

# Application Seminar 2: Feb 10, 2014

Jason D'Antonio, Ph.D.  
Director, Health Professions Program  
[dantonio@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:dantonio@andrew.cmu.edu)  
412-268-8494

Appointments and general questions:  
[hpp-office@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:hpp-office@andrew.cmu.edu)

# Last week's discussion

- Evaluating the strength of your application
- MCAT
- Letters of recommendation
- CMU committee process
- Personal Statements

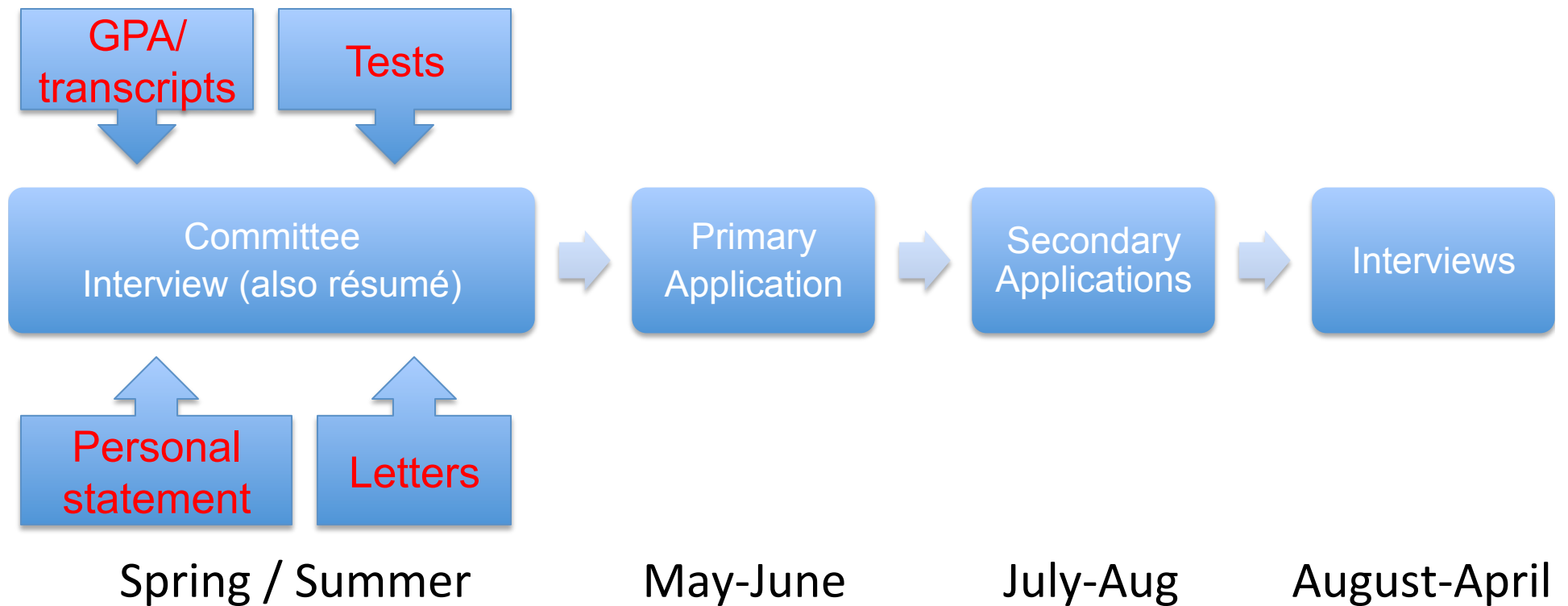
# Outline

- CMU committee process (*review*)
- Personal Statements (*more details*)
- School Selection
- Application services
- Interviews

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# Elements of the (rolling) application



# The CMU committee process

- Simulates the medical admissions interview
- You and 3 interviewers
- 2 hour time slot: ~45-75 minute interview & ~15 minutes of feedback
- Video recorded and available to you
- Fills in the “holes” in your materials, and offers insight about you and your qualifications
- Provides both evaluation and mentoring
- Generates committee letter of recommendation that medical schools prefer
- You will have one letter in the AMCAS system, a “committee letter packet.”  
The author of this is Jason D’Antonio, Ph.D.

# The CMU committee process

## How to schedule:

- Assess when you will be ready
- Required materials
  - All letters of recommendation w/ waiver forms
  - All Non-CMU transcripts (unofficial OK)
  - Personal Statement
  - Résumé
  - MCAT score report (unofficial OK)
- Invite a faculty member you feel will contribute to interview
- Email [hpp-office@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:hpp-office@andrew.cmu.edu) with range of desired dates and times, and the name of the faculty member who has agreed to serve on your committee and we will assist in setting a date and time.

