



February 2, 2009
Volume 2, Issue 1

Are You Ready to Apply to Med School?

Please note: The information contained in this newsletter pertains primarily to the 2010 medical school applicant class.

Congratulations. You have reached the point in your journey where you have completed much of the required course work for medical, dental, or optometry school, you may have even taken your standardized test at this point and now all you have to do is apply. This is a long process with lots of important steps, but some good research and legwork by you on the front-end can take a lot of the worry and stress out of it on the back end. There is no mystery to this process or secret code you need to break. In general, professional schools are concerned with:



- Overall and science GPA
- MCAT/DAT/OAT
- Personal Statement
- Clinical exposure to medicine/dentistry, etc.
- Activities and leadership, particularly related to community service and volunteerism
- Research

Many resources exist to assist you in this process; however, the final responsibility for timelines and the quality of your application rests with you. **Read through all the 2010 Applicant menu bar items on the website and all the Applicant [FAQs](#).**

<http://prehealth.umd.edu/Applicant%20FAQs%20intro.html>

For more information regarding your readiness for the application process, please follow this [link](#).

Wendy Loughlin, Director, Reed-Yorke Health Professions Advising Office
Nick Celedon, Pre-Health Advisor
Ahsan Karim, UMD Class of 2010
Ekta Taneja, UMD Class of 2010

Meet with Wendy!!

A huge part of the service provided by the HPAO office includes a committee letter, which the committee members/interviewers work on with the advisors within the pre-med office. Wendy Loughlin, director of the office, advises the junior and senior pre-medical students. If you want a well-rounded committee letter from HPAO, pertinent to your application, make sure you make an EXTRA effort to meet with Wendy before submitting your pre-health packet to the office. Your meeting with her will provide her insight into your personality and experience, enabling the committee to produce a more effective letter of recommendation.

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Important Dates:

- Feb. 2: HPAO 2010 Applicant Cycle Forms Available Online
- Feb. 5: HPAO Credentials Service Session
- Feb. 27: ACCOMAS Representative Campus Visit
- Mar. 4: AMCAS Representative Campus Visit

Upcoming HPAO Events

Suggested for Juniors & Seniors

****All students planning to utilize the credentials process and to seek a committee letter from the HPAO for their 2010 application are expected to attend a session.****

Walk-ins should not be used to gain this general information.

Utilizing the HPAO Credentials Service & Personal Statement Tips

DATE	TIME	PLACE
Thursday, February 5	3:00 - 4:00 PM	<u>CHM 0119</u>
Tuesday, March 10	2:00 - 3:00 PM	<u>PHY 1201</u>
Tuesday, April 14	4:00 - 5:00 PM	<u>CHM 0119</u>
PERSONAL STATEMENT TIPS		
Tuesday, March 24	3:00 - 4:00 PM	TBA

The following sessions with the application services are the only time this information will be presented this semester.

Please plan to attend the appropriate one(s)!

Spring 2009 Workshop: 2010 Re-applicants

All re-applicants planning to utilize the credentials process and to seek a committee letter from the HPAO for their 2010 application are expected to attend a session.

Walk-ins should not be used to gain this general information.

2010 Re-Applicants

DATE	TIME	PLACE
Wednesday, April 8	3:00 - 4:00 PM	<u>EGR 1108</u>
Monday, May 11	2:00 - 3:00 PM	<u>CHM 1224</u>

The following sessions with the application services are the only time this information will be presented this semester.

Please plan to attend a workshop.

Committee Letter and Credentials Service

The University of Maryland Reed-Yorke Health Professions Advising Office (HPAO) offers a credentials service to individuals who aspire to attend a Health Professional School. There are two components to the service: the committee letter and the credentials forwarding service.

In brief, the committee letter reflects on various aspects of the candidate's personal and academic life, drafted as a result of interactions with the HPAO advisors, information collected in the Student Information Inventory and a mock interview. The [Student Information Inventory](#) is an application including a slew of biographical and self-reflection questions that must be returned to the HPAO before an interview can be conducted. If the completed application is received by the priority deadline of June 1st, a letter is guaranteed by August 1st. For more information regarding this process, please visit our website:

<http://prehealth.umd.edu/Committee%20Ltr.html>

Through the Credentials Forwarding Service, the HPAO collects recommendation letters various professors complete for a candidate, compiles them into one folder, and sends them out to the schools the candidate requests. The letters are only sent out once all of them are in, and only after the candidate submits a [Credentials Mailing form](http://prehealth.umd.edu/2010%20Forms.html) <http://prehealth.umd.edu/2010%20Forms.html> For more information, please follow this [link](http://prehealth.umd.edu/Committee%20Ltr.html): <http://prehealth.umd.edu/Committee%20Ltr.html>

