

Advising for Parents and Guardians

Supporting students interested in medical careers



Medical Careers Advisory Committee (MCAC)

MCAC Chair

- Sudhir Nayak, PhD
- Professor of Biology
- >15 years at TCNJ

Allied Health Advisor

- Mitch Sitnick, PhD
- Clinical Lecturer
- >5 years Allied Health advising

MCAC Administrative Support

- Ms. Helen Kull
- General Advisor, Program Assistant, and Knower of Things
- Department of Biology
- >15 years at TCNJ

MCAC vs Allied Health at TCNJ

- **MCAC** aka “med careers”
 - Allopathic, osteopathic, podiatry, dental, optometry
 - MD, DO, DPM, DMD/DDS, OD
 - Typically take MCAT, DAT, OAT exams
- **Allied Health**
 - Physicians assistant, physical therapist, occupational therapist, nursing / accelerated nursing, speech-language pathologist, and several others.
 - PA, PT, OT, RN/NP/DNP
 - Typically take GRE or PA-CAT exams

Why this presentation?

- To get the best outcomes, the family has to be part of the process
 - Parents/guardians need to be aware of the expectations, process, and time commitment
 - Share a common language for discussion
 - Shared resources
- **Students asked me to do it**
 - Explain the process, misconceptions, misunderstandings, and misinformation

- What does the MCAC do?
- Do I need the MCAC?
- How do I get to medical (dental, optometry, etc.) school?
- How do I become pre-med?
- Where do I get reliable information?
- What do I need to apply?
- Am I a good candidate for medical school?
- What courses do I need?
- Do I have to be a biology major?
- Do minors help?
- Do I need to shadow more than one doctor?
- Do I need research?
- When should I get started?
- What are my chances of getting in?
- How important is the MCAT?
- Is the GPA more important than the MCAT?
- Does my major matter at all?
- Is my C in Orgo going to keep me out of medical school?
- What is the minimum GPA to apply? Is there a minimum MCAT to apply?
- MD vs DO?

- **Can you talk to my parents?***

- How long should I study for the MCAT?
- Should I take an MCAT prep course?
- When should I take the MCAT?
- I want to stay (or leave) NJ?
- Which schools? How many?
- Does it help to be in state?
- When should I apply? Early decision?
- Is it better to apply early?
- How many letters of recommendation?
- Who gets a composite letter?
- What happens if I don't get a composite letter?
- What are my chances of getting in?
- Should I take the MCAT again?
- Should I apply to MD, MD and DO, or DO only?
- What happens if I apply later in the cycle?
- When should I think about a gap year(s)?
- When will I know if I get in?
- If I'm on the waitlist does it mean I'll get in?
- What happens if I don't get in?
- Are post-bac programs worth it?

Presentation built from your questions

- What question(s) does your parent/guardian have that they would like covered during the presentation?

- When should you start studying for the MCAT? / MCAT prep tips?
- What are good resources for MCAT prep?
- If my son scored poorly on the MCAT what are the next steps?
- Is the MCAT really the most important thing or do they consider other activities?
- How can you get some shadowing experience?
- What types of experiences are medical school actually looking for?
- This is all new to us so please start at the beginning!
- My child is having trouble getting research experience. Is this going to be a problem?
- What is the timeline for application? I don't understand the timeline for applying to medical school. Please cover that!
- Explain the GAP year. / How would a gap year affect my child's chances of getting into Medical school?
- What are med schools that like applications from TCNJ? / Is there any preference?
- Medical school affordability / cost
- How to make medical school more affordable?
- What is the process of applying for scholarships in medical schools? / Are there scholarships to medical school?
- How important are grades in science classes?
- Does it matter if my son is not a Biology major?
- Will a minor in Spanish help chances of admission?
- Can my child still receive an acceptance with one very poor grade in a required course?
- Can you give example of students that were accepted to medical school?
- What if my daughter does not have the grades for medical school? What other medical careers do you recommend?
- Is there really a difference between MD and DO?

Can I get this presentation?

