

Middlebury Health Professions Committee

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Embarking on the Premedical Journey

“We won’t always know whose lives we touched and made better for our having cared, because actions can sometimes have unforeseen ramifications. What’s important is that you do care and you act.”

–Charlotte Lunsford

There are many ways to serve humanity and live a purposeful life. However, caring for the physical and emotional needs of others is one of the most selfless and honored traditions. Few careers require as much intellectual rigor and personal sacrifice as the practice of medicine. At the same time, securing a place in one of the schools of medicine has never been more difficult to achieve. Therefore, in addition to excellent academic credentials, today’s applicants must possess a set of experiences demonstrating strong interpersonal qualities, community engagement (local or international), knowledge of the proposed field of study, and the skills and knowledge that prepare one for effective practice in 21st-century medicine.

Admissions committees will consider three questions when evaluating each applicant:

1. **Can this person complete a health professional school program?** They will evaluate the overall GPA, the science GPA, and the entrance test scores.
2. **Does this person know what he or she is getting into?** Experience and knowledge of the field are essential.
3. **Is this an interesting person?** Accomplishments in different areas help here. Success in any subject is valued.

It’s important to approach the decision to pursue medicine thoughtfully; take responsibility for learning about different healthcare fields and take time for careful self-examination to determine which medical credential will enable you to best realize your talents and potential. With this mind, take advantage of all that Middlebury has to offer. The Health Professions Office has valuable resources and advising services that can help you throughout the exploration and application processes.

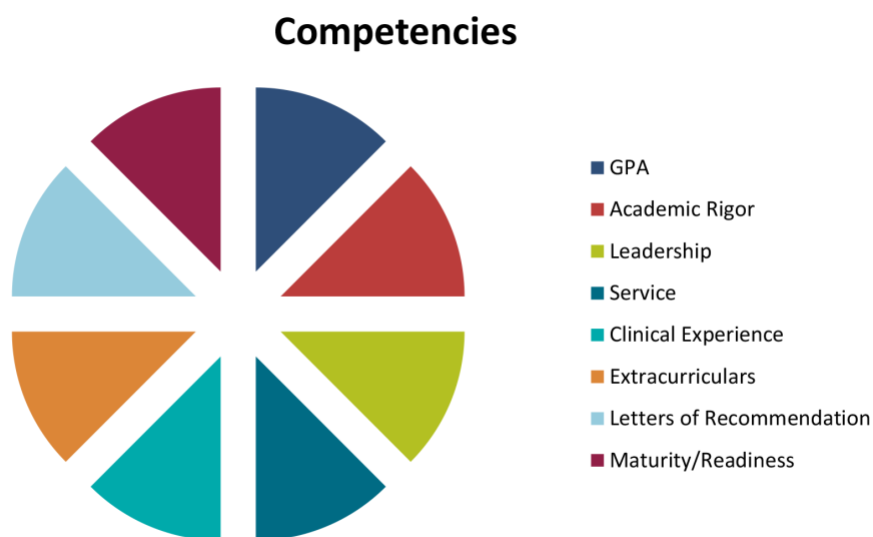
I look forward to getting to know our new health professions students and developing deeper ties with prospective professional school applicants. Please don’t hesitate to reach out to us with questions and updates!



*Mary Lothrop, Director, Health Professions & STEM
Center for Careers & Internships*

Competencies for Entering Health Professions Students

The integrated holistic admissions process incorporates your attributes with your metrics (grades and MCAT scores) and experiences. Schools also take into consideration maturity, intellectual curiosity, values/beliefs, languages spoken, race, sexual orientation, geography, national origin, and building a diverse class. The core element of this holistic process involves widening the lens through which schools view applicants, and recognizing and valuing different dimensions that shape each individual. The following competencies are what the Health Professions Committee uses to evaluate each candidate, and mirrors the competencies used by medical school admissions teams as they work to build a strong and diverse class.



GPA

The national average overall GPA for students accepted into medical school is 3.77 and 3.69 for the sciences. Middlebury is recognized as a rigorous institution, and when our students have GPA's in the 3.5 range, they are considered competitive candidates for admission. Admissions committees spend a good deal of time examining the undergraduate transcript. They pay careful attention to the trajectory of grades, the strength of the schedule, and the academic rigor of the course load. They look for evidence of academic risk and intellectual curiosity. The transcript tells a story, and medical schools look favorably upon a student who is able to recover from a poor semester to go on and succeed.

Undergraduate Course Requirements

The following courses serve as basic requirements for all health professions students. After completing these requirements, you should be prepared for most allopathic and osteopathic medical schools, but it is always good to check requirements at particular schools. Additional or alternative courses are required for pre-vet and pre-dental students and those considering nursing, physical therapy, and other related fields.

Academic Requirements: Applicants will be expected to ‘demonstrate aptitude in biological and physical sciences during the undergraduate years, but not to the exclusion of the humanities and social sciences.’ Students aspiring to careers in health professions are not required to major in science. The following list of courses is currently recommended; however, professional school admissions requirements are based on a student’s ability to demonstrate competency in a variety of ways.

