



Steinbright Career Development Center

Changes to the University Recommendation for the 2022 Medical and Dental School Application Cycle

Drexel University Health Professions Committee
October 2020

The Drexel University Health Professions Committee recognizes the significant impact that COVID-19 has had on academics, research, extracurricular activities, and opportunities for community service and clinical exposure as well as the personal and financial challenges faced by students, alumni, and families. **In light of these issues, the University Health Professions Committee is suspending the evaluative University Recommendation for the 2022 medical and dental school application cycle and is instead offering a narrative committee letter.** Additionally, the application criteria for the narrative summary letter are different from those of the evaluative University Recommendation, and these criteria take into consideration the impact of COVID-19 on academics and co-curricular activities. Note that there is a prompt in the application for the Prehealth Committee Letter where students and alumni can discuss the impact of COVID-19 on their academic, co-curricular, and professional activities and plans.

Importantly, the letterhead of the Drexel University Prehealth Committee Letter will explain the change from the evaluative University Recommendation to the narrative Prehealth Committee Letter. Admissions Committees will be invited to contact the Prehealth Advisor if they have questions or would like more information about this process.

Note that medical and dental schools refer to applicants and the application process by the intended year of matriculation. This 2022 Prehealth Committee Letter, therefore, refers to applicants who are planning to apply to medical or dental school in the summer of 2021 for matriculation in August 2022.

Prehealth Committee Letter for the 2022 Medical and Dental School Application Cycle

The 2022 Drexel University Prehealth Committee Letter will be a narrative summary of the applicant's undergraduate, and where applicable post-undergraduate experiences, which will provide background and context to the applicant's motivation and preparation for a career in medicine or dentistry.

- The letter will be based upon information provided by the applicant in the Application for the Prehealth Committee Letter and in an individual interview with one of the Committee members.
- **There will be no ranking of applicants included in the letter.**
- The Drexel Prehealth Advisor will only submit the Drexel Prehealth Committee Letter to AMCAS/AACOMAS/TMDSAS/AADSAS application services. No recommendation letters will be collected by the Drexel Prehealth Advisor.
- Due to the changes from an evaluative committee letter to a narrative summary committee letter, it will be necessary for applicants to obtain additional recommendation letters from science faculty and other supervisors. ***The narrative summary committee letter will not serve as a substitute for obtaining individual recommendations from science faculty and other supervisors.***
- Applicants are responsible for asking science faculty and other supervisors to submit their recommendation letters to AMCAS/AACOMAS/TMDSAS/AADSAS.

Application Process and Selection Criteria for the Prehealth Committee Letter

Eligibility for the Prehealth Committee Letter

- Currently enrolled as an undergraduate student seeking a bachelor's degree and who completed prerequisite sciences at Drexel. Transfer students who completed the core premedical/predental science courses at another college will be assessed on a case by case basis. Transfer students should email the Prehealth Advisor to assess their individual situations.
- Alumni who completed a bachelor's degree at Drexel University and who completed prerequisite science courses at Drexel University
- Students and alumni who applied in past application cycles for a University Recommendation and were not selected are welcome to apply for the Prehealth Committee Letter.
- Alumni currently enrolled in a postbaccalaureate premedical/prehealth program or a graduate program in science or public health must first check with the program's advisors to see if the program provides a Premedical/Predental Committee Letter for its students. If the program does provide a committee letter, Drexel alumni should work with their graduate/postbac program's advisors to adhere to their Committee Letter process.
- A recommendation letter from the Drexel University Health Professions Committee is only valid for the application cycle in which it was granted. If you applied for and were selected to receive a University Recommendation in past medical/dental school application cycles, you will need to re-apply for a Prehealth Committee Letter for the 2022 application cycle. A separate re-application form will be available in the late winter for students and alumni who received a University Recommendation in past application cycles.
- Alumni who received a University Recommendation letter from the previous Drexel Prehealth Advisor, Thomas Coyne, should contact Mary Beth Davis regarding the process to send that letter to medical or dental schools.

