

What pre-health students need to know...

The “Big 3” for any Health Professions Program

1) Academic credentials are critical:

- ✓ Average GPA for:
 - Allopathic medical school – 3.7
 - Dental school – 3.55
 - Optometry – 3.38
 - Veterinary – 3.6
 - Physical Therapy – 3.52*
 - Osteopathic medical school – 3.4
 - Pharmacy – 3.38
 - Podiatry – 3.2
 - Physician Assistant – 3.3*
- *Data from national averages, GPA’s for acceptance to MU’s PA and PT programs may differ.
- ✓ Science GPA is also very important
- ✓ MCAT, DAT, GRE are important
- ✓ Most application services for the health professions will average repeated attempts of a course. Marquette includes only the final attempt in your MU GPA. As a result, the GPA’s calculated by the application service may be lower than your MU GPA.

2) Experiences:

- ✓ Students **must** have direct exposure to their chosen health profession – volunteer or paid
- ✓ Shadowing – this is important but does not replace actual work/volunteering time
- ✓ Research
- ✓ Leadership roles
- ✓ Service to others – medical and non-medical. Volunteering at a hospital is reported under “direct exposure.” Examples of medical service might include volunteering at a free clinic or participating in a medical mission trip. Examples of non-medical service might include volunteering with Noon Run, Special Olympics, or tutoring at an elementary school.
- ✓ Something that is just you – what are you interested in doing?

3) Letters of recommendation:

- ✓ Two science professors whom students have had for class
- ✓ One non-science professor (should typically be arts or humanities- theology, philosophy, foreign language, English or literature, etc.)
- ✓ Other – should be a non-academic letter, e.g., a health professional, work supervisor, etc.

Also very important:

- ✓ Applying SMART! Be sure to apply to schools from your “home state”, and check out acceptance rates of in-state vs out-of state residents for each medical school
- ✓ Timing is critical – know the application cycle and the format of the admission process. “Rolling admission” means that applications are reviewed as they are submitted, so the earlier an application is submitted, the greater the chance of being accepted. “Pooled admission” means that all applications received by the stated deadline are considered equally, regardless of how early an application was submitted. Medical and dental schools use a rolling admission process.
- ✓ Criminal background checks are conducted on each applicant
- ✓ Underage drinking violations can keep students out of medical or dental school
- ✓ Cultural competency is beneficial
- ✓ Fluency in a foreign language is a plus
- ✓ Writing skills are very important, especially for personal statements

Keep in mind there is no “magic bullet” that will get you in. Medical and dental schools want students who go above and beyond what is typical. They want extraordinary individuals who will be passionate about the profession, so think about what you can do to be a good doctor or dentist, not just a good applicant to their school. Whatever you choose to do while you are here at MU, just don’t be ordinary, be extraordinary!