



## Merritt Based Medicine

A Medical Student's Tips, Tricks, & Experiences

# Pre-Medical Undergraduate Checklist

### Average Matriculant Numbers for Medical School

<b>Overall GPA:</b>	3.7
<b>Science GPA:</b>	3.1
<b>MCAT:</b>	510 (~85 Percentile)

### Calculating Science GPA (MD Programs)

AMCAS application use the BCMP GPA, which takes into account the following courses:

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Mathematics
- Physics courses.

*All attempts at a course will be included in the GPA calculation.*

### Calculating Science GPA (DO Programs)

AACOMAS application use the BCP GPA, which takes into account the following courses:

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics courses.
- As of the 2017 application cycle, all attempts at a course will be included in the GPA calculation.

*All attempts at a course will be included in the GPA calculation.*

### Medical College Admission Test (MCAT)

<b>Cost of Registration:</b>	\$320
<b>How Many Times Should I Take It?</b>	Plan to only take it Once
<b>When Will I Get My Scores Back?</b>	~ 1 Month After Exam Date
<b>How Many Full-Length Practice Test Should I Take?</b>	Although there is no "exact number," I would aim to try to take ~ 5-6 full length exams. (This is truly the best way I found to gauge my progress and to prepare for test day.)

**Side Note:** If you feel that your score did not accurately reflect your knowledge, preparation effort, and ability (ex. if your MCAT score is very different from the predicted scores you consistently received from full length practice tests – you technically can retake the exam. However, going into MCAT prep with the mentality that you will only take the exam once is highly recommended. Retaking the exam should be carefully considered.

**\* = Typical Medical School Pre-Requisites**  
**∇ = Courses I took in my Undergraduate Program**

Recommend Taking Pre-MCAT	Course Codes Associated with the University of Georgia	Registered for Course	Completed Course
Biology 1 * ∇	BIOL 1107 with Lab		
Biology 2 * ∇	BIOL 1108 with Lab		
General Chemistry 1 * ∇	CHEM 1211 with Lab		
General Chemistry 2 * ∇	CHEM 1212 with Lab		
Organic Chemistry 1 * ∇	CHEM 2211 with Lab		
Physics 1 * ∇	PHYS 1111 ∇ or 1211 with Lab		
Physics 2 * ∇	PHYS 1112 ∇ or 1212 with Lab		
Biochemistry * ∇	BCMB 3100 ∇ or BCMB 410 & 4020		
Statistics ∇	STAT 2000 or BIOS 2010 ∇		
Physiology ∇	VPHY 3100 ∇, PMCY 3000, or CBIO 3710		
Genetics ∇	GENE 3200 ∇		
Psychology ∇	PSYC 1101 ∇		
Sociology	SOCI 1101		



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Recommend Taking Pre-MCAT	Course Codes Associated with the University of Georgia	Registered for Course	Completed Course
Organic Chemistry 2 * ▾	CHEM 2212 with Lab		
Microbiology ▾	MIBO 3500		
Microbiology Lab Techniques ▾	MIBO 3510L		
Reproductive Endocrinology ▾	POUL 4060		

**Side Note:** This is NOT an exhaustive or definitive list of classes need for EVERY medical school. A good practice to repeat with each school you plan on applying to → check school's website to see their specific requirements for course work + how they accept or consider AP credits.

### Letters of Evaluation

*Most medical schools require at least three letters of evaluation, but specific requirements do vary between schools.*

Suggestions of Who to Ask for Letter Writers	Asked Writer	Letter Received on AMCAS	Letter Received on AACOMAS
"Hard Science" Professor	2 Letters (Common Requirement)		
Practicing Physician(s)	1 Letter (Strongly Encouraged)		
Non-Science Faculty Member	1 Letter (Strongly Encouraged)		
Research Mentor			
Employer			
Volunteer Coordinator			

At the end of the day, you want to ask people who actually know you personally, so that they are able to speak to your character, work ethic, abilities, etc. Please consider asking the individual who will write the most compelling letter on your behalf.



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## How Many Letters of Recommendation Do I Need?