Recommended Coursework for ALL Allied Health Professions:

- 3 Semesters CHEM w/ lab (Including General & Organic Chemistry)
- 2 Semesters BIOL or NSCI w/ lab *
- 1 Semester PSYC
- 1 Semester MATH
- 1 Semester Statistics
- 2 Semesters PHYS w/ lab
- 1 Semester Biochemistry **
- 2 Semesters English/College Writing

Sample of Courses Frequently Taken:

- CHEM 0103 General Chemistry I
 - CHEM 0104 General Chemistry II
 - BIOL 0140 Ecology and Evolution
 - BIOL 0145 Cell Biology and Genetics
 - PSYC 0105 Introduction to Psychology
 - MATH 0116, BIOL 0211, ECON 0210, or PSYC 0201 Statistics
 - MATH 0121 Calculus I
 - PHYS 0109 Newtonian Physics
 - PHYS 0111 Thermo, Fluids, Waves & Optics
 - CHEM 0203 Organic Chemistry I: Structure and Reactivity
 - CHEM 0322 Biochemistry of Macromolecules
- OR -
- CHEM 0107 Adv. General Chemistry w/ AP Credit
 - PHYS 0110 Electricity & Magnetism (req. Calc II)

Additional Courses to Consider:

- Biological Science courses in content areas such as: Physiology, Immunology, Microbiology, and Endocrinology
- Social Science courses in content areas such as: Sociology, Ethics, and Global Health
- Organic Chemistry II (required for some science majors, as well as some medical, veterinary, and dental schools)
- Calculus II (required for current PHYS 0110 course & some professional schools)

*The [AMCAS Course Classification Guide](#) provides examples of how courses are often categorized.

**In our experience, medical schools requiring 4 semesters of Chemistry have accepted Biochemistry as fulfilling the 4th semester, even in the absence of a lab.

Note: Check the course catalog for the most up-to-date information about prerequisites, course and major requirements. In some instances, AP credit may be used in lieu of a required course.

Dental School Admissions Exam:

We recommend taking the **DAT** as soon after your BIOL/CHEM sequence as you feel prepared. The DAT exam does not include Physics content.

Medical and Veterinary School Admissions Exams:

Students should consider taking the **MCAT** or **GRE** exam no later than the spring before applying to professional schools. Please note that the MCAT comes with a 3 year expiration date, and most schools will accept a GRE exam taken within 5 years of matriculation.

Resources:

Medical School Admission Requirements (MSAR)
Admission Requirements of U.S. and Canadian Dental Schools
Veterinary Medical School Admissions Requirements (VMSAR)
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine

Link:

<https://services.aamc.org/msar/home#null>
<http://www.adea.org/>
<http://www.aavmc.org>
<http://www.aacom.org>

For additional information, or to schedule an appointment with a Health Professions Advisor, please visit:

<http://sites.middlebury.edu/ci/health-professions/the-news/>

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Academic Assistance

Health Professions students should have the strongest possible study techniques and time management skills. Since students enter into advanced degree programs with varying levels of these skills, we strongly encourage you to take advantage of the available on-campus support services:

- [Peer STEM Tutors](#) assist students in a wide range of courses, including biology, chemistry, computer science, environmental science, economics, logic, mathematics, physics, psychology, and statistics. Some tutors run weekly drop-in sessions while others work with students in scheduled appointments.
- [STEM and Quantitative Skills Support](#): Whether you are wondering what course to take, are already enrolled in a course with a quantitative component, or are working on a senior thesis, the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Research (CTLR) has resources to help you. Professional and peer tutors are available to assist students in a wide variety of STEM subjects, including biology, chemistry, computer science, economics, environmental science, mathematics, philosophy, physics, psychology, and statistics. These services are free of charge to Middlebury College students.
- [Center for Community Engagement](#): Locally and around the world, the Community Engagement office helps Middlebury College students explore civic identity, develop essential life-long skills, and pursue projects in collaboration with communities, all while striving to contribute to the public good.
- [Center for Careers and Internships](#): CCI Advisors are here to help you select a major, look for a summer internship, evaluate career possibilities, apply to graduate school, or look for a job. While

each advisor focuses on specific industries or fields, all of our advisors are well equipped to get you started in your own search process.

Other Educational Considerations

- **Advanced Placement (AP) Credits** - Medical schools have different policies regarding AP credits. Plan to take advanced courses to reinforce commitment and proficiencies, and to be sure to meet medical schools' minimum requirements in a subject.
- **Independent Study** - All departments provide opportunities for independent work in the major. Research is viewed quite favorably, but is not required for admission to medical school.
- **Summer Courses** - Candidates may take premedical courses during the summer with discretion. If done too often, however, it may be viewed as "avoiding difficult science courses" at Middlebury.

Academic Rigor

Admissions boards will look at the breadth and depth of your coursework, and balance of the academic program. Schools want to be sure that you can manage a rigorous curriculum, which will include a higher volume of scientific information than most are exposed to as undergraduates. They look for students who have developed strategies that allow them to process and retain vast quantities of information. Additionally, students who are intellectually curious and adept, are able to solve complex problems, and are interested in lifelong learning will fare well in the health professions. You have to know how to learn and love learning.

Change Agent (Leadership)

Leadership is defined as a position of responsibility for others, with a purpose to guide or direct others. Sample Leadership roles: TA, tutor, SGA, chairing a committee, leading an athletic team, etc. The average applicant has 3 different leadership experiences each lasting 3 months.

Service

Service of some kind is fully integrated into the health care professional's undergraduate experience. Most applicants have a strong sense of service, of wanting to help others feel better, making health care work better, and, in many cases, giving back to their communities. There are many ways for you to engage in the community and you can design your own service path. Admissions boards value engagement in community service as a way to demonstrate respect toward others with very different life circumstances, empathy, and cultural sensitivity. They want students to demonstrate a desire to help others and sensitivity to others' needs and feelings. Ideal applicants demonstrate a desire to alleviate others' distress; recognize and act on his/her responsibilities to society, locally, nationally, and globally. The average medical school applicant has 100 hours of community service when they apply.

