

Choosing a Strategic List of Medical Schools



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Before We Begin . . .

Be sure to download the following documents:

1. PDF of slides
2. Worksheet

Also: Open your Pre-Application Google Sheet

Go to: www.colorado.edu/ceprehealth

- Current Students
 - Preparing Your Written Application Materials



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Pre-Application Google Sheet



School List

* Type and resources are posted on the [Choosing Your Schools](#) page of our website.

Assignment: By November 1, list at least three schools you are considering. At minimum, fill out columns K and L for those schools.

	School Name	Location	Mission Statement	Special Tracks/ Programs	Current GPA	Science GPA	Admissions Test	% Accepted for applicants with in-state or out-of-state residency	Non-Standard Prereqs	Required Assessment of Letters of Recommendation	Link % of Data
1											
2											
3											
4											

Additional Resources for Pre-Meds

[Listen to the All Access Podcast](#)

*Take notes on your schools of interest, to use when writing your "Why this school is a great fit" essay on supplemental apps next year.

[Link to video of Kevin Wooster's Data-Driven MD School Selection presentation \(Kevin was a member of our 2021-2022 cohort. Runtime: 50 minutes; Password: CPreHealth\)](#)

[Link to Kevin Wooster's spreadsheet \(this will download as an Excel file\)](#)

[Link to an AI tool that uses MSAR data to generate a list of schools to consider](#)



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The 5 Components of a Successful Application

1. Well-qualified applicant

- Academics and experiences: see self-assessment on Tab 3 on Pre-Application Google Sheet

2. Thoughtful, well-written application materials

3. Strategic list of schools

4. Appropriate timing for each step of the application process

- Common app, supplemental apps, finalized school list, MCAT score, letters, Casper/PREview

5. Proper preparation for interviews



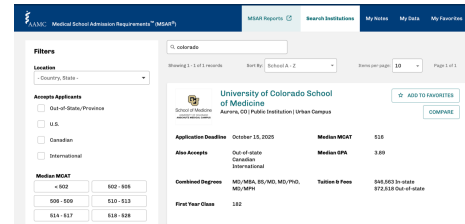
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1. Resources
2. How to assess if you're the kind of student they're looking for
3. What are YOU looking for?
4. Strategies for success

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Resources

For MD programs: MSAR and the MSAR Reports



Filters: Location: Country, State: [Dropdown] Accepts Applicants: Out of State, Province: [Dropdown] U.S. [Dropdown] Canadian [Dropdown] International [Dropdown] Median MCAT: < 502 502 - 509 510 - 517 Application Deadline: Out of state: December 1st of year: [Dropdown] Also Accepts: Out of state: December 1st of year: [Dropdown] Combined Degrees: MD/MS, MD/MPH, MD/PhD, MD/JMPH Tuition & Fees: \$46,000 to state \$72,000 Out of state First Year Class: 100

University of Colorado School of Medicine
Application Deadline: October 15, 2025
Median MCAT: 518
Median GPA: 3.89
Tuition & Fees: \$46,000 to state \$72,000 Out of state
First Year Class: 100

Application Information, Deadlines and Requirements

- [Premedical Coursework Chart](#)
A chart displaying the required and recommended premedical coursework for each school including AP, community college, and online courses. (Updated September 15, 2023)
- [Extended Professional Deadlines Data Tables](#)
A PDF including additional required PREVIEW policies for participating medical schools. (Updated June 9, 2023)
- [Community College Coursework Information](#)
A PDF indicating which community college pathway and coursework will be accepted by each institution. (Updated July 9, 2023)

