Applying to Professional School During the Pandemic (The Reboot)

Once again it's May, and the 2021-2022 professional school application cycle is just ramping up. VMCAS, the application to U.S. veterinary schools opened earlier this year in January, and CASPA, the application to U.S. physician assistant schools, recently opened at the end of April. This month, the applications to U.S. medical schools, both MD and DO, which include AMCAS, AACOMAS, and TMDSAS, open, as do the applications to U.S. dental schools, ADEA AADSAS and TMDSAS. Later this summer, the applications to U.S. pharmacy schools, PharmCAS, physical therapy schools, PTCAS, and optometry schools, OptomCAS, will open. As you're all aware, we are still in the midst of the pandemic, which means a few additional considerations need to be taken before, during, and after submitting your application to professional school, a primary consideration being an applicant's clinical experiences.

Prospective applicants should consider the strength of the application that they will be able to create, especially considering that many were not able to gain the meaningful in-person experiences they might have been hoping to take part in during 2020. While certain experiences may not be explicitly required by some professional schools, such as clinical experiences (shadowing, volunteering, paid work), they are strongly encouraged, and in some cases (PA, particularly) are still required for admission. So what is a prospective applicant to do?

There are many options for those of you who have not yet been able to gain clinical experiences or for those whose clinical experiences have been very minimal, but the first issue to consider is how well you understand the career you are pursuing, and how well you are able to articulate that understanding to others.

Continued on page 2
For many undergraduate pre-health students, clinical experiences provide the best opportunities to gain direct exposure to healthcare settings and to begin learning about their intended profession, beyond what can be read online or gained through conversations, virtual (eShadowing) or otherwise. These experiences, along with many others that you chose/choose to take part in leading up to applying, help you to describe to others your reasons for pursuing a particular career and how you know that career is, in fact, right for you. Admissions committees should not have to guess at an applicant's commitment to their chosen profession, so it is up to the applicant to convince admissions committees, by drawing from their own experiences, that they have a very good understanding of what will be required of them--as well as the appropriate knowledge, skills, and personal characteristics--as a future healthcare professional.

Clinical experiences help to provide pre-health students with opportunities to engage with healthcare professionals and patients in order to begin to develop and demonstrate the Core Competencies that professional schools look for in applicants.

During the pandemic, many organizations developed opportunities for students to gain experiences through eShadowing. While these are excellent opportunities to connect with and learn from current healthcare professionals, they are not a directly equivalent substitution for in-person experiences.

That being said, if someone feels confident in their ability to create a competitive, compelling application and wishes to apply, that is entirely their decision to make. For those who are unsure, we encourage you to ask yourself if taking a gap year might be worth considering if it means being able to gain in-person experiences, clinical and otherwise.

If you are having trouble deciding if now is the right time to apply, please schedule an appointment to meet with Rob or Allie to discuss your individual options moving forward.

Additionally, please be sure to research the admission requirements at each school to which you plan to apply. You must be sure you've completed all prerequisite course requirements/demonstrated competencies, know which types of letters of recommendation are required or highly recommended, and you need to know about important, unique aspects of the school, essentially, any information you can draw on to answer the question, "Why do you want to come to our school?". This information is vital for all aspects of the application process, from start to acceptance. Lastly, be sure to review each program's updates to their response (changes to admission policies) to the pandemic!

For more information, visit our website:
https://healthsciences.duels.ucsb.edu/application/systems
Note: drop-in advising will take place on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 1:00pm - 3:30pm & alternating Fridays from 9:00am - 11:30am (see below)

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**Update on the INT 184PD Clinical Shadowing Experience**

Unfortunately, INT 184PD will remain on hold due to restrictions in place at local hospitals and clinics stemming from the ongoing pandemic. We do not know if we will be able to offer the course during the Fall 2021 quarter, but we will reach out via our prehealth listserv once we begin accepting applications again. In the meantime, please visit the Extracurricular Experiences section of our website to learn about opportunities that are currently available, both in-person and remotely. Lastly, please be aware that most clinical experiences will be limited to paid, essential positions, many of which will require some form of training and/or certification, such as EMT, MA, CNA, or scribing.
The dates for our annual MCAT and DAT Prep Workshops are below!

