



APPLYING TO MEDICAL SCHOOL

Undergraduate Resource Series

Mignone Center for Career Success | 54 Dunster Street

Harvard University | Faculty of Arts and Sciences

mcs@fas.harvard.edu | careerservices.fas.harvard.edu



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Mignone Center for Career Success
Harvard University Faculty of Arts & Sciences
Cambridge, MA 02138
mcs@fas.harvard.edu
careerservices.fas.harvard.edu

CAREERS IN MEDICINE

The career options in medicine are diverse: clinical practice, public and global health, community health, medical administration, health policy, teaching, research, and more. While the majority of Harvard students and alumni pursuing careers in the health field focus on human medicine (allopathic or osteopathic medicine), a number of others will pursue careers in other health fields such as public and global health, dental medicine, veterinary medicine, nursing, occupational therapy, physical therapy, optometry, and pharmacy.

The field of medicine changes rapidly, so physicians have to be lifelong learners and enjoy the intellectual challenge of science. The rewards of caring for others, contributing to research, and having flexible career options make this a very popular career choice for Harvard students. However, the path to becoming a doctor is lengthy, involving specific and demanding premedical course requirements, a long medical school application process, a rigorous four-year basic science and clinical curriculum in medical school, three to seven years of clinical training in residency (and often additional years as a fellow for certain subspecialties), and a three-step licensing exam. The decision to become a physician should be made with a great deal of care and consideration. Clinical training in medical school and residency has also become increasingly interprofessional and team-based in recent years. Even learners who are certain that they want to become physicians, may want to simultaneously explore other health professions along with non-clinical interests in healthcare in order to be certain that medicine offers the best fit for them.

Medical schools seek applicants who have:

- proven their competency in basic science and other areas of study;
- tested their interest in medicine through medically related experiences;
- shown an ability to communicate effectively with patients and colleagues;
- demonstrated personal and pre-professional competencies such as compassion, ethical responsibility, resilience, and the capacity for improvement.

While a strong academic performance in premedical courses and on the Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) is important, personal qualities, experiences, and motivation are also critical factors in determining whether you will be admitted to medical school. To learn more about the core competencies medical schools are looking for in entering medical students, see What Medical Schools are Looking for on the Association of American Medical Colleges' (AAMC) [website](#).

EXPLORING THE FIELD

The decision to become a doctor cannot be made in the classroom. Here are some suggestions for testing your interests in clinical medicine and its interpersonal demands:

- Get volunteer and shadowing experience at a hospital or other clinical setting. Visit careerservices.fas.harvard.edu/channels/pre-med-students/ and careerservices.fas.harvard.edu/getting-experience-premed.
- Consult with a Premedical/Pre-Health Adviser or another Career Adviser regarding your career interests.
- Edit your preferences for Mignone Center for Career Success (MCS) newsletter emails, selecting Premed/Pre-Health as an interest, and be sure to read the monthly Premed/Pre-Health News emails sent by the MCS Premedical/Pre-Health Advisers.
- If you are a current applicant or an alum, sign up for the Medical School Applicant list: lists.fas.harvard.edu/mailman/listinfo/harvardocs-medschool-applicants-list.

- Become involved with student organizations on campus. See the [Dean of Student's website](#) and [the Student Organization Center Online \(SOCO\)](#) for a complete list. Examples include:
 - Harvard Undergraduate Premedical Society (HPS)
 - Harvard Undergraduate Black Premedical Society (HBPS)
 - Harvard Undergraduate Latines in Health Careers (LiHC)
 - Harvard Undergraduate Society of Black Scientists and Engineers (HSBSE)
 - Harvard Undergraduate Global Health Forum (HUGHF)
 - Harvard Undergraduate Medical Humanities Forum
 - the
- For sophomores and beyond, get to know your House or Dudley Community Premed/Pre-Health Tutors.
- Shadow people who have medical training and are working in the field. Ways to find people to shadow include:
 - Utilize your existing connections in healthcare
 - The [Harvard Alumni Association](#)
 - The [Harvard Alumni in Healthcare](#) shared interest group (SIG)
 - Connect with alumni using [Firsthand Advisers](#). This platform allows you to connect with nearly 2,500 alumni across a variety of fields/professions and schedule a one-on-one mentoring conversation.
 - Student organizations, such as the HPS Physician Mentoring Program (PMP), , the HPS BIOME (Biomedical Interdisciplinary Occupations and Medical Exposure) program, and the Athlete Medical Mentorship Program (AMMP).
 - See the section on [Shadowing](#) on the Mignone Center for Career Success website.