- PDF will be available on the MCAC website
 - <https://mcac.tcnj.edu/>
 - Google “TCNJ MCAC”
- MCAC home
 - Events and Workshops (right side)
 - Scroll down to link for PDF of Parent Advising Session Presentation
 - All links active

Resources for students and parents

- Medical Careers Advisory Committee (MCAC)
 - Presentations, data driven advising, mentoring
- American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC)
- Student associations at TCNJ
 - TCNJ American Medical Student Association (AMSA)
 - Delta Epsilon Mu
 - Minority Association of Pre-Health Students (MAPS)

MD (Allopathic) -vs- DO (Osteopathic) Medicine

- MD is a Doctor of Medicine
 - 75% of medical degrees
 - 12–24 months in the classroom + remainder in clinical training
 - 93.5% (92-95%) residency match rate (>99% at top schools)*
- DO is a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine
 - 25% of medical degrees
 - 12–24 months in the classroom + remainder in clinical training
 - 91.6% (89-92%) residency match rate (>99% at top schools)
 - Enrollment rose by 68% between 2011–2022
- **As of 2020 they apply to the same residency programs**

MD (Allopathic) -vs- DO (Osteopathic) Medicine

- **Both programs = physician**
- Apply to the same residency programs
 - Accepting either exam (USMLE or COMLEX)
- Differences
 - Philosophy
 - >60% of DO graduates are in primary care
 - <30% of MD graduates are in primary care
 - Criteria for acceptance

Is pre med a major?

- All Biology (BS) and Chemistry majors are “pre med” for their first 2 years by default
- Any student that takes a **series of courses** required by all medical schools*
 - Philosophy, Math, Spanish, English, Computer Science, Engineering, Psychology, Public Health, Kinesiology, etc.
- **Pre med is not a major**

Medical School required courses

- 2 semesters of biology with lab
 - BIO 201, BIO 211
- 2 semesters of inorganic chemistry with lab
 - CHE 201, CHE 202
- 2 semesters of organic chemistry with lab
 - CHE 331, CHE 332
- 2 semesters of physics with lab
 - PHY 121 and **PHY 122** or PHY 201 and **PHY 202**

Medical school required courses (cont.)

- 2 semesters of English (or equivalent)
 - All majors at TCNJ have this automatically*
- 2 semesters of math
 - MAT 127, STA 215 or MAT 128*
- Other (psychology and sociology)
 - PSY 101 and SOC 101

Medical school recommended courses

- Microbiology
- Genetics
- Physiology
- Immunology
- Statistics / biostatistics
- Second course in biochemistry* or advanced cell biology
- Computer science*

How do I get all the medical school requirements in?

- Academic advising
 - Work out a plan, backups, alternatives
 - Pathway examples
- Summer coursework at TCNJ
 - +: Rigorous coursework, counts toward your TCNJ GPA
 - -: Costs money
- Summer coursework at community college
 - +: Significantly cheaper, lots of courses, count if you go through NJtransfer
 - -: Course rigor, performance on MCAT, may “look bad”, does not count toward TCNJ GPA

How do I get all the medical school requirements in?

- Winter course work
 - Great for meeting College Core requirements
- Gap year(s)
 - **Addressed later in the presentation**
- 5th year at TCNJ to complete medical school requirements
 - +: Spread out requirements, allows for double major/minor
 - -: Costs money but cheaper than a post-bac or masters program
- Post-bac program (E.g. Rutgers)
 - +: Allows completion of requirements over 1-2 years
 - -: Costs money, may or may not help, repeating courses

Common mistakes - Usually results in disaster

- The biggest one: **Trying to complete the medical school requirements in as fast as possible**
 - Example
 - CHE 331, BIO 231, PHY 201 at the same time
- Not sequencing the courses properly and taking course before you are ready
 - Examples
 - Taking CHE 201 before math skills are addressed
 - Taking MAT 127 before precalculus skills are remediated

Common mistakes - Usually results in disaster

- Following what someone else is doing
 - Preparation, aptitude, work ethic, and personal circumstances matter!
 - Example
 - Student athlete?
 - Job?
 - Taking CHE 331 because everyone else is when you struggled in CHE 201
- Not developing time management and study skills for STEM courses
 - This can represent 30 hours a week outside of class and lab

Basic components of a medical school applicant

- 1) MCAT - Medical College Admission Test
- 2) GPA - Grade Point Average (courses matter)
- 3) Letters of recommendation (composite letter)
- 4) Clinical experience (direct patient contact > shadowing)
- 5) Volunteering (sustained experiences)
- 6) Other experiences (lived experience)*
 - **You get in medical school by doing these obvious things well.**

Chances of getting in - primary factors

- **MCAT - Medical College Admission Test**
 - Most important factor
- **GPA - Grade Point Average**
 - Less important than the MCAT
 - Science GPA (more important)
 - Non-science GPA (less important)
 - Preparatory courses / advanced courses
 - **The transcript matters!**

