



PRE-PROFESSIONAL ADVISING PARTNER UPDATE

JANUARY 2020

STUDENT E-NEWS

Want to know what information we send out to over 5000 students on our e-newsletter list?

Feel free to sign up for our monthly student e-newsletter

You will find the registration on our homepage at www.purdue.edu/preprofessional

Please encourage your students to sign up as well. We do not spam them with a lot of emails and we do not share our email list.



NEW DROP-IN HOURS FOR STUDENTS

We are especially busy this year! Since our advising calendars are booked about 3 weeks out, we will now offer 10 minute drop-in meetings for quick questions to alleviate the wait. While we have not had complaints from students about the wait time, we would like to prevent frustration on their part especially as we move into the busy healthcare application season.

Pre-Professional Drop-Ins will be in 132 Young Hall (the same place as CCO Drop-Ins). Mondays-Fridays from 11:00am-1:00pm. This new service will start on a trial basis February 3rd.

WHAT IS A MEDICAL SCRIBE?

You may have heard students mention wanting to be a scribe. For many pre-health students it is seen as the thing to do to make an application. Many students look at it as a great summer job. But is it?

Scribing means that you follow a practitioner and handle all the notetaking and record keeping allowing the practitioner to focus on the patient. It takes months for students to become proficient with the medical records and terminology. That means this is NOT a summer job. Scribes may also be required to work an overnight shift if they are working in an emergency department. So they should consider carefully if this works for them. People are relying on them and taking on this responsibility should be carefully considered.

For pre-physician assistant students, this is often thought of as a way of gaining hands-on experience hours which are required for many programs. Since students are not technically hands-on with patients

while scribing, however, some PA programs will not accept these hours or will accept only part of these hours in fulfillment of their hands-on patient hour requirements. Pre-PA students need to research this carefully and not assume that scribing will cover this requirement.

While having a large learning curve, many of our students have found scribing to be educational and quite fascinating. It has been a fairly flexible job for students and they have been able to carry it through into a gap year as they are applying for professional school.

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FUNDING PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL APPLICATIONS

Applying to health and law programs can be daunting for students for many reasons. Applicants often underestimate, however, just how expensive the process can be. While some fee assistance is available through the application services and aptitude test providers, it is limited. Among the expenses that students face when applying: aptitude tests (preparation materials, the test itself, test day expenses such as travel to sites); application fees (primary application fees for online application, secondary application fees to individual schools, photos, etc.); interviews (travel to interviews, overnight stays, interview clothes/shoes). Here is a breakdown of medical school application costs (specifically MD) as an example.

- **MCAT Preparation**: Costs range significantly depending on how the student chooses to prepare.
 - In-person courses can cost \$2000+
 - Private/online tutoring can cost \$2000 to \$16,000 for bootcamps
 - Books and practice tests can cost several hundred
 - **Low estimate of minimally \$500**

- **Aptitude Test Fees** (MCAT, DAT, OAT, LSAT range from \$200-475) **The MCAT is \$320**
 - Travel to aptitude test site/possible overnight stay \$0-150 (we'll assume this isn't needed)

- **School Selection Resource**: Medical School Admission Requirements (**MSAR**) **\$28 for 1 year**

- **Primary (online) Application Fees** to MD schools \$170 to first school
 - \$40 to each additional school
 - **Application to 10 schools=\$530** (we recommend 6-10 schools, but many students apply to 20+)

- **Secondary Application Fees** (individual to schools) approximately \$50-\$150
 - **We'll estimate the student is asked to fill out 2 of these at \$75 each=\$150**
 - **National Median that students pay for secondary fees is \$1200**

- **CASPer Test** (a situational judgment test) required at 1 school
 - **\$10 to take the test, \$10/school to distribute test=\$20**

The grand total is \$1548 just to apply with very low cost estimates in some categories. A student applying to 20 schools would be spending at least \$400 more. This does not include interviews. Students must pay their own costs of travel to a school's city, transportation within the school's city, lodging and food, and have an interview suit and shoes. This can easily add up to another \$1200 or more if the student has 3 or more interviews.

With a few more schools on the list, a higher cost of test prep, more secondary applications (putting the student closer to the national median), and additional travel costs for interviews, the **overall costs are likely much closer to \$4,000**. All of our career guides have links to fee assistance programs. We are happy to discuss strategies for controlling application costs with students.



