Academic Requirements

Bachelor's Degree

You must have a bachelor's degree and complete your premedical courses at a regionally accredited institution in the United States or Canada prior to matriculation to the University of Utah School of Medicine. Accepted students will be required to provide transcripts for each college attended. The degree must be posted prior to matriculation.

Undergraduate Majors

The University of Utah School of Medicine does not recommend or require any specific undergraduate academic major. We recommend that students choose a major field for which they have enthusiasm and interest.

GPA & MCAT

***For many at our undergraduate institutions, because of the transition to online learning, a Pass/Fail grading system has been adopted.

To accommodate these changes, anyone enrolled in 2020 Spring semester for a pre-medical requisite does NOT have to earn a letter grade. Applicants will not be penalized for Pass/Fail marks on their transcripts in any classes taken 2020 Spring semester. The Admissions Committee understands this change and will not hold it against individual applicants.

In turn, we are closely monitoring the situation when it comes to our other criteria, including research, physician shadowing, patient exposure, community service, leadership ability, and MCAT. We will continue to work with our national and local partners including the Group on Student Affairs (GSA) Committee on Admissions (COA) through the AAMC (Association of American Medical Colleges), AMCAS (American Medical Colleges Application Service), and the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT).
We ask for your patience during these times. Future changes to our criteria will be communicated to local pre-medical advisors as well as posted on our websites and social media accounts.***

Grade point average (GPA) is calculated for all grades received for college credit using the AMCAS GPA calculation. If a course is repeated, both grades received for that course are calculated into the GPA. Applicants must have a science, non-science and overall GPA of at least 3.00 or above to be eligible for consideration.

To determine the average criteria, the applicant’s GPA is compared to the average GPA of students who have gone on to attend medical school from the applicant’s undergraduate institution.

All applicants are required to take the Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) within three years of their application. Only the most recent MCAT score is considered. For the 2021 application cycle, a minimum MCAT score of 124 in all sections is required, but the combined score must be equal or higher than 500 to be considered further.

**Required Premedical Coursework**

Premedical courses must be taken for a passing grade from a regionally accredited institution in the United States or Canada prior to matriculation to medical school.

Courses in mathematics, statistics, physiology, anatomy, biochemistry, human behavior, foreign language, research methods, and computer literacy are recommended but are not required.

Applicants should seek out courses that will help develop skills in independent thinking and decision-making. Physicians need to be able to read and understand scientific literature. They must also communicate effectively and possess the skills to express their thoughts and ideas. Computer literacy has become an essential skill. Courses that demand active involvement and activities such as research and independent study projects will foster these attributes. It is important to develop and demonstrate a commitment to lifelong learning.

Advanced Placement (AP), IB, CLEP credit, independent study and correspondence courses do not satisfy these requirements; however, AP credit earned with a score of four or five satisfies one semester of Chemistry.

Applicants should contact the premedical advisor at their institution for assistance in planning the specific course work that meets our requirements, expectations, and criteria.
Chemistry
4 semesters that should include both a general chemistry series including all applicable laboratories (incorporating both quantitative and qualitative analysis) and an organic chemistry series that includes all applicable laboratories. Advanced Placement credit earned with a score of four or five satisfies one semester of this requirement.

Physics
2 semesters with all applicable laboratories

Writing/Speech
2 semesters of courses that emphasize written and/or verbal communication

Biology
2 semesters – one course must be in cellular biology or biochemistry

Social Science
1 semester (history, economics, anthropology, psychology, etc.)

Humanities
1 semester (art, music, drama, literature, etc.)

Note: One course may not be used to fulfill two-course requirements.
Admissions Requirements

We consider how you balance outside activities and responsibilities with school work to be an indicator of your ability to deal with the rigors of life as a physician. The committee is interested in your motivation for attending medical school. As such, we require letters of recommendation and activity forms to better get to know you. See below for requirements in each area.

For your assistance, we have created a Self-Assessment, which is designed to assist you in evaluating whether a career as a medical doctor is right for you and to help you determine if your qualifications, personal characteristics, and goals are a good match for applying to the University of Utah School of Medicine.

