MEDICAL SCHOOL
2017 APPLICANT INFORMATION

The Health Professions Advising Office offers centralized processing services to assist students who are applying to medical, dental, or optometry schools. These services include the following: the distribution of application support materials, compilation of faculty evaluations and other pertinent information on each student, and forwarding of these materials to the school(s) of the applicant’s choice. We offer this service because most professional schools prefer a centralized system of gathering application support materials.

One of the goals of the Health Professions Office is to help you navigate the application process. However, it is your responsibility to see that the required materials reach our office by the deadlines.

In order to assist you with the applications process, the following checklist is provided. Keep in mind that the steps below may not occur in exactly this order. For example, you may complete your UA committee interview before you submit your primary application, or after. The checklist below is merely a guide.

☐ Make arrangements to take the MCAT. Registration information is available online:

www.aamc.org/students/mcat/registration.htm

• The MCAT is typically offered from January through September of each calendar year. Almost all medical schools will accept MCAT scores taken prior to the September that precedes the matriculation year.
• Example: For a student wishing to matriculate in the fall of 2017, the September 2016 MCAT is the latest score medical schools will consider.
• For many students, taking the MCAT for the first time in April or May is a good strategy; if you are pleased with your spring score, you may apply much earlier in the cycle. If you need time to prepare for a second attempt in July, August, or even September, you have that opportunity.
• Students are restricted to taking the MCAT three times in one year, four times in two years and seven times in their lifetime.

☐ Contact (preferably in person) the faculty members and personal references who will be completing the evaluation forms for you, and request that those be returned to the Health Professions Advising Office.

• Use the recommendation forms to request faculty and personal recommendations. Those forms can be found under the ‘2017 Applicants’ tab of www.prehealth.ua.edu
• Sign and date the forms prior to sending them to your recommenders.
• You should request a maximum of five letters: 2-3 from faculty who have taught you in a college course, and 1-2 personal references. AT LEAST ONE LETTER (preferably 2-3) should come from a science professor.
• Good choices for personal references include physicians you have shadowed, former employers, volunteer coordinators, etc. Do not ask a family member for a letter of recommendation
• Letters of recommendation to should be on letterhead, when possible, and always signed by the recommender.
• Upon completion, letters should be returned to the Health Professions Advising Office, either as an attachment to PREHEALTHRECS@UA.EDU, or mailed to:

Health Professions Advising Office
Box 870268
Tuscaloosa AL 35487-0268.
• The Health Professions Advising Office submits all recommendation letters electronically, either directly to AMCAS via their letter service, or to non-AMCAS schools via CAS. The medical schools can then download your letters at any time.

☐ Complete the UA Pre-Application, and return it to the Health Professions Advising Office

• A recent photo is required and must be included with the pre-application. Ensure this photo is a headshot of you in professional/business casual attire. The goal is to present yourself as a mature, young professional.
• The Health Professions Advising Office WILL NOT conduct your committee interview without your pre-application.
• The priority deadline for pre-application submission is March 30th. Pre-applications received after this date cannot be guaranteed a committee interview with our office.

☐ Request a committee interview with the Health Professions Advising Office.

• Your UA interview WILL NOT be scheduled until you have submitted your pre-application materials and your recommenders have submitted their letters.
• Your UA Pre-App will become available by Jan.20th. It will simulate your AMCAS so be prepared to devote significant time to fill it out.
• To reiterate, committee interviews will be scheduled for the Month of MAY.
• You may submit your primary application before the committee interview and before your letters of recommendation are submitted!
• The committee interviews are held during the month of MAY. UA INTERVIEWS AFTER SEPTEMBER 30 ARE RARE AND ONLY SCHEDULED IN UNUSUAL OR EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES. YOU ARE SEVERELY DISADVANTAGED BY WAITING THAT LATE.
• The interview with the committee serves two purposes; first, it gives the committee an opportunity to spend some time with the candidate before preparing the committee letter of recommendation, and second, the UA interview allows the candidate to get a feel for what the professional school interviews will be like.
• We combine the letters of recommendation sent to us with our own letter to create a composite evaluation, which is sent to the medical schools.

