

General timeline for students applying to medical/dental school in 2017

*Note: this is for students who wish to start medical/dental school in August 2018

February-March

Letters:

Work on getting your letters of recommendation in order. Medical schools require a minimum of 3 letters of recommendation. The HPO requires a minimum of 5 as one of the qualifications for an HPO committee interview. These letters should include the following:

Life sciences majors:

- 2 RU science letters, preferably 2, from upper level major courses.
- 1 RU non-science letters
- 2 additional letters

Non-life sciences majors:

- 2 RU letters from your major
- 2 RU science letters from your premed prerequisites
- 1 additional letter

The additional letters should be mostly from academic sources, including anyone who supervised you in research. You may also have letters from outside of the classroom experiences such as shadowing, volunteer work, paid work etc. There is no limit to the number of recommendations you may submit to your HPO file. Avoid letters that are subjective personal testimonials.

Personal Statement:

You should have a working draft of your personal statement by now. Attend a University Career Services workshop (careers.rutgers.edu), give it to friends to read, put it in a drawer for two weeks and look at it again. See link for more tips: <http://www.sas.rutgers.edu/cms/hpo/docman-lister/interview-worksheet/97-personal-statement-tips/file>

Disciplinary Clearance:

If you know, or think you might, have had a conduct or disciplinary violation, please contact the Office of Student Conduct in Bishop House and ask to review your file. The HPO will require that you have disciplinary clearance to qualify for an HPO committee statement and the centralized, primary application services for health professions schools (AMCAS, AACOMAS, ADSAS, OPTOMCAS, etc) will ask if you have EVER been the subject of disciplinary action by your institution (Rutgers). Be informed and proactive! It is far better to be truthful than to forget or ignore something and be found out later. It might appear that you are trying to cover something up.

MCAT:

If you have not taken the MCAT already, you should be studying and have a target date in April, May, or June to take the exam. It takes at least 4 weeks for your scores to be processed. Remember a good portion of your final study time before the exam must consist of taking practice exams in conditions that closely simulate the real exam conditions. Remember, most people score better on their practice exams so if you are barely making your target score on your practice exams, you are probably not ready for the exam. More information and registration information is available at: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/taking-mcat-exam/>

DAT:

Same as MCAT, except you can take the exam a bit later because scores are processed immediately. More information: http://www.adea.org/dental_education_pathways/aadsas/Applicants/Pages/RegisterfortheDAT.aspx

Autobiography and resume:

Both are additional requirements to qualify for the HPO committee interview. The autobiography is not your personal statement. It is a brief story of your life from day one to the present. Please refer to our guide for writing the autobiography at: <http://www.sas.rutgers.edu/cms/hpo/docman-lister/interview-worksheet/96-guidelines-for-writing-the-autobiography-for-the-hpo-committee-interview-application/file>. Only the highlights please, 2-4 pages single spaced or 4-8 pages double spaced. This is only used by the HPO to help prepare for your interview and to get to know you a bit better. You do not need convince us of how great you are for medical school, rather give us a narrative version of your life and experiences so we get to know you a bit better. Your resume should include advanced coursework, clinical experience, research, campus leadership, skills, and volunteer and work experience. Pick up a free copy of the University Career Services Career and Internship Guide for sample resumes. Post both resume and autobiography to your online HPOdrome account by the end of March.

Early April:

Download an HPO interview worksheet and checklist. Fill it out and submit to the HPO. You must have completed all of the requirements listed on the worksheet before you can submit it for review. Once we have reviewed and approved your worksheet, you will be placed on the HPO interview waitlist. Interviews will start in late April/early May depending on committee members' availability. Preference will be given to candidates who have posted competitive MCAT scores. Try to get on the waitlist as early as possible.

May:

Get excellent grades in your spring semester coursework.

Continue working on personal statement. Finalize by the time your application cycle opens.

Finalize MCAT plans (if not taken already). June 17 is the last MCAT date to qualify for an HPO committee interview in 2017.

Create an account with the appropriate application service and familiarize yourself with the policies and deadlines:

AAMC: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/applying-medical-school-process/applying-medical-school-amcas/>

(Applications open in May and can be submitted the first week in June.)

AACOMAS: <http://www.aacom.org/InfoFor/applicants/Pages/default.aspx> (Applications open in May.)

AADSAS: http://www.adea.org/dental_education_pathways/aadsas/Applicants/Pages/default.aspx

Have transcripts sent to appropriate application services, following their directions. Be sure to have Rutgers send the transcripts that include your spring grades.

June:

Submit your primary application as early as possible. This is really important. The longer you delay the further and further back you get in the line of thousands of applicants medical schools have to review.

June 30 is the last day to submit your HPO committee interview checklist and worksheet if you are applying for a committee interview this cycle.

June/July:

Have your HPO interview and release your letters of recommendation.

Work on your secondary applications

Mid August

Have all of your application materials in to the medical schools. This includes your MCAT (or DAT), primary and secondary applications, letters of recommendation etc.

Podiatry and Optometry schools have later deadlines find out more here:

Podiatry: AACPM: <http://www.aacpm.org>

Optometry: OPTOMCAS: www.optomcas.org

Considering a gap year??

As the competition for entrance to medical school intensifies, the role of the gap year has become more common. The gap year can be an excellent opportunity to gain further clinical experience, prepare for or retake the MCAT, or complete a biomedical masters' degree to enhance your academics. Consider speaking with an HPO advisor to weigh the pros and cons of applying during the traditional end of junior year timeline versus a gap year to enhance your overall strength as an applicant.