



Applying to Health Professions Graduate Programs

A Guide to the Centralized Applications

Identifying Information

Your identifying information will provide the schools with not only the information on how to contact you but also high school and college information, as well as basic information regarding citizenship, legal residence, languages spoken, ethnicity and race, parent(s)/guardian(s), siblings, and felony information.

Coursework and Transcripts

The courses you have taken will need to be self-reported and you will also need to have official transcripts sent to the application service. Most centralized applications will have a form to print off that will need to be attached to your transcript. You will be asked to enter information, grades and credits for every course that you have enrolled in at any U.S., U.S. Territorial, or Canadian post-secondary institution. Transcripts should be sent from the registrar's office of all US and/or Canadian Schools attended. You may order a transcript from the MSU registrar's office from the registrar's web site, www.reg.msu.edu. Cost is \$5.00 for each transcript ordered. If you are taking courses during the spring semester, it is advised you wait until your spring semester grades are posted to your record as professional schools will want to see those grades.

Work/Activities

All of your work in leadership, clinical experiences, community service, research, publication, awards and honors are delineated in a single section. It is best to gather the information gathered on these ahead of time, so that you can narrow them down to input them easily and not forget to include anything in the last minute rush. There are a limited amount of spaces and it is important not to under report.

Personal Statement

The personal statement is a very limited in length essay that is used as a device to get a better understanding of the applicant. The essay can be a place to explain why you selected the field of medicine, what motivates you to learn more about medicine, any pertinent information about you not included elsewhere in the application, special hardships or experiences that have influenced your educational pursuits, and commentary on significant fluctuations in your academic record not explained in the application. It is a very important element that should be prepared well in advance to the application and should be edited thoroughly by many different people, such as but not limited to, the writing center, friends and family.

Letters of Evaluation

It is advisable to establish a credential file well in advance of submitting the application, to allow those individuals writing on your behalf, to file letters early. Some of the centralized application systems collect letters directly into the application system, but at this point most do not. It is recommended that you open an **Interfolio** account for a minimal fee, from the following address: www.interfolio.com. **Interfolio** is a commercial service, provides electronic collection and distribution of reference letters. Each school will ask for a different set of letters from you as the applicant. While **you must pay careful attention to the guidelines of each school that requests your letters**, we suggest you have the following letters in your folder:

- Two science faculty who know you from a class or research experience
- One non-science faculty
- One individual working in the profession you wish to pursue (example: a physician, dentist, physical therapist, pharmacist, etc)
- One or two additional individuals who know you well from a work or volunteer experience