



HEALTH PROFESSIONS PROGRAM

2023-2024 Application FAQs and Instructions for Dartmouth Students and Alumni

Below are the most frequently asked questions about the medical school application. Relevant information about other health professional applications is also included. If you are unable to find the answer to your question(s) within this document or the [AMCAS Applicant Guide](#), please do not hesitate to contact us at 603-646-3377 or Health.Professions.Program@dartmouth.edu. If you would like to schedule an appointment with a pre-health advisor, please reach out to our program coordinator, Rae Stokes, at the above phone or email. You can also schedule an appointment directly through Calendly with [Sarah Berger](#).

PLEASE NOTE: Make sure to select “Release to Advisor” on your primary application and standardized exams. This will allow your advisors to use the data from your application as part of an aggregate number to advise future applicants.

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General Information

Where can I find help with my application?

Use this document, along with the [AMCAS Applicant Guide](#) and the online help available within the application. You can contact AMCAS directly at amcas@aamc.org or 202-828-0600. If you are unable to find an answer through these resources, please contact Health.Professions.Program@dartmouth.edu. For other health professional applications, please use the below resources:

- [AACOMAS \(DO\) Application Instructions](#)
- [ADEA AADSAS \(Dental\) Applicant Help Center](#)
- [TMDSAS \(Texas Schools\) Application Guide](#)

When should I submit my application?

Most medical schools have rolling admissions, and it is to your advantage to be early in the process. We suggest that you submit your AMCAS primary application by June or early July. If you feel you need more time, you should aim to submit it by mid-July. If you have questions about the timing of your application, speak to a pre-health advisor.

How much does it cost to apply?

Fee Reductions through the Fee Assistance Program (FAP) are available, but you must apply for these before submitting your application, as the reduction is not retroactive! Qualifying for the FAP includes fee waivers for up to 20 schools and often reduces secondary application fees as well. Don't hesitate to ask if they don't automatically offer! For more information, please refer to the [AMCAS Fee Assistance Program \(FAP\) page](#).

Fees will sometimes change from year to year. For the 2023-2024 application year:

- [AMCAS](#) charges an application processing fee of \$170 for one medical school designation and \$43 for each designation thereafter.
- [TMDSAS](#) charges a non-refundable flat fee of \$215 regardless of the number of schools you apply to.
- [AACOMAS](#) charges \$198 for the first program you apply to and \$50 for each additional program.
- [AADSAS](#) charges an application fee of \$251 for your first dental school and \$108 for each additional school.

Most schools charge fees for their secondary applications which can range from \$75.00 to \$150.00. (One must also consider travel and interview expenses).

What is included in the application?

1. Identifying and biographical information.
2. Work experiences and activities with a focus on college and postgraduate years.
 - Up to 15 experiences with descriptions for each (there is a 700-character limit).
 - Up to 3 of these experiences can be designated as "most meaningful" and will have an additional 1325 character limit to help you elaborate.
 - The experiences section is unlimited in AADSAS and AACOMAS but has different character limits.
3. Schools attended.
4. Coursework (plan to have your official transcript(s) available to complete this section).

5. Personal statement:
 - AMCAS: 5300 characters including spaces
 - TMDSAS: 5000 characters including spaces
 - AACOMAS: 5300 characters including spaces
 - AADSAS: 4500 characters including spaces
 - VMCAS: 3000 characters including spaces
6. Letters of evaluation.
7. Designated medical schools (see Letter Section for more information).
8. Additional essays:
 - In AMCAS, for combined degree programs additional essays will appear in the “Essays” section.
 - See applicant guides for all other application services.

Should I release to my advisor?

Please check “yes.” This will allow your advisors to use the data from your application as part of an aggregate number to advise future applicants.

- Advisors cannot read your application unless you send it to them.
- Your personal information will be kept confidential.
- The information released to your advisors includes your gender, race/ethnicity, GPA, MCAT score, schools applied to, and final matriculation.
- The data from past applicants will help us assist you during the process, and your data will help us assist future applicants.

Can I change my application after I have certified and submitted it?