MORE STATES ARE ADOPTING UNIFORM BAR EXAM

The [Uniform Bar Exam](#) (UBE) scores are transferable to other UBE states, providing lawyers greater mobility across multiple jurisdictions rather than needing to take multiple state bar exams. Each state sets its own pass rate and applicants must satisfy any additional requirements imposed by each jurisdiction such as character and fitness investigations and a professional responsibility examination. States also have the power to limit how long a UBE score remains transferable.

The UBE consists of three sections: the Multistate Bar Examination, which includes 200 multiple choice questions; two Multistate Performance Test tasks, which are 90-minute sections testing lawyering skills; and six Multistate Essay Examination questions. Some states also include sections on local (state) laws and procedures.

Currently 36 jurisdictions accept the UBE including 34 states as well as the District of Columbia and the U.S. Virgin Islands. <http://www.ncbex.org/exams/ube/>

WOMEN ARE NOW THE MAJORITY IN MEDICAL SCHOOL

According to the Association of American Medical Colleges, medical schools made notable gains in diversifying their entering classes in 2018. For the first time more women than men applied to U.S. medical schools, comprising 50.9% of applicants. Women now represent a majority (50.5%) of medical school students.

For the second year in a row, women were the majority of matriculants to medical school: 51.6% in 2018 and 50.7% in 2017.

The new data also show that the nation's MD programs continue to enroll more racially and ethnically diverse classes.

- Applicants who identified as Hispanic, Latin, or of Spanish origin increased by 5.1% to 5,858; and matriculants grew 6.3%, to 2,466.
- The number of black or African American applicants rose 0.6%, to 5,193; and matriculants increased by 3.2%, to 1,916.
- American Indian or Alaska Native applicants grew by 4.8%, 586; while matriculants rose 5.5%, to 230.

Overall, the total number of applicants to medical school rose by 1.1% to a record 53,371, and the number of matriculants grew by 1.1% to 21,869. This means in 2019 there was about a 41% national acceptance rate to MD programs. Since 2002 applications have increased by 58%. The average overall GPA overall for all students was a 3.78 and the average MCAT score was a 511. This year's entering class also demonstrates a strong commitment to service with a cumulative 12.5 million community service hours. The AAMC makes data more easily accessible than the other health fields making them a valuable resource. The [summary report](#) is available on the AAMC website. https://www.aamc.org/news-insights/more-women-men-are-enrolled-medical-school?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=AAMCNews&utm_content=12112019

Additional data on applicants and matriculants can be found on the [AAMC 2019 Facts](#) site. <https://www.aamc.org/data-reports/students-residents/interactive-data/2019-facts-applicants-and-matriculants-data>

WHY IS IT SO HARD GAIN ADMISSION TO MEDICAL SCHOOL?

In most years approximately 30-40% of all applicants to medical school will be admitted nationally. Some medical schools accept less than 4 percent of their applicants. But over the last several years, we have also seen a large increase in the number of students interested in medical school application.

Over the past decade, the number of medical school applicants increased by about 20 percent.

According to [statistics from the Association of American Medical Colleges \(AAMC\)](https://www.aamc.org/system/files/2019-11/2019_FACTS_Table_A-3.pdf), over 10,000 more applicants sought admission to a U.S. medical school during the 2018-2019 school year than 10 years prior, a roughly 20% increase over the 10-year period. https://www.aamc.org/system/files/2019-11/2019_FACTS_Table_A-3.pdf

Whether this is because of Millennial and GenZ mindsets of having a strong interest in public service, growing up hearing about doctor shortages, or high schools and colleges that have pushed a message of STEM careers, the result is we have students eager to attend medical school.

Medical school enrollment did not increase significantly for about 30 years—it is difficult for it to now quickly catch up with our expanding health care needs.

Unfortunately, while new allopathic (MD) and osteopathic (DO) programs have opened in recent years and existing programs have expanded (class sizes have increased by about 30% since 2002), they are not necessarily keeping up with the demands of our aging population. In addition, we have a bottleneck once these students graduate from medical school and apply for residencies. While medical schools have expanded, the residency system has remained mostly static. The [residency system](https://www.aamc.org/news-insights/gme) is largely federally funded (through Medicare) and this funding has been frozen since 1997. <https://www.aamc.org/news-insights/gme>

[Recent research](https://www.aamc.org/news-insights/looming-doctor-shortage-could-impact-patient-care) (April 2018) on the doctor labor force released by the AAMC predicts a shortage of 120,000+ doctors by 2030. <https://www.aamc.org/news-insights/looming-doctor-shortage-could-impact-patient-care>

CHANGES TO THE 2020 PHYSICAL THERAPY APPLICATION

The [Physical Therapy Centralized Application Service \(PTCAS\)](https://www.ptcas.org/) has made a number of changes over the past several years including updates to demographic questions to be more inclusive and an overhaul of the background information section to assist schools with holistic review of applications. This year the application will remain the same other than the application essay prompt (not yet released).

