This presentation is directed to those applying to medical schools. If you are applying to dental, veterinary or other health professions schools, expectations, deadlines, application information, and national tests will be a little different so please refer to prehealth.duke.edu and/or your advisor.
If you are unsure about your readiness to apply, first attend and/or review the materials for the “Assessing Your Candidacy” workshop. If you need further advice, make an appointment and send us your RMA or resume prior to the meeting. It is easier to advise you on readiness when we can see your experiences and achievements. Also, please only schedule a meeting with one of us. It is better when you maintain contact with one advisor as you go through the application process as this helps us to know you better and write a committee letter on your behalf.
Admission Information
National Statistics for 2019M

53,371 applicants to medical schools
   apply to an average of 17 schools
~ 300   Duke students, alumni apply each year for 1st time
   apply to an average of 26 schools

1,000–15,000 number of applications each medical school receives

~ 24   Average age of entering class at U.S. medical schools
~ 79%   Duke applicants will take a gap year or more
The percentage of Duke students and alums accepted to medical schools has been 70% to 80% or more for many years.
What Do Medical Schools Look For?
These are the things we have encouraged you to do over your 3 or 4 years at Duke. Why are they important now?

1. Academic achievement
2. Shadowing and/or observing physicians
3. Engagement with patients or individuals who are ill
4. Sustained service to others
5. Research
6. Leadership, teamwork, and activities
7. Communication and people skills

Why are these important?
The experiences you have had at Duke can demonstrate the 15 Core Competencies that medical schools look for. Being accepted to a medical school is more than just your GPA and MCAT. They will look for the above skills, values, attitudes and traits. You can read about the AAMC Core Competencies here: https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/core-competencies/
Timeline
Applying to medical schools take a long time. In the beginning, you will need time in your schedule to study for and take the MCAT, review and choose schools to apply to, gather all the information you need to apply, do a draft of your application (RMA) and meet with one of us for an RMA appointment, and later to complete secondary application questions and interview.
The next slides go into details about the timeline. A copy of the RMA is on our website (https://prehealth.duke.edu/applying-medical-school-summer-2020-matriculation-fall-2021). It is a word document so you can write and edit your own version. For the MCAT, you will need to choose a date, register, decide how you will prepare and the length of time you need to review.
What to know about MCAT dates in 2020 …

1. It is best to take your MCAT in April or before, so you will know your scores before you send in your application around June 1

2. Average number of hours spent studying for the MCAT: 300

3. Latest dates in 2020 for applying in summer 2020
   - April 4, 24, 25 (scores back May 5, 27)
   - May 9 (score back June 9)
   - May 15, 16 (score back June 16)
   - May 21 (score back June 23)
   - May 29 (score back June 30)

The April MCAT date (or before) is optimal so that you will have your scores back before you apply. The May dates are the last dates that will allow you to apply early enough to be among the first applications considered. Talk with your peers about their experiences in studying for the MCAT and the differences among the ways to review. You should only take the MCAT once, and prepare well for it.
About those May MCAT dates …

1. If really needed, you can take the MCAT in May

2. Submit your application around June 1, but list just one school, so that AMCAS will verify your application

3. After you receive your scores, complete your choice of schools to apply to and update your application before the last week of June

4. By the end of June, AMCAS will release your application to medical schools and you want to be in the first set of applicants they evaluate

In 2019, AMCAS released applications to schools on June 28.
February - May 2020

1. Attend (or view online) the Application Workshops (Kickoff, Assessing Your Candidacy, RMA Lab, School Selection, and Personal Statement)
2. Schedule an RMA appointment in February, March, or April
3. Complete your RMA form
4. Develop the list of schools you will apply to and check their websites for course requirements and Letter of Recommendation expectations; keep notes; contact their admissions committees for questions
5. Take the MCAT if needed
6. Ask individuals for Letters of Recommendation

Some workshops will be offered multiple times; you do not need to attend workshops more than once (though you can repeat if it is helpful to you).

