2021 Navigating the Healthcare Admissions Interview

UCONN CENTER FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT &
UCONN PRE-MEDICAL AND PRE-DENTAL ADVISING OFFICE
Navigating the Healthcare Admissions Interview
Wednesday, July 21st

9:00AM to 10:15AM – Workshop presentation for current cycle applicants

10:30AM to 11:45AM – Alumni Panel 1

5:30PM to 6:45PM – Alumni Panel 2

All events will take place at uconnv tc.webex.com/meet/preadvis and will be recorded.

We can’t wait to see you soon!
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Special thanks to Caroline McGuire, PhD
AGENDA

Part 1: Interview basics
  ◦ Purpose of the interview
  ◦ Importance of the interview
  ◦ Types of interviews

Part 2: How to prepare
  ◦ Performing a self-assessment
  ◦ Researching the school/program
  ◦ Planning for the day of

Part 3: The interview itself
  ◦ Types of interview questions
  ◦ Tips for answering common questions
  ◦ Sample questions/practice

Part 4: Additional considerations
  ◦ Ethics
  ◦ Communication
  ◦ Questions to ask
  ◦ Follow-up
Interview Basics

PART 1
Application Process

PREPARE
Take entrance exams
Determine schools to apply to
Write resume/CV and personal statement(s)
Gather letters of recommendation
Attend open houses (if offered)

APPLY
File primary applications
Send score reports
File secondary applications

INTERVIEW
Meet with program representatives, faculty, current students, etc.

DECIDE
Wait for offer(s) to be extended
Weigh options and choose a school to attend or an alternate plan
Purpose of the Interview

To assess your:

- Level of interest in the school/program
- Fit with the current faculty/students
- Potential in the field of healthcare
- Holistic candidacy

What is Holistic Review?

Holistic review is an admissions process that considers each applicant individually by balancing their academic metrics with experiences and attributes. These factors are viewed in combination to consider how an individual might contribute value not only as a medical student, but also as a future physician. Nearly all medical schools report using some elements of holistic review.
AAMC 15 Core Competencies

• The Core Competencies for Entering Medical Students
• Real Stories Demonstrating Core Competencies
• Anatomy of an Applicant: Self-Assessment Guide
AAMC 15 Core Competencies

- Demonstrating Competence in an Unconventional Application Year webinar

Through holistic review we can assess your competencies

- Essays – Service orientation, teamwork, resilience and adaptability, capacity for improvement, cultural competency, capacity for improvement, written communication.
  *Personal statement and secondary questions can be a good place to talk about competencies demonstrated during the last few months*

- Experiences – Reliability and adaptability, service orientation, social skills, teamwork, oral communication, scientific inquiry

- Letters of recommendation – can touch on interpersonal, intrapersonal, thinking and reasoning and science competencies

- Interview - can touch on interpersonal, intrapersonal, thinking and reasoning and science competencies
AAMC 15 Core Competencies

- Demonstrating Competence in an Unconventional Application Year webinar

**Plan your mission!**

- **Resource assessment:** What are my resources (experiences & competencies) and how do I best utilize/maximize them?
  
  *Tip:* Keep a journal listing your experiences, hours, contact info and write about what you’ve learned and how experiences relate to competencies!

- **Execute the mission:** Communication, communication, communication!!!
  - Most meaningful experience description
  - Personal Statement
  - Reference letters
  *Tip:* give updated resume & brief written summary of your most meaningful highlights
  - Supplemental application
  *Tip:* This is where you can really personalize your application
  - Interview
Importance of the Interview

If you are offered an interview, that means you are a qualified candidate, but it also means everyone else interviewing is a qualified candidate.

According to the AAMC, in the 2020-2021 cycle:

- **53,030** prospective students applied to medical school
- **22,239** students matriculated into U.S. programs

That’s roughly **42%**
# Types of Interviews

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<tr>
<th>TRADITIONAL</th>
<th>MULTIPLE MINI INTERVIEW</th>
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<tr>
<td>One-on-one or group conversation between you and program representatives</td>
<td>A series of short, structured interview stations involving live and/or prepared scenarios</td>
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<tr>
<td>Topics include: your background, motivation, depth and breadth of interest, hot topics, ethics, empathy, teamwork, your experience</td>
<td>Topics include: ethical decision making, critical thinking, communication skills, current healthcare and societal issues</td>
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AAMC Situational Judgement Test (SJT)

• “The AAMC SJT is a standardized exam that presents a series of hypothetical scenarios students may encounter in medical school and asks examinees to evaluate the effectiveness of a series of behavioral responses to each scenario.”