PREPARING FOR MEDICAL SCHOOL

Academic Coursework

Medical schools require students to take courses covering specific areas in the sciences and other areas of study. We strongly recommend that applicants complete the following science coursework before taking the MCAT and before applying to medical school:

- General chemistry with lab (one year)
- Biology with lab (one year)
- Organic chemistry with lab (one year)
- General physics with lab (one year)
- English (one year)

Resources are available on the Mignone Center for Career Success website to help you understand which Harvard courses meet the requirements at most medical schools. Additionally, sample course schedules, including how to fit in a study abroad experience, are provided in the online resource "[Premedical Information for Harvard Students: Timelines, Courses, and Resources 2023-2024](#)" available on our Premedical and Health Careers Advising website.

Each medical school sets its own requirements and rules regarding courses they will accept. Therefore, if in doubt about whether a course may be substituted for the basic premedical requirements, check with the medical school admission offices. Also see the [Medical School Admissions Requirements and Resources](#) on the MCS website.

Approximately 75-80% of applicants to medical school in recent years have waited until their senior year and beyond, to apply to medical school. This allows you four years to fulfill the premedical requirements and also provides an opportunity to pursue other interests before medical school.

Academic Performance

The first one to two years of medical school are typically called the “pre-clinical years” during which students take a rigorous course load that is often organ-based and includes histology, physiology, anatomy, pathology, and other courses in the biomedical sciences. Therefore, applicants to medical school must demonstrate an ability to handle a science-intensive curriculum.

The first few semesters at Harvard involve getting used to a new setting, a new social and extracurricular life, and new ways of learning and studying. To accommodate this period of transition, we highly recommended that you do not overload your first-year schedules with science courses, particularly if you have not had strong science preparation in high school. Medical schools do not value starting out with more advanced science courses more highly than starting out with the courses you place into, which are the courses for which you are best prepared to earn strong grades.

While it is true that your science GPA (biology, chemistry, physics, math/statistics) is important, you should not feel discouraged from pursuing medicine if your first year and sophomore year grades don’t meet your expectations. Medical school admissions committees understand this and look favorably upon an upward trend in your academic record. They also take into consideration factors such as high school science preparation.

In recent years, Harvard students were admitted to medical school with equal or lower GPAs than national applicants. In a typical year, the admissions rate for Harvard applicants is in the range of 85 to 90%, and approximately 92-95% of applicants with GPAs above 3.5 are admitted.

Choosing a Concentration

There is no “premedical program” at Harvard. Medical schools do not require or prefer that you concentrate in a science, however applicants must demonstrate competency in science courses. The area of study that interests you the most and that you wish to explore extensively is the one you can and should choose for your concentration. While it is important to know and fulfill the necessary requirements for admission to medical school, it’s neither necessary nor preferable to commit yourself to a tightly focused curriculum directed at pursuing this particular profession. Medical schools seek students who have pursued any academic area of interest in depth.

Extracurricular Activities

Medical school admissions committees look to see that applicants have taken advantage of opportunities outside of the classroom that demonstrate leadership, teamwork, and other qualities essential for many of the roles that a physician must play. Many successfully admitted Harvard students have pursued a wide variety of activities, including athletics, public service, social and cultural groups, and the arts.

There is no formula for the activities students should be involved with to be competitive; deep involvement in a few areas is preferred over light participation in many. Each medical school develops its own criteria and priorities for admission, reflecting the goals of the respective school. For some medical schools, community service is very important; for other medical schools, a priority may be leadership qualities or research. Regardless, students should consider their ability to contribute to and ultimately impact an organization or community when deciding how to spend their time.

