Your Health Profession Application

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Assistant Director,
Health Professions Advising
Session Goals

• Inside CAS
• Writing About Experiences
• Do’s & Don’ts
• Personal Statement Information
• Resources
This process takes

Patience + Perseverance

• This is going to take a long time
• Start your work ahead of time
• We’re here to help!
Before you apply

GATHER / CREATE:

• Letters of recommendation
• Listing/reflection of experience hours & contact info
• Your testing records (I.D. number)
• Funds
• Personal Statement
• Transcripts
Rocking the CAS

• What is the CAS for your field?

• What does it look like?

• READ THE MANUAL
Which CAS & When?

- **Dentistry**: AADSAS (Opens May 15, Submit June 5)
- **Medicine**: AMCAS (Opens May 2, Submit May 31)
  - AACOMAS (Opens & Submit May 3)
- **Occupational Therapy**: OTCAS (Opens in July)
- **Optometry**: OptomCAS (Opens in July)
- **Pharmacy**: PharmCAS (Opens in July)
- **Physical Therapy**: PTCAS (Opens July 6)
- **Physician Assistant**: CASPA (Opens April 26)
- **Podiatry**: AACPMAS (Opens in August)
- **Public Health**: SOPHAS (Opens in August)
- **Speech Pathology/ Audiology**: CSDCAS (Opens in August)
- **Veterinary Medicine**: VMCAS (Opens May 11)
What does it look like?

- Biographical information
- Schools Attended, transcript upload
- Coursework entry
- Work/activities
- Letters of evaluation
- Your schools of choice
- Essays/personal statement
- Standardized test info
Dashboard

Dashboard Image Description:

- **My Application**
  - This dashboard is your application home providing access to each part of the application you need to complete and a high level overview of your progress.
  - **My Program Selections**: 1
  - **Have Upcoming Deadlines**: 0
  - **Ready to Submit**: 0
  - **Manage My Programs**
  - **Latest Notifications**
  - **View My Notifications**

- **Getting Started**
  - Speed up your application by entering your colleges first.

- **Personal Information**
  - 0/7 Sections Completed

- **Academic History**
  - 0/1 Sections Completed

- **Supporting Information**
  - 0/4 Sections Completed

- **Program Materials**
  - 0/1 Sections Completed
AMCAS Dashboard

Claudia Garcia
AAMC ID
21173797

Date of Birth
01/01/1988

Email
anymail321@gmail.com

Phone Number
202-555-1236

Identifying Information
Completed

Schools Attended
Completed

Biographic Information
Completed

Course Work
Completed

Work/Activities
Completed

Letters of Evaluation
Completed

Medical Schools
Completed

Essays
Completed

Standardized Tests
Completed

Application - Not Submitted to AMCAS

Quick Links

Follow us on Twitter

My Document Statuses

Transcripts (2)
North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (Greensboro)
Central European University (Budapest)

Letters of Evaluation (1)
Dr. Gwen Williams, UPENN Letter

View Application Status History

View All Transcript Statuses

View All Letter Statuses
You have to tell the system about every college you attended… even if it was for one course. No matter what the grades!

Afterwards you will be able to print a transcript matching form.
Ordering Transcripts

• Order your **official** transcripts in person or online from the Office of the Registrar.
• Hold for **Spring** grades!
• Submit your **transcript request form(s)** (from the application service) the same day that you place your order
• Fax or in person to Registrar
• You must order your transcripts from **all institutions** attended
• It does NOT matter whether the courses have transferred!
Entering Coursework

After you enter your coursework, you will enter Transcript Review.

The system will ask you about:

- Repeated coursework: you must put in every attempt at a course, even if you utilized grade replacement at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- CLEP
- Advanced placement
Coursework classification

- For all systems you have to classify the subject of the course:
  - Example: You will select MCB 150 to be classified as Biology.

- Courses should be classified by the **content** of the course, **not course title**.
  - Example: PSYC 404 Cognitive Neuroscience can be classified as Biology even though it is housed in Psychology. The content of the course is biology.

