

Better Grades. Better Scores. Better Applications. Better Schools.



# MEDICAL SCHOOL ADMISSIONS TIMELINE



Emerson Short



[emerson.short@review.com](mailto:emerson.short@review.com)





# Pre-Health Roadmap

First Year

**"How do I gain experience?"**  
Over the summer, find volunteer and internship opportunities in the medical field

**"Am I staying on course?"**  
Join pre-health clubs & orgs on campus, continue working with advisor



**Med School Admissions Timeline begins**



Junior Year

Meet with an advisor to discuss your class options and start exploring summer programs

**"What classes should I take?"**

Sophomore

**"What experiences do I have?"**  
Over the summer, look into clinical and research opportunities, fill in gaps for experiences

4

**"Am I ready for the MCAT?"**

Research MCAT/Fee Assistance

5

**"What programs are best for me?"**

Use MSAR to compare schools and learn what your scores should look like

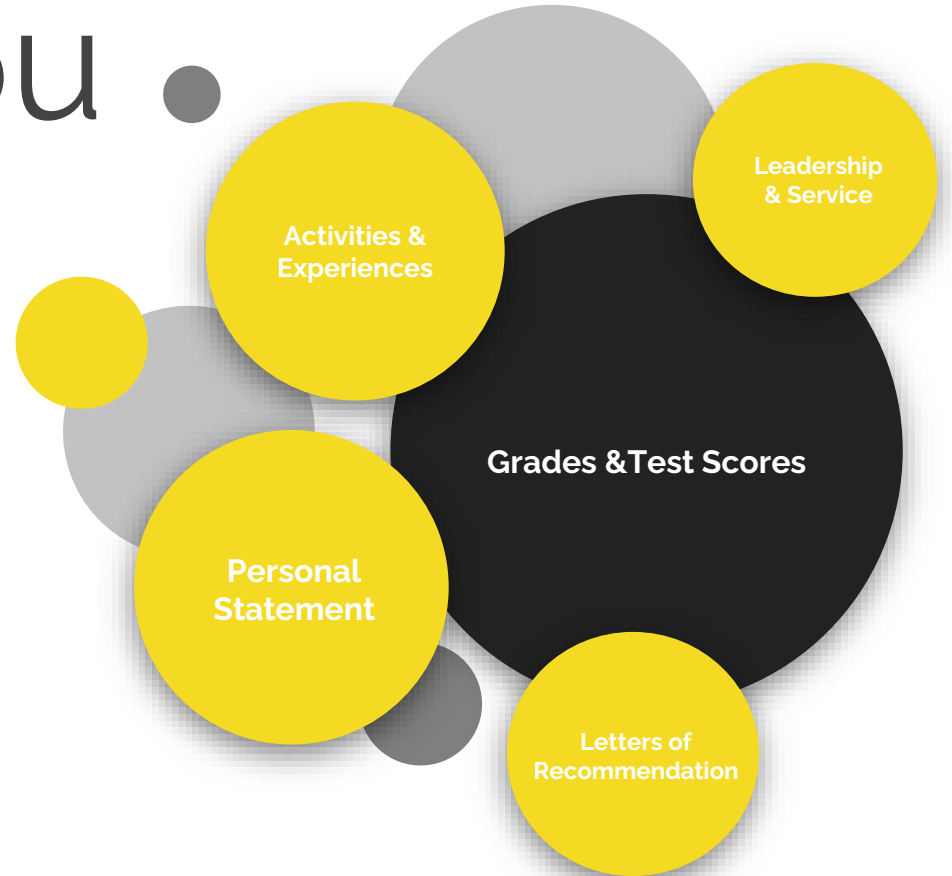
6

7

**"Am I on the best path?"**

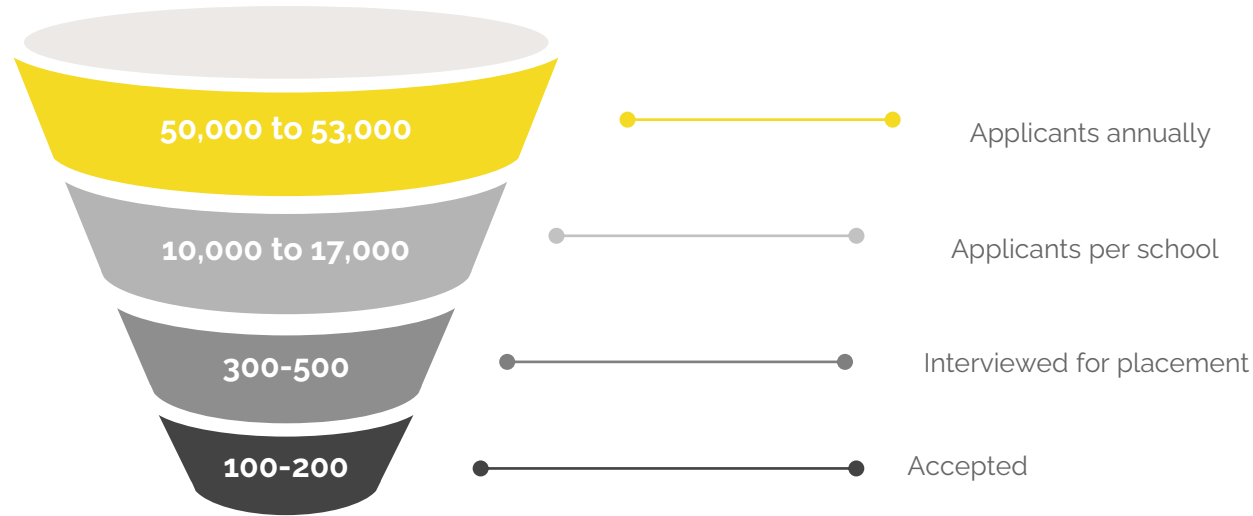
MD vs DO programs?  
Gap year? Post-bac? Masters?  
Paid experience?  
What's best for you?

Before you •  
