Applicant Orientation
(for students planning to apply to medical school)

Michele Johnson
Senior Pre-Med Advisor | Pre-Professional Advising Office

Jennifer Letchuk
Pre-Med Advisor | Pre-Professional Advising Office

Office of the Vice President for Instruction
Our office advises all UGA students interested in health-care careers.
- Medical, dental, vet, optometry, PA, PT, OT, AA, nursing, etc.

We are located in 130 Memorial Hall
- **Website**: prehealth.uga.edu
- **Email**: premed@uga.edu
- **Phone**: 706-542-0444

Join our Pre-HealthUGA listserv
- Primary means of communication from our office to you!

Check out our Pre-Health Event Calendar for upcoming meetings/workshops/events.

Make an appointment with a Pre-Health Advisor by visiting our website.
Meet our Staff!

- **Amanda Spohn** (Coordinator)
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- **Michele Johnson** (Pre-Medical Advisor) - If you are a junior, senior, graduate student, or UGA alumni, please schedule with Ms. Johnson.
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- **Jennifer Letchuk** (Pre-Medical Advisor) - If you are a *freshman, sophomore, or you have less than 75 credit hours completed*, please schedule with Ms. Letchuk.
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- **Lise Kalla** (Pre-Dental & Optometry Advisor)
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Important Upcoming Application Dates
For the 2023-2024 application cycle:

- **AMCAS (Medical School)**
  - Early May: Application opens
  - Late May/Early June: Submission begins
  - Late June/Early July: Schools begin receiving verified applications

- **AACOMAS (Osteopathic Medical School)**
  - Early May: Application opens and submissions begin
  - Mid-June: Schools begin receiving applications
Orientation Overview

- Application and Timeline
- Components of Application
  - Academic Transcript and GPA
  - MCAT
  - Activities
  - Personal Statement
  - Letters of Evaluation
- Where should I apply?
- Interviews
- Should I take a Gap-Year?
- What if I am not competitive?
Medical Schools in Georgia

- **Medical Schools**
  - Emory University (Atlanta, GA)
  - Medical College of Georgia (Augusta, GA)
    - Satellite campus in Athens, GA
  - Mercer University (Macon, GA)
    - Satellite campus in Columbus, GA & Savannah, GA
  - Morehouse University (Atlanta, GA)

- **Osteopathic Medical Schools**
  - Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM; Moultrie and Suwanee, GA)
Primary Application

- **Centralized Application Services**
  - AMCAS (for medical school)
  - AACOMAS (for DO school)
  - TMDSAS (for Texas medical and dental schools)

- Each application has an instruction manual—download it!

- Submit your primary application as early as possible!
  - Takes approximately 4-6 weeks to be verified (peaks in July/August)
Secondary Applications

- Each school you apply to will send you a *secondary application*.
  - Additional essays and questions specific to that school.
  - Some schools screen applicants first (minimum GPA/MCAT)

- Google secondary prompts from previous year and work on those while your primary application is being verified.

- Submit secondary applications within two weeks of receipt!

- Avoid repeating content from AMCAS/AADSAS essay in your secondary essays.
# Medical School Application Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Junior Year</th>
<th>Summer</th>
<th>Senior Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fall</strong></td>
<td><strong>June</strong></td>
<td><strong>Fall</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Shadow/Volunteer/Research and register for Spring MCAT dates in October</td>
<td>Submit AMCAS Application (submit early as possible—even if MCAT score or LOEs are not received)</td>
<td>Interview (beginning late August/early September through Spring)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan-May</td>
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<td>Shadow/Volunteer/Research</td>
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<td>Study for MCAT</td>
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<td><strong>Spring</strong></td>
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<td>Feb/March/April</td>
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<td>Graduate</td>
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<td>Ask for Letters of Evaluation (give letter-writers at least 1-month to compose)</td>
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<td>Write Personal Statement</td>
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<td>April/May/June</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take MCAT</td>
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<td>May</td>
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<td>Begin completing AMCAS Application</td>
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<td><strong>Summer</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>June/July</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepare for Secondary Applications (look online for previous year’s questions)</td>
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<td>July/August</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete Secondary Applications (within 2 weeks of receiving each application)</td>
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Primary Components of Application

