



RICE UNIVERSITY

Academic Advising

A close-up photograph of a hand wearing a white nitrile glove. The hand is holding a silver stethoscope and a white N95 respirator mask. The mask has a yellow circular filter in the center and some text printed on it. The background is a blurred white lab coat.

Health Professions Advising Open File Guide

2022 Admissions Cycle



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Part I: The Strong Candidate

Purpose of This Document

The purpose of this document is to provide details and guidance about the application process to health professions schools – in particular, to schools of medicine and dentistry. Rice submits a Health Professions Advising Committee (HPAC) letter to formally introduce you to schools and provide a narrative on your candidacy. This is an optional service but a Rice tradition for over 30 years. Students are welcome to apply to schools directly, but most medical schools across the country have come to expect the HPAC letter from Rice applicants.

For students who would like to have an HPAC letter, we require that all applicants read this document carefully, follow instructions, consider guidelines and suggestions, and adhere to all deadlines. This will significantly enhance your chance for acceptance to medical or dental school and reduce inefficiencies in the process. Throughout the document, we provide context and explanations as to why the required materials and information are necessary to your finalized application. On page 5 of this document, you will find a timeline and checklist for each step in the process.

The Strong Candidate

If you are planning to apply for Fall 2022 admission, we recommend that you reflect and determine if you meet all the components for a strong applicant, which include:

- Academic Performance (overall GPA and science GPA)
- Standardized Test Scores (MCAT/DAT)
- Clinical Exposure and Experiences
- Service and Community Involvement (Altruism/Empathy)
- Uniqueness: Interests, Perspectives, and Experiences
- Leadership and Teamwork
- Research (Intellectual Curiosity)
- Interpersonal/Communication Skills
- Character: Ethics, Integrity, Honesty, Responsibility
- Letters of Evaluation

If you are unsure, you can make an appointment with an advisor to discuss your candidacy. It is best to apply when you are ready and feel your application is at its strongest.

Importance of Deadlines

As part of the Open File process, we will need significant information from you. Without sufficient information in an organized and timely manner, our ability to best represent your candidacy is hindered, so we encourage you to commit the time and energy necessary for each task. Please also consider that most health professions schools operate on rolling admissions, so delays in submitted materials may significantly impact your admission. Our office is typically well ahead of the timelines, but we need your help to maintain this standard.






Timeline and Checklist

Task	Deadline
Pay Registration Fee	January 29, 2021 at 10 AM
Complete HPA Applicant Information Form (<i>Google Form</i>)	
You are not registered until you have completed BOTH steps above. Anyone registering after 10 AM on January 29, 2021 will not be eligible for a pre-application appointment and will only receive a cover letter.*	
Request Supporting Letters of Evaluation	February 12, 2021
Submit Open File Materials to Individual Box Folder	February 12, 2021 at 10 AM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SJP Disciplinary Request Waiver 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High School Paragraph 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum Vitae (<i>CV</i>) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed draft of Personal Statement 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed Pre Application Appointment form 	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> If these five documents are not complete and thorough, then you will be ineligible to make a pre-application appointment and will only receive a cover letter.* You will not be allowed to make any updates or changes to these five documents until later in the semester. 	
Schedule Pre-application Appointment	February 17 – April 2, 2021
Complete Pre-application Appointment	February 22 – April 9, 2021
Update Open File Materials in Box Folder	April 12 at 10 AM – April 23, 2021 at 10 AM
Your Box folder will unlock for this period only to communicate any updates you wish to share with the committee; this is entirely optional. Please note that OAA advisors will not provide feedback on updated materials, and Box folders will relock at 10 AM on April 23.	
Start Applications to AMCAS and TMDSAS	Beginning May 1, 2021 (<i>ASAP</i>)
Supporting Letters of Evaluation Received	May 21, 2021
Submit veCollect Locked Quiver Form to hpa@rice.edu	Once all letters are received
Complete Applications in AMCAS and TMDSAS	By end of June 2021
*A cover letter is a shorter version of a committee letter and is sufficient for your medical school application.	









Opening your HPA Applicant File

Opening your Health Professions Applicant File is a two-step process. **(1)** Pay the \$100 registration fee: <https://signup.rice.edu/2022HPFile3/> and **(2)** fill out the Health Professions Applicant Information Form: <https://bit.ly/3jkHpfK>. Completion of **BOTH** steps is required for registration. It is entirely **your responsibility** to make sure both steps have been done; the Health Professions Advising Committee will not contact you if your registration is incomplete. Both the payment portal and Health Professions Applicant Information Form will close at 10:00am on Friday, January 29; anyone who misses the deadline and wishes to register will need to reach out to hpa@rice.edu. Late registrants will receive a cover letter and will be ineligible for the pre-application appointment with an advisor.

When submitting payment for the \$100 registration fee, please make sure to sign up using the email you want added to the HPA 2022  Box folders. If you already have a  Box account through your Rice email, then you will need to use your Rice email when submitting payment. If you are a Rice alum, you will need to use a non-Rice email, as your Rice email may be deactivated in the middle of the Open File process and you will lose access to  Box. If you have concerns regarding your ability to pay the \$100 registration fee, please reach out to hpa@rice.edu.

The Health Profession Applicant Information Form asks for comprehensive details, including contact information, health professional program of interest, academic record (major, minor, etc.), and admission test scores. All of this information is crucial to our office's records and organization, and is required for us to know how to advise you and prepare your Health Professions Advising Committee letter. In addition, you will provide the following:

- Required waiver to your right to access your confidential Health Professions Advising Committee (HPAC) letter of evaluation from the Office of Academic Advising (OAA)
- Required waiver to your right to access your letters of evaluation from faculty and community members
- Required authorization for the Office of Student Judicial Programs (SJP) to release your disciplinary record information to the Office of Academic Advising
- Recommended authorization to release basic information to the Rice Alumni in Medicine group
- Recommended authorization to release basic information to future applicants
 - The OAA is creating a directory of students that matriculate to medical school that can be shared with future applicants by request, including name and email address. By sharing your contact information, you give permission for the OAA/future applicants to reach out to you.

