FAQ’s and Instructions as Dartmouth students/alum
(with some relevant info for other app services)

These have been the most frequently asked questions about the application itself, during the application process. If you can’t find the answer to your question here or in the AMCAS instructions, email or call (603-646-3377) Annette Hamilton with your question or, if you are on campus, you can visit Sarah Berger walk-in hours or appt, (or phone appointment if off campus).

Quick Page Reference:
- GENERAL.................................1-2
- SCHOOLS ATTENDED...............2-3
- TRANSCRIPTS/COURSES.......... 3-5
- WORK/ACTIVITIES................6
- LETTERS OF EVALUATION.......6-7
- INTERFOLIO...........................7-8
- CHOOSING SCHOOLS.............8-9

GENERAL

Q1 Where can I obtain help with my AMCAS application?
A Utilize these FAQ’s. Use the application instruction book available at https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/applying-medical-school-process/applying-medical-school-amcas/ and refer to the Online Help available within the application. In addition, you may contact AMCAS directly at amcas@aamc.org or (202) 828-0600. If you are not able to find an answer to your question, please e-mail Annette Hamilton@Dartmouth.edu or call (603) 646-3377.

Q2 When should I submit my application?
A Timing is very important. Most medical schools have rolling admissions, and it is to your distinct advantage to be considered early in their process. We suggest that you submit your AMCAS application by early July (after your spring grades have been reported); if however you feel you need more time you should aim to submit by mid-July. If you have questions about the timing of your application, discuss with a health professions advisor.

Q3 How much does it cost to apply to medical school?
A
- AMCAS charges an application processing fee of $170 for one medical school designation, and $39 for each designation thereafter.
- TMDSAS (Texas schools) charges a flat fee of $165 regardless of the number of schools you apply to.
- AACOMAS (DO) starts at $195 and $45 per each designation after that.
- VMCAS (Vet) cost for one school is $210 and approx. $100 for each additional
- AADSAS (Dental) cost is $245 for first school and $102 for each additional
Also, most schools charge fees for their secondary applications which can range from $75-150.00. (One must also take into account travel and interview expenses)

****Fee Reductions (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, often
reduces secondary fees as well—don’t hesitate to ask if they don’t automatically offer! Go to https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/fap/

Q4 What is included on the AMCAS application? The application includes:
- Biographic Information (childhood/parental: not very detailed. Don’t need documentation)
- Work Experiences and Activities-major focus is on life after high school.
  - You will have space for up to 15 experiences w/ description for each up to 700 characters long, You will get to choose 3 of these as "most meaningful" and will have an additional 1325 characters to help you elaborate further.
- Schools Attended
- Course Work (Plan to have your own copy of your official transcript available to complete this section).
- Personal Statement (5300 characters)
- Letter Reference Information and Designated Medical Schools (See more below in Letter section)

Q5 RELEASE TO ADVISOR:
A Please check YES! This allows your Dartmouth Pre-Health Advisor to see the data from your application process. The advisor cannot read your application unless you yourself send it to them. The data that is released includes: GPA, MCAT scores, Schools applied to, final acceptance data, gender, and race/ethnicity
Your personal information will be kept confidential. The data from past applicants helps us assist you through the process, your data will help us assist you during the process, and—assist future applicants.

Q6 Can I change my AMCAS application after I have certified and submitted it?
A You may only update biographic information and add (but not delete) schools. You may also add to your letters section, but please check with Annette before doing so. You cannot edit or make corrections to course work, post-secondary experiences, or your personal statement.

SCHOOLS ATTENDED

Q1 What if I took courses at another College or Institution?
A You must create/add a section 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 to be sent to AMCAS. This is true even if you took a college level course during high-school.