apply...



The **Princeton** Review®

# More Students are Denied than Accepted Each Year





# The Medical College Admissions Test

- Administered by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)
- Required by US and Canadian medical schools
- Required for both MD and DO programs



# How does the MCAT fit in?

- Most schools preliminary screen with GPA and MCAT scores
- A strong MCAT score can help a lower GPA, but a poor MCAT score negatively affects the best GPA
- Use resources like the Medical School Admissions Requirements to help select schools

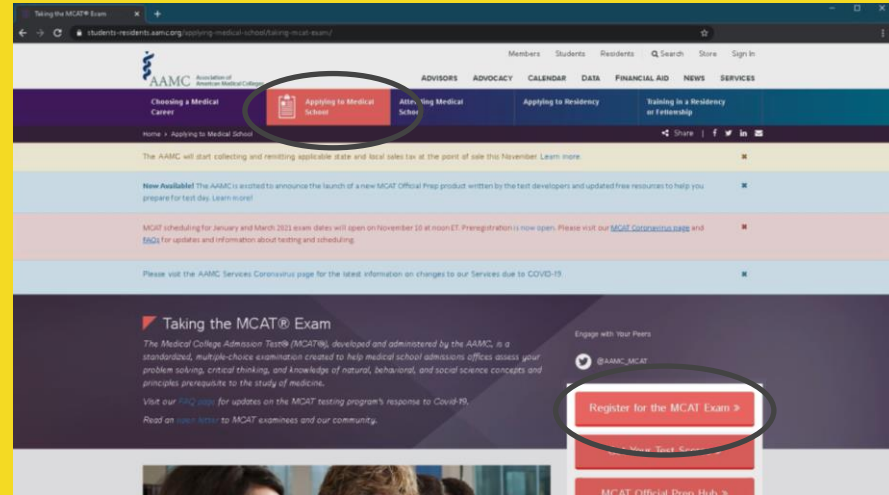
# Applicants vs. Matriculants (MD Programs)

Applicants	2018-2019	2019-2020
Total MCAT (mean)	505.6	506.1
Total GPA (mean)	3.57	3.58
Total Applicants	52,777	53,371

Matriculants	2018-2019	2019-2020
Total MCAT (mean)	511.2	511.5
Total GPA (mean)	3.72	3.73
Total Matriculants	21,662	21,869

# Registering for the MCAT

- ❑ These are the Coachella tickets of exam spots—pre-sign up!
- ❑ 15 minutes before is too early to be signed in, you won't be in the queue
- ❑ Only one exam date at a time
- ❑ Need financial assistance? Start at the AAMC website—plan ahead!