Confirmed receipt of your registration fee and completion of your Health Profession Applicant Information Form officially opens your Health Professions Applicant File for the 2022 cycle. Upon confirmation, you will be provided access to your own individual  Box folder labelled **Last Name, First Name (HPA 2022)**, the HPA 2022 Applicant Resources  Box folder, and the registration code for your veCollect account. If you already have a  Box account associated with the email provided at submission of payment, then the invitations to the two  Box folders will be automatically accepted. If you do not have a  Box account associated with the email provided to us, then you will need to **manually accept the invitations. If you do not accept the invitations within 30 days,  Box will revoke**





your access to the folders. Please accept the invitations as soon as you receive them, and check your spam/junk folders in case you do not see them.


All communication from our office will be sent via email, so be sure to check your email regularly throughout the application process.

Completing Your File

Completing your file with the OAA includes several steps. All are necessary prior to our completion of your Health Professions Advising Committee letter and subsequent submission to the appropriate application services. Each of these steps is included in the “Timeline and Checklist” on page 5 of this document:

- Submit 5 documents to your individual  Box folder labelled **Last Name, First Name (HPA 2022)**:
 - SJP Disciplinary Waiver Request
 - Paragraph outlining your high school accomplishments (written in third person)
 - Detailed curriculum vitae (CV)
 - Completed draft of your personal statement
 - Completed Pre-Application Appointment Form
- Request letters from your evaluators
- Schedule and complete a pre-application appointment to clarify content of the Pre-Application Appointment Form (optional, but **strongly** suggested)
- Submit your application to:
 - [American Medical Colleges Application Service \(AMCAS\)](#)
 - [Texas Medical and Dental School Application Service \(TMDSAS\)](#)
 - [American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Application Service \(AACOMAS\)](#)
 - [American Association of Dental Schools Application Service \(AADAS\)](#)
 - Or other appropriate application service

Please recognize that the Health Professions Advising Committee will draft and complete ~200 letters for medical and dental applicants in spring/early summer 2021. This task is not possible without your compliance with deadlines. Each letter contains considerable detail specific to the candidate and requires personalization. For this reason, non-compliance with deadlines will result in a shorter and less descriptive HPAC letter. Immediately following the February 12 at 10:00am Open File Materials submission deadline, we will check applicant individual  Box folders for the requested materials. **Students who do not follow the material requirements and deadlines will receive a cover letter as opposed to the full length committee letter and are ineligible for the pre-application appointment with an advisor, as well as the medical mock interviews hosted by the Rice Pre-Medical Society (RPMS) and the dental mock interviews hosted by the OAA.**

The following sections provide some basic guidelines regarding the required submissions listed above, but more details are available in the HPA 2022 Applicant Resources  Box folder.



SJP Disciplinary Waiver

The [SJP Disciplinary Waiver](#) allows communication between Student Judicial Programs (SJP) and the OAA regarding your disciplinary record. If an applicant has any honor code or conduct violations, please review the [SJP Website](#) for additional information. Please release your record to the “Office of Academic Advising” and sign the bottom of the form. You **do not need** to upload a copy of your ID.

High School Paragraph – Brief Summary of Achievements

The purpose of this section is to provide guidelines for the paragraph summarizing your high school achievements. We have provided a few examples below for your reference. Keep in mind that the Health Professions Advising Committee will use this paragraph to provide context about your high school accomplishments with respect to your transition to college and to your more recent preparation for acceptance to a health professional school. Be sure to write in third person and to include details such as your GPA, test scores, and significant honors or scholarships.

You are required to write and submit a summary of your most important high school accomplishments in a format similar to those shown below. **Please keep your paragraph no longer than 5-6 sentences.**

Sample 1: In the spring of 2017, Cindy graduated as valedictorian of her class (1/361) from Medical Scholars High School in Baltimore, Maryland with a 6.5/6.0 cumulative grade point average. During her high school years, Sarah was the President of the Student Council, the Vice President of Senior Women, the Treasurer of the National Honor Society and the Drum Captain. She volunteered in a nursing home, in the hospital emergency room, and accompanied physicians on clinical rotations in the Health Occupations Students of America Program. She was honored as a National Merit Commended Scholar, a Hugh O’Brian Youth Leadership participant, and as a UIL State Solo and Ensemble musician. She came to Rice University with a 2360 SAT score and academic achievements earning her four scholarships.


Sample 2: In the spring of 2017, Jason graduated as salutatorian of his class from Rollins High School in San Diego, California with a perfect 4.0/4.0 cumulative grade point average, a 2400 SAT score and a 36 ACT score. He had also amassed 51 hours of Advanced Placement credit. While in high school, Joseph was also actively involved with Habitat for Humanity, and he participated in theater while competing on the tennis and golf teams. He was named a National Merit Scholar and upon his matriculation at Rice, he was given the Trustee Distinguished Brown Scholarship and the W.L. Moody, Jr. Engineering Scholarship.

Sample 3: In the spring of 2017, Anna graduated from Seven Oaks High School in Phoenix, Arizona in the top 5 percent of her class and with an outstanding 3.9/4.0 cumulative grade point average. Her strong scholastic aptitude is evidenced by her AP Scholar Award, her National Merit Scholarship Qualifier status, and her inclusion in the West Phoenix School District’s Highest Honors cohort. She was very active in her community, holding membership on the math team and the International Club. Other extracurricular activities included her work as a tutor at the Canton Institute and her volunteer work at




the Kissinger Senior Center. As a result of her accomplishments, Anya received the Arizona Governor's Scholarship and the Peterson International Science Scholarship (Highest Honors).

Curriculum Vitae (CV)

The HPA 2022 Applicant Resources  Box folder includes the CV template all applicants are **required** to use for their CV submission. **You must use the CV template we have provided.** Its design allows you to provide us with relevant, specific information regarding your candidacy for health professional school. Therefore, we look for academic achievement, research experience, clinical exposure, leadership experience, volunteerism and other altruistic activities, extracurricular involvement, honors and awards, etc. Please put considerable time and energy into your CV as it is a reflection of your preparedness for your health professional goals. Be sure to list every activity you have done since graduating high school (not just medically-related activities). While the OAA provides this CV template for use during Open File, note that you will not need to provide a CV to the application services. If you would like assistance with using your CV for other endeavors, please contact the Center for Career Development (CCD).