Selection Criteria

- Minimum cumulative undergraduate GPA of 3.0 and a minimum undergraduate science and math GPA of 3.0. The science and math GPA includes courses from the biology, chemistry, physics, and math departments.
- Minimum grade of C in medical and dental school prerequisite courses.
- Starting with the spring 2020 quarter, for all courses with a grade of Pass, the Committee will **not** ask the applicant to reveal the actual grade, and the Pass grade will be considered as meeting requirements for the Prehealth Committee Letter. *Note that medical and dental schools may independently ask applicants to provide verification from Drexel University that a grade in a prerequisite course is a C or higher.*
- Participation in activities that have promoted an understanding of medicine or dentistry, research, or community service. The type, length, and duration of the activity will vary among applicants and will be considered holistically in the context of the impact of COVID-19 and with respect to each individual applicant's entire application.

Application Process

- **The deadline for submitting the online application for the 2022 Prehealth Committee Letter is Friday January 15, 2021 at 10 PM Eastern Time.**
- The Preview Word Document for the online application is appended to the end of this statement; however, applicants must submit an online application form. Individualized links to the online 2022 Prehealth Committee Letter Application will be available after Thanksgiving break. You will need to email the Prehealth Advisor to receive an individualized link to the application.
- Review of applications will begin after the deadline, not on a rolling basis, and decisions about applications will be emailed to applicants by the beginning of February 2021.

- Applicants selected in January 2021 to receive the Prehealth Committee Letter will be assigned to do one interview with one member of the University Health Professions Committee. Interviews will be virtually conducted through Zoom. Many interview times will be initially assigned, and there will be a contact person for rescheduling if needed.

The purpose of this interview is to help applicants prepare for the medical /dental school application process with respect to interviewing and discussing their motivation and preparation for their intended career path.

Applicants not selected in January 2021 to receive the Prehealth Committee Letter – Opportunities for feedback and to re-apply for the Prehealth Committee Letter in May 2021

- Applicants not selected in January 2021 to receive the Prehealth Committee Letter will have the opportunity to schedule a meeting with one of the Prehealth Committee Co-Chairs to get feedback on their application. Applicants can choose to **re-apply** for the Prehealth Committee Letter in the spring quarter.

The deadline for the re-application for the 2022 Prehealth Committee Letter is Tuesday May 11, 2021.

Applicants who are selected in May to receive the Prehealth Committee Letter will be assigned to do one interview with one member of the University Health Professions Committee.

Timeline for Submission of Prehealth Committee Letters to AMCAS/AACOMAS/TMDSAS/AADSAS

For applicants who are selected to receive the Prehealth Committee Letter in January 2021, the Prehealth Committee Letters will be submitted by mid-June 2021.

For re-applicants who are selected to receive the Prehealth Committee Letter in May 2021, the Prehealth Committee Letter will be submitted by mid-July 2021.

If you have questions after reviewing this document and the appended Preview 2022 Prehealth Committee Letter Application, please email Mary Beth Davis, Ph.D., Drexel Prehealth Advisor, med349@drexel.edu.

FAQ

What are the average science GPAs for applicants accepted to medical and dental schools?

In 2019 the national average science GPA of applicants accepted to allopathic (MD) medical schools was 3.66. (<https://www.aamc.org/data/facts/>) The science GPA for allopathic medical schools includes courses classified by the applicant on the AMCAS application as biology, chemistry, physics, and math courses.

Osteopathic (DO) medical schools calculate a science GPA that does not include math courses but does include a wide range of science courses in addition to biology, chemistry, and physics. In 2019 the national average science GPA of applicants accepted to osteopathic (DO) medical schools was 3.51.

<https://choosedo.org/admission-requirements/>

Dental schools calculate a science GPA includes a wide range of science courses in addition to biology, chemistry, physics, and math courses. In 2019 the national average science GPA of applicants accepted to dental school was 3.48.

<http://www.adea.org/publications-and-data/data-analysis-and-research/applicants-enrollees-and-graduates.aspx>

How do I know if I have participated in “enough activities” or acquired “enough hours” to receive the Prehealth Committee Letter?