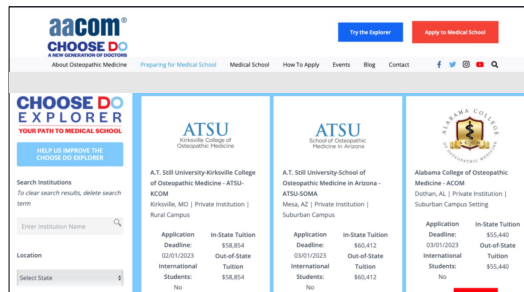
Interview and Waitlist Information

- [Interview Policies](#)
A PDF table including each medical school's interview format, date interview invitations are sent, when a typical interview day looks like, and if regional and/or video interviews are available. (Updated September 15, 2023)
- [Waitlist Procedures](#)
A PDF table including the typical number of waitlist positions available at each medical school, number of acceptance offers made from the waitlist, and a description of the waitlist procedures. (Updated June 17, 2023)

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Resources

For DO programs: Choose DO Explorer



Search Institutions: Enter search results, delete search item. Enter Institution Name. Location: Select State.

Results:

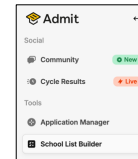
Institution	Location	Application Deadline	In-State Tuition	Out-of-State Tuition	International Tuition	Students
A.T. Still University-Kirkville College of Osteopathic Medicine - ATSU-KCOM	Kirkville, MO Private Institution Rural Campus	12/01/2023	\$16,854	\$16,854	\$16,854	No
A.T. Still University School of Osteopathic Medicine in Arizona - ATSU-SOMA	Mesa, AZ Private Institution Suburban Campus	03/01/2023	\$40,412	\$40,412	\$40,412	No
Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine - ACOM	Durham, AL Private Institution Suburban Campus Setting	03/01/2023	\$15,440	\$15,440	\$15,440	No

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Resources

Kevin Wooster's spreadsheet

School Information	Indicators of holistic assessment	Helpful MSAR reference range
School	How much does this medical school "value" the non-academic side of the applicant? (Indicates on a scale of 1-5 how much the school values the applicant's non-academic side)	MSAR indicator: 1-5 (1-2: Low, 3-4: Medium, 5: High)
Accepts Out of State Applicants	Does the medical school consider students of various ethnicities? (Indicates on a scale of 1-5 how much the school values diversity)	MSAR indicator: 1-5 (1-2: Low, 3-4: Medium, 5: High)
Accepts International Applicants	Does the medical school consider students of various ethnicities? (Indicates on a scale of 1-5 how much the school values diversity)	MSAR indicator: 1-5 (1-2: Low, 3-4: Medium, 5: High)
Accepts Transfer Applicants	Does the medical school consider students of various ethnicities? (Indicates on a scale of 1-5 how much the school values diversity)	MSAR indicator: 1-5 (1-2: Low, 3-4: Medium, 5: High)
Accepts Community College Applicants	Does the medical school consider students of various ethnicities? (Indicates on a scale of 1-5 how much the school values diversity)	MSAR indicator: 1-5 (1-2: Low, 3-4: Medium, 5: High)
Accepts Online Applicants	Does the medical school consider students of various ethnicities? (Indicates on a scale of 1-5 how much the school values diversity)	MSAR indicator: 1-5 (1-2: Low, 3-4: Medium, 5: High)
Accepts Post-Bacc Applicants	Does the medical school consider students of various ethnicities? (Indicates on a scale of 1-5 how much the school values diversity)	MSAR indicator: 1-5 (1-2: Low, 3-4: Medium, 5: High)
Accepts Second-Entry Applicants	Does the medical school consider students of various ethnicities? (Indicates on a scale of 1-5 how much the school values diversity)	MSAR indicator: 1-5 (1-2: Low, 3-4: Medium, 5: High)
Accepts Retiree Applicants	Does the medical school consider students of various ethnicities? (Indicates on a scale of 1-5 how much the school values diversity)	MSAR indicator: 1-5 (1-2: Low, 3-4: Medium, 5: High)
Accepts Transfer Applicants	Does the medical school consider students of various ethnicities? (Indicates on a scale of 1-5 how much the school values diversity)	MSAR indicator: 1-5 (1-2: Low, 3-4: Medium, 5: High)
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Admit.org
Social: Community [New] Cycle Results [Live] Tools: Application Manager School List Builder

Admit.org school list builder
- Please, please, please ignore the Community section, which is chock-full of misguided questions and answers

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Resources

All Access podcast

All Access: Med School Admissions Podcast

Let me introduce you to admissions Deans and Directors of medical schools from around the US.