# The CMU committee process

- Wear what you would wear to a real interview
- Conservative! I.e. cover tattoos, no piercings other than ears.

## Women

- Suit (skirt or pants)
- Pantyhose or stockings
- Button down shirt / blouse
- Closed toes, short heels
- Appropriate makeup & jewelry
- Minimal or no perfume
- Professional bag & coat
- Notepad

## Men

- Suit and tie
- Dress shoes
- Conservative colors
- Well groomed
- Minimal or no cologne
- Notepad



## Personal Statements:

- AMCAS; TMDSAS; AACOMAS
- ADEA AADSAS  
[http://www.adea.org/dental\\_education\\_pathways/aadsas/Applicants/Pages/PersonalStatement.aspx](http://www.adea.org/dental_education_pathways/aadsas/Applicants/Pages/PersonalStatement.aspx)
- How to write an effective personal statement:
  - <http://www.thedoctorjob.com/blog/>
  - Why you wish to become a clinician?
  - How you handle difficult decisions/challenging situations?
  - Personal experiences that shaped you.
  - Your personal philosophy and goals.

# Personal Statements:

- ~1.3 pages in length
  - 5300 characters in AMCAS application (*includes spaces & returns*)
- Allows you to promote yourself as an individual beyond the numbers
  - Highlight personal qualities: personality, communication skills, problem solving, creativity...
- Make a case for you as a qualified applicant worthy of an interview at all schools where you are applying
- Remember: your PS may become the basis of interview questions
- There must be NO errors!

# Personal Statements: topics

- How well you manage life challenges (*e.g. a bad semester*)
- Your motivation for this career
- Key events that shaped your goals
- Activities, work & volunteer experience (*use details*)
- Future Plans (*be concise*)
- Any disciplinary actions may be addressed here and whenever else the info is requested

# Personal Statements: do's

- Prepare before writing (*self exploration and reflection!*)
- Consider your audience, but write what you want
- Be positive about the career
- Give a sense of your personality, priorities and interests → distinguish you from the rest of the applicants
- Use a few illustrative points
- If you begin with a thesis, do you refer back to it in your closing?

Be honest!

# Personal Statements: don'ts

- Do NOT plagiarize!
- Avoid:
  - being too creative
  - controversial topics
  - trying to sound too perfect
  - redundancy
  - exotic vocabulary
  - preaching to doctors about doctors
  - using “I” too much
- It is NOT a prose résumé → save this info for your list of 15 experiences on the primary application

# Personal Statements: revision

- Did you revise and check for errors/misspelled words?
- Reading it aloud
- Read it in reverse
- Have a friend read it
- Ask the Career Center or the Global Communication Center at CMU
- Set up an appointment and we can review the statement together
- Some interviewers only have your statement – does your PS stand alone?
  - All things on statement are fair game for interviewers
- Use specifics to illustrate your PS rather than general statements
- Check formatting and correctness once you have pasted into the web form!

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# School selection

- MSAR (Medical School Admissions Requirements)
  - <https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/requirements/msar/>
  - Selection factors such as MCAT and GPA data
  - Medical school class profiles
  - Application procedures and deadlines
  - Costs and financial aid packages
  - M.D./Ph.D. and other combined degrees
- Osteopathic: <http://www.aacom.org/about/colleges/Pages/default.aspx>
- Dental: [http://www.adea.org/dental\\_education\\_pathways/aadsas/Pages/PDS.aspx](http://www.adea.org/dental_education_pathways/aadsas/Pages/PDS.aspx)
- Individual school websites → most updated admissions info
- Geography; cost; reputation; research; primary care; family...



# School selection: what criteria matter?

- Ranking
- Teaching style
- Grading Style
- Public or Private
- Location
- Mission
- Cost
- Residency
- Citizenship
- Selectivity

TUITION & FEES & INS.	Low	High	Median	Mean
<b>Public</b>				
Resident	\$12,101	\$45,785	\$32,197	\$30,532
NonResident	\$22,113	\$78,686	\$54,625	\$53,545
<b>Private</b>				
Resident	\$19,773	\$59,027	\$50,078	\$48,325
NonResident	\$31,402	\$59,027	\$50,768	\$49,933

# School selection: how many?

- The right number depends on you!
- Primary application is \$160 for 1 school + \$35 for each additional
  - Secondary applications are typically \$25 - \$100
  - Assume \$50/secondary, 15 schools = \$1400 total, not considering travel to interviews
- You should apply to:
  - Reach schools
  - Schools where you are a good match for the typical student
  - Schools where you would be a highly desirable applicant