The University Health Professions Committee is doing a holistic consideration of each applicant’s collective experiences. This application, revised in part from the original University Recommendation application, is designed to help applicants reflect upon their experiences and readiness to apply to medical or dental school. In addition, much of the requested

information, such as contact information for supervisors or inclusive dates of experiences, is required by the AMCAS/AACOMAS/TMDSAS/AADSAS application services.

If you meet the GPA requirements and are considering applying to medical or dental school for 2022 matriculation, strongly consider submitting the application, especially because there is an opportunity for feedback on your application materials.

Do I need to submit recommendation letters with the application for the Prehealth Committee Letter?

No, do not send any recommendations with the Prehealth Committee Letter application. The Drexel Prehealth Advisor will not collect recommendation letters on behalf of applicants. The Prehealth Advisor will only submit the Prehealth Committee Letter to AMCAS/AACOMAS/TMDSAS/AADSAS.

Each applicant is responsible for requesting letters of recommendation from faculty and other supervisors, and each applicant is also responsible for complying with the requirements for recommendation letters as specified by the individual medical and dental schools where they apply. ***The narrative Prehealth Committee Letter, which is not evaluative in nature, will not substitute for other letters of recommendation; applicants must supplement the Prehealth Committee Letter by having other individual letters of recommendation sent to the application services AMCAS/AACOMAS/TMDSAS/AADSAS.***

What are medical and dental schools looking for in applicants?

That question is too broad to answer on this form. This section is to provide you with some insight into the academic, personal, and professional competencies that admissions committees are assessing. The AAMC has outlined these competencies for medical school applicants:

AAMC Core Competencies

The AAMC has defined 15 “core competencies” that entering medical school students need to demonstrate. (<https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/core-competencies/>) As you do a self-assessment of your “readiness” to apply to medical school, think about how your application will convey that you have developed these competencies. For pre-dental students, this exercise can also be useful as you prepare to apply to dental school.

Thinking and Reasoning Competencies

Critical Thinking
Quantitative Reasoning
Scientific Inquiry
Written Communication

Science Competencies

Living Systems
Human Behavior

Interpersonal Competencies

Service Orientation
Social Skills
Cultural Competence
Teamwork
Oral Communication

Intrapersonal Competencies

Ethical Responsibility to Self and Others
Reliability and Dependability
Resilience and Adaptability
Capacity for Improvement

Diversity questions on secondary applications

Many of the secondary applications will have a question asking applicants how they will contribute to the diversity of the medical/dental school class and community. Think broadly about the concept of diversity; diverse perspectives can be cultural, socioeconomic, intellectual, professional experience, special talents, etc. Spend some time thinking about what you could bring to a medical/dental school community.



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Preview of the Online Application Form for the Prehealth Committee Letter from the Drexel University Health Professions Committee

- Online Application and Individualized Links will be available at the end of the fall quarter, approximately December 7, 2020.
- You must email Mary Beth Davis, the Prehealth Advisor, no later than Friday January 8, 2021 *to receive a personalized link* to the Prehealth Committee Letter Application.
- **DO NOT share the link** as the link is for your specific application only.

The deadline for submitting the Online Application Form is 10:00 PM Eastern Time on Friday January 15, 2021.

Note that this application is only reviewed by members of the Drexel University Health Professions Committee. It is not sent to medical or dental schools or shared with other individuals within or outside of Drexel University.

The Drexel University Health Professions Committee consists of several faculty members and deans from multiple academic departments and fields of study across Drexel University and is co-Chaired by the Prehealth Advisor.

Questions about the Prehealth Committee Letter should be directed to Mary Beth Davis.

AMCAS refers to the centralized allopathic (MD) school application.

AACOMAS refers to the centralized osteopathic (DO) school application.

AADSAS refers to the centralized dental school application.

TMDSAS refers to the centralized medical and dental school application service for Texas state medical and dental schools.

You will be required to submit a current resume or CV with this application.

SECTION I PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name:

University ID:

Email address:

Graduation Year:

Cell Phone:

What is the "State of Residence" that you will enter on the medical or dental school application?