## AAMC.ORG/MCAT

- ❑ Click "Applying to Medical School" on the top dashboard
- ❑ Click "Register for the MCAT Exam" on the right-hand side
- ❑ Login or sign up for an AAMC account

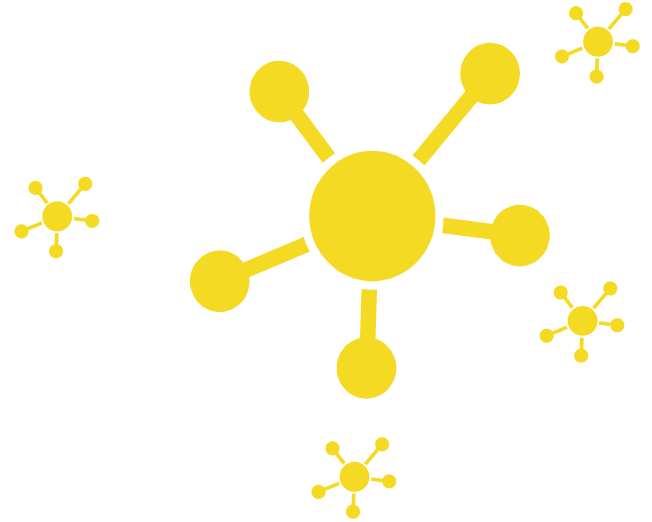


# Coursework

- Biology (introductory, year-long coursework)
- Physics (introductory, year-long coursework)
- General Chemistry (introductory, year-long coursework)
- Organic Chemistry (introductory, year-long coursework)
- Biochemistry (first-semester)
- Psychology (first-semester)
- Sociology (first-semester)

# Scientific Reasoning and Inquiry Skills

- **Knowledge** of scientific concepts and principles
- Scientific reasoning and **problem solving**
- Reasoning about the **design and execution** of research
- **Data-based and statistical** reasoning

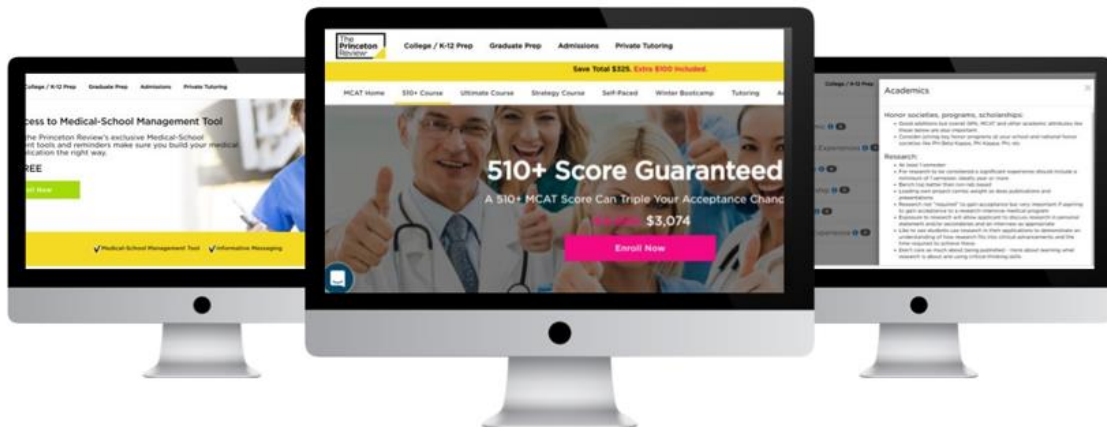


# MCAT SCORING

Section	Score Range	Mean Score
Chemical and Physical Foundations of Biological Systems	118-132	125.1
Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills	118-132	124.8
Biological and Biochemical Foundations of Living Systems	118-132	125.3
Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior	118-132	125.3
Composite	472-528	500.5

# Raise Your MCAT Score

Better Grades. Better Scores. Better Applications. Better Schools.



The **Princeton** Review®

# MD vs. DO Programs

## Doctor of Medicine

- ▶ Average MCAT score of 511.9 from 2021-2022
- ▶ Focus on medication and surgery
- ▶ More likely to specialize in a particular field of medicine (pediatrics, oncology, etc.)
- ▶ USMLE

## Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine

- ▶ Average MCAT score of 503 from 2021-2022
- ▶ Focus on preventative medicine
- ▶ Additional 200+ hours of coursework on bones, muscles, and nerves
- ▶ COMLEX licensing exam or USMLE

- Both learn how to diagnose, prevent, and treat.
- Both meet the strict requirements of the medical board.
- Both are licensed to practice in the US and Canada.
- Both must take the MCAT exam.