You can only update biographical information and add (but not delete) schools. You can also add to your letters section, but please check with HPP before doing so. You cannot edit or make corrections to coursework, post-secondary experiences, or your personal statement.

Am I a reapplicant if I applied to FlexMed and/or Geisel EAP?

You are not considered a reapplicant if you applied to these programs. For those who applied to FlexMed, there is a section on the secondary where you can indicate that you applied to FlexMed.

What if I am not sure where I’ll be living or if my address changes?

Your “Preferred Address” in AMCAS can be updated after submission, and regularly throughout the cycle. Please be sure this information is always up to date.

Biographic Information

This is a pretty straightforward section of the application, however, please note there is a section called “Other Impactful Experiences.” This is a section in which you can describe challenges or obstacles that you have navigated. This could include lived experiences related to family background, financial background, community setting, educational experiences, and/or other life circumstances.

Schools Attended & Transcripts

What if I attended courses at another college or institution?

You must create an entry for each school attended, just as you did for Dartmouth. List the courses and the grades you earned. You must request an official transcript from each school’s registrar’s office to be sent to AMCAS. This applies to a college-level course taken during high school.

How do I enter my study abroad courses?

AMCAS defines a study abroad program as a program that must be sponsored by the United States or a Canadian institution (this is different from an overseas American school branch, i.e., Duke in Singapore). You will add the foreign host institution as another school. If the grades you received on that program are ON your Dartmouth transcript, you do NOT need a separate transcript from that institution. In that case, you will check the box for “Transcript Exception” and use the transcript from Dartmouth (for FSP and LSA programs) to enter the courses under the foreign host institution.

If you transferred coursework from a leave term, completed exchange terms, or post-baccalaureate coursework, but the grades don’t show, then you will need to add a school entry and request separate transcripts. All credit earned at US colleges or universities must be reported.

How do I send my transcripts to AMCAS?

Applicants can request an official eTranscript or paper transcript to be sent to AMCAS through Dartmouth’s Registrar’s Office. eTranscripts are quicker than paper. Dartmouth utilizes a third party called Parchment.

You do not need the AMCAS transcript request form but can upload it to verify your identity when you electronically request transcripts from Dartmouth’s Registrar’s Office. When you make the transcript request, you can also request a “hold for grades,” if you want your spring term grades sent to AMCAS.

- Go to the [Registrar’s website](#) and click on Transcript Tab.
- Current undergraduates: select “Official Transcript” from the “Undergraduate Student Main Menu.”
- Alumni and students without Banner access: log into the “Transcript Request” page. For additional guidance with login information, see “Instructions for Dartmouth Login.”
- Read the instructions on how to order an official transcript.
- Request an eTranscript and depending on your status (undergrad or alum), follow the instructions to request an official transcript.
- Enter your AAMC ID and AAMC Transcript ID in the eTranscript request process.

A separate AMCAS transcript request must be created for each college/institution you have attended. For other institutions, please locate the transcript request page for those colleges on their registrar website for instructions on how to request transcripts.

When I create a transcript request in AMCAS, under “College Address Information,” which Dartmouth address should I use?

6014 McNutt Hall, Hanover, NH 03755

Why won’t my transcript request form download (AMCAS)?

Please check your pop-up blocker, as that is the most common reason applicants experience difficulty downloading the form.

Should I wait until spring grades are available to send my transcript to AMCAS?

The transcript you send to AMCAS should include your spring grades if you are taking courses and want those grades included. Not everyone will need to wait. Consult with a pre-health advisor.

The transcript for your PrivateFolio account does not need to include Spring grades if you are releasing your file to your composite writer before spring grades are available. However, because your citation report is included in your composite letter packet, if you receive a citation during Spring term it may be necessary for you to upload an updated transcript to PrivateFolio. Please contact Rae Stokes at Health.Professions.Program@dartmouth.edu if you have any questions.

How do I enter an Institutional Action (IA)?