- **Course Classifications** are used in the calculation of your Centralized Application Service GPA.
  - Example: Science GPA (sometimes called the BCPM GPA) versus All Others GPA (or AO GPA)
### Course Classification Example

**Found in AMCAS Applicant Guide**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biology (BIOL)</th>
<th>Fine Arts (ARTS)</th>
<th>History (HIIST)</th>
<th>Natural &amp; Physical Sciences (NPSC)</th>
<th>Other (OTH)</th>
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<td>History</td>
<td>Animal &amp; Avian Sciences</td>
<td>Library Science</td>
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<tr>
<th>Communications (COMM)</th>
<th>Government, Political Science, &amp; Law (GOVT)</th>
<th>Health Sciences (HEAL)</th>
<th>Philosophy &amp; Religion (PHIL)</th>
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<td>Dentistry</td>
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<td>Hearing &amp; Speech Studies</td>
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| Special Studies (SSTU) | | | | |
Coursework Entry Tips

- During the verification process, the application service will compare your coursework entry to your transcripts. **They need to match EXACTLY.**

- Use your **Academic History**—it matches the information on your transcript

- **Do NOT use DARS**

- You can put in future coursework into the application.
Questions About Coursework Entry?

- Refer to schools’ specific websites
- Submit questions to schools via email
  - Provides a document you can keep and use as a reference
- Keep in Mind:
  - Prerequisite coursework does not have to be completed prior to the application.
  - BUT prerequisite coursework must be completed prior to matriculation.
Writing About Experiences

• Strategy: List everything first
  – THEN group:
    – Awards/Honors/Scholarships - Memberships
    – Leadership - Service/Volunteering
    – Sports - Part-time work
    – Certifications - Research/Publications
    – Shadowing - Interships/Teaching

• Describe competencies learned & distance traveled
  – Why did you choose to do this?
  – What did you learn?
  – How did the experience make you a stronger applicant?

• Help the reader learn about who you are—can include hobbies, mission work, personal experiences
**Activities & Experiences Section**

**WORK/ACTIVITIES**

**Experience Type:**
- Select One:
  - Paid Employment - not Military
  - Paid Employment - Military
  - Community Service/Volunteer - not Medical/Clinical
  - Community Service/Volunteer - Medical/Clinical
  - Research/Lab
  - Teaching/Tutoring
  - Honors/Awards/Recognitions
  - Conferences Attended
  - Presentations/Posters
  - Publications
  - Extracurricular/Hobbies/Avocations
  - Leadership - not Listed Elsewhere
  - Other (Intercolligate Athletics, Artistic Endeavors)

**Experience Name:**
- [ ]

**Start Date:**
- [ ]

**End Date:**
- [ ]

**Average Hours/Week:**
- [ ]

**Organization Name:**
- [ ]

**Contact’s First Name:**
- [ ]

**Contact’s Last Name:**
- [ ]

**Contact’s Title:**
- [ ]

**Country:**
- [ ] United States
- [ ] Canada
- [ ] Other...
- [ ] Decline to Answer

**City:**
- [ ]

**Experience Description:**
(1325 or fewer characters)
- [ ]

**Character Count:**
- [ ] (maximum 1325 characters)

**Back**  |  **Add Another Work Activity**  |  **Continue**
Do’s & Don’ts with Experience Entry

- Don’t feel pressured to have 15
  - but you should have more than 5!
- It’s okay to use one experience as two entries or gather multiple experiences under one section
- You have 700 characters per experience—
  - on AMCAS, 1325 for 3 most meaningful
- Make the sentence structure interesting
  - don’t start everything with “I”
- Show:
  - 1) Achievements that connect to core competencies
  - 2) Sustained involvements that reflect on your growth
  - 3) Leadership experiences that showcase your responsibility
Personal Statement

• Answer the question
• Brainstorming
• Telling your story (distance traveled, your preparation)
• Get it down on paper, then revise
• 5300 characters; about 1 page
• Resources
Entering Your Personal Statement

**Personal Essay**
Discuss briefly the development of your interest in veterinary medicine. Discuss those unique activities that have contributed to your preparation for a professional program. Discuss your understanding of the veterinary medical profession, what you have to offer the profession in it and your career goals and objectives.