Personal Statement

You will find prompts, resources, and guidelines about personal statements from a variety of perspectives including those of medical school admissions deans in the HPA 2022 Applicant Resources  Box folder. RPMS will host personal statement workshops in the coming months. In addition, the Center for Academic and Professional Communication (CAPC) at Rice has offered to provide consultations regarding personal statements for those applying to various professional schools. As a starting point, reflect on the experiences listed in your CV and describe how they have shaped your motivation to pursue medicine. For CAPC consultations, it is recommended you produce a list of fifteen experiences outside of the classroom that have impacted your life and future career goals or a copy of your pre-application appointment form. We strongly suggest that you start with a draft of your personal statement as soon as possible, if you have not done so already. The process takes several iterations and significant revision following feedback from a variety of individuals. Again, we suggest that you avoid topics of a nature about which you are not willing or able to answer specific questions.

Pre-Application Appointment Form


This form asks specific questions which allow you to expand upon elements of your CV, reflect on your motivations for pursuing health professional school, and articulate your views about the profession. We have designed this form to mimic the questions that admissions committees ask on their secondary applications, so please treat this form like an actual application. **You are required to provide thorough and complete answers and descriptions for the applicable questions and each of your activities. If you do not, your Pre-Application Appointment Form will be deemed incomplete and you will be ineligible for a Pre-Application Appointment, and will receive a cover letter as opposed to the full length committee letter.**



Letters of Evaluation


Please refer to Part III: Letters of Evaluation and veCollect on page 14.

Additional Resources in HPA 2022 Applicant Resources Box Folder

There are more resources in the HPA 2022 Applicant Resources  Box folder to assist with your application processing. These resources include but are not limited to:

- This Health Professions Open File Information guide
- Guidelines (and template) for the high school paragraph submission
- Guidelines (and **required** template) for health professions applicants' Curricula Vitae (CV)
- Guidelines for personal statements and optional essays
- Pre-Application Appointment Form
- Interview resources
- Information for re-applicants

Pre-Application Appointment

Immediately following the submission deadline (February 12 at 10:00am), the HPAC will lock applicant individual  Box folders to verify that all the required materials were submitted and that they are completed and thorough. **Students who do not follow the material requirements and deadlines will be notified via email that they will receive a cover letter as opposed to the full-length committee letter and are ineligible for the pre-application appointment with an advisor.**

Starting February 17, students who meet all requirements and deadlines can schedule a Pre-Application Appointment with an OAA advisor to clarify or expand on any aspect of your materials. The appointment also allows us to get to know you better and offers perspective about the steps you have taken to prepare for that opportunity. While the office will always support our candidates to medical and dental school, we will also try to provide constructive feedback about the steps the candidate has already taken and additional steps they might continue to take to improve their candidacy. The tone of the meeting is relatively informal, but it is an opportunity to practice your interviewing skills. Please dress business casual. We expect professional demeanor and communication style from you. Keep in mind that every interaction is an opportunity to provide an impression. You have until April 2 to schedule the Pre-application Appointment, and until April 9 to complete the appointment.

Research Schools

Deciding where to apply is critical to your application yet challenging and time-consuming. Several important factors to consider include:

- Public school residency requirements (public institutions in your home state are typically a good place to start)
- Curricular approach (such as traditional lecture vs. problem-based learning, block scheduling, grading system, research focus vs. primary care focus, etc.)
- School's mission and vision, as well as school culture
- Location and cost of attendance: tuition and living expenses



In addition, it is costly to apply to health profession programs. Consider all costs including the primary application fee, secondary application fees, cost of sending transcripts, transportation to/from interviews, lodging, meals, etc. If you have concerns about the associated costs, make sure to check out the [Association of American Medical Colleges Fee Assistance Program](#), [American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Fee Waiver Program](#), as well as the [Rice University Access and Opportunity Portal](#).

There are several resources to assist applicants with their research including the [Medical School Admission Requirements \(MSAR\)](#), [Texas and Medical Dental School Application Service](#), and [Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine \(AACOM\) Choose DO Explorer](#). While the MSAR requires a subscription, the OAA allows students to access the database through our office. If you would like to use the MSAR, please [schedule an appointment](#) with an advisor.




Every February, the Office of Academic Advising hosts the annual Health Professions Fair. This past year we hosted over 40 different health professions schools on campus to meet with students and discuss their programs. Some of our guests have included the Duke University School of Medicine, University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine, Baylor College of Medicine, and more. It is a great opportunity to explore schools and make a more personal connection with them, and we hope to offer this opportunity virtually this year.

For medical school applicants, please keep in mind that you may apply to **both MD and DO programs**; MD graduates and DO graduates can practice in any medical specialty anywhere in the country. As of 2020, both MD and DO graduates participate in the same residency matching process. Acceptance to either type of school will allow you to reach your career goals in medicine.



Part II: Application Processing Details

Updating Required Materials in Box

Your individual  Box folder will be locked immediately following the materials deadline at 10:00am on February 12, 2021. If you wish to provide the HPAC with materials updated based on the feedback from your Pre-Application Appointment with an advisor, you will be able to do so from 10:00am on April 12 to 10:00am on April 23, 2021. Make sure to upload new copies of your updated materials to your individual  Box folder and do not delete the old copies. The individual  Box folders will relock immediately at 10:00am on April 23, and will not be reopened for further updated materials to be uploaded.

Application Manuals

To prepare for the application cycle, students should carefully read the applicant manual for each application service. Applications generally open in May/June; check each service for their specific dates. Most schools operate on rolling admissions thus, it is best to submit your application no later than the end of June.

You should thoroughly read the application manual for each application service you are using before emailing with questions.

Questions regarding the application should be directed to each application service.

- AMCAS: amcas@aamc.org
- TMSAS: info@tmdsas.com
- AACOMAS: aacomasinfo@liaisoncas.com
- AADSAS: aadsasinfo@aadsasweb.org

Entering Your Letters of Evaluation in the Application

While completing your application, please use the contact information below when listing Rice. Please select committee letter. For TMSAS, please make sure that you release information to your advisor, otherwise we will not have the necessary access to upload your committee letter.