☐ Identify and select the list of schools to which you plan to apply.

• Note that there are three different application services for almost all US medical schools (AMCAS for MD-granting institutions; AACOMAS for DO-granting institutions, and TMDSAS for Texas schools).
• There are now FOUR medical schools in the state of Alabama: UAB, USA, VCOM-Auburn and ACOM.
• Most offshore medical schools require a separate application, which should be sent directly to those schools.

☐ Complete primary medical school application(s) through AMCAS, AACOMAS, and/or TMDSAS.

• You must submit your primary applications to medical school online. The online application is your official and primary application to professional school. You are responsible for submitting your primary application. Our office does not do this.
  • www.aamc.org/students/amcas - Allopathic (MD) medical schools
  • www.aacomasaacom.org - Osteopathic (DO) medical schools www.utsystem.edu/tmdsas - Texas medical schools
• The due date for individual schools is not the date you submit your primary application but instead the date by which your application has been processed by AMCAS/AACOMAS. This processing can take up to six weeks in peak times, so plan ahead!
• If your AMCAS/AACOMAS/TMDSAS is ready to submit prior to your letters of recommendation being submitted, do not wait to submit your primary application.
• The recommendation letters are an important part of your secondary application, which the medical schools will send you directly after you have applied through the primary online application service. It is your secondary application that is not complete without letters of recommendation – not the primary.
• It is our strong recommendation that you submit your AMCAS/AACOMAS/TMDSAS application no later than August 1.

☐ Make arrangements to have your official transcripts sent directly to AMCAS/AACOMAS/TMDSAS from the University Records Office.

• The Health Professions Advising Office does not send transcripts.
• Request your UA transcript online. Fees may apply. http://registrar.ua.edu/services/transcripts/
• If you have transfer work, you must also have an OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT sent directly from each college/university you attended. This includes dual-enrollment credit from high school.

You will undoubtedly have questions about your application to medical school throughout the process. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns you have.

Good luck with your applications! We look forward to working with you.

-The Health Professions Advising Team
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Do all my Letters of Recommendation need to be in before my committee interview can be scheduled?
A. YES!! The Health professions Office WILL NOT schedule your committee interview until we have received ALL the letters indicated on your UA Pre-App (which also has to be completed before we will schedule your interview) These materials are due BY MARCH 30, 2016

Q. I think I have all of my letters turned in and my UA Pre-App is complete, why can’t I just schedule my committee interview?
A. We will do our very best to keep Blackboard updated as letters of recommendation are received in our office. Once you see that all letters have been received, you will know that your file is complete. All eligible applicants will receive an email notifying them how to register for their committee interview.

Q. I have completed my AMCAS/AACOMAS application but have not submitted it. Do I need to wait for my letters of recommendation to be received?
A. Emphatically, NO. As soon as you are comfortable with your primary application (AMCAS/AACOMAS/TMDSAS), you should submit it. The letters of recommendation are part of your secondary application, which you will be invited to submit to the schools after they have received your primary application.

Q. I am disappointed with my first MCAT score. Should I wait to submit my primary application, for fear of being automatically rejected before schools see my newest score?
A. Again, no. Submit your application as soon as it is complete. If you are (re)taking the MCAT, receiving schools will evaluate your application once that new score comes in. If you wait until after your newest score is released, you may find yourself much later in the application cycle and at some schools disadvantaged as a result.

Q. Where can I go for help with my application?
A. There are extensive online guides and instruction manuals for the primary applications. Generally, 90% or the questions we are asked are answered in the online guides. If you cannot find the answer to your question online, contact our office at prehealth@ua.edu or the application service directly. The UA Writing Center (http://writingcenter.ua.edu/) is an excellent resource for help with editing and refining your personal statement.

