

# The Pathway to Medical School



**Steven T. Case, Ph.D.**

**Associate Dean for Medical School Admissions**

<http://som.umc.edu>

# Steps to Become a Physician

- College/university, 4 years, BA/BS degree
- Medical school, 4 years, MD degree
- Residency (specialty) training, 3-5 years
- Optional fellowship (subspecialty) training, 1-3 years

Total time to become a practicing physician is between 11-16 years



# Medical School Education



## Basic Sciences

Anatomy  
Biochemistry  
Microbiology  
Pharmacology/Toxicology  
Pathology  
Physiology/Biophysics  
Psychiatry/Human Behavior

## Clinical Training

Anesthesiology  
Emergency Medicine  
Family Medicine  
Internal Medicine  
Neurology  
Neurosurgery  
Obstetrics/Gynecology  
Ophthalmology  
Orthopedic Surgery  
Pediatric Medicine  
Preventive Medicine  
Surgery



# Academic Preparation

- Bachelor's degree preferred
  - Any major/accredited college acceptable
  - Required college-level courses (1 year each; *AP credit not acceptable*)
    - Biology
    - Inorganic Chemistry
    - Organic Chemistry
    - Physics
    - Mathematics
    - English
    - Advanced science (senior college)
- 8 hours each including laboratory



# MCAT Preparation

1. Acquire Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) review book with
  - practice exams
  - answers to questions
  - explanations for all answers
2. Review subject matter
3. Simulate timed practice exams on computer
4. Analyze performance
  - read every explanation to every answer to every question and
  - chart reasons for incorrect answers
    - I don't have a clue! (go to #2)
    - I knew that! (go to #3)



# Personal Preparation

- Exposure to medicine
  - Volunteer or employment opportunities
  - MD office, clinics, hospital, nursing home, hospice, participation in pre-medical organizations
  - awareness of time and cost required for training
- Extracurricular activities indicative of
  - effective interaction with diverse people
  - service to individuals, family, community groups
  - leadership, responsibility
  - academic/cultural interests beyond the classroom
  - time management skills



# UMC School of Medicine

<http://som.umc.edu>; "admissions" tab

## – Details about UMC

- Residency and academic requirements
- Program deadlines
- Curriculum

## – Links to Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)

- American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS)
- Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT)
  - Computer-based test at few sites with limited seating
  - ~22 dates; ~half day test
  - January scores used for alternates only
- Fee Assistance Program (FAP)



# You are ready to apply if you...

- are a Mississippi resident (or can meet the 1 year residency requirement before matriculation)
- will complete all academic requirements within the current academic year
- prepared to matriculate next August (deferments discouraged)



# Application Timeline

Not later than junior year

- September: Begin MCAT preparation
- Spring: Take 1<sup>st</sup> MCAT
- May: Request transcripts & letters
- June: Complete AMCAS application
- Summer: Repeat MCAT
- September: Interviews begin

Avoid deadlines; verify receipt of each item



# Early Decision Program (apply to one school)

- AAMC by 8/1
  - AMCAS Application
    - Three faculty evaluation letters submitted electronically
  - Transcripts from all schools attended
- UMC by 9/15
  - Secondary Application & \$50 Fee
  - Transcripts from all schools attended
- $\geq 3.6$  BCPM GPA and 27 MCAT sum



# Regular Decision Program (apply to multiple schools)

- AAMC by 10/15
  - AMCAS Application
    - Three faculty evaluation letters submitted electronically
  - Transcripts from all schools attended
- UMC by 12/1
  - Secondary Application & \$50 Fee
  - Transcripts from all schools attended



# Combined M.D./Ph.D. Program (dual degree)

- 7 year program, 3 blocks  
M1, M2, Step 1 / G1, G2, G3 / M3, M4, Step 2
- Highly competitive applicants  
Average BCPM GPA = 3.8 , MCAT = 31.4
- Select this program on AMCAS application
  - Regular Decision Program deadlines
  - Sequential acceptance to MD, PhD programs



# UMC Selection Process.....

- All decisions rendered by Medical School Admissions Committee (MSAC)
- MSAC is independent of internal/external political/financial influence; all applicants assured equal and unbiased consideration regardless of academic major, school attended, age, religion, gender, gender preference, handicap, race, or ethnicity.



# UMC Selection Process

- Initial Screen
    - uBCPM GPA
    - MCAT
- { (3.8 + 21) versus (2.8 + 31)
- Interviews
    - Three admissions committee members including Associate Dean or Director of Admissions
    - Lunch & campus tour with M4



# UMC Selection Process

- Interviews

Applicants asked to respond to questions and scenarios to assess communication skills, respect for others, motivation for medicine, vision of practice, critical thinking/problem solving, honesty/integrity, maturity, accountability, altruism, compassion, awareness of ethics/values, striving for excellence, setting priorities for medical school, self appraisal, coping skills, support system.



# UMC Selection Process

- MSAC's holistic review of each applicant:
  - Where raised, high school and college attended
  - Exposure to medicine, volunteer work, leadership
  - Interviewer assessments
  - Trends in academic record, MCAT scores
  - Faculty evaluations of effort and behavior
  - Special circumstances such as "distance traveled"
- Decisions rendered by email
  - Accepted (rolling 10/15 – 3/15)
  - Not accepted (rolling 10/15 – 3/15)
  - Alternate (by 3/15)



# Class Entering in 2010

- 310 applications
  - 55 colleges and universities
  - 149 attended community college, 17 earned associate degrees
  - Mean MCAT 25.9
  - Mean uBCPM 3.46
  - Mean oGPA 3.55
- 229 interviewed



# Class Entering in 2010

- 145 accepted to fill a class of 135
  - Mean MCAT 28.4
  - Mean uBCPM 3.64
  - Mean oGPA 3.70
  - 12 schools in-state, 17 out-of state
  - 28 different majors, 48% biology
  - 33 % female, 13% minorities,  
10% African American



# Class Entering in 2010

- Interviews completed 12/18/2009
- Class selection completed 1/6/2010
- All applicants who met deadlines had a chance; but those who completed files during summer had an advantage!
- Follow suggested application timeline!



# Class Entering in 2009

- Two offers of acceptance were rescinded after review of Criminal Background Checks (CBCs)
- CBC review includes
  - Severity, number, time frame of offenses
  - Patterns of behavior
  - Failure to self report in AMCAS
- Speeding ticket in MS may be reported as misdemeanor



# Reasons to Attend UMC

- Student Support
- State-of-the-art facilities
- Hands-on clinical training
- Low Cost (2011 tuition/fees \$18,149)
- High Quality Education
  - UMC pass rate for USMLE Step 1 usually national average; pass rate for Step 2 usually above national average



# For additional information:

Steven T. Case, Ph.D.

Associate Dean for Medical School Admissions

Peggy Miller Davis, M.D.

Director of Medical School Admissions

The University of Mississippi Medical Center

2500 North State Street

Jackson, MS 39216-4505

Telephone 601-984-5010 Facsimile 601-984-5008

Email: [AdmitMD@som.umsmed.edu](mailto:AdmitMD@som.umsmed.edu) URL <http://som.umc.edu>

