

The University of Texas at San Antonio

# UTSA Integrative Biology

College of Sciences

## Pre-Medical Guide



Start here



End here



# Premed to Physicians Program

UT San Antonio  
FLN 4.02.28  
210-458-6020

## Preface

The information presented in this document provides important resources for UT San Antonio students planning on applying to Medical School. It is based on and used with permission from the UT Austin's College of Natural Sciences Health Professions Office.

Additional Pre-Health Professions resources including prerequisites, time lines and application information for the following Health Professions: Dentistry, Physician Assistant Studies, Pharmacy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Optometry and Veterinary Medicine can be found on the Health Professions website: (<https://www.utsa.edu/healthprofessions/>) or by visiting with Dr. Eddie Hernandez, Undergraduate Advisor of Record in 1.01.08C in the Flawn Building.

## Osteopathic Physician (D.O.)

There are two types of fully licensed medical doctors in the United States: MDs and DOs. While the MD degree stands for "Doctor of Medicine," the DO degree stands for "Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine." DOs practice osteopathic medicine, which represents a school of medical thought first introduced by Dr. Andrew Taylor Still in 1874. Osteopathic medicine encompasses a unifying philosophy and approach to patient care, as well as a system of Osteopathic hands-on diagnosis and treatment using manipulative medicine. Like their MD counterparts, they are fully licensed to diagnose, treat, prescribe medications, and perform surgery in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Today, more than 20 percent of all US medical students are studying at a college of osteopathic medicine. To learn more about a career as a Doctor of Osteopathy, click [here](#). You can also check out [this site](#) to learn more about Osteopathic Medicine.

## MD/PhD Dual Degrees

AAMC has great resources that help students interested in MD/PhD programs explore their options. MD/PhD programs provide training in both medicine and research. They are specifically designed for those who want to become research physicians, also known as physician-investigators or physician-scientists. Graduates of MD-PhD programs often go on to become faculty members at medical schools, universities and research institutes.

Regardless of where they eventually work, MD-PhD candidates are being prepared for careers in which they will spend most of their time doing research, in addition to caring for patients. The MD-PhD dual career is busy, challenging, rewarding, and offers opportunities to do good for many people by advancing knowledge, developing new treatments for diseases, and pushing back the boundaries of the unknown. Find out more about this dual degree option from AAMC [here](#).

Additional MD/PhD Resources:

- MD/PhD Panel - Discussion on the process of applying ([video](#))
- MD/PhD: Is it right for me? Read the AAMC [MD/PhD Guide](#)

## Selecting a Major

So, what should you major in at UTSA? A common myth is that you must major in a science degree as a Pre-Med student, however, **this is not true**. We recommend that you choose a degree based on your interests. It is important to choose a major based on your academic interests rather than one that you think looks good to medical schools. Choose a major that you are passionate about, whether it is a major in Liberal Arts, Business, Public Health, or something else entirely. Completing the prerequisites for Medical School can be accomplished while pursuing these majors.

Certain degrees may cover the pre-med prerequisites; however, medical schools also accept students who show broad interests in their academic coursework through a non-science major. Major in any subject you want! Choose a major that may serve as an alternate career path in case you change your mind about medical school.

**Explore Majors/Health Professions further at one or more of the following resources:**

- [Wayfinder](#)
- [My Next Move](#)
- [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#)
- [Explore Health Careers](#)

## Pre-Med Self-Assessment

*The assessment below is designed to assess Medical School application strengths, if you are a new Pre-Med student use this assessment as a planning guide for your Pre-Med Pathway.*

### Are you working towards submitting a well-rounded application?

#### Start by Developing Your Personal Qualities

Individuals who are successful in their pursuit of a health care career possess qualities that they develop as young adults. These include: Good Judgment, Self-Discipline, Leadership/Accountability, Reliability, Motivation/Persistence, Honesty, Maturity, Compassion/Empathy, Integrity, Intellectual Curiosity, Strong Work Ethic, and Cultural Competency. Develop these qualities through the experiences and activities you choose to get involved with.

I want to develop my following qualities:

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How are you going to develop these qualities (be specific)?

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**Here are some ideas to get you started:**

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## Get Involved & Gain Experience

There are several ways you can get involved. Get involved in what you are interested in. This is key! There are many things you can do to build your application that include but are not limited to: Volunteering, Shadowing, Studying Abroad, and/or participating in a summer program. Get involved on campus, Tutor, Mentor, Teach, participate in Rec Sports. The list goes on and on. If you are considering adding studying abroad to your list, check out the study abroad section in this guide. Always remember to be yourself and do what you enjoy.

### Volunteering

Experience giving back to the community will be looked upon favorably by professional school admissions committees. If some of your volunteering is in a healthcare setting, you can combine volunteering with exposure to the field. A community service activity in which you are directly helping people face-to-face is of the most value, and making an ongoing commitment to that community service gives you time to grow and gain real value from the experience.

Volunteer Experience	Dates (can list time period or individual dates)	Hours	Responsibilities

What have I learned about myself through these experiences?

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Have I involved myself in a diverse set of experiences? What skills have I enhanced/gained through these experiences? (For example: I have become a better communicator through my volunteering experiences at the local hospital – explain how you have done this.)

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I want to explore the following volunteer activities:

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What have I learned from these experiences?

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I want to reach out to the following physicians to see about shadowing:

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**Direct Patient Care Experience – Get Hands-On Experience!**

It can be good to gain some hands-on experience to add to your application. You can do so in many ways. You can get a phlebotomy certification, train for EMT Basic certification, become a Certified Nursing Assistant, or become a scribe. Find one that you are interested in by doing informational interviews. Speak to a Pre- Health Professions Coach about these different ways to gain experience.

**Leadership**

Leadership which can be developed in many ways, needs to be demonstrated. Think about how you are developing leadership qualities and skills. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Tutoring
- Mentoring
- Teaching / TA a course
- Get involved in Student Organizational leadership

Name of Organizations	Position/Title (Communication Director, President, Member etc.)	Total Participation time (2 years, 3 semesters, etc)	Duties/Activities participated in with this organization/group

Brainstorm some specific ways you can develop your leadership skills:

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What is the most important thing I have learned about myself from these experiences?

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Brainstorm some specific ways you can develop your leadership skills:

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### Student Organization Involvement

Extracurricular activities help you become a well-rounded student because you develop not only knowledge and thinking skills but also social skills, group work, empathy, team building, organizational and motivational skills relevant when participating in an organization.

