

ADMISSION POLICY - UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

I. Introduction

The foremost goal of the College of Medicine is to train young men and women to become superbly competent physicians, as judged by their knowledge, skills and attitudes. The rapid expansion of scientific knowledge has made the study of medicine far more complex and demanding than ever before. While it was probably possible for a medical student in 1900 to graduate knowing essentially "all there is to know" about medicine, it is today absolutely impossible for any one person to have all the knowledge in even one subdiscipline, let alone the entire field of medicine.

Certain characteristics are desirable in all individuals entering the profession of medicine. A student must have the intellectual capacity to absorb, integrate, and use a voluminous body of knowledge at a rate rarely required in his or her previous experience. Compassion, integrity, stamina, and dedication to the service of mankind should be fundamental personal attributes; curiosity and a sustained ability to learn are uniformly desirable. Finally, it seems reasonable that the student body should be drawn from all groups of society, rather than favoring one over the other.

II. The Admissions Board

The number of applicants for the entering class each year exceeds the number of positions available. An Admissions Board of fifteen (15) members is appointed by the University Board of Trustees from a list submitted by the Dean, subject to the approval of the Medical Sciences Chancellor and the President of the University. Act 310 of 1975 specifies that six of the said members shall be members of the medical faculty. Eight (8) of the members, at least four (4) of whom shall have faculty appointments in the College of Medicine at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, shall be appointed from each of the four (4) Congressional Districts and shall be apportioned on the basis of two (2) members from each Congressional District with one member appointed from the state-at-large. A quorum shall consist of eight (8) of the fifteen (15) Admissions Board members and faculty members in the College of Medicine must constitute the majority of voting members at all meetings. This is in compliance with the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) Standards.

III. Requirements for the Applicant

1. The College of Medicine participates in the American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS) which is a centralized application service sponsored by the Association of American Medical Colleges. Only applications submitted through AMCAS, and received between 1 July and 15 December each year will be considered.

2. Each applicant must sit for the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) not later than October preceding the anticipated enrollment date. Test scores taken more than four years prior to application cannot be accepted.
3. At least 90 semester hours of acceptable academic work are needed for admission, and a baccalaureate degree is recommended. No specific courses are required, but the student will find the following courses helpful as a background to the study of medicine:

General Sciences: General Biology; Zoology or Botany; Physics; Calculus; Statistics; General Chemistry; Quantitative Analysis; Organic Chemistry; Genetics; Embryology.

Behavioral Sciences: General and Special Psychology; Sociology; Ethnology; Human Ecology; Physical or Cultural Anthropology.

Humanities: English Composition; World Literature; Logic; World History; Liberal Arts.

Applicants who have not been enrolled in an academic program for some time prior to application may be advised to enroll for refresher work prior to applying or while the application is pending.

4. One year of American History is required to receive a college or university degree from a school chartered in Arkansas; therefore one unit of American History in high school or six semester hours in college is required.

IV. Residency Status

Legislative Act 59 of 1967 provides that non-residents may be admitted into the freshman class in numbers not to exceed 15% of the total class, and any qualified legal resident shall have preference in securing a position when compared to a non-resident. A Residency Status Committee has been established by the President of the University of Arkansas to review individual claims for resident status. The Committee consists of one member from the Medical Sciences campus and two members from the Fayetteville campus. The status of each applicant claiming residency is reviewed at the time of application, and the classification which is established persists throughout the application period. Non-resident applicants with a gradepoint average below 3.5 (4.0 scale) or with average MCAT scores and science MCAT scores less than 600, are notified that they will not be considered for admission; experience has shown that the number of non-residents with qualifications exceeding these limits is still greater than the number of positions which can be offered.

V. The Selection Factors

Selection is based on the consensus of the Admissions Board's evaluation of the following items:

1. The scholastic accomplishment of the applicant in three areas: (a) total premedical courses, (b) science and math courses, and (c) nonscience subjects. Scholastic performance in graduate studies and other professional courses is taken into consideration also.
2. Scores from the MCAT, and the individual science, quantitative, verbal and general information MCAT subtest components. This test is administered nation-wide twice yearly to more than thirty thousand persons each time. The MCAT provides stored, retrievable information and allows a good estimate of an individual's accomplishment regardless of the college or university attended.
3. Letters of evaluation/recommendation. The premedical advisor or the premedical advisory committee will provide evaluations which are based on three or four years of direct contact with students in the educational environment. Letters of recommendation from other persons of the applicant's choosing are welcomed.
4. Applicant Interviews. Each resident applicant and selected non-resident applicants will meet with experienced members of the medical faculty or student body for an interview. The purpose of the interviews is not so much to gauge the candidate's specific knowledge as an attempt to assess the reason for application to Medical School. The applicant has a chance to become acquainted with the Medical campus in a general way, and at the same time provide the Admissions Board better insight into his/her personal interests and attitudes.
5. Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI). This questionnaire has widespread use in assessing personality characteristics, and is used to compare the profile of each candidate with previously established norms for other individuals. While it is not specifically a diagnostic tool, it does suggest aspects of an individual's personality which might merit additional investigation. Candidates with a MMPI which is skewed significantly will be requested to have an additional interview with a staff psychiatrist, and the findings will be reported to the Admissions Board.

VI. The Selection Process

When the material from these five items has been completed for each candidate, the members of the Admissions Board rate each applicant on a scale of 1 through 7, where 1 is

poor, 4 is average, and 7 is superior. The Board members complete all ratings independently and each member's rating shall be weighted equally. The individual scores are recorded, and the mean scores are used to rank-order the applicants. The scores will determine which applicants are to be granted admission, in accordance with A.C.A. § 6-64-406 concerning allocation of admissions among Arkansas Congressional Districts. The Admission Board has the final responsibility for accepting students into the College of Medicine. The list of admitted applicants is sent to the Dean of the College of Medicine who notifies the admitted applicants.

VII. Notification of Applicants

The College of Medicine adheres to the schedule adopted by most other medical colleges to notify applicants on the 15th of January, February, or March of decisions for acceptance. This takes the form of a letter stating that the application has been approved, and requesting that acceptance of the proffered position be submitted in writing to the Dean within two weeks.

Once all positions in the class have been filled, an additional few applicants will be notified that they are designated as alternates. The alternates are not rank-ordered until after the close of their academic year. Additional grades and the results of a repeat MCAT taken during May, if available, can thus be used in the final ranking. Any individual relinquishing his/her place as an acceptee is replaced by the next ranking alternate.

After all positions in the class have been filled and the alternate candidates have been selected, the unsuccessful applicants will be notified by letter.

VIII. General Conclusion

As the only College of Medicine in the state, supported heavily by state resources, the University of Arkansas must serve responsibly in choosing its students. This selection process must be accomplished with equity, objectivity, thoroughness, and without discrimination. The final decisions for acceptance must be made in accord with the goals of the College, as well as with the legislative acts of the state. Changes in admission policies and procedures inevitably will be needed to meet changing needs, and these will be submitted through appropriate channels for review and approval by the Medical Sciences Chancellor, the President, and Board of Trustees of the University. By adhering meticulously to these details for quality and fairness, the College of Medicine can successfully fulfill its mission to promote the health care of Arkansas during future generations.

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