North Carolina MD/PhD	Temple MD/PhD	Yale MD/PhD
Harvard MD/PhD	Penn MD/PhD (2)	Tufts MD/PhD	
Hofstra LIJ MD/PhD	Rochester MD/PhD	UCLA MD/PhD	

#### **US OSTEOPATHIC MEDICAL SCHOOLS**

Arizona COM	Lake Erie COM	Philadelphia COM
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#### **OTHER HEALTH PROFESSIONS SCHOOLS**

Dental: Harvard	Dental: North Carolina	Dental: U of Pacific	Vet: Tufts
Dental: Florida	Dental: Penn (3)	Vet: North Carolina State	
Dental: NYU	Dental: San Francisco	Vet: Penn	

**Table 1: Average GPA for 2009-2012 allopathic medical school admission**

	BCPM <sup>2</sup> GPA		Cumulative UG GPA	
	Princeton	2012 National	Princeton	2012 National
All Applicants	3.43	3.44	3.49	3.54
Accepted	3.47	3.63	3.51	3.68
Not Accepted	3.21	3.62	3.31	3.68

**Table 2: Average GPA for 2009-2012 allopathic medical school admission  
Only students with no post-bac/graduate science**

	BCPM GPA		Cumulative UG GPA	
	Princeton	2012 National	Princeton	2012 National
All Applicants	3.50	3.44	3.53	3.54
Accepted	3.52	3.63	3.55	3.68
Not Accepted	3.31	3.62	3.39	3.68

**Table 3: Average MCAT scores for 2009-2012 allopathic medical school admission**

	Verbal Reasoning		Physical Science		Biological Science	
	Princeton	2012 National	Princeton	2012 National	Princeton	2012 National
All Applicants	10.7	8.4	11.6	8.8	11.5	9.3
Accepted	10.8	9.3	11.7	9.9	11.6	10.3
Not Accepted	9.8	9.3	11.0	9.9	10.8	10.3

**Table 4: Acceptance rates for Princeton graduates for 2009-2012  
allopathic medical school admission by time off before application**

	# Applied	# Accepted	# Not Accepted	Percent Accepted
Direct Entry	181	158	23	87.3%
One glide year	131	124	7	94.7%
All others	175	147	28	84%
2012 National	43,548	19,735	23,813	45.3%

**Table 5: Acceptance rates for Princeton graduates for 2009-2012  
allopathic medical school admission by application verification date**

	Accepted	Not accepted	Percentage
June 2011	138	9	94%
July 2011	170	17	91%
August and later	121	32	79%

<sup>2</sup> BCPM = all courses in Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Math

### BCPM GPA and MCAT acceptance matrix, Princeton applicants for 2009-2012 admission

*Only includes Princeton applicants who took no science courses as post-baccalaureate or graduate students*

		<24	24-26	27-29	30-32	33-35	36-38	39-45	All MCAT
3.8-4.0	accepts applicants			1	3	14	26	21	65
				1	4	14	28	21	68
				100%	75%	100%	93%	100%	96%
3.6-3.79	accepts applicants			2	8	25	31	13	79
				2	8	30	33	14	87
				100%	100%	83%	94%	93%	91%
3.4-3.59	accepts applicants			3	20	31	27	7	88
				4	20	35	30	8	97
					100%	89%	90%	88%	91%
3.2-3.39	accepts applicants	1	1	8	21	23	10	3	67
		3	1	9	21	25	12	4	75
		33%	100%	89%	100%	92%	83%	75%	89%
3.0-3.19	accepts applicants	0		6	5	11	3		25
		1		6	5	12	4		28
				100%	100%	92%	75%		89%
<3.0	accepts applicants	1		5	9	3	1		19
		1		9	11	6	1		28
		100%		56%	82%	50%	100%		68%
All GPAs	accepts applicants	2	1	25	66	107	98	44	343
		5	1	31	69	122	108	47	383
		40%	100%	81%	96%	88%	91%	94%	90%

