

Lafayette College Health Professions Advising

Ready-ing Your Application, Part 2

Assembling Your Materials:

Putting your Best Foot Forward

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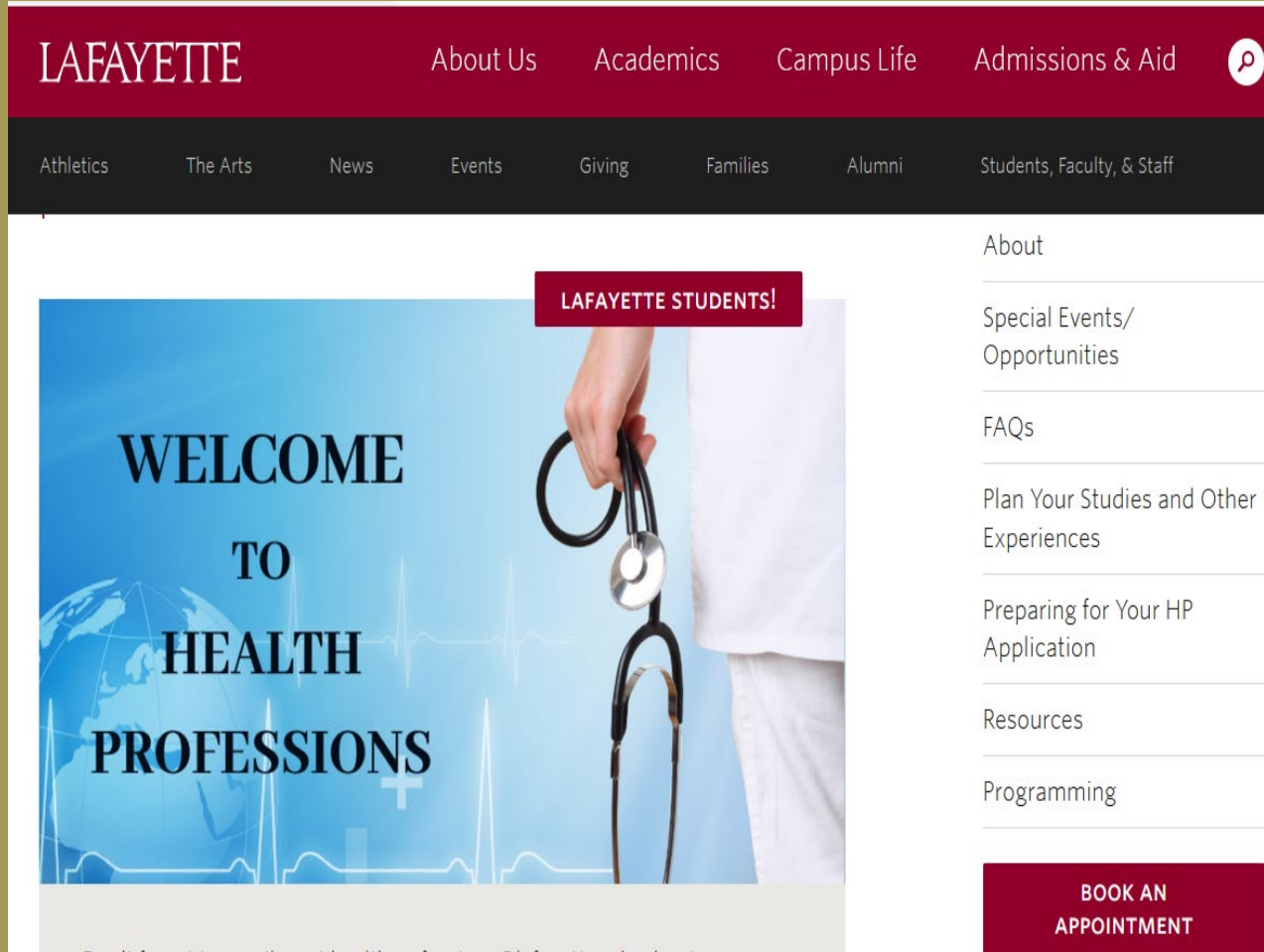
Health Professions Program

Ms Sue Herschlag, Administrative Coordinator

Health Professions Program

9 October 2025

Bookmark our Health Professions Website...



