A Few Words From the Office of Admissions and Records...

The path to medical school is a long one. Sometimes it’s a fairly direct path, and at other times it may be a bit winding. At The Ohio State University Medical Center, our stated mission is to improve people’s lives through innovation in research, education and patient care. Relative to that overarching focus, The College of Medicine aims to prepare our students for the practice of medicine now and for the future. Some of the most rewarding aspects of the medical profession include having the opportunity to serve patients and their families, pursue life-long learning, and be intellectually challenged on a regular basis. When selecting students to enter our medical school, 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 that they are trained to provide.

In this guide, we hope to help you, the applicant, understand the admissions process at Ohio State a little better. Many resources are available, and we encourage you to take advantage of them. These resources include your own pre-medical advisor and the many printed books and web sites that exist.

It’s a long process, but it’s important to remember to enjoy the journey. Take time during the process to reflect on that path and why you’ve stepped upon it.

The Humanistic Touch

“Ideals are like stars; you will not succeed in touching them with your hands. But like the seafaring man on the desert of waters, you choose them as your guides, and following them you will reach your destiny.”

Carl Schurz
How to Prepare for Medical School at Ohio State

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

Undergraduate Majors – The College of Medicine does not recommend or require any specific undergraduate academic major. We recommend that students choose a major field for which they have enthusiasm and interest.

Required Premedical Coursework – The following coursework is required prior to matriculation to medical school. Applicants are strongly encouraged to complete the prerequisite requirements at a fully accredited four-year institution. One year is the equivalent of three quarters or two semesters of coursework.

• Biology: One (1) year.

• General Chemistry: One (1) year that consists of a general chemistry series including laboratory (incorporating both quantitative and qualitative analysis).

• Organic Chemistry: One (1) year of an organic chemistry series that includes a laboratory.

• Physics: One (1) year with a laboratory.

Recommended Premedical Coursework – The following coursework is recommended to provide a well-rounded undergraduate education.

• Writing/Speech: Courses that emphasize written and/or verbal communication. Applicants are required to demonstrate spoken, auditory, reading, and writing proficiency of the English language. Applicants who indicate that English is their second language or English is not the primary language spoken in their home are strongly encouraged to take English language coursework to establish competency. Premedical advisors may recommend appropriate undergraduate coursework.

• Social Sciences: Courses such as history, economics, anthropology, psychology, etc.

• Humanities: Courses in art, music, drama, literature, languages, etc.

• Diversity/Ethics: Courses that focus on the culture, history and/or current circumstances of different populations.

Courses in biochemistry, mathematics, statistics, physiology, anatomy, human behavior, and computer literacy are also recommended, but are not required.

Applicants should seek out courses that will help develop skills in independent thinking and decision-making. Physicians need to be able to read and understand scientific literature. They must also communicate effectively and possess skills to express their thoughts and ideas. Courses that demand active involvement and activities such as research and independent study projects will foster these attributes. It is important to develop and demonstrate a commitment to lifelong learning.

Along with strong academic performance, the Admissions Committee seeks self-motivated and compassionate applicants. Students must embody high ethical standards, especially honesty and concern for others, and must be free of substance abuse, addictions and violent behaviors.

Applicants should contact the premedical advisor at their institution for assistance in planning the specific coursework that meets our requirements, expectations, and criteria.
Premedical Advisors – Premedical advisors are available on most college and university campuses to assist students and alumni in their preparation and application to medical school. Premedical advisors are familiar with the admissions requirements of most medical schools.

The Application Process

Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) – All applicants are required to take the MCAT within three years of their application. For the class entering medical school in 2008, scores will be accepted from tests taken in 2007, 2006, and 2005. To receive consideration for the current application cycle, the last month to take the MCAT is September of the year prior to intended matriculation. Although the MCAT is offered in January, first-time test taker scores will be received too late for consideration for that year’s entering class. Consideration will be given to applicants who have an interview date and elect to repeat the January test in an effort to improve previous scores. Information regarding the MCAT program may be obtained by visiting the following website at: www.aamc.org, by e-mailing mcat_reg@act.org, or calling (319)337-1357.

American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS) Application – The Ohio State University College of Medicine utilizes AMCAS. Information regarding AMCAS may be obtained by visiting the following website at: www.aamc.org or by email at amcas@aamc.org. Applications must be submitted to AMCAS between June 1 and November 1 at 12:00 Midnight, Eastern Standard Time.

