

DARTMOUTH

Health Professions Program

Med/Vet/Dental Application Newsletter

Most Important Tasks NOW!

2024-2025 Cycle

April 2024

Hello everyone!

It's starting to feel real! In these next few weeks, all the application services will have opened! See below for details about our Filling Out the Application Workshop as a Dartmouth applicant! As we head directly into the application cycle, we want to make sure you are keeping track of all the important tasks ahead! It is also time to shift from reflecting, brainstorming, and gathering, to bravely beginning to bring your ideas together through focused writing and drafting about your experiences and motivations, so that you can effectively communicate. Please be sure to thoroughly read this newsletter to understand your most important tasks ahead.

As always, we are here to help you! Please feel free to schedule an appointment through Calendly with Sarah or Nicole, or reach out to Rae at Health.Professions.Program@dartmouth.edu if you have any questions about the application process, composite process, would like assistance with your writing, or anything else on your mind!

Best wishes!
Sarah, Nicole, and Rae

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Applications Dates + Filling Out the Application Workshop!

It's happening! The application for medical and dental school will open starting **NEXT WEEK** on the following dates!

AMCAS: Thursday, May 2nd

TMDSAS: Wednesday, May 1st

AACOMAS: Saturday, May 4th

AADSAS: Tuesday, May 14th

To help you navigate the application, in our **Filling Out the Application Workshop next Thursday, May 2nd at 6:00 PM EST** we'll provide ESSENTIAL INFORMATION about the following:

1. Crucial information about how to fill out your coursework as a Dartmouth applicant.
2. Review the entire application, including the writing section, "disadvantaged" section, and institutional action section.
3. Clarify information about your transcript, application, and letter timeline – as well as dispel misinformation!

We HIGHLY RECOMMEND that you attend this workshop! To receive the Zoom link, [please submit the RSVP form.](#)

Keep in mind, **only cut and paste your writing to the application once your writing is completed!** DO NOT use the application as a writing space. It does not have any formatting or editing abilities.

The Composite Letter Process

My support letters are all uploaded to PrivateFolio, now what?

1. You will submit the [Release to Composite Writer Form](#) once all your support letters, autobiographical sketch, resume, and transcript(s) are uploaded to PrivateFolio.

2. Once HPP receives this form, we'll compile your materials into a file and send it to your composite writer, along with instructions and resources to help your composite writer with the writing process.

What happens after my composite writer completes their composite letter?

1. They submit it directly to HPP
2. HPP will review it and work with your composite writer to create a final draft.
3. When the final draft is complete, HPP will create your completed Composite Letter of Evaluation Packet, which includes:
 - An HPP cover letter clarifying unique aspects of Dartmouth
 - Your composite letter and support letters
 - Your citation report – if you have one
4. We then upload your packet to PrivateFolio and send you instructions on how to deliver it to AMCAS. **Please note that this entire process can take between 1 – 4 weeks.**
5. **If you plan to apply to AACOMAS, TMDAS, or AADSAS, please reach out to Rae Stokes at Health.Professions.Program@dartmouth.edu for their delivery instructions.**

I'm only now getting started on the Composite Letter Process – where can I find information?

If you only recently decided to apply this cycle, **it is time-sensitive that you review the Application Timeline, Composite Process Timeline, and Overview of the Composite Process.** You can [find these resources on our website](#). We also highly recommend that you [review the recordings of our Medical School Application Workshops](#), specifically our Fall 2023 Overview of the Application Workshop, Winter 2024 Writing for the Application Workshop, Winter 2024 Situational Judgement Tests (SJTs) Workshop, and Spring 2024 Personal Statement Writing Workshop.

PrivateFolio

By now, you should have [created your PrivateFolio account](#). However, if you haven't done this yet, make sure to do so ASAP!

On your PrivateFolio account, you should create a Letter of Recommendation Request for each of your support writers (not your composite writer). Each request will prompt PrivateFolio to email your support writers an upload link. Be sure to inform your support writers to look out for this email. If they don't receive it, let them know to check their spam/junk folders. If they still have issues, let them know to contact PrivateFolio directly at help@privatefolio.com for assistance.

Autobiographical Sketch, Resume, & Transcript(s)

If you have not completed writing your autobiographical sketch, make sure to do so ASAP! Send it directly to your support writers and upload it to PrivateFolio. Also, make sure to upload your resume and transcript(s) to PrivateFolio. We will include all three documents, along with your support letters, in the file we create and release to your composite writer. These documents are also useful for HPP to have when we review your composite letter.

Communicate with your Writers!

Should I send reminders to my writers?

YES! You should send “gentle reminders” to your writers as you approach whatever due dates you agreed upon.

What should I do if some letters haven’t been submitted by my due date?

This is not uncommon and isn’t necessarily something you should worry too much about. Reach out to your writer if you haven’t yet and politely ask for a status update and if they need anything from you. If your composite writer has a firm timeline to do their writing, let the writer know that. Additionally, HPP does have resources to help writers with the writing process. Let your writer know they can reach out to us if they would like those resources.

Sometimes starting a new email with a different subject header can be helpful. If your subject header says “Letter of Recommendation,” change it up. Try personalizing it: “Hi Professor so and so, quick question...” for instance. If you have a phone number for the writer, try giving them a text or call!

Should I meet with my composite writer?