**PERSONAL COMMENTS**

Use the space provided to explain why you want to go to medical school. The available space for your response is 5300 characters, or approximately one full page. You will receive an error message if you exceed the available space. For additional assistance, click 'help' on the toolbar at the top of the screen. *What information should I consider including in my personal comments?*

| Character Count: 0 (maximum 5300 characters) |
Personal Statement Warning

• Avoid including:
  – Over-focus on childhood
  – TMI about medical diagnoses
  – Negative language/negativity
  – Writing what “all doctors know/do” or referring to negative experience with physician

• It’s okay to include:
  – Disability/disorders within certain context—let us help!
  – Difficulties you’ve persisted/grown through
Personal Statement Resources

• Writer’s Workshop
  – For framework, sentence structure, grammar

• Personal Statement Review Service
  https://www.careercenter.illinois.edu/service/personal-statement-reviews
  – For overall content when close to final draft
  – POLICY
    • 1 statement review per semester
    • Upload on site, feedback in 2-3 days
You can submit your application without test scores in yet.

You can list date of future exam

Read your CAS’ instructional manual to learn how your particular service wants to receive test scores
Letters of Evaluation

• Research individual schools for requirements

• Cultivate a variety of letters:
  – Three academic letters: two science, one non-science
  – Research is NOT academic. It is an experience letter.
  – Experience letters: research, shadowing, volunteering, work, etc.

• Provide letter writers with:
  – your resume
  – your personal statement
  – suggestions from your CAS
  – A DEADLINE
  – A big thank you---and then keep them updated on your progress!
Letters of Evaluation

Many medical schools determine whether or not an applicant has met their letter of evaluation/recommendation requirements by the type of letters they receive in support of an application. For example, a medical school may require a committee letter OR three individual letters in support of your application.

For medical schools' requirements regarding letters of evaluation/recommendation, click Help.

Please identify the type of letter you wish to enter. If you are uncertain as to the type of letters provided by your school/institution, please ask your pre-health advisor or career center prior to answering this question.

- Committee Letter: A committee is a letter authored by a pre-health committee or pre-health advisor and intended to represent your institution’s evaluation of you. A committee letter may or may not include additional letters written in support of your application.

- Letter Packet: A packet or set of letters assembled and distributed by your institution, often by the institution’s career center.

- Individual Letter: An individual letter refers only to a letter authored by, and representing, a single letter writer. If you have already included an individual letter within either a committee letter or letter packet, you do not need to add a separate entry for the individual letter.
You will be asked about whether or not you have been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor. **BE HONEST.**

A background check is a component of the application process. You do not want to appear to be hiding anything.

You will be asked your current student status, and academic infractions. **BE HONEST.**
By answering Yes, you authorize VMCAS to release selected information regarding your VMCAS application and admission status to the health professions advisor and the health professions advisory committee of the post-secondary institution(s) that you have attended. By releasing your information, your advisor is better able to assist you in the admissions process, as well as better guide other students in the future. You cannot make changes to this item after you submit your application to VMCAS.

[ ] Yes  [ ] No

Save and Continue

PLEASE CHECK YES!

This allows us to better advise our students about and through the application process!
Check your manual for:

Requirements to submit your application and start the verification process!

- In most cases you can submit without test scores and letters of recommendation. Submit to get your place in line for verification.

- In most cases, there are very few changes that can be made to your application after you submit it. Some examples typically include:
  - Legal name changes
  - Adding additional letter writers
  - Applying to additional programs
  - Future examination dates
Overall Application
Do’s & Don’ts

Do:

- Take your time
- Include specifics
- Focus on competencies
- Apply EARLY
- Print/read it out loud
- Come to workgroups
- Follow on Twitter/FB
- Consult the manual or applicant’s guide

Don’t:

- Rush
- Forget your email inbox
- Focus too much on your childhood
- Focus on negative experiences
- Forget to include amazing experiences not related to health!
Take Aways

• Collect your documents & info now
• Do pre-writing now
• Apply early in cycle
• Use resources (including: THE MANUAL!)
Good luck!

I’ll be here at the end of tonight for specific questions!