Health Professions Advisory Committee

2019 APPLICATION PROCESS

Timeline, Policies, and Procedures
PROCESS TIMELINE, 2019 ADMISSION

INFORMATION SESSIONS
*Attend one session. Each session is 4:00-5:00 pm,*
- Monday, September 25, Lippitt 403
- Wednesday, October 25, Lippitt 302D
- Wednesday, November 29, Lippitt 302D

ESSAY WRITING WORKSHOP
*Sign up for one workshop. Each session is 4:00-5:30:*
- Monday, December 11, 2017 Lippitt 403
- Monday, January 22, Lippitt 302D
- Wednesday, January 24, Lippitt 302D

NOVEMBER 27-DECEMBER 12, 2017
*Initial Individual Assessment Meetings with HPAC Chair*

FEBRUARY 1, 2018
*Last day to submit HPAC Dossier*
Deadline for letters of recommendation

MID-FEBRUARY (TBA)
*HPAC Multiple Mini Interview sessions—each applicant attends one*

MARCH 1-APRIL 13
*HPAC personal interviews*

APRIL 2-27
*Final Individual Assessment Meetings with HPAC Chair*

APRIL 18
*Final Applicant Meeting, 7:00-8:30pm, Location TBA*

MAY-JUNE
*Complete and submit primary application (AMCAS, AACOMAS, AADSAS, OptomCAS, et al.)*

JULY-AUGUST
*Complete secondary applications*

JULY 16
*Final primary application (AMCAS, AADSAS, etc.) submission date to receive the HPAC letter. Alumni and students who submit primary applications after this date will not receive the HPAC letter.*

SEPTEMBER-MARCH
*Interviews (most interviews occur September-January)*

OCTOBER 15
*Allopathic medical school release first acceptances (December 1 for dental schools)*

MARCH-JUNE, 2019
*Finalizing decisions (Allopathic medical schools must issue enough offers to fill all seats in their entering classes by March 15)*
*Wait list decisions*
HPAC PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

The HPAC Letter

The HPAC letter is a summary and evaluation of your candidacy for admission. It is usually a page and a half in length and is accompanied by individual letters written by professors, mentors, and/or supervisors who know you well. Health profession admission committees rely on these committee letters to holistically evaluate a candidate's attributes and experiences as they relate to their undergraduate institution (in this case, URI). The letter is based on formal interviews with HPAC members, a dossier that includes background and academic information as well as a list of activities and personal statement, letters of recommendation, and transcripts from URI and other colleges at which you have completed coursework.

Almost all medical schools prefer to receive a committee letter, though in some cases (e.g., alumni who graduated more than three years ago) it is not necessary. Dental, optometry, and podiatry schools also accept the committee letter and other health profession training programs may request your committee letter.

Criteria to Qualify for the HPAC Letter

The HPAC letter is available to students and recent alumni whose record of experiences and academic achievement demonstrate a reasonable chance for success in the admission process, and whose substantive experiences and academic work were either at URI or, if elsewhere, closely related to their undergraduate academic program or co-curricular objectives at URI. To this end, the Committee has established the following eight criteria for eligibility:

1. Most or all required coursework must be complete.
2. Clinical experience at the quantity and quality expected by the applicant’s chosen profession.
3. Science and cumulative grade point averages of 3.2 for medical school, and 3.0 for dental, optometry, and/or podiatry school.
4. Competitive standardized test scores, or a realistic plan to prepare for and take the MCAT, DAT, OAT or other required test prior to submission of primary application(s).
5. Ability to demonstrate, through experience and recommendations, that you meet Core Competencies for Entering Medical Students for allopathic medicine, or the equivalent for other health professions. The competencies can be found online at: https://www.aamc.org/initiatives/admissionsinitiative/competencies
6. Ability to obtain required supporting letters of recommendation.
7. Completion of at least four semesters of study at URI.
8. Status as a current student or graduate who graduated no earlier than 2014.

In addition to these criteria, applicants are encouraged to review the technical standards (or equivalent for professions other than medicine) for the schools to which they plan to apply. These standards are usually available on each school’s web site.

If you do not meet these criteria but still wish to apply, please make an appointment to meet with the HPAC Chair to discuss your plan and how URI can support your application in other ways.
Note that the criteria for receiving the HPAC letter are consistent with competitive applications for admission in general. If you do not meet these criteria, you should seriously consider postponing your application to improve your preparation. The pre-health advising staff will be happy to assist you with further planning.

**Process for Receiving the HPAC Letter**

There are seven required steps to receive the HPAC letter:

1. Attend an information session (fall term).
2. Meet with the HPAC chair for an initial assessment of your credentials for admission (late fall term). You will need to complete a pre-application self-assessment in preparation for this meeting.
3. Prepare your HPAC dossier (by February 1).
4. Obtain supporting letters of recommendation (by February 1).
5. Participate in an HPAC multiple mini interview session (early-mid spring term).
6. Have an individual interview with a member of HPAC (mid-spring term).
7. Meet individually with the HPAC chair for a final assessment (late spring term).

**Information Sessions**

You begin the process by attending one of three informational meetings offered during the fall semester. These sessions last an hour and provide a complete overview of the admission process.

**Initial Assessment Meeting with the HPAC Chair**

This meeting is an opportunity for you to assess, with the assistance of the HPAC Chair, whether your academic and experiential preparation gives you a reasonable chance of success in the admission process for your chosen profession. Prior to this meeting, you will complete the HPAC Pre-Interview Self-Assessment.