1. Academics
   - Overall GPA vs. Science GPA
   - Trends

2. Exam Performance (MCAT)

3. Activities/Experiences
   - Shadowing (Exposure to “doctor-patient” interaction)
   - Volunteering (Commitment to helping others and community involvement)
   - Leadership (Extracurricular engagement)
   - Research

4. Personal Statement

5. Letters of Evaluation
Academics AMCAS

- Overall GPA vs. Science GPA
  - Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Math (BCPM)
  - ~3.7 GPA is average for accepted applicants

- Submit a transcript from every institution you attended.

- Trends
  - Did you challenge yourself?
  - Did you improve over time?
  - Did you take your science courses at UGA?
  - Do you have only 1-2 withdrawals?

- AP credit
  - Medical College of Georgia no longer accepts AP credit for Biology or Chemistry

AMCAS® Application Course Classification Guide

- **Biology (BIOI)**
  - Anatomy
  - Biology
  - Biophysics
  - Biotechnology
  - Botany
  - Cell Biology
  - Ecology
  - Entomology
  - Genetics
  - Histology
  - Immunology
  - Microbiology
  - Molecular Biology
  - Physiology
  - Zoology

- **Chemistry (CHEM)**
  - Biochemistry
  - Chemistry
  - Physical Chemistry
  - Thermodynamics

- **Physics (PHYS)**
  - Astronomy
  - Physics

- **Mathematics (MATH)**
  - Applied Mathematics
  - Biostatistics
  - Mathematics
  - Statistics

- **Behavioral & Social Sciences (BESS)**
  - Anthropology
  - Economics
  - Family Studies
  - Psychology
  - Sociology

- **Business (BUSI)**
  - Accounting
  - Finance
  - Human Resources Studies
  - Management
  - Marketing
  - Organizational Studies

- **Communications (COMM)**
  - Journalism
  - Media Production & Studies
  - TV, Video & Audio

- **Computer Science & Technology (COMP)**
  - Computer Science
  - Computer Engineering
  - Information Systems
  - Telecommunications

- **Education (EDUC)**
  - Counseling & Personnel Services
  - Curriculum & Instruction
  - Educational Administration
  - Educational Policy
  - Health Education
  - Human Development
  - Physical Education (except for sport courses)
  - Special Education

- **Engineering (ENGI)**
  - Aerospace Engineering
  - Biomedical Engineering
  - Chemical Engineering
  - Civil Engineering
  - Electrical Engineering
  - Environmental Engineering
  - Nuclear Engineering

- **English Language & Literature (ENGL)**
  - Composition & Rhetoric
  - Creative Writing
  - Literature

- **Fine Arts (ARTS)**
  - Art
  - Art History
  - Dance
  - Fine Arts
  - Music
  - Photography
  - Theatre

- **Foreign Languages, Linguistics, & Literature (FLAN)**
  - American Sign Language
  - Comparative Literature
  - Foreign Languages & Literatures
  - Linguistics

- **Government, Political Science, & Law (GOVT)**
  - Criminology & Criminal Justice
  - Government
  - International Relations & Studies
  - Law/Legal Studies
  - Political Science
  - Public Affairs & Policy
  - Urban Policy & Planning

- **Health Sciences (HEAL)**
  - Allied Health
  - Biophysics
  - Dentistry
  - Hearing & Speech Studies
  - Hospital Administration
  - Kinesiology
  - Nursing
  - Nutrition
  - Occupational Therapy
  - Optometry
  - Osteopathy
  - Physical Therapy
  - Physician Assistant

- **History (HIST)**
  - History

- **Natural & Physical Sciences (NPSC)**
  - Agriculture
  - Animal & Asian Sciences
  - Environmental Science & Policy
  - Forestry
  - Geography
  - Geology
  - Horticulture
  - Landscape Architecture
  - Meteorology
  - Natural Resources
  - Oceanography

- **Other (OTH)**
  - (All courses that do not fit appropriately in another classification)
  - Architecture
  - Library Science
  - Military Science
  - Sports (men's, golf, aerobics, etc.)