Clinical or Medical Experience

Medical schools look for students who have tested their interest in medicine through healthcare-related activities in the clinical setting as well as community service or a paid or unpaid internship or position in health-adjacent or similar settings (for example, serving as a counselor at a summer camp for children with a medical condition). It’s better to volunteer consistently over an extended period of time rather than seeking out only short-term service projects or activities. Although premedical students are not able to administer medical care, there are many other opportunities to

volunteer in settings involved in caring directly for people such as a homeless shelter, a community health clinic, or a pediatric oncology unit.

While not common or required, students may elect to obtain a clinical certification as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) or Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA), or training in an area like phlebotomy to gain hands-on clinical experience. If you are interested in pursuing paid clinical work, consider doing so during the summer and other breaks, or during gap years, in order to prioritize coursework during the academic year.

Research Experience

Contrary to popular belief, basic science research is not a requirement for medical school. In fact, many Harvard students continue to medical school without working in a lab. Successful medical school applicants have usually demonstrated the ability to pursue an area of study in depth, whether it's basic science research, clinical research, or a thesis in English literature. The experience of critically reviewing data does not necessarily have to take place in a lab. Rather, medical schools look favorably on students with a general orientation towards research regardless of the particular discipline.

With that said, Harvard offers wonderful opportunities for students to work in labs involved in cutting-edge research at the College as well as Harvard Medical School and affiliated hospitals and research institutes. Students considering an MD-PhD pathway will be expected to have extensive research experience by the time they apply to medical school. For some students this can be achieved by taking advantage of research opportunities and resources early in their Harvard careers, allowing them to build a competitive MD-PhD application with one or no gap year. For others, who may discover an interest in the physician-scientist pathway later on during their college years, taking one or more gap years to build substantial research experience may be required in order to be a competitive MD-PhD applicant.

SELECTING A MEDICAL SCHOOL

There are over 150 accredited U.S. allopathic medical schools. Given the major differences in the structure of medical education and licensing policies across countries, we recommend that you pursue medical school in the country in which you hope to practice.

Factors to Consider

Factors that differentiate schools include the school's mission, location, method of instruction, clinical and research opportunities, elective options, special programs and tracks such as those with a focus on primary care or rural medicine, faculty, cost, selectivity, and diversity of the patient population. For more information see individual medical school websites and the *Medical School Admissions Requirements (MSAR)* online resource available at aamc.org.

Selectivity

There are no "safety schools" among medical schools. Medical school admissions deans and committees make a great effort to create a class comprised of students from diverse backgrounds who bring a variety of experiences and perspectives. Predicting the chances of admission to a single school or group of schools is impossible. Apply to a range of schools including less selective as well as more selective ones. We publish the Medical School Admissions Data report that provides statistics on how Harvard applicants have fared in the admissions process. To access this report, please email premed@fas.harvard.edu.

Public vs. Private

Medical Degree (MD and DO) programs exist at both public and private institutions. The mission of many public or state medical schools is to educate and train physicians who will remain and practice in the state, and therefore many state schools restrict the enrollment of students who are not state residents. Enrollment policies vary from school to school; some schools accept virtually no non-resident applicants to their MD or DO program, while others enroll a large number of non-resident students. Refer to the AAMC [Medical School Admission Requirements \(MSAR\)](#) for information about individual medical school application policies and numbers of in-state versus out-of-state applicants. To learn more about the osteopathic (DO) schools' application policies, numbers of applicants, and programs, see the AACOM [Choose DO Explorer](#). This spreadsheet summarizes the information regarding in-state and out-of-state applicants to U.S. medical schools: careerservices.fas.harvard.edu/admissions-academic-requirements-policies-premed. It is common for many Harvard students to enroll at their state medical school.

Rankings

We highly recommend that you research schools for information beyond where the schools fall within popular ranking lists. The surveys upon which rankings are based often measure factors not relevant to the quality of education and student experience. Medical schools have similar educational quality because of accreditation requirements. The reputation of a school on such a list does not determine your prospects for residency. For the most competitive residency programs, a student will need to have excelled during medical school regardless of the particular medical school attended.