Resident and Nonresident Applicants – Applicants are considered for the College of Medicine based on the competitiveness of their application regardless of state of residency.

Application Timeline

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<tr>
<th>June 1</th>
<th>Applications may be submitted to AMCAS.</th>
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<tr>
<td>November 1 at 12:00 midnight EST</td>
<td>Deadline for all applications and transcripts to be received by AMCAS.</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 Days</td>
<td>Secondary application must be received within 30 days from the date on the email requesting secondary application. Reference letters are not required within the 30-day time period.</td>
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<td>September - March</td>
<td>On-Campus Interviews</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application Status and Decisions</td>
<td>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.</td>
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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 to access the status page. Access to the secondary application is available through the status page. We ask that the secondary application be submitted within 30 days from the date of the email inviting the applicant to complete the secondary application.

Secondary materials to be submitted are:

- **Application fee – $60:** Application fees are paid electronically, upon submission of the application.

- **Secondary Application Essays:** In addition to the personal comments provided on the AMCAS application, we require responses to additional essay questions as part of the secondary materials. The personal comments from your AMCAS application will not be accepted as part of your secondary materials. Do not repeat information that is available elsewhere in your application.
• **Letters of Recommendation:** Letters of recommendation are a very important part of the application. Applicants should request letters from professors and supervisors who know them well and can accurately comment on their qualifications for medical school. It is important that those who write letters clearly indicate if they taught or supervised the applicant and the length of time they have known him or her. It is not in the applicant’s best interest to submit letters from relatives or family members. The College of Medicine requires two (2) letters that fulfill the following requirements. The letters of recommendation must be written on letterhead and submitted directly from the letter writer or from a reference letter service to the Admissions Office.

Applicants to the MD/PhD program are required to submit letters of recommendation on the Graduate School Reference Letter form available on the web.

• **Academic Letters:** Submit two (2) letters from professors in any course who have taught the applicant 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 Letters:** It is strongly recommended that applicants provide additional letters from individuals outside the classroom setting. For example:

1. Community and volunteer service: A letter describing the student’s role in providing service and the performance and duration of his or her volunteer service.

2. Clinical experience: A letter clearly stating the student’s role in patient exposure and/or physician shadowing as well as the performance and duration of his or her experience.

3. Research experience: A letter stating the student’s role in the research experience and the performance and duration of his or her research.

Letters written in support of the current application carry more influence with the Committee than do letters written in previous years for prior applications.

Letters of recommendation or evaluations are considered confidential unless the applicant specifically states he or she does not waive the right of access to such statements. It is the applicant’s responsibility to inform the letter writers whether the College of Medicine may receive and maintain the letters or evaluations in confidence.

**Applicants may use an electronic reference letter service or have letters sent to:**

Admissions Office  
College of Medicine  
The Ohio State University  
155D Meiling Hall  
370 West 9th Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43210
Presenting a Competitive Application

Our goal is to select the most capable students to attend our medical school and to have a balanced, but heterogeneous group that will excel in both the art and science of medicine. We recognize that a diverse student body promotes an atmosphere of creativity, experimentation and discussion that is conducive to learning. Exposure to a variety of perspectives and experiences prepares students to care for patients from all walks of life and from every segment of society.

MCAT scores and grades are carefully scrutinized and are an important part of the application process. We also consider the breadth and difficulty of coursework.

As important as grades and test scores are, by themselves they do not predict who will be successful in medical school. The demands of medical education and life as a physician are not for everyone. We consider how the applicant balances outside activities and responsibilities with schoolwork as an indicator of ability to deal with the rigors of life as a physician. The Admissions Committee is interested in motivation for attending medical school and understanding of the medical profession. Commitment to community service, ethical behavior, compassion, leadership ability and communication skills are important characteristics of physicians. Applications and interviews assist us in evaluating these qualities. We expect applicants to be courteous, respectful and professional at all times.

Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) – All applicants are required to take the MCAT within three years of their application. For the class entering medical school in 2008, scores will be accepted from tests taken in 2007, 2006, and 2005. MCAT scores are evaluated in comparison to the most recent entering medical school class. To receive consideration for the current application cycle, the last month to take the MCAT is September of the year prior to intended matriculation. Although the MCAT is offered in January, first-time test taker scores will be received too late for consideration for that year’s entering class. Consideration will be given to applicants who have an interview date and elect to repeat the January test in an effort to improve previous scores.

