

Continuing Ed Pre-Health Advising
Pre-Application Workshop

Part I: *Sample Applications*
Application Timeline
Letters of Recommendation
Self-Assessment

Continuing Education
 UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

Before We Begin

Be sure you have printed out the following documents:

- Pre-Application Workshop handout packet
- *Quick Facts* document for your field of interest
- Examples of successful applications
 - Sample apps not posted online; please send an email to ceprehealth@colorado.edu to ask us to send you a copy directly.

Quick note: Keep a running list of topics you'd like to discuss further at your next individual pre-health advising session.

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Pre-Application Workshop

Part I:

- Examples of successful applications
- Overview of the application process
- Pre-application timeline
- Tips for asking for strong letters of recommendation
- Self-assessment of your readiness to apply next summer

Part II:

- Writing exercise
- Tips for writing a compelling personal statement
- Tips for writing effective experience descriptions
- Disclosing sensitive topics

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Examples of Successful Applications

- AMCAS
- Non-AMCAS (this example is representative all other common application services*)

* Not shown: TMSAS
 – If applying to TMSAS, note that you need to start app process 1 month early

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Overview of the Application Process

1. Common (primary) application

- Course-by-course academic history
- Experience entries
- Personal Statement
- "Disadvantaged Status" information
- Names of the people who will submit your letters of recommendation
 - For most application services, the LOR section can be left entirely blank when you initially submit your common application. (Exception: VMCAS)
- Transcripts

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Application Timing:

- Refer to "Quick Facts" document

A note about AMCAS timing: Opens in May, starts accepting submissions in early June, sends first wave of verified applications to medical schools at end of June



Common Application

• Academic History

- MUST list every U.S. or Canadian college/university that has any sort of academic record for you, regardless of whether you earned any credit for that work, including:
 - Courses that are not required for admission to professional school
 - Courses that transferred to another institution
 - Courses that you failed or from which you withdrew, whether you repeated them later or not
 - Courses you took in high school for college credit that appear on a college transcript
 - Courses taken in a Study Abroad program that transferred to a US/Canadian college transcript
 - Military coursework

• Transcripts

- Required from every U.S. or Canadian college/university/military institution
- Must be sent directly from the school to the common application service
- Can have transcripts sent before you complete and submit your application
- Generate *Transcript Matching Form* in application, provide to each Registrar's office.



Common Application

AP/IB credit

- Only list in your professional school application if it posted to a US/Canadian transcript.
- AP/IB credit only comes with credit hours, not grades
- Be aware: Some schools accept AP/IB credit toward prerequisites, but some don't.



Common Application

Study Abroad

- Three types:
 - Credit granted by a US/Canadian college
 - Credit granted by a foreign institution
 - Coursework taken at an "American College Overseas"
- Each common application service set its own policies regarding study abroad coursework, so you will need to review the instructions for your common application service to know how to enter it correctly.
 - AMCAS and AACOMAS *only* consider coursework that is posted, with a grade, to a US/Canadian transcript
 - Other application services—or individual schools—*may* accept foreign transcripts if you pay for a course-by-course evaluation by an international credential evaluation service such as World Education Services. This is relatively rare.



Overview of the Application Process

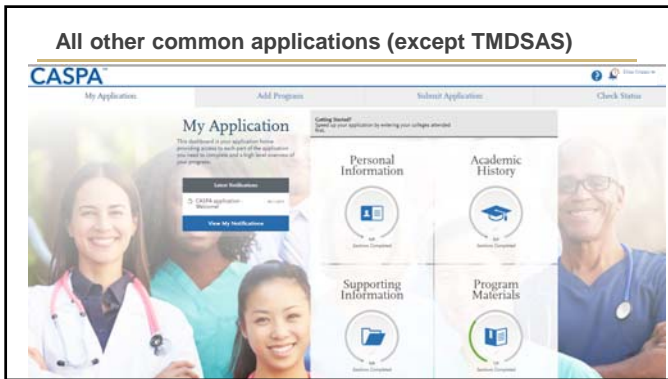
1. Common (primary) application

2. Supplemental (secondary) application for each school

- Additional application fee
- Additional essays
- The supplemental app *may* be housed within the common application, or it may be sent to you separately.
 - Pro Tip: If your common application service houses the supplemental applications, submit your common application with *just one school listed* at first. That gets it in the transcript verification queue. Then work on the additional essays for the rest of the supplemental applications and resubmit once complete.
- Submit within 2 weeks of being prompted to do so