APPLYING TO MEDICAL SCHOOL

Premedical Tutors in the Houses and the Dudley Community

At Harvard, in addition to services offered by the Mignone Center for Career Success, advising also takes place within the residential Houses and in the Dudley Community. Each of the Houses and the Dudley Community have a committee of premedical tutors, who are generally Harvard Medical School students or alumni, and/or medical residents/fellows/attending physicians in one of the Harvard Medical School-affiliated hospitals. You should become familiar with your premedical committee, especially as you get closer to applying. As medical practitioners, the premedical tutors are invaluable resources for learning about your potential career.

The Premedical Committee is responsible for writing the Harvard College committee letter sent to the medical schools when you apply. Premedical Committees request a number of materials from students in the winter/spring before the application cycle begins. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the timeline and requirements for onboarding with your House/Dudley Community Premedical Committee's application process. (Note that the MCS Premedical/Pre-Health office also provides support and advising for medical school applicants; we work closely with your House/Dudley Community Premedical Committee, but you need to onboard separately with the MCS "Navigating the Medical School Application Process" in order to receive support and access to advising from MCS in addition to what your House/Dudley Community provides. Instructions for onboarding for applicants with the MCS process are sent out regularly in our Premed/Pre-Health newsletter.)

The Application

All U.S. medical schools, except for Texas schools, participate in the *American Medical College Application Service* (AMCAS), commonly referred to as the primary application. AMCAS is a centralized application service for applicants to participating allopathic U.S. medical schools. AMCAS is only a service and is not involved in the admissions decision-making process; once verified by AMCAS, the completed application is sent to each individual medical school to which the student has applied. Attend the annual Mignone Center for Career Success workshop series

for medical school applicants, which includes the webinars “Applying to Medical School: A Marathon not a Sprint (November) and “Completing the AMCAS application” (April), and review all resources related to the application process on our website. (Note: these webinars are all recorded, and links to the recordings are sent out via the Applicant email list.)

The *Texas Medical and Dental School Application Service* (TMDSAS) is a centralized application service for applicants to most of the medical, dental, and veterinary schools in the state of Texas. Most students who will be applying to Texas medical schools will also be applying to other medical schools as well and will complete both the AMCAS and TMDSAS applications.

The *American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Application Service* (AACOMAS) processes applications to all of the osteopathic (DO) medical schools in the U.S. Applicants who will be applying to both MD (allopathic) and DO (osteopathic) programs will need to complete both the AMCAS and AACOMAS applications.

Most medical schools send an applicant a secondary application specific to that individual school. Some schools will screen the primary application before sending a secondary; most will send a secondary automatically. Secondary applications typically request additional essays and fees from applicants.

Personal Statement

When you apply to an MD program you will be asked to provide a 5,300 character personal statement in the AMCAS application that addresses your motivations for pursuing medical school and a career in medicine. MD-PhD applicants will be asked for two additional essays, one that addresses your reasons for pursuing the combined degree program, and another that describes in depth your previous significant research experiences.

The personal statement is a crucial piece of the application. It gives life to the numbers and scores in the rest of the application and is an opportunity for admissions committees to learn about your unique story. In general, the personal statement requires many iterations and drafts before reaching its final form. Start early, working on drafts in March or April before submitting AMCAS in late May to mid June.

A first step might be to consider experiences that were formative in the evolution of your interest in medicine. What’s particularly interesting about you or your perspective? This may not involve special life circumstances but unique insights you have on “ordinary” events. It is better to be specific and personal rather than vague and philosophical, and to reflect on experiences rather than list them.

Activities

The AMCAS application provides you the opportunity to list and describe up to 15 different experiences. These experiences include paid or volunteer work, student group participation, research experiences and/or publications, community service, leadership activities, clinical experiences, social justice/advocacy experiences, physician shadowing, and awards and honors. You are given space to briefly describe each experience and are asked to designate three activities as “most meaningful”. While character space is limited, applicants are encouraged to use the space to provide a meaningful reflection on the impact of each activity rather than focusing on resume-like descriptions.

Transcripts and Grades

You are required to submit transcripts to AMCAS from every U.S. post-secondary institution at which you have enrolled in courses. AMCAS then verifies that the transcripts correctly reflect the courses that you have listed in your application. AMCAS then calculates an overall and a “science”

GPA. The AMCAS science GPA is called the “BCPM” GPA and is based on courses in the areas of biology, chemistry, physics, and math/statistics only.

