

Lafayette College
Health Professions Advising
Ready-ing Your Application Part 3:
Self-Assessment and Holistic Review

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KNOW YOUR WHY!

Each decision you make eliminates some possibilities, but each may also lead to new opportunities. Make choices that reflect and demonstrate why they are valuable to you. *The best thing to do is always that for which we have the best reasons!* Be sure your reasons are authentic, rooted in knowledge, demonstrably evident and well-conceived. A consistent, focused portfolio will be reviewed holistically. Your vision of how you will contribute must align with the mission of your schools!



Up until now?

Part 1: High stakes test prep (MCAT, DAT)

Part 2: Documenting competencies and demonstrating skills in your needed materials (HP CV, PIF, LoR > 1° App

Our Objectives Today in Part 3?

Why all this matters to your success?

What is the landscape and what is holistic review?

How to approach Mission-Aligned Selection?

Key Criteria (assist in Mission Alignment)

Academic/Science grades

Admissions tests

Health-related experiences

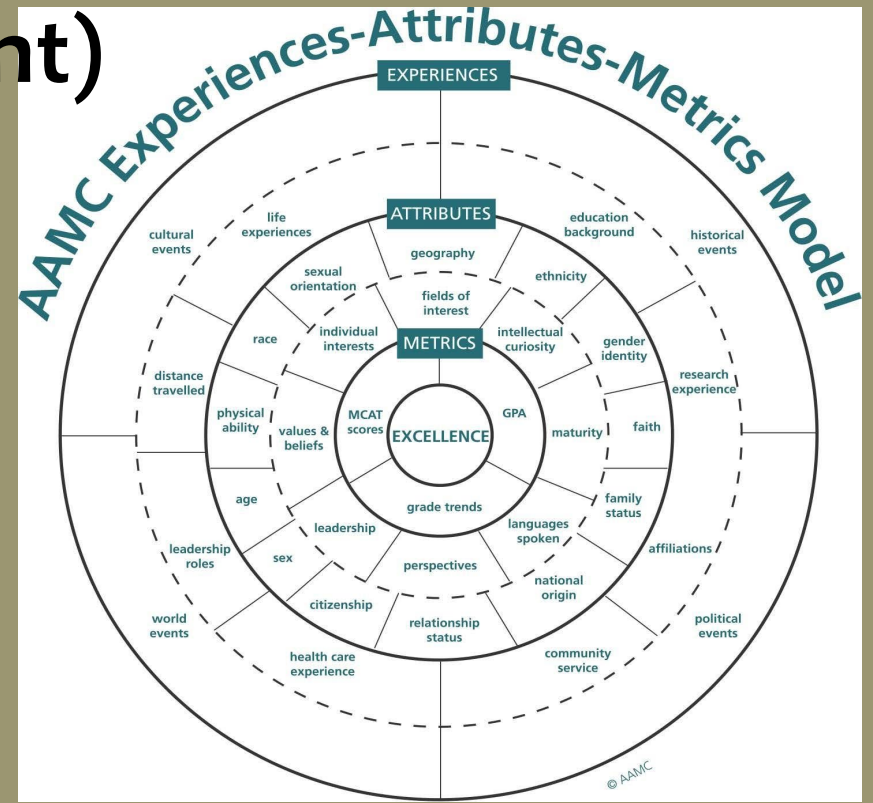
Research experiences

Community service and volunteering

People skills/Humanist competencies

Letters of recommendation

HP school interview



While their importance can vary among schools, ALL are part of 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** in your materials... and all must circle back to the

PRE-PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES!

Undergraduate Preparation – Academic coursework

Required Undergraduate Coursework. Check your bellwether schools. *Typically:*

1 Year EACH of:

Biology with labs (e.g., 111 & 112)

Physics with labs (e.g., 111 & 112; 131 & either 132/133; 151 & 152)

Mathematics/Calculus/Statistics; minimally 1 calc + 1 stats

English composition/Writing-Intensive Coursework (1 or 2)

2+ Years of:

Chemistry with labs (Chem 103/107 & 108; OCh 221 & 222; BioChem 351)

Other frequently required or specialty required courses:

Sociology, Psychology, Bioethics; Microbiology, Nutrition, Genetics, Anatomy & Physiology...