**May 2021**

MCAT Prep Workshop: Saturday, May 1st, 9:00am - 10:30am  
And  
DAT Prep Workshop: Saturday, May 8th, 9:00am - 10:30am

To register, you must RSVP using this URL:  
https://forms.gle/L53fe2uMxVXocJD19

The RSVP will close at 3:00pm on Friday, April 30th for both workshops, and please only register for one!

(Type the URL into a new tab and make sure you are logged into your UCSB email!)

Students interested in being part of the MCAT or DAT panels should send an email to prehealthinfo@ltsc.ucsb.edu.
AAMCAS Applicant Reminders

1. Beginning April 30, applicants should hold no more than one (1) acceptance but can continue to hold alternate list positions.

2. Applicants with at least one (1) current acceptance will have two options to select in accordance with each medical school’s specific policies and deadlines: “Plan to Enroll” and “Commit to Enroll.”

3. Medical schools will begin to see applicant-specific information about each applicant’s Choose Your Medical School status for any applicant holding a current acceptance or alternate list position at the respective school. This applicant-specific information will be visible only to schools where the applicant has a current acceptance or alternate-list list position.

Visit these URLs for more details:
https://studentsResidents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school-amcas/application-and-acceptance-protocols-applicants

https://studentsResidents.aamc.org/media/7846/download?utm_source=sfmc&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=AMCAS&utm_content=CYMS
More great opportunities!

The 2021 RISE Summer Academy
Monday, June 28 – Friday, August 6, 2021

The RISE Summer Academy is a six-week intensive program for American Indians/Alaskan Natives that provides in-depth training and Indigenous learning opportunities to prepare scholars for the medical school application process.

Summer Academy Focus
- Medical School Admissions and Application
- Supplemental Basic Science Refresher
- Cultural Engagement and Community Building
- Medical Student Mentors
- Intensive MCAT prep provided through Kaplan

APPLY HERE:
https://medicine.wsu.edu/about-the-college/diversity-inclusion/pathway-programs/inmed-reimagine-indians-into-medicine-rise-pathway-program/

2021 AAMC Situational Judgment Test

The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) is pleased to be collaborating with five MD-granting medical schools this year to make the situational judgment test (AAMC SJT) available for their applicants in support of a holistic admissions strategy. Throughout the approaching 2022 application cycle, the following listed medical schools will strongly encourage or require all applicants to complete the AAMC SJT. The AAMC SJT will be offered at no cost to applicants during this application cycle.

- Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine
- Morehouse School of Medicine
- University of Alabama-Birmingham School of Medicine
- University of California Davis School of Medicine
- University of Minnesota Medical School Twin Cities

Registration for the AAMC SJT opens on March 9th

For more info on the SJT visit this URL:

The AAMC is hosting a webinar for examinees, Everything you Need to Know to Prepare for the 2021 AAMC Situational Judgment Test, on Tuesday, May 4 at 2:30 p.m. ET.

https://aamc.elevate.commpartners.com/products/everything-you-need-to-know-to-prepare-for-the-2021-aamc-situational-judgment-test-may-4

The webinar will provide essential information about:
- Test administration policies and procedures;
- Test preparation materials;
- What to expect on test day; and
- Plans for score release.

The following schools will strongly encourage or require all applicants to complete the AAMC SJT
- Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine
- Morehouse School of Medicine
- University of Alabama-Birmingham School of Medicine
- University of California Davis School of Medicine
- University of Minnesota Medical School Twin Cities
- Des Moines University Medicine and Health Sciences
Which Biochemistry Course should I take?
MCDB 108 vs MCDB 110

MCDB 108 series

MCDB 108 series consists of MCDB 108A/108B/108C and covers principles of biochemistry, metabolism and enzyme kinetics, and computational and systems biology, respectively. This series is suited for those interested in an in-depth education in biochemistry and/or are planning to go into scientific research. MCDB 108A/B are prerequisites for the biochemistry lab, MCDB 109L.

