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With the aid of: The Health Careers Program Advisory Board
The Health Careers Evaluation Committee
The Health Careers Advising Network
Weill Medical College of Cornell University
Cornell Career Services Staff

Special thanks to: Kristine Goggan, Senior Staff Assistant

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The following questions are typically the first questions students ask.

Which college should I enroll in?

As an undergraduate in any college at Cornell, you may enroll in the courses required for entry into medical college or another health professional school. Traditionally, Cornell undergraduate applicants to medical school have enrolled in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Engineering, and the College of Human Ecology. These colleges offer majors that will enable you to prepare for medical school, and we find no differences in admission rates for students from these four colleges with equivalent academic credentials. The appropriate choice of an undergraduate college depends, to a great extent, on your other academic and career interests. Consult the University's publications for information about the seven colleges at Cornell—their distribution requirements, majors, and course descriptions.

What should I major in?

Medical schools do not require or recommend any particular undergraduate major course of study, and Cornell does not have a premedical major. Therefore, you should pursue your intellectual interests in an academic major, such as history, biology, nutrition, chemical engineering, philosophy, natural resources, or any number of other fields. In majors throughout the university, you can complete the preprofessional core courses while at the same time receiving a broad education and exploring other interests and careers. In this way, you leave open the option of pursuing an alternative career. Also, you are more likely to succeed at and benefit from subjects that interest and stimulate you.

The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) has stated that, "admission committee members know that medical students can develop the essential skills of acquiring, synthesizing, applying and communicating information through a wide variety of academic disciplines.... Students who select a major area of study solely or primarily because of the perception that it will enhance the chance of acceptance to a school of medicine are not making a decision in their best interest."

Despite statements like the above, many students believe that medical schools prefer one major over another. AAMC's national data, however, refutes this. In 2006, 44% of biological sciences majors, 50% of physical sciences majors, 53% of humanities majors, and 45% of social sciences majors applying were accepted to medical school. The variation in percentage of acceptance by major is not significant, and major cannot be used to predict acceptance to medical school.

What courses should I take?

Medical, dental and most health professional schools, while not requiring or recommending any particular major, do stipulate that particular undergraduate courses must be completed. Listed below are the recommended minimum prerequisite courses medical schools require. Some schools have specific requirements and/or recommendations in addition to those listed below. *Medical School Admission Requirements (MSAR)* contains details.

General or Introductory Biology (with laboratory)	8 semester credit hours
Advanced Biology	one course recommended
Introductory Chemistry (with laboratory)	8 semester credit hours
Organic Chemistry (with laboratory)	8 semester credit hours
General or Introductory Physics (with laboratory)	8 semester credit hours
English Composition	6 semester credit hours
Mathematics	(required by some schools, recommended by most)

Education for becoming a physician: a wider view

The science courses required for entry to medical school are only a part of the total educational picture that medical schools consider. It is generally agreed that an applicant must be able to perform well in science, to think like a scientist, and even to enjoy science in order to be a competent physician. Being an educated person with an understanding of human nature and human achievement is equally important to physicians, both professionally and personally. You need to develop the ability to think critically, imaginatively, and logically. The best way to develop these abilities is to explore in some depth an academic field that you find compelling, with what one dean of admissions calls "a sustained commitment to excellence."

What percentage of Cornell students are accepted to medical schools?

In 2006, of the Cornell first-time undergraduate applicants to medical school, seventy-five percent were successful in gaining admission to a U.S. allopathic (M.D.) school. (Nationally forty-six percent of applicants were accepted in 2006.) Eighty-eight percent of 2006 Cornell applicants with a 3.4 or above gained admission to a U.S. allopathic school.

It may be misleading to compare undergraduate institutions using medical school admissions data because institutions have different practices for recommending students for medical school. Some undergraduate institutions recommend only selected students. At Cornell, a student may apply to a health professional school; Cornell will write a letter of evaluation if the student has taken the required courses and follows the procedure for obtaining such a letter.

What help does Cornell give health careers students?

Cornell has a structured Health Careers Program. The Senior Associate Director for Health Careers, whose office is in Barnes Hall, provides information and orientation sessions and advising for students. Each day she has walk-in advising hours, and can also be reached by e-mail and telephone. Advising appointments can be arranged.

Most premedical questions asked by freshmen and sophomores pertain to the fit between major and college requirements, on the one hand, and premed course requirements, on the other. These can be answered by an academic advisor or by the member of the Health Careers Advising Network in the various colleges:

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Cate Thompson, 145 Roberts Hall
 College of Arts and Sciences, Janice Turner, 55 Goldwin Smith Hall
 College of Engineering, Rich Robbins, Fran Shumway and Melissa Hutson, 167 Olin Hall
 College of Human Ecology, Paula Jacobs, 172 Martha Van Rensselaer Hall

The Cornell Health Careers Guide for Preapplicants is available for students and given out at Freshman Orientation. *The Cornell Health Careers Guide for Applicants* is given out to applicants and is available in the Career Library, 103 Barnes Hall. Many portions of these guides, as well as additional material, are on the Health Careers web page: www.career.cornell.edu/HealthCareers/default.html. As stated above, Cornell also writes the letter of evaluation that is a required part of application to most schools of *human* medicine.

Cornell Courses Recommended to Satisfy Medical and/or Dental School Requirements 2007-2008

The Health Careers Program Advisory Board (HCPAB) of Cornell University recommends that students preparing for medical/dental school take the following courses. **This list provides general minimal requirements for the medical and dental schools to which Cornell students usually apply.** For details on particular schools, consult the publications *Medical School Admission Requirements (MSAR)* and *ADEA Official Guide to Dental Schools*.