GPA and MCAT for MD programs

- GPA: 3.7 average
- MCAT is the single best predictor of who gets in
 - High: 528 (100th percentile)
 - Excellent score: 515 (>90%)
 - **Competitive score: 512 (≈85%)**
 - Good score: 510 (≈80%)
 - Borderline score: 508 (≈75%)

GPA and MCAT for DO programs

- GPA: 3.6 average
- MCAT is the single best predictor of who gets in
 - High: 528 100th percentile
 - Excellent score: 510 ($\approx 80\%$)
 - **Competitive score: 507 ($\approx 75\%$)**
 - Good score: 505 ($\approx 65\%$)
 - Borderline score: 503 ($\approx 60\%$)
- **Assumes letter of support from DO**

Other medical careers

- **Optometry**
 - GPA: ≈ 3.5
 - OAT (Optometry Admission Test) score: ≈ 330 ($\approx 75\%$)
- **Dentistry**
 - GPA: ≈ 3.5
 - DAT (Dental Admission Test) score: ≈ 20 ($\approx 75\%$)
- **Podiatry**
 - GPA: ≈ 3.3
 - MCAT score: ≈ 500 ($\approx 50\%$)
- Physicians Assistant, Physical Therapist, Pharmacy (PharmD), Occupational Therapist, Accelerated Nursing, etc.

MCAT - Medical College Admission Test

- Time: 7 hours and 30 minutes exam
- Sections
 - Biological and Biochemical Foundations of Living Systems
 - Chemical and Physical Foundations of Biological Systems
 - Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior
 - Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills
- Medical schools want well rounded students so the **MCAT is more than just science classes**

MCAT prep

- Changed dramatically in 2015
 - Content, scoring, focus, types of questions, etc.
- Preparation
 - Pre-medical course work
 - **Requires 500-1000 hours of study outside of class, lab, job, other duties**
- This is the single biggest source of stress
 - It is the most important factor in admission

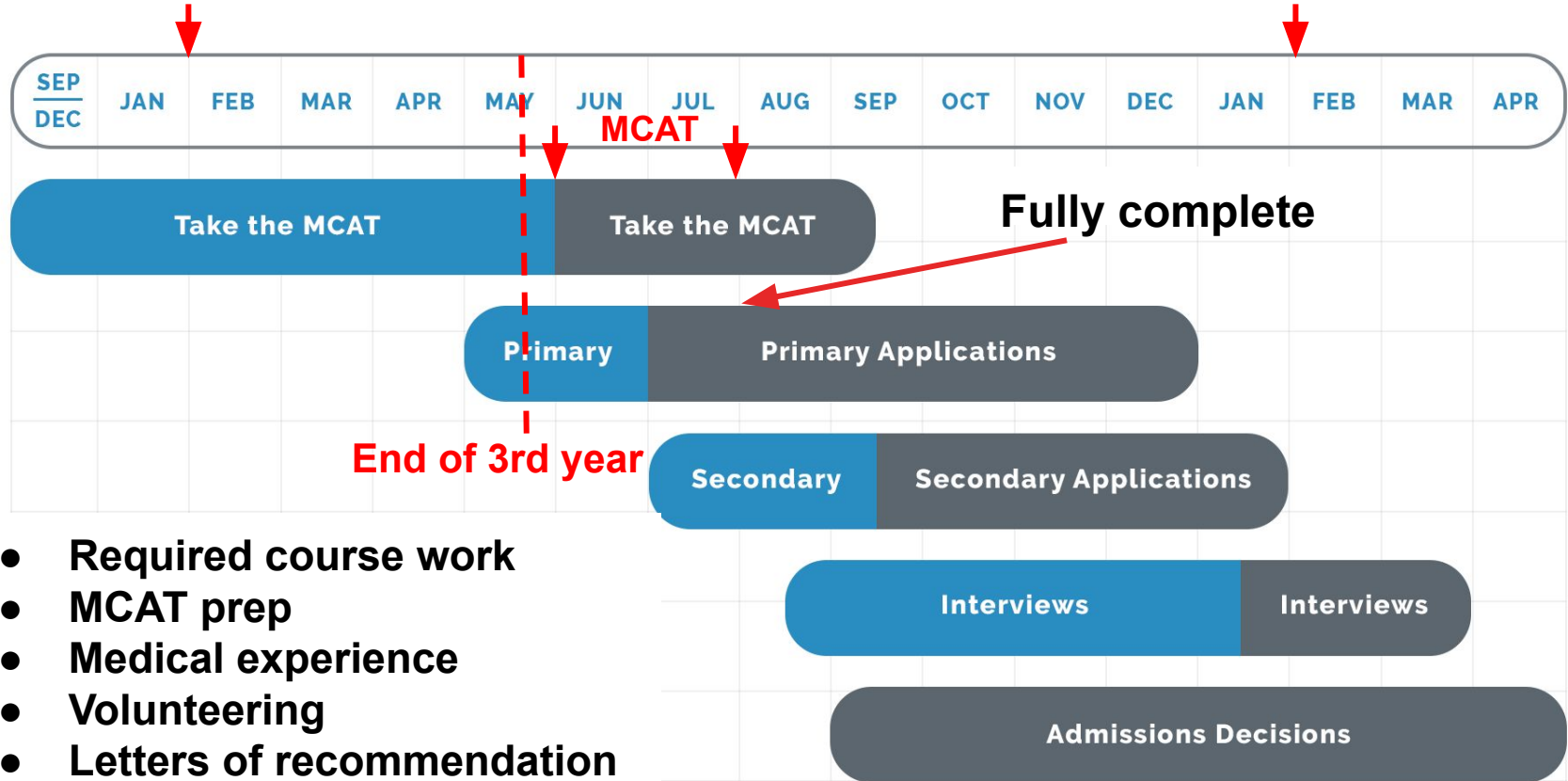
Timeline - 18 months, 18 months, 18 months