The MCAT

The Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) has four sections: Biological and Biochemical Foundations of Living Systems; Chemical and Physical Foundations of Biological Systems; Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior; and Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills. For more information about the MCAT, see students-residents.aamc.org/prepare-mcat-exam/prepare-mcat-exam or aamc.org.

Letters of Recommendation

The purpose of these letters is to highlight qualities that distinguish you from other applicants, e.g., intellectual curiosity, depth of commitment, personal qualities, and other evidence of important academic and personal competencies. See these [AAMC guidelines for medical school recommendation writers](#) for more information on what medical schools value in these letters.

You should request three to five recommendation letters (or four to seven for MD-PhD applications, with these additional letters coming from research mentors). These letters may come from professors and teaching fellows, research advisers, student organization advisers, work supervisors, internship directors, etc. Preferably, two should be from science faculty or instructors and one should be from a non-science faculty or instructor. It is best to select recommenders who know you well rather than recommenders who are simply well known.

If you apply within five years of graduation you will typically receive a committee letter from your Premedical Committee. This letter—prepared by House (or Dudley Community) Premedical Tutors, the Allston Burr Resident Dean, and the Faculty Dean/s—accompanies the individual letters and is composed based on personal interactions with you, submitted materials, and the other recommendation letters. This collection of letters is then uploaded as one bundle to the AMCAS application by your Academic Coordinator. Consult your Premedical Committee and follow the deadlines for submitting letters. Current students as well as alumni may store letters in their House or Dudley Community Resident Dean’s Office.

Select your recommenders carefully. Cumulatively, these letters should address the different facets of your preparation, competency, qualities, and experience, so you should ask for letters from people who know you in different contexts. Personal details and stories are much more effective than retelling of grades or generic praise, so it’s important to gauge the extent to which you think a potential recommender can speak about you highly and personally.

The Interview

Because of the sensitive, interpersonal nature of clinical interactions in medicine, each medical school will interview applicants before admitting them. The majority of applicants are not offered interviews—an invitation to interview means that a school is seriously interested in you and wants to further assess your maturity, personality, and professionalism.

Almost all medical schools conduct their interviews virtually. Interviews occur over a long period of time during the application year. Most schools begin interviewing in September, with a few schools starting to interview in late August, and every year some schools conclude their interview season as late as April. Interviews are arranged by each individual medical school. The interview format varies from school to school. Common interview formats include one-on-one interviews (often called “traditional interviews”) and Multiple Mini Interviews (MMIs), which are standardized scenario-based interviews.

In addition, a number of schools are now using situational judgment tests (SJTs), such as Casper (computer-based assessment for sampling personal characteristics) and the AAMC PREview Professional Readiness Exam, as additional tools for evaluating applicants. The *Medical School Admissions Requirements (MSAR)*, available from the aamc.org, lists the type of interview format at each of the medical schools, and also includes information on the SJT the schools may require. Interviewers may include admissions staff, professors, physicians, current medical students, and even members of the community. Many Canadian medical schools use the MMI format and operate on a different, somewhat later interview schedule.

Contrary to popular belief, most medical school interviews are enjoyable experiences. While some interviewers may ask difficult questions (e.g., about ethical scenarios), they are not seeking to trick or trap applicants. Most applicants report that interviews are of a positive and conversational nature.

Plan to practice answering basic questions about your interests in medicine. We offer a workshop about how to prepare for and succeed at the medical school interview process, held annually in August and recorded for later viewing. The House and Dudley Community Premedical Committees offer individualized interview preparation and mock interviews in person or virtually.

FINANCIAL AID

Applications for Aid

To apply for financial aid, it is important to complete your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), which is required for all federal student loan programs. Your FAFSA can usually be submitted in the fall, or as soon as possible after January 1. Check each medical school's website to learn about financial aid deadlines.

Types of Aid

To determine eligibility for federal loans, applicants are not considered as independent of family finances. For institutional funds, applicants' family information is usually taken into account, a policy that differs from the financial aid policies in place at many other graduate programs. Whether an applicant is viewed as a dependent or not varies from school to school, but parent information is typically requested even for older applicants.