We strongly encourage students to meet with their premedical advisor as they prepare to apply to medical school. Premedical advisors are familiar with the admissions requirements of most medical schools.

Required Activities

Many preparatory experiences could reasonably be considered under more than one heading and you should list them in each applicable area so that you do not fall short of meeting the criteria in any areas. The Admissions Committee suggests that you make your decisions about where to list your activities based on the impact that they have had on you and on your personal development. Overlapping or "double dipping" experiences may be viewed negatively if done in excess.

Community/Volunteer Service

Community/Volunteer service is defined as involvement in a service activity without constraint or guarantee of reward or compensation. The medical profession is strongly oriented to service in the community. Applicants should demonstrate a commitment to the community by involving themselves in service and volunteer activities. Work performed in service learning courses and community service performed as part of employment does not satisfy this requirement.

- We require that you complete at least 36 total hours within the last 4 years. To be a competitive applicant, we recommend that you endeavor to complete at least 100 hours within the last 4 years.
Leadership

Leadership is defined as a position of responsibility for others, with a purpose to guide or direct others. Dedication, determination, ability to make decisions and a willingness to contribute to the welfare of others are indicators of one's ability to succeed in medicine. Individuals with these characteristics readily accept positions of leadership and are an asset to their community and profession. Leadership capacity can be demonstrated in a variety of ways. Positions in employment, church, the community, and school organizations including coaching, tutoring, and mentoring will satisfy this requirement.

- We require that you have at least 1 leadership experience lasting 3 months within the last 4 years. Competitive applicants will have 3 different leadership experiences each lasting 3 months within the last 4 years.

Research

Research is defined as involvement in a scholarly or scientific hypothesis investigation that is supervised by an individual with verifiable research credentials. Research may be in any discipline and performed at any site. However, it must involve the testing of a hypothesis.

- We require that you participate in hypothesis-based research. This may be part of a class where you answered or tested a hypothesis and received a grade. Examples: A writing project, laboratory work, etc.

Applicants with stronger research experience will have completed hypothesis-based research outside of the classroom that is supervised by an individual with verifiable research credentials. May include independent research or senior thesis.

Physician Shadowing

Physician shadowing is defined as the observation of a physician as that individual cares for and treats patients and carries out the other responsibilities of medical practice.

Shadowing must be done with an allopathic (MD) or osteopathic (DO) physician in their practice in the United States. Time spent shadowing medical students, interns, residents, fellows, physician assistants, podiatrists, veterinarians, nurses, EMTs, PhDs, etc. will not be considered. It is our recommendation that applicants shadow several physicians who work in various specialties including primary care. Shadowing family members who are physicians is discouraged.

- We require that you shadow a physician for at least 8 hours. Competitive applicants will have shadowed a variety of physicians for at least 24 hours.
Patient Exposure

Patient exposure is defined as direct interaction with patients and hands-on involvement in the care of conscious people in a healthcare-related environment, attending to their health maintenance, progression, or end of life needs. It is important that the applicant be comfortable working with and around people who are ill, sick, injured, or diseased.

Direct patient exposure can be gained in a variety of ways e.g. volunteering or working in hospitals, emergency rooms, clinics or nursing care facilities, hospice, or physical rehabilitation centers. Patient contact does not include indirect patient care such as housekeeping (cleaning, operating, or patient rooms) staffing the hospital information desk, or working in a pharmacy.

- We require that you complete at least 32 hours of direct patient care. Competitive applicants will have completed at least 48 hours.

Note: Physician shadowing and caring for friends and family members cannot be used to meet this requirement.

Letters of Recommendation

The University of Utah School of Medicine requires three letters of recommendation but will accept up to four letters. All letters should be dated. We strongly recommend that all letters be dated within a year of application.

Although we do not accept premedical committee letters, we will accept up to four individual letters that are included in the packet. You will indicate the names of the letter writers on the secondary application and we will download those specific letters.