If you make plans to be outside the US during the application period, be sure you have reliable internet service and will have an email address that will remain active for the entire cycle.
February - May 2020 (continued)

7. Make plans for the summer and/or gap year
8. In May, begin working on your actual AMCAS application
9. In May, send your final transcript to AMCAS once spring grades are recorded
10. Schedule a CASPer test (if required/recommended at your selected schools)
    • CASPer (Computer-based Assessment for Sampling Personal Characteristics) is a 90 minute, web-based, situational judgment test
Why should you submit as early as possible in June? Your application will be verified and complete faster and you’ll have earlier secondary applications and possible interviews. Many schools have a rolling admissions plan, and if you apply late in the cycle for those, you may competing for the last seats in a class. Note that Texas residents use a separate application program (TMDSAS) with different deadlines; if you are applying to DO schools, you will also follow slightly different dates.

June 2020

1. ~ June 1: Send in your AMCAS application. AMCAS opens for applications at this time and you want to apply as early as you can, so you are among the first applicants to be considered.

2. Once you submit, AMCAS will verify your courses and grades; it could take a few days or a week if you submit on June 1; it could be four weeks or more if you submit in mid-late June or early July.

3. ~ the end of June. AMCAS releases your application to medical schools.

4. Watch to see when your AMCAS application has been verified and then check to see if they have made any corrections.
June 2020 (continued)

5. If you want the HPA Office to write a Committee Letter on your behalf, email a PDF of your verified application to us at prehealth@duke.edu
   - Check the Apply section of our website for similar ACOMAS and TMDSAS instructions.
   - If you did not have an RMA Appointment, the RMA essays will be required at this time.
   - We will then upload your committee letter to AMCAS within 10 business days.

6. Check on your LORs and politely remind any writers if they have not submitted a LOR for you. Although you (and they) should aim for June 1, remember that schools will not receive your application until late June, so a later letter is not going to hold up review. However, you want your application to be complete as early as possible.
You need to be sure you have reliable internet throughout the summer to receive, complete, and return secondary applications, as well as any communication from AMCAS, our office, or schools to clarify any details.

Secondaries are an opportunity for schools to ask you particular questions they are interested in. Write essays that demonstrate how your preparation and goals match the medical school's mission and values.
Secondary applications often require you to answer more essay questions and there is a fee that you will need to pay.
Remember that this is a long process. Some medical schools send out acceptances in October and November, others in March. See our website on how to schedule a mock interview with us in late summer or fall, and when to send medical schools any updates about a new job, more experience, publications or achievements.
July - August 2021

Matriculate to medical school and share your white coat pics! #DuketoDoc

Here are the 10 Duke alumni in the Harvard Medical School Class of 2023!
The Application
Components of an Application

PRIMARY APPLICATION

1. Send your primary application to AMCAS (TMDSAS for TX; ACOMAS for DO)
2. Web-based, one central application
3. Your application will be sent to all schools that you list
4. 9 sections, including
   - Personal information
   - MCAT score(s)
   - Courses and grades
   - Work, activities, experiences
   - List of recommenders
   - Personal statement
   - List of schools

These are the basic components of an application.
SECONDARY APPLICATION

1. Secondary applications are sent to you by individual schools
2. Consist of short essay questions
3. Require another application fee ($50 to $150 per school)
4. Some schools send secondaries to all applicants
5. Some schools send secondaries even before your primary application is verified

These are the basic components of an application.
Completing a Draft of your Application (RMA)
You should start the process this spring by doing the RMA form. The RMA can also be useful to you if you are unsure of whether or not to apply this year.

If you have been working with a particular advisor, you should try to schedule your RMA with that person. However, if you have not met with one of us before and/or your schedule dictates when and who will conduct your RMA, that is understandable.
RMA (Review My Application)

You can find the RMA form (a word document) on the HPA Apply website and can begin at any time and continue to work on this through the spring.