There are two types of aid: need-based and merit. Merit aid comes from a medical school's institutional funds. Merit aid is given at the discretion of the medical school and varies considerably from school to school. Such awards are not based on need (i.e., income, assets, etc.) Some schools offer only need-based aid and no merit aid. It is common for three-fourths of a medical school financial award package to consist of loan-based aid. There are also non-medical school sources of financial aid, including military and National Health Service Corps scholarships.

The [AAMC's FIRST \(Financial Information, Resources, Services, and Tools\) webpage](#) is an invaluable source of information for premedical students planning to apply to medical school in the future. Also be sure to check your eligibility for Fee Assistance from the [AAMC's FAP program](#) early on during your undergraduate years, since FAP also provides financial assistance for MCAT preparation and registration, and free access to MSAR.

PUBLICATIONS AND ONLINE RESOURCES

Mignone Center for Career Success Health and Medical Careers website:

careerservices.fas.harvard.edu/channels/pre-med-students/ Information on health-related internship opportunities, relevant articles, workshop/webinar schedules, past workshop slides and handouts, year-by-year timelines, links to relevant and annotated health-related websites, external sources of financial aid and scholarships, and much more.

Premedical Information for Harvard Students: Timelines, Courses, and Resources 2023-

2024: Medical school requirements, Harvard course offerings and selection, concentration choice, study abroad, summer coursework, post-baccalaureate programs, sample course schedules, career exploration and opportunities, and advising resources at Harvard. [Available online](#) (pdf).

Medical School Admissions Requirements (MSAR): [The official guide](#) to medical schools published by the AAMC, providing information on requirements, in-state vs. out-of-state applicant and acceptance figures, financial aid, and other individual medical school policies.

Medical School Admissions Data for Harvard Students: Data on Harvard students applying to medical schools, including cumulative statistics and acceptance rates for current students and alumni by GPA, MCAT scores, and other factors. Email premed@fas.harvard.edu to request access to this report.

Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC): Comprehensive information on medical careers, the MCAT, AMCAS, and the medical school admissions process. www.aamc.org/.

Mignone Center for Career Success Newsletter emails: Edit your choices on the newsletter to select “Premed/Pre-Health” to receive announcements about medical school visits, deadlines, and programs of interest to premed and pre-health students at Harvard.

Medical School Applicant Listserv: For current senior and alumni applicants and for alumni who plan to apply in future cycles, please subscribe to this listserv:

lists.fas.harvard.edu/mailman/listinfo/harvardocs-medschool-applicants-list

MEDICAL SCHOOL APPLICATION TIMELINE

Many Houses require applicants to submit personal information forms (usually referred to as the “PIF” or “House Questionnaire”) and other materials in the winter and spring prior to the year of application to medical school. Consult your House or Dudley Community for details on the process and deadlines. The official application process opens in late May, a full 14 months prior to matriculation (the AMCAS, AACOMAS, and TMDSAS primary applications become available to applicants in early May). The summer months are generally spent completing secondary applications. Interviews are held from late August/early September to April in the fall and spring prior to matriculation. Please see the timeline below for details.

First-Year and Sophomore Year

- Attend a Pre-Health 101 orientation/workshop.
- Attend the Gaining Traction in Pre-Health Series.
- Attend a Navigating Premed & Pre-Health advising appointment and complete the accompanying survey form.
- Read *Premedical Information for Harvard Students: Timelines, Courses, and Resources*, available on the Mignone Center for Career Success website.
- Edit your preferences in the “This Week at the Mignone Center for Career Success”

newsletter and select “Premed/Pre-Health as an interest area.

- Get involved in health-related volunteer opportunities and shadowing of physicians as time allows.
- Get to know your course instructors—attend office hours, invite them to dinner, etc.
- Seek out help and advice from faculty and other teaching staff, your assigned academic (for students in their first three semesters) or concentration advisers (from the fourth semester and on), academic resource centers, including the Academic Resource Center (ARC), the Writing Center, and the Accessible Education Office (AEO), and Mignone Center for Career Success advisers.
- Connect with the Pre-Health Peer Liaison PAFs (PPL PAFs) and attend Pre-Health Question Centers.
- Attend medical and other health-related programs organized and hosted by the Mignone Center for Career Success, often together with premed and pre-health student organizations.
- Attend the Summer Opportunities Fair in December.
- Start requesting letters of recommendation from faculty or teaching fellows who know you well.
- Attend medical school admissions information sessions (see the events calendar on the Mignone Center for Career Success website and newsletters for upcoming sessions).
- Attend Premed/Pre-Health Drop-ins.

