

Request for Committee Letter of Reference UNO Pre-Medical Committee

Return to: Health Careers Resource Center, Allwine Hall 307, 6001 Dodge St, Omaha, NE 68182-0070.

DUE DATES For Letter Requests and External* Letter writers:

June 29, 2022 :: Cmte Letter submitted by July 31** (Early Decision must use this date)

August 31, 2022 :: Cmte Letter submitted by September 30**

- To receive a Committee Letter, students must be Committee sponsored during the Fall semester before they apply, and provide a posted MCAT score with subscores.
- Students must provide a SUBMITTED MD or DO application before the Committee letter is sent. This should be printed in portrait (not landscape) orientation AND be redacted by blacking out your name and identifying information.

*Letters of recommendation written on your behalf and sent to the Committee MUST be received by the due dates above.

** Best effort will be made to submit your Committee letter within 14 days after receiving your redacted application, or by the submission date, whichever is later. Immediately contact premed@unomaha.edu if you do not receive confirmation of your Committee Letter being accepted by the expected submission date.

See the following pages for additional information required for a Committee Letter.

Name: _____ Today's Date: _____

Major (or indicate "post-bac"): _____ Cell phone number: _____

(Expected) graduation date: _____ NUID: _____

Assigned Faculty Mentor: _____ Current cumulative GPA: _____

Smstr(s) with 16+ credit hr load: _____ Smstr/Year BIOL 1060 taken: _____

Total # of completed hours shadowing physicians: _____ Preferred pronouns: _____

Have you applied to MD or DO school before? MD DO None (If yes, when): _____

Have you requested a Pre-med Committee Letter before? Yes No

MCAT Information (include ALL scheduled and recent MCAT dates, even if score is not known):

Date: _____ Score total : _____ Score breakdown: _____

Date: _____ Score total : _____ Score breakdown: _____

Date: _____ Score total : _____ Score breakdown: _____

Date: _____ Score total : _____ Score breakdown: _____

List the schools you anticipate applying to (≥ 2 & ≤ 10 applications recommended). Indicate Early Decision with an *.



FERPA RELEASE WAIVER

Dear applicant,

You are requesting a University of Nebraska at Omaha Pre-Medical Committee Letter. These letters are maintained with strict confidentiality in accordance with AMCAS and AACOMAS rules. If you wish to receive a Pre-Medical Committee Letter, you must agree to and sign the statement below.

I waive any and all of my rights (including but not limited to those afforded by FERPA) to view, in its entirety or any portion thereof, my University of Nebraska at Omaha Pre-Medical Committee Letter of Reference, and any additional letters sent to accompany or augment the Committee Letter.

Printed Full Name

NUID

Signature

Today's date

Committee letter request items:

The following items must be paperclipped in the following order (NO STAPLES, and NO DOUBLE-SIDED sheets), or may be submitted as ONE combined PDF sent to premed@unomaha.edu.

Each numbered item should receive its own page(s). All information **MUST** be in PORTRAIT, not landscape, orientation.

- 1) The completed “Request for Committee Letter of Reference” facepage.
- 2) Your unofficial UNO transcript, which should include all transfer credits. If you have completed a degree elsewhere, please include an unofficial transcript from those institutions.
- 3) A “near-final draft” portrait orientation (**NOT landscape**) printout of your AMCAS and/or DO school application. This is usually accomplished by selecting “Print as HTML” and then “printing” the resulting document to a PDF “printer.”
- 4) **Extensively** provide typed information that would be helpful for the Committee to know about you. Write this in the third person. **Closely follow** the organization of the Committee Letter format posted on the HCRC website: assume that your primary letter writer will rely **exclusively** on this single document to write your letter, and that you are providing a well-written draft of that letter. Include your name at the top of each page, and omit any information that you wouldn’t have access to (i.e. your class rank, what others say about you, etc.). If you’re a post-bac or transfer student, please include an annual timeline of your life starting at age 18, highlighting where and what you were doing each year.
- 5) **IF** you have previously applied to medical school, but been unsuccessful, thoroughly document what has changed or improved since your last application. Also include any instructions you were given in an exit interview and by whom, and to what degree you’ve complied with those instructions.
- 6) A list of additional individuals (plus their title and organization) who YOU will or may invite to write a letter of support on your behalf. You are strongly encouraged to send support letters to the Committee so that we may incorporate them into your Committee letter. If support letters are sent directly to medical schools, we are unable to incorporate them into the letter, and this may leave gaps in areas of your Committee Letter. To avoid these gaps, please review the following:
 - a. Received support letters will be used by the Committee to augment your Committee Letter, AND all received letters **will be forwarded** with your Committee Letter to the medical schools. You are **strongly encouraged and expected** to request the following individuals send letters to the Committee on your behalf:

Physician(s); research lab director(s); volunteer coordinator(s); and current/recent work supervisor(s). Committee letters missing these items may note that you were encouraged and expected to provide these, but did not. You may also invite others who are familiar with your work, character, leadership and motivation. Note that some out-of-state schools *require* a letter from a physician to be included in your file; and D.O. schools often require a D.O. to provide a letter.
 - b. Provide all invited letter-writers with the attached instruction form (below). You and your mentor will be notified via e-mail when letters on your behalf are received and added to your Committee file.
 - c. Only letters received by the selected Letter Request due date will be considered. These letters will only be used for your MD/DO school UNO Committee Letter, and are maintained with strict confidentiality.
- 7) A table of 4 or more of UNO instructors who the Committee MAY contact to talk about your work at UNO. In the table, include instructors name, department, the class name, semester, and final grade.
 - a. Note that UNO professors who have served as employers or research advisers to applicants should be asked to submit a letter to the Committee. **Other UNO professors should typically NOT be asked to write letters: instead, we may contact them directly.**
- 8) Your latest DegreeWorks printout, which should accurately reflect your selected major.
- 9) For MD schools, include your AMCAS Letter Request for a “Committee Letter” (not “letter packet”). Primary contact information: Dr. Paul Davis, Allwine Hall 307, University of Nebraska at Omaha, 6001 Dodge Street, Omaha NE 68182-0070. [Premed@unomaha.edu](mailto:premed@unomaha.edu). Phone: 402-554-5980. DO school/AACOMAS/Interfolio letter requests should be sent to premed@unomaha.edu using the same contact information.
- 10) Your signed FERPA release waiver (see previous page).

Medical School Application Year Timeline and FAQs

Note: All information below is subject to change at any time. It is provided for your information only, and is not authoritative. Some information obtained from <https://www.premedroadmap.com/pages/amcas-medical-school-application>.

Approximate Annual Dates:

May 1 – AMCAS medical school application system opens.

June 1 – AMCAS medical school application open for submission.

June 1 - CASPer opens. This test is for some out-of-state schools. UNMC does not require the CASPer test at this time.

June 30 – Processed AMCAS medical school applications sent to medical schools.

*Many medical schools will give access to their secondary application automatically once a processed application is received. Submission of supplemental applications is often expected within 10-14 days from the date of request. Pre-writing secondary essays is **HIGHLY** recommended.*

August 1 – AMCAS medical school application Early Decision Program (EDP) Deadline.

August - March – Medical school interviews

September 10- Last MCAT test date for the year (scores post 31 days after exam)

October 1- Final acceptance day for EDP

October 15 – The earliest date a school can offer acceptance to regular applicant.

November 1 – Last day to submit AMCAS. Last day for transcripts to arrive at AMCAS.

May 1 – Accepted applicants must notify only one school of their intent to matriculate.

Approximate UNO Pre-med Committee Assistance Dates:

Mid April – Seminar: Writing Personal Statements (MD, PharmD, PA, DDS)

UNO Prep Week – First Personal Statement peer editing session

Mid June – Second Personal Statement peer editing session & go/no-go advising slots

Mid July – Go/no-go advising slots

Early August – First mock interviews

Late August – Final Personal Statement peer editing session & go/no-go advising slots

Mid September – Second mock interview

Mid October – Final go/no-go advising slots & final mock interviews

Ideal timeline for application year:

The following dates are compatible with Early Decision, but are also recommended for all students.