**Prepare your HPAC Dossier**

Following your assessment meeting with the HPAC Chair, you will receive a link to the online HPAC Dossier. This is a comprehensive dossier that gives the Committee a complete picture of your candidacy. The dossier is designed to closely match portions of the health profession schools’ primary applications. It has nine sections as follows:

1. Identifying information
2. Biographic and demographic information
3. Academic information
4. Detailed list of experiences
5. Essays
6. Standardized test scores
7. Letters of evaluation

8. Institutional disciplinary action

9. HPAC letter waiver

You will need the following items in order to complete the HPAC Dossier:

- A passport style professional .jpg photo of yourself
- Completed GPA calculator (an Excel spreadsheet we will send to you)
- If applicable, transcripts from colleges and universities other than URI where you have taken courses
- A resume

Your completed HPAC dossier must be submitted by **Thursday, February 1, 2018 at 11:59pm. No dossiers will be accepted after that time.**

In advance you should also prepare an activities list and personal statement.

*Letters of Recommendation*
You will need to obtain a minimum of four letters of recommendation, and not more than five total in support of your HPAC letter. You will list your evaluators in the HPAC dossier. These recommendations are sent to health profession schools in a packet with your committee letter.

At least two of your evaluations must be from URI faculty who are familiar with your work from courses, research, or other academic activities (e.g., teaching or tutoring). At least one of these URI faculty letters must be from someone in the sciences, though we strongly recommend that you have at least two such letters.

The remaining two letters may come from individuals at URI or elsewhere who have supervised, mentored, or taught you and who can write in-depth about your personal attributes as they relate to health care practice.

Letters from relatives, family friends, and peers will not be accepted.

If applying for MD/PhD programs, at least two of your letters must be from research mentors.

You should give each of your recommenders a Letter Request Form (we will make this available to you on-line), which details the criteria most helpful to HPAC and to health profession school admission committees. This form also contains information about how to submit your recommendation letter, and how it should be formatted. This form should not be included with your letter of recommendation.

*Multiple Mini Interviews (MMIs) with HPAC*
MMIs are a series of short interviews, each based on single question prompt. During your MMI session, you will rotate through five 10-minutes interviews with five different committee members. The questions could involve hypothetical situations, ethical dilemmas, specific questions about your background, and/or issues in health care practice or policy. No specific knowledge is required for MMIs. Instead, your interviewers will be interested in how you think about various problems and scenarios, your ability to self-reflect, how well you communicate your thoughts and opinions, and your overall level of professional presentation. You will be assigned to one MMI
session sometime in February or early March; the HPAC Chair will provide you with more information about the MMs early in the spring term.

**Individual Interviews with HPAC Members**
In addition to an MMI, all applicants will have a one-on-one interview with a member of HPAC. This interview will be more personalized and informal than the group interview. Your interviewer will have read your dossier and other information about you; their questions will be both specific to your situation and more generally about health care education and practice. They may also have feedback for you about ways to improve your application.

**Final Assessment with the HPAC Chair**
This is the concluding and culminating meeting of the process. You will have an opportunity to ask the HPAC Chair any questions you might have about your application, and you will receive specific feedback about your application strategy along with any concerns the Committee might have about your candidacy.

**Post-Interview and Your Decision to Apply**
The Committee’s goal is to help you make a well-informed choice about when and whether to apply for admission. As noted above, following your interviews with the committee, you will receive feedback from the HPAC Chair about your candidacy. If the Committee has concerns about your application, and believes that you should take additional time to improve your chances for admission, you will receive specific recommendations about steps you can take to become a stronger applicant in the future.

*Note that the committee may choose to withhold its letter if it believes that a student or graduate lacks the academic preparation, personal attributes, experience, or integrity to be successful in the admission process.*

**Re-Applying**
For reapplication, you will need to complete a dossier updating HPAC about your activities since your previous application. You will be asked to write about the reasons why you were not admitted, and steps you have taken to improve your candidacy. You will also need to submit one or two additional letters of recommendation documenting new activities and/or academic work. The re-applicant committee letter packet will include:

- The committee letter from your prior application.
- All individual letters of recommendation submitted in support of your original committee letter.
- New letters of recommendation.
- A cover letter written by the HPAC Chair summarizing the ways in which you have strengthened your candidacy.

In most cases, you will not be required to interview with HPAC again as a re-applicant; rather, you will meet individually with the HPAC Chair who will then present your updated credentials to the committee.
An important note regarding re-application
We *strongly recommend* applying only when you have a reasonable chance of being admitted. While re-application is possible it is best to avoid having to do so. The application process is expensive, time consuming, and stressful; moreover, schools will be expecting improvement in any areas of your application that were deficient the first time around, and this raises the bar for your success the second time around. This is one reason why we have the HPAC process. It is an opportunity to get a comprehensive and realistic assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of your candidacy, your chances of admission, and the best time to apply.

**When to Apply**

You should plan to apply for admission only when you can meet the eight criteria noted above to qualify for a letter recommendation from HPAC. For students who could be ready to go directly from college to health profession training, the admission process would start approximately halfway through junior year. However, for the vast majority of people interested in health professions, the application process will come senior year or later. Note that HPAC supports a significant number of seniors and alumni each year, and pre-health advising continues to be available to alumni.

**Pre-Health Advising Contacts**

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