Applying to medical school can be a very complex and confusing process! On top of that, finding reliable and accurate information about the application process can be even more challenging. With nearly 20 years of admissions experience, *Christian Esman* of Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine, gives the listener a unique view into the medical school admissions world through a series of revealing interviews with key admissions figures from around the country.

All Access: Med School Admissions brings the listeners into.

SUBSCRIBE TO THE PODCAST



• Apple Podcasts
• Spotify

Episode 38: Duke University School of Medicine
September 15, 2020



Episode 40: Washington University School of Medicine
November 02, 2020



Episode 41: The University of Colorado School of Medicine
December 08, 2020

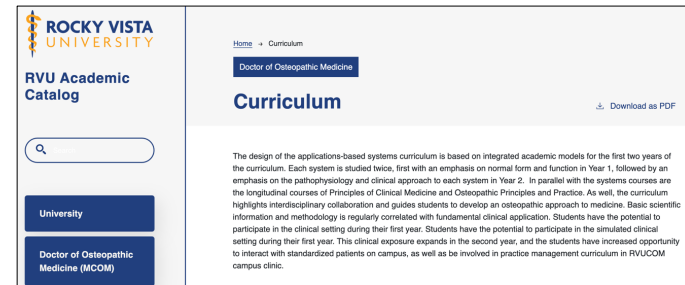


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Resources

School websites



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Resources

Be intentional about taking notes

Two purposes:

- Choosing your list of schools
- To give yourself a head start on next summer's secondary applications – Most schools will ask you to write a short essay to explain why you think their program would be a good fit for your learning style, values, motivations, and interests

Where to find our tips for topics to mention:

- Current Students
 - Preparing Your Written Application Materials
 - Tips for Supplemental/Secondary Essays

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colorado.edu/ceprehealth website:

Why do you want to attend our school?"

Your goal here is to convey your understanding of what they stand for, how they train their students, and their philosophies.

Research each school thoroughly by reading all of the information on their website and in your profession's reference guide. If you can also talk with admissions directors in advance by participating in a virtual fair, CU's annual Health Professions Expo, or by physically visiting the school, all the better – take notes so that you can refer back to them when you are completing your supplemental applications.

- Indicate why you feel the program at this particular school is a good fit for your interests and learning style. Consider mentioning:
 - Approach to curriculum
 - Traditional vs. systems-based
 - Lecture vs. flipped classrooms vs. problem-based-learning
 - Special tracks that fit your interests, as demonstrated by your activity history (rural health, public health, global health, research, etc.)
 - Appealing aspects of their approach to clinical training
 - Support services available at that school, such as mentoring programs, assistance with test prep for licensing exams, or assistance with job placement
 - Student culture, especially any appealing opportunities to engage with their campus community (student groups, service groups, etc.)
- Read the school's mission statement and explain how your strengths are in line with the school's mission.
- If you have talked with an admissions officer during a fair or have visited the school, say so and indicate what excited you about their particular program.
- If you have spoken with one of their faculty members or current/former students and have learned more about their program that way, say so.
- Find a copy of their latest newsletter so that you can talk about current events going on at that school.

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How to assess if you're the kind of student they are looking for

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-
1. Ensure you meet all application requirements
 2. What is each school looking for?
-

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Application Requirements

- Metrics
 - Cumulative undergrad GPA
 - Cumulative undergrad BCPM/Science GPA
 - MCAT score
 - Non-standard prerequisites
 - Required assortment of letters
 - Casper/PREview
-

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Application Requirements

Prerequisites

Double-check the details: will they accept the following?

- AP/IB credit
- Prerequisite courses taken online (okay during the pandemic)
- Community college courses

Be sure you've accounted for differing prerequisite requirements:

- Certain types of math courses
 - Certain types of humanities/social science courses
 - Writing/English Literature
 - Additional biology credit hours
-

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Application Requirements

Assortment of Letters of Recommendation

- Most common assortment is on the “Letters of Rec” tab on your Pre-Application spreadsheet
- Make note of school-specific LOR requirements

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What is each school looking for?

