



**Pre-Health Advising**  
*Pre-Professional Advising Office*  
**UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**

# **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*



# About the Pre-Professional Advising Office

- 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](http://prehealth.uga.edu)
  - **Email:** [premed@uga.edu](mailto: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)
  - [aspohn@uga.edu](mailto:aspohn@uga.edu)
  - [dirpremed@uga.edu](mailto:dirpremed@uga.edu)
- **Michele Johnson** (Pre-Medical Advisor) - If you are a junior, senior, graduate student, or UGA alumni, please schedule with Ms. Johnson.
  - [mtjohnso@uga.edu](mailto:mtjohnso@uga.edu)
- **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.
  - [jletchuk@uga.edu](mailto:jletchuk@uga.edu)
- **Lise Kalla** (Pre-Dental & Optometry Advisor)
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- **Casey Ellis** (Nursing & Allied Health (PT, OT, etc.))
  - [cme18@uga.edu](mailto:cme18@uga.edu)
- **Taz Qadri** (Pre-Physician Assistant & Veterinary)
  - [tqadri@uga.edu](mailto:tqadri@uga.edu)



# 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?



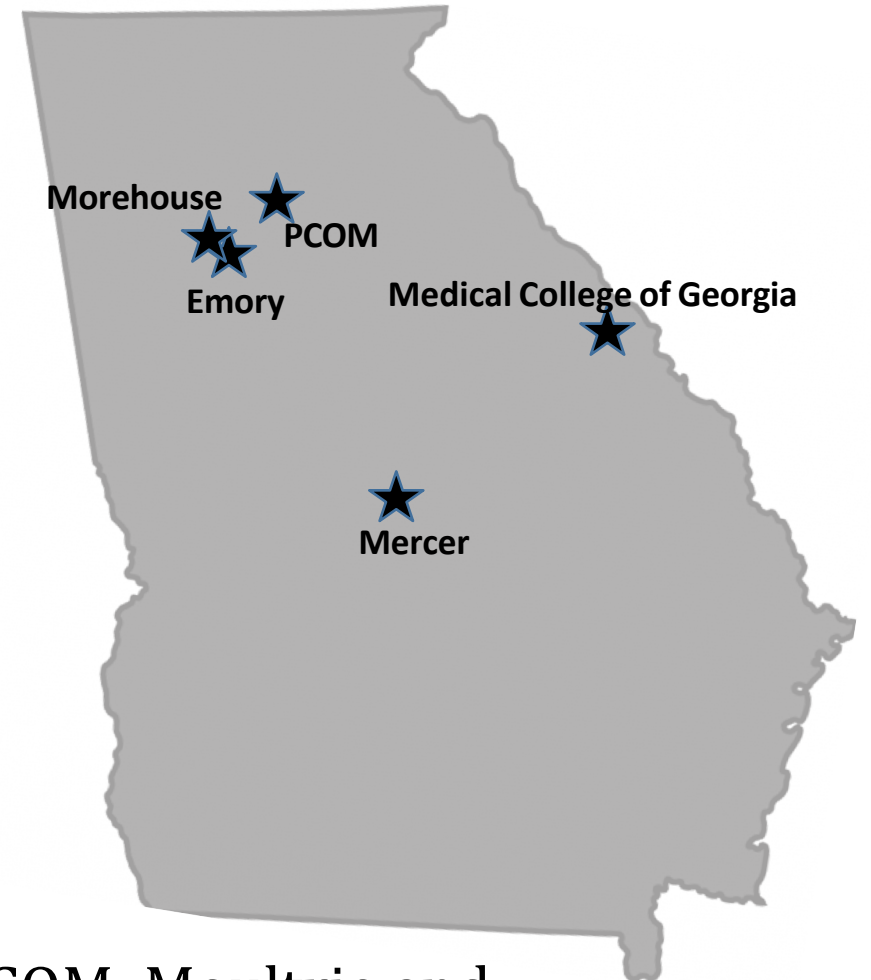
# Medical Schools in Georgia

## ■ 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

## Junior Year

<b>Fall</b>	Shadow/Volunteer/Research and register for Spring MCAT dates in October
<b>Jan-May</b>	Study for MCAT
<b>Feb/March/April</b>	Ask for Letters of Evaluation (give letter-writers at least 1-month to compose) Write Personal Statement
<b>April/May/June</b>	Take MCAT
<b>May</b>	Begin completing AMCAS Application

## Summer

<b>June</b>	Submit AMCAS Application (submit early as possible—even if MCAT score or LOEs are not received)
<b>June/July</b>	Prepare for Secondary Applications (look online for previous year's questions)
<b>July/August</b>	Complete Secondary Applications (within 2 weeks of receiving each application)

## Senior Year

<b>Fall</b>	Interview (beginning late August/early September through Spring) Shadow/Volunteer/Research
<b>Spring</b>	Graduate



# 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

The following guide provides examples of how courses are often categorized. Please select course classifications based on the primary content of the course.

In the case of interdisciplinary courses, where two or more subject matters are combined into one course, refer to the description of the course on your school's website or consult with your Pre-health Advisor to choose the most appropriate course classification.

### Biology (BIOL)

- Anatomy
- Biology
- Biophysics
- Biotechnology
- Botany
- Cell Biology
- Ecology
- Entomology
- Genetics
- Histology
- Immunology
- Microbiology
- Molecular Biology
- Neuroscience
- 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
- Human Development
- Physical Education (Except for sports 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 Language(s) & Literature
- 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
- Chiropractic
- Dentistry
- Hearing & Speech Studies
- Hospital Administration
- Kinesiology
- Nursing
- Nutrition
- Occupational Therapy
- Optometry
- Osteopathy
- Physical Therapy
- Physician Assistant

- Public Health
- Pharmacology & Pharmacy
- Sports Medicine
- Veterinary Medicine

### History (HIST)

- History

### Natural & Physical Sciences (NPSC)

- Agriculture
- Animal & Avian Sciences
- Environmental Science & Policy
- Forestry
- Geography
- Geology
- Horticulture
- Landscape Architecture
- Meteorology
- Natural Resources
- Oceanography

### Other (OTHR)

(All courses that do not fit appropriately in another classification)

- Architecture
- Library Science
- Military Science
- Sports (tennis, 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 (85<sup>th</sup> 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 experience.
- 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 the you well enough to speak positively on the 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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