135,000

Osteopathic physicians in the U.S. reported in 2021-2022

# Differences in Approach

## Allopathy

- ▶ Considered as “modern medicine” approach
- ▶ More focus on blood tests/radiological tests as diagnostic procedures
- ▶ Parts vs. whole—certain procedures for certain illnesses

## Osteopathy

- ▶ Good for focus on primary care/internal medicine
- ▶ Additional specialty: osteopathic manual medicine
- ▶ Can train in traditional and cultural medical practices, naturopathy, etc.

# Your Journey

Finding your purpose, telling your story

- Service Outreach
- Academic Career
- Clinical Experience
- Leadership Capacity
- Social Experiences





# 15 Competencies

## Thinking and Reasoning

- Critical Thinking
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Scientific Inquiry
- Written Communication

## Pre-Professional

- Service Orientation
- Social Skills
- Cultural Competence
- Teamwork
- Oral Communication
- Ethical Responsibility to Self and Others
- Reliability and Dependability
- Resilience and Adaptability
- Capacity for Improvement

## Science

- Living Systems
- Human Behavior

# Service



What did you learn from the people you served?

How were you challenged, and how did you grow?

- Meaningful self-less service where you engage with different populations, understand those you are serving
- Volunteer in non-health related fields
  - Hospice, VA, Big Brothers, Big Sisters, pen pal to the elderly
  - 6 months, for at least 50 hours, consistently

# Academics



## ○ Research

- "Wet" lab experience is a plus, clinical setting is ideal

**Can you work as a part of a team? Can you be a team player?**

**Do you know what research is, how to do it, and that it takes time to make a discovery?**

## ○ Teaching assistant/tutoring

- Great opportunities: check your office of undergrad research, reach out to professors, look into clinical research experiences in your hometown, look for hospitals or physicians looking for interns. Virtual tutoring and TA opportunities in the community are viable too!

**Do you know how to explain complicated things simply? Can people understand you?**

## ○ Study abroad

- Doesn't have to be abroad! Engage in refugee support groups in your own community, find opportunities in your culture and community—it's just important to show you have gone outside of your comfort zone

**Can you work with people from different backgrounds, religions, and socioeconomic statuses?**

**Can you extend empathy to others?**

# Clinical Experiences



Have you explored different areas of medicine?

Do you have experience in a clinical setting?

- Diversity of experience, 3-5 different areas (primary +)
- Paid clinical, patient-facing experience is a BIG plus, which is why a gap year is beneficial (e.g., paid medical scribe, C.N.A, EMT)—part-time activities also great
- Also, lots of virtual shadowing opportunities available because of COVID-19

# Leadership



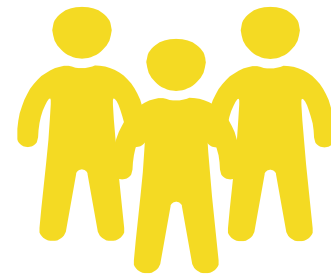
**Do you engender trust, inspire others to feel a part of a team?**

**How do you take the reins in a bad situation?**

**How have you overcome challenges and grown as a leader?**

- At least 2 strong experiences
- Great leaders are respected by the people they lead, but more importantly, they make everyone feel like an important member of the team.
- How do you feel as though medical professional (MDs/DOs in particular) are leaders? How do your leadership experiences foreshadow your career?

# Social



**Can you make connections and build trust?**

**Will you be a good representative?**

**How will you relieve stress?**

- Clubs, fraternities, honor societies, etc.
- Expanding your network, showing your support system (outlets, interests, personal development experiences that will set you apart and keep you grounded)
- Personal interests outside of medicine, what will make you relate to others, holistic view of you (i.e., personal projects, art experiences, travel experiences)