Clinical Experience

A strong emphasis is placed on your clinical exposure to medicine and patient care, including time spent shadowing, working in clinics, and other patient-care settings. Clinical experience is defined as direct interaction with patients and hands-on involvement in the care of conscious patients in a health care related environment, attending to their health maintenance, progression, or end of life needs. The average applicant has 45-50 hours of patient contact.

Extracurriculars

While your GPA reflects your academic performance and your MCAT demonstrates your ability to synthesize concepts and perform on standardized testing, your extracurriculars can set you apart from other applicants the way numbers and scores cannot. Involvement in extracurricular activities rounds out your application. It is one thing to state that you wish to help people as a health care provider, but backing it up through dedication of your time and energy does much more to impress an admissions board. An extracurricular activity can refer to any activity outside of the classroom and studying. Beware, however, that a common mistake that many undergraduates make is getting involved in too many extra-curricular activities. There's a myth that in order to be a competitive applicant, you must "check all the boxes," or try to cover every category of activity. Bouncing around different activities during your first year is encouraged, but you should have a solid grasp on which activity you are passionate about by the time your second year is over. Committing to too many extracurricular activities will only dilute your time and energy.

Below are some on-campus student organizations with a pre-health focus

(You can find a complete listing of all of the student orgs at <https://middlebury.presence.io/>)

GlobeMed at Middlebury College (GlobeMed)

Middlebury First Responders (MFR)

Pre-Health Society

Psychology Club

Women in Health Sciences

Letters of Recommendation

Letters of recommendation are a critical element to the application process. Your final dossier should include a minimum of three letters, two of which should be written by faculty in the sciences (including biology, chemistry, physics, neuroscience, and math).

**For re-applicants, have you been able to obtain at least one new letter of recommendation that supports your candidacy, preferably addressing areas that may have been seen as weaknesses in the previous application cycle? Your other letters can remain as-is for the dossier, but it is helpful to have a new letter to update what you have done since your first application.*

Maturity/Readiness

Admissions boards look for evidence of substantive and long-term investment. An applicant who shows maturity/readiness demonstrates:

- awareness of others' needs, goals, feelings, and the ways that social and behavioral cues affect peoples' interactions and behaviors; adjusts behaviors appropriately in response to these cues; treats others with respect.
- knowledge of socio-cultural factors that affect interactions and behaviors; shows an appreciation and respect for multiple dimensions of diversity; recognizes and acts on the obligation to inform one's own judgment; engages diverse and competing perspectives as a resource for learning, citizenship, and work;

recognizes and appropriately addresses bias in themselves and others; interacts effectively with people from diverse backgrounds.

- teamwork by working collaboratively with others to achieve shared goals; shares information and knowledge with others and provides feedback; puts team goals ahead of individual goals.
- reliability and dependability by consistently fulfilling obligations in a timely and satisfactory manner; takes responsibility for personal actions and performance.
- resilience and adaptability by tolerating stressful or changing environments or situations and adapting effectively to them; is persistent, even under difficult situations; recovers from setbacks.
- capacity for improvement by setting goals for continuous improvement and for learning new concepts and skills; engaging in reflective practice for improvement; soliciting and responding appropriately to feedback.

The INTERNAL Application Process: Health Professions Committee

Staff

Located within the [Center for Careers and Internships](#), our office offers a number of opportunities for you to prepare for a career in health professions. Our advisors are here to guide you and provide you with information sessions, opportunities, internships, and workshops to help you explore your options.

Mary Lothrop, *Director, Health Professions & STEM* – mlothrop@middlebury.edu

Hannah Benz, *Associate Director, Health Professions & STEM* – hbenz@middlebury.edu

Erin Southworth, *CCI Coordinator* – eirons@middlebury.edu

Candidates may apply to medical, dental, or veterinary school as:

- juniors planning to matriculate to professional school immediately following graduation; or,
- seniors planning to matriculate to professional school the year following graduation; or,
- alumni who have chosen to explore other opportunities after Middlebury prior to matriculation.

Applicants who wish to receive an endorsement by the Health Professions Committee should initiate the internal review process 2 years before they plan to matriculate in school by filling out the Committee Selection Form, meeting with an Advisor, and then meeting all of the Health Professions Committee Timeline deadlines. Candidates may only go through the Health Professions Committee ONCE, so you want to make sure you are going through when you are at your most competitive.

This guide outlines procedures for arranging committee interviews, describes the process for applying to schools, and explains the procedures for requesting dossiers and transcripts.

Please make note of deadlines by which information must be submitted and certain activities completed.

The Health Professions Advisors are available to share their knowledge and expertise concerning the admissions process. However, it is the responsibility of prospective applicants to conduct research necessary to make informed decisions concerning their future plans.