- Letter Title: Rice_(Your Last Name)_Committee Letter
- Institution Name: Rice University
- Name: Genevieve Robinson
- Title: Health Professions Coordinator
- Email: hpa@rice.edu
- Phone: 713-348-4060
- Organization: Office of Academic Advising
- Address: 6100 Main Street MS-529
- Country: United States
- State: Texas
- City: Houston
- Zip: 77005



Transcripts

Students are required to submit transcripts for **each institution** of higher education you have **ever** attended.

[Please click here for information on how to request a Rice transcript.](#)

Each service requires a Transcript Request Form to be sent with your transcript. Be sure to include your applicant ID with your form, and follow the guidelines for each application service regarding transcript submission and study abroad credits.


Secondary Applications

After you submit your primary application, set your focus on secondary applications, which typically fall into one of three categories:

1. Some institutions do not have a secondary application at all.
2. Some become available after confirmed receipt and/or review of your primary application.
3. Some are immediately available to all applicants.

Check with each school for their secondary application policy. **It is best to submit secondary applications as soon as possible, ideally within two weeks of receipt.**

Interviews

To prepare for interviews, research each school's interview format (traditional vs. multiple mini interviews). The OAA's pre-health professions website has a listing of which schools use the multiple mini interview, or MMI, format. Practice possible interview questions and be ready to articulate your story in a concise manner. In the spring of 2021, RPMS will host medical school mock interviews and the OAA will host dental school mock interviews. Mock interviews will also be conducted by the CAPC and the CCD. Interview resources can be found in the HPA 2022 Applicant Resources  Box folder.



Part III: Requesting Letters of Evaluation and veCollect

Purpose of Letters of Evaluation

Health professional school admissions committees consider letters of evaluation very carefully in their decision-making, and the supporting letters of evaluation are also invaluable when our office writes your HPAC letter. At Rice, **applicants are responsible** for generating letter requests and monitoring the receipt of letters in their file through the web-based system veCollect.

We will outline: (1) requesting letters of evaluations, including email templates; (2) setting up your veCollect account; and (3) using veCollect as an applicant.

Professionalism

The way in which you ask for a letter of evaluation is important. Here you will find guidelines about how to request letters from potential evaluators, including details about timing, email correspondence, face-to-face communication, provision of necessary information, being considerate and respectful of the evaluator's time, and appreciating their commitment to your future professional goals.

Requesting Letters of Evaluation

Requesting supporting letters of evaluation from professors and other community members is a critical aspect of your application. To successfully obtain strong letters of evaluation from evaluators, you need to consider the following:

- Number of letters
- Who, how, and when to ask
- Guidelines and deadlines for evaluators
- Relinquishing your right to see letters

We typically encourage students to request evaluations from three or four individuals, as less than three is too few, and there is often no additional benefit from more than four letters unless a specific program makes this request. MD/PhD applicants must request evaluations from a supervisor from each research project in which the applicant has participated.

Although the ideal set of evaluators is highly dependent on the applicant, carefully consider how you select your evaluators. We suggest the following letters if possible:

- Professor in your academic major
- Professor of a science or engineering course (could overlap with major professor)
- Supervising research professor or someone related to your clinical activities
- Letter from individual who can provide a strong character reference

Most schools accept the HPAC letter in lieu of a second letter of evaluation from a professor of science or engineering. A small number of schools still require two letters from science/engineering professors in addition to the HPAC letter. Please consult specific schools' instructions to be certain you are adhering to their requirements.



There could easily be overlap among these individuals. The character reference could come from a wide range of possible evaluators who you know well through your research, health-related positions, volunteer work, or other Rice or non-Rice related programs. The most important factors are familiarity and commitment to providing a strong letter of evaluation.

Timing is critical, so you will need to ask early. Faculty members receive many requests for letters of evaluation, and writing a thoughtful, quality letter takes time. Providing your prospective letter writers with adequate notification and appropriate supporting documents is absolutely essential.

Be sure to provide an evaluator the option of saying no. If an evaluator does not have time or is uncomfortable writing on your behalf, it will likely result in a shorter, less effective letter. It is best to have honesty from an evaluator, which will allow you to find another who is enthusiastic to support your application.

We encourage all applicants to request their letters of evaluation by February 12, 2021 to allow evaluators adequate time to write a strong letter of evaluation. **Make sure your evaluator is aware that letters are due by Friday, May 21, 2021 in veCollect.**

Waiving your right to see your evaluations provides greater credibility. Non-confidential requests can make it more difficult for your evaluators to write honest, candid, and objective letters. Likewise, schools are informed if evaluation letters are non-confidential, and whether correctly or incorrectly, perceive them with less credibility.



Checklist for Applicant

✓	Task	Deadline
First Contact		
	Request/schedule meeting with potential letter writer via email	
In-Person Meeting		
	Attend meeting on time and in professional dress	
	Prepare to talk about why you are asking that particular instructor and what your future plans are	
	Supply copies of the following materials:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A draft of Personal Statement 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unofficial Transcript 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter Writer Instructions 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current CV 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unofficial Test Scores (Summary of MCAT, DAT, etc.) 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific program information & instructions (if applicable) 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary dates and deadlines (if applicable) 	
After Meeting		
	Follow up with a 'Thank You' email	
	Check in to see progress and help address any questions after about a month (if there has not been communication beforehand)	
After Submission		
	Thank individual letter writers with hand-written notes after letters were submitted	
	Follow up with individual letter writer with results of application process via email or schedule a meeting.	
	Regardless of admission outcomes, express gratitude for their time and effort.	



Sample Template Email to Request an In-Person Meeting

Dear Dr. Writer,

I am currently working on my application materials to go to medical school/dental school. I was hoping to meet with you in the upcoming week(s) to talk to you about my future professional endeavors and academic interests. Would you have any availability to meet in the next two weeks? I am available on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday afternoons from 1-5 pm. Please let me know what time and date would be most convenient for you.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Thanks,

Your Name

Rice University Class of xxxx
Major
College
Rice Email
Phone Number

Sample Template Email after Meeting with Evaluator

Dear Dr. Writer,

Below is a summary of all the programs I will be applying to for next year. They are all in the field of Medicine, although some have differing degree paths. Most are combined programs with a Master's in Public Health, but a few are just stand alone MD programs. I plan on submitting all my materials by June 15th, as all of these programs operate on rolling admissions. The deadline for letters of evaluation to be submitted is May 21, 2021 to veCollect.