Pronoun usage adopted from the 2021 AMCAS/AACOMAS/TMDSAS applications

Please select the set of pronouns you want people to use to refer to you. Select one option or add in your own in the space provided. If selected to receive a Prehealth Committee Letter, these pronouns will be used to refer to you in the text of the letter that will be sent to AMCAS/AACOMAS/TMDSAS/AADSAS.

☐ She/Her/Hers

- ☐ He/Him/His
☐ They/Them/Theirs
☐ Ze/Hir/Hirs
☐ Different set (please specify):

SECTION II ACADEMIC RECORD

You need to report **ALL** colleges and universities where you have **ever** enrolled for a course(s). This includes:

- Any colleges where you took courses during high school or before enrolling at Drexel
- Any colleges where you took summer courses
- Any colleges where you took postbac courses or graduate/professional courses after graduating from Drexel

It does not matter if you transferred the credits to Drexel or not; you will be required to report these courses to the medical/dental school application services.

Attach an unofficial transcript for any college except for Drexel.

Note for military veterans: AMCAS requires the submission of the Joint Services Transcript; however, you do not need to submit it with this application in order to apply for the Prehealth Committee Letter.

List all of the colleges that you have ever attended below.

Enter your undergraduate science GPA (BCPM):

(The science GPA is the average of all courses taken in the biology, chemistry, physics, and math departments.)

Enter your cumulative undergraduate GPA:

Major:

Minor (if applicable):

Program (5yr/3co-ops, 4yr/1co-op, 4yr, BS/MS):

Note that MCAT and DAT scores are not required in order to apply for the Prehealth Committee Letter. The request to report these scores is for advising purposes only.

MCAT Scores (if taken) Please enter the scaled score and the percentile rank.

Chemical and Physical Foundations of Biological Systems:

Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills:

Biological and Biochemical Foundations of Living Systems:

Psychological, Social and Biological Foundations of Behavior:

Total MCAT Score:

Date taken:

Enter date(s) that you plan to take the MCAT:

DAT Scores (if taken)

AC AVG:

PAT:

QRT:

RCT:

Gen Biology:

Gen. Chemistry:

Organic Chemistry:

Total Science:

Date taken:

Enter date(s) that you plan to take the DAT.

In completing the following sections only use plain text – no bold, italics or special characters. The AMCAS, AACOMAS, AADSAS, and TMDAS applications only accept plain text, and on those applications special formatting may lead to formatting problems following submission. Start using the plain text format now to draft your essays and question responses.

SECTION III COLLEGE ACTIVITIES

Introductory academic questions

- Why did you choose your college major and if applicable, your minor?
- Are you planning to do / have you done a senior thesis or capstone project?

Instructions for Sections A – G.

1. Please list and briefly describe your involvement in the following types of co-curricular activities. For each of the individual sections (A-G) below, one paragraph should be sufficient to describe specific activities. Obviously, some sections may have more entries (i.e. one co-op versus 3 co-ops, multiple community service placements, etc.) that require additional paragraphs, but be concise in your responses.

This section is designed to help you organize content and collect information (i.e. supervisor's contact information) needed for your medical and dental school applications. ***On the AMCAS, AACOMAS, AADSAS, and TMDAS applications, however, you will only have 600-750 total characters (letters, spaces, and punctuation) to describe your activities.***

2. For each experience and/or activity, **provide inclusive dates of your participation**, i.e. month and year, not just years. (Note that this is required by AMCAS, AACOMAS, AADSAS, and TMDAS.)

3. Where requested, provide the name and contact information of your supervisor. (Note that this is required by AMCAS, AACOMAS, and AADSAS)

4. Note that some activities may fit into more than one category. For such activities please do not repeat the experience description; list the activity under each entry and refer to the initial description of the activity indicating in which section it can be found.

A. Co-op program

If you participated in the co-op program: give some specific details of your employment (projects, assignments). List the location, employer (company, research facility, etc.), and name/contact information of your direct supervisor. Include comments on how these experiences had an impact on your personal or career development.