First, if you are unsure what your status is (“I had an incident but was it an IA?”) we will gladly have a confidential conversation with you to help determine your answer. If you have an institutional action of “Probation” or higher, it is expected by medical schools that you will self-report this even if Dartmouth or any other institution would not have reported it. Several schools, for instance, have a secondary application question that asks “Even if your school does not report it, have you had an IA?” We know it can feel nerve-wracking to consider disclosing this information. Please discuss this with us. We can help you think through how to approach and write about an incident you may have been involved in.

That said, if you have had an IA you would check “yes,” in that case. You will choose whether it was academic or conduct related. Then there will be a space to write about the incident. You would write a simple explanation of what happened and how you learned and grew from the experience. Again, we are glad to walk through it with you in a judgement free zone.

Coursework

BE SURE TO HAVE YOUR OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT ON HAND WHEN ENTERING YOUR COURSEWORK! Please consult with a pre-health advisor when entering coursework for other application services. This section mostly applies to AMCAS.

How do I enter AP credit?

If you received credit, note the course number and name exactly as shown on your transcript. The grade should be noted as “CR” on your transcript and your application. Choose “Advanced Placement” in the “Special Course Types” section. If there is no indication of your AP course on your Dartmouth transcript, you should not enter it on your AMCAS application.

What term should I list AP credit under?

Choose “freshmen” and include this coursework with your first-year, Fall courses. You will not have a grade.

How do I enter exemptions?

Enter the course exactly as it appears on your transcript (“EX” for transcript grade). Choose “exempt” from the “Special Course Types” section.

What course type do I enter if I have an “NR”?

Choose “Pass/Fail” for the course type. “NR” should be noted as the grade, exactly as it appears on your transcript.

What is the course number?

A course number includes both the department abbreviation and the course number, such as BIOL013 or ENGL007.

How many credit hours should I enter for courses?

For AMCAS: All Dartmouth courses are worth 1 credit hour, so all courses at Dartmouth should be entered as 1. For each course, you will check the box to indicate whether the course was “lecture only,” “combined lecture + lab,” or “lab only.” Make sure to do this accurately so that when AMCAS calculates credit hours you will get an accurate credit/GPA count.

AMCAS will convert your Dartmouth credits into semester credit hours, according to the conversion that is listed on the back of your transcript. Do not enter the conversions in AMCAS. Lab courses will convert automatically when your application is processed (after submission) to 4.5 semester credit hours, and non-labs will convert to 3.5 semester credit hours.

For all other application services (TMDAS, AACOMAS, AADSAS, VMCAS): Enter your courses as semesters (NOT quarters) and convert the units into credit hours. Lab courses will be worth 4.5 credits, and non-labs will be worth 3.5 credits.

If you have earned credit at other colleges or universities, you will need to check those official transcript(s) for information on how to record their credit hours. Applications for other health professional schools might require you to make those conversions, but not AMCAS.

Are we on trimesters or quarters?

Dartmouth's registrar's office has reported to AMCAS that we are a quarter-term school.

- Fall = First Quarter
- Winter = Second Quarter
- Spring = Third Quarter
- Summer = Fourth Quarter

AMCAS will convert your Dartmouth credits into semester credit hours, according to the conversion that is listed on the back of your transcript. Do not enter the conversions in AMCAS. Lab courses will convert automatically to 4.5 semester credit hours, and non-labs will convert to 3.5 semester credit hours when your application is processed (after submission). See the question above for more information.

For all other application services, it is important for the accuracy of your credit hours to enter everything as a semester and use the conversion listed for semesters (see the previous question).

What is course classification?

Course classifications are used in the calculation of your AMCAS GPA. The BCPM GPA is comprised of courses in Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Mathematics (including Statistics).

- AMCAS includes Neuroscience as a sub-category of Biology.
- Include only courses with "Neuroscience" in the title or a course you could support being heavily based in Biology.
- Some Engineering courses could also count towards your BCPM.
- Please review the [AMCAS Course Classification Guide](#).

Do not be concerned if you are still completing some prerequisite courses at the time you submit your application. It will not hinder your application. All prerequisites should be completed before matriculation into medical school or earlier depending on the school.

What if I'm unsure how to classify a course?

Please review the AMCAS Course Classification Guide. You will find sub-categories for each classification. Classification designation is up to you and should primarily be determined by course content rather than the course title or department.

