

Pre-Med at JWU

Coursework: JWU courses for MD/DO entry overview (see link below)

<https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:854c8aea-2ed0-4e16-8428-2e6eaf2a268d>

MD Getting Started Info:

<https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school-amcas/applying-medical-school-amcas>

Osteopathic Medicine Getting Started Info : <https://www.aacom.org/become-a-doctor/about-osteopathic-medicine>

Shadowing: START EARLY! Prior to holiday breaks, contact any medical contacts you may have (pediatrician is a good place to start and then start asking others) and ask about possibility of shadowing. Shoot for at least 20-50 hours, with at least 2 different MDs. If planning DO, be sure to get time with at least one. Most schools recognize that Covid has made difficult & some flexibility, but still required.

Community Volunteering: Service in just about any capacity is encouraged! Food pantries, online crisis counseling, tutoring, hospital volunteering, religious volunteering, Greek-life volunteer projects, etc..

Patient Contact Care: Not required for most MD/DO programs, but demonstrates good clinical experience. Good options are: EMT (emergency medical technician), CNA (certified nursing assistant), phlebotomist, medical scribe, or medical assistant (see FAQ for more specifics about medical assistant). Consider using your job for internship credit, contact Experiential Learning as approach junior-year status or beyond to help set up.

Scientific Research: Not required, but some successful candidates take part in a scientific research project. Undergraduate research opportunities are often available within your major (advertised when they become available) or by applying to outside summer research fellowships and outreach programs (go to AMCAS, How to Gain Experience). Consider looking or using research opportunities here and abroad for internship credit, contact Experiential Learning as approach junior-year status or beyond to help set up.

Programs: In-state, public schools are often most affordable and best chance of acceptance. Consider moving to a state with/more medical schools in your gap years (see FAQs). FAQ for other considerations. **MCAT Testing:** <https://students-residents.aamc.org/mcat-faq/mcat-faqs?topic=general> See FAQs for more details.

International Medical Outreach: Not required, but some successful candidates take part in volunteer travel programs outside of the US. *Be careful as some may have significant costs.* See link below:

<https://www.volunteeringolutions.com/blog/recommended-pre-med-volunteer-projects-abroad/>

Application Process:

Begin ~2 years before hope to begin MD/DO school

MCAT: Plan on taking 1 ½ - 2 years in advance, often Fall [2 years in advance] - late Winter [1 ½ years in advance] before you plan to matriculate as will give you time to re-take in Spring/Early Summer if necessary.

Write AAMCAS Personal Statement:

Start 1 year (often Spring) before you plan to matriculate. Take help from writing tutors/faculty on personal statements!

AAMCAS Application: Portal opens each year in May. Best to have application submitted no later July (ideally earlier!) the year before you plan to matriculate.

AAMCAS Recommendation:

3-4 total: 2 faculty (at least 1 science) and 1-2 other, often someone who can reflect on healthcare, volunteer, and/or research experience.

Interviews: Top candidates will be asked for secondary responses and then interviews 3-9 months prior to matriculation. Ask for help to prep from faculty or Experiential Learning!

IMPORTANT Pre-MD/DO FAQs:

1. **Document Your Activities:** Keep log on your computer of your experiences, including names as you will need to document your experience later in your application.
2. **What is BCPM?:** Science mastery and grades, especially the BCPMs (Biology [BIO], Chemistry [CHM], Physics [PHY], and Math courses) should be strong as possible in order to be competitive for any of these programs! Please avoid online/community college courses (Covid year 20-21 only allowance) as some schools will not accept for core science requirements. Check school requirements for AP credit allowance.
Take advantage of tutoring & consider re-taking a course if grade less than/equal to a C, especially in the core sciences.
3. **JWU GPAs Require Conversion to Standard System:** Please be aware that ALL collegiate grades will be counted when you applied (even if you re-take a course) and will be converted to standardized AMCAS system which adjusts your JWU GPA slightly (ex. B+ at JWU = 3.5 → adjusted AMCAS system B+ = 3.3). You may also need to convert quarter terms to semester equivalents. To do this, MAKE A COPY of the linked sheet and save a copy for your keeping: <https://1drv.ms/x/s!Ak5n0wrbFYysg4Ff52Yr8vziv-huAw?e=crPGbl>
4. **Goal GPAs:** In 2020, the average adjusted overall GPA of 3.73, and adjusted BCPM GPA of 3.66. US acceptance rate was ~ 6.7% in 2019. For more statistics, see: <https://bemoacademicconsulting.com/blog/us-med-schools-admissions-statistics> AND <https://mededits.com/medical-school-admissions/statistics/#:~:text=The%20most%20recent%20data%20shows,Non%20Science%20GPA%3A%203.82>
5. **MCAT:** The MCAT is a challenging exam that covers a wide breadth of mainly scientific knowledge based upon the required coursework for entry. It is graded on a bell curve each year based upon the percentiles of those who complete; a good goal for acceptance is ~80% or about a 510. It is often best to take it once or near the end of required and suggested coursework. No calculators are allowed, and students are limited in how many times it can be taken. Students should plan on studying 6-12 months in advance. Various review books and courses exist, such as Kaplan, & Princeton Review. While the courses are expensive, they are very helpful for most students. Free online resources like Leah4Sci are also great.
6. **Patient Contact Care Specifics (suggested but not required):**
 - a. **EMT, CNA, Phlebotomy:** Please research certification programs as there are a lot of variations in how long programs take/expense as well as job availability. CNAs can sometimes find “free” training programs in exchange for work at nursing home, etc..
 - b. **Medical Scribe:** Students who are good typists and want to learn a lot about pharmacology can sometimes be trained by Scribe America (<https://www.scribeamerica.com/career-opportunities/>) or LifeSpan (search for medical scribe positions, often Brown Emergency Medicine). Alternatively, you can take a course. One example is: <https://medicalscribes.org/how-to-become-a-medical-scribe/>

- c. **Medical Assistant:** Usually no certification is required as often providers will train you but licensed programs exist. To be confident that your time as a medical assistant will have the greatest impact, negotiate with the employer “back of the house” work (ie. taking vitals, running tests, collecting samples, etc.) vs. less “front of the house” work (insurance, filing, appointment booking).
7. **GAP YEAR(S):** Most accepted students have taken TWO to several gap years in order to improve their applications, gain experience, and save up money before actually applying. More maturity is a big positive as well as it is best to have completed the coursework (which is extensive) before taking the MCAT; so, unless you complete your BCPM courses by the end of your 3rd year of 4 that is typical, you should wait. As of 2020, the average age of acceptance was 24 years of age.
8. **When to Apply:** It is best to apply EARLY (by June ideally) and only when you are a SOLID candidate as re-applicants get looked at AFTER 1st time applicants.
9. **Where to apply:** State, public schools are most affordable & best chance of acceptance for in-state residents. Rhode Island does NOT have a state MD/DO school unfortunately. UConn and UMASS offer RI residents ½ out-of-state tuition. Brown University has a certain number of spots reserved for RI residents. If you speak Spanish fluently, consider applying to Puerto Rican medical schools!
10. **Establishing Residency in a State:** Your state of residence is the one in which you are claimed by parent/custodian or file as an independent on income taxes, not necessarily where you live, and sometimes an issue when parents are divorced. Some forward-thinking students move to states with state, public medical schools to establish residency in those states as an independent for 1-2 years (ie. no parent/guardian claiming you as a dependent on taxes for that year, set up banking/license in that state) before applying.
11. **Becoming a Better Candidate:** If you are not a strong candidate by graduation, some students continue to take new courses or re-take. Many schools will not accept online courses for science pre-requisites. Some students also go into post-bac medical programs (often expensive) that are designed to give experience, help with MCAT testing, and take classes; some give promises of interviews at their MD or DO school upon successful completion. Search for “Post-Bacc Pre-Medical.” Some other students opt to go into masters or other graduate programs in some relevant field to gain courses and experience.
12. **Need more coursework for Pre-Reqs:** Be sure to look at required coursework for programs you are interested in.
- a. If you require additional coursework while an undergraduate yet not required for your major for graduation, consider minoring in Chemistry at JWU <https://catalog.jwu.edu/programsofstudy/arts-sciences/chemistry-minor/>; all of the required Chemistry will then be part of your degree and usually encompassed by financial aid. Some students opt to double major in Biology.
- b. If you require additional coursework after you have graduated, consider a pre-medical certification or post-bac medical program. JWU’s can be found at <https://catalog.jwu.edu/programsofstudy/arts-sciences/postbaccalaureate-pre-medical-pre-health-professions-program-nondeg/providence-ce/>