Q2 What if I participated in a Dartmouth, or non-Dartmouth ABROAD programs?
A A study abroad program, as AMCAS defines it, is a program that must have been sponsored by a US or Canadian Institution. (This is different from a branch of an American School overseas IE: Duke in Singapore.) You will add the school you attended abroad, as another school, BUT you will check the box for “Transcript Exception” and use the transcript from the domestic school. Then, use your Dartmouth transcript for adding the classes from your abroad program, when filling in courses for the school you attended abroad.
  - Programs affiliated WITH Dartmouth, IE: FSP and LSA terms that were “ON” terms but abroad, should be entered as regular Dartmouth terms. If you transferred course work from a Leave term, completed exchange terms or post baccalaureate course work, then you will need to add a school and separate transcripts. All credit earned at US colleges or universities must be reported.
**Q3** How do I send my transcripts to AMCAS? There are Two Parts. Please read ENTIRELY.

**A**

**STEP ONE:** Applicants can request an official E-Transcript or paper transcript to be sent to AMCAS. Paper is okay, but the e-transcript is very efficient. Go to [http://www.dartmouth.edu/~reg/transcript/](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~reg/transcript/). Read instructions on how to order official transcript. Request E-Transcript and depending on your status (undergrad, alumni) follow the instructions to request an official transcript. To complete this request, you must also do **STEP TWO**.

**STEP TWO:** In addition to making the request, you will also need to SEND the AMCAS Transcript Request form to the registrar, which you will find IN the AMCAS app. You will upload it to the registrar when you make your transcript request. This form can be found in the Schools Attended section of the AMCAS application. Please click on the link, fill out the form and then email it to the registrar. **The registrar will not be able to complete your transcript request without this form!**

This form will have your AMCAS ID# along with instructions for where to send the transcript. The registrar's office will place your request on hold until they receive the AMCAS request form.

The AMCAS request form is used to match your official transcript to your application. It will also help to expedite the receipt of your transcript and ensure it does not get lost.

When you make the request you can request “hold for grades,” in which case they will release the transcript once Spring grades are in.

A separate AMCAS transcript request form must be created for each school you have attended.

**Q4** When I am creating the transcript request form in AMCAS, what Dartmouth address do I use for the “College Address Information”?

**A** 6014 McNutt Hall, Hanover, NH 03755

**Q5** Do I have to wait until spring grades are available to send my transcript to AMCAS?

**A** The transcript that you send to AMCAS should include your spring grades if you are taking courses this spring. However, you can submit a transcript request form to the Registrar after May 29th as long as you indicate that you would like the transcript sent after spring grades are available. **(This should be a checkbox on the request form.)** The transcript for your Interfolio account does not need to include spring grades if you are releasing your file to your composite writer before spring grades would be available.

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**COURSE WORK**

**Q1** How do I handle AP credit?

**A** 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 on 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.

**Q2** What should I list as my academic status (class year) for Advanced Placement course work?

**A** Choose FRESHMAN and include this course work with your first-year fall courses. You will not have a grade.

**Q3** What if I was exempt from a course?
A: Again, enter the course exactly as it appears on your transcript ("EX" for transcript grade). Choose EXEMPT from the Special Course Types section.

Q4 What Course Type do I check if I have an NR on my official transcript?
A: Choose PASS/FAIL for course type. "NR" should be noted as the grade – exactly as it appears on the transcript.

Q5 What is the COURSE NUMBER?
A: A course number includes both the department abbreviation and course number. For example, BIOL013 or ENGL007.

Q6 What do I put in the CREDIT HOURS box?
A: All Dartmouth courses are worth “1” credit hour, so all courses at Dartmouth should be noted in the Credit Hours box as 1. For each course you will check the box to indicate whether the class was “lecture only;” “combined lecture+lab;” or “lab only.” Make sure to do this accurately or when AMCAS calculates credit hours you will not get an accurate count credit/gpa count.

For YOUR information, at Dartmouth, our one credit will be translated as such: lecture only, or lab only, courses are worth 3.3 semester hours. Combined lecture & lab courses are worth 4.5. DO NOT ENTER those equivalencies in AMCAS. They will do the translation. 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 professions schools might require you to make those translations, but NOT AMCAS.

