Prehealth Orientation

MIT Prehealth Advising
E39-305
617-715-5328
Objectives

• How to explore the field to determine if a career in healthcare is the right fit for you.

• How to develop yourself and prepare for the application process.

• How to navigate the steps and timeline of the application process.
Health Professions pursued by MIT Applicants in the past

- Medicine (Allopathic/Osteopathic)
- MD-PhD
- Dentistry
- Pharmacy
- Physician Assistant
- Public Health
- Veterinary Medicine
- Physical Therapy
- Optometry
- Podiatry
How do you know if a career in healthcare is right for you?

• Gain Exposure: Understand the profession.
  – Have you spent time in a medical/healthcare environment? Do you have a realistic sense of what the job entails?

• Get Experience: Gain the skills you need.
  – Have you acquired skills and developed qualities that are relevant to the work you want to do in the future?

• How do you know what skills and qualities are relevant?
  By gaining exposure!

• How do you know if you’ll enjoy the job?
  By gaining experience!
Exposure

Observation time spent in a healthcare environment and discussions with professionals in the field

“No medical school is going to accept an applicant who hasn’t taken the time and made the effort to learn about the field they hope to enter.”

How can I gain exposure?

• Volunteer in a medical/healthcare environment
• Conduct informational interviews
• Job shadow
Exposure
(examples)

- MIT Physician Shadow Program
- MIT EMS
- Hospital Volunteering
- Student/Alumni Externship Program
Conduct informational interviews

Networking to gain exposure: Exercise 1

• Do you know any…:
  – Physicians or other health professionals
  – Medical students
  – Medical researchers

• Consider:
  – Friends and fellow classmates
  – Family
  – Advisors
  – Faculty
  – Alumni

• Next steps: How will you contact these individuals and when?
Experience

Activities you engage in that help develop skills and qualities that will be instrumental in your future work as a physician or other health care professional.

*Does my experience have to be medically related?*

No. But, you do need to understand, and be able to communicate the value gained from your activities.

**Examples:**

- Student clubs & organizations
- Service work
- Internships, externships, etc.
- Research
- Extracurricular activities (sports, music, dance, etc.)
Experience (examples)

- Intern, Teach for America
- Intern, U.S. Senate Committee on Finance for health policy
- Distinguished Fellows – Truman and Rhodes Scholars
- Member, Varsity Basketball
- Intern, WHO in Geneva
- President: MedLinks
- Co-Founder Camp Kesem
Student Clubs

http://web.mit.edu/asa/

announcements:

Fall Activities Midway
The 2012 ASA Activities Midway will be Friday, August 31st, from 3:00 to 5:00 PM. The application for space is due at 11:59 pm on August 1, and is available here.

Recent ASA Official Items
- Due to traffic and safety concerns, display easels are no longer permitted on the Infinite Corridor. The text of the announcement about this from Martin Schmidt, Associate Provost for Space Planning, is posted here.
- The Campus Activities Complex is looking into the possibility of adding card access to the Student Center doors overnight, potentially from 1:30 AM to 6 AM or thereabouts. The Student Center will remain unlocked during daytime and evening hours on both weekdays and weekends, and any MIT ID holder will be able to get in at night. Please email any feedback or questions to asa-exec@mit.edu.
Develop your skills through experience: Exercise 2

• Review the “Example of Desirable Traits for Physicians and Applicants” worksheet.
• Consider what activities have already helped you strengthen these traits.
• Identify which traits you might focus on in the future, and consider new activities that will allow you to do so.
Service work


Gain Skills for Med School

Develop Your Skillset through Research, Volunteering, and Internships

http://web.mit.edu/mitpsc/


How to Find Meaningful Volunteer & Service Work

Jennifer Earls, Prehealth Advisor
MIT Global Education & Career Development

http://www.volunteermatch.org/

http://gecd.mit.edu/sites/default/files/grad/files/hospitals-list.pdf

VolunteerMatch
find opportunities recruit volunteers

Opportunities Organizations Learn About Volunteering

Find an Opportunity Location Keywords Search Advanced

Find New Stuff...
Identifying service work: Exercise 3

- What causes are you passionate about? Examples: education, the arts, oncology, autism, diabetes, nutrition, etc.
- What population(s) would like to work with? Examples: children, seniors, individuals with disabilities, animals, etc.
- Consider your schedule and determine:
  - What days and times you can volunteer?
  - How many hours a week are you able to volunteer?
  - What are the next steps you will take to get involved?
Internships and jobs

http://gecd.mit.edu/

Jobs and Internships

Your Next Adventure Awaits

Whether you're a freshman looking for your first internship or a postdoc launching your career — or anywhere in between — GECD will partner with you. We'll help you find opportunities, polish your application, and interview to impress. Get started with the resources below, and schedule an appointment to see a counselor soon.