- Think **18 months** ahead
 - The application cycle is 18 months
- What are you trying to achieve?
 - MD, DO, DPM, DDS/DMD, OD, PA, OT, PT?
- Are you a good test taker?
 - **MCAT prep is where things go terribly wrong**
- Will you need summer courses at TCNJ?
 - BIO 201, BIO 231, CHE 331/332, MAT 127, PHY 201/202
- **Are you a GAP year candidate?**

Timeline - In cycle (no gap year)

- MCAT
 - Ideal: Taken by the end of **May junior (3rd) year**
 - Latest: Taken by the end of July
- Open a file with the MCAC
 - Spring of junior year
 - **≈18 months prior to intended start of med school**

Medical School Admissions Timeline



- Required course work
- MCAT prep
- Medical experience
- Volunteering
- Letters of recommendation
- MCAC file

MCAT prep - A real example #1

- **Diagnostic test (full length): 496 (\approx 39%)**
 - This is actually high for a no-study diagnostic
- Month 1: 503 (\approx 65 hours)
- Month 2: 507 (\approx 50 hours)
- Month 3: 510 (\approx 38 hours)
- Month 4: 512 (\approx 40 hours)
- Month 5: 518 (\approx 60 hours)
- Month 6: 516 (\approx 60 hours, with reduced time)
- **Official MCAT score: 515 (\approx 91%) taken in month 6**
 - 506 hours logged not including some basic content review
 - Approximately \approx 50-100 hours

MCAT prep - A real example #2

- **Diagnostic test (full length): 480 ($\approx 3\%$)**
- No previous prep
- End summer: 512 practice (≈ 400 hours)
 - **No job**, volunteering 5 hrs / week, shadowing 10 hrs / week DO (peds)
 - Did not take practice test with reduced time (under stress)
 - Limited number of practice tests (2)
- **Official MCAT score: 505 ($\approx 62\%$)**

MCAT prep - A real example #2

- End Summer 2: 509 (\approx 200 additional hours)
 - All 4 practice tests reduced time
 - Job 20 hrs / week, volunteering 5 hrs / week, shadowing 5 hrs / week MD (peds)
 - **Gap year** RWJMS medical scribe
- **Official MCAT score: 510 (\approx 78%)**

MCAT prep - A real example #3

- **Diagnostic test (full length): 490 (\approx 17%)**
 - End 2nd year - no prep
 - **Student athlete**
- 2nd year summer: 10-20 hours / week
 - Job, shadowing, and volunteering
- 3rd year Fall / Spring: \approx 5-10 hours / week (sometimes none)
 - Much more over breaks
 - “An insane amount. It made me a little crazy.”
- **Official MCAT score: 516 (\approx 92%)**
 - Final 3 practice average 517
 - > 500 hrs total

GPA vs Transcript - courses matter

- **GPA - Grade Point Average**
 - Science GPA (more important)
 - Non-science GPA (less important)
 - A high GPA cannot make up for a low MCAT score
- **Transcript**
 - What courses did the student take?
 - Lots of intro/easy courses? Advanced courses?
 - **Performance in required math/science courses**
 - Advanced courses in the discipline or STEM courses
- Higher is better but the transcript matters

Do / Do not

- **DO**

- Make sure that your student has enough time to study
- Make sure that they are taking full-length practice tests
 - Ideally with time constraints
- Understand they may have to take it more than once
- Help them set realistic goals

- **DO NOT**

- Make them take it on a predetermined schedule
- Have them take it to see how they do
- Have them take it because other students are doing it
- Apply anyway with a low MCAT score

Is one bad grade the end?

