

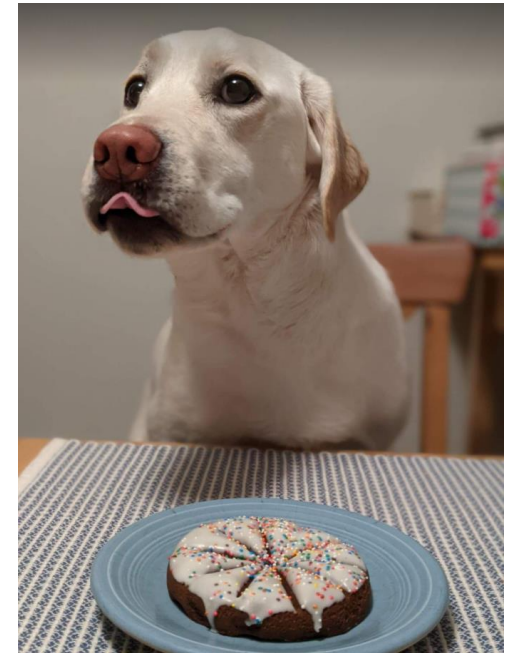
Pre-Medical and Pre-Dental Advising Office

Spring 2021
Secondary Applications



Agenda

- I. **Housekeeping**
 - II. **Secondary basics**
 - III. **Secondary timelines**
 - IV. **Sample questions**
- ❖ premed.uconn.edu
 - ❖ premed_predental@uconn.edu
 - ❖ Instagram: [uconn_premed_predental](https://www.instagram.com/uconn_premed_predental)
 - ❖ Rowe Building, 4th floor



Spring 2021 workshops



**2022 MED/DENT APPLICATION CYCLE
SPRING WORKSHOP SERIES**

UConn
PRE-MEDICAL AND
PRE-DENTAL ADVISING
OFFICE

- Monday, February 8 / 2-3 pm / Letters of Recommendation:
Who and How to Ask (with OUR) / Link at
ugradresearch.uconn.edu/workshops
- Wednesday, February 10 / 6-7:30 pm / 2022 Cycle
Application Orientation
- Monday, March 8 / 3-4 pm / Selecting Schools to Apply to
- Friday, March 19 / 1-2 pm / Personal Statements (with CCD)
- Tuesday, March 23 / 3-4 pm / Secondary Applications
- [TBD July/August] Navigating the Healthcare Admissions
Interview (with CCD)

ALL WORKSHOPS WILL TAKE PLACE AT
UConnVTC.Webex.com/Meet/Preadvis UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.
ALL WORKSHOPS WILL BE RECORDED AND UPLOADED TO
[PREMED.UCONN.EDU/VIDEOSERIES/](https://Premed.UConn.edu/Videoseries/).

Spring 2021 Chat with Alumni

Chat with Alumni

LGBTQIA+ in Healthcare

Monday, 3/29 6:00-7:00 pm

uconnvtc.webex.com/meet/preadvts

Tanya Miller (UConn '20) is currently completing her Helen Gurley Brown BOLD Fellowship at Science Club for Girls. SCFG is a non-profit organization based in Cambridge, Massachusetts that fosters excitement and literacy in STEM for girls from underrepresented communities with free, experiential programs. In 2020, Tanya graduated with her B.S. in Physiology and Neurobiology after completing her Honors Thesis in Dr. James Conover's laboratory and enjoying several years serving on the Bows Scholars Executive Board. During the summer of 2019, she created a documentary titled "Pisces!BROADuctor" through the BOLD Scholars Program in order to increase the visibility of female physicians and to encourage students from nontraditional backgrounds to pursue medicine. This fall, she will begin studying at Johns Hopkins School of Nursing as an MSN Entry into Nursing student. She is excited to become a leader in healthcare that is committed to serving all patients, but especially those who are LGBTQIA+ and/or from low-income communities. She looks forward to returning to the UConn Pre-Medical and Pre-Dental Advising Office this May for her 2nd summer in a role of supporting other pre-health students along their journey!