- Mission Alignment
 - Assessed by your stated interests and your long-term activity history
- Competitive metrics
- Age ranges of accepted students
- Public schools: in-state vs. out-of-state

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What is each school looking for?

Mission Alignment

From the AAMC:

Goal: Select and support learners who have the academic and professional readiness to advance the program's mission, contribute to biomedical research, serve evolving community and health system needs, and provide compassionate, accessible, high-quality patient care.

Mission-aligned selection establishes a program's mission as the foundation for defining merit and identifying competencies, attributes, and experiences that align most closely with programmatic goals and definitions of academic and professional readiness. It maintains the importance of individualized applicant review and calls for a strategic, evidence-based approach to selection that is inclusive of test scores, grades, experiences, and applicant context to identify applicants most likely to thrive and contribute meaningfully to the program's mission.

Mission-aligned retention builds on selection by recognizing that admitted learners must be supported by systems designed to help them succeed. Holistic Student Support provides a foundation for retention by facilitating student thriving, ensuring professional readiness, and developing a workforce prepared to advance the program's mission and respond to local and regional community health needs.

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Mission Alignment

- They seek to select students who will help them fulfill their mission statement
 - They will draw conclusions from:
 - Your stated motivations
 - Especially: your *long-term activity history*
- Students who want to get involved in the activities and special offerings that are highlights of that school's program
- Students whose learning style is a good match for their curricular approach

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Mission Alignment

Mission statements will indicate if they are looking for people from certain backgrounds or with certain interests

- People from a certain geographical region
- People with an interest in primary care
 - If this is you, you may want to consider one of the accelerated 3-year MD programs (acceleratedmdpathways.org)
- People with extensive rural experience who want to practice rural medicine
- Focus on urban underserved populations, with strong relevant experience
 - If applying to one of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), it is essential that you have dedicated yourself to caring for people in underserved communities
 - Charles R. Drew, Meharry, Morehouse, and Howard

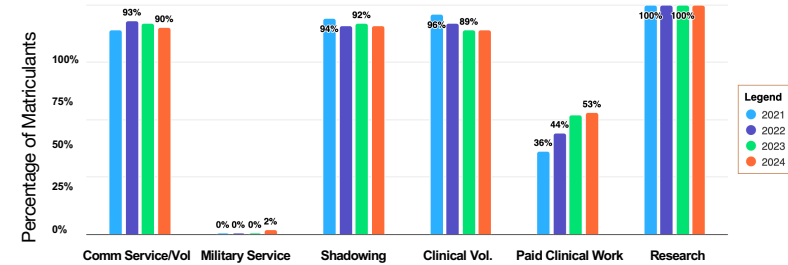


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Mission Alignment

Johns Hopkins

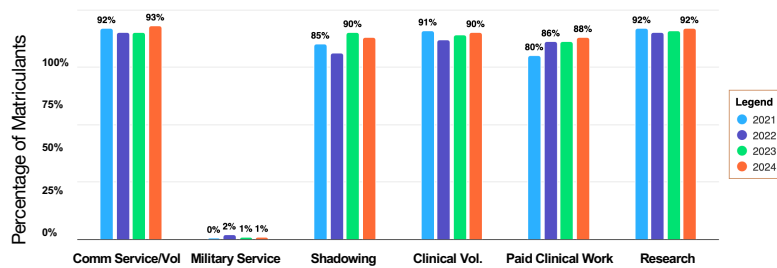


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Mission Alignment

Rush Medical College



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What is each school looking for?