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## Application Services:

- AMCAS <https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/amcas/>
- TMDSAS <http://www.utsystem.edu/tmdsas/>
- AACOMAS <https://aacomas.aacom.org/>
- ADEA ADSAS <https://portal.aadsasweb.org>

# The AAMC Fee Assistance Program

<https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/fap/>

Applicants awarded fee assistance in 2014 calendar year receive:

- MCAT Benefits
  - Reduced Registration and Reschedule Fees
  - Free copy of the book [The Official Guide to the MCAT® Exam](#) (\$30 value)
  - Authorization code for access to [The Official MCAT® Self-Assessment Package](#)
  - *Regardless of how many FAP awards you receive, you will only receive MCAT prep benefits one time.*
- MSAR Benefits
  - Complimentary access to [MSAR Online](#) for one year after activation (\$22 value)
- AMCAS Benefits
  - Waiver for all AMCAS fees for up to 15 medical schools (\$650 value)

# The ADEA Fee Assistance Program

- [http://www.adea.org/dental\\_education\\_pathways/aadsas/Applicants/GeneralInstructions/Pages/FeeAssistanceProgram.aspx](http://www.adea.org/dental_education_pathways/aadsas/Applicants/GeneralInstructions/Pages/FeeAssistanceProgram.aspx)
- Applicants who qualify for Fee Assistance will receive a \$244 fee waiver for the **first** ADEA AADSAS dental school designation. After receiving approval for fee assistance, applicants select one dental school designation and eSubmit the ADEA AADSAS application.
- There is no fee assistance for additional dental school designations (\$90 each).

# Application Services: FAQs

- How do I convert units to hours/credits?
  - Divide by 3 (done automatically by AMCAS)
- How do I list my activities?
  - Up to 15 are allowed
  - After entering basic data, you can describe the experience in up to 700 characters
  - Up to 3 of the 15 may be flagged as “most meaningful.” For these you get another 1325 characters to explain why.

# Applying to medical school

- May 1<sup>st</sup>: online AMCAS application system opens
  - Applicants start entering personal and academic information
- June 3<sup>rd</sup>: can submit primary application → verification queue
  - Produce transcript request form → the Hub (hold for spring 2014 grades)
  - Produce ONE letter request form (*committee letter*) w/ my name & contact info. Give to me or May Simaan in HPP office. (Bar code and ID #)
- June 27<sup>th</sup>: AMCAS begins transmitting verified primary applications
  - AMCAS sends application to schools even w/o MCAT and committee letter
  - MCAT scores auto-sent to schools
- Schools send secondary applications → complete ASAP!
  - 1<sup>o</sup> app + transcripts + com letter + 2<sup>o</sup> app are required to be considered for interview



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# Interviews: what to wear?

## **Women**

- Suit (skirt or pants)
- Pantyhose or stockings
- Button down shirt / blouse
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- Appropriate makeup & jewelry
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- Cover tattoos
- No piercings other than ear

# Interviews

- What is the purpose of the interview?
  1. Compare person to writing
  2. Explore communication skills
  3. Marketing the school
  4. Maturity and motivation
  5. Test your grace under pressure

# Interviews

- Interview styles
  1. One on one
  2. Panel
  3. Blind - interviewer is “blinded” from your application
  4. Partial blind - interviewer has seen only part of your application
  5. Multiple mini interviews

# Interviews: preparation

- What is your “take home” message?
- Practice, practice
  - HPP committee interview will be video taped & available to you
- Career center
- Faculty
- Fellow classmates/alumni who have interviewed
- Research mentor
  - Prepare to discuss things you have worked on (projects, research, service, athletics, etc.)

## Interviews: follow-up

- Write thank you notes immediately following interview
- Send follow up information as it is available (e.g. after summer / fall grades) unless schools ask you not to
  - Personalize the notes as is possible.
- Consider writing “letters of interest” and “letters of intent” when appropriate, but not too soon
  - Letters of intent may be considered legally binding
  - Both allow you to provide updates on your activities

## How to reach the HPP office

- Doherty Hall 1319/1324
- Email:
  - Scheduling/general questions - [hpp-office@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:hpp-office@andrew.cmu.edu)
  - Jason D'Antonio - [dantonio@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:dantonio@andrew.cmu.edu)
  - May Simaan - [simaan@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:simaan@andrew.cmu.edu)
  - Veronica Peet - [vpeet@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:vpeet@andrew.cmu.edu)
- Phone: (412) 268-8494
- URL: <http://www.cmu.edu/hpp/>