The Pathway to Medical School

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI MEDICAL CENTER

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http://som.umc.edu
Steps to Become a Physician

• College/university, 4 years, BA/BS degree
• Medical school, 4 years, MD degree
• Residency (specialty) training, 3-5 years
• Optional fellowship (subspecialty) training, 1-3 years

Total time to become a practicing physician is between 11-16 years
Medical School Education

USMLE:

Step 1

Step 2

Basic Sciences
- Anatomy
- Biochemistry
- Microbiology
- Pharmacology/Toxicology
- Pathology
- Physiology/Biophysics
- Psychiatry/Human Behavior

Clinical Training
- Anesthesiology
- Emergency Medicine
- Family Medicine
- Internal Medicine
- Neurology
- Neurosurgery
- Obstetrics/Gynecology
- Ophthalmology
- Orthopedic Surgery
- Pediatric Medicine
- Preventive Medicine
- Surgery

BA
BS
M1
M2
M3
M4
MD
Academic Preparation

- Bachelor’s degree preferred
- Any major/accredited college acceptable
- Required college-level courses (1 year each; AP credit not acceptable)
  - Biology
  - Inorganic Chemistry 8 hours each including laboratory
  - Organic Chemistry
  - Physics
  - Mathematics
  - English
  - Advanced science (senior college)
MCAT Preparation

1. Acquire Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) review book with
   - practice exams
   - answers to questions
   - explanations for all answers

2. Review subject matter

3. Simulate timed practice exams on computer

4. Analyze performance
   - read every explanation to every answer to every question and
   - chart reasons for incorrect answers
     • I don’t have a clue! (go to #2)
     • I knew that! (go to #3)
Personal Preparation

- **Exposure to medicine**
  - Volunteer or employment opportunities
  - MD office, clinics, hospital, nursing home, hospice, participation in pre-medical organizations
  - Awareness of time and cost required for training

- **Extracurricular activities indicative of**
  - Effective interaction with diverse people
  - Service to individuals, family, community groups
  - Leadership, responsibility
  - Academic/cultural interests beyond the classroom
  - Time management skills
UMC School of Medicine
http://som.umc.edu; “admissions” tab

- **Details about UMC**
  - Residency and academic requirements
  - Program deadlines
  - Curriculum

- **Links to Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)**
  - American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS)
  - Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT)
    - Computer-based test at few sites with limited seating
    - ~22 dates; ~half day test
    - January scores used for alternates only

- **Fee Assistance Program (FAP)**
You are ready to apply if you...

- are a Mississippi resident (or can meet the 1 year residency requirement before matriculation)

- will complete all academic requirements within the current academic year

- prepared to matriculate next August (deferments discouraged)
Application Timeline

Not later than junior year

- September: Begin MCAT preparation
- Spring: Take 1st MCAT
- May: Request transcripts & letters
- June: Complete AMCAS application
- Summer: Repeat MCAT
- September: Interviews begin

Avoid deadlines; verify receipt of each item
Early Decision Program (apply to one school)

- AAMC by 8/1
  - AMCAS Application
    - Three faculty evaluation letters submitted electronically
  - Transcripts from all schools attended

- UMC by 9/15
  - Secondary Application & $50 Fee
  - Transcripts from all schools attended

- ≥ 3.6 BCPM GPA and 27 MCAT sum
Regular Decision Program
(apply to multiple schools)

- AAMC by 10/15
  - AMCAS Application
    - Three faculty evaluation letters submitted electronically
  - Transcripts from all schools attended

- UMC by 12/1
  - Secondary Application & $50 Fee
  - Transcripts from all schools attended
Combined M.D./Ph.D. Program (dual degree)

- 7 year program, 3 blocks
  M1, M2, Step 1 / G1, G2, G3 / M3, M4, Step 2

- Highly competitive applicants
  Average BCPM GPA = 3.8, MCAT = 31.4

- Select this program on AMCAS application
  - Regular Decision Program deadlines
  - Sequential acceptance to MD, PhD programs
UMC Selection Process......

• All decisions rendered by Medical School Admissions Committee (MSAC)

• MSAC is independent of internal/external political/financial influence; all applicants assured equal and unbiased consideration regardless of academic major, school attended, age, religion, gender, gender preference, handicap, race, or ethnicity.
UMC Selection Process

• Initial Screen
  - uBCPM GPA
  - MCAT

\{ (3.8 + 21) \text{ versus } (2.8 + 31) \}

• Interviews
  - Three admissions committee members including Associate Dean or Director of Admissions
  - Lunch & campus tour with M4
UMC Selection Process

• Interviews

Applicants asked to respond to questions and scenarios to assess communication skills, respect for others, motivation for medicine, vision of practice, critical thinking/problem solving, honesty/integrity, maturity, accountability, altruism, compassion, awareness of ethics/values, striving for excellence, setting priorities for medical school, self appraisal, coping skills, support system.
UMC Selection Process

• MSAC’s holistic review of each applicant:
  – Where raised, high school and college attended
  – Exposure to medicine, volunteer work, leadership
  – Interviewer assessments
  – Trends in academic record, MCAT scores
  – Faculty evaluations of effort and behavior
  – Special circumstances such as “distance traveled”

• Decisions rendered by email
  – Accepted (rolling 10/15 – 3/15)
  – Not accepted (rolling 10/15 – 3/15)
  – Alternate (by 3/15)
Class Entering in 2010

• 310 applications
  - 55 colleges and universities
  - 149 attended community college,
    17 earned associate degrees
  - Mean MCAT 25.9
  - Mean uBCPM 3.46
  - Mean oGPA 3.55

• 229 interviewed
Class Entering in 2010

• 145 accepted to fill a class of 135
  - Mean MCAT   28.4
  - Mean uBCPM 3.64
  - Mean oGPA   3.70
  - 12 schools in-state, 17 out-of state
  - 28 different majors, 48% biology
  - 33 % female, 13% minorities,
    10% African American
Class Entering in 2010

• Interviews completed 12/18/2009

• Class selection completed 1/6/2010

• All applicants who met deadlines had a chance; but those who completed files during summer had an advantage!

• Follow suggested application timeline!
Class Entering in 2009

• Two offers of acceptance were rescinded after review of Criminal Background Checks (CBCs)

• CBC review includes
  – Severity, number, time frame of offenses
  – Patterns of behavior
  – Failure to self report in AMCAS

• Speeding ticket in MS may be reported as misdemeanor
Reasons to Attend UMC

• Student Support
• State-of-the-art facilities
• Hands-on clinical training
• Low Cost (2011 tuition/fees $18,149)
• High Quality Education
  
  UMC pass rate for USMLE Step 1 usually national average; pass rate for Step 2 usually above national average
For additional information:

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