Competitive Metrics



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Metrics

Table 2. Percentage and Number of 2020, 2021, and 2022 Applicants Accepted by at Least One Medical School, by MCAT Total Score and Undergraduate GPA Range (MD only)

GPA Total	MCAT Total															
	512-519	520-529	530-539	540-549	550-559	560-569	570-579	580-589	590-599	600-609	610-619	620-629	630-639	640-649	650-659	660-669
3.00-4.00	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
1.60-3.75	6536	8744	66173	340270	938442	1,873,626	2,438,123	1,768,417	1,254,744	796,017	489,576	310,812	256,643	177,354	14,449	628
3.00-3.99	9786	11857	91710	271062	679312	1,258,744	1,880,522	1,271,749	849,576	502,312	297,628	187,354	144,490	14,449	628	30
3.20-3.99	11	11	31	91	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261
3.00-3.99	8926	7907	40139	167190	340273	746238	889224	929234	862119	721149	483714	310812	256643	177354	14449	628
2.80-2.99	11	11	31	91	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261
2.60-2.99	3754	7502	8065	4667	94716	141704	134569	93522	68119	38119	20762	10427	5428	2954	144	30
2.40-2.99	9681	3302	4307	2934	35310	50269	46211	37148	22662	9244	22624	9244	22624	9244	22624	9244
2.20-2.99	11	11	31	91	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261
2.00-2.99	9236	974	686	357	748	434	123	193	233	431	313	193	233	431	313	431
1.80-2.99	11	11	31	91	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261
1.60-2.99	11	11	31	91	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261
1.40-2.99	11	11	31	91	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261
1.20-2.99	11	11	31	91	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261
1.00-2.99	11	11	31	91	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261
0.80-2.99	11	11	31	91	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261
0.60-2.99	11	11	31	91	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261
0.40-2.99	11	11	31	91	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261
0.20-2.99	11	11	31	91	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261
0.00-2.99	11	11	31	91	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261	261
All	375545	511	222718	1255116	3446417	8447335	11681246	16389954	14799217	13222123	10789345	8390314	6830914	4830914	3050914	1930914

Metrics

Strategy for assessing MCAT scores when you aren't taking the MCAT until the end of June:

- As you start to generate your school list, identify ~6-8 schools that you plan to apply to, no matter what. This core group of schools should have reasonable median metrics.
- Create two additional lists:
 - Schools you'll add if you are on track for a very high MCAT score
 - Two buckets in this category: one is 516-519. Another is 520+.
 - Schools you'll add if you think you're likely to get a lower MCAT score than you originally were aiming for
- When you submit your AMCAS application in early June, list just one school at first:
 - If you expect an MCAT score of 510+, list a school you're definitely applying to
 - If you aren't sure your score will exceed 510, list a school you definitely *don't* want to attend.
 - This is a throw-away selection to get your application processed while protecting your first-time applicant status at your schools of interest.
- Finalize your MD school list by the date when your AMCAS application is processed and sent to schools
 - The first transmission date is at the end of June. By then, you'll know how you've been doing on your timed, full-length practice tests. Assume your real score will be similar to your last 2 practice tests

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Metrics

Advice for "Academic Reinventors"

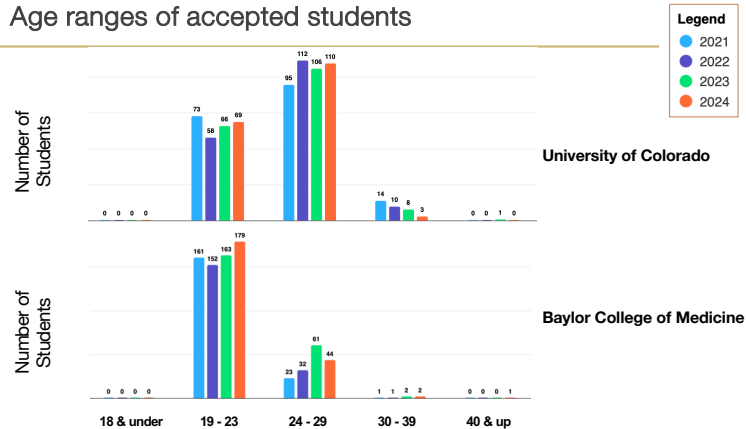
Focus on applying to schools that show a true commitment to holistic review:

- Median metrics are not outrageously high
- Ranges of GPAs for accepted students are relatively wide (yours may fall below the typical range, but nonetheless look for a wide range)
- Goals:
 - Your test score is near/above median for accepted students at that school
 - For your three most recent academic terms, you have been taking 9+ credit hours of BCPM courses per term and all of those term GPAs are at/above the median for accepted students at that school



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Age ranges of accepted students



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Public Schools: In-State vs. Out-of-State

Only a factor at public institutions (just a few exceptions)

- When you submit your common app, you will need to list your state of legal residency for the application year. You'll only be able to list one state.