I am a part of the following student organizations:

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I want to join the following student organizations:

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#### Quick Tip:

*There are over many registered student organizations on campus, so there are lots to choose from. There are close several health-related organizations. Check the [Office of the Dean of Students](#) for a searchable database of student organizations and/or check with [Julian Chavez](#), Undergraduate Program Manager in the Department of Integrative Biology, for opportunities to join clubs or participate in non-health related volunteer opportunities in the department.*

### Academics

Academics include your overall and science GPA's and MCAT Scores. How well are you doing? Are you taking between 14-17 credit hours per semester? Are you keeping your grades up? Use the GPA [calculator](#).

Overall GPA \_\_\_\_\_ BCPM GPA (Biology/Chemistry/Physics/Math [including statistics]) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Quick Tip

*To be competitive for medical school, you will need average overall and science GPAs of at least 3.6 to 3.8 and above, depending on the schools you plan on applying to. This means you need to be making As and Bs with more As than Bs. If you are behind in your classes, don't wait until you get your first poor test score to ask for help. See the academic assistance section of this guide.*

\*This includes all course taken at UTSA and other institutions

**My MCAT Score \_\_\_\_\_**

Biological &amp; Biochemical Foundations of Living Systems: \_\_\_\_\_

Chemical &amp; Physical Foundations of Biological Systems: \_\_\_\_\_

Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior: \_\_\_\_\_

Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills: \_\_\_\_\_

**Quick Tip**

*You will want to aim for a score of 509-511 with at least 126-127 in each of the categories. Check out the MCAT section of this guide for more information on the MCAT. Please see a Pre-Health Professions Coach if you have further MCAT questions.*

***Get in the habit of personal reflection***

*Your insights about who you are as a person and how your experiences have shaped you will be of tremendous benefit when it is time to write your personal statement (a required part of your professional school application). Keep a journal handy so you can jot down your thoughts and observations!*

**Track your Progress**

Why do I want to be a Physician?

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What characteristics do you have that you feel will help you be an excellent doctor?

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Have you had experience working with people from backgrounds different from your own? What impact has it had on you?

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## Medical School Prerequisites Courses

For the most updated and current medical school and prerequisite courses, please visit the Pre-Medical Pathways page [here](#). Completion of the courses listed on this site will prepare you for Texas and most out-of-state United States medical schools. If you need to find out the pre-requisites for an out of state school you can consult the [MSAR](#) guide and contact that school's admissions office.

## Medical School Prerequisite Time Line

This is a recommended time line. There are many different pathways to Medical School and many students are not ready to apply after the third year of undergraduate school. Many take an additional year to prepare for medical school, applying in the summer after the fourth year, and then have a year in between undergraduate and medical school. Whether you are prepared to apply following your 3<sup>rd</sup> year or you are going to wait to apply after your 4<sup>th</sup> year, there are some things you can do as a Pre-Med Student, including:

**[Completion of these courses prepares you for Texas and most out-of-state U.S. medical schools.]**

The time line presents the pre-medical course requirements for Texas and most out-of-state United States medical schools, including courses that will fulfill the Baylor College of Medicine requirements and help with preparation for the MCAT and professional life. Six semesters, regardless of the student's age or year in college, are generally required to complete the premedical courses and extra-curricular activities needed for the MCAT and applying to medical schools. It is also common for students to complete the prerequisites and take the MCAT at the end of Year 4; these students have a bridge year between college graduation and starting medical school. For many students, this is an opportunity to become better prepared and more competitive for admission to medical school. Consult your academic advisor for help incorporating these courses into your degree plan and for selecting options based on your degree requirements. Check the Course Schedule for prerequisites for these courses.

This time line and course map on the following page serves as an example of how students interested in a career in medicine may complete the minimum premedical requirements at The University of Texas at San Antonio.

**[Requirements can change at any time. Check often for updates and review application service and school web sites for changes that may occur between updates.]**

You should plan on taking the MCAT in April or May of your third year. The senior year can be thought of as a bridge year to medical school. You should continue in relevant course work and premedical activities to become well-prepared for medical school and to strengthen your competitiveness if it becomes necessary to reapply.

First Year		Second Year		Third Year		Fourth Year	
Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
AIS 1203 Academic Inquiry	WRC 1023 Freshman Comp. II	ENG 2413 Technical Writing	PSY 1013 Social & Behavioral	HIS American History	Intro American Politics	American History	Language, Philosophy, & Culture
WRC 1013 Freshman Comp. I	MAT 1193 Calculus for BioSci	STA 1403 Prob and Statistics	BIO 3413 General Physiology	BIO 3643 Advanced Physiology I	BIO 3653 Advanced Physiology II	Creative Arts	Texas Politics
BIO 1203 Biosci I Lecture	BIO 1213 Biosci II Lecture	BIO 2313 Genetics	BIO 3813 Cellular Biology	BIO 3642 Advanced Clinical Anatomy I	BIO 3652 Advanced Clinical Anatomy II	BIO 3663 Human Embryology	COM 2113 Public Speaking
BIO 1201 Biosci I Lab	BIO 1211 Biosci II Lab	BIO 2362 Molecular Genetics Lab	CHE 3643 Org Chem Lecture II	PHY 1603 or PHY 1943 Physics I	PHY 1623 or PHY 1963 Physics II	BIO 3713 Microbiology	BIO 3433 Neurobiology
CHE 1103 Gen Chem I Lecture	CHE 1113 Gen Chem II Lecture	CHE 2603 Org. Chem I Lecture	BIO 2992 Medical Terminology	PHY 1611 or PHY 1951 Physics I Lab	PHY 1631 or PHY 1971 Physics II Lab	BIO 3513 Biochem	BIO 1173 Computation Biology
CHE 1121 Gen Chem I Lab	CHE 1131 Gen Chem II Lab	CHE 2612 Org. Chem Lab I		BIO 3013 Intro to Clinical Med & Pathology	BIO 4373 Adv. Clinical Med & Pathology	BIO 3362 Molecular Biochem Lab	
<b><i>Four Year Plan</i></b> <b><i>BS in Biology - Pre-medical Concentration</i></b>							
14	14	16	14	15	15	17	15

## Pre-Medical Activities and Application Time Line

### First and Second Years

- ▼ Subscribe to the *HPinfo Emails* [here](#).
- ▼ Take an average to heavy course load: 14-16 hours is considered a normal pre-med course load.
- ▼ **Get to know your professors.** You will need faculty evaluations when you apply to medical schools. Two from science faculty are recommended.
- ▼ Meet with Dr. Eddie Hernandez to explore health professions and to discuss your goals and preparation, especially how to make the most out of your first two years.
- ▼ Get involved in extracurricular activities (*e.g.*, student organizations, volunteering, and shadowing in medical settings, community service).
- ▼ Attend the Health Professions Fair each year, generally held in February or March, to visit with representatives from medical schools and other health professions programs.
- ▼ Attend the medical school presentations.
- ▼ Keep viable career alternatives open.