Recommended minimum courses for medical and/or dental schools	Rec. sem hrs.	Cornell University courses recommended to fulfill these requirements																						
<p>CHEMISTRY General or Inorganic</p>	8	<p>Chem 207 + 208 or Chem 215 + 216* For students with strong chemistry backgrounds (Honors) or Chem 211 + 208 Possible sequence for engineering students</p> <p>See also "Course Selection." It is possible that mixing sequences (e.g., 215 + 208) may not provide full coverage of MCAT topics, despite satisfying the medical school requirements for two semesters of introductory chemistry. See www.aamc.org/students/mcat/about/start.htm for science topics in the exam. Chem 206 is a one-semester introduction to chemistry. Although it can be used to replace Chem 207 in the Chem 207-208 sequence, this is not recommended, and students particularly those with a weaker chemistry background, may find themselves disadvantaged in Chem 208. *Students who decide not to proceed to Chem 216 should see the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) in the Chemistry Department for possible alternative courses in that department.</p>																						
Organic	8	<p>Chem 357 + 358 + 251 Usual sequence or Chem 357 + 358 + 301* or Chem 359 + 360 + 301* or Chem 359 + 360 + 251</p> <p>Chem 359, 360, and 301 are honors courses *Note: Chem 300 is a prerequisite for 301</p>																						
<p>BIOLOGY Introductory</p>	8	<p>Bio G 101/103 + 102/104 or Bio G 105 + 106 or Bio G 107 + 108 (Summer only)</p> <p>Also possible is any combination of the first term of one of the above sequences followed by the second term of another. The HCPAB does NOT recommend Bio G 109 + 110 because it is not as comprehensive an introductory biology sequence and it does not meet the prerequisite for some of the advanced courses.</p>																						
Advanced		<p>A minimum of one advanced course is recommended, though not required by all medical/dental schools. There are many appropriate courses, <u>some examples follow which do not require a biology course beyond Introductory Biology.</u> See an academic advisor for other examples.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Introduction to Behavior</td> <td>BioNB 221</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Introduction to Neurobiology</td> <td>BioNB 222</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The Vertebrates: Structure, Function and Evolution</td> <td>BioEE 274</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Genetics</td> <td>BioGD 281</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Microbiology</td> <td>BioMI 290</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Physiology</td> <td>BioAP 311</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Animal Physiology Experimentation</td> <td>Bio AP 319</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Introduction to Human Biochemistry</td> <td>NS 320</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Human Anatomy and Physiology</td> <td>NS 341</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Histology</td> <td>BioAP 413</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Biochemistry</td> <td>BioBM 330, 331 + 332, or 333 (Summer)</td> </tr> </table>	Introduction to Behavior	BioNB 221	Introduction to Neurobiology	BioNB 222	The Vertebrates: Structure, Function and Evolution	BioEE 274	Genetics	BioGD 281	Microbiology	BioMI 290	Physiology	BioAP 311	Animal Physiology Experimentation	Bio AP 319	Introduction to Human Biochemistry	NS 320	Human Anatomy and Physiology	NS 341	Histology	BioAP 413	Biochemistry	BioBM 330, 331 + 332, or 333 (Summer)
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<p>PHYSICS General or Introductory</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>Physics 101 + 102 Usual sequence, not calculus based, auto-tutorial*</p> <p>or Physics 207 + 208 Usual sequence, calculus based</p> <p>or Physics 112 + 208 Possible sequence, also using calculus</p> <p>or Physics 112 + 213 + 214 Possible 12 semester hour sequence**</p> <p>*Physics 103 is a summer, lecture-style version of and substitute for P101. **This three-semester sequence gives minimal coverage to fluids. Students using only parts of a sequence or mixing parts of two - and three - semester sequences may find certain MCAT topics not covered. Crossovers between 101/208, 103/208, and 207/102 are acceptable; consult appropriate faculty.</p>
<p>MATHEMATICS</p>		<p>Math 105 + 106 or 105 + 111</p> <p>or Math 111 + 112 or 111 + 122 or 111 + 191</p> <p>or Math 171 + 106 or 171 + 111 (171 is statistics)</p> <p>College work in mathematics is required by some schools, highly recommended by almost all. A very few schools require one year of calculus.</p> <p>Note: 105 and 171 are not calculus courses. Students who want two semesters of calculus should take any of the other sequences listed above. Statistics is accepted as college level mathematics at some schools, and at some schools statistics is required or recommended. Besides Math 171, suitable statistics courses include the following, however, some may only be open to students in a particular college.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applied Economics and Management 210 Biometry 301 Industrial and Labor Relations 212 Policy Analysis and Management 210 Psychology 350 Sociology 301 Engineering 270
<p>ENGLISH COMPOSITION</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Most medical schools will accept two First-Year Writing Seminars in fulfillment of their writing requirement. Some, however, specifically require English literature and composition. Students who plan to apply to these schools should take either their First-Year Writing Seminars or advanced courses in the Department of English. The John S. Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines, 101 McGraw Hall, will provide a notice stating that First-Year Writing Seminars taken in any department are equivalent to "English composition" courses.</p>
<p>ADDITIONAL COURSES</p>		<p>Students need to be aware that some institutions have very specific requirements and/or recommendations in addition to the almost universal requirements listed above. Students need to be concerned about other additional courses only if they are required by their state medical/dental school or by schools in which the student has a particular interest. <u>See MSAR and/or Official Guide to Dental Schools well in advance of the time of application.</u></p>

Courses Beyond the Requirements

Students should work with their academic advisors in choosing courses beyond the premedical/pre-dental requirements. Some students decide to take courses similar to those taken in medical school, such as biochemistry or histology, in an attempt to demonstrate that they can perform well in a course taught in medical school or to ease their studying during the first year of professional school. These advantages, however, should be weighed against possible disadvantages. These include not being able to take an elective that may be important to your personal development and undergraduate education or which will not be available for you to take once you are in the medical school. As you plan, also keep in mind that medical/dental school admissions officers frequently speak of wanting to see both breadth and depth in a student's academic record. In choosing courses you will want to strike a balance between these, avoiding a narrow, tunnel-vision approach on the one hand and a dabbling, superficial approach on the other.

Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory Grades

Do not take any requirement for medical/dental school on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis.

Transfer Students

Transfer students should check that the courses they have taken at their previous college meet the requirements for entrance to medical/dental school. See also "Transfer Students' Guidelines" in the Health Careers portion of Cornell Career Services web pages, www.career.cornell.edu.

Summer School Courses

Required courses for medical/dental school may be taken during summer session here or at other universities whose educational standards are comparable to Cornell's. However, it is preferable to take these science courses at Cornell during the regular school year in order to demonstrate that you can perform well even while carrying a full course load. The college advising office can explain the procedure for attending summer school elsewhere.

Advanced Placement (AP)

Courses accepted by the college as satisfying graduation credit requirements may be used to replace introductory requirements listed above at many medical/dental schools. **Check specific statements in medical and dental school catalogs or web pages.** Some schools advise students to pursue advanced courses in biology, chemistry, and/or physics, which provide reinforcement of previous courses, even though they may have met the minimum science requirements while in high school. Most medical schools require a year of biology taken in college. If you have AP credit in biology (this AP credit must be indicated on the official transcript), most schools recommend that you take two semesters of advanced biology and want you to have taken a lab course in college.

Students with AP Biology should see the Office of Undergraduate Biology web page at www.bio.cornell.edu/advising/ap.cfm for information on using AP Biology credit at Cornell.

Course Selection

Any of the courses outlined previously will fulfill the prerequisites for medical/dental schools. Which ones to take depends on several factors: your interest in the subject; test scores; high school preparation; experience in demanding, competitive courses; and major and academic goals. Placement in the right courses is very important. *Cornell Courses of Study* describes the courses; the academic advisor and the directors of undergraduate studies (DUS) in relevant departments can explain the differences among courses and can help in selecting suitable courses.

Sequence of Courses

Recommended order The recommended order in which to take these courses is: mathematics, chemistry or biology, physics. Biology, chemistry, and mathematics need to be started by the sophomore year if you plan to apply to medical/dental school at the end of your junior year for attendance in the fall following graduation. Courses are usually (but not necessarily) taken during these years:

- First-Year Writing Seminars - freshman
- General Chemistry - freshman or sophomore
- Introductory Biology - freshman or sophomore
- Mathematics - freshman or sophomore
- Physics - sophomore or junior
- Organic Chemistry - sophomore or junior

Mathematics Strong quantitative skills are essential for chemistry and physics. It is recommended that college mathematics precede physics.

Organic Chemistry For organic chemistry, lecture courses must be taken before, or concurrently with laboratory courses. Co-registration in organic lecture and organic laboratory is not necessary.

Natural Science Major If you think you want to major in a natural science, the usual advice is to take two science courses or mathematics and science during freshman year.

Humanities or Social Science Major If you think you want to major in a humanities or social science discipline, you may want to take only one mathematics or science course during freshman year in order to be able to experiment with courses from several departments. However, this may require taking two science courses in both the sophomore and junior years. For non-science majors, the usual advice is to take one additional advanced biology course or health-related course during the senior year.

Unsatisfactory Performance in a Course

Repeating Courses Generally speaking, courses should not be repeated. A poor performance (below C-) can be redeemed partially by a good performance in another course which demonstrates strength within the same area. In some cases, e.g. required science courses, however, it may be advisable to repeat the course. This is the case especially when extraneous circumstances were largely responsible for the initial weak performance. The academic advisor will help to explore these points further as well as credit hour and grade point average implications which vary among colleges.

Recommended sequences for students who receive a grade of D+ or lower in required science courses

See the appropriate departmental office.

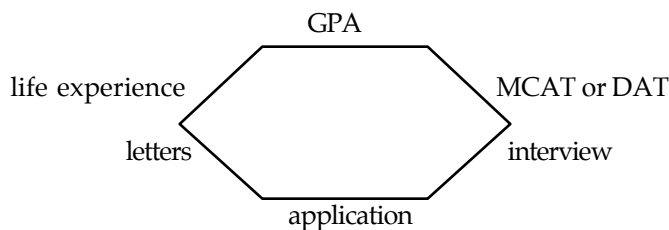
Medical School Admission Test (MCAT)

The MCAT should not be taken until introductory courses in biology, chemistry, organic chemistry, and physics are completed (or are within a few weeks of completion) and you have studied for the exam. The MCAT is administered over twenty times a year at designated computerized test sites.

Students should review the *MCAT* web pages especially www.aamc.org/students/mcat/about/start.htm to see the science topics in the exam and to determine that they have covered all the topics. Checking topics may be especially useful if you have mixed course sequences.

Students registered in CornellTRAK who request Health Careers Program emails will be updated on MCAT development as well as other health careers topics and programs.

As a student who is thinking about applying to a health professional school, you have probably wondered how your credentials compare with some ideal student you've imagined or heard about in the student grapevine. Although you want a realistic appraisal of your chances for acceptance, a definitive answer is impossible; and a generalized answer is difficult, given that there many medical and dental schools in the United States and that each has its own admissions committee with its own standards. These variables make it hard to define one set of standards that apply in all schools. However, almost all schools consider the following six factors when reviewing applicants:



It is difficult to determine the weight of each factor that is considered. Each bit of information, however, contributes in much the same way that pieces of a jigsaw puzzle finally comprise a picture. Usually no one piece of information alone is sufficient to determine your chances; instead, view the process as one where you want to contribute the best "pieces," so that the committee can come up with the best "picture" of your potential. The following questions are ones an admissions committee member might seek answers to when reviewing your credentials.