Note: MCDB 108A/B/C required for Cell and Developmental Biology, Microbiology, and Biochemistry and Molecular Biology majors; MCDB 108A/B required for Pharmacology majors.

MCDB 110

MCDB 110 offers a comprehensive overview of the principles of biochemistry and touches on all topics tested on the MCAT. Recommended for non-MCDB majors who must take biochemistry for professional school. However, if your desired professional school requires a biochemistry lab course, MCDB 110 does not allow you to take MCDB 109L.

Note: Cornell Veterinary School does not accept MCDB 110 as sufficient preparation; please check with the professional schools you are interested in for their specific policies.

Which do I take?

MCDB 110 is sufficient for the MCAT along with proper studying and prep materials, but check with the professional schools that you are interested in for how many quarters of biochemistry they require.

MCDB 108A and MCDB 108B would also cover all topics necessary and may offer some deeper understanding that is helpful for research positions. MCDB 108C, which teaches Computational and Systems Biology, is not necessary for the MCAT.
Los Curanderos Presents!

CYNTHIA TELLO

Join us in listening as Cynthia Tello describes her journey to medicine, including earning a double major at UCSB, a post-baccalaureate at CSULA, and currently a Master of Science in Medical Sciences at Western University! She will be discussing her process of applying to medical school in addition to extracurriculars she has completed, so come prepared with questions!

WEDNESDAY, MAY 12TH, 2021 @ 5PM VIA ZOOM!
https://UCSB.ZOOM.US/J/84906069600

Dr. Melissa Morgan

Join us in listening to Dr. Melissa Morgan as she shares with us her journey through academia and research, including earning her doctorate in Counseling Psychology from Loyola University Chicago, conducting community-based participatory research in areas of multicultural, international and immigrant research, and serving as a professor here at UCSB! She will be answering questions about a career in psychology and will be sharing her experiences in Latinx research and resilience within the communities, so come prepared!

WEDNESDAY, MAY 19TH, 2021 @ 5PM VIA ZOOM!
https://UCSB.ZOOM.US/J/84906069600
Are you interested in taking courses at UCSB this summer? If so, read the information below!

For many students, taking courses at UCSB during the summer is a great way to get ahead in degree requirements, retake courses, or to get back on track from a setback faced during the regular academic year. These are all great reasons to take summer courses, but for pre-health students, there are a few things you should consider prior to registering.

First, it's important to remember that a key goal of yours as a pre-health student is to demonstrate to professional school admissions committees that you will be able to successfully manage the rigorous science curriculum you will face while in professional school. You can begin to do this, in part, by performing well in your undergraduate courses, particularly your professional school prerequisite science courses, while also engaging in extracurricular experiences to further your understanding of healthcare, explore personal interests, and to experience personal growth. Doing this during the regular academic year can help you to build the resilience and skills necessary to be successful in professional school.

Below are some points to consider as you think about your plans moving forward.

You might want to consider taking courses in the summer if
- You need to retake a lecture or lab course you earned a C- or lower in or to take a lecture or lab course you missed during the regular academic year (Likely Chem 1A-B-C/AL-BL-CL)
- You need to take or retake a Math or Stats course (Math 34A-B, 3A-B, PSTAT 5A/5LS)
- You want to get started on the Physics series (Physics 6A-B-C/AL-BL-CL)
- You want to take a GE or two
- You want to take a non-degree-essential course (ie, a course that doesn't explicitly fulfill a degree requirement other than providing units toward graduation)

You might want to consider not taking courses if you are doing so for these reasons
- You want to make your science course load "easier" next year
- You want to take a "difficult" science or math course without having to worry about taking other courses at the same time
- You want to finish your GEs early (A balanced schedule containing major and GE courses may be ideal for some students.)

If you have questions about summer courses and whether taking professional school prereqs over the summer is right for you, please speak to a pre-health advisor during drop-in advising, every Tuesday and Wednesday from 1:00pm - 3:30pm. More information can be found on the Health Professions Advising website, https://healthsciences.duels.ucsb.edu/.

For more information about Summer Sessions, please visit https://www.summer.ucsb.edu/.
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*Fees are accurate as of February 2021, subject to change.*
Looking for a new way to take notes?

