Navigating the Unknown

As we move into August and after over four months living during a global pandemic, students across the country are looking toward the fall and the start of another academic year, but what that year will look like is still TBD. Chances are, many of our interactions will continue to be remote or with physical distancing, and the likelihood of pre-health students gaining in-person experiences remains slim. This doesn't mean, however, that you can’t continue to learn, grow, and continue to prepare to be a competitive applicant!

Thinking beyond experiences

Extracurricular experiences are only part of what it takes to create a competitive professional school application. In addition to experiences, you will still need to maintain or strive to achieve academic excellence, and you still need to learn about the application and admissions process. In my experience, many students leave these items until just before they are ready to apply, which I believe is a mistake.

Understanding the admissions requirements at each school you hope to apply to is a must and should really start as soon as you determine that a particular career is right for you. Prerequisite course requirements, including types of courses and grading options that are accepted by each school, are just the first step.

(Continued on Page 2)
Moving beyond courses, you also need to determine the types and number of letters of
recommendation each program requires or recommends and admission tests applicants are
required to take. Going further, you also have to prepare your response to the question, "Why do
you want to come to our school?" This question will be asked, possibly worded a bit differently,
either as part of a secondary application essay question or asked during your admissions
interview. Either way, you have to have a good, genuine response! In order to do this, you have to
go beyond admissions requirements and learn what makes each school special, both
special/appealing to you and also what the school or program believes is special. Much of this
information can be found within each program's website, but it may take a little digging. Not only
do you need to know about each program, you also have to be able to articulate why you want to
pursue a particular health career.

Many students begin to explore their Why while preparing their personal statement essay for the
professional school application, but this really should begin to happen early in your pre-health
journey. Understanding your why can help to give you something to hold onto and work toward,
while also helping you to reflect on what drives you. Additionally, it can help you to push through
the obstacles and setbacks that you might face later. If you start drafting your personal statement
early, consider it to be a living document that changes as you learn more about yourself, about
your profession, about others, and about healthcare in general. If you’re looking for a resource to
get started, please visit the Application Info section of our website, and review the videos in the
Personal Statement section. This series of videos was created for Health Professions Advising by
UCSB's own Janet Mizrahi. Ms. Mizrahi has taught the Writing 109HP course, Writing for Health
Professions, for several years, and these videos and the accompanying worksheets will help you as
you begin work on exploring your why and drafting your personal statement.

In addition to the personal statement, which is part of the primary application, you will also need
to begin drafting your work and experiences entries. Information on this section and other
information needed for the primary applications can be found in the various applicant guides
associated with the centralized application services (CAS) used by most health professions schools.
Links to these systems can be found in the Pre-Health Tracks section of the Health Professions
Advising website.

Although you may currently be limited to the in-person experiences that you're able to participate
in, there are still many things that you can continue to do to learn about your intended profession
and to prepare yourself to be a competitive applicant. So if you find yourself feeling antsy, go for a
run, a swim, a walk, whatever you need to do, then come back to your computer and start
researching programs and learning everything you can about the application process, starting with
the Health Professions Advising website. And of course, when you have questions, please reach out
to your pre-health advisors!
Note: drop-in advising will take place on Wednesdays from 1:00pm - 3:30pm & Friday from 9:00am - 11:30am!

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Pre-Health Student Organizations Meeting Information

All UCSB student organization meetings will take place virtually. Please contact your organization for more information.
Were you recently accepted to professional school?

Share your acceptance with us, and share some advice with your fellow pre-health Gauchos!

Email a recent picture, along with your major, grad year, the professional school you were accepted to, and a brief bit of advice to prehealthinfo@ltsc.ucsb.edu, and we'll include you in a special edition of our newsletter!
Antiracism and Health Resources

A statement from the NAAHP:

Our country is once again experiencing the tragic realities of the racism present in our society.

The slaying of Ahmaud Arbery while jogging; the police shooting of Breonna Taylor that led to her death; Amy Cooper’s false report on a 911 call against Christian Cooper in New York City’s Central Park; Officer Derek Chauvin’s killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, as he was restrained by three police officers; and most recently, the killing of 27-year-old Rayshard Brooks as he tried to flee after wrestling with officers and grabbing a Taser has rekindled protests in Atlanta that erupted in the wake of Floyd’s death.

It is understandable that this historical disregard for the human rights of African-Americans and due process in the criminal justice system would lead to outrage across the nation. As protesters respond to these human rights violations, we encourage law enforcement leaders to demonstrate restraint and seek out opportunities to collaborate with community leaders further escalation and harm.

The aforementioned events excise a hidden emotional and psychological tax on our BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) colleagues and students, who are more likely to have experienced the loss of someone in their family and community, and to respond with a heightened awareness of the threat of racism.

We are experiencing only the most recent manifestations of the racist ideologies and their contribution to racial violence. At the same time, COVID-19 is epitomizing the structural factors that disproportionately impact the health and economic well-being of African-Americans. The pandemic has shed new light on the persistent health disparities and the social determinants of health impacting African-Americans and those from other historically marginalized communities.