The dates of the application cycle, however, will be changing this year. Typically the PTCAS application has opened the first week of July. The upcoming 2020-21 application cycle, will feature a “soft launch” period from June 17-July 1 providing applicants an additional two weeks to create their accounts, begin entering information and completing their applications. Applicants will be unable to submit their application until July 1, 2020. <http://www.ptcas.org/home.aspx>

MEDICAL & DENTAL SCHOOL LETTER SERVICE 2020 OPEN



Our **Letter Service for Medical and Dental School Applicants** is open for students applying in the spring/summer 2020 for fall 2021 admission. We encourage students to use this service as it helps us offer advice on appropriate letters to applicants and we maintain the letters for 5 years in case students need to apply more than once. Students can learn more and sign up in the [Learning Center](https://www.purdue.edu/preprofessional/Learning%20Center/Letters.php) of our website. <https://www.purdue.edu/preprofessional/Learning%20Center/Letters.php>

Benefits of using our letter service:

- We assist with fixing any mistakes in the letters (name changes in the letter, unsigned letters, etc.)
- We alert students when they may have chosen inappropriate types of letters
- We help students with prompting busy letter writers to complete their task
- We maintain the letters for 5 years so that if a student needs to apply again, they do not need to start the letter-seeking process from the beginning the next time (letters are deleted in application services after each cycle)
- We support students throughout the stressful application process

Information for Students Needing Letters for Other Professional Programs

We do not handle letters for other fields because those application systems require letter writers to answer questions about the students before uploading their letters. We do, however, have guides for students about how to ask for letters and a handout they can give their letter writers that explains what to include in professional school letters.

PHYSICIANS EXPECT ALMOST ONE-THIRD OF THEIR JOBS TO BE AUTOMATED BY 2040

In a [recent survey](#), doctors reported that digital technology and data are driving changes in medicine.

Surveyed physicians, residents and medical students expect that almost 1/3 of their current duties could be automated in 20 years. Doctors are preparing for that future now. Nearly half of physicians and most medical students are seeking additional training in areas such as advanced statistics, genetic counseling, population health and coding. One-third are studying artificial intelligence.

Providers in the survey are heavy digital users and reported they believe patient data from wearables can be clinically valuable. Nearly half the respondents wear a health monitoring device. The majority say self-reported data from a patient's health app would be clinically valuable in supporting their care. They also see value in data from consumer genetic testing reports.

Most respondents, however, did not believe the current generation of practitioners is ready for a data-driven future. When asked to rate the effectiveness of their education to prepare them for these developments, only 18% of current medical students and residents surveyed said their education was "very helpful."

<http://med.stanford.edu/content/dam/sm/school/documents/Health-Trends-Report/Stanford%20Medicine%20Health%20Trends%20Report%202020.pdf>

NUMBER OF NEW LAW STUDENTS DIPPED IN 2019

The [number of first-year law students](#) enrolled in American Bar Association-accredited law schools declined slightly this fall reversing a small increase in recent years. Overall enrollment in the country's 203 programs rose slightly this fall to 132,684 from 130,084 in 2018. But the closely watched 1L (first-year class) actually declined by 0.3 percent despite the fact that the number of applications to schools increased by 3 percent. <https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2019/12/13/number-new-law-students-dipped-2019>



MEDICAL RESIDENCY

Typically residency isn't something Pre-Professional Advising is involved with since it happens years after our students leave our programs at the end of their medical school journey. It is, however, interesting as a healthcare consumer to know a bit more about what happens during the training of future physicians.

According to the [2019 Report on Residents](#), an annual AAMC compilation of data on the characteristics of medical school graduates and residents, here are a few interesting points about what happens to students after they finish medical school. <https://www.aamc.org/news-insights/today-s-residents-numbers>

- Only about a quarter of students stay in the specialty they thought they would enter when they started medical school. Those most likely to stick with their original plan are students considering orthopedic surgery and pediatrics (just over 40% for both of these).
- Much of the ability to enter various areas depends on their USMLE (United States Medical Licensing Exam) Step scores.
- Nearly one-quarter of those who completed residency from 2009-2018 are practicing in medically underserved areas.
- More than half of those who completed residency training from 2009 through 2018 are practicing in the state where they finished their training.
- Women make up a larger percentage of residents in family medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, and psychiatry, while men make up a larger percentage of residents in anesthesiology, emergency medicine, internal medicine, radiology, and surgery.