2010 Forms

To help guide students through the application process, the HPAO provides students with a variety of checklists, forms, and FAQs. At [this website](http://prehealth.umd.edu/2010%20Forms.html), <http://prehealth.umd.edu/2010%20Forms.html>

applicants can find links to:

- ⇒ The 2010 timeline
- ⇒ Checklist
- ⇒ Student Information Inventory
- ⇒ A resume template
- ⇒ Self-reflection questions
- ⇒ Credentials Mailing Form
- ⇒ Letter of Recommendation Waiver Form
- ⇒ Student Conduct Certification

Available links on the HPAO website regarding information and events include:

- ⇒ [The committee letter and credentials service: http://prehealth.umd.edu/Committee%20Ltr.html](http://prehealth.umd.edu/Committee%20Ltr.html)
- ⇒ [Timeline: http://prehealth.umd.edu/Timelinetest.html](http://prehealth.umd.edu/Timelinetest.html)
- ⇒ [Workshops: http://prehealth.umd.edu/Workshops.html](http://prehealth.umd.edu/Workshops.html)
- ⇒ [FAQs: http://prehealth.umd.edu/Applicant%20FAQs%20intro.html](http://prehealth.umd.edu/Applicant%20FAQs%20intro.html)
- ⇒ [Blackboard: http://prehealth.umd.edu/Blackboard.html](http://prehealth.umd.edu/Blackboard.html)
- ⇒ [A GPA calculator: http://prehealth.umd.edu/GPA%20calculator.html](http://prehealth.umd.edu/GPA%20calculator.html)

GPA Calculator

Every program has its own requirements for GPA calculation. The HPAO provides information regarding how to calculate your GPA for various program types, including a table with the assigned numerical grade value for each letter grade. This information can be found here: <http://prehealth.umd.edu/GPA%20calculator.html>

Blackboard

Blackboard will be used to help students monitor the receipt by HPAO of elements of their Pre-Health Packet. It will also be used to collect required elements of the Student Information Inventory for easy and environmentally friendly distribution of these items to the members of the Pre-Med Committee. More information on signing up for the HPAO “class” and submitting materials can be found here: <http://prehealth.umd.edu/Blackboard.html>

Intro to the FAQ

The applicant FAQ's are the 'extra gravy' for current applicants. The basic 'bread and butter' is located in the gray drop down menu on the webpage entitled 2010 Applicants and ALL current applicants should be familiar with that information and utilize each page during their application. The web pages are here to guide you through the HPAO committee process and the information is very relevant to your success. The FAQ's are a good resource for all applicants and serve to help those students who want extra information relevant to professional school applicants. To navigate to this page, click here:

<http://prehealth.umd.edu/Applicant%20FAQs%20intro.html>

Letters of Recommendation

Most professional schools request that you submit three to five (3-5) letters of recommendation. Submitting more than five letters is strongly discouraged, as many admissions officials feel overburdened by having to read more than five letters. For more information regarding the letters of recommendation, including a link to the Letter of Recommendation Waiver Form, please click here:

<http://prehealth.umd.edu/LOR.html>

Common Application Services

Medical, Dental, Osteopathic Medical and Optometry Schools all utilize common application services. For answers to specific questions regarding these processes or to initiate an application, please visit their individual websites, whose links can be found on the HPAO website <http://prehealth.umd.edu/applicationservices.html> At this link, you can also find additional information regarding the service, including questions about registering study abroad credits, getting an AMCAS ID, etc.

Choosing Where to Apply

Many factors must be considered when choosing where to apply. The process is expensive and time consuming. Many resources exist to assist with this process. It's important to consider how many schools to apply to, and which factors are most important to you, personally. Take a look at this HPAO FAQ section <http://prehealth.umd.edu/wheretapply.html>

Financing Medical Education

There are many resources available to provide guidance on financing a professional school education. While much of the assistance available is in the form of loans, there are some private scholarships as well as scholarships offered by the schools. Refer to program websites and resources, with links provided: <http://prehealth.umd.edu/financing.html>

Mock Interviews

Once your Student Information Inventory has been reviewed and you have received the email from an HPAO advisor inviting you to set up your mock interview, you will call Mike Grunberg, the Credentials Clerk, to make those arrangements. The email you will receive will contain those instructions.

