Preparing for Medical School

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
Ohio State offers both a four-year and a three-year MD program. The choice depends on your interests and goals.

Students who are interested in a career in family medicine may wish to consider the three-year OSU Primary Care Track as an option. The core curricular objectives of both the three-year and the four-year program are identical, integrating basic and clinical sciences throughout the length of the program.

At Ohio State, you will find the career path for you.

For information about the three-year Primary Care Track, visit http://medicine.osu.edu/admissions/md/3-year-track.

Making it in medical school can be challenging. The competition is stiff and the curriculum rigorous. But you can be a front-runner by knowing what to do to prepare for successful candidacy.

The information in this booklet will explain to you how to prepare for medical school—what undergraduate courses you should take, what grade point average and MCAT score to strive for, how to present a competitive application, the importance of community service and leadership experience, how to apply, and much more.

When you are accepted as an Ohio State University College of Medicine student, you are taking your first step toward an exciting and rewarding career in medicine.

Academic Coursework

To prepare for medical school, you should seek courses that will help you develop skills in independent thinking and decision-making. Courses that demand active involvement in research and independent study projects help to foster these attributes. You may major in any subject you choose, but you must complete the prerequisite courses listed below prior to enrollment.

Required Premedical Coursework

- Biochemistry: One semester/quarter-long introductory or higher-level course
- Biology: One year
- General chemistry: One year that consists of a general chemistry series, including laboratory work (incorporating both quantitative and qualitative analysis)
- Organic Chemistry: One year of an organic chemistry series that includes one year of a lab experience or equivalent.
- Physics: One year with a laboratory experience

Recommended Premedical Coursework

- Anatomy: One semester/quarter-long introductory or high-level course in anatomy.
- 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 psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics, 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, to form a balanced, diverse group able to excel in both the art and science of medicine. A diverse student body promotes an atmosphere of creativity, experimentation and discussion that is conducive to learning. An understanding of and appreciation for a variety of experiences and perspectives prepares students to care for patients from any racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic background.

Along with your grades and test scores, you will be judged on how well you can balance outside activities and responsibilities with schoolwork as an indicator of your 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 medical students.

Healthcare-related experience— As a medical school candidate, you are expected to spend enough time in a clinical setting to understand the challenges and demands of the lifestyle you will encounter as a physician. Experience with patient exposure can be gained through volunteer or work in hospitals, emergency rooms, homeless clinics or extended care facilities. Please note that physician shadowing, while valuable, is only one way for applicants to gain experience.

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

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. As a future physician, you will depend on medical literature to remain current in your field. Research experience may be in any discipline and performed at any site. You should be able to describe your projects, the questions being asked in the research, and your 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, communication skills, teamwork and a willingness to contribute to the welfare of others are characteristics of effective leaders. They 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.

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

Tips for Success

Clinical Experience: Spend time in a clinical setting to understand the challenges and demands of the lifestyle you will encounter as a physician.

Community/Volunteer Service: Demonstrate a commitment to the community by involving yourself in service and volunteer activities.

Research: Engage in research activities to broaden your understanding of the foundations of medical knowledge and to stay abreast of the current medical literature.

Leadership: Participate in work, church, community or school organizations to gain experience in becoming an effective leader.
The Application Process

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

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

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 considered and are an important part of the application process. For the class entering medical school in 2018, scores will be accepted from tests taken January 2014 through September 2017. The MCAT exam has undergone a major revision in 2015 to keep pace with the changes in medicine. More information is available at aamc.org/students/applying/mcat.

Grade Point Average (GPA)—Grades are considered in the context of difficulty and rigor of the applicant’s major.

Letters of Evaluation—You should request letters of evaluation from professors, supervisors, or other individuals whom know you well and can accurately comment on your qualifications for medical school. It is important that those who write the letters clearly indicate whether they taught or supervised you and the length of time they have known you. The letters of evaluation are only received through the AMCAS letter service. More information about this process is available at: https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/section-6-letters-evaluation/

• Academic Letters: The College of Medicine requires two academic letters from professors who have taught you and assigned a grade for credit in the course. One letter should come from a professor who taught you in a science course. A premedical committee composite letter satisfies this requirement. MD/PhD applicants must submit two additional evaluation letters describing your research experience and qualifications.