- **NO**, however, it does matter
- Was it the only bad grade?
- Can it be explained?
 - Why did you stay in the course if you found you were not prepared?
 - What have you done to resolve the issue?
 - What did you learn from the experience?
- Was it in an introductory, intermediate, or advanced course?
 - How were grades subsequent courses?
- What do you consider bad?
 - **C** = it's not that bad, **D** = it's bad, **F** = it's really bad
- **The trend / progress, MCAT, letters of recommendation, and activities become critical**

Is one bad grade the end?

- Example (real, same student)
 - BIO 201 (B), BIO 211 (B), BIO 221 (A), BIO 231 (A), BIO 312 (A) BIO 341 (A), BIO 411 (A), BIO 445 (A-), BIO 451 (A)
 - CHE 201 (C+), CHE 202 (B+), CHE 331 (A-), CHE 332 (A-)
 - MAT 127 (D), STA 215 (B)
 - MAT 127 repeated* summer (B)
 - PHY 201 (B), PHY 202 (B)
 - Spanish minor (All As)
 - Medical Spanish
- EMT, shadowing, volunteering, **exceptional** letters of recommendation
- **MCAT 508** (≈700 hours, 6 practice exams) -> admitted to DO school
 - One gap year, medical scribe

Chances of getting in - other factors

- **Composite letter from MCAC***
 - Letters of recommendation are critical
 - Choose wisely
 - Required at some, recommended at others
- **Patient care experience**
 - **Direct patient contact** (EMT, CNA, MA, etc.) more important
 - Shadowing - less important but valid

How to get experience?

- Formal, certification, direct patient contact
 - EMT, CNA, medical technician, phlebotomist, etc. can be done at community college in the summer
- Medical scribe
 - Example: [RWJMS](#) - paid training!
- Network
 - Reach out to your family doctor / pediatrician
 - Have you ever seen an orthopedic doctor or other specialist?
 - Formal programs
 - Example: [University of Pennsylvania](#)
 - **We do not recommend paying for programs**

Volunteering - hospital, clinical, general?

- [Capital Health](#)
- [Hackensack Meridian Health](#)
- [Pascack Valley Medical Center](#)
- [Children's Hospital of Philadelphia \(CHOP\)](#)
- [RWJ Barnabas \(many links\)](#)
- [Valley Health System](#)
- [Summer Health Professions Education Program \(SHPEP\)](#)
- [St. Barnabas Medical Center programs](#)
- [Georgetown's ARCHES program](#)

Chances of getting in - other factors

- **Volunteering toward the greater good**
 - **Sustained experiences** - more important
 - Multiple short term experiences - less important
- **Involvement (clubs, sports, etc.) / engagement**
 - Leader and contributor
- **Lived experience (military medic, nurse, PhD, etc.)**
 - First generation college, PELL eligible

Gap year(s)

- The majority of medical students have taken a gap year(s)
 - Nationally: **>60% take gap year(s)**
 - Med school start age: 24-26
 - Overwhelming majority go this route

Gap year(s)

- Improve patient contact and/or shadowing
- Get a job in the medical field
 - Medical scribe, EMT, CNA, etc.
- Improve letters of recommendation
 - Masters faculty, medical professionals
- Complete / repeat / improve coursework
- **Present a more compelling case for admission**

Who gets into medical school?

- Performance in major and performance in required courses
- MCAT score
- GPA and transcript
- Letters of recommendation
- Experience
- Volunteering
- Other activities

- Major: Biology
 - Minor: Anthropology
- MCAT: **Competitive**
 - 508*, 513
- GPA: **Good (B/B+)**
 - Science: 3.5, non-science: 3.5
- Transcript: **Good/Excellent**
 - Multiple 400-levels courses in major and minor
 - Lowest grade: C in CHE 331
- Letters: **Excellent**
 - Science x2, non-science x1, physician x1, clergy x1
- Experience: **Excellent**
 - 100+ hours EMT, shadowing GP >100 hours
- Volunteering: **Excellent**
 - 200+ hours, Girl Scouts (10+?), senior center (7), Teen Crisis Hotline (3)
- Involvement: **Excellent**
 - AMSA, Club Fencing, Anthropology Society

Accepted!