AMCAS



Overview of the Application Process

1. Common (primary) application
2. Supplemental (secondary) application for each school
 - Additional application fee
 - Additional essays
 - The supplemental app *may* be housed within the common application, or it may be sent to you separately.
 - Pro Tip: If your common application service houses the supplemental applications, submit your common application with *just one school listed* at first. That gets it in the transcript verification queue. Then work on the additional essays for the rest of the supplemental applications and resubmit once complete.
3. Standardized test scores
4. Letters of recommendation

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Pre-Application Timeline

Guiding Principles:

- Strategically select an application year in which you will be a strong applicant
- Prepare thoroughly (and in advance, without rushing) for that application season
- Plan ahead for meaningful gap year activities that will build upon your strengths while also shoring up gaps in your preparation
- Prepare thoroughly for interviews, even if you are a gregarious "people person."

Refer to *Pre-Application Timeline* in handout packet for term-by-term details.

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Letters of Recommendation

- Refer to your *Quick Facts* document for a recommended assortment of letter authors
 - **Caveat:** Each professional school sets its own LOR assortment requirements. As you research your schools of interest, keep track of their specific LOR requirements on a spreadsheet.
- The best authors:
 - Know you well
 - Can share first-hand anecdotes and illustrative examples of time when they've seen you express your personal strengths.
- When selecting letter authors, the author's level of professional prestige is NOT an important consideration.
 - *Guidelines for Writing Compelling Letters of Recommendation*
 - *Confidential vs. Non-Confidential handout*

Asking for Letters of Recommendation

Ask in a way that makes it easy for the person to say “no” if they are so inclined:

- “Would you consider writing a letter of recommendation for me?”
- “Do you feel you know me well enough to write a strong letter?”
- “Do you think you’d be able to include a few stories about times when you saw me expressing [fill in the blank with appropriate competencies].”



Asking for Letters of Recommendation

- Arrange a time to meet in person, if possible.
- Provide:
 - *Guidelines for Writing Compelling Letters of Recommendation* handout
 - Note the topic areas you hope they will be able to discuss
 - Resume of relevant activities
 - Draft of your personal statement
 - [If applying to MD schools: *AMCAS Letter Request Form*]
- Ask them to focus on sharing *first-hand anecdotes*. (Remind them that your application will include your transcript, personal statement, and descriptions of all relevant experiences.)
- Ask how long they think they’ll need to complete the letter (2 to 3 weeks is typical) so that you can send reminder if necessary.
- Send a Thank You note after they have submitted their letter for you.



Letter Storage Services (pre-meds and pre-dents only)

We recommend using a third-party letter service.

- *Interfolio*: Tried-and-true
- *PrivateFolio*: Newer but becoming popular. Current and former CU Boulder students can receive \$20 credit when they sign up for an account using the code CU Boulder and their CU email address.
- **Advantages:**
 - Letter writers can complete letters well in advance.
 - Letters are stored for future use, if needed.
- **Disadvantage:**
 - Additional cost



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Self-Assessment

Complete the *Self-Assessment* in the handout packet.

- **GPA Calculations:**
 - Look for online “AMCAS/AACOMAS Undergrad GPA Calculator” on Google Sheets
 - Cumulative undergrad GPA across all of your schools (including post-bacc)
 - Adapt “Science GPA” as needed for other app services: Search online for the Course Classification Guide for your common application service
 - BCPM vs. BCP
- **Questions?** Schedule an individual pre-health advising appointment to discuss in detail.



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