

18. Besides medicine, what is your main interest?
19. How do you spend your leisure time?
20. What books/magazines do you read?
21. What sports do you play?
22. What do you do for social activities?
23. What kinds of friends do you have?
24. How did you pick your undergraduate college?
25. How has your undergraduate experience helped in making you a better person?
26. What courses did you particularly enjoy while in college? Can you discuss them?
27. What subjects are you taking now? Can you discuss them?
28. What type of work experience have you had in college or during the summer?
29. What have you done during your summers?
30. Where have you traveled?
31. Have you worked with persons of different ethnic and economic backgrounds?
32. Explain your transcript: why did you drop a course? go to summer school? Explain discrepancies between GPA and MCAT scores.
33. How much did you study while in college?
34. Who or what has had the greatest influence upon your life?
35. How do you feel about living and working in the area in which the medical school is located?
36. If medicine were to become socialized, how would that affect your plans?
37. What are your opinions on abortion/euthanasia/organized medicine?
38. What are your opinions regarding women in medicine?
39. What are your opinions on minority groups in medicine?
40. How far do you feel a doctor's responsibility is to his/her patient needs?
41. What problems do you anticipate arising during your professional career or medical training?
42. What changes would you like to see made in the current American health care delivery system?
43. How would you suggest the doctor shortage in rural and inner-city areas be alleviated?
- What will you do if you are asked to serve in a doctor shortage area?
44. What are your feelings regarding the medical malpractice crisis? Do you have any solutions to offer?
45. Do you think that college grades/MCAT scores are an accurate yardstick for one's aptitude for medicine?
46. If you were conducting an interview, what questions would you like to ask an applicant?
47. To how many programs have you applied?
48. What program is your first choice and why?
49. Have you been accepted to any schools yet?
50. Why do you want to attend this particular program?
51. Do you consider yourself a competitive applicant to this school?
52. Explain your lowest MCAT score?
53. Do you have any questions?

It's a good idea to have questions prepared in response to #53. But remember, they need to be real questions. Nothing kills an interview quicker than an applicant who asks a question which has already been answered earlier in the conversation. Another bad move is to ask a stock question without really having thought about why you are asking. The interviewer can tell if you don't really care. Pay attention during the interview, and you'll come up with some things to ask. And finally: do not ask things about the school that you should already know. Here are some typical questions to consider.

1. How early are students exposed to clinical medicine?
2. Is the school more research or clinically oriented? How does that affect students?
3. Ask about programs in fields of special interest.
4. Ask about opportunities for elective work and/or research.
5. How much do students interact with professors? What sort of life do students lead?
6. What programs are scheduled for the summer? What years?

INTERNET RESOURCES

- A list of all accredited medical schools in the U.S. and Canada with locations and websites: <https://www.aamc.org/about/medicalschoools>.
- Medical School Interview Feedback lists some very helpful sites to prepare for interviews with specific schools and specific questions by those schools: <http://www.interviewfeedback.com/>.
- U.S. News Best Medical Schools and other rankings and information: <http://grad-schools.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-graduate-schools/top-medical-schools>.
- U.S. News Medical School Compass includes expanded profiles for 146 schools, average MCAT scores, and most popular residencies: http://www.usnews.com/usnews/store/medical_school_compass.htm?src=wid.
- MCAT preparation includes online courses, videos, and practice tests: <http://mcats-prep.com>.
- GAMSAT preparation includes online courses, videos, and practice tests: <http://gamsat-prep.com>.
- Medical school admission preparation includes MCAT information and preparation, interview questions, and other information: <http://futuredoctor.net>.
- Computerized MCAT Registration: <https://services.aamc.org/20/mcat>.
- MCAT test dates and registration deadlines: <http://www.princetonreview.com/medical/mcat-registration.aspx>.

Resources used to compile this workbook include:

Peterson's Insider's Guide to Medical Schools, Peterson's, Princeton, NJ (This book is available in the Career Planning Office at Hillsdale College)

Shana Plasters, Director of Career Development, Albion College

Resources Available in Hillsdale College Career Services:

Getting Into Medical School: What You Need to Know Before You Go, First Edition, National Internships, Washington, D.C., 2000

Peterson's Insider's Guide to Medical Schools, Peterson's, Princeton, NJ, 1999

Directory of American Medical Education 2003-2004, Association of American Medical Colleges, 2003

Graduate Admissions Essays - Write Your Way Into the Graduate School of Your Choice, Donald Asher, 2000

Graduate Medical Education Directory 2004 - 2005, Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, 2004

Health Professions Career and Education Directory, 2005 - 2006, American Medical Association, 2007 - 2008 Medical School

Admission Requirements, Association of American Medical Colleges, 2006

Updated Fall 2016

Medical School

A HILLSDALE COLLEGE CAREER SERVICES GUIDE

Getting into medical school is one of the most significant challenges a medical student will face. Following is some guidance for your pursuit.