### Third Year

- ▼ Complete premedical requirements by May of your third year.
- ▼ Prepare for and take the MCAT, ideally no later than the end of your third year.
- ▼ Visit medical school web sites; decide where you will apply.
- ▼ Ask faculty who know you well if they will write evaluations in support of your medical school application; you will need two faculty evaluations. Science faculty letters are recommended.
- ▼ Attend the Medical School Speaker Series.
- ▼ Attend the Health Professions Fair, generally held in February or March, to visit with representatives from medical schools and other health professions programs.
- ▼ Complete and submit medical school primary and secondary applications early in the summer, after your 3<sup>rd</sup> year.

### Fourth Year

- ▼ Most medical school interviews take place during the late summer and the fall semester.
- ▼ Acceptance offers to medical school begin during the fall semester.
- ▼ Complete UTSA degree requirements necessary for graduation.
- ▼ Throughout your fourth year, continue in premedical activities and additional courses to prepare for medical school and to strengthen your application in case you need to apply again.

## Can I Take Courses Away from UTSA

Completing your coursework at UTSA (your home institution) is considered best preparation for health professions schools.

Key: UTSA: Take classes at UTSA

4YR: If necessary, okay to take class at another 4-year institution

CC: If necessary, okay to take class at community college

Courses	Pre-medical	Pre-dental	Pre-veterinary	Pre-optometry	Pre-Pharmacy	Pre-Physician Asst	Pre-Physical Therapy	Pre-Occupational Therapy
Biology	UTSA	UTSA	UTSA	UTSA	UTSA	UTSA	UTSA	UTSA
Chemistry	UTSA	UTSA	UTSA	UTSA	UTSA	UTSA	UTSA	UTSA
Physics	4YR	4YR	4YR	4YR	4YR or CC	Not Required	4YR or CC	4YR or CC
Statistics, Calculus	4YR	4YR	4YR	4YR	4YR or CC	4YR or CC	4YR or CC	4YR or CC
English	4YR	4YR	4YR	4YR	4YR	4YR or CC	4YR or CC	4YR or CC
Other Pre-requisites	Generally, it seems to be okay to take other prerequisites away from UTSA, if needed; however, students should contact individual schools' admission offices for questions about specific courses.							

General Recommendations:

1. Taking courses away from UTSA can give the impression that the student is avoiding rigorous courses; therefore, it is important to earn excellent grades at both community colleges and other four-year institutions.
2. It generally appears to be okay with professional schools to take government and history requirements at other four-year institutions or community colleges.
3. For other general requirements students can check with professional schools' admissions offices.

## Study Abroad?

Most health professions schools require that prerequisites be taken at U.S. accredited schools, and some will accept credits from Canadian accredited schools.

Although exchange program courses and some affiliated program courses are counted as in-residence credit by UTSA, according to Texas state law, foreign course work cannot be counted in the GPAs for application to graduate and post-baccalaureate professional schools. The rules and policies can vary among the professional schools. Students who plan to study abroad should research this carefully for the schools and application services they plan to apply to. Look in the education requirements, transcripts, and FAQ sections of their web sites for information about foreign course work and study abroad. [See example at bottom of page.]

UTSA faculty-led courses are "in-residence" courses as well as U.S. credits, and so courses like

Organic Chemistry II (CHE 3643) taught in Spain by UTSA faculty can be used to satisfy a prerequisite; however, for many students taking these rigorous courses in only 5 weeks may not be recommended. It is important that pre-health professions students master these courses and retain this knowledge for success in entrance exams and in advanced studies.

The UTSA Health Professions Office (HPO) very strongly recommends that our students satisfy their health professions prerequisites at UTSA. Use the study abroad opportunity to study the culture and language of that country and to satisfy general education requirements if approved by your academic advisor. Science courses that are not considered direct preparation for the health professions can be considered as well. (Examples: research, ecology, environmental science; but NOT cell, molecular, micro, anatomy, physiology which figure heavily into your preparation and readiness for professional school and the admissions committee's assessment of your application).

EXAMPLE: from TMDSAS (Texas Medical and Dental Schools Application Service)

### **FAQ - Foreign Applicants, Coursework from Foreign Schools and Study Abroad**

#### **Do you accept foreign coursework?**

No! State law requires that academic work taken at foreign colleges, universities or preparatory schools shall be excluded from the calculation of the grade point average for students seeking admission to graduate or post-baccalaureate professional school.

#### **Foreign coursework will not count towards satisfying any of the required coursework.**

Undergraduate foreign coursework that appears as transfer credit on the transcript of a regionally accredited US college will count towards the 90-hour requirement. Each individual transfer course credit granted by the US school must be listed on the transcript. Lump sum credit with no specific course and hour identification will not be accepted.

For full content on this topic visit the TMDSAS website: see [Foreign Coursework](#).

## **What about Claiming AP/IB Credit for Prerequisites**

While we generally recommend that as a Pre-Health Professions student you not "claim" AP/IB credit for prerequisite courses such as Biology, Chemistry, English, Physics, and Mathematics, these are important decisions that you must make and that require your careful consideration.

It may seem like a convenient way to eliminate hours from your degree plan and accelerate your path to professional school, but claiming credit can be detrimental to your preparation for success on entrance exams and in professional studies. Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses vary in rigor, and they are generally not equivalent to the rigor of UTSA courses. However, your AP/IB courses can be very good preparation for taking these courses at UTSA, providing the opportunity to master that material, become better prepared, enhance your GPA, and demonstrate your academic ability and readiness for advanced study in health professions schools.

Unless you are academically very well prepared, it is best to start with the introductory courses. Please consult with your academic advisor for help in determining your readiness for higher level science

courses. Most schools that accept AP/IB credit will expect you to take additional upper-division course work in that area of study. Below are specific recommendations.

## Science Courses

### Biology and Chemistry

If you claim credit in courses like BIO 1404 and BIO 1414 you may not be adequately prepared for the rigorous next course here at UTSA, BIO 2313 (Genetics). If you claim credit for CHE 1103 and CHE 1113, your first college level chemistry course at UTSA will be CHE (Organic Chemistry I).

Honors students in Biology and Chemistry may claim test credit, register in the honors sequence for Biology or Chemistry, and will take additional upper-division credits in those areas, making up for the lack of first-year hours in those disciplines.

Your UTSA faculty will expect you to be prepared to learn and understand the material conceptually and theoretically in order to understand test questions well enough to earn As on your exams. They will teach material beyond the textbook that was not presented in your high school courses. You will be in second year courses with many students who took General Biology and General Chemistry here and are well prepared to handle the exams in the more advanced courses. They will set the standard for the grade scale or curve in your classes.

### Physics

Physics is required to prepare for some health professions schools. In some cases, you will be tested on Physics in your professional school entrance exam. We strongly recommend taking physics at the college level if you are preparing for a professional school that requires physics.