School	Program	Application Open	Deadline to OAA
Texas Tech	MD/MPH	May 1	May 21
UT Galveston	MD/MPH	May 1	May 21
UTSA	MD/MPH	May 1	May 21
Vanderbilt	MD	June 1	May 21
Duke	MD	June 1	May 21
Baylor	MD/MPH	June 1	May 21

Please let me know if you have any questions about these programs or how I selected them.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Rice Email Address
Phone Number



Example Program Information with Instructions

This is only necessary if you are planning to apply to different types of health professions programs. For instance, if some programs are MD and some are MD/MPH, it is helpful for your evaluator to understand the differences between the programs and why you are applying to both. This also allows the evaluator to tailor a letter that fits both goals for MD and MPH programs.

Example:

Thank you very much for your willingness to write an evaluation on my behalf. I sincerely appreciate your help. Below I have included information on each program and specific instructions for its evaluation letter. If you have questions at any time, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to staying in touch.

Kindest Regards,

Name
Rice Email Address
Phone Number

1) Baylor

MD and MPH

The MD/MPH initiative really demonstrates BCM's drive to provide opportunities for future physicians to expand their understanding of health and health care. The training, resources, and faculty support truly opens up a vast array of possibilities in traditional realms such as patient care and research as well as other realms of health including community-based health programs, health policy development, and healthcare administration.

Students accepted into the program spend their first three years at BCM. In addition to medical school classes, students will take five online public health classes. The fourth year is spent taking classes at UTHealth School of Public Health. The fifth year, it's back to BCM for the last year of medical school.

2) Vanderbilt

MD

The School of Medicine at Vanderbilt University is committed to the education of physicians who are firmly grounded in the basic medical sciences, will provide compassionate care to their patients based upon their evaluation and application of the latest scientific research, and will become leaders and scholars in their field.

The medical school's major strength lies in the quality of its students and faculty. The school provides a supportive and stimulating environment where students are encouraged to pursue individualized interests in clinical medicine and research. Our graduating students traditionally gain entrance to high quality residency programs of their choice throughout the country. The faculty, which represents a variety of specialties and research programs, has a national and international reputation for excellence in the biomedical sciences and clinical care.



Setting up veCollect

Rice applicants' letters of evaluation (no matter if the writer is on-campus or off-campus) are submitted electronically through our web-based system called veCollect. It is a secure, online service where applicants can manage their letters of evaluation including requesting letters, tracking if they have been received, and informing the OAA that they are ready to be transmitted to medical and dental programs.

veCollect Process

An overview of the veCollect process is as follows:

1. After creating your veCollect account, you will enter the contact information for your individual evaluators, including their email.
2. You will send an email request to your evaluator by clicking on the envelope icon near their name.
3. Indicate that you waive your right to access your individual letters of evaluation.
4. Evaluators will send veCollect your letter of evaluation via email. Once the system verifies your letter, you will see a PDF icon to notify you that the letter has been matched to your account.
5. After all letters are received, you will bundle them into a quiver and let the OAA know that they are ready to be transmitted to medical or dental programs.

Before beginning to request letters through veCollect, please be sure to let your evaluators know they will receive an email from veCollect requesting that they submit a letter on your behalf.

Creating your veCollect Account

To create your account, go to: <https://collect.virtualevals.net>.

The screenshot shows the veCollect website interface. At the top right, there are links for "Login to veCollect" and "Register for access". A callout box with a black border and white background contains the text "Click one of these links to create your account." with an arrow pointing to the "Register for access" link. Below the navigation bar, there is a "Getting Started" section with several links: "Are you an applicant? Click here to register for veCollect access!", "Are you returning? Login to your account.", "veCollect is available to applicants whose advisors have registered for veCollect Service. If you are unsure, check with your advisor to see if you are eligible to use veCollect.", "We have created instructional videos to help you use veCollect. Where available, links to the videos will appear in orange.", and "Video: Registering for an applicant account on veCollect".



Rice University's letter collection registration

- If your advisor elected to require applicants to enter an authorization code in order to register for veCollect, you are prompted for that code below. If you do not have that code, please contact the advising office at your institution that is responsible for transmitting your letters to health professions schools/programs.
- Please complete the form below. Be sure to make a note of your login and password in a safe place. For further information, see the sidebar.

Video: Registering for veCollect
Primary and Secondary email addresses?
Some applicants create a specific email address to use for their health professions school applications. If you have done this, please enter this as your primary email address. Your advisor would also like you to register with your institutional email address if you have one. You may change these email addresses at any time during the process. But keep in mind that veCollect will use the email address that you enter here as primary. You will need to make sure that emails from veCollect are not blocked at that address.
Graduation Year?
Enter the year you expect to graduate from undergraduate college/university. If you already graduated, enter that year.
Entry Year?
Enter the year you are planning to enroll in a health professions program. For example, if you are beginning the application process in 2010 and expect to enroll in the health professions school of your choice in 2011, enter 2011. If you are not sure, enter the earliest date at which you would likely enter. You can change this date if your plans change.

Rice University utilizes a manual activation process. After you register your account will not be active. In order for us to activate your VE Collect account, your advisor must approve your registration. When that has occurred you will receive email notification.

Items with an asterisk (*) are required.

Rice University requires an authorization code for registration. If you do not have this code you will need to contact the advising office for the institution. Provide your institution's authorization code below.

*Login
*Password
*Password confirmation
*First name
Middle name
*Last name
*Email
Secondary email
Year you graduated or expect to graduate from undergraduate college / university
Year you expect to enter health professions school / program
Identification Numbers: Enter Student ID and any others that are applicable and available to you now. Note: You must return to this site and enter ID numbers as the become available to you during the application process.
Student ID
AACOMAS ID

It is not necessary to add these numbers at registration.

1. In which state is your institution? Select "TX".
2. A blue box will indicate the Rice University requires an authorization code to register. **This code will be provided in the confirmation email you receive after completing the Health Professions Applicant Information Form and submitting payment for the registration fee.**
3. Create your own username and password.
4. You will follow a series of prompts. You do **not** need to provide your AMCAS, TMDSAS, AACOMAS, or AADSAS IDs.
5. When you complete the form, click "Register for veCollect."
6. After you register, you will receive a confirmation email within 24-72 hours informing you that your account is now active. Upon receipt of this email, you will have full access to your veCollect account.