2019-2020 Health Professions Committee

Mary Lothrop, *Director, Health Professions & STEM, co-chair*

Mark Spritzer, *Associate Professor of Biology, co-chair*

Hannah Benz, MD, *Associate Director, Health Professions and STEM*

Michole Biancosino, *Assistant Professor of Theatre*

James Fitzsimmons, *Associate Professor of Anthropology*

Randall Ganiban, *Professor of Classics*

Lesley-Ann Giddings, *Assistant Professor of Chemistry/Biochemistry*

David Munro, *Assistant Professor of Economics*

Stephen J. Ratcliff, *Jacob Abbott Professor of Natural Sciences*

Fernando Rocha, *Associate Professor of Luso-Hispanic Studies*

Mary Jane Simpson, *Assistant Laboratory Professor in Chemistry/Biochemistry*

Kristina Walowski, *Assistant Professor of Geology*

Function

Middlebury, along with other top undergraduate schools, provides an evaluation process conducted by a faculty committee (Health Professions Committee) that results in a letter of endorsement in support of your applications. This campus review process begins by the fall preceding the summer in which your application is initiated.

Most applicants for medical, dental, and veterinary schools from Middlebury College are evaluated by our Health Professions Committee. The function of the Committee is to conduct a holistic review of each applicant and assign a rating based on the competencies listed in the beginning of this handbook. In rare cases, the Committee may recommend delaying the application process to give the student time to improve their qualifications.

Students are eligible to go through the committee process if they are:

- Applying to medical, dental, veterinary or other health profession school (post baccalaureate programs and other health profession schools do not require committee letters.)
- A current Middlebury student or alum.

Timeline

Preparing to Apply to Professional Schools

Our office is happy to meet with you to discuss career options in any of the medical fields, and we post about a variety of health professions fields in our [blog](#). We also recommend doing your own research into fields of interest.

It is critical to apply to professional schools as early in the application cycle as schedules allow. Begin to make preparations to submit applications in the spring, about one and one-half years before the targeted matriculation date. Applications to the central application service (for example, AMCAS, AADSAS, or VMCAS) should be made early in the summer, and applications to schools should be made as close to the date they become available as possible. This is recommended because many professional schools use a rolling admissions process and begin making selections before the application deadline date. The closer to the deadline date an application arrives, the greater the competition for the remaining openings at schools with rolling admissions.

In preparing for application through the Middlebury Health Professions Committee, a number of steps must be taken (most of this information is also available in our [Application Timeline on our website](#)):

November 15

- Submit the [Committee Selection Form](#)
- Submit a **head shot**. *Does not need to be professional, for internal use only.*
- Create a [veCollect account](#).

January 15

- Complete the [Biographical Report](#) – which includes your personal statement.
 - [What are the most important things I should write about in my personal statement?](#)
 - [Secondary Essay Prompts Database](#) (*This is for medical school, but there are some great generic essay prompts as well.*)

- Johns Hopkins University has a helpful page on writing the [Personal Statement](#)
- Submit **Letters of Recommendation** - Letters of recommendation are a vital part of the dossier. One should take great care in selecting individuals who are to serve as references: consultation with one of the Health Professions Advisors is recommended. Be sure to discuss overall academic work, non-academic activities, and professional goals with these individuals. It is best to furnish them with a résumé or bio report, a personal statement, and a current unofficial transcript. One should not hesitate to ask whether or not an individual is willing to give strong support (this does not mean that they should not discuss weaknesses as well as strengths).

For purposes of the Committee interviews, at least two letters are required to be submitted to [veCollect](#)—one of which must be from a Middlebury faculty member, and at least one should be from a science professor, addressing your performance in the sciences. [Click here to see what is considered BCPM Coursework](#). These letters will also be included in the final dossier sent to medical schools. Additional letters can arrive later in the year, but should be in an applicant’s veCollect file before the Committee letter is written—by June 1st of the intended application cycle. Note: letters must be submitted by the writers to veCollect as a PDF on letterhead, dated, and signed by the recommender. Please specify this format when requesting a letter, before sending the document request from veCollect.

The final dossier should include 3-4 letters, two of which should be written by faculty in the sciences; check each school for their requirements. We advise students that 4 strong letters generally provide ample support of their candidacy. Using additional letters that are neutral or repetitive does more harm than good. If you have questions about how many letters are needed to adequately tell your story, please consult with Mary Lothrop at mlothrop@middlebury.edu.

Faculty referees should be contacted as early as possible to avoid their very busy period at and near the end of each term. Each referee should indicate clearly that the candidate is being recommended for medical (or dental, or veterinary) school. Recommendations are considered very seriously by the professional schools.

Recommenders need to know before they compose the letter whether or not it will be confidential. When candidates request each referee to write for them, their choice is indicated on a waiver on the form sent to them from veCollect. Note: It is very rare for letters to be open (non-confidential)—it is thought that referees will write more candidly if they do not think the candidate will see the letter. Do consider carefully the impression that an “open” letter will make; each letter is boldly marked if it is not confidential.

- Submit **non-Midd unofficial transcripts** - Unofficial transcripts are required from any school at which you took more than four courses. If you have taken more than four courses, a full post bacc or obtained your Master’s Degree, you will need to share those transcripts with the committee and calculate the GPA.
- Submit the [Pre-Interview Form](#).
- Submit the [Dossier Waiver](#).
- Complete **Committee Interviews** - Interviewers are chosen based on the completed Committee Selection form (available [here](#)) that each candidate is required to fill out by mid-October. Each candidate will meet individually with three members of the Committee. An effort is made to arrange

faculty interviews with whom the candidate has had little or no contact, to maximize the number of committee members who are familiar with each candidate. Committee interviews also serve to introduce the candidate to the interview process that must be undertaken at professional schools. These interviews take place roughly between January and March.

To arrange a meeting with assigned members of the Committee, students should contact the committee member directly. It is the student's responsibility to know the status of their file and to complete all requirements by the deadlines.

