

## **PreMed/Pre-Health Advising:**

### **Background and Registration information for admission to medical school in FALL 2022**

Updated 02/01/2021

Rensselaer offers advising for students considering further study in medicine or another health-related field. The program is coordinated by the Pre-Health Professions Committee. Interested students must register for the advising program.

If you are at least a junior, please email Patricia Tedesco (tedesp@rpi.edu) and she will send you those instructions and necessary forms.

#### **PRE-HEALTH PROFESSIONS COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

- Michael H Hanna, PhD, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences, Head
- Alicia Walf, PhD, Lecturer, Cognitive Science
- Steven A. Tysoe, PhD, Lecturer, Chemistry and Chemical Biology
- Kristen Kettering, Career Counselor, CCPD

#### **REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS:**

It is essential that you complete the **Registration** and **Student Recommendation** forms **as soon as possible** so that we can get you on the spring roster and create your file. These forms are available electronically from Patricia Tedesco at [tedesp@rpi.edu](mailto:tedesp@rpi.edu) and should be returned to her as well. Both forms require your ***signature***.

Your application packet can be sent electronically to Ms. Tedesco and should include the following items:

1. A copy of your transcript (unofficial from SIS is fine to begin with, **but an official transcript is required at the completion of the spring semester**).
2. A formal resume.
3. A one page personal statement similar to that required in the AMCAS, AADSAS, or other pre-health common applications. *(Please include your name on your personal statement.)*
4. At least **4** letters of recommendation using the **Student Recommendation Form**; **2** due by **March 12<sup>th</sup>**. For pre-medical and pre-dental, two of these letters **must** be from faculty members, preferably in the sciences. Letters from other sources are highly encouraged. Most other pre-health professions require three letters of recommendation and often have different emphasis.

#### **LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION**

Take the time to choose recommenders who know you well and are aware of your background and interests in a career in medicine or other health-related fields. **Impress upon them your need for a letter with some depth beyond the usual platitudes**, which means an extended discussion will be necessary if you are not known well. Letters from sources other than faculty members may be helpful (Dean of Students, Directors of Programs, physicians who know you well, health professionals in your field of interest, faculty research mentors, church leaders, athletic coaches, etc.). These letters help the Committee learn about your non-academic self.

In accordance with policy at Rensselaer, students sign a waiver statement on their **Student Recommendation Form** and also on the **Registration Form**. Both forms must agree as to waiving or not waiving the right to review the letters of recommendation. The decision of a student with regard to waiving the right to view these confidential letters will be forwarded to the health professional schools as part of the Committee letter of

recommendation. No letter of recommendation will be seen by anyone outside of the Committee without authorization of the student and the recommender. The Committee requests access to your personal file in the Dean of Students Office. Access will be limited to the Head of the Pre-Health Professions Committee and students sign a waiver statement on the registration form allowing or denying access. The student's decision regarding this waiver is also communicated to the health professional schools.

#### **SUMMARY OF DEADLINES FOR THE PRE-HEALTH PROFESSIONS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

1. **ASAP- Registration Form & Student Recommendation Form (both signed by you)**
2. **March 12th** –resume, personal statement, unofficial transcript, and at least **two** of the four letters of recommendation. Remaining letters are due as soon as possible, but no later than **June 1, 2021**
3. **April**-Committee interviews are conducted.
4. **Registration for MCAT, DAT and GRE** is ongoing and should be completed after determining the best date for taking the exam.
5. **May** – AMCAS and AACOMAS web-based primary application opens. For other professions see 'quick reference' section of this site.
6. **July 15th**– Remaining letters of recommendation may be submitted to the Pre-Health Professions Committee in electronic form on or before **July 15<sup>th</sup> if cleared, prior to June 1<sup>st</sup>, by the Pre-Health Professions Committee.**
7. **June 1st - August 15th** - Committee letters are completed and submitted to the relevant application service.

#### **WHAT IS A PERSONAL STATEMENT?**

Almost all health professions require either a single essay or multiple essays in which the applicant identifies certain characteristics of their personality, their experience, and their motivation for study in medical (or dental, etc.) schools. Each may have a minimum font and maximum number of characters allowed for the essay. These essays are difficult to write and often come out as bland statements along the following lines: "I love people, I love Science, I will be a great physician." They frequently start with a quote from some famous person. These "statements" do not say much. Students need to provide examples of their experiences that indicate why they would become good health care professionals. The Committee will read your first draft and provide feedback so that when you submit these letters to AMCAS, AADSAS, or other health professional programs they will be a better representation of you as an individual. Please remember that each school to which you apply will read several thousand of these letters every year. If you have special talents, make us and the schools aware of those talents. Make your letter worth reading. The first draft must be submitted prior to committee interviews.

#### **INTERVIEW INSTRUCTIONS WITH PRE-HEALTH COMMITTEE**

Interviews with applicants will be scheduled during November (for spring away students) or sooner if the registration materials and at least two letters of recommendation have been returned. **No students will receive Committee letters without going through the interview process.** The purpose of the interview is to provide students with experience in interviewing techniques, counsel you concerning your overall record, and obtain information for use in your Committee letter of recommendation. The Pre-Health Professions Committee provides a summary of your overall application (information gathered from your interview and application portfolio) and includes all of your letters of recommendation for each school to which you apply.

**Webex** interviews of approximately 45 minutes are scheduled during normal working hours, 9:00AM to 4:30PM EST. **It is expected that applicants will present themselves in a business-like fashion.** Please have available for discussion a preliminary list of schools to which you will apply. Each applicant will be interviewed by two members of the Committee in one meeting. **Based upon the recommendations of the interviewers, applicants will be allowed to present additional information and letters of recommendation to their file until August 6th.**

## **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

At the end of the fall semester (after your interview), a formal copy of your transcript, which includes your fall grades, MUST be submitted to the Committee. The MCAT (DAT, etc.) registration forms are available at [www.aamc.org](http://www.aamc.org) for medical applications. (For other health fields, see 'quick reference' section of this site.) The MCAT, DAT and GRE are given multiple times during the academic year. Applicants should be certain to sign up to take the exam at a time when they are prepared to take the test and early enough to meet the deadlines of the graduate health schools. In recent years, a few medical schools have refused to take MCAT exam results from September exam periods for that year's application cycle. All professional health schools prefer applications where the MCAT, DAT, etc. is taken once and not more. This is not like the SAT or ACT where undergraduate colleges care less about how many times you take the test.

The AMCAS or primary application for medical school is available at the same web address listed above and is available typically during May through October. Students should submit their AMCAS or other common application in a timely fashion **and provide an electronic copy of the completed application** to the Pre-Health Professions Committee addressed to **Patricia Tedesco, [tedesp@rpi.edu](mailto:tedesp@rpi.edu)**. **Any outstanding application materials/letters must be provided to the Pre-Health Professions Committee on or before July 15th.** Application materials presented after this will not be included with the Committee recommendation or the student's registration will be withdrawn by the Committee. NO exceptions to this deadline will be made.

### **A new test for premedical students- CASPer**

CASPer stands for Computer Based Assessment for Sampling Personal Characteristics. Now that you know what it is, what is it? The exam provides typical life situations (real or theoretical) and asks you what you would do if you were in this situation. A greater number of medical schools are using this test on situational judgment-requiring it- before they make decisions on interview or admission. The field is shifting toward and not away from this exam. For overall information see: <https://takecasper.com/about-casper/>. There will be more posted on our site for listing of major premed/Pre-Health websites.