### Calculus and Statistics

For the Texas medical schools, if you take statistics in the classroom here at UTSA, you can use statistics to satisfy the math prerequisite. Then if your degree plan or any of your science courses require calculus, you can decide with your academic advisor whether to use credit-by-exam or take the course(s) in the classroom.

**For all health professions schools, both in Texas and out-of-state, it is important to check their admissions web sites for any restrictions and preferences on credit-by-exam.**

## Non-Science Courses

It is usually acceptable to claim credit-by-exam for general education or core curriculum requirements such as history and government. Claiming this type of credit may give you time to take the courses that will prepare you for professional school and school entrance exams. On the other hand, critical thinking skills and an understanding of ethics, society, community, cultures, history, and human behavior are important for your success now and throughout your professional and personal life. Taking college level courses is a good way to develop these areas of knowledge.



## English Literature, Rhetoric, Writing

If you claim credit for freshman writing and literature courses, we recommend taking additional courses in the classroom at the college level. Even if your high school verbal skills were strong, this type of academic skill weakens over time if you do not use it.

Verbal skills are extremely important to your success in your undergraduate course work, your entrance exams, in professional school, and as a health care professional. You must be able to read efficiently, at a good rate, with high comprehension and critical thinking skills. You must develop and maintain a good vocabulary, not just for the sciences but also for social and behavioral sciences, ethics, policies and regulations, and procedural information. Many admissions deans recommend reading well-written novels in addition to your textbook material.

### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Although the **Texas medical and dental schools** accept AP credit for admission, **some out-of-state schools** do not. These schools vary in their policies and perspectives on credit-by-exam. For example, Texas medical and dental schools recommend taking additional upper-division courses in the same subject area to make up for using AP credits for prerequisite courses. The credit-by-exam policies vary among the **health profession disciplines** and from school to school within each professional area.

Review the information on our prerequisite courses lists and check individual school admissions web sites or contact their admissions offices to be sure about each school's expectations. Taking courses in the college classroom will help you to compete for admission and to succeed in professional school. We strongly recommend that you use these courses as building blocks that will be the foundation for your future career.

## To Withdraw or Not to Withdraw (or to switch to pass/fail)

No admissions committee for any health professional school likes to see "W" on a transcript. This is an indication that something became too much for you to handle and that you chose to drop the course rather than see it through. There are times when the "W" is the best course of action, however, keep reading to see how your choice may affect your competitiveness for professional school.

### More of a problem if:

1. **"W" is a pattern on your transcript.** Two "W"s can signal a possible pattern; three "W"s create a definite pattern.
2. **It occurs in a context of inconsistent grades.** To be competitive for professional school, you should be making A's and B's with more A's than B's. If you have semesters which include B's and C's – even one or two C's, your grades are inconsistent by a professional school's standard.
3. **It's one of your prerequisite courses for professional school.** In this case, you might consider sticking with the class. Then you only need to earn a D to earn credit. **Check with your academic advisor** about whether you can use the pass/fail option.
4. **It's any science-based course,** since the bulk of professional school curriculum will be science based.

**Less of a problem if:**

1. **It's the only "W" on your transcript at time of application to professional school.** You will want to choose wisely however, depending on the course. If you are taking a lower division or introductory course, keep in mind that upper division courses will be more challenging. You may want to hold on to that "one and only W" for later.
2. **It's a non-science course.** While professional schools want you to do well in all classes, they are likely to be less concerned if you dropped a sociology or business class.

**What if there are non-academic reasons for needing to Withdraw?**

Sometimes personal or family emergencies and other special circumstances make it difficult to find time for and focus on your studies. Sometimes for new students it is difficult to make the transition to UTSA. If you are dealing with something that is getting in the way of your school work, it is very important that you get help.

1. Talk to your academic advisor and/or an advisor in your college student department office.
2. Check out the support services at the [Counseling and Health Center](#).

**What if I keep the class and then I make a C or lower?**

No one wants to explain a poor grade in a class, but there is much to be learned about being responsible for your grades (see exercise below). Talking about how you might change your strategy going forward can be not only a sign of maturity and integrity, it can also demonstrate your resilience. All these qualities are important to future health professionals.

**What did you learn from this experience?**

While it can be tempting to blame others for the need to withdraw from a class, you must understand that the responsibility is 100% yours. To help you identify your responsibility, ask yourself these questions.

1. Could I have met with the professor to see what I could do to improve my understanding?
2. (If my professor was difficult to understand or hard for me to follow) Did I look for other sections of the courses to sit in on so that I could learn the material in a different way?
3. Could I have identified that I needed assistance earlier in the semester? (In time to have possibly salvaged my grade)
4. Could I have managed my time better so that I had appropriate time to devote to the class?
5. Could I have checked out resources for tutoring through the [Tomás Rivera Center](#)?
6. Could I have adjusted my priorities (lowering especially those which are non-academic) to allow focus on my studies?

**Preparing for the possible professional school interview question**

You will want to spend some time reflecting on what you could have done differently so that you did not have to drop the class (see above). If you are asked about the Withdraw, you should be able to explain where things went wrong, what you learned from the experience, and how you might choose differently in the future. Remember the Health Professions Office does Interview Prep appointments to help you prepare for your interviews.

## Academic Assistance

### Academic Support

Depending on the course, you may have tutors available that can help you with course content. Be sure to look for announcements in your class about tutor and supplemental instructors that can help with course content. Together, you and your tutor will tackle difficult homework problems and review course concepts. You can also receive coaching on how to understand and work those science exam questions that you need to earn an A. The Department of Integrative Biology has a [Study Hall](#) where Teaching Assistant and Tutors are available to work with you on course content. These students are hired to help expand the reach of the professor, providing another source of assistance. While they don't have the expertise of a professor, they have mastered the course previously, often with the same professor. TAs are great for quick questions and – depending on their skill level and availability – can be great “tutors”, explaining concepts in a way that may be easier for you to grasp.

The Department of Mathematics also has a tutoring center. [Math Lab](#) is available to all UTSA students enrolled in a mathematics course. Upper division undergraduates and graduate students are available to help with any math questions.

### Improve Your Study Skills

[Tomás Rivera Center](#) promotes lifelong student success by providing academic success resources to UTSA Students and our Community. These campus services include:

- Tutoring Services (QLab)
- Supplemental Instruction (SI)
- Academic Success Coaching & Workshops

The Center is the main resource for academic support. Supplemental Instruction offers optional weekly discussion sections for students enrolled in some historically difficult, large-format courses, including calculus. The PLUS program provides peer-led study groups for a few difficult, upper-division courses. Visit the Center website for additional Academic Support Resources.

[The Writing Center](#) aids with each step of the writing process for cover letters, personal statements, and other writing projects.