Resumes, Cover Letters, CVs and LinkedIn

What's the best way to convey your skills and experience to a prospective employer? Our online guides will:

- help you build a successful resume.
Research

https://www.aamc.org/members/great/61052/great_summerlinks.html

http://web.mit.edu/urop/

http://misti.mit.edu/
# Prehealth Application Timeline

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<tr>
<td><strong>Prehealth Advising Meeting</strong></td>
<td>Request Committee on Prehealth Advising (COPA) Letter</td>
<td>Prepare for Application</td>
<td>Preferred time to submit Prehealth Credential Service Account</td>
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<td><strong>Submit Primary Application</strong></td>
<td>Secondary Applications</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Confirm Acceptance with 1 school</td>
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What year are you applying?

- If you want to enter medical school in fall of 2017:
  - Prehealth Advising Meeting, spring-fall 2015
  - Submit primary application, June 2016

- If you want to enter medical school in fall of 2018:
  - Prehealth Advising Meeting, spring-fall 2016
  - Submit primary application, June 2017

- If you want to enter medical school in fall of 2019:
  - Prehealth Advising Meeting, spring-fall 2017
  - Submit primary application, June 2018
Prehealth Advising Meeting

**Purpose:**
- Reflect on your motivation for pursuing a healthcare career
- Take stock of what you’ve already done to prepare
- Collect feedback and guidance on how to improve application

**Process:**
- Step 1: Complete/submit Prehealth Advising Questions
- Step 2: Schedule Prehealth Advising Meeting

Learn more about MIT Prehealth Advising Meetings here: http://gecd.mit.edu/grad-and-med-school/prepare-medical-school/meet-prehealth-advising
Primary Application

When? Submit in early-mid June of application year.

• Centralized Online Applications:
  – AMCAS: U.S. Allopathic Medical Schools
  – TMDSAS: State medical schools in TX
  – AACOMAS: Osteopathic Medical Schools
  – AADSAS: Dental Schools
  – VMCAS: Veterinary Medicine Schools
Primary Application Components

- Coursework
- GPA
- Exam Score (MCAT, DAT, GRE, etc.)
- Activities/extracurriculars
- Essay/personal statement
- Schools
Coursework & GPA

• MIT Prehealth Recommended Course list
  ▪ Requirements vary by school

• GPA (Undergraduate Applicants)
  ▪ MIT Mean GPA (2012-2014): 3.7
  ▪ Accepted range (2012-2014): 3.1-4.0

Learn more about prerequisite coursework here:
Medical College Admissions Test

- Standardized exam required by most medical schools
- Take MCAT no later than spring of application year

**MCAT Scores** (Undergraduate Applicants)

- MIT Mean MCAT (2012-2014): 35
  (~517; 96th percentile)
- Accepted range (2012-2014): 26-43
  (~502-528; 55th-100th percentile)
  (~507-520; 73rd-98th percentile)

Learn more about the MCAT here:

[https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/prepare/](https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/prepare/)
Activities/Extracurriculars:

- Enter work, internships, extracurricular activities, awards, honors, or publications
- Include a maximum of 15 experiences – Quality over Quantity
- Designate 3 of these 15 as your “most meaningful” experiences.
  - 1325 Extra characters for these activities
  - Must select #1 most meaningful
Essay/Personal Statement:

• **Primary Application Essay:**
  – Why medicine? (5,300 characters)

• **Additional Essays for MD-PhD:**
  – MD-PhD Essay (3,000 characters)
  – Significant Research Experience Essay (10,000 characters)
Schools

• Develop a list of 20-25 schools

• Match your credentials and your interests

• Be prepared to help schools understand why you’ve applied/why you are a good candidate

• AAMC Medical School Admissions Requirements Guide (MSAR)
  https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/requirements/msar/

• School selection information:
After the Primary Application:

- Secondary Applications
- Letters of Recommendation
- Interview
Secondary Applications:

- Sent to you from schools directly
- Request additional essay responses
  - Opportunity to convince specific schools that you are a strong candidate for their program
  - Opportunity to further discuss experiences/qualifications
- Should respond within 2-3 weeks of receipt
Letters of Recommendation

Total of 4 – 5 letters are required:

- 2 science professors who have taught you in a class
  - (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Math)

- 1 non-science professor
  - (Humanities, concentration, etc.)

- Research experience (required by many schools)

- Others: extracurricular, coaches, volunteer, employer

**Do you know your professors? You should!**

Learn more about how to get to know your professors here:

Committee on Prehealth Advising (COPA) Letter

• Comprehensive letter of recommendation
  – Writer has access to your application materials and all letters of recommendation

• Written by a member of the MIT Committee on Prehealth Advising (COPA)

• Must meet COPA letter request deadlines to obtain a COPA letter
What should I be doing now?

• Join the Prehealth Email List: email dshafran@mit.edu with intended matriculation year

• Join “MIT Prehealth Advising” Facebook group

• Get Exposure and Experience

• Prepare for application!
  – Coursework
  – MCAT
  – Get to know your professors!
MIT Prehealth Advising Resources


• Drop-ins: Tuesdays from 11 a.m.-12 p.m. (5-118)

• Appointments: call 617-715-5328
Thank you for your attention.

Questions?