

University of Arizona College of  
Medicine Tucson Annual Faculty  
Committee Report

**Report from the Admissions Committee, 2019 - 2020**

Submitted by Zoe Cohen PhD and Tejal Parikh MD, Admissions Office

**Members:** Frank Morello, MD (Chair), Zoe Cohen, PhD (Vice Chair), Valentine Nfonsam, MD, Holly Bullock, MD, Patricia Harrison-Monroe, PhD, Dalia Mikhael, MD, Cori Daines, MD, Ritu Pandey, PhD, Alejandra Zapien Hidalgo, MD, Salma Patel, MD, Ismael Miller (MS1), Ashley Vincent (MS1), Danielle Sawyer (MS1), James Patterson (MS1), Johnny Trinh (MS1)

**Charge to the Committee**

By LCME Standard (MS-4) as well as by the UACOM-Tucson (UACOM-T) bylaws, the Admissions Committee is a majority faculty committee with the responsibility for choosing the members of the medical student body. The Admissions Committee works closely with the Admissions Office to achieve the best possible class that is consistent with both the AAMC ideals and the mission of the institution. In addition, the Admissions Committee has oversight and final decisions of the MD-PhD, Honors and Pre-Medical Admissions Pathway (PMAP) programs. The mission of the committee is to *“select a diverse cohort of students who will become the future physicians, physician-leaders, and physician- researchers for Arizona communities and throughout the United States”*.

**Admissions Process**

During the 2019 - 2020 admissions cycle, the Admissions Office received 9,563 applications through AMCAS (a % increase from the 2,555 applications received in the 2010-2011 cycle). Of these, 7788 applicants met the minimum standards of MCAT 498 and GPA 3.0 and earned a secondary application and submitted their secondary applications, which addressed questions specific to the UACOM-T.

- AMCAS Applications: 9563
  - Resident: 768
  - Non-Resident: 8795
- Accepted Applicants: 216
  - Resident: 136
  - Non-Resident: 80

Under the direction of the Admissions Office, screeners reviewed and scored the secondary applications. The Admissions Office invited 522 applicants for on-site interviews; 476 accepted and completed interviews, and the Admissions Committee then processed and reviewed the completed applications.

Five subcommittees of the Admissions Committee, each consisting of 2 faculty members and 1 student member, evaluated the applicants who completed interviews. All 3 subcommittee members reviewed each applicant assigned to that subcommittee; a total of 476 applications were reviewed by the

collective subcommittees.

The Admissions Committee continues to use data from the Mini-Medical Interview (MMI) format to evaluate candidates. In addition, the Admissions Committee evaluates each applicant on a series of desired attributes. These specific attributes, developed and refined by the Committee over the past 6 years, are consistent with the AAMC guidelines.

Assessment of these attributes makes explicit the Committee review practice and allows analysis of the selection process and longitudinal success. The desired attributes include: motivation to pursue MD education; alignment with commitment to institutional mission; ability to succeed academically; resiliency; distance traveled; service and volunteer experiences; sufficient clinical exposure to understand the profession; research experiences; language spoken in underserved communities in Arizona; humanistic orientation; cultural competency; understanding the importance of diversity; and professionalism.

After each subcommittee discussed assigned applicants, each subcommittee member scored the applicant/application using a 1-to-5 scale (1=unacceptable, 2=poor, 3=acceptable, 4=excellent, 5=outstanding, with intervals of 0.5). The applicant rank represented the average score among the subcommittee members. Applicants with top subcommittee average scores then advanced to presentation, review, and discussion at full Admissions Committee meetings and each Committee member then ranked each applicant (again using the 1-to-5 scale).

The Admissions Committee offered acceptance to 216 applicants; 117 accepted entry into the Class of 2024 (3 returning students will join the class from a Leave of Absence – actual class total: 120). UACOM-Tucson has retained **45%** of the top 100 applicants accepted.

