

Fall 2023

***Getting into Medical and
Dental School
What you need to Know***

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Admission Stats

2022-23 admissions data from AAMC:

55,188 applied 23,810 matriculated = 43% got in
BCPM GPA: 3.67 TOTAL GPA: 3.74 MCAT 511.9

2021-22 admissions data from AACOMAS

Numbers for DO schools are a bit more forgiving but overall acceptance is still competitive

2021-22 27,277 applied and 8,516 matriculated = 31.22% got in
BCP: 3.35 TOTAL GPA; 3.35 MCAT: 502.71

- **-60% of those accepted had 1 acceptance**
- **-Average age 24**
- **-68% completed at least 1-2 gap years, 13 % had 3 to 4**

2021-22 admissions data from ADEA

11,759 applied 6295 matriculated = 53.5% got in
BCP: GPA:3.51 TOTAL GPA: 3.59
DAT SCORES: AA: 20.7 PA: 20.6 TOTAL SCI: 20.4

What is a strong candidate?

Academics (aamc.org indicates that the median undergraduate GPA was 3.82)

MCAT/DAT

Clinical Experience (do not go by the old 100-200 hour figures you see when you Google)

Leadership (takes many forms)

Community Service (according to the AAMC, the entering class of 2023 cumulatively performed over 15 million community service hours, an average of nearly 675 hours per student.

Application: Well written, on time

Quality letters – must meet requirements of schools applied to and have some objective basis for recommendation. Should include some familiarity with students' interest in medicine or dentistry

What is clinical experience and why is it important?

Your clinical experience will give professional schools vital information about you as an applicant. For example:

- Is the applicant aware of the expense and time commitment required for this career. Do they have personal, concrete experiences to support their decision?
- Has the applicant had experiences that have allowed them to understand and begin to develop a good "bedside manner" and ability to care for people from diverse backgrounds who have medical needs?
- What is this applicant's career vision? Do they have a long-term view of their career? What experiences have shaped that vision?
- Is this applicant ready to navigate in hospital and clinical environments and work successfully as a team member within them?

What can you do to gain clinical experience?

Most successful applicants have had more than one type of experience, including active (vs. passive) experiences. Here are some common examples:

- Volunteer and/or paid EMT
- Scribe
- Medical assistant
- Patient care technician
- CNA
- Clinical research assistant
- Physical therapy assistant
- Ophthalmic technician
- Endoscopy tech

Where can you find opportunities?

- HPO listserv: we send out emails that include job and internship
- Explore internship and job postings on the Rutgers Career Exploration and Success web site with your Handshake account
- Explore postings on LinkedIn, Indeed, Craigslist employment section Health and Medical
- Get a certification, such as EMT or CNA, and use it!
- Look at job listings at individual hospitals and medical/dental facilities

Tasks to be completed for those planning to apply in the next application cycle (June 2024 to start medical/dental school in August 2025)

- Familiarize yourself with the application services and their requirements, deadlines and policies
- Get familiar with forms and resources on hpo.rutgers.edu
- Study for and take MCAT by the end of June (latest)
- Collect letters of recommendation
- Write personal statement
- Work on list of activities and supporting information
- Contact Office of Student Conduct if there is ANY chance you have ever been the subject of Institutional Action
- If you are considering Early Decision at NJMS, reach out
- Subscribe to MSAR, consult choosedo.org, or adea.org/godental
- Complete and submit primary application early in June
- Take CASPER or AAMC PREview (if required) in June or July
- Complete secondary applications and submit all supplemental materials by early to mid-August
- Prep for interviews in August/September