~12-14 Core Courses. 1st semester juniors? At ~10-12 courses. 1st semester seniors ? All core completed. Schools increasingly prefer ALL core courses DONE WITH 1^o APPLICATION, not upon matriculation!

EXPLORE course options in social science, humanities, and engineering wherever possible!

Undergraduate Preparation – REMINDERS!

If there is a reason to set aside an application, they will!

Advanced Placement. School scrutiny is rising! Be certain you are taking rigorous academic courses and laboratory training! Reduce/remove ambiguity in interpretation!

Summer Coursework, Pass/Fail, Light loads. Politely explain any weakness or negative interpretations in your portfolio; elect full courses at home in full load.

Study Abroad. Request a letter of recommendation!

Research, Electives, Minor. Explain why you seek these distinctions. Do that for which you have passion!

Internships/Externships. Show passion, Dedication! Push your boundaries and limits, stretch your comfort zone!

Extracurricular Activities. Focus on what you control NOW!

...and Read! Widely! Especially on healthcare. On policy. On current events. On music, theatre, sports, literature... See the HP Program website for suggestions.

If there is a reason to set aside an application, they will! Do not provide a reason! Reduce ambiguity in your portfolio!

UNIVERSAL Pre-Professional Competencies

how schools evaluate the avalanche of applicants

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 Thinking
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**

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Knowledge of biomedical science
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Society and population health... **PA**

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Anatomy of an Applicant
Guide! A GREAT AAMC
resource with developmental
planning worksheets you can
use to gauge your progress,
no matter your intended field!

HOW TO ASSESS YOUR READINESS? WHO IS YOUR COMPARISON GROUP?

SOME RECENT (FALL 2024 OR 2023) NATIONAL DATA...

- **Allopathic medical schools accepted 23,156 from 51,946 applicants (45%); osteopathic schools admitted 9,612 out of 22,086 applicants (43%)**
- **77 US dental schools admitted 6,719 of 12,491 (54%)**
- **48 US/International veterinary schools admitted 4,000+ of 11,508 applicants (35%)**
- **24 US optometry schools admitted 2,868 from the 12,732 applications read**
- **11 colleges of podiatry admitted 525 from 839 applicants (63%)**
- **321 PA programs admitted 10,734 from the 34,625 applicants (31%)... with more programs gaining accreditation**

LISTEN TO WHAT YOUR DATA ARE TELLING YOU...

Applicant Matriculation Year	Acceptance GPA 3.60+	Acceptance GPA 3.59-3.20	Acceptance GPA 3.20 & under	Acceptance Overall
LAFAYETTE 2018-2022 Aggregate data (MD + DO)	73% (59 of 81)	50% (13 of 26)	25% (1 of 4)	66% (73 of 111)
NATIONAL 2020-2023 (MD only)	53%	28%	13%	41%

AAMC as of 10/22/2025: 51,741 completed, processed applicants for the current cycle vs 49,101 in the previous cycle... a 5.4% increase in applicants to allopathic schools. Fall 2023: successful GPA 3.77, MCAT 511.7

For 2018-2023 Lafayette College aggregate data:

80% dental school applicants were accepted (12 of 15)

80% veterinary school applicants were accepted (4 of 5)

100% optometry applicants were accepted (3 of 3)

Data for DP, PA, MPH and other allied health specialties are not yet available.

* Source: aamc.org, aacomas.org

UPDATE SOME OF THESE DATA!!

Applicant Matriculation Year	Acceptance GPA 3.60+	Acceptance GPA 3.59-3.20	Acceptance GPA 3.20 & under	Acceptance Overall
LAFAYETTE 2020-2024 Aggregate data (MD + DO)	76% (48 of 63)	60% (12 of 20)	33% (1 of 3)	71% (61 of 86)

AAMC as of 10/22/2025: 51,741 completed, processed applicants for the current cycle vs 49,101 in the previous cycle... a 5.4% increase in applicants to allopathic schools. *Fall 2024: successful GPA 3.79, MCAT 511.8*