An integral part of the committee process is the three interviews with the committee members. You will meet in person with three committee members who will be trying to get to know you better as a candidate. If you believe your situation warrants a virtual interview accommodation, please describe why performing a face to face interview would present a significant hardship in your [Committee Selection Form](#).

The three interviews with members of the Health Professions Committee are important to the evaluation process. Interviewers will ask questions about the candidate's background, academic preparation and performance, motivation, and knowledge of the profession under consideration: they will also consider personal, social, and ethical issues related to one's chosen profession. In some respect, these interviews will parallel those given by medical schools, and they are good practice for applicants.

Interview reports are included in the overall appraisal by the Committee. Students are encouraged to meet with the advisors to receive feedback and recommendations that result from the Committee evaluation. NOTE: Candidates being supported by the Committee are ranked as 'Superior,' 'Excellent,' 'Very Good,' or 'Good,' and your specific category endorsement is not shared as part of the feedback process. **To review the interview rubric, please see the appendix.**

Tips on the Health Professions Committee Interview

1. Be yourself.
2. Try to communicate clearly and succinctly; do not over-talk.
3. Be prepared to respond to all kinds of questions, many unrelated to the study of medicine.
4. Be ready to discuss your motivation for the study of medicine and any activity or experience that has tested this motivation.
5. Be appropriately dressed and groomed, as if applying for a job.
6. Don't attempt to outsmart the interviewer.
7. Don't butter up the interviewer.
8. If you don't know the answer to a question, say so.
9. Explain your deficiencies honestly, and don't offer excuses and rationalizations for lack of academic achievement.
10. Don't be hesitant about asking questions.
11. Don't be on the defensive or on the offensive.

Some Helpful Interviewing Resources:

- [Ten Medical School Interview Tips – Go In Ahead of the Competition](#)
- [Ask the Experts: Preparing for the Interview](#)

- [5 Tips for Your Medical School Interview: Advice from a Recent Admit](#)
- [Ivy League Interview Tips](#)
- [Sample Interview Questions](#)
- Complete a **School List** - Applicants to medical, dental, or veterinary schools should consider applying to all of the public schools in their home state system, since preference is given to in-state residents. [Note: students applying to home-state medical schools should be intentional and thoughtful of maintaining residency and be aware that if they register to vote, register their cars, or get a driver’s license in another state, they may be jeopardizing their in-state status at certain medical schools.] Private medical schools in one’s home state should also be considered. Candidates should develop a preliminary list of schools and review this list periodically, deleting and adding schools as necessary.
 - Those who interviewed with **Mary Lothrop**, [fill out the School List here](#).
 - Those who interviewed with **Hannah Benz**, [fill out the School List here](#).
- The Health Professions Advisors are available to discuss the candidate’s selection of schools. We recommend that each candidate purchase a copy of the latest edition of one of the following publications to assist in preparing a realistic list of schools:
 - [Medical School Admission Requirements](#) [MSAR] [American Association of Medical Colleges]
 - [Admissions Requirements of US & Can. Dental Schools](#) [American Dental Education Association]
 - [Veterinary Medical School Admissions Requirements](#) [VMSAR] [Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC)] Purdue University Press

Most professional schools require applicants to apply through a central application system:

- **Allopathic:** [AMCAS](#)
- **Osteopathic:** [AACOMAS](#)
- **Dental:** [AADSAS](#)
- **Veterinarian:** [VMCAS](#)

Middlebury College is a member of a professional organization called the Northeast Consortium on Medical Education (NECOME). This group of premedical advisors and medical school deans and admissions directors meets twice a year to discuss medical school trends and issues regarding medical education. The following colleges and medical schools comprise NECOME.

Undergraduate schools:

Amherst College
Bowdoin College
Hamilton College
Haverford College
College of the Holy Cross
Middlebury College
Swarthmore College
Wesleyan University
Williams College

Medical schools:

Albany Medical College
Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth College
Harvard Medical School
Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University
Tufts University School of Medicine
University of Connecticut School of Medicine
Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania
University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry
Larner College of Medicine at the University of Vermont

- Complete **Entrance Exams** ([MCAT](#), [DAT](#), or [GRE](#)) – There is no one size fits all answer for what good exam prep looks like.

- With the **MCAT**, most students find that 2-4 hours/day over about 3 months prepares them well for the exam. Some sites recommend a goal of about 300 prep hours. The MCAT exam is long (7+ hours) and taking several practice exams (7-9) teaches you not only what to expect on exam day, but also helps you to build the mental stamina required to be successful on exam day.
- Commercial preparation courses are available for the MCAT:
Please note that we do not endorse any specific preparation courses. These are some of the courses used by applicants in the past.
 - [Kaplan](#) offers live, interactive courses via the internet; courses are extracurricular and cost around \$2,000. Kaplan offers some financial aid.
 - [Princeton Review](#) has on-line instruction for \$2,000. Their course runs for 15 hours, times and dates arranged per group.
 - [Examcrackers](#) provides preparation for standardized exams through books, audio CDs, DVDs, internet forums, and live classes [not in Vermont, though].
 - The [American Association of Medical Colleges](#) (AAMC) offers practice tests for the MCAT, which are available for \$35 per test.
 - [Khan Academy](#) is a free online resource of videos and practice questions

Many of our students use Kaplan, Princeton Review or Examcrackers as they prepare for the exam. Some students elect to take the course in person, others through online modules and some students will buy study guides and prepare entirely on their own. The real benefit of doing a prep course, either in person or online, is the structure that it enforces and the requirement that you take full-length, timed practice tests. Bottom line: If you are disciplined and put in the study time, it doesn't matter what type of prep you use. Figure out which set of materials aligns with your learning style and go with that.