Q. How can I determine which of my letters have been received?
A. Check the Blackboard Portal under the course named “Prehealth_Advising_Cycle2017”. Our office will stop updating Blackboard on April 7th. After this date you will have to contact your prehealth advisor per the alphabet split.
The University of Alabama
Health Professions Advising Office
2017 Medical Applicant Timeline

November 11th and 17th, 2015: First Mandatory Meeting of 2017 Application Year.

January 19th, 2016: Last Mandatory Meeting of 2017 Application Year. UA Pre-Application available on January 20th at www.prehealth.ua.edu.

November 11th and 17th, 2015: First Mandatory Meeting of 2017 Application Year.

March 30th, 2016: ALL Application Materials Due* to our office. This includes:
- UA Pre-Application
- Resume
- Picture
- Letters of Recommendation

May 2016: Health Professions Committee Interviews April 25-May 20th, 2016.

Late-June: Schools are able to download your application packets for review.

May 2017: AMCAS goes LIVE; Start Early…this takes a while.

Early Decision: August 1st deadline to submit to AMCAS. ALL Letters from HPAO will be uploaded by the ED deadline.

September 2016: Last MCAT test date for 2017 Application Year.

Note: Dates are subject to change!

*Incomplete file = No Interview
REQUEST FOR A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION
UA HEALTH PROFESSIONS ADVISING OFFICE
CYCLE 2017

THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY THE STUDENT:

STUDENT’S NAME: ___________________________________________ UA CWID: ____________________________
STUDENT’S EMAIL: ___________________________________________@crimson.ua.edu

HOW DO YOU KNOW THIS EVALUATOR?
(Professor, Physician I shadowed, Extracurricular/Work Supervisor, etc.)

If Applicable:
1) Course taught: ___________________________________________ Semester/Year: ____________________ Grade: _________
2) Course taught: ___________________________________________ Semester/Year: ____________________ Grade: _________

I hereby voluntarily waive and relinquish access to this confidential evaluation:

_________________________________________ ___________________________
Student Signature Date

I request that my letters be submitted to the UA committee by the following date: ______________________________________________

It is strongly recommend that you choose to waive your right to view your letters.
Give letter writers at least two weeks to complete your letter. If you have questions, please ask.

TO THE EVALUATOR:

The Health Professions Advising Committee will use the information you provide to write a composite recommendation of the above named student to medical, dental, or optometry school, as well as send a copy of your letter to the professional schools. Your input in the following areas will be especially useful:

1. Do you think he/she has performed at or below his/her potential? Do you think the academic record and test scores of this student are a good indication of his/her potential in the health professions? If not, please specify the qualities or circumstances of the student that would help put such quantitative measurements in better perspective.

2. Please make additional comments that address the qualities of this student such as: MOTIVATION, WORK HABITS, EMOTIONAL MATURITY, ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE, ABILITY TO WORK WITH OTHERS, and LEADERSHIP. Please visit: https://www.aamc.org/download/349990/data/lettersguidelinesbrochure.pdf for a list of detailed competencies.

3. FOR FACULTY EVALUATORS: Transcripts indicate only final course grades. If this student was enrolled in one or more courses you instructed, please give additional information about his/her performance, including, if possible, approximate rank in the class, consistency of work, strengths and/or weaknesses in content or skill areas of the course(s).

4. Please indicate your summary recommendation by indicating from the choices below. Your recommendation should be based on the applicant as compared to other pre-health professional students with whom you have worked.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Quartile</th>
<th>Second Quartile</th>
<th>Third Quartile</th>
<th>Bottom Quartile</th>
<th>No Recommendation</th>
</tr>
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EVALUATOR SIGNATURE: ___________________________________________ DATE: ___________________________________________

TITLE/DEPARTMENT/CONTACT PH#: __________________________ (attach business card if possible)

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM AND YOUR LETTER TO:

HEALTH PROFESSIONS ADVISING
BOX 870268
TUSCALOOSA, AL 35487-0268

OR SEND AS AN EMAIL ATTACHMENT TO:

PREHEALTHRECS@UA.EDU

Professional schools will not accept letters that are not signed and on department letterhead.
Questions? Call (205) 348-5970