*For 2020-2024 Lafayette College aggregate data:
79% dental school applicants were accepted (11 of 14)
71% veterinary school applicants were accepted (5 of 7)
100% optometry applicants were accepted (3 of 3)
Data for DP, PA, MPH and other allied health specialties are not available.*

* Source: aamc.org, aacomas.org

Recent Lafayette College Applicants

- Top UG majors: Biology, Neuroscience, but 26% of applicants were non-science majors
- Acceptance rate to med school was 84%
- 53% of applicants had 2+ glide years
- Applicant metrics:
GPA=3.79, BCPM GPA=3.72, MCAT=508.4
- Successful Matriculant metrics:
GPA=3.81, BCPM GPA=3.77, MCAT 509.6

Fall 2024 applicants

COMPETITIVE ADMISSIONS TESTS TARGETS...

MCAT [HTTPS://WWW.AAMC.ORG/STUDENTS/APPLYING/MCAT/](https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/)

- BIOLOGICAL AND BIOCHEMICAL FOUNDATIONS OF LIVING SYSTEMS
- CHEMICAL AND PHYSICAL FOUNDATIONS OF BIOLOGICAL SYSTEMS
- CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND REASONING SKILLS
- PSYCHOLOGICAL, SOCIAL & BIOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF BEHAVIOR
- **TARGET: 510 (80TH %ILE) AND GPA 3.6+, 800 HOURS**

DAT

[HTTP://WWW.ADEA.ORG/DENTAL_EDUCATION_PATHWAYS/AADSAS/APPLICANTS/PAGES/TAKETHEDAT\(DENTALADMISSIONTEST\).ASPX](http://www.adea.org/dental_education_pathways/aadsas/applicants/pages/takethedat(dentaladmissiontest).aspx)

- NATURAL SCIENCE (BIOLOGY, GENERAL AND ORGANIC CHEMISTRY)
- PERCEPTUAL ABILITY (2- AND 3-DIMENSIONAL PROBLEM SOLVING)
- READING COMPREHENSION
- QUANTITATIVE REASONING
- **TARGET: 20-21 (75TH %ILE) AND GPA 3.6**

OAT [HTTPS://HTTP://WWW.ADA.ORG/EN/OAT](https://http://www.ada.org/en/oat)

- NATURAL SCIENCES (BIOLOGY, GEN CHEM, ORGANIC CHEM)
- READING COMPREHENSION
- PHYSICS
- QUANTITATIVE REASONING
- **TARGET: 350 (75TH %ILE) AND 3.5 GPA**

Cultivate your own self-reflective insight to...

- Develop your vision **BROADLY** rather than narrowly
- Devour your bellwether schools—evaluate **NOT** just metrics, but pay close attention to:
 - Watch this [AAMC webinar](#) to see how the Admissions Team fills their **mission** to admit their matriculants
 - Compare that to your **vision** of yourself as a health care provider, **NOT** a given specialty or residency, but how you see yourself contributing to the profession
 - Consider applying to a school **ONLY** if it is a school you would attend as the **SOLE SCHOOL** that accepted you!

UNDERSTANDING HOLISTIC REVIEW

- Useful in review for deciding/considering interview offers, Holistic Review places credentials of applicants contextually to life experiences; it strives to match applicants' experiences to meet the school's mission.
- HR is NOT 'robbing Peter to pay Paul' nor 'using an overflowing bucket to fill an empty bucket'... strong performance in some areas will NOT mitigate weak performance elsewhere.
- “No one is saying that skills and inclination in science are not important,” Dr. Witzburg said. “But in this rapidly evolving and diverse society, they alone are insufficient.”

The trap to avoid: “I have a really strong application, except for...”

Remember: If there is a reason to set aside an application, they will!

UNDERSTANDING HOLISTIC REVIEW CONTINUED...