Grade Point Average (GPA) – We consider grades in the context of the rigor of the major and will take into account factors such as illness, hours worked during school and lack of access to a quality secondary education that may have depressed the applicant’s GPA. We are especially interested in the trend of grades. Applicant GPA is compared to the average GPA of students matriculating into the most recent class.

Physician Shadowing – Applicants should spend enough time with a physician(s) to understand the challenges, demands and lifestyle of a doctor. Shadowing a physician of any specialty through all the activities of an average day over a period of time will help develop your knowledge of the medical field.

Patient Exposure – It is important that the applicant be comfortable working with and around people who are ill. The patient exposure experience can be gained in a variety of ways. Many applicants volunteer or work in hospitals, emergency rooms, homeless clinics or extended care facilities and are actively involved in patient contact.

Leadership Ability – Dedication, determination, ability to make decisions and a willingness to contribute to the welfare of others are indicators of one’s ability to succeed in medicine. Individuals with these characteristics readily accept positions of leadership and are an asset to their community and profession. Leadership capacity can be demonstrated in a variety of ways such as positions in employment, church, community and school organizations including coaching, tutoring and mentoring.

Extracurricular Activities – The Admissions Committee is interested in how applicants deal with the demands of their lives outside of the classroom. This is a strong indicator of how well they handle responsibilities and deal with stressful situations. It also predicts how well they will handle the difficult demands of medical school.

Community/Volunteer Service – The medical profession is strongly oriented to service in the community. Applicants should demonstrate a commitment to the community by involving themselves in service and volunteer activities. Work performed in service learning courses and community service performed as part of employment is a good starting point.
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. Most physicians participate in research at some point in their careers. Research experience may be in any discipline and performed at any site. Applicants should be able to describe their project, the questions being asked and their role in the conduct of the research. Research performed as part of a course requirement or a senior thesis project is acceptable. More research experience is expected of MD/PhD applicants.

Review Process
Members of the Admissions Committee are drawn from College of Medicine faculty and administration and community physicians.

Interview Process
The primary purpose of the interview is to identify those who will be able to deal compassionately and effectively with patients. The interviewer will have reviewed the application file prior to the interview. 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. Each applicant will have two interviews - one with a faculty member and one with a current medical student.

Selection Process
Interviewers present applicants interviewed to the Admissions Committee for a Committee vote at the end of each interview day. Applicant GPA and MCAT are compared to the average of students matriculating into the most recent medical school class.

Applicants are notified of the Committee decision through their status page within two weeks after their interview. Decision categories are: accept, defer or no longer receiving consideration.

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 may withdraw from the alternate list by notifying the College of Medicine Admissions Office 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/or recommendations to make their medical school application more competitive. We recommend that applicants make significant changes in more than one area and update their personal statements before reapplying. Letters of recommendation from previous applications to our school may be transferred to new applications. At least one new reference is required of reapplicants. 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.

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 M. D. 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 Admissions Office to request an application form and complete instructions.

**Acceptances**

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 prior to matriculation. The College of Medicine requires an official transcript from every college or university attended with degree(s) posted.

Applicants are required to demonstrate spoken, auditory, reading, and writing proficiency of 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 coursework. If competency is not reached after one year, the applicant will be removed from consideration for admission.

The College of Medicine is committed to provide the public with well-trained physicians who possess the traits of high moral character and standards. The College of Medicine requires a criminal background check and drug testing prior to matriculation. The purpose of this policy is intended to assist all of our students in the goal of 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.

A health examination, proof of immunizations and health insurance are also required prior to matriculation.

The Medical Student Handbook sets student guidelines and discusses the College of Medicine’s Technical Standards for Admission, disciplinary process and associated due process procedures. The Student Handbook is available on the web at: http://medicine.osu.edu/studentsaffairs/5678.cfm

**Contact Information**

Admissions Office  
College of Medicine  
The Ohio State University  
155D Meiling Hall  
370 West 9th Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43210  
614-292-7137  
fax: 614-247-7959  
email: medicine@osu.edu  
web site: http://medicine.osu.edu

**Some Useful Links**

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