

# Preparing for Medical School



## Our Mission

The mission of The Ohio State University Medical Center is to improve people's lives through innovation in research, education and patient care. The OSU College of Medicine aims to prepare students for the practice of medicine now and in the future. We look for academically capable students who are ready to tackle the challenges of a rigorous curriculum and who are caring, humanistic and compassionate in delivering the medical care they are trained to provide. Successful students are self-directed learners, innovative and forward thinking.

## Academic Coursework

Students interested in entering medical school should seek courses that will help develop skills in independent thinking and decision-making. Courses that demand active involvement in research and independent study projects help to foster these attributes. Students planning to apply to medical school may major in any subject they choose but must complete the following prerequisite courses prior to enrollment.

### Required Premedical Coursework

**Anatomy:** One quarter/semester-long introductory or high-level course in anatomy (human anatomy is preferred but not required; other options will be considered). For more information, visit our website at [medicine.osu.edu/students/admissions](http://medicine.osu.edu/students/admissions).

- **Biology:** One year
- **General Chemistry:** One year that consists of a general chemistry series, including laboratory work (incorporating both quantitative and qualitative analysis)
- **Biochemistry:** One quarter/semester-long introductory or higher-level course

- **Organic Chemistry:** One year of an organic chemistry series that includes a laboratory experience
- **Physics:** One year with a laboratory experience.

### Recommended Premedical Coursework

- **Writing/speech:** Courses that emphasize written and verbal communication. Applicants are required to demonstrate spoken, auditory, reading and writing proficiency in the English language.
- **Social sciences:** Courses such as history, economics, anthropology, psychology, etc.
- **Humanities:** Courses in art, music, drama, literature, languages, etc.
- **Diversity:** Courses that focus on the culture, history and/or current circumstances of different populations.
- **Ethics:** Courses that address questions and issues related to morality and moral behavior that may include meta-ethics, normative ethics, applied ethics, moral psychology, descriptive ethics, etc.

## Presenting a Competitive Application

The goal of Ohio State's College of Medicine is to select students who are capable and engaged in order to form a balanced, diverse group capable of excelling in both the art and the science of medicine. A diverse student body promotes an atmosphere of creativity, experimentation and discussion that is conducive to learning. An understanding and appreciation for a variety of experiences and perspectives prepares students to care for patients from any racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic background.

Along with excellent grades and test scores, applicants are judged on how well they can balance outside activities and responsibilities with schoolwork as an indicator of their ability to deal with the rigors of life as a physician. Commitment to community service and ethical behavior along with compassion, leadership ability and communication skills are characteristics we seek in our future physicians.

**Clinical Experience**—Applicants are expected to spend enough time in a clinical setting to understand the challenges and demands of the lifestyle they will encounter as physicians. Experience with patient exposure can be gained through volunteer or work in hospitals, emergency rooms, homeless clinics or extended care facilities.

**Research**—Research is the foundation of medical knowledge. We consider participation in research activities to be an important part of the preparation for medical school. Physicians depend on medical literature to remain current in their fields. Research experience may be in any discipline and performed at any site. Applicants should be able to describe their projects, the questions being asked in the research, and their role in the conduct of the research. Research performed as part of a course requirement or a senior thesis project is acceptable.

**Leadership Ability**—Dedication, determination, decision making and communication skills, teamwork and a willingness to contribute to the welfare of others are characteristics of effective leaders—and are also indicators of one's ability to succeed in medicine. Leadership experience can be gained in a variety of ways, including participation in work, church, community or school organizations.

**Community/Volunteer Service**—The medical profession is strongly oriented to serving the community. Applicants should demonstrate a commitment to the community by involving themselves in service and volunteer activities.

**Extracurricular Activities**—The Admissions Committee is interested in how applicants deal with the demands of their lives outside the classroom. Their ability to juggle these challenges is a strong indicator of how well they will handle responsibilities, stress and the demands of medical school.

## The Application Process

Admission to the College of Medicine is highly competitive, based on academic success, performance on the Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT), participation in health-related experiences, letters of recommendation and a personal interview.

**Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT)**—The MCAT is a standardized test required for admission to Ohio State's medical school. MCAT scores and grades are carefully scrutinized and are an important part of the application process. For the class entering medical school in 2012, scores will be accepted from tests taken in 2011, 2010, and 2009. For more information regarding the MCAT, visit the following website: [www.aamc.org](http://www.aamc.org), e-mail [mcats\\_reg@act.org](mailto:mcats_reg@act.org), or call (319) 337-1357.

## Application Timeline

June 1	Applications may be submitted to AMCAS.
November 1 at 12:00 midnight EST	Deadline for all applications and transcripts to be received by AMCAS.
January 1 at 12:00 midnight EST	Deadline for receipt of secondary application.
Reference Letters	Must be available through AMCAS prior to a scheduled interview.
September–March	On-campus interviews
Application Status and Decision	Notification of application status is available to applicants on their status page. Admission decisions are available on their status page within two weeks of their interview date.

**Grade Point Average (GPA)**—Grades are considered in the context of difficulty and rigor of the applicant’s major. The applicant’s GPA will be compared to the average GPA of students accepted into the most recent class.

### American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS)

**Application**—The Ohio State University College of Medicine utilizes the AMCAS service. AMCAS is a non-profit, centralized application processing service only available to applicants entering their first year at participating medical schools.

### Secondary Materials

Applicants who designate The Ohio State University on the electronic AMCAS application will receive an e-mail from the College of Medicine providing instructions for accessing their status page and secondary application.

- **Application fee—\$80:** Application fees are paid electronically, upon submission of application.