Alexa Friedman (UConn '18) is a third-year Ph.D. student in the Environmental Health department at Boston University School of Public Health. Her dissertation is examining early-

We exposure to multiple metals and children's neurodevelopment. She is interested in understanding not only how exposure during critical windows of development but also how exposure over time, in the form of exposure profiles, is related to children's neurodevelopment. Ultimately, Alexa hopes to conduct research to inform targeted public health interventions. Alexa earned her Bachelor of Science in an interdisciplinary major, Human Health Sciences, at the University of Connecticut in 2018 where her undergraduate thesis was on the Gut microbiome influence on infection response in *Drosophila melanogaster*. Being a first-generation student, Alexa is heavily involved in outreach efforts focused on breaking down barriers for students from non-traditional backgrounds during her undergrad and graduate studies.

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Chat with Alumni

LGBTQIA+ in Healthcare

Monday, 3/29 6:00-7:00 pm

uconnvtc.webex.com/meet/preadvts

Deborah Donnell, MD (UConn '09, UConn Med '15) is a board-certified Family Medicine physician with experience in community organizing, primary care advocacy, and leadership development. As a Connecticut-native, she was born and raised in Manchester, CT, attending UConn as part of the Combined B.S./M.D. Program in Medicine, as a Nutmeg Scholar, Honors Scholar, and member of the first class of Bows Scholars. During undergraduate studies, she founded the UConn Pre-Medical Society in 2007, and volunteered extensively at the UConn Migrant Farm Worker Medical Clinics. During Medical School, she co-founded the UConn Primary Care Progress (PCP) chapter in 2013, and has remained involved with Primary Care Progress advocacy at the national level as an Engagement Fellow, Conference Trainer, and Leadership Pathway Lead Coach. Dr. Donnell completed Family Medicine Residency at Tufts Family Medicine Residency at Cambridge Health Alliance, while serving as Resident Director for the MassAFP Board of Directors. After residency, she returned to CT to practice in the office where she did her medical school community continuity experience. She is passionate about full-spectrum primary care, with reproductive health, procedures, pediatric and adolescent care, and preventative medicine.



Jana Baker (UConn '20) recently earned her Bachelor of Science in Physiology & Neurobiology this past May. During her time at UConn, she competed for the Track & Field team and served as a member of the executive board for the Bows Scholars Program. Jana is currently spending her growth year before medical school working as a research technician at Brigham & Women's Hospital in Boston, MA. In her research, she assists Dr. Eva Liu in studying hypophosphatemic rickets, a genetic disorder that causes abnormally low levels of phosphate in the blood resulting in bone deformations. Jana is interested in pursuing a career in medicine so that she can dedicate her life to addressing the health disparities that disproportionately affect the Black and LGBTQIA+ communities. Additionally, after years of mentoring and working as a teaching assistant, Jana aspires to work in academic medicine in order to help minority students succeed in medicine while further diversifying the healthcare field.