The mock interview will be scheduled with a member of the University of Maryland community – faculty or staff member – who will spend about an hour with you, taking you through a formal interview that will prepare you for your professional school interviews. The interviewer will ask a variety of questions including some intended to provide information for the Committee Letter and some intended to help you anticipate and try out your answers to typical professional school interviews. At the conclusion or possibly throughout the interview, you will receive feedback on how you did based on your responses, body language, communication skills, etc.

For more information regarding the mock interview, and suggestions on how to follow-up on an interview, navigate to <http://prehealth.umd.edu/mockinterviews.html>

Interview and Follow-up

Schools have very limited interview slots and will not offer them without having a serious interest in you as a candidate. You should take receiving an interview as a very good sign but remember that schools will offer acceptance to between one third and two thirds of all the students they interview. So, it is important to be well prepared and to be yourself and behave like a person the interviewers would want to have as a colleague. The school is interested in fit for their program and wants to know that you will be happy there and that your needs will be met, as well as that you will fit in well with other students and faculty.

For more detailed information regarding the medical school interview, click <http://prehealth.umd.edu/interviews.html>

Transcripts and AP/IB Credit

The HPAO is not responsible for sending your transcripts to AMCAS; applicants need to take care of this individually through the Office of the Registrar. More information on transcripts can be found at: <http://prehealth.umd.edu/Transcripts.html>

Individual medical schools have their own policies regarding AP and IB credit. Students are advised to check individual school web pages for the most current information regarding their policies regarding these credits. For general policies about AP/IB Calculus, AP/IB Biology, AP/IB Chemistry, and AP/IB English, please navigate to <http://prehealth.umd.edu/apcores.html>

February 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 HPAO Student Inventory Form Available Online	3	4	5 HPAO Credentials Service Session 3-4pm CHEM	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27 AACOMAS VISIT: 4pm Location: TBA	28

Alumni Resources!!!!

DID YOU KNOW that the HPAO has a list of recent graduates who are willing to answer your questions? The HPAO alumni list includes contact information and the professional school that each student is attending. Please utilize this invaluable resource to get the inside scoop about the schools you plan on applying to. Alumni are very eager to answer your questions, provide insight about the admissions process, and are willing to answer a broad range of questions you may have about a specific professional school. You get good perspective about a school since these students are often in their second or third year. To access this list, you **MUST** have an HPAO blackboard account. If you have one, click HPAO and you will find this under the alumni resources tab. If you don't have an HPAO tab in blackboard, email prehealth@umd.edu or come into the office and see one of the wonderful advisors.

Student Conduct Violations and Academic Performance

Professional schools and their application services will ask you to declare academic and criminal records. The HPAO requires students to complete a [Student Conduct Certification](#) that indicates whether a disciplinary record is currently maintained by the university. Any information reported by the Office of Student Conduct will be included with the Committee Letter, whether in the affirmative or the negative. For more information, and a link to the certification, <http://prehealth.umd.edu/studentconduct.html>

International Students

The HPAO website includes a http://www.naahp.org/resources/InternatMed_Article.htm to an external website explaining the situation of international students seeking to apply to U.S. medical schools. Here's an excerpt:

As institutions of higher education in the United States increasingly seek to attract a geographically diverse student population, the number of international students has begun to increase not only at the historically research-oriented universities, but also at small, liberal arts colleges nationwide.1 Indeed, many undergraduate admissions offices now use a "need-blind" financial aid policy, which means that foreign students from all economic levels can now consider an undergraduate education in the United States. Based on our experiences with Yale students and anecdotal information gleaned from our colleagues nationwide, the apparent result of the increased attention on an internationally diverse entering class and on a "need-blind" admission policy is that many international students arrive at our institutions believing that a baccalaureate degree from a U.S. college or university guarantees that they will be able to pursue an advanced degree program, including medicine, in this country.

Premedical advisors are often faced with the unenviable task of informing international students that not only is it extremely difficult for those who are not citizens or permanent residents of the U.S. to obtain admission to American medical schools, but also that financial aid for such study is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to secure. Thus, it is imperative that pre-medical advisors work closely with the undergraduate admissions officers at their institutions to draft a statement that succinctly and clearly states these facts.

*Please e-mail us with any comments or questions
you would like to see addressed in the HPAO
Newsletter!*

Prehealth7805@gmail.com

Find us online!

<http://prehealth.umd.edu>

Health Professions Advising Office Mission

The mission of the undergraduate Health Professions Advising Office supports the overall objectives of the University of Maryland, particularly its commitment to health care education and the training of health care professionals for the 21st century and beyond.

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