- **Philosophy & Religion (PHIL)**
  - Ethics
  - Logic
  - Philosophy
  - Religion
  - Theology

- **Special Studies (SSTU)**
  - Afro-American Studies
  - American Studies
  - Gender Studies
MCAT

- Take the MCAT no later than Spring/early Summer of the year you plan to apply
  - Offered in January and March-September each year.
  - Registration opens in October for Jan-June dates and in February for July-September dates.

- Courses you need before the exam:
  - BIOL 1107/1108
  - CHEM 1211/1212 and CHEM 2211
  - BCMB 3100
  - PHYS 1111/1112
  - **Recommended:** STAT 2000, PSYC 1101, SOCI 1101, CBIO 3400, GENE 3200, and a Physiology course

- MCAT scores range 472-528
  - Try to score at least 510 (85th percentile)

- You can study for the MCAT on your own or take a MCAT prep-course
  - Key is to make a study plan and take at least 5-6 full-length practice tests!
Activities & Experiences (for Medical School)

- AMCAS allows you to include up to 15 “Work/Activities”
  - You do not have to list 15 total, but ideally you should have at least 10.
  - You will only have 700 characters to describe the activity.
  - Do not fill this area with fluff.
  - Can include hobbies (but try to stick to only 1 or 2 that you’re very passionate about).

- You can mark up to three experiences as the “Most Meaningful.”
  - You are granted an additional 1325 characters to describe these experiences.
  - You should focus on the transformative nature of these experiences.

- Anything you add is fair game for an interview!
  - Include activities in which you were actively engaged.
  - Highlight specific qualities (e.g. leadership, teamwork, compassion, etc.).
  - Try to avoid including things in which you are a passive participant.
Personal Statement

- Your chance to inform the committee about yourself beyond transcript.
  - 5300 characters (MD)/4500 characters (DO)—~ 1 page, single-space
  - Triple-check for grammar and spelling errors!

- Need to answer these questions:
  - Why do you want to be a doctor?
  - Why do I want to pursue a medical education?
  - 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?
  - Explain a defining moment that helped steer you toward a career in medicine.

- Start early! Give yourself at least two months to work on your statement.
  - Have several people read it (letter-writers, advisor, etc.)
  - UGA resources: Honors College, Milledge Hall Writing Center, Career Center
Letters of Evaluation

- **Medical school: Need at least 3 letters**
  - 2 science professors
  - 1 non-science professor
  - 1 physician
  - Additional letters from another academic professional, physician, a supervisor, or someone who knows you well enough to speak positively on your behalf.

- Letters should come from people who know you!
  - Will need to describe your character traits—behavior, communication skills, maturity-level, etc.
Regarding Committee/Pre-Med Advisor Letters

- The Pre-Professional Advising Office does not write letters of recommendation for students – i.e. we do not have a committee letter.

- The absence of a committee or pre-med advisor letter will not negatively affect your application.
How should I ask for Letters of Evaluation?

- Ask early! January-March of year you plan to apply.
- Email about meeting in person, then ask for letter during meeting.
- Always ask whether they can write you a positive letter!
- Provide the following to your letter-writers:
  - Resume or CV
  - Draft of personal statement
  - Information about the programs you’re applying to and your goals
  - Guidelines for Letter-Writers handout (provided by Pre-Health Advising Office)
How should my Letters be submitted?

- Several options to submit letters, but best option is **electronically**.
  - **Electronic Submission:**
    1. Interfolio (preferred method)
    2. AMCAS Letter Writer Service
  - **Regular Mail to AMCAS or AADSAS**
    - Ask letter-writer if they will need postage
  - Work with letter-writer to make submission as easy as possible.
  - **Always** waive your right to view your letters of evaluation!
Where should I apply to medical school?