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Advisors

► Director of Pre-Professional Advising

- Erin Ciarimboli, PhD



► Pre-Medical

- Keat Sanford, PhD
- Khalilah Arrington, PhD student

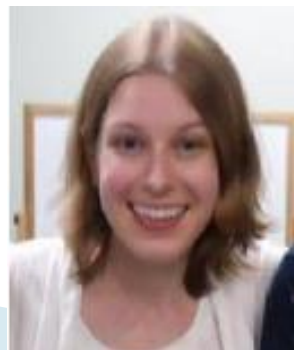


► Pre-Dental

- Thomas Abbott, PhD

► Staff and/or advisors

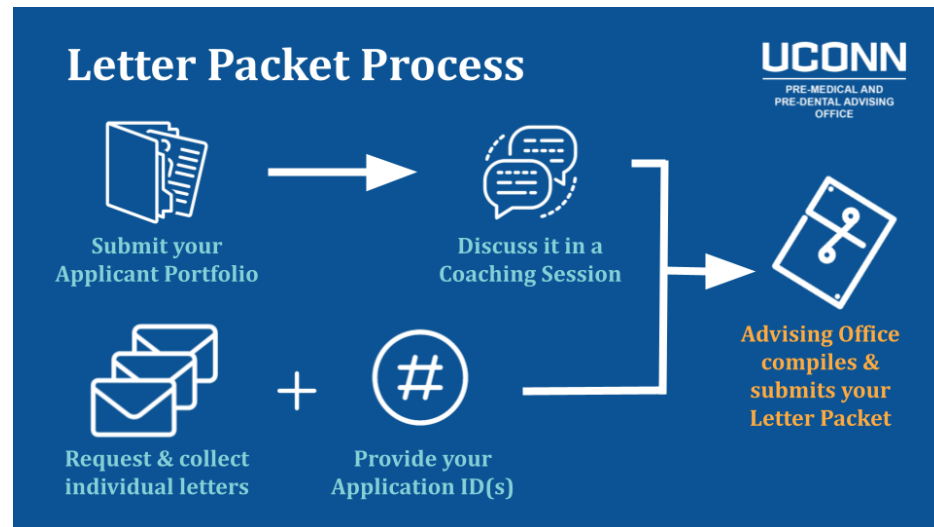
- Krista Rogers, MA
- Susan Ruggiero, MS
- Emma Belliveau, BS



2022 cycle reminders

► Helpful links

- Application timelines: <https://premed.uconn.edu/timelines/>
- Workshops & Chat with Alumni recordings: <https://premed.uconn.edu/videoseries/>



Secondary basics

► What is a secondary application?

- Format varies, but usually 1–2 additional short essay-type questions
- Usually includes 1 school-specific question
- CASPer test / Situational Judgement Test (SJT)
- Further chance to differentiate yourself from other applicants
- Schools may ask you to elaborate on your secondary responses at an interview

Secondary basics

► Primary vs. secondary applications

- Primary: “common app”
- Secondary: “supplemental”
- They are independent application components

Personal Comments Essay

Some questions you may want to consider while drafting this essay are:

- Why have you selected the field of medicine?
- What motivates you to learn more about medicine?
- What do you want medical schools to know about you that hasn't been disclosed in another section of the application?

In addition, you may wish to include information such as:

- Special hardships, challenges or obstacles that may have influenced your educational pursuits
- Commentary on significant fluctuations in your academic record which are not explained elsewhere in your application

Secondary basics

AMCAS:

Unlike your AMCAS application—which is standard across all the medical schools you’re applying to—secondary applications are directly sent to you by each school on an individual basis. As such, they are focused on the interests of that particular school.

Secondary applications run the gamut in terms of length and involvement: Some are only a handful of yes-or-no questions, while others require up to four full-length essays. On the more annoying side of things, some secondary applications can involve 20 short answer questions and ask you to re-enter every class you’d taken that met the prerequisite criteria. However, the “average” secondary application (if there really is such a thing) has one to two short essays and asks for a bit of additional biographical or academic data.

UConn Med:

The UConn Supplemental Statement requests responses to several questions. The statement affords the applicant the opportunity to highlight aspects of preparation regarding research, teaching, and clinical experience. The statement also affords the opportunity to further discuss motivations for a career in medicine, and to discuss important issues facing medicine and health professionals. The intent of the Supplemental Statement is to provide the applicant with an additional opportunity to present and to amplify on relevant preparation and experience, as well as their specific interest in attending the UConn School of Medicine.

Secondary basics

► Where do you submit secondaries?

- MD programs: All but a few Texas schools require them
- DO & PA programs: Generally similar to MD programs
- Dental programs: Varies—some have them, some don't
- Check your application service's "explorer" to see whether a school requires a secondary or not



The graphic promotes the ADEA Official Guide to Dental Schools, 2019-2020 edition. It features two book covers on the left and right, and a central image of a tablet and smartphone displaying the digital version of the guide. The book covers are blue and white, with the title 'ADEA OFFICIAL GUIDE TO DENTAL SCHOOLS' prominently displayed. Below the book covers are three orange buttons with white text: 'PURCHASE BOOK', 'SUBSCRIBE TO DENTAL SCHOOL EXPLORER', and 'PURCHASE BUNDLE'.

AMERICAN DENTAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
2019-2020
ADEA OFFICIAL GUIDE TO
DENTAL SCHOOLS
For Students Entering
Fall 2020 or Fall 2021
ADEA

AMERICAN DENTAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
2019-2020
ADEA OFFICIAL GUIDE TO
DENTAL SCHOOLS
For Students Entering
Fall 2020 or Fall 2021
ADEA

PURCHASE BOOK

SUBSCRIBE TO
DENTAL SCHOOL
EXPLORER

PURCHASE BUNDLE

Secondary timelines

► When will I receive secondaries?