In 2019, the overall number of active residents was 134,951.

DID YOU KNOW?

MD/DO Combined Residency System

MD (Allopathic) medical schools and DO (Osteopathic) medical schools are currently combining residency accreditation. In the past students either went to an MD or a DO residency after completing their medical school program. Now they will attend a medical residency in whatever medical specialty that interests them. Eventually medical board exams may combine, but that is much further in the future. At present they will continue to take the USMLE (MD students) and COMLEX (DO Students) board exams. This year will be the first year of the combined match. If you are interested in reading more, this [FAQ document](#) from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) may help answer your questions. <https://www.acgme.org/Portals/o/PDFs/Nasca-Community/FAQs.pdf>

Even More Application Costs

As one of the articles in this issue suggested, applying to medical school is expensive. As students complete medical school and apply for residency positions, they face an even bigger financial hurdle. Advisors in medical schools typically recommend that students make available \$10,000-\$15,000 for residency application and travel expenses for the interview process.

And More Cost Reporting...

The Optometry Admission Test (OAT) which is required for students applying to optometry programs now costs \$490 to take (not including any prep materials). The test includes 4 sections: Survey of Natural Sciences (biology, general and organic chemistry), Reading Comprehension, Physics, and Quantitative Reasoning.



Physical Therapy Careers

Did you know that physical therapy education does not have to end with the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT)? Some physical therapists choose to advance their careers via residency, fellow education, or becoming a board certified specialist in one of several practice areas. Numerous options are available including 288 residency education programs in 11 practice areas and 53 fellowship programs in 9 practice areas. The American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties also recognizes 9 board certification areas including the newest area of oncology which began in 2019.

Physical therapy specializations include: cardiovascular and pulmonary, clinical electrophysiology, geriatrics, neurology, oncology, orthopaedics, pediatrics, sports, and women's health.

To specialize in physical therapy with animals, therapists typically become a physical therapist or other professional first, then learn to apply their techniques to the physical therapy of animals.

To perform physical therapy on animals, people typically have a professional degree first either in physical therapy, physical therapy assistant, veterinary medicine or veterinary nursing and then specialize their therapeutic techniques with animals. Additional training programs are available for those whose training involved only humans to learn how to apply their techniques to animals.

CURRENT PROJECTS

Invite Us Over!

Have some space for us to hang out? We would be happy to come to your students if you have some space for us to spend time and hold drop-in hours. Now that we will be holding Drop-Ins regularly, we are organized with some materials on-the-go. We can schedule a time in your space for the convenience of your students!

Update on the New Physician Assistant Aptitude Test

While we experienced silence on this subject for much longer than anticipated, it appears that the [PA-CAT aptitude test](#) WILL actually be available in May 2020. Much is still unclear, including the level of support from the Physician Assistant Education Association. Little information is available including which schools will require the test. Only one practice test appears to be available and only a few practice questions are on the website.

As of now we know that the exam will cost \$240 and will be offered at Prometric sites. It will take about 4 hours to complete, have 240 questions and cover 9 subject areas. We will continue to provide information as we learn it. <https://www.pa-cat.com/about-the-pa-cat/>

Hosting Indiana University School of Medicine Admissions Advising Visits

We continue to host Admissions Representatives in our offices as they meet individually with students for advising appointments. Students sign up for these through a [website managed by IU](#). These are 25 minute advising appointments. Students should be prepared with questions for their appointments and should dress neatly, but they do not need to wear a suit. IU does track all communications with students and these notes are eventually part of their application file, so it is important that a student communicates with IU if they will be unable to make it to their appointment or it will be noted in their eventual application that they missed an appointment. Spring dates are February 20, March 26, and April 23 and students can make appointments at <https://iumedadmissions.as.me/>

UPDATE YOUR CALENDAR

January 22, 2020: VMCAS (veterinary school online common application) opened

February 3, 2020: PPA Drop-Ins Begin, 11-1 Monday-Friday in 132 Young Hall—Ask your students to stop by!

February 5, 2020: July-September MCAT registration will open

Mid-February: The next issue of our PPA Partner Update with information on the Health Programs Expo and updates on the Physician Assistant Aptitude Test including recommendations for students

March 2, 2020: 2-5pm in Purdue Memorial Union Ballrooms HEALTH PROGRAMS EXPO—You're Invited!



CONTACT US

Pre-Professional Advising in the Center for Career Opportunities

132 Young Hall · 765-494-3981 · preprofessional@purdue.edu · www.purdue.edu/preprofessional