### Utilize Faculty Office Hours

Your grades in a given course will ultimately be determined by the professor who is teaching it. If you are struggling in a course, your first request for help should go to the professor. Not only are they experts in the content being taught, but they also have established the method by which you will be evaluated. Be prepared to explain to the professor what you have been doing to grasp and retain the content and where you believe you are falling short. This not only communicates your commitment to learning, it also gives the professor a starting point for your discussion.

[Career Services](#) assists students and alumni in identifying and developing the global skills necessary to successfully pursue and achieve lifelong career goals.

## MCAT INFORMATION

There was a major change in structure and content of the MCAT in 2015.

### MCAT Preparation

The MCAT exam is analysis based; answers will be within the question and you will need to think through the question to get the answer. The exam is 7hrs and 30 minutes (including completing demographics, etc). Actual test time is 6hrs, 15 min.

The MCAT web site is full of very helpful information about preparation and planning for taking the MCAT. The Official Guide to the MCAT® Exam, Fourth Edition is now out and can be bought through AAMC's MCAT [here](#). The guide includes:

- An official comprehensive overview about the MCAT exam
- 120 practice questions and solutions (30 questions in each of the four sections of the MCAT exam) written by the developers of the MCAT exam at the AAMC
- Everything you need to know about the exam sections
- Tips on how to prepare for the exam
- Full length practice exams
- Details on how the exam is scored, information on holistic admissions, and more

Below are some options for MCAT preparation materials:

- [Khan Academy](#)
- [AAMC Preparation Materials](#)

### MCAT Implications for Medical School Preparation

Although medical school prerequisites have not yet changed, it is important to recognize that medical schools consider the new content to be essential in your preparation for the medical profession and may look for evidence of it in other ways; for example: in your transcripts and in your interviews.

Strong reading skill will be more important than ever. For a complete description of the areas and topics that may show up on the new exam, check out the [MCAT for Students page](#) periodically; these will be updated whenever new information is available.

### MCAT scoring

Each of the four subsections are scored on a scale of 118-132 with 125 being at the center of the bell curve. The overall scale is 472-528, with 500 at the center of the bell curve. They chose to center the scale at 500, since their national data with the previous exam showed that students at the center succeeded in medical school.

The score report will include total score, section scores, percentile ranks, confidence band, and score profile showing strengths and weaknesses. Last year's percentile rank tables are available [here](#).

## Should I retake the MCAT?

**Can I do better if I am going to retake?** Remember – there is also the risk of getting a lower score in one or more of the test’s categories. Many schools look at the most recent set of MCATs, which needs to be a consideration. Ask yourself the following questions:

- How did I prepare for the exam? Did I take a prep course?
- Do I feel that I did not have enough time to devote to MCAT study?
- How did I feel the actual test went for myself – Was I sick? Was I overly anxious? Did I have enough time? Were there other distractions on test day?
- What are my summer commitments? Do I have the time this summer to truly dedicate myself to MCAT study?
- What is the relative risk of going down on any section?
- Do I feel that my score accurately reflects my ability?
- Looking at my history, how have I tended to perform on standardized tests?
- Am I mentally prepared to take on the task of retesting? Do I have the motivation and energy required?

**How is my score?** The national average MCAT 508-509 with no less than 127-129 on the subsections and is rising each year. What schools do I want to apply to? What are their average MCAT scores and GPAs?

- What was my breakdown? Are there individual scores that may be viewed as a weakness?
- Are there any other considerations that can be taken into consideration when interpreting MCAT scores?
- Do I have a learning disability? Did I use my accommodation?
- Is English my second language?
- Am I part of a group of underrepresented students?

**How competitive are the other aspects of my application?** It's important for students to view themselves realistically. The average overall GPA for those accepted to medical school is on average 3.65-3.75 and the BCPM (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Math) is a 3.69-3.71.

- What is my BCPM GPA and overall GPA?
- Are my grades at the average, above the average or below the average?
- Would I be a more competitive applicant if I waited another year, took additional coursework, retook the MCAT and added additional experiences to my resume?

Be sure to look individually at one's courses and one's subsections of the MCAT. For example, it will not be favorable if a student had trouble in the physical sciences both in their coursework and on the MCAT. If you are planning on retaking the MCAT come and speak with a health professions coach.

\*It is important to note that a high GPA does not make up for a low MCAT score and vice versa. Your GPA reflects your performance over your college career where as your MCAT score represents your performance at one point in time.

## Need a GPA Booster?

A post-baccalaureate program is for students who have already completed an undergraduate degree, and are interested in a health professions career. They need either to finish pre-requisite courses and/or need to improve their academic standing for a more competitive professional school application.

### What Different Post-Baccalaureate (Post-Bacc) Programs Are Available?

Essentially there are two different types of programs for students hoping to attend med or dent school:

**Basic Sciences:** This type of program is for students who have not completed the basic requirements for medical school. Generally, this is for "career changers" who have decided to pursue medicine. The coursework can be done in a formal post-bacc program or individually at a local university.

**Advanced Sciences/GPA Boosters:** This type of program is designed for students who were science majors or have completed the basic science requirements. These are for students who:

- Want to stay academically engaged during a gap year while applying to medical or dental schools.
- Need to raise their GPA to become a more competitive medical school applicant.

### How do I Get In?

Selection criteria vary around the country. Most programs require at least a 3.0 GPA and an MCAT score of that meets a specific threshold; it can be different for each program so please check directly with the program you would like to apply to. Applications for the fall semester are usually due by March of that year. Check with individual programs so as not to miss deadlines.

- Follow [this link](#) for a list of programs around Texas
- Follow [this link](#) for a list of programs around the United States

## Research Schools Before You Apply!

Thinking about what type of medical school you are looking for? Not sure what you want in a school? Check out the following possible criteria for evaluating a medical school's fit for you!

1. Size of your cohort
2. Prestige of the institution
3. Training facilities / Hospital affiliation

**Examples:**

- Shriners Hospital for Children (UTMB)
- Memorial Hermann Hospital (Hou)
- Parkland Memorial Hospital (UTSW)
- Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital (SA)
- Ben Taub General Hospital (BCM)

4. Opportunity to do research
5. Support programs –tutoring, counseling, student health services, childcare
6. Community building – student organizations
7. Options for financial aid/scholarship
8. Outreach/Service to Community

**Examples:**

- Walkin' the Talk Initiative (PLF)
- The Monday Clinic (UTSW)
- Health Care for the Homeless Program (BCM)
- Hart School-Based Pediatric Clinic (TT)
- Health For All (A&M)

9. Combined degree programs (MD + MPH, MBA, or JD)
10. Family/Friends (Support in close proximity)
11. Lifestyle - outdoorsy, athletic, cultural arts, etc.
12. Centers/ Institutes /Programs that align with your Medical School Goals

**Examples:**

- Neuroscience Research Center (Hou)
- Greehey Children's Cancer Research Institute (SA)
- Huffines Institute for Sports Medicine and Human Performance (A&M)
- Laura W. Bush Institute for Women's Health (TT)
- The Center for Training in International Health (UTMB)
- Cardiovascular Research Institute (TCOM)
- Center of Excellence in Infectious Disease (PLF)

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**Other Resources to explore:****Medical School Admissions Requirements (MSAR)**

<https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/requirements/msar/>

Written and published by the Association of American Medical Colleges. This guide is packed with crucial information on applying about how to make yourself a better prepared and more attractive applicant, and everything about the entire admissions process. You get details about the MCAT exam, how admissions decisions are made, and information on diversity in medical schools, financing, applicant and matriculant data, and more. Order your copy today in print or e-book.