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Public Schools: In-State vs. Out-of-State

Matriculation Data for First Year Class

Categories	In-state	Out-of-state	International	Total
Verified Applications	633	8841	529	10003
Interviewed	158	498	41	697
Deferred	1	3	0	4
Matriculated	94	83	5	182

University of Colorado
School of Medicine

Source: MSAR

	In-State Applicants	Out-of-State Applicants
Interviewed	25% of applicants	6% of applicants
Matriculated	60% of interviewees	16% of interviewees

Public Schools: In-State vs. Out-of-State

Out-of-state applicants *less* likely to be considered at public schools:

- Non-resident with qualifications that are typical among accepted students

Out-of-state applicants *more* likely to be considered at public schools:

- Outstanding metrics and/or experiences, with enthusiastic LORs
- Experience in specific areas the school is seeking
 - Examples: underserved populations, bilingual, long hist of volunteer service, research
- Member of a group that is not well-represented among resident applicants
- Strong family ties to state and a well-articulated desire to establish your future practice in that state
 - Address this on your secondary application

Public Schools: In-State vs. Out-of-State

Application Restrictions:

- Other Restrictions: Non-resident applicants must have strong ties to the State of New Mexico to receive consideration. Consideration is also given to non-resident, enrolled members of a US federally recognized American Indian Tribes and Alaskan Natives and Villages (AI/AN), holding a degree (at any level) from a New Mexico college or university, or being a legal resident or high school graduate of a U.S. County bordering New Mexico. Applicants may be asked to provide proof of residency at any point throughout the admissions cycle. Please refer to our website for more information: <https://hsc.unm.edu/medicine/education/md/admissions/apply/residency-requirements.html> Read Less

New Mexico

Application Restrictions:

- Other Restrictions: Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine at Washington State University seeks applicants from Washington which includes those with connections to Washington. To be eligible, applicants must either meet a legal definition of "resident student" or meet three of four criteria to be identified as from Washington: 1. Born in Washington, 2. Childhood address in WA, 3. Graduated from a WA high school, and parent/guardian currently lives in Washington. Read Less

Washington State

Worksheet activity

What are YOU looking for?

- Special tracks/programs that match your interests
- Residency placements
- Approach to curriculum/grading scheme
- Approach to clinical training
- Support services
- Student culture
- Reputation
- Location
- Tuition (but note that some schools can offer large scholarships)



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Tracks

University of Illinois



Rocky Vista



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Residency Placements

	Yale	Colorado
Anesthesiology or subspecialty	1.5%	9.6%
Child Neurology	1.5%	0.8%
Dermatology or subspecialty	7.4%	0.8%
Emergency Medicine or subspecialty	4.4%	9.6%
Family Medicine or subspecialty	4.4%	12.8%
Internal Medicine or subspecialty	23.5%	16.0%
Internal Medicine/Pediatrics	0.0%	3.2%
Medical Genetics and Genomics or subspecialty	0.0%	2.4%
Neurological Surgery or subspecialty	4.4%	4.0%
Neurology or subspecialty	2.9%	6.4%
Obstetrics and Gynecology or subspecialty	1.5%	1.6%
Ophthalmology or subspecialty	4.4%	4.0%
Orthopaedic Surgery or subspecialty	4.4%	1.6%

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Residency Placements



Rocky Vista University College of Osteopathic Medicine CO Class of 2025 Residency Specialties and Locations

The following list displays residency programs for both PGY-1 and PGY-2 (if different placements).