- **AAMC (MD)**
- <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/applying-medical-school-process/>
- **2025 AMCAS application cycle dates** will be posted sometime in the late winter/spring 2024. Typically, applicants can begin *filling in* their application early in May and are able to **submit** their completed applications **late in May**. AMCAS then begins verifying applications but does not **send** any verified applications to medical schools until **late June**. We will update this information with exact dates as they become available but keep yourself informed by visiting the AMCAS site frequently.
- Application help: https://aamc-orange.global.ssl.fastly.net/production/media/filer_public/b2/23/b223c482-8ba3-44dd-bb1c-8835ac84f3e6/2020amcasapplicantguide-060419.pdf
- **AACOMAS (DO)**
- <http://www.aacom.org/InfoFor/applicants/Pages/default.aspx>
- **2025 AACOMAS application cycle dates** will be posted sometime in late winter/spring 2024. Typically, applicants can begin filling in their applications in April. See: <https://choosedo.org/how-to-apply/>
- **AADSAS (Dental)**
- **2025 AADSAS application cycle dates** will be posted sometime in late winter/spring 2024. Typically, applicants can begin filling out the application starting in May.
- General information: <https://www.adea.org/aadsas/>
- http://www.adea.org/dental_education_pathways/aadsas/Applicants/Pages/default.aspx

Pick a date, register, and study for your MCAT/DAT

- MCAT registration opened October 24/25 for MCAT test dates in January and March-June 2024. See: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/register-mcat-exam/october-registration-opening-january-and-march-through-june-mcat-dates>
- February 2024: Register for July-September exams.
- DAT information can be found here: <https://www.ada.org/education/testing/exams/dental-admission-test-dat/apply-for-the-dental-admission-test-dat>
- Be sure to leave time in your study plan to take multiple full-length practice tests. If you are not consistently achieving a competitive score, consider rescheduling and re-examining your study habits to see what you might improve.
- Remember, you do not need your MCAT/DAT score to apply but will want your score submitted by early July, at the latest.

Letters of Recommendation

- -Finish collecting your letters, optimally by the end of June.
- -You do not need your letters to submit your primary application. In fact, the letters will not be read by admissions committees until your secondary applications are submitted, typically late in July/early August.
- -Most medical schools require 3 letters, 2 from science professors (BCP) and one other. Many will accept only up to 5 letters.
- -We recommend that you have a minimum of five (5) in your HPOdrome account by July:
 - 2 from science professors or TAs
 - 1 non-science
 - If you have done research, we recommended you get a letter from your PI or the person with whom you worked most closely. NOTE: not all medical schools will accept a letter from research as a science letter, unless the person also taught you in a science class.
 - At least one letter from your major is strongly recommended
 - A letter from a physician or dentist (shadow, work etc.) is strongly recommended and required by some schools.

LORs continued...

- Use HPO forms. More information and tips for requesting and submitting LORs available on our website.
- Once you ask, check the HPOdrome to make sure the letters are received. Please be aware that it takes time for us to process and upload your letters.
- It is your responsibility to make sure that you have letters that meet the requirements of the schools to which you plan to apply.
- Once all of your letters are in your HPOdrome account, and you have submitted your primary application, you will need to fill out and submit a release form to the HPO and pay our fee. Instructions and information are available on our web site.
- We cannot customize packets for individual schools. We will select the strongest letters from your account and send a packet of letters and schools will be able to choose which letters they want to read from the packet.

Work on your personal statement

- AMCAS and AACOMAS require a one page, 5300 character essay. AADSAS is limited to 4500. Consider the following questions in your essays:
- Why have you selected the field of medicine/dentistry?
- What motivates you to learn more about medicine/dentistry?
- **What do you want medical/dental schools to know about you that has not been disclosed in another section of the application?**
- **SHOW don't TELL.**
- **Use specific examples from your experiences to illustrate what you learned, how you developed competency, how you made a difference.**
- Career Exploration and Success can help you draft and revise
- **A personal statement will not get you in – but it can keep you out!**

If appropriate, you may want to include.....

Information such as:

- Special hardships, challenges, or obstacles that may have influenced your educational pursuits

Commentary on significant fluctuations in your academic record which are not explained elsewhere in your application.

REMEMBER:

Writing a good personal statement is difficult and time consuming but it is vital to the success of an application. While your work and activities are going to be a key factor in the success of your application, **do not underestimate the importance of the personal statement. It will be read and reread and used as material for questions in interviews.** Give yourself plenty of time to write multiple drafts of the essay.

