

DATE: 2006 - 2007
TO: Students interested in careers in medicine and dentistry.
FROM: Dr. Ben Aronson AND Dr. Lisa Olson
Health Professions Advisor Health Professions Advisor
Hedco # 111 / Ext. 8734 Hedco # 108 / Ext. 8524

This information is intended especially for students who will be:

1. Taking the MCAT or DAT this spring or fall.
 2. Applying for admission to the Fall 2008 entering class for medical school or dental school.
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STANDARDIZED ADMISSION TESTS AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION

**** YOU MUST FIRST REGISTER TO TAKE EITHER OF THESE EXAMS !***

MCAT For current information about the exam, to register for exam, and to obtain preparation materials go to: <http://www.aamc.org/students/mcat/>

- ◇ For 2007 there are 22 tests dates. 20 are between April & August.
- ◇ Registration starts 6 months prior to exam date.
- ◇ It is highly recommended to register at least 60 days prior to exam date.

DAT For current information about the exam, to register for exam, and to obtain preparation materials go to: www.ada.org/prof/ed/testing/dat/preparation.asp

- ◇ The exam is administered through a Sylvan Technology Testing Center.
 - ◇ The registration process takes about 2 weeks.
 - ◇ Once registered, call 48 hrs. in advance to set up an appointment.
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STANDARDIZED ADMISSIONS TESTS: SCORES

Most of the standardized tests allow you to have your test scores sent to your health professions advisor at no charge, usually if you so indicate at the time of the exam.

Please do this, indicating that a report of the scores should be sent to:

Dr. Ben Aronson OR Dr. Lisa Olson
Department of Biology
Health Professions Advisor
University of Redlands
1200 E. Colton Avenue
Redlands, CA 92374

**** Be sure to stop by and see us as soon as you receive your scores !***

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

You should carefully read the appropriate literature for your area of interest (e.g., Medical School Admission Requirements) as an aid in deciding which schools to apply to and for detailed information on when and how to apply to them.

* *Several important factors you need to consider:*

1. Many medical, especially state-supported schools, often show a very strong preference for in-state residents who apply for admission. Usually your admission chances are best for state-supported and private schools in the state of which you are a resident and for selected out-of-state private schools. Unless you are an extremely strong candidate, your chances of admission to state-supported schools in states of which you are not a resident will usually be small. Statistics on the number of in-state and out-of-state applicants and entrants are provided for most of each of the schools in the appropriate literature for your area of interest.
2. When selecting which schools to apply to, it is generally a good idea to end up with a list of schools roughly divided between those for which the average GPA for the most recent entering class was:
 - ◇ Above your undergraduate GPA.
 - ◇ About equal to your undergraduate GPA.
 - ◇ Below your undergraduate GPA.
3. Most schools require letters of recommendation. See Below.
4. Most schools require application through one of the centralized application services. (See below). However, a significant number of schools require direct application. Application dates vary from school to school and from one application service to the next, but most begin accepting applications in early summer and stop accepting applications in November or December. Specific dates are again available in the appropriate literature for your area of interest. *Early applicants have a better chance of admission than late applicants.* It is therefore to your advantage to begin the application process *as early as possible in the summer.* This means filling out and submitting any centralized service applications as soon as available in May or June. For schools not participating in the centralized application services and which require their own applications, this means writing to these schools this spring in order to obtain the necessary application forms. Generally you should use your home address for receipt of materials since some schools may not send out the materials until after you leave campus for the summer.
5. Even though they utilize the centralized application services, *many schools still require supplemental applications to be filled out and charge their own additional application fees.* If you get all of your initial applications in early in the summer, you will receive many of the supplemental application forms from the schools starting later in the summer. This will usually be a much better time for you to do this (filling out these supplemental applications is a time-consuming process) than if they all arrive in the middle or at the end of the Fall Semester just before finals (because you waited until fall to submit your initial applications).