1. Academic Record (GPA)

- What is the applicant's grade point average (GPA)?
- What is the science and math GPA?
- What are the grades in courses required for medical/dental school?
- What are the grades in organic chemistry?
- What is the pattern of grades? Is there an upward or downward trend?
- Have many courses been dropped? Why?
- How many "incompletes" are present? Why?
- What proportion of courses was taken Pass/Fail?
- Did the student consistently take a normal course load?
- How do science and liberal arts courses "balance"?
- Did the student consistently choose an easier or more difficult sequence of courses?
- What is the academic quality of the institution where courses were taken?
- Was summer school attended? Why? What school? What courses were taken?
- Did the student undertake honors work?
- In what ways has the student taken responsibility for his/her learning?
- What is the student's major?

Grade point average is important, but as the preceding questions indicate, the GPA alone is not the only academic factor considered.

2. Medical College Admission Test (MCAT)

- What is the student's percentile ranking?
- What is the score for each section? Writing Sample?
- Is there a low score on one section of the test? If so, which section?
- Are there any factors that might account for poor performance?
- How do these scores compare with those of other candidates from the same institution?
- Are the scores consistent with the GPA? How do they compare with the GPA?

In general medical schools seem to be looking for applicants with scores in the eightieth percentile or above. A low score on one section could be a problem, one extraordinary score, noteworthy; but committees are interested in the total profile of the MCAT and how that fits with the total picture of the candidate.

The MCAT should be taken only after all four prerequisites are completed or very close to completion and after there has been time for a solid review of the topics to be tested. Usually this is at the end of junior year. However, if you have finished the introductory courses in biology, chemistry, organic chemistry, and physics by the end of your sophomore year, you may want to take the MCAT at a date closer to when those classes were completed. This option may enable you to do most of your review during the summer rather than during the school year.

While grades and MCAT are not everything, they are primary to the admissions picture. For example, a medical school may have five thousand or more applicants for one hundred places. In order to determine whom to select for entrance, the members of the admissions committee may choose eight hundred candidates to interview. They usually choose those with high "numbers" (grades and MCATs). From this pool of hundreds, they are able to find applicants who have, in addition to high "numbers," the human traits that are likely to enable them to become good doctors.

3. Life Experience

Of particular interest to committee members is the quality of the activities in which you have participated and what you learned from them. How would your answers to the following question reveal that?

Health Care Experience—"the unwritten requirement for medical school"

- Have you had contact with sick people?
- Have you worked/volunteered in a clinical health care-related setting?
- How have you gained a realistic picture of the health career you seek to enter?

Work

- Have you worked while attending college? In the summer? How much?
- Has this affected time available to devote to studies and extracurricular activities?

Service

- What kind of service experiences have you had?
- How have you demonstrated a commitment to helping others?
- What have you done to become aware of the needs of people unlike yourself—different ages, classes, races, ethnic, and religious groups?

Extracurricular

- Are you able to participate in activities and still maintain good grades?
- Have you assumed leadership roles? Worked as part of a team?
- Have you sustained the commitment? Demonstrated initiative? Showed creativity?
- What is the range of your activities?

Research/Original Inquiry

- Have you had research experience or undertaken original inquiry that required initiative and creativity? Lab? Clinical? Another area? Level of independence? Paper? Publication? Presentations/Posters? (If you plan to pursue an MD/PhD you must engage in significant laboratory research.)

Teaching/Counseling/Mentoring

- Have you been a teaching assistant? Counselor? Peer advisor? Mentor?

Experience with patients should be viewed as required. Beyond that you should pursue your other interests. You do not need to have experience in all of these areas; nor can you turn to a magical formula for combining activities to "look good." Most admissions committee members are experienced in their work, and many have an instinct for detecting the credentials that have been put together for the purpose of "getting into medical school." Instead, they prefer a genuine person, so pursue in some depth and breadth the activities that interest you and that are congruent with your personality and life goals.

4. Letter of Evaluation and Recommendations

While your application essay will help to fill in the picture, your letters of recommendation help even more, in that they contribute information on how recommenders who are experienced in working with students view you. The letters help to answer questions about your academic and intellectual abilities, personal attributes, values, and motivation in comparison to other students. To ensure strong letters of recommendation take the initiative, beginning in your freshman year, to get to know your teachers.

5. The Application

The completed application, which includes an essay, contributes to the total picture that is being formed.

- Was the application submitted in a timely manner?
- What does the essay reveal?
- Can the applicant write well? Spell? Organize information?
- What is the applicant's state of residence? Diversity aspects?

6. The Interview

After an admissions committee finishes looking at the "paper credentials," it is ready to make some observations in person, in the form of an interview, to try to answer questions like the following: What are the applicant's communication and interpersonal skills? Personality? Physical bearing? What aspects in the application can be expanded on or clarified?

After the interview, the school's admissions committee has a fuller picture which it uses to compare you with others in the pool of candidates from which it ultimately makes its choice. Naturally this process is not perfect; but at most medical schools, it seems to be administered with a great deal of human concern.

"Are my credentials competitive?"

There are many variables in the six admission factors given above, and there are many variables in the opinions of the members of the various admissions committees; so the choice of candidates is not totally predictable, nor is it totally unpredictable. Therefore, within wide parameters it is possible for you to look at your credentials, reviewing the six admission factors as an admissions committee might, and find at least a tentative answer to the question "Are my credentials competitive to apply to medical school?" You can also further explore this question with a health careers advisor and plan steps to take to strengthen your credentials.

Important: Your Conduct and Your Credit Rating

"Were you ever the recipient of any institutional action by any college or medical school for unacceptable academic performance or conduct violation, even though such action may not have interrupted your enrollment or required you to withdraw?" The American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS), used by the majority of medical schools in the United States, includes this question on its application. Trustworthiness and good judgment are essential qualities for someone who seeks to enter a health profession. Throughout your college career, be aware that actions that reflect negatively on your character, judgment, or honesty may seriously diminish your chances of admission to a health profession school.