- Depends on when you submit your primary
- Typically 1–3 weeks after primary verification
- Almost always within 3 months
- February–April is still possible
- Very occasionally you may even get one before your primary is verified!



Secondary timelines

► Steps / 2022 cycle AMCAS example

- 1. Submit primary
 - AMCAS opens on 5/3/21
 - Submission button available on 5/27/21
- 2. AMCAS verifies primary
 - Verified primaries are sent to schools beginning on 6/25/21
- 3. Submit secondaries
 - Additional \$50–120/school
 - Schools may offer fee waivers
- 4. Wait for interview invites

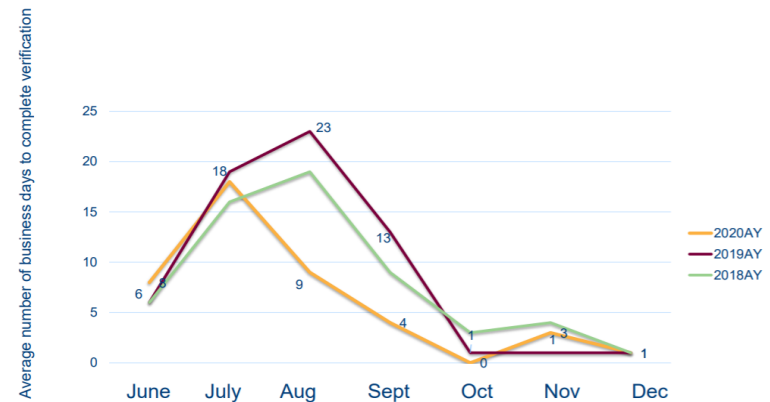
Secondary timelines

► How soon should I submit my secondaries?

- Ultimate goal: a few days after receipt
- More realistic goal: *within 2 weeks of receipt, even if the school gives you a month to submit*
- Prioritize your most important schools!

**Pre-dents:
Verification
happens
FAST!!**

AMCAS Verification



Secondary timelines

► Applicant example

- 8/24: Primary was verified by AMCAS
- 8/26: Received first secondary
- 8/31: Received second secondary
- 9/08: Received third secondary



Secondary timelines

► Acceptances

- Typically pay a deposit within 2 weeks due to rolling admissions timeframe
- Pay attention to school-specific instructions!
- MD programs: You can usually pay a refundable deposit at multiple schools
- You must commit to one school and withdraw apps from other schools by 4/30
- “Passive withdrawal” = when you don’t complete a school’s secondary

Sample questions

► General reflective questions

- How do your unique personal characteristics and background contribute to the university's educational mission of creating a diverse entering class?
- What is one non-medical activity that has had a significant impact on you?
- Which points of your character would you like to highlight to the admissions committee?
- Describe a crisis/conflict situation in your life. How did you deal with it, and how has it affected you?

Sample questions

► 2021/2022 cycles note

- MD programs have added a question about the impact of COVID-19 on your preparation and experiences



Sample questions

► UConn Med

Please limit your responses to 1800 characters, including spaces, for each essay question.

Highlight your experiences in the health care field. What insights have you gained about potential problems you will face as a physician?

How will the University of Connecticut School of Medicine best serve your needs of becoming a physician or physician scientist?

Please take a moment to explain how the COVID-19 pandemic directly and personally affected you as it pertains to preparing for medical school. (e.g. MCAT test date delay, financial impact, research/clinical experiences, self-quarantine, etc.).

Sample questions

► UMass Med Pt. 1

You are asked to highlight specific examples of how you developed and demonstrated core professional competencies that are required for entering medical students. Please respond to the first prompt (Diversity). Then select three of the other six prompts. Each response should be 150-200 words.

