



UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA
Pre-Health Advising Office

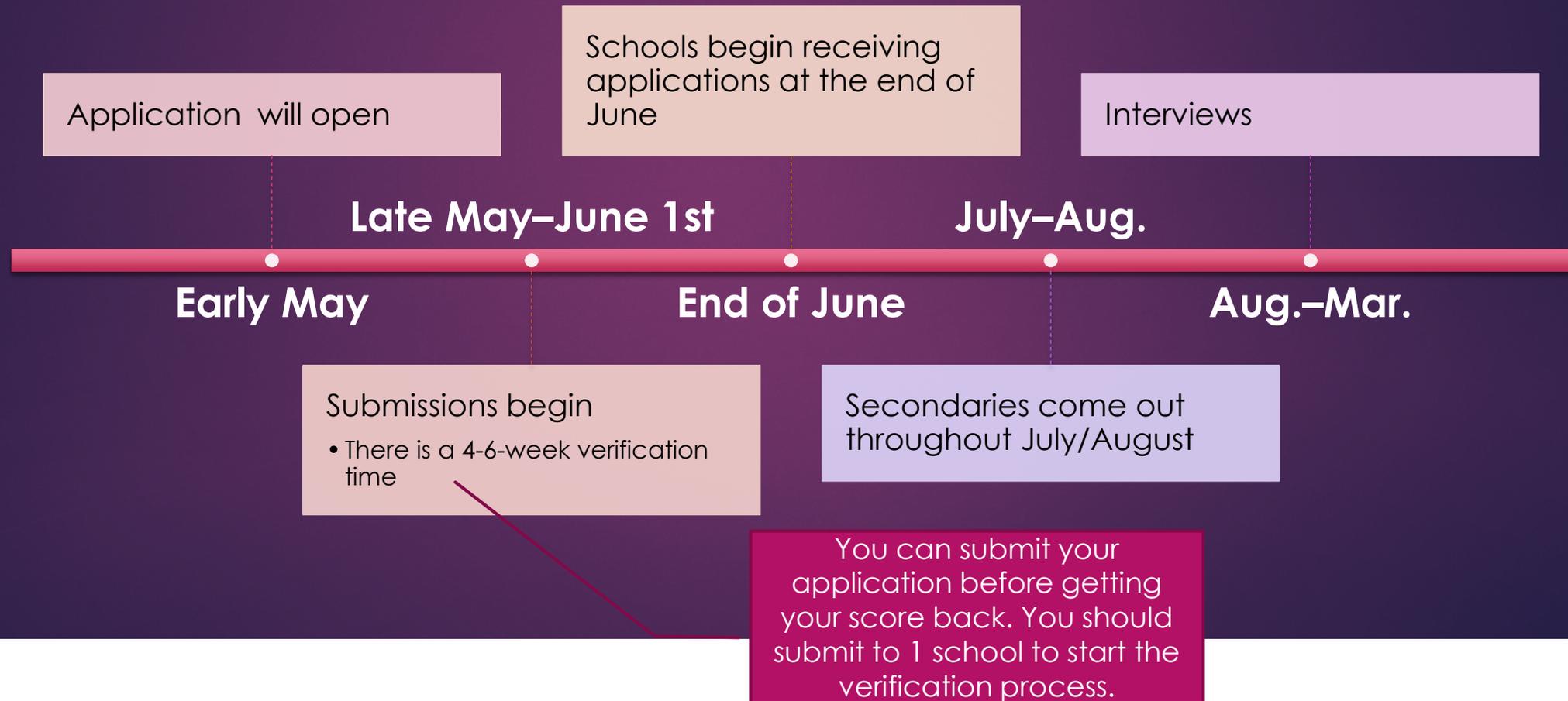
Application 101

JABARI ROBINSON

Workshop Overview

- GENERAL APPLICATION
TIMELINE
- PIECES OF APPLICATION
 - Preparing pieces of
Application

Application Timeline



Application Timeline

- ▶ Applications can be submitted with having your official MCAT score
 - ▶ There are several lag times in the beginning of the application and you run the risk of pushing your self further and further back in the application pool by waiting to submit your application
 - ▶ Submit to at least 1 school to begin verification process (this only looks at coursework and transcripts)
 - ▶ Most applicants will have their MCAT score back before medical schools get their application (taking the MCAT in May) or shortly afterwards (taking MCAT in early July)
- ▶ I highly encourage doing this method so that medical schools are not getting your application late.