Most applicants must borrow to pay for medical school. In order to be able to get loans, you will need to have a good credit rating. Debts, other than long-term educational debts (credit card debt, car loans and other unpaid bills), must be taken care of by you prior to entering medical school. Medical schools have rescinded an acceptance when a student's credit rating was poor.

Health Careers Calendar • Human Medicine

FALL 2007

ORIENTATIONS

• **Freshman Orientation (Also for transfer students)**

College of Engineering	9:00 am Aug 20	165 Olin
College of Arts and Sciences	11:00 am Aug 20	Hollis E. Cornell Aud., Goldwin Smith
College of Human Ecology	9:00 am Aug 21	G71 MVR
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences	2:30 pm Aug 21	Call Alumni Aud., Kennedy

• **Orientation for Jrs. & Srs. Applying in 2008**

College of Human Ecology	4:35 pm Sept 4	280 MVR
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences	4:35 pm Sept 5	145 Warren
College of Arts and Sciences	4:35 pm Sept 6	Kauffman Aud., Goldwin Smith
College of Engineering	4:35 pm Sept 10	218 Olin

• **Health Careers Evaluation Committee (HCEC) Orientation: 2008 Applicants for 2009 Acceptance**

6:30 pm Nov 7	B45 Warren
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BRIEFINGS

• Interviewing at Medical/Dental School	12:20 pm Aug 31	North Rm., Willard Straight
• Follow-up Action, Acceptance Protocol, and Finances	12:20 pm Sept 27	North Rm., Willard Straight
• MCAT Review Tips & Timing	12:20 pm Oct 30	North Rm., Willard Straight
• HCEC Letters of Recommendation: Whom to Ask and How?	12:20 pm Nov 8	North Rm., Willard Straight
• Summer Opportunities for Health Careers Students	12:20 pm Nov 13	North Rm., Willard Straight
• Applying in 2008: Am I a Competitive Applicant?	4:35 pm Nov 14	165 McGraw

GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL DAY

11:00 am – 2:30 pm, Oct 3 Barton Hall

Speak with admissions officers from health professional schools: medicine, dentistry, podiatry, public health, physician assistant, nursing, etc.

EXTERN PROGRAM Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors: Apply in October and shadow an alumna/us in a career field of your choice over winter break.

FRESH PROGRAM Freshmen: Apply in January to shadow an alumna/us in a career field of your choice during spring break.

SPRING 2008

REGISTRATIONS

• **Health Careers Evaluation Committee (HCEC) Registration: 2008 Applicants for 2009 Acceptance**

Step I -- pick up materials anytime between 5-7 pm	Jan 28 or 29	103 Barnes
Step II -- drop off materials anytime between 5-7 pm	Mar 10 or 11	103 Barnes

ORIENTATION

• Sophomore Orientation	4:35 pm Feb 20	see online career calendar for location www.career.cornell.edu/events.html
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BRIEFINGS

• HCEC Letters of Recommendation: Whom to Ask and How?	12:20 pm Feb 22	North Rm., Willard Straight
• Waitlisted or Waiting: What to do?	12:20 pm Jan 25	North Rm., Willard Straight
• Writing the Personal Statements and Themes for the HCEC and for Application	12:20 pm Jan 31	North Rm., Willard Straight
• Interviewing with the HCEC and the Interviewer's Perspective	4:35 pm Feb 12	see online career calendar for locations: www.career.cornell.edu/events.html
• How to Choose Medical/Dental Schools to Apply To	4:35 pm Mar 27	www.career.cornell.edu/events.html
• How to Apply to Medical/Dental School: AMCAS & Others for 2008 Applicants for 2009 Acceptance	4:35 pm April 8	www.career.cornell.edu/events.html
	4:35 pm April 22	www.career.cornell.edu/events.html

See Cornell Career Services calendar at www.career.cornell.edu for additional programs and web audios of most programs.

Audios are also available: Career Library, 103 Barnes Hall, Monday-Friday, 8-4:30, including breaks

HEALTH CAREERS ADVISING

- Judy Jensvold, Senior Associate Director, Health Careers, 103 Barnes Hall
- Walk-ins School Year: Monday-Thursday, 3:00 to 4:00 pm; Fridays 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm
Summers: 1:30 – 2:30, M-F
- E-mail/Telephone jmj5@cornell.edu Direct line 4:00 pm to 4:30 pm most days (607-255-0542);
- By appointment See Information Services Assistants in 103 Barnes Hall or phone 255-5296.

HEALTH CAREERS EVALUATION COMMITTEE

- Janet Snoyer, Assistant Director, Health Careers and Credentials
203 Barnes Hall; phone 255-5045; js100@cornell.edu

The checklist below pertains specifically to premedical, pre dental, and preveterinary students; however, students interested in other health fields will find portions of the following useful. All health care preprofessionals are encouraged to use the materials and audios in the Career Library, 103 Barnes Hall, and on the web to determine specific requirements for course work, standardized tests, and application procedures.

Throughout Your Undergraduate Career

- Refer to "Recommended Courses for Medical and/or Dental School Requirements," (pink sheet) or "Recommended Courses for Veterinary School Requirements" (blue sheet) to plan your course schedule.
- See the Cornell Career Services web page: create a CornellTRAK profile to receive health careers program information and consult the "Calendar" for program announcements.
- Attend programs featuring medical/dental/veterinary school admissions speakers, practitioners, and others. Watch for e-mail announcements.
- Attend special programs offered annually:
 - "Open House" at the College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell, held each spring.
 - "Grad and Professional School Day," every fall. (October 3, 2007, Barton Hall)
- Check out student health career organizations, volunteer and research opportunities, summer jobs, and internships to test and develop your career interests.
- Begin your search for summer jobs/internships during the fall semester for the following summer.
- Develop and frequently update your "Plan B"—a career option you can pursue if you don't go to a health professional school or don't go right after graduation.