6. Application forms from the centralized application services and from individual schools inevitably have a space for you to describe your interests in your particular field and to provide any extra information (e.g., why you did poorly your first semester). (***This essay should be written and rewritten several times this spring.***) Get some critical evaluation of the essay from others, Dr. Heather King, HOL (Hall of Letters) # 226, Ext. 8581, (fellow students, your advisor, ourselves) in order to make it as polished as possible. Then, when it comes time this summer to fill out the applications, you will have this important portion done and ready to use.
7. *It is **your** responsibility* to arrange with the Registrar's Office for the sending of all official transcripts requested by the schools you apply to and by any of the centralized application services. If you have attended any other college besides the University of Redlands, you will also have to have official transcripts from these colleges sent.
8. Pay close attention to all deadlines, including those for submission of supplemental applications and for having letters of recommendation sent.
9. Write this spring to every school you think you might be applying to; request current copies of their catalogs and any financial aid information they may have available.
10. It is very important that you notify the University of Redlands Health Professions Advisor about ANY response you receive from schools to which you have applied.

This includes:

- ◇ Requests for interviews.
- ◇ Rejection.
- ◇ Acceptance.
- ◇ Being placed on an alternate list.
- ◇ Requests for letters of recommendation

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Usually in the spring of their junior year, students request professors to send letters of recommendation to the Health Professions Advisor. These are then placed in the student's health professions file at the University of Redlands. When the student later informs the Health Professions Advisor that individual schools have requested letters of recommendation, copies of these letters are sent out to these schools by the advisor.

IF YOU WILL BE SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS THIS SUMMER OR FALL, IT IS CRITICAL THAT YOU FILL OUT THE FORM REQUESTING US (DR. ARONSON or DR. OLSON) TO COLLECT LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION FOR YOU, AND FOR YOU TO RETURN IT IN PERSON TO US (DR. ARONSON or DR. OLSON) IMMEDIATELY !!!!

We will explain further details of the procedures for collecting and sending out letters of recommendation for you in another memo.

*** Ideally you should have five letters of recommendation on file with us:**

- ◇ At least one letter from a professor not in the sciences division.
- ◇ At least three letters from professors in the sciences division; include at least one in your major, and at least one outside your major.
- ◇ Preferably one of the letters will be from your academic advisor.

These are only suggestions; what is most important is that you have letters written by those professors you feel can give you the best recommendations.

These letters of recommendation should be:

1. Almost always from professors who have taught you courses.
2. Only rarely from an employer, and then only if your job has a direct bearing on your interest in your particular field.
3. From a priest, minister, etc. only if you have applied to a particular school that you know will request a letter from such a person.

*** Note that:**

1. You want to have all your letters of recommendation on file with us ***BEFORE*** the summer starts. It is extremely difficult to get letters of recommendation from people during the summer or in the fall if they go on sabbatical. It often takes 4-6 weeks to get letters from recommenders to us. ***So, NOW is the time to start,*** not May 25!!!! Many schools request letters of recommendation during the summer and will not review your application until they receive them. If all your letters of recommendation are not on file with us at that time, completion of your applications will be delayed (and, hence, your chances of admission will decrease) until we receive the letters from the recommenders to send for you.
2. *It is **your responsibility*** (and not ours) to see that the recommenders get the letters to us. You should check with us every couple weeks to see what letters we have received so that You can prod those professors who have not gotten the letters done yet.

CENTRALIZED APPLICATION SERVICES

Applicants to most medical, dental, osteopathic medicine, and podiatric medicine schools are required to initially apply through centralized application services: American Medical Colleges Application Service (AMCAS), American Association of Dental Schools Application Service (AADSAS), American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Application Service (AACOMAS), and American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine Application Service (AACPMAS). This is usually done during the summer between your junior and senior years.

Later this spring we will have application materials or information on how to receive them this summer for AMCAS, AADSAS, AACOMAS, and AACPMAS. Let us know which of these services you expect to be utilizing.

RECORDS

For your own protection and records, make and keep **photocopies of EVERYTHING** related to your medical or dental school applications. This should include (but certainly should not be limited to)

ALL forms, applications, correspondence, etc. related to:

- ◇ MCAT/DAT
- ◇ AMCAS/AADSAS/AACOMAS/AACPMAS
- ◇ Letters of recommendation
- ◇ Supplemental applications