Special Sophomore Application Programs

Sophomores considering an early assurance program may find much of the material in this guide useful, but a discussion with a health professions advisor is advisable.

Early Assurance Premedical Programs

Exceptionally well-qualified students may be considered for special early assurance programs during the sophomore year. Candidates for early assurance should be absolutely sure they want to pursue a career in medicine, should be sure of the medical school they wish to attend, and must demonstrate clearly how the program will benefit them in a significant way. See a health professions advisor for more details.

- [Albany Medical College](#)
- [University of Rochester School of Medicine & Dentistry](#)

Other Early Assurance Programs Available

The following programs are open to all undergraduate students and do not have a special affiliation with Middlebury College:

- [University of Toledo Medstart Program](#)

- [Icahn School of Medicine Flex Med Program at Mt. Sinai](#)
- [University of Florida College of Medicine Medical Honors Program](#)
- [SUNY Upstate Medical University EAP](#)

We also have students interested in the FlexMed program at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and we are happy to support students in their FlexMed applications.

The EXTERNAL Application Process

Through Middlebury, there are THREE ways to apply to medical, dental and veterinary schools:

Central Application Service

Candidates apply through a **Central Application Service**. Schools using the application service may use the information obtained through this service to make first-cut selections. They may reject the applicant after an initial screening, or they may invite the applicant to complete the school's own application, the secondary application.

To apply through a Central Application Service:

Complete and send the central application forms to the proper address:

- **Allopathic:** [AMCAS](#)
- **Osteopathic:** [AACOMAS](#)
- **Dental:** [AADSAS](#)
- **Veterinarian:** [VMCAS](#)
- Other Health Professions fields have their own application system as well, but since Middlebury students have not historically applied to programs in these fields, we do not include them here. If you are interested in other Health Professions fields, schedule an appointment with an advisor.

Non-AMCAS Schools

The following schools use AMCAS only for MD – PhD applications:

- Texas A&M University System Health Science Center College of Medicine
- Texas Tech University Health Science Center School of Medicine
- University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas Southwestern Medical School
- University of Texas Medical School at Galveston
- University of Texas School of Medicine at Houston
- University of Texas School of Medicine at San Antonio

This school does not use AMCAS:

- Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, El Paso, Paul L. Foster School of Medicine

In order to apply via the Central Application Service through our office, you will need to have a completed file by June 1, 2020. A completed file includes:

- Please be sure to share your preferred **post-Midd e-mail address** with our office.
- Ensure your [veCollect](#) is current
- [Transcripts](#)
- [Letters of Recommendation](#)
- [Committee Letter Request](#)
- Read the [Application Instruction Manual\(s\)](#)
- If you qualify, apply for [Fee Assistance](#)
- A PDF copy of your online application to AMCAS/AACOMAS/AADSAS, etc.

Once we have your completed file, we will complete your Dossier. Contents of Dossiers include:

- Cover letter
- An explanatory sheet outlining the GPA distributions of Middlebury students, a profile of the candidate's class, a brief explanation of Middlebury's 4-1-4 calendar and credit system, including the lack of credit given for labs at Middlebury. This is explained on the back of the official transcript, so schools should have no trouble understanding the Middlebury College system. We also include an explanation of the College Writing program and an explanation of the Health Professions Committee review process.
- Confidential committee letter
- Confidential letters of recommendation

Early Decision Programs (EDP)

When applying to college, choosing early decision is a definite advantage, but this is most definitely not the case when it comes to the medical school admissions process. You can only apply to one medical school's Early Decision Program and while you are waiting to learn of their decision **you cannot apply to other medical schools**. Almost all medical schools review applications on a rolling basis, and extend interview invitations, and offer spots in their classes in the same way. This means that they fill their classes on a first-come, first-serve basis. Initially, they may have 120 spots to offer. With each passing week of conducting interviews, the admissions committee meets and extends offers and fewer and fewer spots are available. At the same time, the medical school still receives more applications, so the competition goes up and the number of available spots goes down. **The HUGE drawback to applying ED is that you cannot start applying to other medical schools until you have received a rejection letter from your ED school. This puts you two to three months late in the application cycle and is a MAJOR disadvantage.** Like college ED, you need to be 100% sure the medical school you apply to with this program is really the school you want to attend since there is no changing your mind later. Please make an appointment to speak with a health professions advisor if you are seriously considering ED. (<https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/requirements/edp/>)

To apply through the EDP, applicants must follow these guidelines:

- Apply to **only one** U.S. medical school by the stated deadline date (August 1 for schools that participate in AMCAS);
- Not to apply through the EDP if they have already submitted an initial or secondary application (AMCAS or non-AMCAS) to a U.S. medical school for the current entering class.
- Attend only this school if offered a place under the EDP.

If these guidelines are met, applicants will be notified of the school's admission decision by October 1. If not accepted under the EDP, applicants will automatically be placed in the regular applicant pool by the school and may then apply to additional schools. EDP regulations apply to both AMCAS and non-AMCAS participating schools.

Not all medical schools offer admission through the EDP; check medical schools' admission requirements to verify a school's participation. Since most participating schools only admit a small portion of their entering class through the program, only applicants with an excellent chance of admission to a particular school should apply under this program.