- UMass Medical School strives to be a diverse community mindful that diversity makes our community stronger and benefits the patients we serve. Each person in our community brings a unique set of strengths, experiences and perspectives. Describe an example where you contributed to the diversity of a group, team or class. Connect this to how you will contribute to the diversity of the UMMS community. (Diversity)
- Describe a time when you have made a decision that was not popular and how you handled this. (Leadership competency)
- Describe a time when you were on a team that was dysfunctional in some regard. How did you address the situation? (Teamwork)
- Describe a meaningful interaction you have had with a person whom you have helped at work, school or another activity. (Empathy/Compassion)
- Describe a situation where poor communication had a negative impact. What did you do to improve it? (Communication)
- Describe a time when you have used your ingenuity to solve a problem. (Inquiry)
- Describe a time when you suffered a setback. How did you respond to this challenge? (Persistence/Grit)

Sample questions

► UMass Med Pt. 2

Please discuss any part of your application that you feel requires further explanation. For example, discuss grades or MCAT scores that do not reflect your true ability, and/or a gap in time that is not explained elsewhere in your application. Discuss any impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on your academic, service, extracurricular, or employment experiences. If you are reapplying to UMass SOM, highlight how you have strengthened your application. (250-word limit)

If you have participated in UMass SOM or UMass Memorial Health Care, or UMMS Baystate sponsored programs (SEP, Summer Research Program, Worcester Pipeline Collaborative, AHEC, BaccMD, HSPP, Academic Internships, BSEP, Summer Scholars) please describe how these programs helped you decide to apply to UMass SOM. (200-word limit)

What is your greatest strength? What are you going to contribute to the UMMS community?

If you are currently taking a gap year, in what activities are you engaged? (200-word limit)

Sample questions

► Harvard Med

If you have already graduated, briefly (4000 characters max) summarize your activities since graduation.

If there is an important aspect of your personal background or identity, not addressed elsewhere in the application, that you would like to share with the Committee, we invite you to do so here. Many applicants will not need to answer this question. Examples might include significant challenges in access to education, unusual socioeconomic factors, identification with a minority culture, religion, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity. Briefly explain how such factors have influenced your motivation for a career in medicine. (4000 char)

The Committee on Admissions understands that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted applicants in various ways. If you wish to inform the Committee as to how these events have affected you and have not already done so elsewhere in your application, please use this space to do so. (This is an optional essay; the Committee on Admissions will make no judgment based on your decision to provide a statement or not.) (4000 char)

Sample questions

► Texas A & M

Describe briefly any experiences and/or skills that have made you more sensitive or appreciative of other cultures or the human condition. (3500 character maximum).

The Texas A&M College of Medicine embraces the Aggie Core Values of Respect, Excellence, Leadership, Loyalty, Integrity and Selfless Service. Briefly discuss what activities demonstrate best that you would be a good custodian of these core values. (3500 character maximum).

Describe any circumstances indicative of some hardship, such as, but not limited to, financial difficulties, personal or family illness, a medical condition, a death in the immediate family or educational disadvantage not mentioned in your primary application essays; OR describe any key academic, personal, or financial barriers that COVID-19 may have posed on you or your immediate family. (Do not leave blank. If not applicable, please so indicate. The character limit on this essay is 3500).

OPTIONAL: List the area (or areas) of medicine that appeals to you and briefly explain. (Limit your explanation to 50 words or 250 characters for each area of interest you list.) Do not leave blank. If not applicable, please so indicate.

Sample questions

► Other examples

- **[DO]** Write an autobiographical statement in 6,000 characters. Are you acquainted with a DO physician? Tell us about your experiences working with this professional.
- **[PA]** Describe the physician assistant's role as a member of the healthcare team.
- **[Dental]** Discuss one activity or experience you listed in your AADSAS application as a means of providing evidence of your leadership skills or self-initiative.

Sample questions

► Tips & tricks

- Why *this* program? → Not just for reasons of convenience...
- How does *this* program give you an opportunity to make a meaningful social, educational, and scientific contribution to the medical community in terms of patients, other medical students, and faculty?
- Precisely answer *the question that's being asked*

Sample questions

► Tips & tricks

- Don't repeat information/reiterate resume
- Think of secondaries as the continuation of a conversation, not the start
- Have others proofread
- Time management



Sample questions

► Tips & tricks

- Use your Health Professions Applicant Portfolio as a starting place!
- Our website: <https://premed.uconn.edu/secondary-applications/>
- Unofficial prompts database:
<http://www.prospectedoctor.com/medical-school-secondary-essay-prompts-database/>