

Pre-Health Information for Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.)



While allopathic physicians (M.D) and osteopathic physicians (D.O) have the same structure of education (four years of medical school followed by accredited medical residencies), the philosophy of training and provision of medical care are different. M.D's and D.O's are licensed in all 50 states and work side-by-side in the same specialties.

Profession web site(s): www.osteopathic.org www.aacom.org

Application web site: www.aacom.org

Admission/Entrance exam:– MCAT (Medical College Admission Test)

Transcripts: Official transcripts from ALL institutions attended, including Marquette University, must be sent directly from the institution to the central application service. If you studied abroad and the courses and grades do not appear on a U.S. transcript, then you need to have transcripts sent to AACOMAS from the school or an evaluation service.

Course prerequisites: Course prerequisites vary by program. Typical prerequisites include biology (1001/1002), a separate lab course (BIOL 2001), general chemistry (1001/1002), organic chemistry (2111/2112), biochemistry (BIOL 4301 or BISC 3213) and physics (1001/1002). Courses for majors (e.g. Chemistry 1014 for Majors) will be accepted. Some schools will require additional upper level biology or biomedical science courses. Courses such as psychology, sociology and genetics may not be required by medical schools but may be beneficial for MCAT preparation.

Observation hours/experience: Medical schools like to see well-rounded applications and look for quality and depth of experiences rather than requiring a specific number of hours. Direct exposure to medicine, either volunteer or paid, shadowing, leadership, service to others, both medical and non-medical, and research are all recommended experiences to become competitive for medical school. Osteopathic schools tend to favor students with more clinical experience, service, a clear understanding of osteopathic medicine, and a commitment to the profession.

Minimum requirements to apply: The average GPA for acceptance is a 3.48. At Marquette, students with about a 3.3 GPA or higher have been competitive. MCAT scores are also important, as well as activities, experiences, and other factors.

Letters of Reference (LOR): Letters of recommendation packets can be sent through the service provided in the pre-health advising offices. Although requirements vary by school, we recommend obtaining letters from two science professors and one non-science professor whom you have had for classes, and one to two non-academic letters that speak to your experiences, character, interest in health care, etc. Check each school to which you are applying for additional letters needed. Some schools require a letter from an osteopathic physician whom you have shadowed.

Personal Statement: A personal statement is a written reflection on why you want to be a physician and why you think you would be a good one. Particular emphasis should be placed on why you are choosing osteopathic medicine. Character limits can be found on the AACOMAS website, but the limit is typically about one page single-spaced.

Interview: Competitive applicants may be invited to participate in an interview process. Interviews may include faculty members, current students of the program, and/or physicians. Interviews may be used to assess oral communication skills; professional behaviors; attitude; knowledge of the profession and/or of health care overall, especially osteopathic medicine; problem-solving skills; passion for pursuing medicine, etc. Go to your interviews with prepared questions about the school/program that show your interest in what the school has to offer (other than being close to home or low tuition).

Deadlines: Timing is critical with medical school admissions. Most medical schools accept students on a rolling basis, which means programs reviews applications as they arrive. The earlier an application is submitted, the better the chance for acceptance. Students should complete their application in mid to late June. Keep in mind that processing of an application by AACOMAS may take four to six weeks once all materials have been submitted. Once the primary application is processed, students will begin to receive secondary applications which should be completed by mid to late August.

Early Decision: Early decision is a binding option for applicants who have decided that a specific program is their first choice and that they will enroll if accepted. If a student decides to apply early decision, he/she is not able to apply to any other schools until an admission decision is made. This is not available for all programs.

Data for Accepted Students (2012 Application Cycle):

Average UG gpa: overall 3.48 ; science courses 3.35 (on a 4.0 scale)

Average Scores: 8.59 in Verbal Reasoning, 8.38 in Physical Sciences, and 9.33 in Biological Sciences