Work and Activities list and information

- The applications require that you complete a section where you include work and activities that are relevant to your application.
- For example, on AMCAS you can include up to 15 activities with descriptions that are up to 700 characters in length. You can then select up to 3 of those activities as most meaningful and write an additional 1325 characters on each of those activities.
- It is important not to treat this as a resume. You need to elaborate as much as you can about your roles, responsibilities, insights gained and what you learned from the experience. It is also important to include detail about the difference/impact you made through the activity. **This section is as, or more, important than your personal statement.**

Work and Activities (cont.):

- While writing about your experiences you should also keep in mind how they connect to the AAMC's 17 core competencies.
- <https://students-residents.aamc.org/media/15396/download>
- AAMC has lots of resources such as their Anatomy of an Applicant which uses real stories to demonstrate the premed competencies: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/real-stories-demonstrating-premed-competencies/real-stories-demonstrating-premed-competencies>
- This guide includes a self assessment tool: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/media/10606/download>
- Now is a good time to assess your strengths and address any weaknesses! Laying out a tentative template of what you would be able to include in your application now will help you see strengths and weaknesses in your non-academic profile while you still have time to do something about the latter.

There are 18 categories that you can select from when entering your activities. You do not need to list something from each category and these are listed in alphabetical order, not order of importance.

- Artistic Endeavors
- Community Service/Volunteer/medical clinical
- Community Service/Volunteer – not medical/clinical
- Conferences attended
- Extracurricular activities
- Hobbies
- Honors/Awards/Recognitions
- Intercollegiate Athletics
- Leadership – not listed elsewhere
- Military Service
- Other
- Paid Employment – medical/clinical
- Paid Employment – not medical/clinical
- Physician Shadowing/Clinical Observation
- Presentations/Posters
- Publications
- Research/Lab
- Teaching/Tutoring/Teaching Assistant

Contact the Office of Student Conduct

- Please contact the Office of Student Conduct (<https://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/records-transcripts>) to find out if you have ever been the subject of institutional action. If so, ask to review your file. The centralized, primary application services for health professions schools (AMCAS, AACOMAS, AADSAS, OPTOMCAS, etc.) will ask if you have EVER been the subject of disciplinary action by your institution (Rutgers) and expect you to be honest. Some require verification as part of their secondary or final admissions process. 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.

HPO Committee Portfolio review

- Have a 3.4 or higher overall and science GPA?
- You may wish to participate in the optional HPO review process.
 - Individualized review of your application materials
 - Membership in Canvas site specifically for portfolio review participants
 - Non evaluative, generic cover letter indicating applicant participated in portfolio review process
 - Interview preparation resources
 - Mentorship from recent grads in first, second year med/dent programs
- For more information and to participate you must have opened an HPO file by November 25 and attend one of the following workshops

Portfolio review workshop dates fall/winter 2023/24

- Friday, November 17 1-2:30pm
- Thursday, November 30 4-5:00pm
- Thursday, December 14 11am-12:00pm
- Wednesday, January 3 5-6:00pm
- Friday, January 19 3-4:00pm

You **MUST** attend a workshop **AND** submit all required materials by the deadline of Friday, February 2 by 5pm.

Common Mistakes by Applicants

- Not taking required courses
- Applying with low grades and/or scores
- Applying with minimal clinical experience
- Not allowing sufficient time for MCAT Prep
- Not taking personal statement seriously and/or procrastinating on writing it
- Not following directions provided by the application service
- Applying late
- Applying to the wrong schools
- Taking longer than two weeks to complete secondaries
- Thinking the application process ends after secondaries
- Lack of interview prep
- Lack of professionalism
- Lack of contact with the HPO

Need more information?

- Check out our web site: hpo.rutgers.edu
- Ask an advisor during virtual walk-ins, or in a regular, or virtual, appointment.
- Use Live Chat weekday afternoons to ask quick administrative (not advising) questions
- e-mail us at HPO@dls.rutgers.edu