If you classify a course in a way that is questionable to AMCAS, you may be asked to justify your classification. This could delay the processing of your application.

During the verification process, it is your responsibility to check regularly for emails.

- Just in case, check your spam/junk folder for notifications that AMCAS disagrees with your classification.
- The pause will hold your application for two weeks, during which you can submit an "Academic Change Request."
- After two weeks, the verification process continues but you cannot retroactively make a change request.
- They will require a course description or syllabus to justify your classification.
- You are not "in trouble" if they don't agree with your classification.
- If you are unsure how to classify a course, please contact the Health Professions Program for guidance.

How should I classify my First-Year Seminar?

If you plan to use this course as a fulfillment of an English prerequisite and this course was completed in a department other than English, you should still classify it as English. However, if you already have your English credits elsewhere, you can classify them however you feel is appropriate. If you need to provide additional information with your supplemental application, you can use the following:

“AMCAS has long agreed with the Dartmouth Registrar that Dartmouth’s First Year Seminars meet the criteria for an English course, even though they are sometimes found in an array of departments. To fulfill Dartmouth’s writing requirement, I completed (CLASS) a First-Year Seminar. According to the Dartmouth College Bulletin, Organization, Regulations, and Courses; First-Year Seminars offer every Dartmouth first-year student an opportunity to participate in a course structured around independent research, small group discussion, and intensive writing. By a vote by the Faculty and the Trustees, successful completion of one First-Year Seminar is a requirement for the A.B. degree. The function of the First-Year Seminar Program is threefold. First, by means of a uniform writing requirement, it stresses the importance of written expression in all disciplines. Second, it provides an attractive and exciting supplement to the usual introductory survey course in many disciplines. And finally, the program’s emphasis on independent study enables each first-year student to have an early experience of the scholarship that fuels Dartmouth’s upper-level courses.”

If during your verification, a verifier does not get that message and disagrees with your FYS English classification, you can send them this explanation. Get in touch with HPP if they continue to dispute this.

How do I classify Neuroscience courses?

The classification should be based on course content, rather than the course title or department. If the primary content of your Neuroscience course was Biology, instead of Psychology, then it can be classified as Biology.

How do I classify the credits I received through research?

It is up to your discretion based on the content of the research. It is not verified by AMCAS.

How do I list Sophomore Summer?

Sophomore Summer is the summer quarter of your junior year according to the AMCAS calendar. It will also have the same year (20XX/20XX) as your other junior year terms. When your coursework section is complete, the terms should be listed in chronological order. The academic “year” from the application’s point of view is Summer - Spring.

How do I enter a future course? Do I need to?

You can add current or future courses the same way you add past courses, except you will not include a grade and you will check the current/future box at the bottom of the page. You are not required to indicate future courses. Some applicants will choose to do so to show medical schools that they plan on taking a remaining prerequisite or another course you wish them to know about. If you enter future courses, but your schedule changes, you are not held to what you listed. Future coursework or activities can also be mentioned in your secondary applications.

Should I use the abbreviation for courses, or should I write out the entire title?

It is best to put exactly what is written on your transcript. If Dartmouth abbreviated a course and it seems unclear what the topic is, you can make a more logical abbreviation. If the course title is too long, again, you can make a more logical abbreviation. Keep in mind that AMCAS will try to match up your transcript with your application. The more exact your application, the easier and less time-consuming it will be for AMCAS to verify. If you have AP courses on your transcript, you should put exactly what is on your transcript.

How do I enter an NR?

Check the box at the bottom of the screen that says “Pass/Fail.” Do not check the “No Record” box. Your transcript grade should be noted as “NR.”

Should I include transferred credits on my application?

Credits that are transferred from another college to Dartmouth should be listed under the original college, NOT under Dartmouth. For example, if you took Organic Chemistry at Harvard, you would have a separate transcript from Harvard. Even if you transferred those credits to Dartmouth and they appear on your Dartmouth transcript, they should not be listed under Dartmouth on your AMCAS application. You should add Harvard as a separate college attended and list those courses there. Remember to request an official transcript from Harvard or another college/institution to be sent to AMCAS.