Solo Application

We strongly advise students and alumni to seek the endorsement of the College's Health Professions Committee if they have graduated in the last five years. Alumni who have been out of Middlebury College for more than five years may elect to apply as solo applicants without going through the Health Professions Committee. Know, however, that many schools prefer a committee letter if the undergraduate school has one for you to work with. The Health Professions Committee can be helpful because they organize all of your paperwork for you. Also, many of their requirements for the committee letter reflect the requirements of applying to medical schools.

To Apply Directly to Medical School:

- The applicant should provide Mary Lothrop (mlothrop@middlebury.edu) with a complete list of the schools to which they will be applying.
- [Transcripts](#) are always required and applicants should follow the Middlebury guidelines for sending them electronically.

Deferred Application

A deferred applicant is a candidate who went through the Health Professions Committee in one year, but deferred their application until a later year.

- Applicants will join the [timeline](#) mid-spring before the June of the external application year. Around April, please reach out to our office after filling out the School List (Those who interviewed with **Mary Lothrop**, [fill out the School List here](#). Those who interviewed with **Hannah Benz**, [fill out the School List here](#).) We recommend you also schedule an appointment with one of the advisors to fill them in on what you have been up to since you went through committee.
- Once you have completed the School List and met with an advisor, your first deadline isn't until June 1st, the start of the external year.

Re-Application

Re-applicants are candidates who went through the Health Professions Committee in a previous year and applied to professional school, but were not offered admission that cycle. The applicant plans to re-apply this year.

- Before starting this process again, consider what about your candidacy could be improved? When is the best time to re-apply? Will you be able to obtain at least one new letter of recommendation? Will you have all of your materials ready to submit your re-application in early June, with a new personal statement and updated bio report? Is your MCAT competitive? You want to apply when you are the strongest candidate you can be. For example, applying in two consecutive years may not be the best strategy to use in reapplying, as it may not allow enough time for you to improve your candidacy.
- Applicants will join the [timeline](#) mid-spring before the start of the external application year. Around April, reach out to our office after filling out the [Self-Assessment Guide](#). We recommend you also schedule an appointment with one of the advisors to fill them in on what you have been up to since you went through committee.
- Complete the online School List form – Due MAY 15, 2020. (If you interviewed with Mary Lothrop, fill out this [School List Form](#). If you interviewed with Hannah Benz, fill out this [School List Form](#).)
- Once you have completed the Self-Assessment Guide, School List, and have met with an advisor, your first deadline isn't until June 1st.

Suggestions for Re-applicants

- Stay in touch with our office throughout the process. We are happy to connect with you in any way that works with your schedule; we can meet with you remotely, via email, phone, FaceTime, Zoom, or skype, as well as in person.
- Write a new personal statement. You will want to make sure your personal statement is current. Admissions committees will want to see a fresh perspective.
- Apply as early as possible. Re-applicants are scrutinized more closely, so stay on top of the timing of your application.
- Make sure you are still connected with a clinical setting. Keep your hands-on experience going!
- Network with other MiddKids who are currently in medical/dental/veterinary school. Ask them if they have any tips on the application process. If you need help networking, our office can help you.
- Consider applying more broadly. Be open to all schools.
- Keep your interview skills fresh. Practice, practice, practice.

FAQs

Can international students apply to US medical schools?

The short answer to your question is “Yes,” you most certainly can apply to medical schools in the US. The “Yes,” however, is qualified in that it is statistically much more difficult for international students to be accepted into a US medical school, and if a student is accepted, there are major financial considerations to consider. Some schools require that 4 years tuition (can be a quarter of a million dollars!) be set aside in a special account.

According to AAMC statistics, in 2015, of the 1,251 MD applicants whose legal residence was outside of the US, 140 matriculated to medical school, for a matriculation rate of about 10% vs. 41% for all applicants. There are some US medical schools that do not accept international students and some that limit international acceptances to Canadian citizens. Once an international student is admitted, the financial aid options at many schools are more limited than they are for US citizens, so while it certainly isn’t impossible, it is important to have a realistic understanding of the obstacles faced by international students.

We recommend reviewing the [AAMC info sheet](#) on applying as an international applicant.

Whether you are accepted into a US medical school as an international applicant, become a physician in your home country, or become a US citizen and eventually attend medical school in the states, we are here to support you in any way that we can.

Applying to MD/PhD programs

How do I know if a combined program is right for me? MD/PhD programs are specifically designed for those who want to become research physicians. Graduates often go on to become faculty members at medical schools and research institutes. MD/PhD candidates will spend most of their time doing research in addition to caring for patients.

How long does it take? Students enter an integrated curriculum that typically takes 7-8 years to complete.

When and where do I apply? Nearly all MD/PhD programs participate in the application process via AMCAS. You simply designate yourself as MD/PhD on the application. You will also be asked to complete two additional essays: one related to why you are interested in MD/PhD training, and the other highlighting your research experiences. Nationwide, there are more than 100 programs affiliated with medical schools.

Can I apply as an MD/PhD candidate and an MD candidate in the same cycle? Yes! Most of our students apply to both MD/PhD programs and MD programs, often at the same schools. This is a perfectly acceptable and commonplace practice and is not viewed as a lack of commitment to the MD/PhD track, but rather a recognition of the highly competitive nature of these programs.

Can I still study abroad?

Yes! You just need to plan your course sequence thoughtfully (particularly chemistry). Consider studying abroad for one semester or a summer rather than the whole year. Or plan to matriculate to medical school a year after graduating from Middlebury and complete additional coursework through a continuing education or post-baccalaureate program.