- **Secondary Application Essays:** In addition to the personal comments provided on the AMCAS application, we require responses to additional essay questions. The personal comments from your AMCAS application will not be accepted as part of your secondary materials.

- **Letters of Recommendation:** Applicants should request letters from professors, supervisors or other individuals who know them well and can accurately comment on their qualifications for medical school. It is important that those who write the letters clearly indicate whether they taught or supervised the applicant and the length of time they have known him or her. The College of Medicine requires two Academic and two Professional Experience letters. The letters of recommendation are only received through the AMCAS letter service. More information about this process is available at: [www.aamc.org/students/amcas/faq/amcasletters.htm](http://www.aamc.org/students/amcas/faq/amcasletters.htm)

- **Academic Letters:** Submit two (2) letters from professors in any courses who have taught the applicant and assigned a grade for the credit in the course. A premedical committee composite letter satisfies this requirement.

MD/PhD applicants must submit two (2) additional reference letters describing their research experience and qualifications.

- **Professional Experience Letters:** Applicants need to submit two Professional Experience letters from work supervisors and/or managers detailing their professional experience and accommodations that make them a quality candidate to pursue medical school.
- **Personal Letters:** It is strongly recommended that applicants provide additional letters from individuals outside the classroom setting. For example: community and volunteer service, clinical and/or research experience.
- **Interviews—**Each applicant will have two (2) interviews—one with a faculty member and one with a current medical student. The primary purpose of the interview is to identify those who will be able to deal compassionately and effectively with patients. Interviewers will explore the candidate’s motivation for seeking a medical degree, understanding of the medical profession, problem solving skills, understanding of medical ethics and interpersonal skills.

## Selection Process

Applicants interviewed will be presented to the Admissions Committee composed of OSU College of Medicine faculty, administration and community physicians for a Committee vote at the end of each interview day. Applicants are notified of the Committee decision through their status page within two weeks after the interview date.

**Early Decision Program—**The Application deadline for consideration is August 1.

**Deferment—**Acceptances may be deferred for one year.

**Alternate Positions—**Applicants on the alternate list may be offered acceptance up to and including the first day of school. Applicants can withdraw from the alternate list by notifying the College of Medicine Office of Admissions in writing.

**Reapplying—**Each year the number of qualified applicants exceeds the number of available positions. This results in a large number of applicants who will reapply to medical school. We recommend that applicants meet with their premedical advisor for suggestions and recommendations to make their medical school applications more competitive. For tips on reapplying, visit our web site at [medicine.osu.edu/students/admissions/reapplicantAdvice/Pages/index.aspx](http://medicine.osu.edu/students/admissions/reapplicantAdvice/Pages/index.aspx).

We recommend that applicants make significant changes in more than one area and update their personal statements before reapplying. Reference letters must be submitted to the AMCAS Letter Service each application year. Letters from previous applications are NOT transferred from one application year to the next. Letters written in support of the current application carry more influence with the Admissions Committee than do letters written in previous years for prior applications. One or two new letters submitted on your behalf are expected. Application may be made for three consecutive years. The Admissions Committee will not consider applicants who have been dismissed, are on probation, on hold, or who are under suspension at another medical school.

**Advanced Standing Transfers—**Transfer positions to the College of Medicine are considered for available positions in the third year class. At Ohio State, students can begin their third-year clerkships only after they have passed Step 1 of the USMLE. Advanced Standing Transfers are rare and are based upon space available in the class,

compelling and compassionate reasons put forth by the applicant and their ability to meet the College's cognitive and non-cognitive requirements. To receive consideration, students must be in good standing and currently enrolled in another LCME-accredited MD-granting institution in the United States.

The application deadline for receipt of advanced standing transfer applications is March 15.

Students who meet these preliminary requirements may contact the College of Medicine Office of Admissions to request an application and complete instructions.

## Acceptance

Once an applicant has received an offer of acceptance, he or she will have two weeks to accept or decline the offer of a position in our incoming class. The acceptance form and fee must be returned by May 15. The College of Medicine requires an official transcript from every college or university attended with degree(s) posted upon enrollment.

Applicants are required to demonstrate spoken, auditory, reading and writing proficiency in the English language. Applicants who indicate that English is their second language or have been recommended for assessment after interview by the Admissions Committee may be given a one-year deferred admission in order to establish competency through appropriate English course work. If competency is not reached after one year, the applicant will be removed from consideration for admission.

The College of Medicine is committed to providing the public with well-trained physicians who possess high moral character and standards. The College requires

a criminal background check and drug testing prior to matriculation. The purpose of this policy is to assist all our students in becoming licensed physicians, to protect property and to help ensure a safe environment for patients, employees, visitors and the general public. Background checks and drug testing will be performed only after the applicant has been accepted into the College of Medicine.

## Contact Information

Office of Admissions  
The Ohio State University  
College of Medicine  
155D Meiling Hall  
370 West 9th Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43210  
(614) 292-7137  
email: [medicine@osu.edu](mailto:medicine@osu.edu)  
website: [medicine.osu.edu/students/admissions/](http://medicine.osu.edu/students/admissions/)

## Some Useful Links

[www.aamc.org](http://www.aamc.org)  
[www.humanism-in-medicine.org](http://www.humanism-in-medicine.org)  
[mdapplicants.com](http://mdapplicants.com)  
[www.studentdoctor.net](http://www.studentdoctor.net)

**Student Handbook:** [medicine.osu.edu/students/life/resources/handbook/Pages/index.aspx](http://medicine.osu.edu/students/life/resources/handbook/Pages/index.aspx)

**Admissions Office**

155D Meiling Hall  
370 W. 9th Avenue  
Columbus, Ohio 43210

**medicine@osu.edu**

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