- **Builds a diverse class to admit students from a wider range of backgrounds and life experiences.**
- **Ensures a student body where a rich learning environment promotes collaboration to achieve potential.**
- **Provides a more complete, nuanced depiction of an applicant by giving context and articulating how challenges were surmounted.**
- **Enables alignment with a school's mission by demonstrated commitment to values articulated by each school.**

NEW MISSION-ALIGNED SELECTION AND RETENTION

- Clarifies usage of holistic review tools in admissions
- Establishes the **program's mission** as the foundation for identifying applicants whose competencies, metrics, attributes and experiences 'fit'
- Adds emphasis on **supporting accepted** students to enhance their success
- Provides transparent goals based on data-informed outcomes
- **Programs** will evaluate applicants with the goal of assembling a cohort that collectively demonstrates a collective ability to thrive and contribute
- **Applicants** will need to develop with more individuality those criteria that each school prioritizes in their review process; **School Specific!**
- Elevates the fit of each applicant to the meet the school's mission among all relevant and applicable criteria!

EXAMPLE OF MISSION-ALIGNED SELECTION AND RETENTION: CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Mission: To improve global health by linking research to populations in a superb educational environment (dig deeper? CWRU is a national leader in NIH funding and biomedical research) ***So... Priority Admissions Criteria?***

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- ***Academically successful***
- ***Compassion for others***
- ***Passionate***
- ***Intellectually curious***
- ***Altruistic***

Also valuable? Evidence of socially adept, activity interest, emotional intelligence, self-motivated and collaborative learner, focused and mature

EXAMPLE OF MISSION-ALIGNED SELECTION AND RETENTION: UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

Mission: We pursue excellence across biomedical research, education and patient care to advance health equity and wellness for people in Baltimore, the state of MD and the world. Together we work to solve generational health challenges and make lasting contributions to the betterment of our diverse and interconnected communities.

So... Priority Admissions Criteria?

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So... Priority Admissions Criteria?

- ***Highly talented academically***
- ***Compassionate***
- ***Humanistic***
- ***Professional***
- ***Committed to social justice and health equity***

Also valuable? FirstGen, in-state applicants, Fee Assistance Program applicants, Socioeconomic status, community representation

BOTTOM LINE?

You now have more homework to do, earlier in your trajectory on school choices so you can be strategic. Consider collaborating with your fellow pre-dent and pre-med students and delve into Mission Alignment for some schools!

More recent helps and resources...

Fee Assistance Programs

Considering applying for financial help? Applicants need to apply to Fee Assistance programs *before* registering for their admissions tests or submitting their applications. Info about AAMC Fee Assistance program can be found at [this link](#).

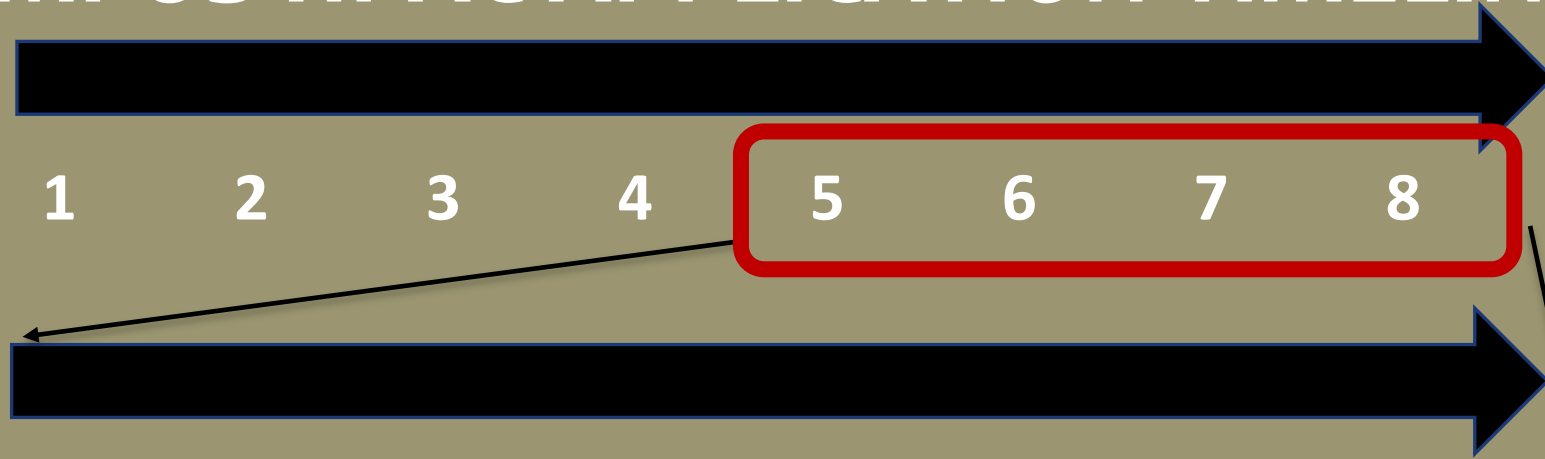
MCAT/Preview Accommodation Process Updates