Freshman Year

- Attend Freshman Orientation** for freshmen and transfer premedical and preveterinary students held during Orientation Week or listen to the audio if you are unable to attend.
- Meet with your faculty advisor and/or student academic advisors, and the prehealth careers advisor in your College to plan a four-year program to include College requirements, major requirements, and premedical/dental/veterinary requirements.
- Make the effort to get to know your teachers and advisors. You'll learn more, enjoy Cornell more, and lay the groundwork for future letters of recommendation needed when you apply.
- Remember a year or a semester away from campus (e.g., study away or a leave of absence) needs to be planned in advance; consult with your College Office and "Study Away Procedures" on the Health Careers web page.

Sophomore Year

- Attend Sophomore Orientation** for premedical/pre dental students held early in the spring semester or listen to the audio if you are unable to attend.
- Plan your prerequisite course sequence in order to complete the necessary requirements before taking national tests, e.g. Medical College Admission Test (MCAT), Dental Admission Test (DAT), Graduate Record Examination (GRE), or Optometry Admission Test (OAT).
- Check out opportunities and requirements to be a teaching assistant in your junior and/or senior year.
- Continue getting to know teachers, advisors, and others who might write your letters of recommendation.

Sophomore Year (Con't)

- Use the Career Library on line keyword search to locate resources. Become familiar with the following informational resources, especially those that list specific requirements at schools, in the Career Library, 103 Barnes Hall:
 - *Medical School Admission Requirements (MSAR)*
 - *ADEA Official Guide to Dental Schools*
 - *Veterinary School Admission Requirements in the United States and Canada (VMSAR)*
 - *Minority Student Opportunities in United States Medical Schools*

Junior Year or Senior Year, depending on when you plan to start professional school

- Attend Orientation for Jrs. & Srs. Applying in 2008** for prehealth students, held by college in September. Begin giving some thought to who might write your letters of recommendation.
- Attend HCEC Orientation** for premedical/pre dental students in the fall semester (usually held in November) or listen to the audio.
- Attend HCEC Registration** and register with the Health Careers Evaluation Committee (HCEC) in the spring semester if applying to schools of human medicine. (You are not required to use the HCEC, but most schools of human medicine require a letter of evaluation, such as that written by the HCEC.)
- Attend premed/prevet fall and spring semester briefings. These cover the steps necessary to complete the application process.
- Access web information on the MCAT, DAT, GRE, and OAT. MCAT, DAT, and OAT are taken usually in the spring/summer of the year of application. GRE is required by CVMCU to be taken no later than October of the year before desired matriculation. The MCAT is required or accepted by some veterinary schools.
- In the Career Library consult information provided by previous Cornell applicants.

Preveterinary students who are interested in applying in the fall of their junior year for acceptance in the spring of their junior year to attend veterinary school the following fall, see instructions below regarding prevet seniors.

Summer Between Junior And Senior Year

- Apply to schools of human or veterinary medicine. Check procedures, requirements, and deadlines, which vary among schools of veterinary medicine. Application can also be done at the end of senior year, giving you an interim year before attending professional school, or as an alumnus/na.

Senior Year

- Have HCEC send your letter of evaluation to medical/dental schools that have requested it.
- Attend briefings on "Interviewing at Medical/Dental School," "Follow-up Action, Acceptance Protocol, and Finances for Medical/Dental School Applicants," and "Waitlisted or Waiting: What to do." If you are not getting interviews and/or acceptances by January, see the health careers advisor.
- Interviews at schools of human medicine usually occur between October and March. Acceptances arrive mostly from late fall until May, but may go into the summer.

Why do you need letters of recommendation?

In the admissions process, health professional schools use quantifiable information such as transcripts and standardized test scores; but they also want to know if you are the kind of person who will become a good health care professional. Cornell writes a letter of evaluation to help schools learn about your qualitative aspects such as motivation, maturity, and intellectual and interpersonal skills as well as academic performance. This process requires you to get letters of recommendation. **These letters should come mainly from Cornell faculty and staff.** To get strong letters you need to build contacts and relationships and make yourself known. You'll get the full benefit of your Cornell education and enjoy it more if you get to know your teachers and advisors, and you are the one who must take the initiative.

What is the letter of evaluation? See reverse side.

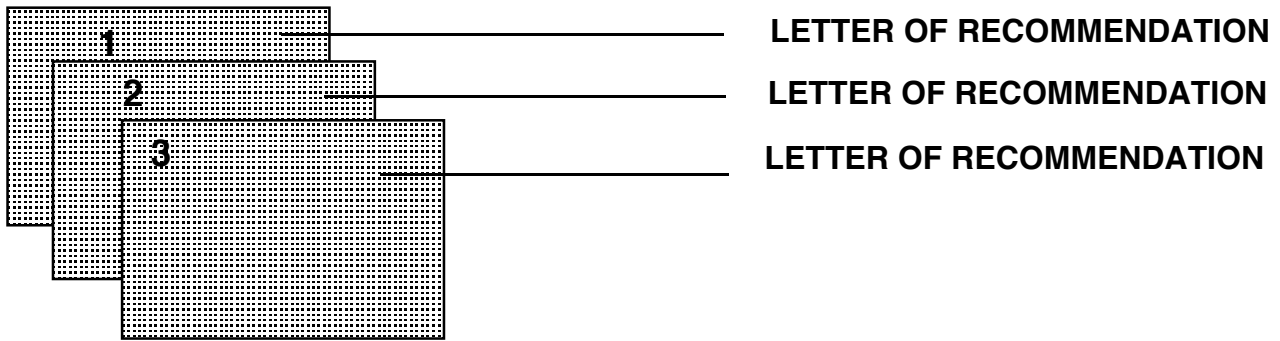
Checklist of things to do to get strong letters of recommendation

- Your teachers should be the key source of letters. Don't let large classes deter you from getting to know them. Make use of faculty office hours.** Throughout your college career, beginning in your freshman year, invest time in talking with and getting to know your faculty advisor and other faculty. Make an appointment with faculty to discuss activities, goals, interests, and your plan to become a health care professional. This appointment should be **in addition** to any regular pre-registration appointments.
- Letters may also come from employment or volunteer supervisors, or mentors, research or club advisors, and coaches among others.
- Create your own file on "You." Keep records of semester grades, awards; selected assignments, papers, and tests with teacher comments; addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of employers, supervisors, etc. This information and material will then be available for you and/or your recommenders to consult.