During a series of conversations[1] hosted by Professor Evelynn Hammonds on Epidemics & African American Communities from 1792 to the Present at Harvard University, Dr. Paul Farmer and Dr. Vanessa Northing Gamble explained that COVID-19 has unveiled the racial fault line in the United States. This observation resonates with statements made by 19th century abolitionist Frederick Douglass and 20th century thinker and civil rights founder Dr. W.E. B. DuBois who both commented on the color-line during slavery and the redemption of the South that followed failed Reconstruction efforts.

We as a society have a moral obligation to confront and eliminate the structural factors that impede human flourishing. We as an organization seek to support our students who will be on the front lines confronting these factors as health professionals.

The NAAHP begins by affirming the real and valid feelings that people of color and those from all marginalized populations are experiencing. Your experiences of trauma are real and valid. It is incumbent upon our NAAHP leaders and community members to demonstrate support for our Black colleagues, and those from other marginalized identities, by standing against these continued injustices.

(continued on page 2)
Each of us needs to consider how best to do this within the context of our own roles and circumstances, but we all need to engage in action to create the healthy, equitable and inclusive community we desire. And we must urgently address law enforcement violence and inequities in our criminal justice system as public health issues.

As an association, we will hold virtual community meetings this summer to discuss what it means to be part of an institution that lifts up anti-racism as a core value and how NAAHP can come together to best support Black and all marginalized groups of students, staff, and faculty through these difficult times.

[1] https://hutchinscenter.fas.harvard.edu/epidemics

For further reading:
- **Altering the Course: Black Males in Medicine**
- **Reshaping the Journey: American Indians and Alaska Natives in Medicine**
- **Black Man in a White Coat: A Doctor’s Reflections on Race and Medicine**
- **Duke University School of Medicine Antiracism Resources**
- **Harvard University Countway Library Antiracism and Health Reading List**
- **Peggy McIntosh TEDTalk: How to recognize your white privilege — and use it to fight inequality.**
- **Black medical leaders: Coronavirus magnifies racial inequities, with deadly consequences**
- **Coronavirus rates vary dramatically from one neighborhood to another, based in part on race and income, a USA Today analysis of ZIP code data shows.**
- **Black communities account for disproportionate number of COVID-19 deaths in the US, study finds**
- **The COVID Racial Data Tracker**
- **NAAHP Diversity Professional Resources**
In an attempt to keep students and our medical community engaged in issues surrounding the medical humanities during these turbulent and uncertain times, we are doing a virtual Summer seminar series: "Conversations with Clinicians." Conversations with Clinicians will be an ongoing informal discussion with clinical and public health leaders about key issues regarding the humanities as applied to clinical medicine, public health, and society during pandemic. The first discussion will be surrounding the impact this pandemic has had on professionalism and character of health providers. You can register for the webinars at https://enroll.professional.ucsb.edu/search/publicCourseSearchDetails.do?method=load&courseId=33332506

The webinar is open to past and current UCSB students enrolled in UCSB Medical Humanities Program in addition to students interested in the program. The webinars are also open to members of our local Santa Barbara university, medical, public health, and activist community. You can learn more about the UCSB Medical Humanities Certificate Program at https://professional.ucsb.edu/certificate-medical-humanities.

The panel based webinars will be Tuesday evenings at 6pm and the topics, panelists, and details will attempt to be reflective of contemporary issues surrounding the COVID19 pandemic. Please see the tentative course outline below.

For all those out there on the frontline, hang in there. For all those who are training to be on the frontline, hang in there. What you do matters!!

Jason Prystowsky MD, MPH

8/4 - professionalism and character during COVID - Jerome Hoffman (UCLA emergency medicine), Charles Stolar (Columbia surgery), Kayla Rosen (UCSB student health, SB Neighborhood Clinics).

Moderator: Jason Prystowsky - How has COVID19 pandemic changed the role of the physician and healthcare team? It has been said that the pandemic has pulled back the veil and shown both weaknesses and strengths in our healthcare system, and both heroic virtues and weak shortcomings in the character of the healthcare personnel in the trenches. . . what character virtues do healers need moving forward? Advice for students interested in healthcare within the context of COVID. We will discuss courage, curiosity, integrity, perseverance, ego, and more.

8/18 - Critical Care and allocation of scarce resources during COVID
9/15 - Mental health in the age of COVID
9/29 - Racial Disparities during COVID
**Application Tips**

Research ALL schools you plan on applying To!

Read and understand the Application Guide as if it is meant to prepare you for one of the biggest tests of your life!

Know Your Deadlines
Allow yourself, your letter writers, and your transcripts plenty of time to be received and evaluated by planning ahead!

Entering Grades and Assigning Course Classifications
+ Order official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended (even if taken through dual enrollment in high school), and use these to enter course info.
+ Categorize courses based on the primary content of each course. Not sure, contact the application service.

Personal Statement
+ Yes, it will be difficult.
+ Follow the writing process and don't skip steps!
+ Brainstorm, outline, draft, edit, revise, repeat until you're satisfied.
+ Focus on presenting information about you and/or your journey that cannot be found elsewhere in your application.
+ Develop a working thesis statement and refine it as needed.
+ KISS: Keep It Simple Sweetie. Don't try to bring too many different elements or experiences into the essay. It isn't about describing *everything* that impacted you, even though many things may have played a role in your decision to pursue your intended career.
+ Get feedback from a variety of people.