B. Extracurricular activities: defined as activities outside the usual duties of a full-time job and/or class. **Leadership:** defined as a position of responsibility, with a purpose to guide or direct others. Briefly describe the extent of your participation in extracurricular activities and leadership activities.

C. Experience in a clinical setting (e.g., hospital, private practice, clinic, etc.):

Describe your Patient Engagement Experience and how it has had an impact on career motivation. Provide contact information for your supervisor or the volunteer coordinator.

D. Physician/Dentist shadowing or informational interviews with physicians or dentists:
Provide contact information for the physician/dentist. Include comments on how the experience(s) has had an impact on your career development. Predental students – list the approximate number of shadowing hours you have accumulated to date.

Note that while you may list shadowing of family members on this application for the Prehealth Committee Letter, be aware that medical and dental schools prefer that applicants shadow professionals who are not immediate family members.

E. Community/volunteer service activities. Provide contact information for your supervisor or volunteer coordinator.

If you were involved in informal/not structured community engagement during COVID-19, please describe those activities here. Examples include providing childcare or tutoring for neighbors, running errands or grocery shopping for home bound people, serving as an online friendly visitor to homebound individuals, etc.

Include comments on how the experience(s) has had an impact on your personal or career development.

F. List all research experiences. Research experience: defined as involvement in a scholarly or scientific investigation of a hypothesis that is supervised by an individual with verifiable research credentials. List any conferences attended or publications. Provide contact information for your research supervisor(s).

For each research experience please address the following:

What did you do? How has this experience influenced your career goals?

Provide a 1-2 sentence description of the objective/goal/question explored in the project.

Note that research experience may include participation in the STAR or other summer research program, volunteering as a research assistant in a lab, clinical research, co-op positions, etc.

G. Paid employment

What paid jobs, excluding co-op, have you held since starting college (including summers)? Provide a brief description of your responsibilities.

List approximate hours per week, and contact information for your supervisor.

SECTION IV ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

Please limit your comments to 1-2 paragraphs for each question.

a. *Briefly*, what are the primary reasons that you want to become a physician or dentist? Note that you will need to be able to state this concisely in an interview.

b. For predental students - list your hobbies that involve manual dexterity and note a recent project that you have undertaken. Note that this is a common question at dental school interviews, and there is a similar question on some dental school supplemental applications.

c. How do you assess your preparation and chances of admission to professional school at this time and why? What, if any, do you see as weaknesses or obstacles to being admitted to professional school this year?

d. To what extent do you feel that your academic record properly demonstrates your readiness to be successful in the intensive scientific curriculum of medical or dental school?

e. If you have already taken the MCAT or DAT, do you feel that your scores accurately reflect your skills in standardized testing? If not, do you plan to retake the test?

f. What plans do you have if you are not admitted to professional school this cycle? Have you considered alternative careers? If not, why not?

g. If you are a senior, please describe your work or academic plans for the upcoming medical/dental school application year. (if known)

h. If you are considering applying to osteopathic medical schools, briefly describe what you have done to learn about the osteopathic philosophy and its influence on the physician's practice of medicine.

i. Please describe how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected your preparation for applying to medical or dental school. You may share disruptions in plans for academic/volunteer/work/co-op/extracurricular activities. We recognize that this answer might be somewhat longer than responses to the above questions.

SECTION V FOR ALUMNI

If you have already graduated from Drexel University, briefly describe your work/activities since you graduated.

Are you enrolled in a postbaccalaureate or graduate school program?

If yes, have you discussed your plans to apply to medical/dental school with your postbac/graduate program advisor?

If you are enrolled in a postbac/graduate program, does your postbac/graduate program provide a premedical/predental committee letter for its students?

If your postbac/graduate program provides a committee letter you should seek a letter from your advisors; medical/dental schools do not want multiple committee letters. Email Mary Beth Davis if you have questions about this issue.