As a student in STEM courses, Notability has taken my note-taking, studying, and performance to the next level. Try this great tool out if you are looking to transition out of paper note-taking. This has been recommended to you by your Pre-health Advising Peers!

- Take more vivid and efficient notes
- Organize all your material in one location
- Compile notes within and across courses
- Reference your notes with precision
- Audio record while notetaking and more!

Try it out with...
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!
UC Santa Barbara
Koegel Autism Center

PRESENTS

T.E.A.M.
THRIVE, ENCOURAGE, ACCOMPLISH, & MAKE FRIENDS!

A VIRTUAL PROGRAM PROVIDING A SUPPORTIVE SPACE FOR STUDENT WITH AND WITHOUT AUTISM TO STAY CONNECTED AND HAVE FUN DURING REMOTE EDUCATION

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM TEAM
* Virtual Meet-Ups
* Game Nights
* Newsletter
* Social Connection
* Improve your remote experience
* de-stress
* Have FUN!

Learn and discuss academic, social, and personal skills with fellow Gauchos!

Sign-up TODAY with your UCSB.edu Email
Enrollment is free and ongoing throughout the Quarter
For more Information visit: https://education.ucsb.edu/autism/TEAM
Advising Appointment Reminder!

Zoom

Appointments with Rob, Allie, Anna, or Juliette:

Prefer Zoom? Send an email to prehealthinfo@ltsc.ucsb.edu indicating your preference. Please include your perm #, day & time of appointment, and the name of the advisor.

Note: Phone is the default appointment type.

Also, be sure to join the listserv and follow us on social media!

Phone

Note: Drop-Ins will all be conducted by phone.
SEEKING COLLEGE STUDENTS

VIRTUAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Looking for remote volunteer work? Become a virtual mentor for a K-12 student and tutor, give college tips, teach a new skill, or just socialize with a younger student.

SIGN UP AT
STUDENTSPHERE.ORG
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!
Plan ahead for the MCAT!

2021 Schedule for the Medical College Admission Test® (MCAT®)*

MCAT Admin | Score Release
--- | ---
Jan 15 | Feb 17
Jan 16 | Feb 17
Jan 21 | Feb 24
Jan 25 | Feb 24
March 13 | April 13
March 26 | April 27
April 10 | May 11
April 23 | May 25
April 30 | June 1
May 1 | June 1
May 14 | June 15
May 15 | June 15
May 20 | June 22
May 28 | June 29
June 4 | July 7
June 18 | July 20
June 19 | July 20
June 26 | July 27
June 30 | Aug 3
July 17 | Aug 17
July 22 | Aug 24
July 30 | Aug 31
Aug 7 | Sept 8
Aug 13 | Sept 14
Aug 21 | Sept 21
Aug 26 | Sept 28
Aug 27 | Sept 28
Sept 2 | Oct 5
Sept 3 | Oct 5
Sept 10 | Oct 12
Sept 11 | Oct 12

*The highlighted dates above indicate the U.S. MCAT test dates. For Canadian and international test dates, please visit students-residents.aamc.org/mcatregister.

Note: The MCAT exam is not offered in February or Oct.-December 2021.

Standard start times will be 7:30 a.m. and 3 p.m. each day.

@AAMC_MCAT
The INSIGHT Summer Research Program is an NIH-funded, eight-week paid summer internship through the University of Washington at Harborview’s Injury Prevention and Research Center (HIPRC). Students in our program are matched to clinical research projects and partner with a UW Medicine & Health Sciences Faculty. Students get to meet and learn from peers and health professionals from across the country, and also get to participate in clinical shadowing at Harborview, and social activities and tours, including the King County Medical Examiner’s Office.

Bringing together a diverse group of young people interested in health care and research allows HIPRC to create a unique and rich resource for students who seek to learn more about what they can accomplish in the field of injury and injury prevention. The INSIGHT Program offers a $3,200 stipend to those accepted. Below follows our website, where interested students can find the application portal and all the details of the program.

June 14 - Aug. 6, 2021
Monday - Friday: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
401 Broadway, Seattle, WA 98122.

https://hiprc.org/training/undergrad-grad/insight/