**Osteopathic Medical College Information Book**

<http://www.aacom.org/resources/bookstore/cib/Pages/default.aspx>

A brief description of all of the osteopathic medical colleges, admissions criteria, minimum entrance requirements, supplementary application materials required, class size or enrollment, application deadlines, and tuition. Also includes information about choosing a career in osteopathic medicine.

**My Top Ten Schools Are:**

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 6) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 7) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 8) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 9) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 10) \_\_\_\_\_
-



## CASPer Information

### What is CASPer?

CASPer is a form of situational judgement test.

Situational judgement tests (SJTs) are a type of psychological test which presents the test-taker with realistic, hypothetical scenarios and may ask the individual what they would do in the dilemma and why they would do it. Situational judgement tests tend to determine behavioral tendencies, assessing how an individual will behave in a certain situation, and knowledge instruction, which evaluates the effectiveness of possible responses.

### Why do programs require CASPer?

Many programs have begun incorporating new and innovative tools like the multiple-mini interview (MMI) and CASPer®, to make sure that students are not only academically capable but also possess the suitable characteristics of someone who will likely succeed on the job.

Although there is a slight increase in resources for applicants and programs, it is helpful to incorporate a variety of different tools in the admissions process to gather a more holistic view of the applicants.

The following Texas Medical Schools Now Require CASPer:

- Texas A&M Health Science Center
- Texas Tech Health Science Center
- UTMB
- Long School of Medicine

### What is CASPer test comprised of?

Going into the test knowing what to expect will prepare you best! Be aware that there are 12 sections to be completed in 60-90 minutes. You are given an optional 15-minute break after six sections, where you can stand up to stretch or you use the washroom.

Each section is comprised of either a video-based or word-based scenario. Each scenario is followed by a set of three questions. You are asked to type out your response to each question in the designated text box. You have five minutes to respond to all three questions.

When the timer is up, you are automatically directed to the next section where you are presented with a new scenario.

Want more information? Check out this [video](#).

## Follow the Time Line for Applying to Medical School

### Fall Semester

- Begin compiling list of experiences; include details such as dates, hours, tasks and responsibilities
- Attend personal statement workshop presented by a Pre-Health Professions Coach
- Begin drafting personal statement and optional essays
- Ask evaluators for letters of evaluation
- Set up an Interfolio account
- Medical applicants: Purchase Medical School Admissions Requirements guide online through [www.aamc.org/](http://www.aamc.org/) Click on "Publications"
- Research schools to determine where to apply



### February/March

- Attend Health Professions Fair, usually held in February or March to visit with professional schools and have a professional headshot taken for your application
- Create TMDSAS ID



### January

- For those that are ready, take MCAT; We recommend taking these exams no later than April



### April

- Send friendly reminder to recommenders at the end of the month if haven't already submitted letters of evaluation

### May

- **Applications open about May 1**
- Obtain official transcripts from all institutions attended. Review for accuracy of information and use as reference for completing application
- Print and read application service instructions; Make a plan or "to do" checklist
- Be sure to read instructions about score reporting; these vary year-to-year and by schools
- Request transcripts from all institutions attended to be sent to application services
- Schedule a personal statement review
- Finish personal statement and write optional essays
- Submit when application is complete (this includes your Spring grades) and you are confident you've done your best! (**Earlier is Better**)



### June/July

- Submit when application is complete (this includes Spring grades) and you're confident you've done your best! (Earlier is better - ideally end of June)
- Complete and submit secondary applications; applications are not complete until secondary applications are submitted



### August/September

- Schedule interview prep appointment with Health Professions Office
- Interviews begin in early August

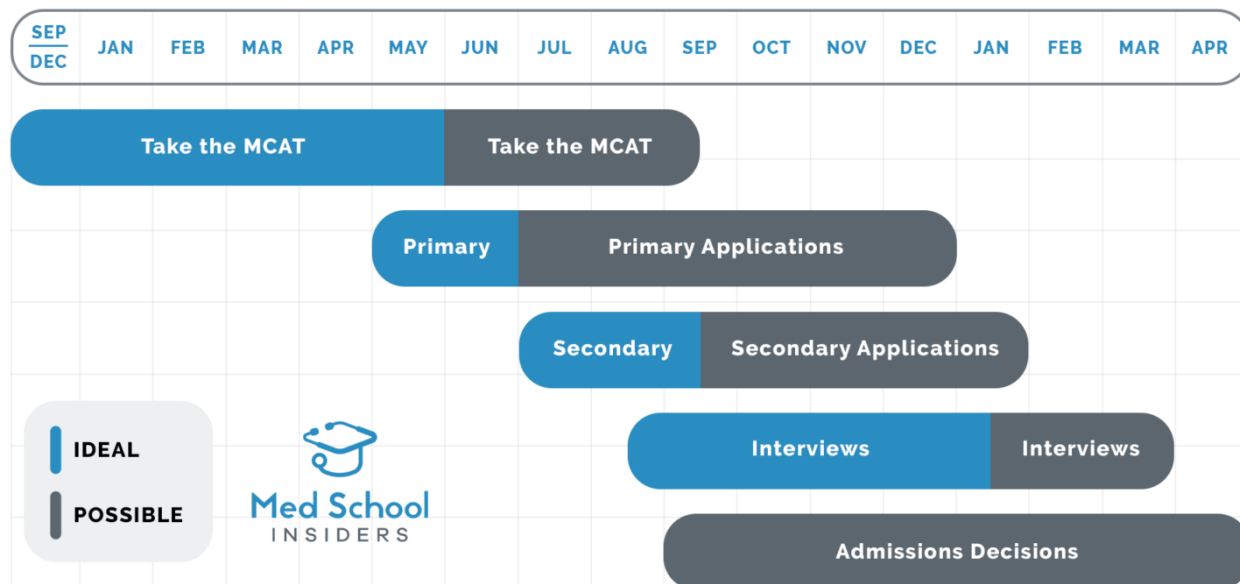


### October

- Interviewing continues until December, maybe January in some cases
- **Deadline to submit TMDSAS is about Sept. 29 (Earlier is better - we encourage submitting by end of June)**
- **Deadlines vary by schools for AMCAS**

## Apply Early and Know the Process

### Medical School Admissions Timeline



## Application Services

There are three application services that you will use to apply to Medical School in the United States.