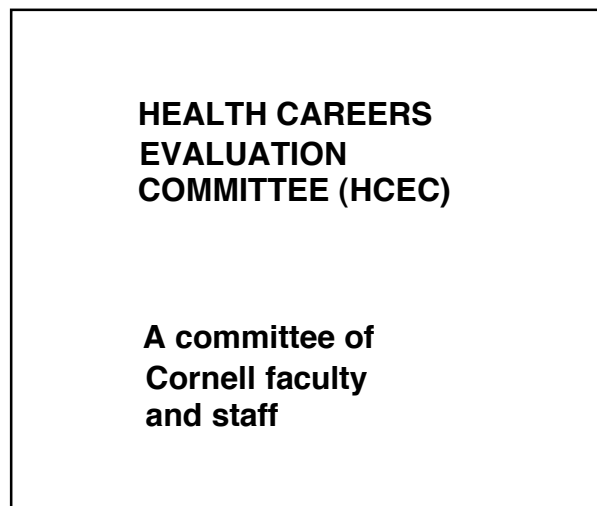
Usually junior year and beyond:

- Attend the Health Careers Evaluation Committee Orientation**, usually fall of your junior year.
- Register with the HCEC for the letter of evaluation process.** Registration is usually held in the spring semester. This is usually done your junior year but can also be done as a senior, giving you an interim year before attending medical school, or as an alumnus/ae.
- Ask for letters of recommendation during spring semester. To learn how, attend the briefing "HCEC Letters of Recommendation: Whom to Ask and How" or listen to the audio, available in the Career Library, 103 Barnes and on the web.
- Meet with the people who are writing your letters; review your qualifications; and provide a resume, an essay, and/or a transcript. Other helpful information includes the title of the course(s) taken from the recommender, year taken, and title of paper(s) written for the course(s).
- Provide the letter writer with the recommendation request form. You get these forms when you register with the HCEC.
- Check to see that your letters are arriving. If needed, tactfully remind letter writers of the deadline.

"THE LETTER OF EVALUATION"



plus



produces



- A COMPOSITE LETTER WRITTEN WITH INPUT FROM
- LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION
 - INTERVIEW
 - YOUR HCEC PERSONAL STATEMENT
 - TRANSCRIPT(S)
 - BACKGROUND INFORMATION FORM (BIF)

ALL SHADED ITEMS MAKE UP YOUR HCEC PACKET AND ARE TRANSMITTED TO SCHOOLS AS "THE LETTER OF EVALUATION" WHEN YOU LEGALLY AUTHORIZE THIS.

Medical and dental school admission committees also receive a letter that lists Cornell departments, prerequisite course sequences, HCEC members, etc.

Health Careers Advising Network

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The following staff and faculty members are designated by their colleges, divisions, or programs as prehealth professions advisors. You are encouraged to use this list to locate advisors who can assist you.

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIFE SCIENCES - 145 Roberts Hall

Cate Thompson, Director, Multicultural and Diversity Programs
Phone: 254-5385 E-mail: ct30@cornell.edu

COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES - 55 Goldwin Smith Hall

Janice Turner, Assistant Dean, Academic Advising Center
Phone: 255-9497 E-mail: jft2@cornell.edu

Irene Komor, Arts and Sciences Academic Advising, Career Counselor

Phone: 255-4166 E-mail: ijk1@cornell.edu

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING - 167 Olin Hall

Rich Robbins, Director of Engineering Advising
Phone: 255-7414 E-mail: rlr43@cornell.edu

Fran Shumway, Associate Director Engineering Advising
Phone: 255-7414 E-mail: fss2@cornell.edu

Melissa Hutson, Assistant Director, Engineering Advising
Phone: 255-7414 E-mail: mh265@cornell.edu

COLLEGE OF HUMAN ECOLOGY - 172 MVR

Paula Jacobs, Associate Director Student Services & Career Services
Phone: 255-2532 E-mail: pj24@cornell.edu

Virginia Utermohlen, Associate Professor, Nutritional Sciences - 314 Savage Hall

Phone: 255-5719 E-mail: vu10@cornell.edu

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Wendy Aquadro, Assistant Director, Advising Undergrad Biology- 216 Stimson Hall
Phone: 255-5233 E-mail: gsa8@cornell.edu

Bonnie Comella, Director, Undergraduate Advising/Undergrad Biology - 216 Stimson Hall
Phone: 255-5233 E-mail: bec3@cornell.edu

Jeffrey Doyle, Professor, Plant Biology The Hays and James Clark Director - 259 Plant Science
Phone: 255-5233 E-mail: jjd5@cornell.edu

CORNELL CAREER SERVICES - 103 Barnes Hall

Judy Jensvold, Senior Associate Director, Health Careers
Phone: 255-0542 E-mail: jmj5@cornell.edu

Gene Burpee, Career Counselor
Phone: 255-3559 E-mail: egb7@cornell.edu

AMERICAN INDIAN PROGRAM - 450 Caldwell Hall

Scott Templin, Student Services Associate
Phone: 255-3121 E-mail: sat82@cornell.edu

ARTS & SCIENCES ADMISSIONS & ADVISING - 438 Rockefeller Hall

Juliette Corazon, Assistant Dean/A&S Academic Advising Center
Phone: 255-9497 E-mail: jr272@cornell.edu

CORNELL ABROAD - 300 Caldwell Hall

Richard Gaulton, Director Cornell Abroad
Phone: 255-6224 E-mail: rhg7@cornell.edu

COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE AT CORNELL UNIVERSITY - S2 012 Schurman Hall

Jennifer Mailey, Director of Admissions/ VM Admissions
Phone: 253-3702 E-mail: jam333@cornell.edu

Accepted/Applied Chart 2006

The 2006 Accepted/ Applied Chart below contains Cornell-specific data. Accepted/ Applied Charts, including the most current one, can be accessed at www.career.cornell.edu/HealthCareers/acceptedApplied.html. The chart may be used to estimate your chances of admission to allopathic (M.D.) medical schools. The data does not include Cornellians who applied to other health professional schools: osteopathy, dentistry, optometry, and podiatry.

