



**Adams House Pre-Health Introductory Meeting**  
**September 15, 2019**  
[adams-medical@hcs.harvard.edu](mailto:adams-medical@hcs.harvard.edu)



## **Introduction**

- I. Welcome!
- II. Why do you want to be a physician or enter the pre-health track?
- III. Goal-setting
  - a. Risk/benefit ratio in decision-making
  - b. Determine your goals both inside and outside of medicine

## **Resources**

### *I. Resident Tutors:*

- a. Rumbi Mushavi, Varnel Antoine, Richard Newcomb, Chelsea Messinger, Emiliano Valle
- b. E-mail: [adams-medical@hcs.harvard.edu](mailto:adams-medical@hcs.harvard.edu)
- c. WEBSITE: [www.adamshouse.harvard.edu](http://www.adamshouse.harvard.edu)

### *II. Non-resident tutor (NRT) staff*

- a. Role of the NRT
- b. Medicine as a career choice (especially useful for the undecided)
  - Non-medicine NRTs are also available - please let the tutor team know if you are thinking of a different health professions graduate school
- c. Application process: writing Dean's letter

### **\*\*\*Bottom line: Get to know your NRT!\*\*\***

- We'll be having study breaks to get to know them.
- Be proactive and contact them! They are **key** support system in preparation for and during the application process

### *III. Office of Career Services (OCS)*

- a. Emiko Morimoto and Oona Ceder ([premed@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:premed@fas.harvard.edu))
  - a. They should be contacted as soon as possible if you are considering non-MD programs (e.g. vet school, dental school, PA school, nursing school)
- b. \*\*\*OCS website: <http://www.ocs.fas.harvard.edu/students/careers/medicine.htm>
  - a. [Premedical Information for Harvard Students](#)
  - b. Sign up to the pre-health listserv!
- c. Medical school information – including alumni evaluations of schools (this is most appropriate when deciding on a school list for applications)

### *IV. Published books, other resources*

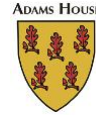
- a. [Medical Schools Admissions Requirements \(MSAR\)](#)
- b. OCS Booklet with Harvard Undergraduate-specific data
- c. AMCAS website --<http://www.aamc.org/students/amcas/>
- d. Other – medical school websites

### *V. Financial resources*

- a. [Fee Assistance Program](#) (up to two calendar years from when you submit your Fee Assistance Program application)
  - i. Reduced registration fee, from \$315 to \$125, for MCAT exams until December 31st of the year you submit your Fee Assistance Program application
  - ii. Complimentary access to the Medical School Admission Requirements (MSAR) website



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- iii. Waiver for all AMCAS fees for one (1) application submission with up to 20 medical school designations (\$930 value)
- b. Financial Aid Office
  - i. Reach out to your financial aid officer about your options to taking out additional loans to apply to graduate school (deferred while in graduate school and more)

### **Components of a successful medical school application**

#### I. *Numbers*

- a. Grades—yes, they are important [OCS Med School Admission Data]
- b. Importance of science GPA
- c. Pre-med requirements – Biology (with lab), Chemistry (with lab),
- d. Physics (with lab), Math/Statistics, English: please see OCS website for list

#### II. *MCAT*

- a. Prep coursework
  - i. MCAT practice manuals, old exams from AAMC
  - ii. Kaplan/Princeton (both ~\$1500), ExamKrackers
  - iii. **ANKI** (free desktop and android flashcard app, \$25 for iOS-Phone/iPad)
    - YouTube ANKI Tutorials
    - Look at Reddit and google for Pre-made ANKI Decks for MCAT prep
  - iv. **UWorld**
- b. **What is it:** Electronic, but not adaptive
- c. **When is it:** Now offered very frequently, but dates fill up fast
- d. **How long does it last:** Expires in ~ 3 years
- e. **How to afford:** Please apply to the **Fee Assistance Program** *before* booking your MCAT to save on money with reduced MCAT costs and waived AMCAS primary and supplemental applications

#### III. *Extracurricular Activity*

- a. Why do extracurriculars?
- b. Public service
  - Talk to Adams House public service tutors!
  - Public service organizations at Harvard: <https://publicservice.fas.harvard.edu/>
- c. Clinical experiences (**critical**)
  - Mt Auburn/ Cambridge, Project HEALTH,
  - CrimsonEMS
  - Red Cross Disaster Relief
  - Senior NRTs
  - Crimson Care Collaborative (CCC) at HMS
  - Harvard College Alzheimer's Buddies
- d. Athletics/ Music/ Other
- e. Leadership positions

#### IV. *Sustained scholarly project*

- a. Medically-oriented research
  - i. Importance of basic science or clinical research, NOT a requirement!