# Screening Parameters

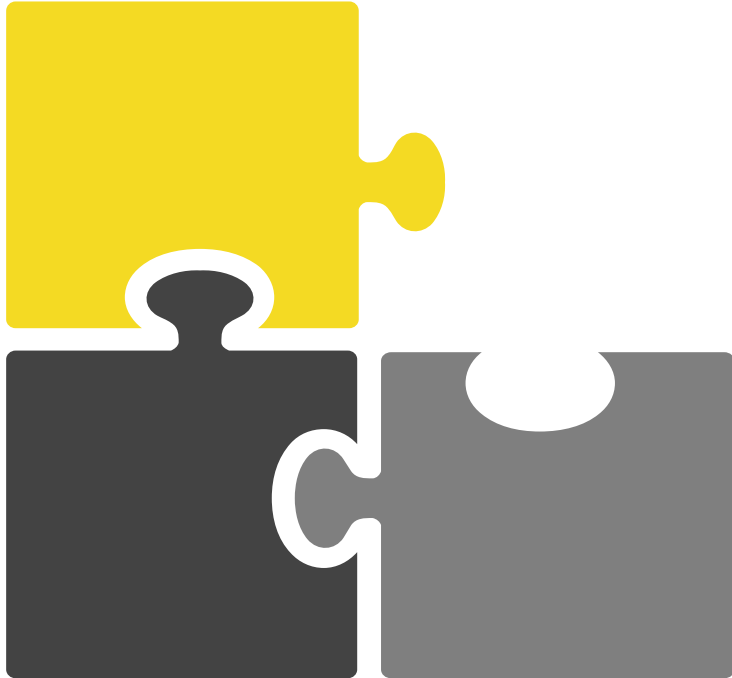
- Looking for 300-500 clinical hours, diversity of clinical experience is important--paid clinical is better than shadowing every time
- Screening for re-applicants is more stringent, schools expect you to fix these issues and sometimes make you wait a year before screening you again
- If lower credentials (and not under-represented in medicine), you may want to consider Caribbean or gap year or DO program

Why do applicants that meet GPA and MCAT score still not make it past the screening?





# Building Your Brand: Personal Statement



A typical reviewer will take 3-5 key points from review of any part of your application (activities, personal statement, and interview), so make them count!

- ❑ **DO:** demonstrate your journey & growth through examples, not statements
- ❑ **DON'T:** try to convince the reader “why you want to be a doctor” — dig deeper!
- ❑ Write, re-write, let it sit...and then write it again

# Building Your Brand: Personal Statement



## STAY ON TOPIC

- Your theme is why you are choosing a career in medicine. Stick to it and support it with specific examples!

## GOOD WRITING = SIMPLE WRITING

- Use clear, direct language to make your personal statement effective.

## FOLLOW THE RULES

- Use appropriate grammar and syntax—proofread and spell check are your friends!

# Now What?



When do I start drafting my Personal Statement?



When do I flesh out my Activities and Experiences?