Q7 I am confused as to what the Dartmouth term system matches up with under the AMCAS term options. Is it Trimesters (fall winter spring with a summer session option) or Quarters (fall winter spring) and a summer quarter?
A: Our registrar has reported to AMCAS that we are a QUARTER term school. Fall = First quarter, Winter = Second quarter, Spring = Third quarter, Summer = Summer quarter

That said: When AMCAS does its verification, it will grant credit hours that make our terms the equivalent of semesters at other schools. IE: If a medical school requires two semesters of gen chem, then trust that two quarters at Dartmouth ARE the equivalent.

Q8 What is COURSE CLASSIFICATION?
A: Course classifications are used in the calculation of your AMCAS GPA. The BCPM GPA is comprised of courses in Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics. AMCAS includes Neuroscience in the Biology section (neuroscience in title of courses or a course you could back up as heavily biology based). Some engineering courses would also qualify. This is also one method schools use to confirm that you have taken prerequisite courses. Do not be concerned if are still completing some prerequisite courses at the time you submit your application. It will not hinder your application. All prerequisites should be completed prior to med school matriculation however or earlier in the cycle if the school requires.

Q9 What do I do if I am unsure about how to classify a course?
A: You should first use the AMCAS Help section to look up “Coursework Classification”. There you will find sub-categories for each classification. Classification designation is up to you and should primarily be determined by course content rather than course title or department. If you classify a course in a way that is not obvious/clear to AMCAS verifiers, you may be asked to justify your classification which could delay the processing of your application. During the verification process it is your responsibility to check regularly for emails (check junk mail, etc) that might notify you
they do not agree with your classification. The pause will hold for two weeks during which time you can submit an “academic change request.” After the two weeks the verification process continues but you cannot retroactively make a change request. They will need a course description or syllabus that helps convey why it is justified to classify it as you have. You are not “in trouble” if they don’t agree with your classification. If you are still not sure about classification you may ask us.

**Q10**  **How should I classify my First-Year Seminar course?**

**A**  
If you plan to use this course as 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 it however you feel is appropriate. If you need to include follow-up information with your supplemental applications, 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. In order 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 vote of 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 us if they continue to dispute this.

**Q11**  **How do I classify neuroscience courses?**

Again, classification should be based on course content rather than course title or department. If the primary topic/content of your neuroscience course was biology rather than psychology, then it can be classified as BIOLOGY.

**Q12**  **How do I list sophomore summer?**

**A**  
Categorize sophomore summer as SUMMER QUARTER of your JUNIOR year. 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-Following Spring.

**Q13**  **How do I indicate a future course? Do I need to?**

**A**  
You can add current or future courses the same way you add past courses except that 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 in order to show the medical schools that they plan on taking a prerequisite (like biochem) or other courses you wish them to know about but even so, it is not required. That said, if you do indicate future courses, but your schedule changes, you are not held to what you shared as such. **Future course work or activities can be mentioned on your secondary applications.**
Q14 Should I copy the abbreviations for course names on my transcript or should I write out the entire name of the class?
A It is best to copy exactly what is on your transcript. If Dartmouth abbreviated it and it seems unclear what the course topic is, you can make a more logical abbreviation. If the course name is simply too long, again, make a logical abbreviation. Keep in mind that the verifiers at AMCAS will be trying to match up your transcript with your application. The more exact you are in your application, the easier—and less time consuming—it will be for them. If you have AP courses on your transcript, you should put exactly what is on your transcript. If the transcript does not spell out what the credit is for, add the topic at the end (e.g. College Board Adv Placement: Calculus).

Q15 How do I designate a course that I NROed?
A DO 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.”

Q16 Should I include transfer credits on my application?
A 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 in 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 to be sent to AMCAS.