- Each applicant will have only one RMA appointment.
- Attend the RMA Lab and/or review the materials.
- Do not wait until your RMA form is completed to schedule an appointment; schedule it in advance and work toward that date.
- You want to balance your timing; earlier RMA appointments are more readily available and will allow you more time to edit, however you need to be sure you have a well-prepared RMA form.
- Think about your other plans and obligations (spring break, thesis defense, finals, beach week, graduation, etc.)
- Your previous peers will tell you: what you will get out of the form and appointment are what you put into them!
Letters of Recommendation
Letters of Recommendation

1. 3-4 LORs are typical, from individuals who know you and can write about your competencies
2. Maximum number can vary by school, but too many is not a strength
3. Check individual school websites to see what the requirements are of the specific schools you intend to apply to
4. The HPA Committee Letter is separate and is not considered a LOR
5. Have each LOR writer submit their letter directly to AMCAS in May or early June; you can choose which schools receive which letters

There is a helpful guide here as to what makes a strong letter: https://www.aamc.org/download/349990/data/lettersguidelinesbrochure.pdf
Letters of Recommendation

Advice on where to send letters...

The Duke Committee Letter does not count as a Letter of Recommendation. Designate on AMCAS that the Duke Committee Letter should be sent to ALL medical schools.

1. If a medical school requires "x" Letters of Recommendation, send them "x" Letters of Recommendation AND a Duke Committee Letter.

2. If a medical school gives you an option for a Committee Letter OR individual Letters of Recommendation, you should still submit BOTH.

3. If a medical school waives their requirement for Letters of Recommendation because you will have a Committee Letter, we still advise you to submit BOTH the Committee Letter and individual Letters of Recommendation because they contain information and insight that the Committee Letter does not.

**Check individual school websites to see what the requirements are of the specific schools you intend to apply to**
There is a helpful guide here as to what makes a strong letter:
15 AAMC Core Competencies for Entering Medical School Students

**Interpersonal:** Service Orientation, Social Skills, Cultural Competence, Teamwork, Oral Communication

**Intrapersonal:** Ethical Responsibility to Self and Others, Reliability and Dependability, Resilience and Adaptability, Capacity for Improvement

**Thinking and Reasoning:** Critical Thinking, Quantitative Reasoning, Scientific Inquiry, Written Communication

**Science:** Living Systems, Human Behavior

https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/core-competencies/

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How to Select Schools
How do you know what medical schools require?

The average number of schools to which Duke students apply is ~26

1. Check a school’s Mission Statement and website
2. Check MSAR for their metrics range (BCPM GPA and MCAT score)
3. Check residency requirements (in-state vs. out-of-state applicants, citizenship requirements)
4. Check the emphasis they place on research, service to others, and factors important in selection of applicants
5. Check the specific the number of LORs required, specific required courses (including AP credit and writing/English), if they send secondary applications and the fees, require CASPer, interview policies, and other data.

**Attend the School Selection Workshop.**

The year’s subscription to the MSAR (a detailed online database from AAMC listing all medical schools, their requirements and statistics) is currently $28; it can be found here https://apps.aamc.org/msar-ui/#/landing
Costs
Note that these costs accrue over 18 months so you don’t need to pay all at once. However, you should think strategically about finances. The AAMC has a fee assistance program (do an internet search for AAMC fee assistance program and the website will show up).
Ethics, Conduct, and Professionalism
The AAMC application will state this: “If you were ever the recipient of an institutional action by Duke (or any other school that you attended) for unacceptable academic performance or conduct violation, even if such action did not interrupt your enrollment or require you to withdraw, you must answer YES in AMCAS, even if the action does not appear on or has been deleted or expunged from your official transcript due to institutional policy or personal petition.” If you have any questions about this, schedule an appointment to talk with one of us and/or the Office of Student Conduct. This is by no means meant to be punitive, but meant to prepare you to reflect upon the experience in an advising setting.

Also be careful that you appear professional in all ways of communication. Your email address should be professional and should be active throughout the entirety of the cycle.
Are You Ready?
If you are unsure, begin with filling out the RMA. It can help you see evaluate your progress, accomplishments and experiences.

You should also attend an “Assessing Your Candidacy” workshop this spring.
Good Luck!