SECTION VI INSTITUTIONAL ACTION AND CRIMINAL MISCONDUCT QUESTIONS

Most professional school applications include questions about whether or not the applicant has been the subject of any institutional action from their college/university and questions about whether or not the applicant

has a criminal record. These questions are usually followed by a limited sized text box (1325 characters and spaces on the AMCAS application) to explain the circumstances.

Please read and respond to the institutional action and criminal misconduct questions below. **If you answer YES to any questions, provide a brief description of the circumstances. If you prefer not to write about the situation you can schedule a meeting with Mary Beth Davis and discuss the issue with her.** Note that the questions are from the AMCAS medical school application; they are good representatives of these types of questions.

1. Institutional action:

Were you ever the recipient of any institutional action by any college or medical school for unacceptable academic performance or conduct violation, even though such action may not have interrupted your enrollment or required you to withdraw? You must answer "Yes" even if the action does not appear on or has been deleted or expunged from your official transcripts due to institutional policy or personal petition.

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. Misdemeanor:

Have you ever been convicted of, or pleaded guilty or no contest to, a Misdemeanor crime, excluding 1) any offense for which you were adjudicated as a juvenile, 2) any convictions which have been expunged or sealed by a court, or 3) any misdemeanor convictions for which any probation has been completed and the case dismissed by the court (in states where applicable)?

You need NOT disclose any instance where you:

- were arrested, but not charged;
- were arrested and charged, but the charges were dropped;
- were arrested and charged, but found not guilty by a judge or jury;
- were arrested and found guilty by a judge or jury, but the conviction was overturned on appeal; or
- received an executive pardon.

☐ Yes

☐ No

3. Felony:

Have you ever been convicted of, or pleaded guilty or no contest to, a Felony crime, excluding 1) any offense for which you were adjudicated as a juvenile, or 2) convictions which have been expunged or sealed by a court (in states where applicable)?

You need NOT disclose any instance where you:

- were arrested but not charged;
- were arrested and charged, but the charges were dropped;
- were arrested and charged, but found not guilty by a judge or jury;
- were arrested and found guilty by a judge or jury, but the conviction was overturned on appeal; or
- received an executive pardon.

☐ Yes

☐ No

SECTION VII DRAFT PERSONAL STATEMENT

Although this personal statement is a draft, the Health Professions Committee expects applicants to take this section seriously and to write a thoughtful essay, not a last minute essay to meet the deadline.

The draft essay is limited to 5300 characters and spaces (this means letters, spaces, punctuation, and line breaks). This text limit is derived from the limits of the AMCAS/AACOMAS personal statement.

This is your opportunity to tell your own story of motivation and preparation for medicine/dentistry in a compelling way that will strongly encourage an admissions committee to invite you for an interview. Remember that the medical and dental school applications will have a section to describe work and activities, so you should not rewrite your resume in the statement. It is not possible to cover “everything” in the essay. Write what you want admissions committees to learn about you, not what you think that they want to read.

Some questions to consider:

- Why have you selected this career? What motivates you to learn more about medicine or dentistry?
- How have you demonstrated this interest?
- What key experience(s) have you had that affirms your career goal? What did you do and what did you learn from it?
- Have you encountered special hardships along the pathway to this career? If so, describe.
- Your motivation to become a physician or dentist should be clear.

You will be able to upload the essay as a separate Word or PDF file on the online application.

SECTION VIII APPLICANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The prior sections asked about your collegiate/post-collegiate academic, research, clinical exposure, community service, etc. experiences. This section is your opportunity to share with the University Health Professions Committee information that is not covered in other parts of the application and that you feel has helped shape your professional development and motivation for a career in medicine/dentistry. Please respond briefly to each question below.

- In what area have you spent the majority of your life and what was its influence on you? Was this location a medically underserved area?
- Were languages other than English spoken at home?
- Are you a first-generation college student?
- Did you serve in the military?
- Identify an experience in which you overcame a significant challenge and how you overcame it.
- Has anyone in your family worked in the health care field?
- Please tell the University Health Professions Committee something else about you that “does not fit” into any of the other sections. For example, you could describe your pets, hobbies, talents, a travel experience, etc.