Types of clinical experience

- **Hands-on experience (more important)**
 - EMT - Emergency Medical Technician
 - CNA - Certified Nurse Assistant
 - CMA (AAMA) Certified Medical Assistant
 - PTA - Physical Therapist Assistant
 - OTA - Occupational Therapist Assistant
- **Hospital / medical environment (important)**
 - Medical scribe, ER, clinic, underserved communities, medical translation
- **Shadowing (less important)**
 - Passive, limited in scope
 - Primary care, specialist, private, hospital, etc.

Volunteering and other activities

- Volunteering
 - Physicians serve the public
 - Long-term commitment to the greater good
 - **Emphasis varies by medical school**
- “Other”
 - NCAA athlete, national competitor in robotics, orchestra, student government, Spanish minor, etc.
 - Job*
 - **Involvement in some activity to make the applicant three dimensional**

Do I need research?

- **No.**
 - There is no difference between the admission rates
- Positive
 - **Strong letter if you do a good job**
 - Problem solving skills
- Negative
 - Takes time away from medically relevant opportunities
 - EMT, volunteering, shadowing, MCAT prep
- Exceptions
 - MD / PhD

Do I need research?

- American Medical Association (AMA) Position
 - Research isn't required to secure a residency position
 - Research isn't required for admission to medical school
 - Survey of program directors conducted by the National Resident Matching Program
 - **12 other factors were seen as more important** over “involvement and interest in research”
- Really, the answer is **NO**

Should I do a minor?

- Possibly
 - +: More preparation in an important field (e.g. Chemistry)
 - -: Takes time (MCAT), scheduling, risk poor grades
- Some minors can help
 - Math, Applied Math, Statistics, Physics, Computer Science, Spanish (to fluency)
 - Chemistry can help with MCAT preparation
 - Psychology for students interested in Neuroscience
 - Public Health for students interested in serving underserved communities

My official recommendation

- **In general - NO**





- Unless the student was going to take the classes anyway
 - Interest in chemistry, public health, psychology
 - Just wants a challenge
- Wants additional preparation
 - E.g. Chemistry

Medical school is expensive

SIDNEY KIMMEL MEDICAL COLLEGE 22-23 ESTIMATED COST OF ATTENDANCE



OFF-CAMPUS OR ON-CAMPUS				
	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD	FOURTH
SINGLE STUDENT	(11 MONTH)	(12 MONTH)	(12 MONTH)	(11 MONTH)
Tuition	\$61,520	\$61,520	\$61,520	\$61,520
Library and Tech Fees	\$994	\$994	\$994	\$994
Books and Supplies	\$1,060	\$725	\$925	\$625
Instruments*	\$249	\$20	-	-
Room and Board	\$19,349	\$21,108	\$21,108	\$19,349
Transportation	\$500	\$1,205	\$3,500	\$3,236
USMLE - Step 1	-	\$645	-	-
USMLE - Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK)	-	-	\$645	-
USMLE - Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS)	-	-	-	-
Criminal Background Check	-	\$106	-	-
Medical-Dental (out of pocket)	\$450	\$485	\$485	\$450
Major Medical Insurance**	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Residency Application/Travel	-	-	-	\$3,000
Miscellaneous ***	\$1,650	\$1,800	\$1,800	\$1,650
Estimated Loan Fees	\$476	\$499	\$499	\$476
TOTAL	\$86,248	\$89,107	\$91,476	\$91,300

Medical school is expensive





State	Medical School	In-State			Out-of-State		
		Total Cost of Attendance	Tuition and Fees	Health Insurance	Total Cost of Attendance	Tuition and Fees	Health Insurance
NJ	Cooper Medical School of Rowan University	 \$73,049	\$46,998	\$0	 \$99,247	\$73,196	\$0
NJ	Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine	 \$121,085	\$73,336	\$6,867	 \$121,085	\$73,336	\$6,867
NJ	Rutgers New Jersey Medical School	\$86,502	\$47,505	\$2,741	\$113,346	\$74,349	\$2,741
NJ	Rutgers, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School	\$87,657	\$46,749	\$2,741	\$114,501	\$73,593	\$2,741
NY	Albany Medical College	\$86,869	\$57,723	\$5,646	\$85,069	\$57,723	\$5,646
NY	Albert Einstein College of Medicine	\$95,123	\$63,437	\$6,236	\$95,123	\$63,437	\$6,236
NY	Columbia University Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons	\$108,499	\$73,501	\$4,551	\$108,499	\$73,501	\$4,551
NY	CUNY School of Medicine	\$65,855	\$41,912	\$0	\$93,515	\$69,572	\$0
NY	Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell	\$97,337	\$58,325	\$5,890	\$97,337	\$58,325	\$5,890
NY	Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai	\$94,659	\$66,446	\$6,168	\$94,659	\$66,446	\$6,168