Junior Year (or Senior Year if applying after graduation)

Fall term

- Make an appointment with one of the Mignone Center for Career Success premedical/pre-health advisers to discuss your timeline, grades, and activities to ensure that this is the correct cycle for you to apply.
- Begin Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) preparation.
- Apply for the [AAMC Fee Assistance Program](#) (FAP) prior to registering for the MCAT (if eligible).
- Apply for MCAT Accommodations early (if applicable). Initial review can take up to 60 days, and appeals can take an additional 30 days to process. Please refer to the [AAMC suggested application timeline](#) to ensure you receive an accommodation prior to your MCAT exam.
- Meet with one of the Resident Premedical Tutors in your House/Dudley Community.
- Attend a pre-applicant meeting or other programs for applicants in the upcoming application cycle arranged by your Premedical Committee. Review House/Dudley Community deadlines.
- [Register for the MCAT](#). Plan to take the MCAT by early-mid May of the application year.
- Attend the Mignone Center for Career Success webinar on The Medical School Application Process (delivered annually in November and recorded for students who were not able to attend live)

Spring term

- If you have not already applied for the [AAMC Fee Assistance Program](#) (FAP), be sure to apply now (if eligible). Note that the benefits are not retroactive and need to be approved prior to registering for the MCAT or submitting the AMCAS to receive full benefits.
- [Register for the MCAT](#).
- Take the MCAT by early-mid May.
- Plan to have secured three to five letters of recommendation by your House's/Dudley Community's deadline for current applicants.
- Brainstorm and begin a draft of the personal statement for the AMCAS application.
- Attend or view the recordings of the remainder of the Mignone Center for Career Success medical school applicant webinar series:
 - Financing Your Medical Education
 - Selecting Medical Schools

- Writing Your Personal Statement
- Completing the AMCAS Application
- Generate a list of medical schools to which you would like to apply. Harvard applicants apply to an average of 25 to 30 schools. It can be risky to apply to fewer than 20 schools.
- Confirm that all letters of recommendation have been sent to your House/Dudley Community, where the Academic Coordinators ensure that these letters are made available to your Premedical Committee.
- Submit a copy of your unofficial Harvard transcript (be sure it includes spring grades if you are still a student at the College), and science and overall GPA calculations to your Premedical Committee (May-June).
- Submit an official MCAT score report to your Premedical Committee (May-June).
- Request official transcripts to be sent to AMCAS from all colleges attended, including for individual courses taken at other institutions during the summer or before matriculation at Harvard College.

Summer

- Complete and submit AMCAS application by mid-June.
- Complete secondary applications for individual medical schools within two weeks of receiving the application (July/August).
- Premedical Committee letters will be sent to all medical schools on August 15 provided you have adhered to deadlines.

Senior Year (or postgrad year if applying after graduation)

Fall term

- Confirm with medical schools that your application is complete (September).
- Prepare for medical school interviews:
 - Attend the Medical School Interview webinar.
 - Keep up with current issues in medicine.
 - Schedule a mock interview with your House Premedical Committee or assigned non-resident or resident tutor.
 - Practice interview questions with friends/family.
- Receive invitations to interview (late August through April).
- Complete interviews (late August through April).
- If you have received 0-2 interviews by mid-late October, please contact the Mignone Center for Career Success and your House/Dudley Community Premedical Tutors and Committee to discuss your application and strategies to gain interview invitations.

Spring term

- Stay in touch with your assigned Premedical Tutor and Premedical Committee regarding the status of application.
- Apply for financial aid. (Note that some medical schools allow submission of financial aid application, including FAFSA, starting in the fall.)
- Note that the last date to hold more than three acceptance offers is April 15 and the last day to hold more than one acceptance offer is April 30.
- If you are on a wait list(s), keep in touch with medical schools; provide relevant updated information.

Summer

- Register for your first day of medical school!