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- ii. Selecting a laboratory to work in
- b. Duration of research
- c. Relationship with professor or doctor
- d. Research credit/funding opportunities
- e. Senior Honors Thesis (in any field!)

### V. *Recommendations* – Ask **EARLY** - Important to not wait until the last minute!

- a. Ask for one each semester
- b. Know your teaching fellow/professor
- c. **Do not procrastinate**, and ask when they will remember you
- d. Explicitly ask if they can write a **STRONG** letter of recommendation
  - a. Asking for a letter can be done in-person or by email. Both strategies have advantages. In-person adds a nice personal touch and by email allows a prof or TF to make an excuse if they don't have time or don't feel like they can write a **STRONG** letter of recommendation
- e. If teaching fellow is writing, highly recommend that professor co-signs.
- f. Info to give a letter writer:
  - a. A cover letter (or explanation for interest in medicine) and CV/Resume
  - b. A waiver form (house form)
  - c. [AAMC Guide to Letter Writers](#)
  - d. Guidelines (OCS) for writing a pre-med letter
  - e. The format of the letter: Ask that the letter be written on **official letterhead** with a **signature** included at the end.
  - f. Letters of recommendations need to be addressed along the lines of "To the Medical School Admissions Committee" or "To the Veterinary School Admissions Committee." **AVOID addressing LOR to specific schools (To HMS)**
  - g. Where the letter should be sent: The letter should be sent by email to the **Adams Academic Coordinator** at [adams\\_coordinator@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:adams_coordinator@fas.harvard.edu). Subject line: "Letter of recommendation for medical school - FirstName LastName"
- g. At least two science letters from course instructors, one letter from concentration, and one extra-curricular or non-science instructor letter, try to find someone who could speak to your potential as a physician
- h. Inviting your faculty and TFs to **Faculty Dinners** hosted every semester in Adams House is a good way to get to know your professors and Teaching Fellows on a more personal level

### **Considering dual degrees**

#### I. MD/Ph.D.:

- a. These programs can be NIH funded (MSTP); there are ~40 programs around the country with funded MD/Ph.D. spots.
- b. The savings from the fully-funded status must be weighed against the years (3-5) that the Ph.D. takes to complete
- c. Talk with one of our MD/Ph.D. tutors (Chelsea or Emiliano) for advice
- d. Think carefully about what you are trying to achieve with the two degrees.

As an alternative to the PhD, many students engage in 1-2 years of research during medical school through various funding agencies (HHMI, NIH, Doris Duke, etc).



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II. MD/MBA, MD/MPH, MPP (@ Kennedy School), MS (vs MD/PhD)

- a. Many schools now offer these programs
  - Both usually just add one year to your training (5 years vs. 4 years)
- b. Think carefully about what you are trying to achieve with the two degrees. Do you need both? Which one do you most want and which is secondary?

**Application year calendar**

\*OCS has useful workshops as well—see their webpage for schedule

\*Ongoing: be sure to register for the MCAT!

*I. December 2019*

For those applying in the next cycle, you should meet with NRT by this time!  
Ask for recommendations before you leave for break.

*II. February 2020*

Mandatory Meeting for all applying students this current cycle.  
Finish asking for recommendations

***\*This meeting is also required for seniors who are not applying, but leaving the house***

*III. March 2020*

- a. All recommendations from previous semesters due
- b. Intention to apply to medical school form
  - We will reach out to you closer to March with instructions on how to submit these documents
- c. Check in with NRT to discuss pre-med packet and application by March
- d. Premedical Packet due to the House (we will provide instructions on how to submit)
  - Provides extensive information to us / NRTs in writing the Dean's letter
  - Helps you better define interests and goals in pursuing medicine as a career
  - Includes a complete list of recommendation letter writers
- e. Materials must be submitted on time in order to take full advantage of the mock interviews (see below)
- f. Missing letters of recommendation WILL delay your application.

*IV. April 2020*

- a. Mock interviews: mid-April
  - Opportunity to experience interview in a no/low-stress setting
  - Helpful comments from our NRT staff on the interviewing process.
- b. Personal statement and Interview workshop: late-April

*V. June 2020*

- a. Your AMCAS application should be completed by mid-June.
- b. Online application and details can be found on AMCAS website.
- c. MCAT must have been completed by late June (at the latest).



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***Alum in your Gap Years? You must contact us in the Fall of the year before you apply so that we can set you up with an NRT.***

- a. **Example:** If you are five years out and planning on submitting your application in June 2021, you should contact us ([adams-medical@hcs.harvard.edu](mailto:adams-medical@hcs.harvard.edu)) in the Fall of 2020.

**QUESTIONS? Please look at the Adams Premed and OCS WEBSITES first.**

Then email [adams-medical@hcs.harvard.edu](mailto:adams-medical@hcs.harvard.edu) if you cannot find the answers!