Creating an Evaluator Record

After logging in to veCollect, the screen will display a navigation bar as shown below:



Click on "My Evaluators" to begin. When you reach the screen, click on "Create New Evaluator Record". Complete the screen and click "Create Evaluator Record."



You will arrive at a confirmation screen. Here, you will have a chance to review the information for accuracy. If changes are needed, make necessary edits and click “Save Evaluator Record.”

Creating a Letter Record

After you have created an Evaluator Record, you can now create a Letter Record for this evaluator. Scroll down and click “Create New Letter Record”.

From this screen you can edit the information you entered for this evaluator record and create a new letter record for the evaluator.

Video: [Creating Letter Records](#)

After creating an evaluator record, you will create a “letter record” for that evaluator. You will indicate the type of health professions school/program to which you are applying and you will address the confidentiality of the letter.

Create New Letter Record

[Save Evaluator Record](#) [Back to evaluators](#)

Need help? Instructional videos are found on the right side of the page.

This area allows you to review information for accuracy. You can click “Save Evaluator Record” at the bottom if you made any changes.

Click here to create the new letter record.

Select Letter Type

From the dropdown menu, select the type appropriate for your application.

New Letter for Need Help

Letter type:
MD and DO

FERPA Statement
Under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and subsequently amended, an individual has a right to examine his/her education record, including any letters of evaluation that are a part of that record, unless he/she waives that right. When you create a letter record, you must indicate whether or not you waive your right to see the letter. Enter the date and your name which will be considered an electronic signature.

Please note that Health professions schools prefer confidential letters of evaluation/recommendation, i.e., those that are written with the knowledge that the applicant will not have access to the letters.

For each letter you must provide a response and signature regarding the FERPA statement.

I request a CONFIDENTIAL evaluation. I permanently waive my right to inspect this letter of evaluation at any time.
 I request a NON-CONFIDENTIAL evaluation and retain my do not waive the right to inspect this letter of evaluation at any time.

To create a letter record, you must confirm your confidentiality preference by typing in your name to serve as a signature.

[Create Letter Record](#) [Back to evaluators](#)

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FERPA Statement: This describes your rights to waive access to your letters.

Schools prefer confidential letters thus students are highly encouraged to request **CONFIDENTIAL** letters of evaluation.

To acknowledge your selection, you must type your name.



Request the Letter from Your Evaluator

To request a letter from your evaluator, click on the envelope icon and an email will automatically be sent to your evaluator.

If your evaluator does not receive the veCollect notification email, this is primarily a result of applicants (a) creating an evaluator record but not a letter record or (b) forgetting to click on the envelope icon or (c) the email being identified as spam or junk by their email platform. Please be sure to check with all of your evaluators to confirm that they have received the veCollect notification email. **If your evaluator is having any difficulty with submitting their letter to veCollect, please contact hpa@rice.edu.**

Once a letter has been submitted, there is a 72 hour processing period for letter verification. Once it has been processed, you will see a PDF icon next to the letter type. Do not worry if you do not immediately see the PDF. At this point, be sure to follow up with your evaluator and thank them for their time.

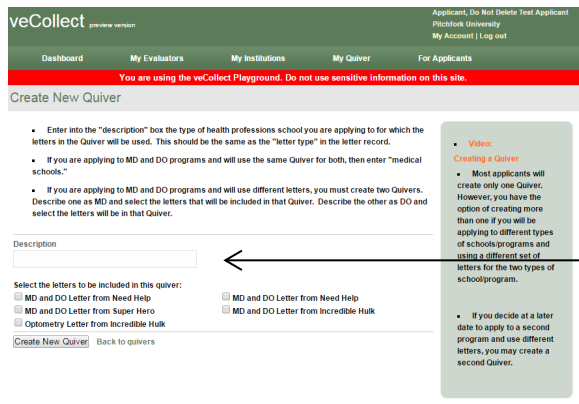
If for whatever reason, your evaluator submits an updated letter on your behalf, it will overwrite the original letter submission.

Schools in veCollect

We do not use this feature in veCollect. It is **not necessary** for you to enter schools into veCollect.

Creating a Quiver

Create a Quiver by clicking “Create New Quiver”



In the description, label your quiver by referencing the program to which you are applying and include the entry year, i.e. MD 2022, DO 2022, Dental 2022.

In the description, label your quiver by referencing the program to which you are applying, and include the entry year, i.e. MD 2022, MD/PhD 2022, DO 2022, DDS 2022.

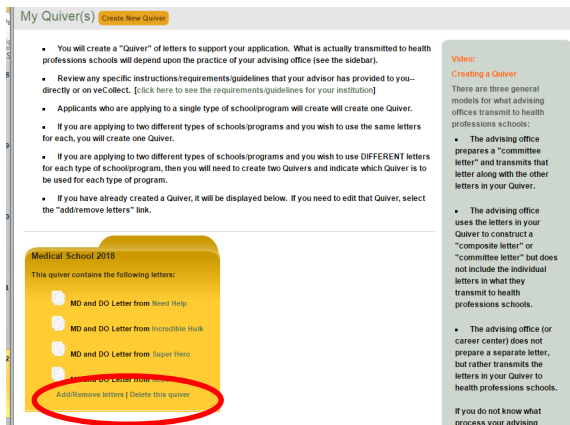
Select all letters to be included in the committee packet then click “Create New Quiver”.

If you are interested in applying to both MD and DO programs, please be sure to create two quivers (one for each program). Select the appropriate letters for each quiver. You may need to include a letter of evaluation from a DO physician that should be included in the DO Quiver.



Editing a Quiver

If you would like to add or delete letters in your Quiver or prematurely created a Quiver, visit “My Quiver” and choose either Add/Remove Letters or Delete This Quiver.



Locking your Quiver

When all of your letters of evaluation have been received, you will click “Process My Letters” in the top navigation bar.



Review the letters that are in the Quiver to ensure it is complete and correct. Before you can lock your Quiver, you must certify that the information you entered in to veCollect is truthful and accurate. You acknowledge this by entering your name into the block provided; this is considered your signature.