APPLYING FOR MEDICAL SCHOOL

Where to Apply

These factors will be part of the decision-making process:

1. Location
2. Reputation
3. Personal recommendation from a professor or someone attending the school
4. Cost
5. Specialty

Ideas where to apply

- Apply in your home state.
- Ask your professors for ideas. Visit the Career Planning Office for a list of medical schools that Hillsdale graduates have attended.
- Most state schools receive significant funding from their state and they cut residents a break.
- Be realistic. Do you really have a shot at Hopkins, Harvard, or USFC?
- You can consider osteopathic school; many of the graduates end up in MD residencies.

The Process

Get everything in early. Most deadlines are rolling, but a safe bet is to have everything turned in (application, MCAT scores, and letters of recommendation) by early fall, one year before you plan to enter medical school. Do not procrastinate.

Location

Where a school is located greatly affects your life both inside and outside of school. Remember that this location is going to be your home for four years and often longer, so keep your long term goals in mind.

The Essay

This is an important document and takes time to prepare. Be original, but not too original. Keep in mind how many thousands of essays admissions committee members read. Choose a topic you truly care about, whether or not it has to do with medicine. Do not repeat things from your resume, although creating interests in one or two of your areas may help.

Volunteering

Many students applying to medical school volunteer in a hospital or doctors office. Although it is not required, it is a good idea. It will give you a chance to see whether or not you will like medicine, and admission committees like it.

Recommendation Letters

Request letters from faculty members who know your work. Include the professor who was your advisor for your senior research project.

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DEVELOPING SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEWING SKILLS

The personal interview is a key ingredient of the medical school admission process. Medical schools want the best students, but they want to accept students who will attend if selected. The mission for the interviewee is two-fold: (1) Convince the interviewers that they need you in their class, and (2) convince them that if selected, you will graciously accept and matriculate. If you reach the interview stage of the admission process, you must assume that all candidates, at least on paper, are fairly equal at that point. Think of the interview as your opportunity to ace the final exam of a very important class - a class where everyone has a GPA of 4.0 going in, but where the only grade that will count will be the final. Would you take your chances on this exam and go in cold, assuming that because you've done great work so far, you'll be able to pull it off? Of course not! You would put in as much, if not more, preparation - because this test decides the final outcome of your grade. And if you blow this, it doesn't really matter how hard you worked to get to that point.

Use the same reasoning to include serious interview preparation in your application process. It is possible that your interview may be the deciding factor in whether or not you are admitted to medical school. Excellent interviewing skills don't just happen. Neither should you just assume that "getting a couple of interviews under the belt" will be sufficient preparation. A successful interview is no more a matter of luck than your undergraduate grades are. Pre-interview preparation, research and study will always result in a superior performance.

Preparation Tips

1. Review the most current information available about the school. Remember, it is going to be pretty tough to provide a coherent answer to the question, "Why do you want to attend our school?" if you don't know or can't remember anything about it.

2. Review all application materials sent to the school. Up until the interview, everything about you that the medical school knows is probably on paper. Study your academic record and quiz yourself. Why was this class a good one? What did I get out of that directed study? Review your personal statement. You may have written it long enough ago that you now have no idea what you said. Be prepared to address any difficult issues - the weak grade, or the poor semester. Look at all of the information you provided on the application and ask yourself why you did what you did. Why did you join this organization? What did you get out of this internship experience? In other words, pre-interview yourself.

3. Keep up-to-date on current health issues. Watch the news and/or read a paper. You may be asked to comment on some hot health topic. You don't want to give a picture of yourself as a high achiever who has been locked up studying for the past three years. If you don't have time to read, use the Internet to stay up on pertinent medical issues.

4. Do a practice interview. Videotaped mock interviews are available to you through the Career Planning Office. There is no better way to get an accurate perspective on your ability to present yourself and communicate clearly than to see

the brutal results on videotape. And amazingly enough, it is much easier to monitor and control those annoying and distracting habits once you have seen them for yourself.

The interview evaluation form that will be used in your mock interview provides a basic outline of the areas that will be judged. Keep in mind that you are working on the total package. Like it or not, you will be evaluated on (1) how you look, (2) how you act, and (3) how you think. You have the ability to positively control all of these factors. Prepare for it. In fact, the mock interview should be the final result of your interview preparation - not the starting point. Make use of the many resources on successful interviewing skills and positive personal presentation available through the Career Planning Office.