The national accepted/applied information, which is also given, can be useful in reviewing the Cornell charts.

Accepted/Applied Chart - 2006 Admission To Schools Of Allopathic (M.D.) Medicine of Cornell University Junior And Senior Year, First Time, Non-Minority Applicants Using The Health Careers Evaluation Committee

Acceptance Ratios (Example: 2/4, 2 Acceptances For 4 Applicants)
By Grade Point Average (GPA) And Total Scores
For The Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT)

Overall GPA	3.9+	3.89 - 3.8	3.79 - 3.6	3.59 - 3.4	3.39 - 3.2	3.19 - 3.0	2.99 - 2.8	Row Totals	% Accept. by MCAT Scores
MCAT Total									
35+	100% 14/14	100% 15/15	100% 23/23	91% 10/11	33% 1/3	67% 2/3	—	65/69	94%
30-34	90% 9/10	94% 16/17	88% 30/34	72% 18/25	47% 9/19	43% 3/7	0% 0/2	85/114	75%
25-29	100% 1/1	100% 2/2	80% 8/10	69% 11/16	17% 2/12	—	0% 0/1	24/42	57%
20-24	—	—	0% 0/1	0% 0/1	0% 0/1	0% 0/1	0% 0/2	0/6	0%
15-19	—	—	0% 0/1	—	—	—	—	0/1	0%
Column Totals	24/25	33/34	61/69	39/53	12/35	5/11	0/5	174/232	
% Accept by GPA	96%	97%	88%	74%	34%	45%	0%		75%

This chart does not include students who did not release their information to the Health Careers Program.

Recent National Accepted/Applied Information

2006	17,915	39,336	46%
2005	17,978	37,364	48%
2004	17,662	35,735	49%
2003	17,539	34,786	50%
2002	17,592	33,625	52%

Investigating Careers - Resources Available in the Career Library 103 Barnes Hall

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Careers in Sports Medicine
Complete Guide to the MD/PhD Degree
DOs: Osteopathic Medicine in America
Exploring Health Care Careers (health advocacy, medical writing, biomedical engineering, etc.)
Exploring Medical Anthropology
Faces of Public Health
Healthcare Management Education Directory of Programs
Health Professions: Career and Education Directory (physician assistant, athletic trainer, dietitian, etc.)
Minority Student Opportunities in United States Medical Schools
Nursing Programs (includes advanced practice nursing for non-nurse college graduates)
Official Guide to Dental Schools
Opportunities in Eye Care Careers
Opportunities in Clinical Laboratory Science Careers
Pharmacy School Admission Requirements
Planning Your Career in Alternative Medicine
Physician Assistant Careers
Yale Guide to Careers in Medicine & the Health Professions
To locate other resources search the Career Library catalog at career.cornell.edu/library/default.html

Wider Reading

Anatomy of an Illness as Perceived by the Patient, Norman Cousins
Betrayal of Trust: The Collapse of Global Public Health, Laurie Garrett
Blindsided: Lifting a Life Above Illness, Richard Cohen
Caring for Patients from Different Cultures: Case Studies from American Hospitals, Geri-Ann Galanti
Classic Cases in Medical Ethics: Accounts of Cases that Have Shaped Medical Ethics with Philosophical, Legal, and Historical Background, Gregory E. Pence
Complications: A Surgeon's Notes on an Imperfect Science, Atul Gawande
Critical Condition: How Health Care in America Became Big Business and Bad Medicine, Donald L. Bartlett & James B. Steele
Darkness Visible: A Memoir of Madness, William Styron
Deadly Dust: Silicosis and the Politics of Occupational Disease in Twentieth Century America, Gerald Markowitz and David Rosner
Demanding Medical Excellence: Doctors and Accountability in the Information Age, Michael Millenson
Drinking: A Love Story, Caroline Knapp
Goldberger's War: The Life and Work of a Public Health Crusader, Alan Kraut
How Doctors Think, Jerome Groopman
Joycelyn Elders, MD: From Sharecropper's Daughter to Surgeon General of the USA, Joycelyn Elders
Life after Medical School: Doctors Describe How They Shaped Their Medical Careers, Leonard Laster
Lucky Man: A Memoir, Michael J. Fox
Medical Marriages, Glen O. Gabbard and Roy W. Menninger, eds.
Middlemarch, George Eliot
Mountains Beyond Mountains: Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World, Tracy Kidder
Nursing Against the Odds, Suzanne Gordon
On Call in Hell: A Doctor's Iraq War Story, Cdr. Richard Jadick & Thomas Hayden
On Doctoring: Stories, Poems, Essays, Richard Reynolds and John Stone, eds.
The Call of Service, Robert Coles
The Doctor Stories, William Carlos Williams
The Pact: Three Young Men Make a Promise and Fulfill a Dream, Rameck Hunt, Sampson Davis, George Jenkins and Lisa Frazier Page
The Scapel and the Silver Bear, Lori Arviso Alvold and Elizabeth Cohen Van Pelt
The Social Transformation of American Medicine, Paul Starr
The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctor and the Collision of Two Cultures, Anne Fadiman
Voices of Integrative Medicine, Bonnie Horrigan, ed.