Medical Schools Application Systems

- ▶ Allopathic (MD) medical schools are mostly through AMCAS
- ▶ Osteopathic (DO) medical schools are mostly through AACOMAS
- ▶ Any public MD or DO medical schools in Texas will go through TMDSAS
 - ▶ This is heavily weighted for Texas residents
 - ▶ They require 3 essays: Personal Characteristics: Motivation for Medicine: and Optional (covers anything not mentioned)
- ▶ They all follow the same timeline mostly

Sections of the Application



Primary Application



Secondary Application



CASPer Test



Interviews

Primary Application

Personal Statement

Work and Activities

MCAT

School Selection

Letters of Recommendation

Coursework and Transcripts

Personal Statement

- ▶ The goal of the personal statement is to talk about who you are and why medicine.
- ▶ 5,300 characters including spaces
- ▶ Think of 3-4 things you want medical schools to know about you and why medicine
 - ▶ Talk about your why through the 3-4 aspects.
- ▶ Reflect on your story
- ▶ Use talk-to text
- ▶ Start in the middle

Work & Activities

- ▶ Basically your resume
- ▶ Can have up to 15 activities (by no means do you have to have all 15 spots filled)
- ▶ Start with the RMA documents on the PPAO website
- ▶ This is meant to show all the work you have been doing in college outside of coursework
- ▶ 700 Character description: What is the activity, what did you do, what is something that you learned.
 - ▶ Three activities can be marked as most meaningful: additionally 1,325 characters (why is this so impactful)

MCAT

- ▶ Prep Course v. Self-study
 - ▶ Reflect on the way you learn best. Prep courses provide structure and accountability
 - ▶ Utilize AAMC materials-they create the MCAT
- ▶ Applicants study on average 300-350 hours: I suggest planning for 375-400 hours (life happens)
- ▶ Do practice problems and test. Suggested applicants do at least 5-6 full-length practice test
- ▶ Registration begins in October for the Jan.-June dates; February for July-Sept. dates
- ▶ The majority of applicants will take the MCAT in May or Early June

You can submit your application before getting your score back. You should submit to 1 school to start the verification process

MCAT Resources

- ▶ AAMC: Prep materials and practice problems/test; guides to create plans; Kahn Academy resources
- ▶ Kaplan: Prep course and materials; practice tests
- ▶ Princeton Review: Prep course and materials; practice tests
- ▶ Exam Krackers: Prep materials; practice tests
- ▶ Next Step: Prep materials; practice tests
- ▶ U World: Practice problems
- ▶ Anki cards: Flashcards
- ▶ MCAT Professors: Prep course and materials; practice tests
- ▶ MedBros YouTube Channel-Tips and tricks on MCAT and Application; Day in the Life
- ▶ Leah4Sci YouTube Channel-Organic Chem help

School Selection

Don't Worry about MCAT and Metrics At First

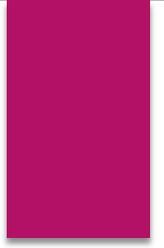
- Look at the location, curriculum, programming, culture of the school, etc. to make an initial list (25-30 schools) with a wide range of MCAT scores
- Use this list to determine where you should aim for your MCAT (510-515 is a good range to be in for most schools)
- As you get closer to submitting application, whittle this down to about 15-20 schools



Once you have your official score you can pick the exact schools you want to apply to based on your initial parameters and your competitiveness based on metrics

- Look at the 25th-75th percentile ranking on MCAT and GPAs for medical school on MSAR

Letters of Recommendation





Who should I ask?

- ▶ Each medical school will give you a list of requirements
- ▶ Medical Schools Expect:
 - Minimum of three letters.
 - **Two letters from hard science faculty** who have instructed you in a course. *Research mentors do not necessarily count, but commonly do. Be sure you read what the school is looking for.*
 - **One from an MD or DO** that you have shadowed or otherwise worked with.
 - Supplemental letters can come from other faculty, volunteer coordinators, employers, etc.
 - ❖ These letters should add something new to your application, and should be outstanding. Don't include lukewarm or redundant letters just to inflate numbers.
 - 10 letters max for the AMCAS and 6 in AACOMAS. --There is such a thing as overkill.
 - The Pre-Health Advising Office does *not* write or submit letters on your behalf.

What Medical Schools Expect in the Letter

- ▶ Evaluation of your skills and traits that speak to your ability to succeed in medical school and become a competent physician.
- ▶ When asking for letters, think of which skills each of your letter writers can highlight.
 - ▶ Who can discuss your ability to work on a team and your leadership skills? (Volunteer coordinator, coach, etc.)
 - ▶ Who can discuss your thinking and reasoning skills and/or your science competencies? (Research mentor, science professor who has taught you in a course, etc.)
 - ▶ Who can speak to your capacity for improvement or resiliency? –Don't shy away from those who can attest to your grit.
- ▶ Letters should be signed by the letter writer and on letterhead!

What about the Committee Letter

- ▶ As of January 2016, the Pre-Professional Advising Office will no longer serve as a repository/submission service for letters of evaluation to medical school. Additionally, UGA does not offer committee letters. Due to our large student population, we would be unable to provide each medical school applicant with a quality letter.



