

HELPING YOUR STUDENTS BUILD THEIR HEALTH PROFESSIONS APPLICATIONS

JAMES MCKINNELL, MD

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF PRE-HEALTH PROFESSIONS STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

PREHEALTHPROFESSIONS@UNM.EDU

OBJECTIVES

- Understand the goals of the health professions application
- Delineate the components of the application
- Review importance of academic performance
- List the types of experiences an applicant may have and understand the unique aspects of each
- Become aware of resources available to your students to help them understand what is needed to become a successful candidate

GOALS OF THE HEALTH PROFESSIONS APPLICATION

- Demonstrate ability to succeed academically in a health professions program
- Demonstrate understanding of the profession
- Demonstrate insight into personal strengths and unique characteristics the candidate would bring to the profession
- NOTE: Admissions Committees have their own goals!

COMPONENTS OF A HEALTH PROFESSIONS APPLICATION

- Demographic data
- Academic record
 - GPA
 - Board scores
- Experiences
- Personal comments

ACADEMIC RECORD - GPA

- Evidence candidate can succeed academically in health professions program
- ***GPA interpreted several ways***
 - Overall
 - Science and math
 - Pre-requisites
 - Last 2 years
- ***Academic development*** also assessed using transcripts
 - C in freshman year NOT the same as C in junior year
 - Some programs may use weighted GPA
- Note: retaking classes for grade replacement not universally beneficial

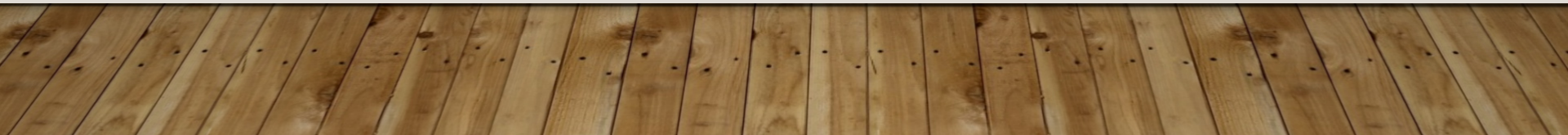
ACADEMIC ADVICE

- There is no “best major” for a pre-health student
- On some level, students have to like science and be able to do math
- There are required pre-requisite courses to apply for any health professions program; they may vary slightly from institution to institution. Students need to do their homework
- Encourage students to challenge themselves

EXPERIENCES

- Work
- Shadowing/clinical
- Volunteer
- Research
- Leadership
- Interests/passions

These are more than boxes to be checked off. Students need to be able to tell people how they have contributed to their personal development



WORK

- List all work experiences
- Emphasize history of working while a student
- Think about work experiences and work record in relation to the skills, personal traits important to a healthcare provider

SHADOWING

- Has become “gold standard” for demonstrating to others that you understand what your health profession entails
- Sole way to closely observe a provider-patient interaction
- Provides insights into the “mechanics” of the profession
- Gives additional information necessary to make an informed career choice

CLINICAL

- Hands-on work with patients
- Critical for some health professions programs; less so for others
- Can be obtained through paid, volunteer or classroom-related opportunities

VOLUNTEER

- Demonstrates understanding that we are part of a world bigger than ourselves
- Ideally, reflects what the student cares about
- Students should know why they made the activity choices they made
- May or may not occur in hospital setting

RESEARCH

- Acquiring experience using scientific method
- All research uses scientific method; research does not have to be biomedical
- Candidate should understand and be able to talk about the research
- Working in a lab is NOT the same as doing research

INTERESTS/PASSIONS

- These are activities that defy categorization
- Include hobbies, talents, pasttimes
- Demonstrate commitment, effort, mastery of skills
- Provider “wellness” huge concern in the health professions; students need to show they have interests outside of medicine or healthcare

CHALLENGE OF COMMUNICATION

- Applicants must be able to communicate what they have learned
 - about the profession
 - ***about themselves***
- Done through both writing (essays) and speaking (interviews)
- Shortcomings here are probably most common reason students are not accepted into training programs

PERSONAL COMMENTS

- CRITICAL! This is the only opportunity any candidate has to set themselves apart from the pack
- Come in a variety of forms; almost all programs ask for a single page essay
- Writings on an application should be considered as a whole; no repeating info
- Useful prompt: “Why do you think you would be happy taking care of people?”

HELP!

- Sound complicated? It is!
- Seem difficult? It is!!
- Do you have to do this alone? **ABSOLUTELY NOT!!!**

OFFICE OF PRE-HEALTH PROFESSIONS STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

- Informational workshops
 - “Building the Strongest Health Professions Application”
 - “Shadowing Orientation and Credentialing”
 - “Creating an Effective Personal Statement”
 - “Preparing for a Health Professions Interview”
- Individual advisement
 - Students must email for an appt: ***prehealthprofessions@unm.edu***
- Interview preparation
 - Mock interviews, in collaboration with the Office of Career Services

COMMERCIAL!

- **4th UNM Health Professions Symposium**
- Saturday, April 18, 2020 UNM SUB
- 90 different workshops/info sessions
- 90 minute information table session
- **FREE! LUNCH PROVIDED!**
- For more info, and to register, visit the website:

hps.unm.edu