5. Confirm your date, time, location, and schedule in advance. Get directions and give yourself plenty of time to get there. If you need to, make arrangements to get there the night before and stay over. Arrive early; above all, DO NOT be late.

6. Be pleasant to everyone you come in contact with. It is impossible for you to know whom any particular person is associated with. Therefore, your short-tempered, nervous comment to the receptionist may make its way right up to the people making the decisions. Remember to act like a guest.

7. Dress conservatively. Make the best professional presentation that you are able to muster.

For men, the standard dress is a business suit, medium to dark gray or navy blue. Wear a conservative tie with a long sleeved, pressed white shirt. Clean, polished shoes do matter.

For women, a conservative suit or dress is an appropriate choice. Shoes should be comfortable, closed toe, low-heeled pumps. Colors should be moderate, and if you don't know the rules about the seasons for wearing light shoes, and matching your shoe to your hem color, it's time to learn them. Accessories should be minimal and not distracting. Remember, an extra pair of hose is no trouble to bring, just in case you need them.

Both men and women should avoid excessive aftershave or perfumes. In fact, many recommend eliminating them entirely. If you smoke, don't do it on the day of the interview (a tough hint - but essential). The odor will hang on to you, no matter how many Certs you suck down before you meet with people. Above all, try to present a comfortable, yet professional presence. Applicants have been rejected based on their appearance. It may not be fair, but remember, this process doesn't have to be. Remember that it must be assumed by those meeting you that what they see before them is the very best that you can do. They are not obligated to give you the benefit of the doubt in any area.

Interview Tips

After the planning is completed comes the time to actually visit the school—to talk to people, answer questions,

and try to make the best possible presentation of yourself as the right candidate for this school. Remember:

- Expect the very best and be prepared for the very worst.
- Listen carefully to what is being said, and answer the questions. This seems basic, but you would be surprised at how many candidates get so busy being nervous that they forget to do this. These people end up babbling.
- Take the time to think before answering - particularly if it is a tough question. Thoughtful silence is perfectly ok; in fact, it is preferable to thoughtless stammering.
- Don't lie, and don't try to outsmart the interviewer. It can't be done. If you do not know, say so. This is far more admirable than bluffing.
- Don't make excuses. Period. No one cares. They want explanations or evaluations, not personal sob stories. If you have some glaring problem to deal with, be prepared to do just that - deal with it.
- Be real. The whole point is to present who you are, not your

well-scripted performance of the stereotypic perfect applicant clone. Remember that this process should be a conversation—an exchange of information.

- This is above all, an educational process. Think of it like this: you have all the information that the interviewer needs to be able to make a judgment about you. He/She can't guess a lot of this by looking at you. You need to teach it to him/her. When you are wondering whether or not you should share the fact that you have won an international award for your work in Restrictive Ant-Farming Techniques when you were an Eagle Scout, consider this test: "If I were the interviewer, would it help me to better evaluate the candidate if I had this information? What purpose does it serve? What would I learn about the applicant if he/she told me this fact?"

A final hint: Should you accept and then decide not to attend an interview at any particular school, CALL AND CANCEL! Do it graciously, and as far in advance as possible. Even though you have decided not to pursue admission at a particular school, please be aware that your rude and unprofessional manner can hurt any other candidates from Hillsdale College.

Sample Interview Questions

The following are questions that have been asked in the past at medical school interviews. Remember that you should use these questions to teach yourself how to comfortably respond. It would be counterproductive to try to memorize an answer to each question, as you will probably (1) not be asked any of these questions in exactly this form, and (2) you'll sound stiff and unnatural in your responses. Ask yourself these questions, and then answer them - out loud - to familiarize yourself with how you sound and how you think on your feet. Remember that while content certainly counts here, the manner in which you present yourself is also being evaluated.

1. How would you describe yourself?
2. How would others describe you?
3. What factors have influenced your decision to attend medical school?
4. Why do you want to go to medical school?
5. How do your parents/friends feel about this decision? How have they influenced you in this decision?
6. When did you decide to pursue this field?
7. Which of your qualities will make you a good physician?
8. What do you see as your weak points?
9. What qualities do you think a good physician should possess?
10. What will you contribute to medicine?
11. What type of doctor would you like to be and why?
12. In what setting would you like to practice?
13. What do you see yourself doing in 20 years?
14. What will you do if you are not accepted?
15. Are you applying to other graduate or professional programs?
16. What experience have you had in the biomedical field (emphasis on research or clinical work)?
17. Have you done any hospital volunteer work?