WORK/ACTIVITIES

Q1 What exactly do I describe in the work/activities section?
A You have the opportunity to describe work experiences, extracurricular activities, awards, honors, citations, publications or personal pursuits that you would like the medical schools to know about.

Q2 How many experiences can I enter?
A A maximum of 15 experiences can be entered but remember to only list significant experiences. 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 each of these experiences.
   • ***NOTE: Use EVERY Opportunity to write about yourself thoughtfully (and grammatically!). Each one is a chance to "reach out" to the school on the other side and help them get to know you better!! If you are writing about experiences, specify about skills learned, growth gained. Don't overdo/overstate.

Q3 How do I categorize my shadowing experiences in the work/activities section?
A Depending on the role you played, active role in the care of patients or otherwise contributed to the healthcare facility, or merely witnessing— you may categorize it as “Community Service/Volunteer – or simply Medical/Clinical”, or “Other” if your actual 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 depthful, it might naturally have its own activity box.

Q4 Where can I write about future activities?
A Future plans (gap year activities, work experiences, publications, etc.) are typically discussed in secondary applications. However, depending on the experience, IE: you just received a job, grant,
fellowship, thesis proposal accepted, etc., it could be alright to use a box to note that, but in that case, keep it simple. You can only write about what you know or have actually done. Don’t project much into what might happen.

**LETTERS OF EVALUATION**

**Q1**  How do I categorize my letters in the “Letters of Evaluation” section of AMCAS?

**A** If you are using a composite letter, you will check COMMITTEE LETTER in this section. Dartmouth uses a composite letter in lieu of a Committee Letter; however, they serve the same purpose. Alumni/ae three or more years out of Dartmouth, who are not using a composite letter, should check “Letter Packet” because all letters will be sent at once to every school if working through the Health Professions Office. Otherwise they will go in as individual letters. Please contact Annette Hamilton for help with creating your letter packet before you attempt to mail it to AMCAS. If you are considering sending an additional letter after your composite letter or letter packet has already been sent to AMCAS, please contact Annette ASAP to discuss.

**Q2**  Who is my “Primary Contact/Author”?

**A** Sarah Berger, Health Professions’ Advisor, will be the primary contact for ALL composite letters, OR any letter packets (used by many alums who are three or more years out of Dartmouth) that are sent from Interfolio. If you are using another school’s letter service in addition to Dartmouth, please contact them for this information.

The following responses are appropriate for all Dartmouth applicants who are using Interfolio to transmit letters:

What school is providing this letter?

*Dartmouth (if you are using Interfolio to transmit your letters)*

Letter Title: Dartmouth Composite
Institution: Dartmouth College *(should be pre-populated)*
Primary Contact/Author’s Prefix: Ms.
Primary Contact/Author’s First Name: Sarah
Primary Contact/Author’s Middle Name: L
Primary Contact/Author’s Last Name: Berger
Primary Contact/Author’s Title: Health Professions Advisor
Primary Contact/Author’s Email: Sarah.L.Berger@Dartmouth.edu
Primary Contact/Author’s Phone: 603-646-3377
Organization Name: Dartmouth College
Address: 6147 Parker House - Room 101, Hanover, NH 03755 USA

**Q3**  What do I do with my AMCAS Letter Request Form?

**A** DO NOT send this form to anyone. You can print off a copy for yourself. Keep this information handy as you will need the letter id# created on that form to complete the mailing of your composite letter/individual letter packet to AMCAS.

**INTERFOLIO/CREDS**

**Q1**  How do I upload my resume, autobiographical sketch and transcripts to Interfolio?

**A** You can directly upload your resume, sketch and transcripts to Interfolio. You can use a copy of your Dartmouth transcript *(not a Banner print out)* from the Registrar (you can request an
electronic copy), scan it and upload it to Interfolio choosing “other document” from the drop down box and then title the document "Transcript". You should also upload a transcript for each school you have attended. All transcripts do not need to be official copies. These documents are only for your composite writer and are not sent to the schools.