Work and Activities
Again, keep it simple. For most, you'll have a topic sentence introducing the experience/activity, you'll provide some detail, then you close by describing why the experience/activity was valuable/beneficial to you. This is mostly the same with the "Most Meaningful" experiences, only you can provide more detail and insights with the extra characters available.

Letters of Recommendation/Evaluation
Try to get letters from people who can speak to different aspects of you as an applicant: the science/academic and healthcare side and the personal side: hobbies, non-medical work, non-medical service, etc.
Hey all! Have questions or want advice about medical school? Dr. Eric Larson graduated from UCSB in 2011 before attending St. Louis University for medical school! He is now in the 4th year of his orthopedic surgery residency at the University of Virginia and is kind enough to make himself available for questions from our pre-med students!

eric.stanley.larson@gmail.com
Take Medical Humanities at UCSB Online

DISCOUNTS FOR FALL 2020

For a limited time, UCSB Students can enroll in Intro to Medical Humanities with a 50% discount.

Follow the instructions on the course page.

HFA Scholarships, worth a 50% tuition discount, are also available. In combination with the PaCE Discount above, HFA scholarship recipients will not pay ANY tuition for the Fall 2020 course!

Contact us for more information

https://ucsbprofessionalandcontinuingeducation.createsecond1.com/t/r-l-jhcvhy-l-k/
UCSB Health Professions Advising would like your feedback on the advising you receive and programs we offer. Share with us what you love and find beneficial about Health Science Advising, and also let us know what we can do better or what information you think would be beneficial for yourself and other pre-health students at UCSB!

Follow this link to complete the survey: https://forms.gle/DffDrnuXNzT4NoP57
From our Instagram & Facebook Posts

Attention Test-Takers!

Closure of U.S.- and Canada-based Pearson VUE-owned Test Centers

Due to increasing concern for the health and safety of our candidates and our employees and in response to government guidance and difficulty procuring the critical hygienic products that keep our test centers safe, we are temporarily closing our U.S.- and Canada-based Pearson VUE-owned test centers starting Tuesday, March 17.

Candidates can reschedule their exams for appointments starting April 16 and beyond if conditions allow. For information on global regions outside the U.S. and Canada, please see below.

Candidate Scheduling Information

If you already have a scheduled exam:
You will receive an email cancellation notice and you will either receive a refund (if paid to Pearson VUE) or an extension as determined by your exam sponsor. We will work with you to reschedule your exam as soon as it is safe to resume test delivery (on or after April 16).

If you are looking to schedule an exam:
Registration windows for new exam appointments will not be available until April 16. If you have additional questions regarding voucher usage or testing windows, please visit your exam program homepage to speak to the customer service team associated with your program.

For a list of all tests administered by Pearson VUE:
https://home.pearsonvue.com/Test-takers/A-to-Z-program-list/View-all.aspx

Great Resource

The National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions (NAAHP) has created a page with links and resources to help you understand how professional school applications and admissions tests are being affected by COVID-19!

https://www.naahp.org/covid-19hplinks/home

UCSB Pre-Health Students

Please remember to include your Perm number in the body of your emails that you send to the prehealthinfo@ltsc.ucsb.edu email address. Also, remember that we are still holding scheduled and drop-in appointments by phone!

Be Safe!
UCSB Health Professions Advising
CLAS Academic Skills Workshops for Pre-Health Students!

Do you find yourself struggling in courses or want to improve in skills vital for success in your studies and future profession?

CLAS offers 90-minute sessions featuring specific exercises designed to help students identify and improve their academic skills!

- Time Management*
- Fighting Procrastination*
- Make a Study Plan*
- Confronting Confusion*
- Lecture Strategies*
- Reading Efficiency*
- Essay Exam Strategies
- Multiple Choice Exams
- Writing Papers
- Citing Sources
- Reading Comprehension
- Focus
- Motivation
- Confidence
- Performance Exams (New!)

To find sessions offered this quarter, visit the link below or navigate to the "Academic Skills" page under the "Services" tab of the CLAS website!

http://clas.sa.ucsb.edu/enrollment-schedules-overview/workshop-schedule

* = workshops we highly recommend for Pre-Health Students!
UCSB Professional and Continuing Education (PaCE) is now offering Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Certification training on campus! Space is still available in the Spring/Summer section. Students pursuing a higher level of medical training such as RN, PA or MD can use this certification and experience as an enhancement for the competitive application process found in those professions. The course will include clinical observations in hospital and/or ambulance settings.

To Information, visit: https://enroll.professional.ucsb.edu/search/publicCourseSearchDetails.do?method=load&courseldId=31276812

Please check PaCE's website for up-to-date info on the Summer EMT Course.
Update your Pre-Professional Emphasis in GOLD!

1. Login to GOLD.
2. Navigate to “My Personal Info” under the ABOUT ME tab.
3. Select the Pre-Professional Emphasis you are pursuing!
4. Don’t forget to update your preferences!