Data taken from [AAMC 2024](#).

Medical school is expensive

State	Medical School	In-State			Out-of-State		
		Total Cost of Attendance	Tuition and Fees	Health Insurance	Total Cost of Attendance	Tuition and Fees	Health Insurance
NY	Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences at the University at Buffalo	\$78,283	\$48,238	\$2,903	\$100,413	\$70,368	\$2,903
NY	New York Medical College	\$96,204	\$63,824	\$6,630	\$96,204	\$63,824	\$6,630
NY	NYU Grossman Long Island School of Medicine	 \$28,496	\$4,350	\$0	\$28,496	\$4,350	\$0
NY	NYU Grossman School of Medicine	 \$28,152	\$4,150	\$0	\$28,152	\$4,150	\$0
NY	Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University	\$86,190	\$49,464	\$5,280	\$108,320	\$71,594	\$5,280
NY	State University of New York Upstate Medical University Alan and Marlene Norton College of Medicine	\$81,379	\$45,213	\$4,901	\$102,869	\$66,703	\$4,901
NY	SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University College of Medicine	\$79,304	\$45,713	\$4,392	\$101,434	\$67,843	\$4,392
NY	University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry	\$93,889	\$71,677	\$3,612	\$93,889	\$71,677	\$3,612
NY	Weill Cornell Medicine	\$100,969	\$71,900	\$6,809	\$100,969	\$71,900	\$6,809

Medical school is expensive

State	Medical School	In-State			Out-of-State		
		Total Cost of Attendance	Tuition and Fees	Health Insurance	Total Cost of Attendance	Tuition and Fees	Health Insurance
PA	Drexel University College of Medicine	\$100,883	\$67,790	\$3,005	\$100,883	\$67,790	\$3,005
PA	Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine	\$97,678	\$62,946	\$6,196	\$104,362	\$69,630	\$6,196
PA	Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University	\$87,051	\$57,299	\$5,900	\$91,933	\$60,681	\$5,900
PA	Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine	 \$84,876	\$57,844	\$4,006	 \$84,876	\$57,844	\$4,006
PA	Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania	\$109,497	\$71,935	\$4,100	\$109,497	\$71,935	\$4,100
PA	Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University	 \$95,103	\$64,389	\$5,792	 \$95,103	\$64,389	\$5,792
PA	University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine	\$90,934	\$64,606	\$4,728	\$93,400	\$67,072	\$4,728

Scholarships are rare and extremely competitive

- Range from <\$500, application fees, to >\$250,000 over 4 years
- TCNJ example
 - SKMC Scholars Program at Sidney Kimmel Medical College - Thomas Jefferson University
 - Early assurance program for admission to medical school
 - Focused on economically disadvantaged and first generation college students
 - Highly competitive
 - Eligibility criteria, additional information, and the application for 2024 can be found here: <https://forms.gle/voTRFsdaszFPBr5Zh7>

Focused scholarship examples

- **African American:** Empire State Medical Association Scholarship Award (NY)
- **Armenian descent:** Armenian Students Association (ASA) Scholarships
- **Greek descent:** Hellenic Medical Society of New York
- **Hispanic:** Hispanic Scholarship Fund
- **Iranian descent:** Iranian-American Scholarship Fund
- **Italian descent:** The National Italian American Foundation Scholarship
- **Jewish:** Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago Vocational Service Scholarship (IL); Albert Strickler Memorial, Samuel F. and Sara G. Feinman, and Dr. Hirsch Herman Funds
- **Korean descent:** Ryu Family Foundation Seol Bong Scholarship
- **LGBTQ+:** Women in Medicine Scholarships (WIM). See also Point Foundation Scholarships above.
- **Methodist Church members:** World Communion Program
- **Native American:** Indian Health Service Health Professions Scholarship (additional opportunities can be found [here](#) and [here](#))
- **Polish descent:** Dr. Marie E. Zakrzewski Medical Scholarship
- **South Asian Indian descent:** Endowment for South Asian Students of Indian Descent Scholarship Fund

What are my chances?