...and remember to **SIGN IN** for today's program!



Our Objectives Today

What you provide

How to provide it

Why all this stuff? Map it to the App!

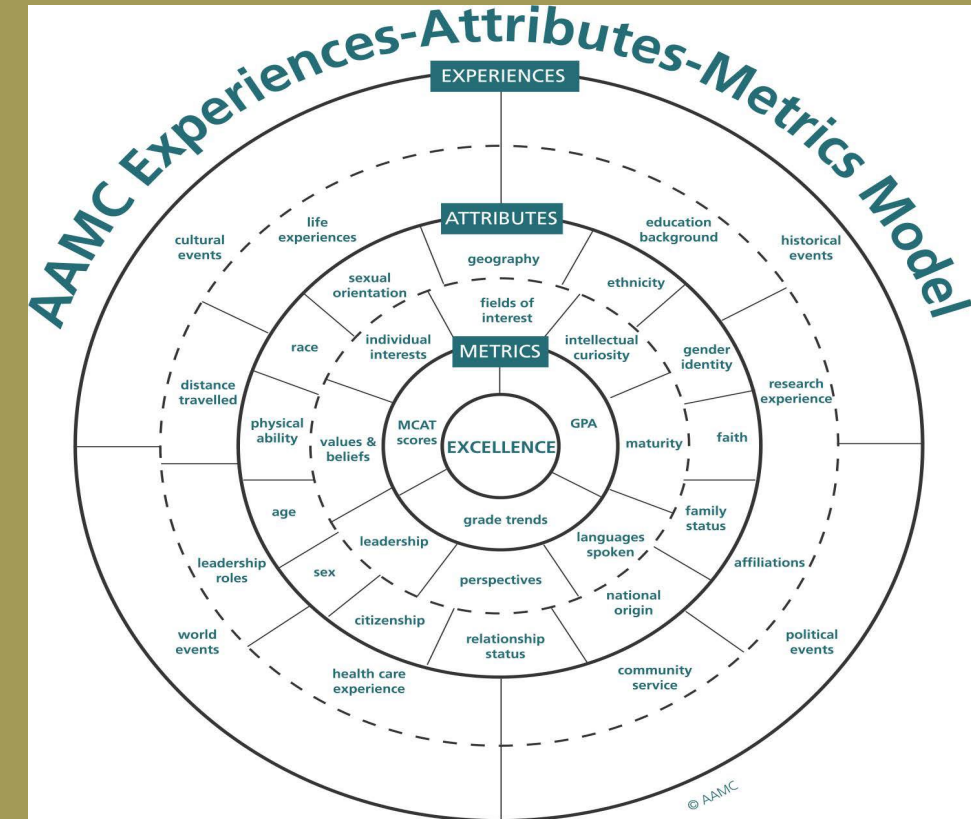
1st of all LOR: choosing, asking

2nd of all HP CV: specificity, skills

3rd of all PIF: capturing competencies

REMEMBER... Undergraduate Preparation for Admission to Graduate and Professional Schools in the Health Professions

Key criteria: Academic/Science grades
Admissions tests
Health-related experiences
Research experiences
Community service and volunteering
People skills/Humanist competencies
Letters of recommendation
HP school interview



While some criteria will vary more than others, ALL remain important to those making admissions decisions; you will need to do more than say it, you need to **SHOW** and provide **EVIDENCE** of your resilience and durability in the face of challenges.

So... you **MUST** convey that evidence **ACCURATELY** and **CLEARLY**!