- Recommend applying to 15-20 schools.
  - Admissions committees can be fickle. Many variables affect likelihood of interview.
  - There are no true “back-up” medical schools.

- Apply to every school in Georgia

- Apply to private out-of-state schools.
  - State institutions are very particular about residency, private schools are not.

- Use the *Medical School Admissions Requirement (MSAR) handbook*
  - Overview and admissions data for every accredited medical school in US
  - Digital and paper versions
Background Check

- Report anything you think might be an issue.
  - Honor Code violations
  - Legal issues

- Not reporting is considered the same as lying.

- If you have had a violation expunged, be sure to pull record and verify.

- If something happens after you apply or are accepted, you must report.

- Bottom-line, try to keep your nose clean!
Interviews

- Interview season begins in August/September and will continue into the Spring.
- An invitation to interview typically means your “numbers” are good.
- Interviewers are trying to find out who you are.
  - No right/wrong answers—more about how you answer and interpersonal communication skills.
- Tips:
  - Know your application inside and out.
  - Dress conservatively (no tattoos, minimal jewelry, beards trimmed, comfy shoes)
  - Interview begins the minute you step on campus
  - Send thank-you notes within 2-weeks of interview (email or hand-written)
- Career Center conducts mock interviews
  - Schedule early! Try for Spring.
- Pre-Health Advising Office conducts Interview Panel every August—watch for announcement
Gap Year

- Why take a Gap Year?
  - I didn’t get in.
  - I am not ready to apply.
  - I need a break from school.

- Work on weak spots in your application.
  - Complete post-bac or Master’s program
  - Retake MCAT
  - Increase clinical involvement and experience

- Key to Gap Year is planning.
  - Try to stay busy and do things that allow you to grow and cultivate new skills
What if I am not competitive?

- It’s okay not to get in the first time! Plenty of people have to reapply.

- Take a Gap Year to work on becoming more competitive.
  - Take additional courses or complete a graduate degree
  - Re-take the MCAT
  - Seek out more volunteering and shadowing opportunities

- Apply to Osteopathic School (DO)
  - Very similar to MD program, but apply through AACOMAS
  - One program in GA: Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM)

- Consider another career in healthcare
  - Nursing, Physician Assistant, Physical Therapist, Genetic Counseling, etc.
Fee Assistance Programs

- **Medical School**
  - The AAMC offers a fee assistance program to assist students registering the MCAT or applying to medical school.
  - Importantly, benefits are not retroactive! Apply for fee assistance well before you register for MCAT or submit your AMCAS application.
  - Also provides you access to the MSAR Handbook.
  - [Link to program website](#).
Recent Medical Admissions Data (2020-2021)

University of Georgia
- 227/584 (accepted/applicants): 38.9%
- Average applicant (Overall/BCPM) vs. matriculant (Overall/BCPM) GPA:
  - 3.64/3.53 vs. 3.74/3.66
- Average applicant vs. accepted MCAT:
  - 506.5 vs. 509.8
- Matriculated into 68 different medical schools
  - Including: MCG, Mercer, Morehouse, Emory, Wake Forest, University of South Florida, University of Tennessee, Louisiana State, East Virginia, Central Florida, and many more.

National
- 21,972/62,443: 42%
- Average applicant (Overall/BCPM) vs. matriculant (Overall/BCPM) GPA:
  - 3.72/3.48 vs. 3.81/3.66
- Average applicant vs. accepted MCAT:
  - 506 vs. 512
Major Takeaways

- Plan out each step in advance!
- Submit your application as early as you can (but don’t rush it)!
- Be positive about your chances of acceptance but always have a plan for if you do not get in:
  - Make sure you have a gap year plan.
  - Make sure you keep up with your academic and extracurricular responsibilities after you hit submit.
- Utilize the Pre-Health Advising Office:
  - Join the Pre-Health listserv
  - Meet with Pre-Health Advisor
  - Review our website
Questions?

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