• Used by six medical schools in the 2022 cycle (two required)

• Focuses on eight core competencies

• 30 scenarios / 186 test items / 75 minutes to complete

• AAMC SJT

• AAMC SJT Essentials: Testing Year 2021

• AAMC SJT accommodations
Altus Suite: Casper, Snapshot, Duet

• Offered by Altus Assessments

• Measure non-academic metrics—the personal and professional attributes necessary to succeed; intended to minimize bias

• “Adds more pixels into the picture of an applicant”

• No “right” or “wrong” answers

• Official site with list of participating schools

• Testing accommodations request form
Altus Suite: Casper, Snapshot, Duet

Altus Suite for Applicants

Casper
An online situational judgment test (SJT) that screens for people skills

Snapshot
One-way structured video interview to share more about yourself to programs

Duet
Value-alignment assessment that compares what you value with what the program has to offer

2021/2022 admissions cycle
Altus Suite: Casper, Snapshot, Duet

• Measures 10 non-cognitive competencies
• 12 sections / 60-90 minutes to complete
• Score of 1 (lowest) – 9 (highest) for each section
• Each section contains a video or word-based scenario and three open-ended questions
• Test takers have five minutes to respond to all three questions
• New to this cycle—applicants receive quartile scores one month after testing
Altus Suite: **Casper**, Snapshot, Duet

**Casper**

An online, video-based situational judgment test (SJT) that evaluates 10 competencies for professionalism and non-academic skills.

- 12 sections
- 8 video-based scenarios
- 30 second reflection
- 5 minutes to type response
- 60-90 minutes to complete
- 1 aggregate score
- 4 text-based scenarios
- 3 open-ended questions
- 10 minute optional break

**Rating**

- Raters focus on:
  - Casper competencies
  - The content of response
  - Benchmarking applicants against one another
- Raters do not focus on:
  - Spelling errors
  - English proficiency level
  - Cut off or incomplete sentences
- Raters do not penalize applicants for providing non-traditional or unique answers
Altus Suite: Casper, **Snapshot**, Duet

**SNAPSHOT**

A short, one-way video interview that highlights your communication and self-reflection skills, and motivation for the profession so you can bring your personal statement to life.

- **Try to complete within 14 days after Casper**
- **15 minutes**
- **Comm skills**
- **Motivation**
- **Self-reflection**

**How Snapshot works**

**Interview**

- **Tech**
  - Check equipment

- **Practice**
  - 2 practice questions
  - Take as many times as needed

- **Read question**
  - 30 seconds to read the question and to reflect on your response

- **Record response**
  - Up to 2 minutes to record response
  - Can stop timer if finished early
  - Cannot review response
  - Cannot re-record response

- **Submit**
  - Cannot review any responses
  - Snapshot responses are reviewed by the programs you are applying to

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**Try to complete within 14 days after Casper**

**15 minutes**

**Comm skills**

**Motivation**

**Self-reflection**
Altus Suite: Casper, Snapshot, Duet

How Duet works

- **Introduction**: Review instructions to ensure purpose and format is understood
- **Reflect**: Review and reflect on the 7 characteristics and definitions of each category
- **Compare**: For each pair of categories, choose the one most important
- **Category comparison**: Continue until all 7 are complete
- **Submit**: Can go back to previous pair

**Try to complete within 14 days after Casper**

- 3 categories
- 7 characteristics

**Available for US UME/GME**

- 20 minutes

**Available if you're applying to US UME/GME**
Interviews this cycle

AAMC MSAR 2022 Cycle Advisor Reports

Interview Procedures (updated 7/12)
Admission Policies and Information (updated 7/15)
Primary Application Information (updated 6/11)
Secondary Application Policies (updated 6/28)
Additional Required Assessments (updated 7/7)
Waitlist Policies (updated 5/31)
Interviews this cycle

AAMC / Preparing for Medical School Interviews
AAMC / Virtual Interviews: Tips for Medical School Applicants
AACOM / The Admissions Interview
2/2/21 UConn Chat with Alumni event!
AOA / 4 tenets of osteopathic medicine
ADEA / Interviews (+ Dos and Don’ts)
Texas medical & dental programs / How Interviews Will Be Hosted at Each Member Institution for EY2022
Preparing for an Interview

PART 2
Performing a Self-Assessment

After an interview, the interviewer remembers 3-4 key takeaways.

• What are the **main pieces of information** I want to make sure I cover during my interview?
• What **core competencies and other skills** do I want to demonstrate that I have during my interview? Do I have stories/examples to back them up?
• What makes me **unique** in comparison to other candidates?
• Am I able to elaborate on everything included in my **application materials** without being repetitive?
• How do my **values, interests, and skills** align with this particular program?
• Can I explain my **research** in a way that is accessible to others?
Researching the Program

WHAT SHOULD I KNOW?

• Mission and values
• Program curriculum
• Other program elements, like experiential learning, affiliated student organizations, service opportunities, etc.
• Key faculty and staff
• Faculty research topics
• Recent recognition

WHERE SHOULD I LOOK?