- Texas Medical and Dental Schools Application Service (TMDSAS)
- American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS)
- American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Application Services (AACOMAS)

### Texas Medical and Dental Schools Application Service

([TMDSAS](#)) is the only application for the state of Texas. It is the application service you will use to apply to the 9 public medical schools in Texas. They are not listed in the AMCAS application.

#### Texas Medical Schools (Public) - Allopathic

- [The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center](#) (Dallas)
- [The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston](#)
- [McGovern Medical School at Houston](#)
- [The University of Texas School of Medicine at San Antonio](#)
- [The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley](#)
- [Texas A&M University College of Medicine](#) (Bryan-College Station, Temple)
- [Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Medicine](#) (Lubbock)
- [TTUHSC Paul L. Foster School of Medicine at El Paso](#)
- [The University of Texas at Austin – Dell Medical School](#)

### Texas Medical School (Public) – Osteopathic

- [Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine at the University of North Texas HSC - \(Ft. Worth\)](#)
- [Sam Houston State University \(SHSU\) College of Osteopathic Medicine \(COM\) – \(Conroe\)](#)

### American Medical College Application Services

([AMCAS](#)) is the application service you will use to apply to Baylor College of Medicine and all out-of-state allopathic schools. ACMAAS [FAQ](#) have great information for you to check into.

Texas Medical Schools (Private) - Allopathic

- [Baylor College of Medicine](#) (Houston)

### American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Application Service

([AACOMAS](#)) is the application service you will use to apply to all out-of-state osteopathic schools. If you are applying to Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine you will complete the TMDSAS application.

Texas Medical Schools (Private) – Osteopathic

- [University of the Incarnate Word School of Medicine](#) (San Antonio)

### MD/PhD Applicants

If you are applying to Texas schools and MD/PhD programs you will complete both the TMDSAS application and the AMCAS application.

For lists of accredited programs in the United States:

- [Allopathic Medical Schools – American Association of Medical Colleges \(AAMC\)](#)
- [Osteopathic Medical Schools – American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine \(AACOM\)](#)

## Considering Attending an International Medical School?

### Things to consider...

- Why International Medical School? What strengths/attributes do you possess that will enable you to overcome additional difficulties such as difficult living conditions, less extensive learning resources, more limited teaching and clinical facilities, etc.?
- International Medical School Graduate must prepare to apply for residencies through the National Resident Matching Program <http://www.nrmp.org/>
- Learn about living costs: Create a ScienceWorks account for access to explore 'Going Global' Resource
- Make sure you are knowledgeable about any post graduate/post residency requirements  
(For example, Duke has a medical school in Singapore and they require 1 year of work in Singapore after residency called paying their bond)
- Does the University accept UT Pre-Med Prerequisites?

Make sure the school...

- Is accredited and respected: The World Directory of Medical Schools provides accreditation data, university affiliations, etc. <http://www.wdoms.org/>
- Has not been banned from the medical licensing board in the state you would want to practice in (e.g. California has banned some schools)
- Follows Ethical Guidelines: <https://www.cfhi.org/ethics-and-best-practice-guidelines-for-training-experiences-in-global-health>
- Is the School listed on the (FAIMER) Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research's International Medical Education Directory? <http://www.faimer.org/resources/imed.html>
- Students must graduate from an International Medical School listed in this directory to be eligible for ECFMG certification. ECFMG certification is required to be eligible for the (ACGME) Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education's accredited residency programs in the U.S., and for licensure in many states. <http://www.ecfm.org/certification/>
- Prepares you to take the (USMLE) United States Medical Licensing Exam <http://www.usmle.org/>

Consider the Pros and Cons...

- Of [applying to international medical schools](#)
- Of International Medical Schools: [attending international medical school](#)

## Quick Links

- Search [International Health Opportunities Directory](#)
- AAMC [Medical School Admission Requirements \(MSAR\)](#)
- UT CNS International Study resources: <http://cns.utexas.edu/international-study>
- **Explore the** [Medical School Application Guide](#)
- Caribbean medical schools and other international medical school options: [Applying to International Medical Schools](#)

## Letters of Evaluation

Letters of evaluation are key pieces to your professional school application. The number of letters and type of letters you need vary from school to school. Each application system has its own way of collecting letters. Check with each application service you are using for additional details and guidelines.

It is important to get to know your faculty because you will need letters of evaluation from them. Review additional resources about letters on HPO's Application Resources webpage: [Requesting Letters](#)

Although you are not required to use Interfolio for letters of evaluation, we highly recommend you do so, especially if you are applying through multiple application services. Click [here](#) for more information about Interfolio, including a guide to using the service and help for letter writers.

## Writing Your Personal Statement

### PERSONAL STATEMENT BRAINSTORMING & CONTENT PLANNING

Please read the Personal Statement resources below and then you are welcome to meet with a Pre-Health Professions Coach to discuss your ideas before starting your personal statement.

### PERSONAL STATEMENT POWERPOINT ON WHAT IT'S ABOUT AND HOW TO GET STARTED

- Writing Your Health Professions [Personal Statement](#)

### FIND & READ YOUR ESSAY PROMPT BEFORE STARTING

- [TMSAS](#) Application Essay Prompts
- Other Application Essay Prompts: Find your prompt before you start - [website links](#)

### TOOLS TO HELP YOU BUILD YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

- Personal Statement [Brainstorming Worksheet](#)
- Use [Action Verbs](#)
- Identify your Strengths Skills with this [Word List](#)

### PERSONAL STATEMENT & ESSAY WRITING, REVISING, REVIEW & FEEDBACK

The [Writing Center](#) is an excellent resource to utilize when writing application essays. Their trained Writing Consultants can help you at any stage of writing, from getting started to making recommendations for a polished finished product.

## Interview Tips and Preparation

It is important to professionally and properly represent yourself to an admissions committee. From what to wear, to anticipating what questions you might be asked, our Pre-Health Professions Coaches are here to help you prepare for your professional school interview. Go to the [HPO Application Resources Page](#) to find additional resources, including:

- **Improve Your Interview Skills** - Schedule an Interview Prep Appointment with a Pre-Health Professions Coach by calling our front desk 210-458-5185
- **Mock Interviews** – Schedule a mock interview with Dr. Eddie Hernandez in the HPO. Mock interviews are conducted every spring.

