Internal Application: Timeline & Checklist
For Students Applying to Medical Schools for Entering Class 2021 (EC21) – Fall 2021

INTRODUCTION:

The instructions and timeline on the following pages are intended for GS postbac and undergraduate premeds who plan to apply, with the support of the GS Premedical Committee, to medical school next summer for 2021 admission. We’ve packed quite a lot of information into just a few pages, and so our hope, in this introduction, is simply to help you get your bearings so that you don’t feel overwhelmed by an intimidating mass of text and you know where to find what you need.

Applying to medical school is a lengthy, complex, and challenging process. If you attended one of the Mandatory General Applicants Meetings, you should have an overview of the several phases and diverse components of this process and their interrelationships, but please see your advisor, if you have any questions. The main part of this document is a timeline summarizing what you need to do and by when. This way of organizing information, we believe, makes it easier for you to keep on track; as a result, however, the instructions tend to be concise. For example, the timeline tells you that, in February, you should schedule your portfolio review for some time during the spring, but nothing is said about the nature of this interview. Our expectation is that if you encounter a “to-do” item on the timeline and need more information, you will look elsewhere on our website or consult with your advisor.

The timeline below is preceded by two brief sections. The first elaborates a schedule of assurance dates for transmitting committee letters. In short, the Premedical Committee is providing incentives for completing certain important tasks as early as feasible; but we also wish to provide options. Please read this section carefully and speak with your advisor, if you have any questions about it.

The second section provides suggestions and pointers on a select assortment of pertinent subjects: MCAT, personal statements, portfolio reviews, interview workshops, and the like.

The Premedical Committee is eager to collaborate with you on the important project of applying to medical school and we look forward to getting to know you better in the course of doing so.

COMMITTEE LETTER ASSURANCE DATES:

- The main part of the internal application is due by January 23, 2020. Students who submit by this date are eligible for committee support for EC 21. Students who do not submit by this date are not.
  After the January 23 deadline, the following deadlines apply:
  - For students who submit the common application and other required documents by June 30, 2020 and take the MCAT by June 15, 2020, the Premedical Committee will have the committee packet prepared for medical schools by August 15, 2020.
  N.B. Dates of AMCAS submission and MCAT guide decisions about the order in which to complete committee letters.
  - Students who submit the common application and other required documents by June 30, 2020, but intend to take the MCAT after June 15, but by the end of July 2020 must submit a request for an extension by June 15; their request must indicate the planned MCAT date. Extension requests should be made using the online form created for this purpose. Students will find the link to this form on their application status page when they log into their portfolios. These extension requests will be automatically approved and will ensure that the
Premedical Committee will have the committee packet prepared for medical schools by September 1, 2020.

• Students who need to submit the common application and other required materials after June 30, but before August 1, 2020 must submit a request for an extension by June 30. This request must include an explanation for the delay and a proposed date by which the missing materials will be submitted. (Extension requests should be made with the online form created for this purpose. Students will find the link to this form on their application status page when they log into their portfolios.) Premeds whose requests are approved by the committee will have their committee packets prepared, but with no assurance it will be completed by September 1, 2020.

• A student whose file is not complete by August 1, 2020, or who has not taken the MCAT by this date, or who requires, but has not requested, an extension, will not be eligible for a committee letter for 2021 admission.

• A student who submits AMCAS or takes the MCAT after June, but does not submit a request for an extension is ineligible for support in the EC21 application cycle.

• We will not provide committee support in the EC21 cycle to any applicant who takes the MCAT for the first time after July 2020.

• When an assurance date falls on a weekend, the committee letter will be uploaded on the next business day.

**AAMC ID**

The internal application requires the applicant to have an AAMC ID. This can be acquired at any time. To register with the AAMC, click the Sign In link in the top-right of the AMCAS homepage (https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/amcas) then click Register for an AAMC Account and complete and submit the online registration form.