- MD vs DO
 - What is the difference?
- Nationally -vs- NJ -vs- TCNJ
 - How do we do?
- In state -vs- out of state
 - How bad is the bias?
- MCAT score
 - What score do you need?
- GPA
 - Does it matter?

By the numbers - Nationally

- MD - 157* schools
 - GPA: 3.7
 - MCAT: 512 (\approx 85%)
- DO - 41 schools*
 - GPA: 3.6
 - MCAT: 505 (\approx 65%)
- NOTE
 - **The numbers are not minimums!**
 - Some schools have STRONG in-state preference
 - Some schools have application minimums listed which are misleading
 - Around 490-500
 - **Actual minimum 505**
 - Other schools have minimums based on the applicant pool

By the numbers - NJ Edition

- MD - 4 schools
 - GPA: 3.7
 - MCAT: 513
- DO - 1 school
 - GPA: 3.6
 - MCAT: 506
- NOTE
 - **The numbers are not minimums!**
 - Same caveats as on the previous slides
 - You can actually use these numbers

By the numbers - Rutgers

- MD - NJMS (Rutgers)
 - GPA: 3.7
 - MCAT: 514
 - Higher for out-of-state students
- NOTE
 - **The numbers are not minimums!**
 - Some schools have in-state preference
 - Some schools have application minimums
 - Rutgers does not have an MCAT minimum for application
 - Robert Wood has a 498 MCAT minimum for application
 - Low chance of admission below 508 to either school

By the numbers - Rutgers

- GPA: ≈ 3.7
- MCAT: ≈ 514 ($\approx 90-92\%$)
- Interview Rate
 - 33% in-state
 - **5% out-state**
- Acceptance Rate
 - **$\approx 75\%$ (of interviews)**
 - $\approx 5.5\%$ of total
- **60% of admitted students were out at least 1 year**

What are my chances?

- Assumptions
 - MD schools
 - Solid application
 - Letters, experience, essay, course selection, no red flags, etc.
 - Applying to reasonable schools
 - ≈ 20 schools
 - Application is **early in the cycle**

By the numbers - TCNJ

- Applicants MD / DO
 - $\approx 60-80$ /year
 - GPA: ≈ 3.8
 - MCAT: ≈ 511
- Admitted history (first pass + reapplicant)
 - $\approx 86\%$ from TCNJ
 - $\approx 41\%$ nationally
 - **We regularly double the national average**

Take home messages for everyone

- Be patient on the path respect journey
 - Apply when you are ready
 - **There is no guarantee of admission**
- The MCAC is here for advice and support
 - Have a schedule and a plan, but **be flexible**
- Our advice
 - Focus on your undergraduate studies
 - **Build measurable skills**
 - You cannot repeat your college career
 - **Academic damage is difficult to undo**
 - Be self reflective and realistic
 - **Know when to consider other medical careers**

When to apply to medical school?

- **When the student is ready**
 - Do not push to apply before the student is ready
- What is the MCAT score?
- GPA in range? Coursework?
- Medical Careers Advisory Committee (MCAC) meeting
- Letters of recommendation have been secured
 - Is a composite letter required?*
- Shadowing / patient contact hours
- Volunteering

Questions?

- 5 min break

How much does the GPA matter?

- Examples (assumes a solid application):
 - GPA: 3.2 + MCAT: 510 \cong 30%
 - GPA: 3.3 + MCAT: 510 \cong 35%
 - GPA: 3.4 + MCAT: 510 \cong 40%
 - GPA: 3.5 + MCAT: 510 \cong 45%
 - **GPA: 3.6 + MCAT: 510 \cong 50%**
 - GPA: 3.7 + MCAT: 510 \cong 55%
 - GPA: 3.8 + MCAT: 510 \cong 60%

How much does the MCAT matter?

- Examples (assumes a solid application):
 - GPA: 3.6 + MCAT: 506 \cong 30%
 - GPA: 3.6 + MCAT: 508 \cong 40%
 - **GPA: 3.6 + MCAT: 510 \cong 50%**
 - GPA: 3.6 + MCAT: 512 \cong 55%
 - GPA: 3.6 + MCAT: 514 \cong 60%
 - GPA: 3.6 + MCAT: 516 \cong 65%
 - GPA: 3.6 + MCAT: 518 \cong 70%