• National and regional associations (ex. AAMC, ADEA, SAPTA, etc.)
• Program’s website
• Social media
• LinkedIn
• Husky Mentor Network
• News outlets
• Student Doctor Network
The Night Before & The Day Of

- Check your technology, especially internet connection, needed software, and audio/visual capabilities

- Lay out clothes and get a good night’s sleep

- Make sure your interview space has good lighting, a professional background, and is clear of any distractions

- Set up at least 10 minutes early and join the call 5 minutes early

- Be “on” from the beginning and make a strong first impression
Dress Like a Healthcare Professional
The Interview Itself

PART 3
# Types of Interview Questions

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<th>TRADITIONAL</th>
<th>BEHAVIORAL</th>
<th>CASE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Usually relate to your personality, background, and values</td>
<td>Used to find out what type of behavior you have used to handle specific situations in your past experiences</td>
<td>Put your critical thinking and problem solving skills to the test on the spot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow interviewer to get to know you better as a person and candidate</td>
<td>Allow interviewer to predict how you may react to similar situations in the future</td>
<td>Can allow the interviewer to see how you interact in a collaborative setting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Translating the Question

How can I tell what they’re really asking?

- Listen for keywords
- Put yourself in their shoes
- Focus on transferrable skills/content
- Avoid cliché responses
Translating the Question - Examples

Why are you interested in becoming a ____?
◦ Looking for your genuine interest in pursuing the field because graduate school is not easy and they want to make sure you’re committed/ready

Tell me about a time you were part of a successful team.
◦ Looking for you to describe your teamwork skills because working in healthcare requires collaborating with many other professionals, and that requires quite a bit of teamwork

If you won $1 million tomorrow, what would you do with it?
◦ Looking for you to talk about your values and how your actions align with them
Sample Traditional Questions

• Why do you want to be a ______?
• Why do you want to attend our school/program?
• What will you do if you don’t get into medical school?
• What are the biggest problems with today’s healthcare system?
• What are the most important characteristics of a [physician/dentist/PA, etc.]?
• How do you see this profession being fulfilling to you in 10 years?
• Is there anything else I should know about you? (at the end of the interview)
Behavioral Questions

Behavioral questions usually start with:
- Tell me about a time when...
- Give me an example when...
- Describe a moment when...

<table>
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<tr>
<th>SITUATION</th>
<th>TASK</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>RESULT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brief overview for context</td>
<td>The task or project the story is about</td>
<td>Specific action steps YOU took to address the task</td>
<td>The outcome(s) and your learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample Behavioral Questions

• Give me a specific example when you overcame a challenge related to your academics.
• Tell me about a time you demonstrated your ability to work under pressure.
• Describe a situation where you had to communicate a difficult message to someone. How did it go?
• Give me an example of when you successfully solved a problem with a team.
Case Questions

Case questions are not intended to test specific field knowledge; they are meant to evaluate your thought process and ability to think on your feet.

- Listen carefully
- Understand the goal (ask questions if you don’t)
- Consider the question from a variety of perspectives
- Process out loud, if appropriate
- Work on time management
Case Questions

• You see your friend cheating on an exam; what do you do?

• A close friend in your 1st year medical school class tells you that their mother was recently diagnosed with breast cancer and they are considering dropping out to spend more time with her. What would you say to them?

• You are working with a patient who is adamantly requesting a certain type of treatment that you don’t believe will help. What do you do?

• Why are manholes round?
Additional Considerations

PART 4
Ethics

Ethics are a theme of healthcare interviews because the program wants to ensure you will be an ethical practitioner

- Be honest and true to yourself
- Present both sides of an ethical dilemma to show you have considered them before making your decision
- Highlight your ethical and moral values and connect them to the program’s whenever possible
- Your interviewers may have different beliefs than you, but so will your patients at times, and you need to be comfortable with that
Communication

NON-VERBAL
• Maintain good eye contact
• Be aware of posture, hand gestures, and fidgeting
• Maintain professionalism; treat both faculty and student interviewers equally regarding respect and professionalism
• Show enthusiasm

VERBAL
• Use formal grammar
• Do not swear under any circumstances
• Avoid fillers such as “um”, “you know”, and “like”
• Silence is okay if used sparingly
• Avoid skipping questions
• If you mess up, address your mistake, keep going, and don’t let it derail you
Questions for the Interviewers

**DO ASK**

3-5 questions per interview  
Paths of program alumni  
Specific aspects of program curriculum  
Orientation opportunities  
Current events impacting the program  
Program’s plans for future growth  
Next steps in the selection process

**DO NOT ASK**

Anything that can easily be found online  
How much money you can expect to make  
Controversial topics  
Program criticisms  
Personal topics (to an extent)
After the Interview

Follow up with a thank you e-mail within 24 hours

An additional mailed handwritten letter or card is acceptable, but not required

If you meet with multiple people, send unique notes to each

Dear Dr. Chan,

It was a pleasure to meet you today at my UConn Medical School interview. Thank you for sharing more details about the first semester practicum course that all UConn Medical students take; I am very interested in the example placement at Hartford Healthcare you suggested and look forward to learning more about that possibility.

I also really enjoyed learning more about the cohort model of the program and how that generally improves the success of graduates. I would be honored to one day be a part of the UConn Medical School alumni community.

Thank you again for taking the time out of your day to speak with me; I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,
Lisa
Resources

PRACTICE INTERVIEW AND NETWORKING RESOURCES
Center for Career Development

1:1 Practice Interviews
Career Coaching

Practice Interviewing Guide

Virtual Interview Supplement

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Questions?

TYPE THEM INTO THE CHAT BOX