**MCAT**

We recommend that students have an MCAT score by the time they submit the common application. This would mean taking the MCAT before June 2020. If you feel this isn’t feasible, you should consider taking the MCAT by the end of June 2020. Of course, you shouldn’t take the MCAT on a given date, unless you’ve been able to devote yourself to thoroughly preparing for it; however, if you decide to take the MCAT after June 2020, you should consult with your advisor. Students who score below a 508 should meet with their advisors to formulate a plan.

When registering for an AAMC ID or for the MCAT, students should be vigilant about the name under which they register. The ID documents presented on arrival at the test site must match the registration name exactly. *J. Mary Smith* is not the same as *Mary Smith* or *Jane Mary Smith*.

2020 MCAT Test and Registration Dates: https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/taking-mcat-exam/

**Personal Statement Development:** Attend a personal statement workshop before the end of the fall semester. You will be required to submit a draft of your personal statement by January 23, 2020 and a revised draft one week before your portfolio review (February-June).

**Portfolio Review:** The Premedical Committee conducts these interviews with prospective applicants during the spring semester. Premeds who submit their internal application by the January deadline will receive instructions for scheduling their interviews.

**Explanation of sanctions and convictions:** In the internal application, you were asked whether you have ever been the subject of a disciplinary process as a student or were ever convicted of a criminal offense. If you answer yes, you must provide the committee with appropriate corroborating documentation.
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JANUARY 2020
☐ January 23
- Application Deadline for a Premedical Committee Letter in support of your application to medical schools. The application includes questionnaire responses, essays, work & activities entries, draft of your common application personal statement, photograph, universal waiver, and verification of clinical experience to date. The online internal application is available here: https://gs.columbia.edu/content/applying-medical-school. Students who do not submit the internal application by this date will not be eligible for a committee letter in this cycle.
- Stay tuned for instructions on scheduling your Portfolio Review between late February and early June.
- [Postbacs only] Save the Date: Postbac Class Day, May 15, 2020 (each postbac finishing study in the spring or summer 2020 is welcome to invite two guests to attend).

FEBRUARY 2020
☐ The Portfolio Review must be completed between February and the first week in June. One week before your portfolio review, you should e-mail your advisor a revised draft of your personal statement.
☐ Begin reading the Medical School Application Year Guidelines: https://gs.columbia.edu/content/applying-medical-school.
☐ Order a set of your transcripts to review for accuracy and to use when completing the AMCAS application in May/June (you will need to reorder your Columbia transcript showing your spring grades).

☐ February 8: Attend Medical School Fair in Lerner Hall hosted by PMA.

☐ February 14
- Date by which students are encouraged to have recommendation letters on file with the Postbac Premed Program Office from:
  - supervisors of completed research/clinical experiences
  - previous employers
  - Columbia faculty from courses completed in previous semesters
  - faculty at non-Columbia academic institutions
- Students are encouraged to act early, but letters of recommendation will be accepted until June 30, 2020.

MARCH 2020
☐ Attend a personal statement writing workshop, if you have not already done so.

APRIL 2020
☐ Ask faculty of spring courses and year-long courses for recommendations.
☐ Tell GS premed advisor anticipated MCAT date.
☐ Attend Application Year Panel
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MAY 2020
☐ AMCAS application goes live usually during the first week of May.
☐ If you did not do so previously, order a complete set of transcripts after the spring semester. Check them for errors. If there are errors, follow up with the appropriate registrar.
☐ Begin to fill out AMCAS application, drawing on an accurate set of transcripts.
☐ Have transcripts from all institutions attended sent to AMCAS using the AMCAS transcript request form.
☐ Do not have your Columbia transcript sent until spring semester grades have been recorded on it. You may have your Columbia transcript sent to AMCAS electronically through Student Services Online. On the “Select Documents” page, be sure to choose the “AMCAS Transcript” option.