How do I enter my citations?

Do not use the star for citations when entering coursework. You can always draw attention to your citations in the activities section, and we also include them with your Dartmouth Composite Letter of Evaluation packet.

What if I did the 5-year AB/BE Engineering program?

If all your coursework appears on your main Dartmouth transcript, you do not need to do anything differently. However, if some of your courses only appear on the BE transcript from Thayer, you will need to submit both transcripts. To do this, you will create 2 Dartmouth entries under “Colleges Attended.” One will be for Dartmouth, and the other will be for Thayer. Request transcripts following the respective processes for Dartmouth and Thayer and enter the coursework separately under each respective college. Be sure that the courses you enter under both match each transcript.

Work/Activities

What is in the work/activities section?

You can describe work experiences, extracurricular activities, awards, honors, citations, publications, and/or personal pursuits that you would like the medical schools to know about. Be sure to convey not only what you did/your role, but also what you learned/gained-how it impacted you or what impact you may have had.

How many experiences can I enter?

A maximum of 15 experiences can be entered into AMCAS. You will be given 700 characters to describe each experience and then you will be asked to choose up to 3 experiences that were most meaningful to you. You will have an additional 1325 characters to further describe these experiences. ***Do ALL your writing in word/google/note NOT on the application. In the end you will cut and paste your final version into the application. It cannot deal with formatting and is not useful for editing.

- Use every opportunity to write about yourself thoughtfully.
- Each activity is a chance to help medical schools get to know you better.
- It usually helps to *over write*—figure out what you really want to convey/say, and THEN craft and edit it into the character count with use of compelling prose.
- In AACOMAS, TMDSAS, VMCAS, and AADSAS you have unlimited experiences, but the character counts might be shorter. ACCOMAS (600 including spaces), TMDSAS (300 including spaces), AADSAS (600 including spaces), and VMCAS (600 including spaces)

How do I categorize shadowing?

Typically, shadowing is categorized under “Physician Shadowing/Clinical Observation,” though this does depend on the role you played (i.e., active role caring for patients or merely witnessing).

You can also select “Community Service/Volunteer – Medical/Clinical” or “Other” if your experience doesn’t quite fit.

Multiple shadowing experiences can be lumped together in one of your 15 work/activities entries. If one stands out or was longer/more in-depth, you could distinguish it in its own activity entry.

How do I enter activity dates/hours and future activities/hours?

For each activity, you can enter multiple start and end dates if you paused and returned to an activity multiple times. For each, you will calculate the number of hours spent on that experience. You can also put in anticipated future hours and dates, as well as anticipated hours. Stay as accurate as possible. For a future activity you have not yet started, don't overstate what you have not yet done. Keep it simple. During the course of the application year, you can submit updates to individual medical schools.

Essay Prompt

When considering the essay, many people think the prompt is simply "why medicine?" In fact, it's broader than that. You want the reader to walk away with a sense of conviction that medicine is a genuine aspiration for you, but their actual prompts to reflect on are: Why have you selected the field of medicine? What motivated you to learn about medicine? What do you want medical schools to know about you that you haven't disclosed in another section of the application?

You can also discuss any special hardships or challenges that may have influenced your educational pursuits. This can also be a space to discuss any significant fluctuations in your transcript.

***Do ALL your writing in word/google/note NOT on the application. In the end you will cut and paste your final version into the application. It cannot deal with formatting and is not useful for editing.

Letters of Evaluation

How do I categorize my letters in AMCAS?

If you are using a composite letter, select "Committee Letter."

If you are submitting a letter packet (i.e., just support letters, no composite), you should select "Letter Packet." This option is typically chosen by alumni who have been graduates for 3+ years. If you have not notified HPP, please contact us for help with creating your letter packet before you attempt to send it to AMCAS.

Alumni who choose to submit individual letters when AMCAS opens should select the option for individual letters.

If you are considering sending an additional letter after your composite letter or letter packet has already been sent to AMCAS, please contact HPP as soon as possible to discuss it.

Who is my Primary Contact/Author?