Jan – April: Study for MCAT.

Early May: Begin requesting letters of recommendation to be sent to the UNO Pre-medical Committee.

April – May: Take the MCAT.

Early June: Begin to fill out the AMCAS application. Request official transcript(s) be submitted to AMCAS as soon as you open your AMCAS application.

Mid June: (Peer) edit your AMCAS personal statement and Work/Activities sections.

~Late June (before the 1st letter request due date): Receive MCAT score, and if sufficient, submit a Letter Request Form along with your draft AMCAS application. Remember to immediately submit your MCAT score to premed@unomaha.edu.

If MCAT score is insufficient, consider taking it once more during the summer if time permits additional studying sufficient to significantly increase your score.

If unsure of your entry chances, you should strongly consider a “go / no-go” meeting with your faculty mentor or Dr. Davis to determine if your combined application & MCAT score are sufficient.

Before submitting your AMCAS: Check to see if your school(s) require CASPer, an online ethics training module. See <https://takecasper.com/test-dates/> as these are administered only occasionally, and take weeks to be accepted.

Late June-Late July: Officially submit your revised, peer-reviewed, mentor-reviewed AMCAS application. Also, provide your submitted document in a name-redacted form to premed@unomaha.edu or drop off at the HCRC.

Early Fall: Attend one or more mock interviews hosted by Dr. Davis

Late Fall: Begin preparing your D.O. applications

FAQS about Application Season

Q: When do medical schools begin accepting applications? Is there an advantage to submitting early?

A: Typically AMCAS allows applications in early June of each year. There appears to be a considerable disadvantage to students who submit their application after October 1st. However, *there is never an advantage* to students who submit an incomplete, erroneous, or poorly worded application.

Q: What is the Early Decision Program (EDP)? Does it increase your likelihood of getting it?

A: The EDP is a program designed for students who know where they want to go to medical school. If you apply as an EDP student, you must submit your applications by late summer (each school is different), and you commit that you will apply to no other school until your chosen school indicates whether you have been accepted or not. Most schools, including UNMC and Creighton, simply move their EDP applicants into the normal pool if they are not selected for EDP.

Application to EDP does not often grant any advantage to getting in, unless you have a situation where it is useful for you to demonstrate that you are willing to stay in Nebraska for schooling. This usually only applies to people who have left the state or who have traveled extensively. In addition, applicants considering EDP who have a less-than-robust application and could benefit from a few more months of shadowing, volunteering, etc. should NOT consider EDP, as this will guarantee two reviews of a less-than-stellar application. Instead, students should consider EDP only if they have a robust, complete application by the time that they apply.

Q: When should I submit my application?

A: You should submit only when your application is completely ready, and has been reviewed by others. The key here is that a rejection from your first application will increase the difficulty of all subsequent applications, so your first application should truly be your best. You should have sufficient shadowing hours, clinical experience, etc. documented on your application. For UNMC, you should NOT “predict” or “foreshadow” any volunteer, shadowing, or other work hours in the hours completed tab (despite the fact that AMCAS may allow it). Stated hours should only be for hours you have completed by the time of application submission. Most important is your MCAT score- *you should never submit your application without knowing your latest MCAT score.*

We advise you to submit your AMCAS application as soon as you receive your MCAT scores, assuming you are satisfied with the score. If ambivalent about your score, you are urged to check with your faculty mentor or Dr. Davis before proceeding. We encourage you to submit your transcript to AMCAS, even prior to submitting the remainder of your AMCAS application. This will allow for processing to occur, which sometimes takes 1-2 weeks. Once they have these three components (transcript, MCAT score, and AMCAS application), most medical schools (including UNMC) will begin to schedule interviews.

Please note that some schools do not consider your application complete until all documentation is received, including the Committee Letter. Please be aware of this when applying to out-of-state medical schools, and coordinate your Committee Letter Request submission date appropriately.

Q: Is there a penalty to submitting an application that is below average or contains multiple errors?