Commitment to learning and growth
Cultural awareness
Cultural humility
Empathy and compassion
Ethical responsibility to self and others
Interpersonal skills
Oral communication
Reliability and dependability
Resilience and adaptability
Service orientation
Teamwork and collaboration
Critical thinking
Quantitative reasoning
Scientific Inquiry
Written communication
Human behavior
Living systems... **MD & DO**

Knowledge of biomedical and clinical sciences
practice
Interpersonal and communication skills
Person-centered care
Interprofessional collaboration
Professionalism and ethics
Practice-based learning and quality improvement
Society and population health... **PA**

Critical Think
Professionalism
Communication and interpersonal skills
Health promotion
Patient care:
Assessment, diagnosis, planning, treatment
Establishment & maintenance of oral health
Practice management and informatics... **DMD & DDS**

Practice-based learning and improvement
Patient care and procedural skills
Systems-based practice
Medical knowledge
Interpersonal and communication skills
Professionalism
Compassion for all animals and people
Moral and ethical standards
Motivation to serve
Expectations on interactions with those of all ethnic,
social, cultural, and religious backgrounds... **DVM**

Observation abilities: tactile & audio/visual
Communication ability
Sensory and motor coordination ability
Intellectual, conceptual, integrative, quantitative
ability
Behavioral and social attributes... **OD**

UNIVERSAL Pre-Professional Competencies

Everything
you do
and
describe
MUST
circle back
to these !

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Cultural humility
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Critical Think
Professionalism
Communication and interpersonal
Health promotion
Patient care:

Assessment
Evaluation

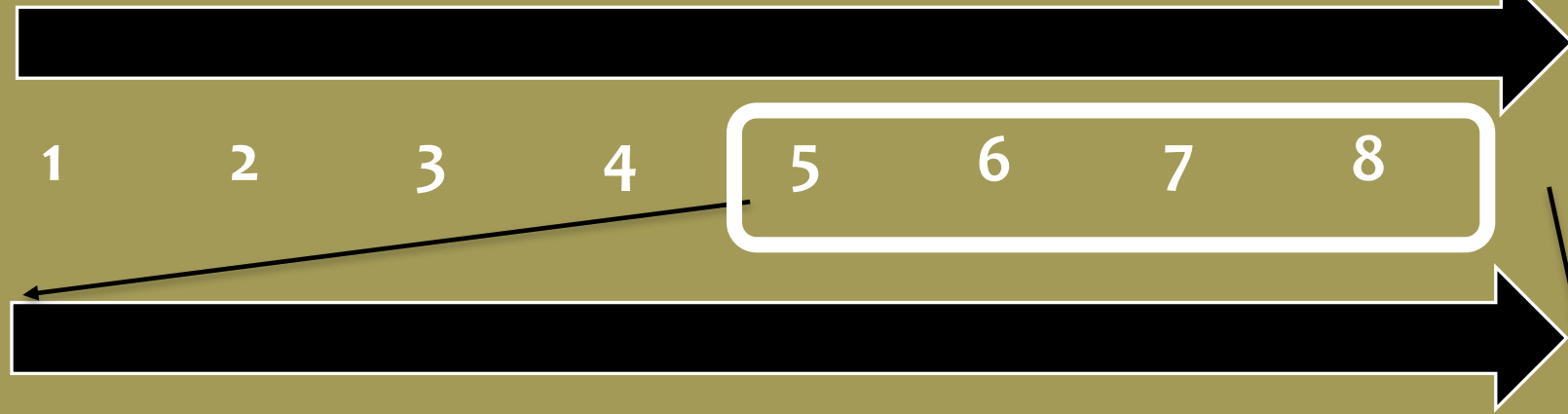
**ANATOMY OF
AN APPLICANT
...AGAIN 😊!**

Observation abilities: tactile & audio/visual
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CAMPUS HPAC APPLICATION TIMELINE



Complete On-Campus HPAC Application BEFORE your HP school application!