<b>MD Programs</b>	Max of 10 Letters
<b>DO Programs</b>	Max of 6 Letters

**Side Note:** This is NOT an exhaustive or definitive list of letters; check each school's requirements to see their specific letter requirements prior to asking your writers.

## Shadowing

You are expected to spend time shadowing and observing a physician to get experience with the “doctor/patient” interaction. You can never begin acquiring these hours too early; so, try to begin reaching out to potential preceptors and shadowing as soon as possible.

### Clinical Shadowing Info:

<b>Hours Needed:</b>	No Specific # of Hours Requirements
<b>Do I need to shadow the specific kind of “doctor” or specialties I might be interested in?</b>	While it is helpful to shadow areas of care that are particularly of interest to you, any physician shadowing you are able to do is better than none
<b>How many different physicians should I shadow?</b>	Again, there is no specific number here. I would say just to try your best to get a wide variety of experiences with physicians in various fields. This gives you a wholistic view of the role a physician plays in healthcare, in the community, and a better understanding of the medical profession.

Best Case Scenario: Shadowing allows you an opportunity to experience medicine, as well as the ability to build a good relationship with at least one M.D. or D.O. along the way. This relationship is an example of someone you can request a letter of evaluation.

PSA: Shadowing means HANDS-OFF → aka OBSERVATION only.



## Volunteering

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Community Service is another very important part of any medical school application. This is an opportunity to show schools your ability to be compassionate and give back to the community while juggling a rigorous course load.

The longevity of your volunteering involvement across multiple years and/or extensive time commitments displays a dedication and commitment to something greater than yourself. Medical Schools are looking for individuals who can balance their commitments, academics, social life, etc. well while being willing and able to serve within their community.

### Community Service Info:

**Hours Needed:** Again, no Specific # of Hours Requirements

**Good Rule of Thumbs:** Aim to have hours that show:

- you have been involved over an extended period of time  
(ex. all 4 years at UGA)
- you are actively involved  
(ex. 2 hours biweekly or 3 weeks every summer)

**Does my volunteer hours have to be related to healthcare/medicine?** Nope!

Tip: Find an organization that you are passionate about and then find a way to serve them.

## Research



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## Research Info:

### Is it required to get in?

While it can be beneficial to your undergraduate experience for many reasons and the majority of successfully applicants are involved with research, it is NOT a requirement.

### Should I get involved with research?

Yes, but only if you are genuinely interested in the research. If you are not interested in lab-based bench research (ex. using pipettes, wearing lab coats, running PCR, etc.), look into other outlets like qualitative community-based research (ex. surveying populations to look into awareness of an issues in healthcare) or case studies.

If you are not interested in pursuing research at all, please do not join a research project because you feel that you need to. I promise you are better off dedicating your time to other activities that you are passionate about and spark joy (ex. volunteering or shadowing or leadership roles).

### How long should I spend in research if I choose to?

Aim to dedicate at least a year to a specific project or lab or the extent of the project if possible.

This will ensure that you are familiar with the details of the research and able to discuss your research at various levels ("elevator speech" and in-depth), while also displaying dedication to a program.

## Food for Thought



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PSA: If you don't take ANYTHING else away from this document/my Merit Based Medicine Platforms, PLEASE read & remember this!!

You are **NOT defined** by a **number** on a piece of paper or computer screen (GPA, MCAT, etc.).

Your **self-worth** is **NOT based** on a medical school's impression of your application or **acceptance**.

Yes, you are a pre-med student; but you are also so **much MORE** than that. Do not let the stress and pressure to achieve success take away from the amazing people and experiences around you in this season of life (or ever)!

Dedicate your time and energy to things that **spark joy** in YOUR life.

Please **NEVER** do anything (including community service, research, a certain leadership position, etc.) to simply "**beef-up your application**" or because you feel like you "**have to**" in order to be a more competitive applicant.

When admissions committees read your personal statement, or talk with you during the interview process, the topics of conversation that you are **passionate** about and **invested** in will **show**.

Yes, work hard and be invested in your pre-med journey. But please don't let your "**Why?**" for everything be solely based on your goals of getting into medical school!

*..... and thank you for coming to my Ted Talk lolz.*



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