After you complete these steps, click on “Process and Lock this Quiver”.

Inform the OAA your Quiver is Locked

Go into the HPA 2022 Applicant Resources  Box folder and complete the **veCollect Locked Quiver Form**. Please save the form as **Last Name, First Name – veCollect Locked Quiver Form**.

Submit the completed form to hpa@rice.edu with the subject line: **Last Name, First Name - veCollect Locked Quiver Form**. You will receive confirmation from hpa@rice.edu that your veCollect Locked Quiver Form has been received and the committee can begin processing your individual letters.

OAA Letter Processing

Please allow the OAA adequate time to process all committee letters. If your Quiver is locked and you have submitted the notification form, please refrain from contacting the OAA until Friday, July 31, 2021 to check on the status of your committee letter submission. The OAA will submit your HPAC letter along with individual letters of evaluation to the application services together, as one PDF file. After upload, you will receive email confirmation from hpa@rice.edu.



Part IV: The Ongoing Application Process

Committee Letter and Letters of Evaluation

When will my health professions advising committee (HPAC) letter be submitted to medical and dental schools?

Please allow the Office of Academic Advising (OAA) adequate time to process all HPAC letters and individual letters of evaluation. **If your Quiver is locked and you have submitted the veCollect Locked Quiver Form, please refrain from contacting the OAA until Friday, July 30, 2021** to check on the status of your committee letter submission.

How will I know when my HPAC letter has been uploaded to the application services?

The OAA will submit your HPAC letter along with individual letters of evaluation to the application services as one PDF file. After it is uploaded, you will receive an email confirmation from hpa@rice.edu.

Can I customize the letters of evaluation in my committee letter that are sent to professional schools?

Your HPAC letter, along with individual letters of evaluation, will be sent to all of the allopathic, osteopathic, and/or dental schools to which you apply. You cannot customize your letters for individual programs.

However, supplementary letters of evaluation are accepted by many schools. If you are using AMCAS, you can upload additional letters to be shared with all of your medical schools, a designated group, or a single school. Additional letters are not sent through the OAA and must be uploaded directly to the application services. Please refer to the application manuals for details.

If I request an additional letter of evaluation after my HPAC Letter is uploaded, will it delay the processing of my application?

If you requested additional letters and schools have not reviewed your application yet, they may wait for the additional letter to arrive, therefore postponing the review of your application. For this reason, it makes sense to submit additional letters later in the process, perhaps if you are not getting interview invitations or are placed on a waitlist.

Making Changes to your Application

If I changed my fall coursework or if I am not taking a course from what I listed on my application, do I need to notify schools?

Generally, this is not an issue and you do not need to contact schools. They likely will take note of this change if you are completing a missing prerequisite course or finishing a graduate/post-baccalaureate program.



If I decide to postpone my application, what do I do?

Please inform the OAA **as soon as possible** at hpa@rice.edu. If we are informed too late into the cycle, the committee may not be able to issue you a refund for the Open File registration fee.

How do I update schools on plans for a gap year?

Many schools will ask about your gap year in their secondary application. You can also discuss it during an interview or in an update letter to be sent later in the application cycle.

How do I update schools that I have changed my major, dropped a second major or minor, or switched from a BS to BA degree?

You can send changes directly to a program. You must double check if a school is open to receiving updates after application submission. If so, they may prefer updates are communicated directly to their Admissions Office or via application portal.

Secondary Applications

After you submit your primary application, set your focus on secondary applications. Secondary applications vary among institutions. Certain institutions do not have a secondary application while others become available after confirmed receipt of your primary application. Check with each school for their secondary application policy. It is best to submit applications as soon as possible, it is recommended to submit within two weeks of receipt.

How much time should I dedicate to secondary essays?

You should spend a considerable amount of time working on your secondary essays. Look to your peers, family and friends to review your essays. While schools may ask the same questions, be sure to tailor your essays to each school. Proofread for spelling and grammar mistakes.

How do I approach optional essays?

Make every effort to answer all essay questions. To address “why this particular school,” review your research and identify key features that are well-suited to your interests and you as a person.

Think carefully about the “diversity” question. It is important to acknowledge the importance of diversity and that you have learned from exposure to diverse cultures and experiences.


Ongoing Contact with Programs

Do grades matter after I submit my application?

Absolutely! If you do not interview by December, you will want to send updated grades for the Fall 2021 semester that demonstrate your continued academic success. Additionally, schools typically request for your final transcript prior to matriculation.



How do I complete a “Dean’s Form/Certification?”

The two-step process for Dean’s Certification is found in the HPA 2022  Box folder under [Dean’s Certification](#).

What if I decide to apply to additional medical schools?

This is not an issue. Be sure to follow the specific instructions outlined for each respective application service to include these additions.

What if a school told me that I would hear within four weeks and it has been six weeks since I interviewed?

Patience is key! On occasion, schools do not meet their stated timeline for notifying an applicant. No news does not always mean bad news from a school. Waiting is part of the process.

Is it ever appropriate to notify another medical school in a city you have been invited to interview that you will be in the area?

You should only make this request if you are travelling an unusually long distance, but schools will vary in their response. Express gratitude for their consideration and any opportunity to interview whenever that may occur.

What does it mean when my application is “on hold?”

Likely, admissions committees want to review more applicants before they make a decision on your application. By late February/early March, most “on hold” applicants have either been invited for interviews or have been rejected.

Letters of Interest, Updates, or Intent

When should I send a “letter of interest?”

A letter of interest is appropriate to send to schools where you have not been interviewed, have not heard anything at all, following placement on a waitlist or after you have received official notification from a school that your application is on hold. Reiterate or elaborate why you feel you are a good fit for this particular school and how you can contribute to the incoming class. The letter should be concise, focused, and no more than a few paragraphs. This letter can include new information about your activities, updates when you have new grades, or simply to express your continued interest for a program.

Include your applicant ID number. It is important to follow specific-school directions for submitting additional information. Some schools discourage the submission of additional information, so respect their policy.

How do I update schools on new activities or accomplishments?



While this rarely influences decisions about your application, it is appropriate to include this in a letter of interest or when solicited by a specific school.

When is it appropriate to send a “letter of intent?”