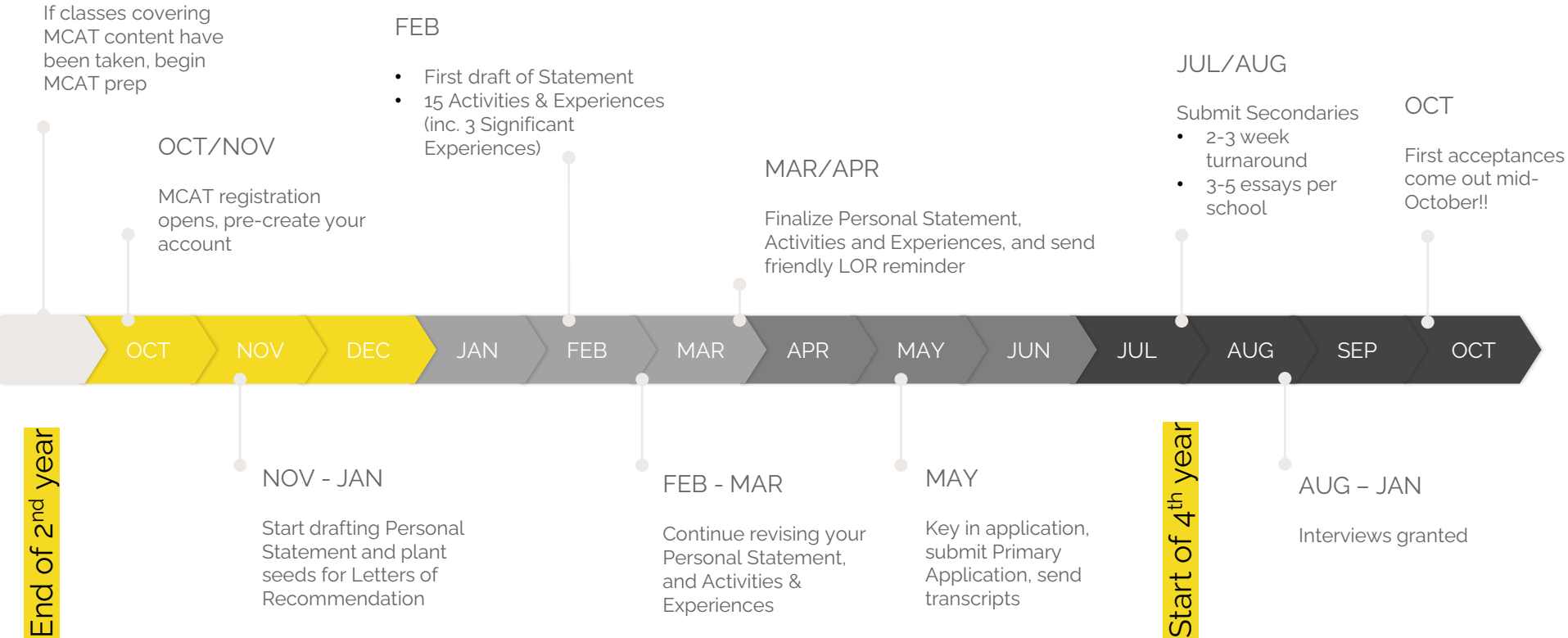


How long does it take to verify my Primary Application?



How long should it take to write and submit my Secondary Essays?

# Medical School Application Timeline



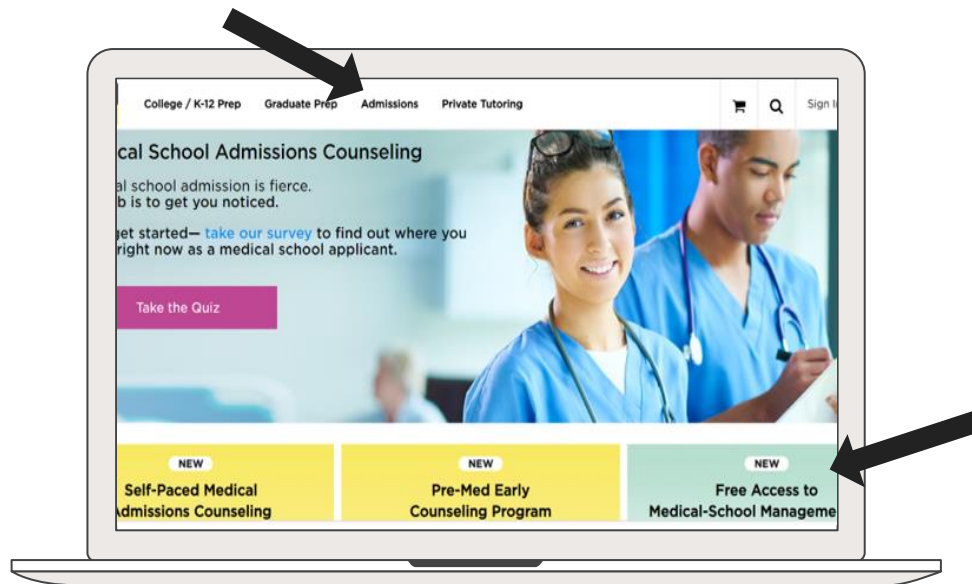
# How can I get started?

Before drafting your personal statement...

Before asking for your letters of recommendation...

Before taking your MCAT...

FREE Access to Medical School Management Tool. 100% Easy.



## Portfolio

This is your application portfolio which will help guide you in the selection and tracking of key accomplishments and experiences sought by admissions committees, as well as employers and those writing letters of recommendation on your behalf in the future.

These will ultimately be used in your primary and secondary applications and interviews to showcase your preparedness for your career choice and graduate school but highlighting your best work, life experiences and achievements.

## Academics

### Academic ⓘ 0

> Scholarships (0)

> Academic Awards (0)

> Honor Societies (0)

▼ Honors & Scholarship Programs (0)

> Research (0)

> Study Abroad (0)

> Tutoring (0)

> Teaching Assistant (0)

> Language Proficiency (0)

> Clinical Experiences ⓘ 0

### Honor societies, programs, scholarships:

- Good additions but overall GPA, MCAT and other academic attributes like those below are also important
- Consider joining key honor programs at your school and national honor societies like Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Kappa, Phi, etc

