Preparing for Medical School

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
Our Mission

The mission of The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center is to improve people’s lives through innovation in research, education and patient care. Ohio State’s 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

To prepare you 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**

- **Anatomy:** One semester/quarter-long introductory or high-level course in anatomy. For more information, visit our website at 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 semester/quarter-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 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 in order 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 excellent 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...
behaviour, along with compassion, leadership ability and communication skills, are characteristics we seek in our future medical students.

**Clinical 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.

**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.

**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, 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 service. 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 2015, scores will be accepted from tests taken in January 2010 through September 2014. The MCAT exam is changing in 2015 to keep pace with the changes in medicine. More information is available at aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/mcat2015.

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

**Letters of Recommendation:** You should request letters of recommendation from professors, supervisors or other individuals who 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 College of Medicine requires two academic letters, one of which should be from a professor who taught you in a science course. The letters of recommendation are only received through the AMCAS letter service. More information about this process is available at: aamc.org/students/amcas/faq/amcasletters.htm

- **Academic Letters:** You should submit two (2) letters from professors who have taught you and assigned a grade for 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.
• 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.

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, which is composed of 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 2014-2015 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 our web site at 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. The Admissions Committee will not consider applicants who have been dismissed, are on probation, or on hold, or who are under suspension at another medical school.

Transfer Policy
Due to implementation of the new curriculum, the College of Medicine will not offer the Advance Standing Program beginning 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. 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.

Deferral
If so desired, you may defer acceptance for one year after receiving approval by the committee.
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
e-mail: medicine@osu.edu
website: medicine.osu.edu/students/admissions/

Some Useful Links
aamc.org
humanism-in-medicine.org mdapplicants.com
studentdoctor.net

Student Handbook: medicine.osu.edu/students/life/
resources/handbook/Pages/index.aspx

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