Rae Stokes (HPP Program Coordinator) is the primary contact for all composite/letter packets. Please use her contact information below. If you are using another school's letter service in addition to Dartmouth, please contact them for their information.

What schools are providing this letter? **Dartmouth** (if you are using PrivateFolio to transmit your letters)

- Letter Title: **Dartmouth Composite**
- Institution: **Dartmouth College**
- Primary Contact/Author's Prefix: **Ms.**
- Primary Contact/Author's First Name: **Rae**
- Primary Contact/Author's Middle Name: **L**
- Primary Contact/Author's Last Name: **Stokes**
- Primary Contact/Author's Title: **Health Professions Program Coordinator**
- Primary Contact/Author's Email: Rae.L.Stokes@Dartmouth.edu
- Primary Contact/Author's Phone: **603-646-3377**

- Organization Name: **Dartmouth College**
- Address: **6147 Parker House, Hanover, NH 03755 USA**

PrivateFolio

Why has my file not been sent to my composite writer?

Once all your support letters, resume, transcript(s), and autobiographical sketch are uploaded to PrivateFolio, it is your responsibility to notify HPP by submitting the [Release to Composite Writer](#) form. Your file will not be released to your composite writer until this form is submitted.

If the majority of your support letters have been submitted, but 1-2 are taking longer than expected and you are worried about your timeline, please contact HPP.

How do I deliver my letters to AMCAS?

Once HPP receives the composite letter from your composite writer, we will need 1 – 4 weeks to review and finalize it depending on the number of edits it needs and the number of composites we have in our queue. **Composites are reviewed by submission date order.**

Once HPP has created the finalized composite letter packet, it will be uploaded onto your PrivateFolio account. You will be notified by email with instructions on how to deliver it to AMCAS. Please make sure to regularly check your email for these instructions. If you are using other application services such as AACOMAS, TMDSAS, or AADSAS, please refer to the [Delivering Your Packet](#) document.

To complete the delivery to AMCAS, you will need to provide your:

- AMCAS ID (8-digit number).
- Letter ID (4-digit number created by PrivateFolio and assigned to your composite/letter packet).

When do I need to submit my composite/letter packet to the application service?

You do not need to wait on your letters to submit your application. Do not delay submitting your application because of your letters. You will most likely deliver your composite/letter packet while you are completing your secondary applications. As mentioned in the previous question, HPP will email you AMCAS delivery instructions once your composite letter packet is finalized and uploaded to PrivateFolio. For other application systems, please refer to the [Delivering Your Packets](#) instructions.

Do I need to submit my citation report separately to AMCAS?

Your citation report is meant to be reviewed by the medical schools you apply to, which they will do through the “Schools” section of your AMCAS application. However, to make sure that medical schools do see your citation report, HPP will include it in your composite/letter packet.

Therefore, if you submitted your transcript/citation report to be released to your composite writer before your Spring grades were in, and you received a citation during the Spring term, we highly recommend that you upload an updated copy to PrivateFolio and inform Rae Stokes at Rae.L.Stokes@dartmouth.edu.

Choosing Medical Schools

How do I decide which schools to apply to?

This is a research project that takes some time. You will need to develop your own criteria and preferences, as well as create a list with a balanced range of schools that meet both your criteria and consider selectivity.

You can use the documents on the [Choosing Medical Schools](#) page on the HPP website.

- Consider subscribing to [MSAR](#) (Medical School Admissions Requirements) online.
- We also have information from Dartmouth alums attending medical schools who have agreed to share their experiences at their chosen schools. You can request a PDF copy be emailed to you by contacting HPP.
- You can also use the Alumni Advice Network accessible through the [Nathan Smith Society](#) homepage if you are a current student.
- Contact admissions personnel at different schools and ask to speak to current students, if possible.

Eventually, you will narrow down your list to include a range of schools that interest you and at which you are likely to be competitive. Apply to multiple schools, but do not go overboard. Dartmouth applicants applied to an average of 24 schools in 2020, depending on their state of domicile.

Remember that the admissions process is very expensive, as well as time and labor-intensive. You won't be able to do a good job on your secondary applications if you apply to too many schools.