What is a Post-Bacc?

A post-baccalaureate program is for students who have already completed an undergraduate degree, and are interested in a health professions career.

There are two different types of programs for students hoping to attend medical, dental or veterinary school:

- **Career Changers:** This type of program is for students who have not completed the basic requirements for medical school. The coursework can be done in a formal post-bacc program or individually at a local university.
- **Academic Enhancement:** This type of program is designed for students who have completed the basic science requirements and need to raise their GPA to become a more competitive medical school applicant.

How do I get in? Selection criteria vary around the country. Most programs require at least a 3.0 GPA. Applications for the fall semester are usually due by March of that year. Check with individual programs so as not to miss deadlines.

Pre-Vet at Middlebury

I am a first-year student and have always been interested in becoming a veterinarian, but I seem to only see information and workshops for pre-med. Can I be pre-vet at Middlebury?

You absolutely can! While it is true that our pre-med group has more students, we prefer to think of our students as “pre-health.” Pre-health student interests range from nursing to midwifery to acupuncture to veterinary medicine to dental medicine, etc. While we know there aren’t many pre-vet students on campus, we work closely with pre-vet students and support them through the application process just like we do with our pre-meds. Our workshops and information sessions that we hold for the students going through our

Health Professions Committee cover medical/dental/veterinary and D.O. information, so we welcome you to these meetings. The veterinary medicine school application process is very similar to the medical school process. The key differences are in the timing and your letters of recommendation. You will need 3-4 individual recommenders who will complete forms via VMCAS, the application service that most (but not all!) vet schools use.

Going through the Health Professions Committee process is optional as veterinary schools do not expect committee letters in the way that medical schools do. You'll also submit your application in the fall rather than early summer. We do keep a separate contact list for pre-vet students, so please email us with your information and you will get targeted reminders about pre-vet events, internships, etc. We are happy to meet with you to support you with planning your course schedule, finding shadowing opportunities, and going through the application process. Schedule an appointment any time!

Appendix

Below is the **interview rubric** the Health Professions Committee uses.

Overall GPA

Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior

An overall GPA around 3.3-3.4 is **Very Good**, one between 3.5-3.7 is usually **Excellent** and one above 3.8 is generally **Superior**. By way of reference, the average GPA for students attending top medical schools is 3.92; students attending state medical schools might have overall GPA's around 3.65. Schools like to see an upward grade trajectory, will take into consideration difficult personal circumstances, and **value capacity for improvement**.

Science GPA

Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior

A science GPA around 3.3-3.4 is **Very Good**, one between 3.5-3.7 is usually **Excellent** and one above 3.8 is generally **Superior**. By way of reference, the average Science GPA for students attending top medical schools is 3.92; students attending state medical schools might have a Science GPA around 3.65. Schools like to see an upward grade trajectory, will take into consideration difficult personal circumstances, and **value capacity for improvement**.

Academic Rigor/Strength of Schedule

Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior

Admittedly subjective, rigorous schedules will often have more than one lab course per semester, will consistently have at least four classes per semester, might have a thesis, challenging upper level coursework outside of the major, a minor, and involve language study over several semesters. It's also important to examine a student's schedule in the context of their other obligations, e.g., work commitments, athletics, campus leadership roles, etc.

Team Player/Change Agent

Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior

Examples of traditional leadership include serving as club president, team captain, or student government representative. We also look for evidence of quiet change makers, those who lead from behind. These sorts of softer leadership skills are often gleaned from letters of recommendation and from the candidate interview. Please also include extracurriculars that showcase teamwork and the candidate's ability to positively affect others.

Service Orientation

Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior

Service or advocacy need not be in the medical field. Admissions committees value **engagement over time** with increasing organizational responsibility. Successful applicants will have had a regular service or advocacy role over the course of a couple of years.

Scientific Inquiry

Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior

Medical schools want to see evidence that a student is able to pose a scientific question, delve into its solution and present the findings in the form of a poster, paper, thesis, etc.

Exposure to the Field of Medicine

Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior

A clinical shadowing experience provides an introduction to the profession of medicine and the day-to-day responsibilities of the health care provider. Critical to the experience is the awareness and education of both the pre-medical student and the patient regarding the importance of the patient’s rights, privacy and confidentiality. Successful applicants tend to have at least **30-40 hours of clinical shadowing time**. Working as an EMT, scribe, and medical assistant are also a way for applicants to obtain medical exposure.

Letters of Recommendation

Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior

Please highlight any key phrases, helpful quotations or common themes that emerge from reading a candidate’s letters of recommendation. We often learn of **resilience** and **adaptability** from these letters. We ask that you call our attention to any letters of recommendation that you feel might jeopardize an applicant’s candidacy.

Maturity and Readiness

Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior

Admission committees pay particular attention to the following competencies: patience, **empathy**, self-motivation, emotional stability, **being ethically grounded**, **personal integrity**, accountability, and dedication to the practice of medicine. Is there evidence that the candidate is ethically grounded and can work cooperatively as a member of a team? Does the student have **cultural awareness**, sensitivity and advocacy for, as well as interest in, individuals who are served by the health care system? Possess the ability to withstand the stressors inherent in the intensive medical school training process? Is the student **resilient**?

Interview: Social Skills and Oral Communication

Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Superior

Please provide us with both positive reflections and critiques that will be helpful when we provide anonymous feedback to the student. You may wish to comment on their eye contact, general demeanor, confidence, knowledge of the health care field, answers to certain questions, etc.