When do I ask?

- ▶ The sooner the better.
 - Aim for mid-February
 - Give your evaluators at least a month to compose the letter. Be mindful that not everyone sticks around after finals season in May and that faculty will be receiving multiple letter requests.
 - Are you going to stay in touch with this person?
 - If not, consider asking for the recommendation immediately and investing in Interfolio.
 - Many schools require letters to be current (within the last year).



How do I ask?

- ▶ How you approach an evaluator will vary depending on the nature and depth of the relationship.
- ▶ Good Practice:
 - Ask for a positive letter of evaluation in person. Be polite and professional. If you must reach out via e-mail first, ask to meet to discuss the possibility of them writing a letter.
 - Have a copy of your resume and a competent draft of your personal statement ready to give them when you meet.
 - Be clear about what the letter expectations are and include our [Guidelines for Letter Writers](#).
 - Let your evaluator know your timeline and also explain how they will submit the letter.
- ▶ Remember!: You are asking them for their time and effort. Put in the work on your end.



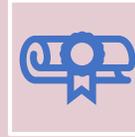
But all my science classes are large lectures...

- ▶ Because the pre-requisite science courses at UGA are large lecture classes, students must make a conscious effort to connect with the faculty.
 - Don't worry about it seeming transactional.
 - Sit in the front of the room if possible. Do not play on your phone/laptop in class or otherwise make yourself look unprofessional or disinterested.
 - Be engaged. Speak up when appropriate, ask questions and put visible effort into group or solo activities.
 - Try to attend office hours or speak with the professor before or after class.
 - They are people too! It doesn't all have to be about the science.
- ▶ When asking for the letter, in addition to giving your evaluator a resume and personal statement, also give them the opportunity to interview you and leave the door open for them to reach out with questions.

How do I submit letters?

- ▶ Letters for MD programs will ALWAYS be submitted to the schools through the AMCAS Letter Writer Service.
- ▶ Letters for DO programs will ALWAYS be submitted to the schools through AACOMAS.
- ▶ Your letter writers can submit their letters directly into your application or use a third party-site called Interfolio (recommended, but necessary to use)

Coursework and Transcript

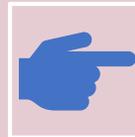


You will input your coursework into your application, plus submit your transcripts.



Transcripts are needed from every school you've attended

This includes dual enrollment and transient coursework



You wouldn't do this portion until application opens in May



Need to wait until Spring grades are posted before submitting transcripts

Secondary Application



This will be school specific and generally looks at how you fit into the mission of the school



Good time to update the school on new experiences obtained or planned since submitting primaries



Generally will get them shortly after schools get your primary (July/August)



Wants to submit within 2-3 weeks typically

Secondary Application

- ▶ There is an archive of secondaries from most schools over several years listed on student doctor network
 - ▶ Suggest prewriting response while waiting for application to verify and be sent to schools
 - ▶ Most schools ask the same questions, so you can write general responses initially and edit them to fit the specific schools once you get them
 - ▶ Typically 500 word or character limits. Some are smaller, and some are much longer
- ▶ Want to get these back within 2-3 weeks

CASPer Test



A part of the secondary process

About \$12 to take and \$12 to send to each school



Take at some point in the summer (ideally by early July)



Situational Judgement Test-looking at how you handle ethical and situational scenarios



Takes 3 weeks for scores to return-sent directly to medical schools and you won't see them

Interview

- ▶ Early Decision Interviews start mid August; regular decision interviews start early September and go through March (most schools try to end interviews by early to mid-February)
- ▶ Types of Interviews:
 - ▶ Traditional 1-on-1
 - ▶ Can be open or closed file
 - ▶ MMI (Multiple Mini Interview)
 - ▶ Group
- ▶ Practice with friends, Career Center, Big Interview, and PPAO
 - ▶ Look up ethical questions and situational questions
- ▶ Interviews are meant to show admissions committee who you are in person (its easier to sell yourself on paper than in person)
 - ▶ This is a time to show those soft skills

Tips to help prepare application

- ▶ Start Personal Statement and Work and Activities...Now (*winter break is another good time to get a lot of things on paper*).
 - ▶ Working on this now will alleviate stress later. The point of the RMA documents to work on these pieces over time so you can copy paste right into the application
- ▶ Reflect on your experiences, and don't count anything out
- ▶ Planning is key! This is not a process you can do on a whim.
- ▶ Set up another email account specifically for your medical school applications -one that you will actually check!

You can set an appointment with me through
SAGE (3rd years and above)

Walk-Ins:

Mondays from 9-10 am & Wednesdays from 2-
3 pm

JABARI ROBINSON

JABARI.ROBINSON@UGA.EDU

Questions?