- **Develop your HP CV from your resume**
- **Draft your Personal Information Form (PIF)**
- **Choose and solicit individual Letters of Recommendation**
- **Complete your GreenSheet[©] advising/self-assessment form**
- **Schedule your GS[©] Session with us**
- **Draft your Reflective Personal Statement Essay**
- **Interview with HPAC... and THEN... Shift to your Application Portal!!**

Application Components

- Complete undergraduate coursework: core science, writing; Shown in your transcripts
- Select meaningful and diverse experiences: push your comfort zone; Shown in your HP CV and PIF
- Pursue and understand meaningful research: relate your findings capably; Shown in your PIF, LOR and interview
- Exhibit robust extra-curricular service posture: lived experience speaks volumes; Shown in your PIF and Personal Statement

In addition:

- Plan for expenses: \$7500/applicant/cycle
- Plan your back ups 1, 2 and 3 to enhance your portfolio!

1st Item: Letters of Recommendation

- Choose someone who can comment on your competencies from directly observing you in the intended setting, e.g., clinical, laboratory, classroom, etc. NOT a character reference or ‘friend’, but someone who witnessed your growth and performance.
- For On-Campus HPAC Application, select 2 Natural Science faculty, 1 non-Science faculty and then 2 Non-faculty (5 total).
- Each recommender should provide a different perspective to comment on different competencies, e.g., a 5 way mirror!

Advice for students so they don't sound silly in emails



Remember: Craft the email with an Outline

- Salutation/introduction
- Why them—support with evidence
- What you seek
- When—your availability
- Supportive documents
- Presumptive close
- Plan for follow-up...

... and actually Follow up!

Dear Professor Waters,

As a senior biology major who has completed Biol 231: Ecology, I would like to ask if you could provide a strong letter for me for dental school. I ask because I believe you can attest to my work ethic and commitment to learning, as well as to my ability to surmount challenges and implement constructive feedback, given my early struggles in Biol 231. I am attaching drafts of my Health Professions Curriculum Vitae (HP CV), as well as my HP Personal Information Form (PIF) to describe the experiences I've undertaken to pursue my path to dentistry. I believe you can access my unofficial transcript and I will provide a draft of my Personal Statement if that would be helpful.

If you agree, I will provide a signed waiver form and ranking sheet for you to complete along with your recommendation. This could be submitted as early as January 5th 2026, but no later than March 1st, 2026. If you would like to discuss this request, I can be available outside my class schedule, between 2-4pm on Wednesdays as well as anytime Friday mornings. Please let me know what might be convenient. I know you are very busy so if I do not hear from you, I will plan to follow up with a phone call or stop by your office by the end of next week. Thanks in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Student

BS biology major, minor in Spanish, Class of 2026

2nd Item: From Resume to HP CV

Inform with specificity

Devil is in those details

Do the requisite homework

Over communicate! Rather than under communicate

...and...

Practice! Practice! Revise! Revise!

MCMILLAN, VE. 2022. WRITING PAPERS IN THE BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES. BEDFORD/ST MARTIN'S PRESS

PECHENIK, JAN. 1993. A SHORT GUIDE TO WRITING ABOUT BIOLOGY. HARPER COLLINS PUBLISHERS

HOFFMAN, AH. 2010. SCIENTIFIC WRITING AND COMMUNICATION. OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

How Do They Differ?

Resume:

Summarize experience
and qualifications

Highlight relevant
achievements

Promote yourself as a
candidate!

Curriculum Vitae:

Enumerate academic
credentials

Detail relevant
coursework, research

Document suitability for
fellowships, etc

So we combine elements of BOTH in your HP CV!

Mechanics: It bears repeating

- Stick with a plain text
 - Avoid too many bold, *italics*, >bullets OR tabs!
- Use color sparingly, if at all
- Assess page 'real estate' effectively
- Employ consistent fonts:
 - Avoid serifs, opt for sans serif
- Perfection in format, alignment
 - Avoid Orphans on lines

Approach: Make a list and check it twice...

Coursework: relevance?