A: Yes. You are advised to submit only your best application. For instance, it should contain necessary shadowing and volunteering hours *already completed* and relevant clinical experience. It should also contain a good MCAT score. Lastly, it should be rigorously proof-read and grammatically correct. Of note, many pre-med students indicate that family members are very often insufficiently critical or corrective in reviewing applications.

Students who submit an application which is lackluster or missing key elements often assume that their application will be viewed “holistically.” This often is not the case; rather, your application will be rigorously compared to other applications, and those with the key elements all intact will most often be selected (MCAT, GPA, solid volunteering, clinical experience, shadowing, scholarship or extracurricular engagement, etc.).

Further, students who submit incomplete or lackluster applications find that their second and possibly third attempts to apply to medical school have an even harder acceptance bar than first-time applicants. Thus, you don’t want to “use up” your first application with a mediocre or incomplete attempt.

Q: Should I submit applications to DO schools?

A: Why not? Indeed, we strongly urge students to apply for DO schools based on the nationwide agreement that all residencies will view DO and MD degrees as synonymous. DO schools tend to be more holistic in their review compared

to MD schools (even those MD schools who claim they are holistic). However, DO schools will insist on your shadowing of a DO prior to application. Please note that DO schools use an application system different from AMCAS, so there will be some duplication of effort involved.

Q: Can I submit my AMCAS application and then choose to add another school after submission?

A: Yes, as long it is before the November 1st deadline.

Q: How many hours of shadowing or volunteering should I have by the time I submit my application?

A: No less than 20 hours of shadowing, ideally from two providers. For volunteering, there is no defined minimum- rather, the commitment over a range of time is important. Medical schools do not like to see that someone started volunteering less than a year before applying, as this indicates that caring for others may not be a natural part of who you are. At least 24 months of some type of volunteering with/among people (as opposed to with animals or without human interaction) is expected.

Q: What is CASPer and when should I take it?

A: CASPer is an online test that screens medical school applicants for the following skills: collaboration, communication, empathy, equity, ethics, motivation, problem solving, professionalism, resilience, and self-awareness. The test consists of 12 problem-based scenarios (in either video format or written format) in which you are given 5 minutes to answer a total of 3 questions. The test can take anywhere between 60-90 minutes.

Further, the test should be taken at approximately the same time that the AMCAS application is submitted as it takes three weeks to score. Scores are not sent to test-takers and are limited access to schools in which you select and pay for. There are very few test dates offered each month, so it is best to register early. Most schools consider CASPer a component of the secondary application and will not review the application for interview invites until CASPer scores are received.

Dear Colleague,

The University of Nebraska Pre-Medical Committee is made up of faculty members who guide and evaluate students in their efforts to seek future training as a physician. As part of this effort, the Committee sends to medical schools an extensive letter on behalf of the university which thoroughly describes the applicant and their observed attributes.

When crafting this letter to the medical school(s) to which the applicant has applied, we often rely on outside sources to help evaluate the student's readiness to attend medical school. Attributes which you describe are helpful in determining whether an applicant has made adequate preparation. Your evaluation of the applicant's relative strengths or weaknesses in the following areas is extremely useful:

Compassion, maturity, teamwork and peer relations, leadership, critical reasoning, attention to detail, independence, motivation, time management and effective prioritization, endurance, emotional stability, honesty, cultural competence, and demeanor.

Your letter will be maintained with strict confidentiality, and is never shared (in part, in whole, or in summary) with the applicant at any time. Thus, we encourage you to write honestly about the applicant. The Committee will include pertinent or summary statements attributed to you in the final Committee letter. In addition, your complete letter will be included in the Committee letter appendix material for review by the medical school(s) to which the applicant has applied.

Please address your letter to the UNO Pre-Medical Committee. When complete, please send it electronically to premed@unomaha.edu, or to the following address:

UNO Pre-Medical Committee, 6001 Dodge Street, Omaha, NE 68182-0070.

Thank you for your support on behalf of our student,

Dr. Paul H. Davis
Director, UNO Health Careers Resource Center
<http://cas.unomaha.edu/healthcareers>