AAMC has combined MCAT and PREview accommodations application processes. The updated and integrated system enables applicants to apply for one or both exams. More information is available at [this link](#). In addition, we urge our dental, optometry, or veterinary applicants to review accommodation process for their respective application services in advance of applying.

MCAT Preparation

Be wary of unofficial prep videos for HP applicants, since none are directly offered by ADEA AADSAS or OptomCAS. Build on our Part 1 Session by using “Start your MCAT Prep Right with Proven Learning Strategies” by Dr. Wynn, an AAMC consultant at [this link](#).

CAMPUS HPAC APPLICATION TIMELINE



Campus HPAC Application **PRECEEDS** CAS *Primary application submission.*

Complete your GreenSheet[®] advising/self-assessment

Provide your HP CV; schedule your GS Session with us

Solicit individual Letters of Recommendation

Draft Reflective Application Personal Statement Essay

Fill out your Personal Information Form

Interview with HPAC...

...THEN...

Shift to your Application Portal!!

SUMMARY APPLICATION TIMELINE TO MATRICULATE FALL 2027

- GreenSheet Form and HP CV** submit **NOW** but no later than **November 7, 2025** to access our personal GS appointment evaluation sessions through Fall 2025.
- Recommenders—WHO** to recruit? 2 science faculty, 1 non-science faculty, 2 non-faculty supervisors... choose wisely! **WHEN** to ask? Before close of Fall 2025. **HOW** to request? A formal email asking for consideration and a meeting, providing drafts of materials attached with your request. **WHAT** to provide? Cover sheet dated **2026**. See Session on Part 2!!
- Populate your Personal Information Form.** See Session on Part 2!
- Draft your Reflective Personal Statement Essay.** Upcoming Session in January 2026.
- Establish your exam preparation schedule...** and adhere to it. If you intend to pursue test accommodations, do so **EARLY!** And don't forget PreView, Casper and/or SJT requirements! See Session Part 1!!
- FIRST DEADLINE 1 February 2026:** Provide to HPA your HP Advising Waiver Form (may require Dean's meeting for follow-up)
- SUPER DEADLINE 1 March 2026:** Provide to HPA ALL Letters of Recommendation with ratings and counter-signed cover sheet; updated PIF, HP CV, and your Reflective Personal Statement Essay

...**MORE TIMELINE...**

- HPAC On-Campus Interview** invitations are conducted through March and April 2026
- Sit for Entrance Examination** by May 2026 to have scores by 1 June 2026
- Create your account with your CAS** when application services open in Spring 2026; you need a month to populate from your PIF/HP CV
- Manage your TRANSCRIPTS** following CAS policies asap; wait for your LC transcripts until Spring 2026 grades are available
- Sit for PreView, CASPER or SJT exam** as directed by your schools!
- 2ndary requests extended**, sometimes after previews, sometimes automatically, but finish them within 10 days of receipt!
- School interviews** initiated in late July 2026 and may continue through March 2027; interviews may be in person, virtual or MMI
- Admission offered** perhaps within 3 weeks or as long as 6 months, but October 1 2026 is earliest official acceptance date (ED); waitlist use varies

...so maybe you can see why 25 is the mean age of matriculating HP students

What do each of us need?

External Feedback

- compassionate
- informed
- constructive

Internal Self-Assessment

- courageously honest
- confidently competent
- evidence based

CAN I DO, CAN I BE BETTER?

AM I COMPETITIVE AND AT MY BEST?

*EMPLOY OUR **GREENSHEET** 2025 PROCESS*

*All of us at Lafayette College look forward to your success as you plan for a career in the health professions. Follow our Twitter account **@HPLafCol**, connect with Gateway Career Center, and visit us at **<http://healthprofessions.lafayette.edu/>***