JUNE 2020
☐ Meet with the Writing Consultant to discuss drafts of personal statement.
☐ Meet with premedical advisor to discuss where you plan to apply.
☐ Complete and submit AMCAS application.
☐ Complete and submit ACOMAS and/or TMDSAS application(s), if applicable.
☐ If applying with committee support, please select the letter type “Committee Letter” in the Letters of Evaluation section; entitle this “Columbia University Premedical Committee Letter” and name your premedical advisor as the primary author. The Committee Letter will encompass not only the letter written by the Premedical Committee, but also a selection of the individual letters of recommendation on file in the Premedical Office. Do not select “Letter Packet” or “Individual Letter”; also, do not list the individual letters in your file at Columbia.
☐ AMCAS applications can be submitted beginning in late May or early June.
☐ Take the MCAT by June 15 to be eligible for committee support by August 15.

☐ June 30 DEADLINE – BY THIS DATE, YOUR FILE IN THE GS PREMEDICAL OFFICE MUST CONTAIN:*
  • Minimally four letters of recommendation, at least two of which must be from Columbia University science faculty.
  • A copy of the common application that was submitted electronically to the common application service (AMCAS, ACOMAS, TMDSAS). The only common application that will be accepted is one that has already been submitted. The submission date should be stamped at the top of the first page of the AMCAS application as proof of submission. Applications without the date will be returned. You must upload a pdf of your common application to your portfolio on the internal application status page.
  • A screenshot of your MCAT registration confirmation (showing the date, time, and address of your MCAT exam) should be uploaded to your prehealth portfolio.
  • Verification of pertinent health care experience (postbacs are required to complete at least 120 hours).

*If your file is missing any of the above required materials on June 30th (i.e., letters of recommendation, common application, MCAT registration confirmation, verification of health care experience), you must submit a request for an extension to the Premedical Committee no later than June 30. Your request should contain an explanation for the delay and a proposed date by which the missing materials will be submitted. If your request is approved, you will continue to be eligible for committee support in the current application cycle; however, the committee letter assurance dates discussed at the beginning of this timeline will no longer apply.
**JULY 2020**
- Take the MCAT by the end of July to be eligible for committee support by September 1.

**JULY/AUGUST 2020**
- After submitting your common applications, though perhaps not until they have been verified, you will begin receiving secondary applications. Aim to submit secondary applications by the first week of August regardless of the date provided by the medical school. (If you receive secondary applications in August, plan to submit them within two weeks.)

**AUGUST 2020**
- **August 1 – For those who applied for a deadline extension by June 30:**
  - This is the latest date to submit materials for EC 21 in order to receive committee support; however, if materials are submitted after the June 30 deadline, but before August 1, we cannot assure you that your committee letter will be transmitted by September 1.
  - Students will not be eligible for a committee letter for 2021 admission if their files are not complete by this date.
- **August 15**
  - This is the date by which your committee letter will be uploaded, if you have taken the MCAT by June 15 and have met other deadlines.

**SEPTEMBER 2020**
- **September 1**
  - This is the date by which your committee letter will be uploaded, if you submitted all materials by June 30, 2020, and taken the MCAT after June 15, but before August 2020.

**FALL 2020 AND SPRING 2021**
- Postbacs will be automatically enrolled in “maintenance of status,” unless they are enrolled in classes at Columbia during these semesters.
- Before each medical school interview, consult the interview feedback forms found here: https://gs.columbia.edu/content/interview-feedback.
- After each interview:
  - Complete the interview feedback form found here: https://gs.columbia.edu/content/medical-school-interview-feedback-form;
  - Send thank you notes to your interviewers.
- When you matriculate at medical school, please send your advisor a photograph of you at your White Coat Ceremony. We’d love to see it and (with your permission) to share it with current postbacs.

- **Keep in touch with your advisor throughout the application year.**

For more information about the application year, please consult the Medical School Application Year Guidelines (https://gs.columbia.edu/content/applying-medical-school).