Anesthesiology (12)

Health Education Services, Las Cruces, NM
Keck School of Medicine of University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA
Maine Medical Center, Portland, ME
McLaren Health Care Corp, Lansing, MI
University of Colorado School of Medicine (2), Aurora, CO
University of Connecticut School of Medicine, Farmington, CT
University of New Mexico School of Medicine, Albuquerque, NM
University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston, TX
Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, Winston-Salem, NC
University of Texas Health Science Center, San Antonio, TX * †
Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Bethesda, MD * †

Dermatology (3)

OhioHealth - Riverside Methodist, Columbus, OH
University of Central Florida/HCA Healthcare OMC, Orlando, FL
San Antonio Uniformed Services Health Education Consortium, San Antonio, TX * †

Emergency Medicine (2)

Creghton University (2), Phoenix, AZ
Denver Health Medical Center, Denver, CO
Desert Regional Medical Center, Palm Springs, CA

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Approach to curriculum/grading system

- Traditional vs. systems-based
- Lecture vs. flipped classrooms vs. problem-based-learning
- Grading scheme: Letter grades, P/F, Honors/Pass/Fail
- Required attendance vs. lectures online

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Approach to curriculum/grading system

About the curriculum

The first year of the curriculum concentrates on the fundamental scientific principles and processes related to the human body's standard structure, function, and regulation. First-year students also receive instruction in human behavioral science, communication and medical interviewing skills, the doctor/patient relationship, health promotion/disease prevention, professionalism, medical ethics, and healthcare's social and community context. The second year focuses on basic science principles related to the mechanisms of human disease, pharmacology, and the therapeutic approach to disease. Students develop their basic clinical skills by gaining experience in physical examination, effective history-taking, and evidence-based clinical decision-making. The third and fourth years are organized into eight required clinical clerkships, two medicine sub-internship experiences, and up to 34 weeks of elective time chosen from a catalog of over 100 clinical electives. [Read Less](#)

Loyola

Academic system, more information: Students complete 7 integrated, organ-based modules spread across an 18-month pre-clerkship curriculum. Clerkship rotations are conducted at U.S. sites and post-clerkship electives can be world-wide.

Instruction style: Instruction includes a mix of lectures, labs, small groups, clinical practice, and simulation. Clerkships and clinical electives are conducted at military treatment facilities worldwide.

Lecture attendance policy: Lectures are optional and almost all lectures are pre-recorded with video capture technology. Attendance is required for labs and small groups.

Uniformed Services

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Approach to clinical training

- When do students start working with patients?
- Characteristics of patient population
- Locations of standard clinical rotations
 - Are they all arranged for you, or will you need to take ownership of setting up some rotations?
 - Pros/cons
- Opportunities for external rotations?
 - Community clinics
 - Federally-qualified health centers
 - Rural
 - International
 - etc.

Patient interaction: Students begin working with patients on the second day of medical school and continue to work with patients throughout the entire medical curriculum.

Clinical rotations: Clinical clerkships begin during the second half of the second year of medical school.

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Support services

- Mentoring programs
- Test prep for licensing exams
- Career center, assistance with job placement

In *Instruction* section of MSAR:

Availability of office hours and/or tutoring: Faculty are easily accessible. Support Services provides tutoring/review sessions; study strategies; counseling/advising, with referrals for more intensive support; USMLE board review strategies.

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Student culture

- Collaborative vs. competitive
- Opportunities to engage within the campus community (student groups, service, etc.)
- Are students happy there?
 - ... Do your best to assess this element on interview day



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Reputation

Ranking lists: **Caution! Caution!**

- Criteria used to create the ranking may not be relevant to the criteria important to you

Medical school is what you make of it

- School choice matters less than your level of engagement as a student in professional school
- Your future competitiveness for residencies/jobs will be determined by your professional school grades, USMLE/COMLEX scores, and LORs from academic and clinical faculty (and, for the most competitive specialties, research productivity in med school)