### Research:

- At least 1 semester
- For research to be considered a significant experience should include a minimum of 1 semester, ideally year or more
- Bench top better than non-lab based
- Leading own project carries weight as does publications and presentations
- Research not "required" to gain acceptance but very important if aspiring to gain acceptance to a research-intensive medical program
- Exposure to research will allow applicant to discuss research in personal statement and/or secondaries and an interview as appropriate
- Like to see students use research in their applications to demonstrate an understanding of how research fits into clinical advancements and the time required to achieve these.
- Don't care as much about being published - more about learning what research is about and using critical thinking skills

# Medical School Management Tool

## Clinical Experience

### Goal

100 total hours in 3-5 different areas (including primary care)

### Shadowing:

- Schools generally like to see shadowing in 3-5 specialty areas for a total of at least 100 hours or more and one should include primary care (like Pediatrics, Family Medicine, OB/GYN and in some cases ER)
- You can be reflective on all the different physician specialties and primary care interactions and that you have truly explored the career you seek
- Diversity over quantity is better -100 hours in 3 areas vs 200 hours in same specialty
- Hospital volunteering is service, but you can sometimes split the hours between service and clinical
- If considering DO need to try to shadow a DO and get a letter

### Paid Clinical:

- Paid clinical is a very positive experience for schools - at least 6 months or 200+ hr
- Schools want to see that you have not only shadowed but that you have also “rolled up your sleeves” and gotten as close to medicine as possible—not passively but directly.
- We recommend that prospective applicants consider the following before applying to medical programs: Medical schools will be looking for applicants

The screenshot displays the Princeton Review application management interface. A modal window titled "Add Paid Clinical/Employment" is open over a "Portfolio" page. The "Portfolio" page shows a navigation menu with categories: Academic (1), Clinical Experience (0), Shadowing (0), Paid Clinical/Employment (0), Co-op (0), Internship (0), Volunteer Program (0), and Other (0). The "Add Paid Clinical/Employment" form contains the following fields:

- Institution/Org/Program Name:
- Supervisor Name:
- City:
- State:
- Paid?:
- Start Date:
- End Date:
- Approximate Total Hours:
- Percent of College Expenses Paid:
- During Academic Year?:

A "Save Changes" button is located at the bottom right of the modal.

## Student Example's Portfolio

Name: Student Example

MSMID: 114444838

Phone: (555) 555-1234

Email: prehealth@review.com

Product Enrollment: Free Access to Medical-School Management Tool

Cycle:

### Academic

#### Scholarships:

- Caldwell Scholarship

#### Academic Awards:

- Dean's List

#### Honor Societies:

- Phi Beta Kappa, Golden Chain, Alpha Epsilon Delta, and University College Honors Program

#### Research:

Start Date: 01-01-2017

End Date: 01-01-2020

Institution/Org/Program Name: NCSU

Area/Type of Research: Biochemistry Lab, Clinical Practice Research

Duties: Set-up lab, analyze journal articles, collecting samples, and present data

Received UG Research Grant for \$1000 UG Research Symposium - Poster Presentation

Paid?: Yes

Approximate Total Hours: 450

#### Study Abroad:

Institution/Org/Program Name: MedFirst

Location(s): Belize

Start Date: 05-01-2018

End Date: 05-20-2018

Purpose: Medical Mission Trip

Institution/Org/Program Name: MedFirst

Location(s): Dominican Republic

Start Date: 03-10-2019

End Date: 03-18-2019

Purpose: Medical Mission Trip

#### Teaching Assistant:

# Free. Functional. Finished.

- Send as a reference sheet to your letter writers
- Reference your skills when inquiring about opportunities with your health advisor
- Track your awards, research, and experiences in real time
- Craft your application narrative
- Utilize as a super detailed CV



# Use Your Resources



## **1:1 Free Consultations**

If you're looking for extra guidance in determining the next steps in your pre-health journey, email me or book a consultation!

## **Management Tool**

Free on the Princeton Review website! Use this to organize your application and keep track of your progress.

## **\$500 off Course Discount**

Save your cash! We're partners for a reason. Reach out to me to learn about what course might be most appropriate for your academic goals.

## **MCAT Flashcards App**

Download this free app to practice different test questions—you can do them anywhere, any time!

## **Free Practice Tests**

Taking advantage of free tests will help you prepare for the time length of the exam, subject material, the environment—sign up!

## **10% off Tutoring**

Managing classes and preparing for the MCAT can be tough—get 1:1 tutoring for your academic coursework to keep balanced.



# Questions?

## Contact Me

Emerson Short // [emerson.short@review.com](mailto:emerson.short@review.com)

Pre-Health Outreach Specialist