• Personal/Professional Experience Letters: It is strongly recommended that you provide additional letters from individuals outside the classroom setting, such as, supervisors and/or managers, or individuals from community and volunteer service, clinical and/or research experience.

Secondary Application
If you designate The Ohio State University on the electronic AMCAS application, you will receive an e-mail providing instructions for accessing your status page and secondary application.

• Application fee—$80: Application fees are paid electronically, upon submission of the secondary application.

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

OSU Primary Care Track
Applicants to the three-year Primary Care Track (OSU-PCT) must first designate The Ohio State University on the electronic AMCAS application and select “Regular MD” as the application type. OSU-PCT applicants are not permitted to apply to both the standard, four-year MD program AND the Primary Care Track; applicants may choose only one of these programs.

Interested students must contact the College of Medicine at threeyeartrack@osumc.edu for instructions on how to apply to the OSU-PCT.
Selection Process

**Interviews**—You will have two (2) interviews—one with a faculty member and one with a current medical student or a resident physician. The primary purpose of the interview is to identify individuals 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.

Applicants who are interviewed will be presented to the Admissions Committee, comprising OSU College of Medicine faculty, medical students, resident physicians and community physicians. You will be notified of the committee’s decision through your status page within approximately two weeks after the interview date.

**Early Decision Program**—Applying through the Early Decision Program may be an option, if you are certain you wish to attend medical school at Ohio State. Choosing this option has the advantage of hastening the application process; however, it is also a binding agreement that you will not apply to other medical schools while your application is under review, and further, that you will accept Ohio State’s offer of admittance, should an offer be made. The Early Decision Program application deadline for 2016-2017 cycle is August 1.

**Wait List**—Applicants on the college’s wait list may be offered acceptance up to and including the first day of school. You may withdraw from the wait 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. For tips on reapplying, visit medicine.osu.edu/admissions/md/tips-and-advice. We recommend that you make significant changes in more than one area and update your 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.

**Application Timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 1</td>
<td>Applications may be submitted to AMCAS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1 at 12:00 midnight EST</td>
<td>Deadline for all applications and transcripts to be received by AMCAS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 15 at 12:00 midnight EST</td>
<td>Deadline for receipt of secondary application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Letters</td>
<td>Must be available through AMCAS prior to a scheduled interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September–March</td>
<td>On-campus interviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Status and Decision</td>
<td>Notification of application status is available to applicants on their status page within two weeks of their interview date.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transfer Policy
Due to implementation of the new curriculum, the College of Medicine no longer offers the Advance Standing Program, effective with the 2012-2013 academic year.

Acceptance
The College of Medicine operates on a rolling admission cycle, where the Admissions Committee makes decisions every two weeks after Oct. 15, until the end of the cycle. Applicants who are not selected for admission remain in consideration for all subsequent Admissions Committee meetings until April.

Accepted students are asked to pay a $25 acceptance fee. The deadline for students to pay the fee or make their final decision is April 30. An official transcript is required after acceptance 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. If you indicate that English is your second language or have been recommended for assessment after interview by the Admissions Committee, you 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, you 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.

Some Useful Links
aamc.org
http://www.gold-foundation.org
Follow us on twitter.com/ohiostatemed

Application Checklist
☐ Prerequisite Courses
General Chemistry with lab, Organic Chemistry with lab, Biochemistry, Physics with lab, Biology
☐ Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT)
☐ Recommendation Letters (two academic required)
☐ Official Transcripts
☐ Secondary Application
Contact Information
Office of Admissions
The Ohio State University
College of Medicine
155D Meiling Hall
370 W. 9th Ave.
Columbus, OH 43210
614-292-7137
medicine@osu.edu
medicine.osu.edu/admissions