We recommend students only send one “letter of intent” if you are on a waitlist of your top choice school after April 30th. The letter is only appropriate if you intend to matriculate to that school. It is not appropriate to send to schools where you have not received an interview.

Waitlist

What does it mean to be on a waitlist following an interview?

This simply means the medical school has not accepted you yet, but it also does not want to reject your application. Notification of a waitlist status can be a good time to send a follow-up letter of interest to express your continued interest in a school. Being on a waitlist means that you have a chance of being accepted, and you should not lose hope. You can stay on waitlists well into summer, even if you are accepted to other schools.

If I am on a waitlist, when might I be admitted?

You will only be admitted when a spot opens. This can happen any time between May and matriculation. Schools report that they accept the highest number of waitlisted students during May and June but can accept students later in the summer. You cannot accept an offer of admission from another school after you have started orientation at a school.

Please note after 5:00 pm on June 1, no medical school in Texas may offer a position to an applicant already accepted by another medical school in Texas. This is the result of an agreement between the TMSAS medical schools and Baylor College of Medicine.

Are waitlists ranked?

Some schools rank their waitlist while others do not. Remember that you have been deemed qualified for admission by being placed on the waitlist. When accepted applicants withdraw from an incoming class, the medical school will look to admit waitlisted candidates who would best balance the composition of the class.

Texas Match

Texas resident applicants must rank all schools at which they interviewed regardless of whether or not a pre-match offer was received. Applicants holding a pre-match offer who have interviewed at school(s) that did not extend an offer may rank one or more of those schools higher than the pre-match offer school without risk of losing the pre-match offer. If an applicant holds a pre-match offer and matches to a school they have ranked more highly, the pre-match offer will be withdrawn. Pre-match offers will also be withdrawn through the match process from all other lower ranked schools. The applicant can still be selected by schools which they ranked higher than the school to which they matched. If applicants are holding multiple pre-match offers, they will come out of the match holding only one offer. A case study



provided at the end of this document illustrates these points. Applicants who do not enter their match preference ranks by the deadline will automatically be withdrawn from all medical schools regardless of whether or not an early offer has been made.

Following the match, rolling admissions will continue through the beginning of orientation at each medical school. Medical schools will continue to make offers from their alternate pools which may include applicants who are currently holding an offer at another Texas medical school. However, the Texas medical schools have agreed that after June 1, no school may make an offer to an applicant already holding a place at another Texas medical school.

Texas resident applicants must rank all schools at which they interviewed regardless of whether or not a pre-match offer was received. The deadline for applicants to submit their match preference rank list online was February 19, 2020 by 5:00 PM (CT) for the 2021 applicants, so please follow TMDSAS's website closely for deadline updates. More information on the match can be found in this [video](#).

Getting Accepted

I just received an acceptance letter. What do I do?

Congratulations! Celebrate this achievement. If you receive and hold multiple acceptances, you have until April 30th to narrow it down to one school. After this point, you are in danger of having offers rescinded. Once you have decided on your school, follow their instructions for submitting a deposit and any other steps they require.

Are there any advantages to interviewing at a school after I have already been admitted to my top choice?

No. If you continue to interview after being admitted to your top school, you are taking up valuable interview slots for candidates who may be interested or seriously considering that medical school. If you have been admitted to your preferred school, you have an ethical obligation to notify the remaining schools that you have accepted an invitation to attend elsewhere. It is never acceptable to no-show for an interview. This is a poor reflection of you and Rice University; the OAA will be notified of this behavior.

I am thinking about deferring admission for a year. Can I do that?

Each school has its own deferral policy. Some will not allow deferrals at all, some only allow students to defer if they have received a significant opportunity or have an emergency, and others will allow you to defer with no issue. Check with each school regarding their policy. In general, we do not recommend students apply to medical or dental school if your intention is to defer your admission.

What do I do about schools that require a deposit? Will I get that money back if I choose not to matriculate?

Most medical programs have deposits of \$100 or greater. The deposits are usually refundable before April 30 or will be applied toward your tuition if you ultimately attend the school. For many DO schools, the deposits are between \$500-\$1500 and are typically not refundable.

What if I am accepted but my preference is to attend a school where I am waitlisted?



You can stay on a schools' waitlist until classes start. Keep in mind Texas medical schools will not offer positions after June 1 if you have already been admitted to another Texas program. You should deposit to a school where you have been accepted. At some point in late spring or early summer, you should move forward with plans to attend the accepted school because you will need to make preparations.

April 30

Why is April 30 important?

AMCAS has Application and Acceptance Protocols that outline deadlines, policies and responsibilities. One policy states that applicants can hold multiple acceptances until April 30th of the year of matriculation. By April 30th, all applicants must select one school. Students must notify all schools of their decision or they risk having all offers of admission rescinded. Once schools know how many students will be matriculating, they may begin using their waitlist to fill any open spots.

What if it appears I will not be accepted?

When is the appropriate time to meet with the OAA staff if I'm not hearing from schools?

You are advised to keep in touch with the OAA throughout the process, and if you have not received interviews by the end of December, you should contact us in the spring. Likewise, if you are on waitlists or on hold in May, you should speak to an advisor.

If I am not accepted this cycle, should I make alternative plans for next year and/or consider reapplying?

This is a difficult decision that involves weighing how long to remain available for an admission offer versus making alternative plans for the fall and beyond. Reapplying right away is not always best. You want to be sure your application is as strong as possible, which may mean taking additional time to address areas of weakness in your application before applying again. Your second application should feature new and different experiences. Developing a new personal statement also helps demonstrate the additional experience and maturity you have gained since the last time you applied. While waiting before applying again may be frustrating, it often means the difference between being accepted and not. Commit to spending the time to become the most competitive applicant as possible.

What are some barriers to acceptance?

These can range from metrics such as GPA and test scores, test timing, clinical exposure, volunteer work, research, or more. Additional barriers include the timing of your primary application submission, your choice of schools, secondary application submission, or interview skills. You will need to assess your candidacy, reflect on where you can make concessions, and determine how to improve your overall application before you next apply.

Closing

Please remember that the application process is long and challenging. Prepare ahead of time by reading the application service manuals when they are released in late spring. We understand it can be overwhelming, but have patience. We all wish you luck!