Q2  **How do I upload my citation report to Interfolio?**
A  Scan your citation report separately from your transcript. Choose "other document" from the drop down box and then title the document "Citation". You will mail your citation report together with your composite letter/individual letter packet directly to AMCAS once your letters are ready for mailing. Instructions will follow at that time from Annette Hamilton.

Q3  **My Interfolio file is complete, why hasn’t my file been sent to my composite writer yet?**
A  Once your file is complete (appropriate letters, transcripts, autobiographical sketch, resume) you must submit a [Release to Composite Writer form](https://www.hpphealth.com) to Annette Hamilton. This form will not be accepted until your file is complete, so monitor Interfolio and submit it ASAP after all of your letters and documents are in. The form can be found on the HPP Pre-health Advising [website](https://www.hpphealth.com)

Q4  **My composite letter is finished and has been submitted to Annette Hamilton. How do I get access to my letters in order to mail them to AMCAS?**
Once our offices receives the completed letter from your composite writer, we needs time to review the letter. This can take up to two-three weeks depending on how many letters where received, or whether any further tasks are involved in the letter’s completion. Once Annette has created the final composite letter document (which includes an HPP cover letter; the composite letter, and support letters) it will be uploaded onto your Interfolio account. You will be notified by email receive instructions for how to send it/"mail” it to AMCAS or whichever application service you are using.

Q5  **When do I need to submit my composite letter or individual letter packet to AMCAS?**
A  You submit your completed composite letter or individual letter packet through Interfolio as soon as they are ready. You do not submit your composite letter or individual letter packet with your AMCAS application. Therefore, you do not need to wait until your letters are completed to submit your AMCAS application. Do not delay submitting your application waiting for your letters to be finalized. You will usually be delivering your completed composite packet to AMCAS during the time you are completing secondary applications. Again, you will receive mailing instructions from Annette Hamilton once she has uploaded your composite letter/letter packet to your Interfolio account. You will create the mailing from your Interfolio account.

Q6  **How do I submit my letters from Interfolio to AMCAS?**
A  Once your letters have been uploaded to your Interfolio account, Annette Hamilton will email you and provide mailing instructions. Follow these instructions carefully.

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

    - AMCAS ID# (8 digit number)
    - Letter ID# (7 digit number created in your AMCAS application and assigned to your composite letter or individual letter packet).

Q7  **Do I need to mail my citation report separately to AMCAS since it will be sent with my official transcript to them?**
A  Your citation report will hopefully be reviewed by the medical schools. They are prompted in the "schools" section of the AMCAS application to view your citation reports. However, we
recommend that you include your citations in your mailing when you send your composite letter /individual letter packet to AMCAS. Check with Annette before completing the mailing for further instructions.

MEDICAL SCHOOLS

Q1  How do I decide which schools I should apply to?
A  Understand that this is a research project that takes some time! You will need to develop your own criteria and preferences, as well as develop a list with a balanced range of schools that both meet that criteria and with a view to competitiveness at those schools.

Please use the documents on “Choosing Medical Schools” page on our website

USE the Worksheet on that page, to help you develop criteria and a balanced list of schools!

- You may use our excel document called: Med School Fact Summary there too. It is a compilation of school data (gpa's, mcat's, etc) you can refer to.

- Consider subscribing to the actual MSAR (Medical School Admissions Requirements) online.

- We also have info from Dartmouth grads attending medical schools who have agreed to share their experiences at their schools. Copies of those questionnaires are compiled into binders located in Annette Hamilton's office in Parker House, Room 103.

- You can also use the Alumni Advice Network accessible from the Nathan Smith Society home page (only if you are a current student).

- Contact Admissions folks 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 where you are likely to be competitive. Apply to multiple schools, but do not go overboard. Dartmouth applicants have applied to an average of 20-23 schools in recent years. 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.

For other information about the application process please freely use the application section of our website!