### Prepare and Practice

Be prepared to discuss your strengths and weaknesses, obstacles and inspirations, current events and personal attributes. The following sample questions are meant to provide you with a better understanding of why the interviewer might be asking the questions that they do. By asking you certain questions, interviewers are attempting to gain a better understanding of your personality.

- 
- What kind of community/volunteer work have you done?
  - What is the most rewarding experience of your life?
  - Who is your favorite author?
  - Have you worked while you have been in school?
  - Have you had the opportunity to travel abroad?
  - What accomplishment are you most proud of?
  - Tell me about the most difficult period of your life. How did you deal with this?
  - What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses?
  - What is the most difficult decision that you've had to make?
  - How do you plan to finance your medical school education?
  - How are you going to decide which medical school to attend?
  - How do you handle adversity?
  - Why should we pick you instead of someone else?
  - Why do you want to be a physician?
  - What will you do if you are not accepted to medical school?
  - When did you first decide that you wanted to pursue a medical career? Was there a specific cause for your decision? Has anything happened since that time to strengthen or weaken your decision?
  - Can you see other careers in which you could achieve the same goals or meet the same needs?
  - What steps have you taken to find out more about medicine as a career?
  - If accepted to medical school, what field of medicine would you prefer?
  - Where would you like to start practicing?
  - How do you study? How do you manage your time?
  - What courses do you find most enjoyable, most difficult? Why?
  - Describe your hobbies and interests.
  - Describe your best/least favorite course at UTSA and why it falls into that category.
  - Why did you choose \_\_\_\_\_ as your major?
  - Are there any questions you would like to ask me?
  - Describe a situation where you've worked with people from different backgrounds.
  - What type of person do you enjoy being with? What type of person irritates you most and how have you dealt with these types of people?
  - What about yourself would you most like the interviewer to know?
  - Do you have any populations you would like to work with? Have you worked with this type of population in the past?
  - How do you handle stress?
  - How would you keep health care costs down?
  - What is an HMO? / What do you know about managed care?
  - What characteristics does a good doctor possess?
  - What current event in medicine have you heard about or been following?
  - What are the advantages and limitations that you see going into medicine? (Be specific)
  - What problems do you predict that medicine will face in the next decade?
-

## Research Current Events

As a medical school applicant, you should be aware of current events happening in the United States and around the world impacting health care. This can include current research, insurance and health care reform, ethics, and other topics. Below are some resources to help you keep up.

### American Medical News

- Published by the AMA

### Analysis of Health Care Reform Legislation Provisions

- Published by the American Association of Medical Colleges

### Kaiser Family Foundation

- A non-profit foundation focusing on health policy and communications

### Expanding Health Insurance Coverage & Choice

- News & resources from the American Medical Assn

### The American Journal of Bioethics

- Published by MIT Press and Bioethics Education Network

### The Hastings Center

- Publications Section - Promoting thoughtful, balanced reflection on the ethical and social issues of medicine and medical science

### Health Research Findings

- Stanford Medical Health Library

### National Public Radio Archives

### Wall Street Journal

## Finding Your Medical Education

For more information about the cost of medical school and financing a medical education, visit any of the following resources.

- [FIRST for Medical Education](#)
- To find out about tuition and fees at specific medical schools, consult the [Medical School Admissions Requirements \(MSAR®\)](#).
- Apply for [FAFSA](#)
- The Army has [Armed Forces Health Scholarships](#)
- The US Department of Health and Human Services [National Health Service Corps](#), a program that allows medical and dental students in their final year of school to get up to \$120,000 in loan repayment in exchange for a service commitment.
- [National Medical Fellowships](#) (NMF), a nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing the number of underrepresented minority physicians in the healthcare workforce, provides



scholarships and awards to underrepresented minority medical students and offers service-learning programs to students in the health professions.

- Learn to Budget Check out AAMC’s resources for you: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/financial-aid/article/budgeting-basics-managing-money-during-lean-years/>

<b>Add It Up! – Don’t forget to include all living costs (Cost of Attendance is often more than tuition alone.)</b>	
Tuition:	
Rent:	
Food:	
Entertainment:	
Health Insurance:	
Laboratory Fees:	
Car Insurance:	
Gas:	
Other Travel:	
Other Expenses:	

## Pre-Health Professions Services

**Applying to Professional School? We are here to guide you!**

**Email [Dr. Eddie Hernandez](#), the Department of Integrative Biology Undergraduate Advisor for the biology degree to schedule if you have questions in one or more of the following topic areas:**

- Going over pre-requisites ("What do I have to take to get into X school?")
- Shadowing opportunities ("how to find, importance of, what is")
- Leadership opportunities ("how to find, importance of, what are")
- Patient care experience ("how to find, importance of, what is")
- Clubs/organizations
- How to ask for letters of recommendation/evaluation
- Course load ("Is this reasonable to take in one semester?")
- Study habits/tutoring resources
- Test-taking strategies
- How to use HPO services

## Pre-Health Professions Coaching Appointments

Schedule a Pre-Health Professions Coaching session to meet with a Pre-Health Professions Coach. These appointments cover:

- Progress checks ("How am I doing?; What else do I need to do?")
- Application Strategies/resources
- Choosing letter writers ("Who should I ask?")
- Academic turnaround ("I am worried about my GPA")
- Potential gap year planning/Post Bacc discussions
- Academic dishonesty/legal issues
- Reapplication strategies
- Study abroad timeline
- Alumni or Post Bacc Student questions

### TO Withdraw or NOT TO Withdraw Discussions

Not sure what to do? Thinking of dropping a course? Then you can schedule an appointment with [Dr. Hernandez](#) about deciding on W dropping or the pass/fail option. Check out our TO W or NOT TO W guide in this guide before your appointment.

### Personal Statement Brainstorming

Come speak to a Pre-Health Professions Coach to discuss your ideas before starting your personal statement. We will help you brainstorm ideas for the content of your essays. We have additional personal statement resources [here](#).

We no longer review personal statements in the Health Professions Office. However, we have developed a partnership with the University Writing Center for personal statements. The [Writing Center](#) is an excellent resource to utilize when writing application essays. Their trained Writing Consultants can help you at any stage of writing, from getting started to making recommendations for a polished finished product.

### Interview Prep Appointments

Discuss interview strategies and practice a couple of interview questions with us! You will go over any questions you have and practice a couple questions of your choice with a Pre-Health Professions Coach in this 30-minute appointment. You will receive tips and feedback to help you in your professional school interview. Dressing up for your HP Interview Prep appointment is optional, if you would like feedback on your clothing choice and you want to test whether it will be comfortable, or they can just discuss appropriate attire with you. Schedule a mock interview with Dr. Eddie Hernandez through the HPO to receive interview coaching and feedback.