Honors & awards

Protocols/Equipment

Groups/clubs

Language facility

Shadowing experiences

Support skills

Specialized skills

Positions held

Hobbies/activities

... then quantify, specify, assess value & level

Example:

Experience

Dailey Pet & Home Care Services | since DATE

Offering clients peace of mind in pet walking and care while they are away; manage garden, patio and houseplants and attend to household and property chores on an as-needed basis; client base currently at ~ 21

Emerson's Excellent Vehicle Detailing | since DATE

Contract for car cleaning (exterior and interior) and detailing, either on-site or at my own home garage; services range from simple cleaning to high-shine chassis wax, carpet shampooing, interior surface protection, mat power washing as directed by my clients; client base currently at ~ 14

Leadership and Activities

Hostess, Applebee's Restaurant | Ebensburg, PA | Ms Mary McGowan, supervisor, since May 2023
Responsible for evening shift; point of contact for customer intake averaging ~ 84 patrons nightly. Coordinate reservations and table set-up. Assist servers when needed. Train new employees. Trouble shoot customer service concerns. Maintain high visibility presence and cultivate positive customer experiences.

Go to the Elmo Doc Cam here
For HP CV example and instructions

3rd Item: Your PIF—Work and Activities

**If your HP CV documents, your PIF interprets impact on competencies
Why do they matter?**

- Displays evidence of your growth
- Shows transformative nature of your choices
- Provides insight to your judgement about your choices
- Sheds light on your ‘why’
- Not repetitive, but elaborates

Active link to the AMCAS 2026 Work and Activities Guide:

<https://students-residents.aamc.org/media/13376/download?attachment>

Examples

Experience Type: Volunteer

America Reads Tutor, Landis Community Outreach Center, Easton, PA

January 2017 – May 2019

Helped tutor and mentor students in a weekly middle school intervention program in the Easton area. Worked with children to help with homework, and practiced reading and classwork assignments to improve their literacy and mathematical skill sets. Participated in three organization-wide education and reflection sessions held each semester.

Experience Type: Research

Researcher in Davis Lab of Neuropharmacology | Full time Summer 2024 | University of Iowa | ~50 hr weekly, 500 hours total | Direct Supervisor: Kat Horvath, PhD, khorvath@uco.edu

Project title: Cell type specific effects of Glucagon-like Peptide-1 receptor agonism in the central amygdala on neural dynamics and cocaine reinstatement

Responsible for: conducting chemogenetic experiments to activate central amygdala to nucleus accumbens GABA projections in a rat model of cocaine self-administration and relapse.

Conducted calcium imaging experiments to study the ability of the GLP-1R agonist Exendin 4 to reverse the effects of cocaine on neurons. Performed catheter and stereotaxic surgeries for virus injections, fiber optic placement, and cannula placement. Ran animals through behavioral tasks daily, recorded and analyzed all data, treated sick animals, prepared solutions, and participated in weekly journal club. Presented an oral presentation at the Leadership Alliance National Symposium and a poster at the UCo Summer Undergraduate Internship Program Research Symposium.

In all things...

~~In our study published as James et al in 2017 we found that..~~

James et al (2017) demonstrated...!

Edit

~~It is interesting to note that~~
extraneous! omit!

~~in prior studies?~~

Previously!

ruthlessly!

~~In light of the fact that?~~

~~more often than not?~~ Usually!

Because!

~~In order to show?~~ To show!

~~Utilize?~~ Use!

Good Ways to be Memorable...

Do YOUR homework first. Sometimes it *does* hurt to ask!

Address persons with respect; use their titles. Or assume a higher title!

Treat e-mail as formal correspondence—faculty and admissions staff treat it that way! Grammar and spelling matter! Use a signature and start your brand!

Introduce yourself; Provide complete information, specific context (subject header? context? email signature? Useful and relevant attachments?).

Request, rather than demand or instruct.

Provide sufficient advance notice.

Always say ‘Thank you!’ and mean it!

THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?