We encourage you to meet with your composite writer to talk directly about your background, goals, experiences, and motivations. Even if they are someone you’ve known for a while, it is still useful for them to clarify what they know and be reminded of details. Especially if you have any unique circumstances academically or personally, such as an Institutional Action, and have a trustful relationship with your composite writer. Your composite writer can often add context in their composite letter about your unique circumstances. It is okay to discuss this and ask them to directly provide this context in their composite letter.

Writing for the Application

It is crucial to start preparing and writing for your primary application at this stage. A well-written application is a strong application and takes more time than most applicants realize. For more in-depth information and writing tips, please [review the recordings of our Winter 2024 Writing for the Application Workshop and Spring 2024 Personal Statement Writing Workshop](#).

How do I write for my application?

For your primary application (AMCAS, TMDSAS, AACOMAS, AADSAS, VMCAS), you’ll have a main essay – your personal statement – and then a work and activities section to write about your most relevant and influential experiences, whether they be academic, professional, or personal. Note that each application has different character counts. For instance, TMDSAS and VMCAS have some shorter essays rather than one long one. You will also eventually write secondary essays for each school you apply to. To craft an effective narrative, it is necessary to self-reflect on your journey and experiences over the past several years. We suggest the following:

- Create a spreadsheet or document to list all the experiences, jobs, internships, volunteer/community service work, research, activities, etc. you’ve been involved with.

Include start and end dates (you can have multiple ones for the same activity) and future dates. Note that the primary application includes 15 entries for the work and activities section.

- Regarding HOURS: For each activity you'll need to enter how many hours you engaged with it. Take the time to carefully backtrack your calendar and gather accurate information about how many hours you engaged in each of your activities. DO NOT estimate as that often results in inaccurate information. Lately, we have seen a lot of hours being presented as "50," "100," or "400." Real life hours are not this tidy! Be mindful of accuracy!
- For each experience, consider what you learned, your responsibilities and duties, and skills, abilities, competencies, or personal qualities you used or developed.
- Consider how each experience impacted or influenced you intellectually, personally, or professionally. How was each experience meaningful to you?
- Consider and reflect on specific moments, details, or memories that illustrate meaningful experiences or influences.
- Write about your reasons and motivations for going into medicine. How have you explored those? Is there a connection between a specific experience and the growth or affirmation of why you decided to pursue medicine?

Other Things to Consider

- When you start writing, don't focus on character count – focus on content and what you genuinely want to convey. Once you figure that out, then you can work on refining your writing and editing it to meet the character count.
- Do not rush your writing! While there is a timeline to consider, take the time to ensure that your writing is strong and conveys what you want to say.

MCAT Timing and Preparation

By this point in the cycle, you have either taken the MCAT or have a plan for taking it. If you haven't taken it or settled on a plan to take it yet, keep in mind that you would ideally know your MCAT score BEFORE you submit your primary application. It takes a month to receive your score. Considering this, we recommend taking the MCAT by May or June at the latest. If this isn't feasible, please discuss your plans with Sarah or Nicole and they can help you figure out a submission strategy/timeline that makes sense for you. Please [review the MCAT section on our website](#) for tips and resources.

MCAT & Application Costs

For planning purposes, keep in mind the following costs that will accrue during the application process.

- MCAT: \$315
- AMCAS: \$175 processing fee, including one school. An additional \$45 for each school thereafter. On average, Dartmouth applicants apply to ~23 schools. i.e., the AMCAS application totals approximately \$1,000.
- Secondary application fees average between \$75-150 per school (absolutely ask for a waiver if you qualify for the Fee Assistance Program, see Section 8).

- Situational Judgement Tests (SJT): CASper \$85; Preview \$100 (if you qualified for FAP they will waive fees)
- As far as we know, interviews continue to be remote. The main costs would be for a professional outfit for your Zoom interviews. After an acceptance has been offered, some schools will offer the opportunity for an in-person visit. This would be the only other cost to account for.

Fee Assistance Program (FAP)

The Financial Assistance Program is the SAME for MCAT and AMCAS. If you didn't get around to applying for FAP before the MCAT but might qualify we urge you to apply to it now before you submit your AMCAS application (there is some fee assistance for DO, Dental, and VET as well). Check out the [MCAT and AMCAS Fee Assistance Program here](#). See below for information about fee assistance for dental, DO, and veterinary applications. If you qualified for FAP already for the MCAT this year, then you are already qualified for the AMCAS fee reduction. It can take up to four weeks to have the FAP approved, so plan accordingly. It will require getting paperwork and records from yourself and your family.

It is not retroactive, so apply BEFORE submitting the AMCAS application. If you qualify it will not only greatly reduce your Primary application fees, but most schools will waive or reduce the secondary fees. Ask directly if they don't offer it upfront.

Fee Assistance for Other Health Professions

- [Dental School Application Fee Assistance](#)
- [Osteopathic \(DO\) Application Med School Fee Assistance](#)
- [Veterinary School Application Fee Assistance](#)

Where Can I find HPP Application Resources?

As we move through the application cycle, we'll post links to our newsletters, resources, and forms to the HPP website, see <https://www.dartmouth.edu/prehealth/applying/>. Additionally, you can find recordings of our application workshops and medical school admissions webinars here, https://www.dartmouth.edu/prehealth/applying/app_podcasts.html. **We strongly encourage you to bookmark these pages for your ease of reference.**