We recommend that applicants provide at least one ACADEMIC letter where the letter writer can speak to your academic ability and/or intellectual curiosity. This letter should be from someone who directly taught or supervised you in an academic setting. It can be from a professor you did research with or a professor that you worked with as a teaching assistant.

We recommend that applicants provide at least one MENTORING letter where the letter writer can speak to your commitment to service, leadership ability, growth as an individual, interpersonal and/or teamwork skills.

Letters from employers, military supervisors, athletic coaches, and/or religious leaders can also be part of the collection of 3 to 4 recommendations. Letters should be from someone who will address your intellectual curiosity or service or leadership ability.

All letters of recommendation must be on letterhead, have a valid signature and be submitted to the AMCAS Letter Service.
Application & Review Process

All applications should be made through the American Medical College Application Services (AMCAS). Applications must be submitted to AMCAS no later than 11:59 pm EST on November 1. Applicants must take the MCAT no later than September 12, 2020, to be considered for the 2021 application cycle.

Early Decision Program (EDP)

Early Decision is an application process recommended to outstanding applicants that notifies them of decision by October 1, 2020. This allows sufficient time to apply to other medical schools if not accepted to the University of Utah School of Medicine. Review official AMCAS Early Decision Guidelines before applying to the EDP.

EDP applications must be submitted to AMCAS no later than 11:59 pm EST on August 1. Applicants must take the MCAT no later than June 27, 2020, to be considered for the 2021 application cycle.

Applicants not accepted under the EDP will be automatically be placed in the regular applicant pool.

Secondary Materials

Applicants invited to complete secondary materials will have 30 days from the date of the invitation to submit the required materials including letters of recommendation.

Application Fee - $100

The application fee may be paid by credit card and is nonrefundable. We honor the AMCAS fee waiver. Students in extreme financial hardship who did not obtain the AMCAS fee waiver may petition the School of Medicine requesting that the application fee be waived.

Letters of Recommendation

Applicants must submit at least 3 letters of recommendation with up to 4 being accepted. To see details about letters of recommendation, check the Admissions Requirements section.

Activities Form

The applicant must briefly describe his/her participation in each of these areas: community/volunteer service, leadership, research experience, physician shadowing, and patient exposure.
Idaho State Certification

Applicants must be certified through Idaho State University as residents of Idaho prior to applying. Accepted students pay Utah resident tuition. Students also pay a surcharge to a fund administered by the state of Idaho that is designed to assist in loan repayment for graduates who return to practice primary care in Idaho. Information about this program is available at Idaho State University website or calling 208-282-2475. For more information, visit our Idaho Residents page.

Note: If you have completed a residency certification for the WWAMI program, the University of Idaho will provide a copy of your certification to Idaho State University for verification for the University of Utah School of Medicine. Applicants only need to submit a residency certification through one institution.

Non-Resident Explanation

If applicants are not from Utah nor Idaho they are given the opportunity to briefly explain their decision to apply to the University of Utah School of Medicine. They should include if they have any ties to Utah.

Review Process

Your application is reviewed to determine if you are eligible for further consideration. The School of Medicine will not consider applicants who have previously matriculated, been dismissed, are on probation, on hold, or who are under suspension at another LCME accredited allopathic medical school.

All decisions are final.

Assessment Process

Volunteers from the fourth year medical student class and faculty representatives who are physicians, investigators, administrators, or community representatives who interact with the medical students, participate in the assessment process. Evaluators explore the applicant's motivation for seeking a medical degree, awareness and understanding of the medical profession, leadership, problem solving skills, understanding of medical ethics, and interpersonal skills.

Selection Process

Members of the Admissions Committee are volunteers from the fourth year medical student class and faculty representatives who are physicians, investigators, administrators, or community representatives who interact with the medical students. Committee members discuss each qualifying applicant in detail, after which each applicant is independently graded.

Applicants are reviewed weekly until all interviewed applicants have been presented. Notifications will be sent by email, revealing final status: Accepted, placed on the alternate list, or not accepted.