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Location

- Support system
 - Family and friends – pros and cons
 - Access to hobbies
- Practical realities
 - Reasonably priced place to live
 - Transportation – car vs. public transportation
 - Urban, suburban, rural
 - Diversity of patients in clinical rotations
- Not-so-great for those of us who love the western US:
 - Fewer schools per capita, many of them are public, and more people are willing to move to this region from other regions



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A note about the total # of apps a school receives

Applying to schools that receive extraordinarily high volume of applications
=
Greater element of chance



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Strategies for Success

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Strategies for Success

- Tip #1: Apply to a strategic number and assortment of schools
- Tip #2: Apply only to schools that are a good fit
- Tip #3: Attend admissions fairs and school info sessions
- Tip #4: Only apply where you would happily attend if it is your only acceptance
- Tip #5: Avoid common mistakes

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Tip #1: Strategic number and assortment of schools

How many MD schools to apply to?

- Enough to hedge your bets, but not too many
- We recommend a max of 15 unless you can pre-write secondary essays.
- (National average is 18 MD schools per applicant)

Why not more?

Time constraints: secondary applications

Give yourself 2-3 weeks max to complete and submit secondary applications.
Many essays to write in July and early August.

Cost

Additional price-per-school: Common app AND secondary apps
School deposits if accepted before hearing back from top-choice school

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Tip #1: Strategic number and assortment of schools

	Students with competitive applications	Students with exceptionally strong applications
Reach (includes most out-of-state public schools)	~20%	~45%
Good fit	~60%	~45%
Interested and ready to attend if it's your only acceptance	~20%	~10%

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Tip #1: Strategic number and assortment of schools

Pro Tip: If applying to both MD and DO schools, intentionally wait until mid-August to submit AACOMAS.

- This approach gives you time to complete all of your AMCAS secondaries first (more time-sensitive)
- DO programs tend to conduct their admissions process more quickly than MD programs:
 - Faster to offer an interview
 - Faster to offer admission after the interview
 - Faster to require a deposit (often large and non-refundable) to hold your seat

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Tip #2: Apply only to schools that are a good fit

- Does your activity history show that you have the values and interests that match their mission statement?
- Are certain types of activities, such as community service, research, etc., *required* while in professional school?
 - If so, that school will be looking for people with demonstrated interest



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Tip #3: Attend fairs and information sessions

- Attend the AAMC and AACOMAS virtual fairs
 - Presentations and virtual chats (no cameras – everything is in writing)
 - Introduce yourself – many schools take note of people who interacted with them at the fairs
 - Ask well-informed questions
- CU Boulder's on-campus Health Professions Admissions Fair



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Tip #4: Only apply where you would happily attend

- For each school you consider, ask yourself:

"If this ends up being the *only* school where I am accepted, would I happily attend next year?

... Or would I be more inclined to go through the entire application process again to try to get into another school?"

Do your best to think broadly so that your school list is neither too short nor too focused on schools with highly competitive admissions processes.



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Tip #5: Avoid common mistakes

- Too many schools
- Too many public schools
- Too many schools with uber-competitive admissions processes
- Schools that aren't a good fit (your activity history doesn't match their mission)
- Waiting until May to start working on your school list
- Being slow to finalize your school list after your AMCAS application has been processed
- Failure to meet minimum application requirements (missing prereqs/LORs)
- Unprofessional social media accounts



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The 5 Components of a Successful Application

1. **Well-qualified applicant**
2. **Thoughtful, well-written application materials**
3. **Strategic list of schools**
4. **Appropriate timing for each step of the application process**
5. **Proper preparation for interviews**



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Schools used as examples on worksheet

MISSION:

- A. Arizona School of Dentistry & Oral Health (A.T. Still University)
- B. Stanford MD program
- C. Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine
- D. Loyola MD program
- E. PA program at Keck School of Medicine, University of Southern California
- F. PT program at University of Colorado Anschutz

CURRICULUM

1. Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of University of Southern California
2. Rush Medical College
3. UMKC Anesthesiologist Assistant program
4. Cornell DVM program



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