The number of total applications for the Class of 2024 reflects a national trend; several other medical schools are also experiencing increased numbers of applicants for enrollment. It also reflects the success of our recruitment strategies, including competitive scholarships and engagement of applicants as they consider which medical school to attend. Additionally, the AAMC reports that the total applicants for the 2019-2020 cycle was 53,231.

### **Outcomes**

The class of 2024 has an average GPA of 3.73, an average science GPA of 3.65, an average MCAT score of 508. The average age is 24 (range, 21-45), with 45% male students and 55% female students. Arizona residents comprise 76% of students, while out-of-state residents comprise 24% of the class; for comparison, the Class of 2021 had 67% in-state residents. Students who are underrepresented in medicine (URiM) comprise 30% of the class: 27 Hispanic (23% Hispanic); 6 African American (5% of total), and 7 Native American students (6% of total). The Admissions Committee is unaware of the URiM status of the candidates during its deliberations.

1. 19 of the top 50 original acceptances were offered scholarships, many of the students received substantial scholarships in an effort to recruit them to the UA COM and to eliminate concerns about funding their medical school education.
2. Waitlist accepts started April 15<sup>th</sup> and with the addition of at least 51 from the waitlist

Research done by the Arizona Medical Education Research Initiative (AMERI) team and the Admissions Office is instrumental in supporting the Admissions Committee throughout its processes and in recruiting applicants chosen by the Committee. Increased overall recruitment in part reflects Applicant Visit Day presentations on the UACOM-T unique curriculum (Societies, Blocks, Distinction Tracks, Research and Clinical Thinking Course), an online Zoom “Second Look” program, and, perhaps most importantly, the ability to provide scholarship assistance.

### **Scholarships**

In 2018, a substantial increase in funding for scholarships has enhanced recruitment which contributed to funding levels remaining consistent for the talented Class of 2024; however, there was a decrease in renewables due to the projected increase for other commitments (MD-PhD). For the sixth year, the UACOM-T has offered both renewable and non-renewable scholarships, a financial assistance model that allows us to be much more competitive in the recruitment of in-need students who contribute to the diversity and academic excellence of the UACOM-T. As of today, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, the total amount of scholarships offered was \$537,160. There were 10 renewable scholarships (includes 2 merit tuition waivers) and 14 non-renewable scholarships that have been offered. These might be less because some of the awards were combined and converted into bigger amounts. It is estimated that there is about \$259,431 in donor scholarships, \$67,160 in tuition waivers and grant awards totaled \$210,569.

### **MD/PhD Admissions**

The MD/PhD program is designed to train students planning careers in academic medicine or biomedical research. Through the collaborative efforts of the College of Medicine and the Graduate College, research intensive training is pursued through one of a number of biomedical science departments and interdisciplinary programs Five have accepted our offer; their average GPA is 3.56 and combined MCAT score average is 513. These 5 students are included in the total of 120 members of the class of 2024.

### **Pre-Medical Admissions Pathway (P-MAP)**

Currently in its sixth year, the P-MAP program was developed by the Admissions Office and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion to help students who have experienced unique or greater than average challenges in preparing to become competitive medical school applicants and succeed in medical school. The program is targeted to students who are Arizona residents and who have faced socioeconomic disadvantages, are first-generation college attendees, grew up in a rural or US/Mexico border region, and/or are enrolled members in Federally-recognized American Indian tribes. Students should demonstrate principles of cultural competence in healthcare, demonstrate attributes such as altruism and social accountability, and are fluent in English and conversant in languages commonly spoken in Arizona (e.g., Spanish and Navajo). Upon successful completion of the P-MAP program with a GPA of at least 3.0 in P-MAP coursework, students will be offered admission to UACOM-T. Concluding a programmatic pause in the 2017-2018 cycle, PMAP has restarted in 2019. The Admissions Committee Selected 10 applicants. Cohort 7 has 10 members (5 females, 5 males), GPA of 3.5, and MCAT average of 500.8. All of these met the AMCAS mandatory requirements for the college of medicine and have applied through the AMCAS.

### **Honors Early Assurance Program (HEAP) or Honors MedCats**

The Honors College Early Assurance Program (HEAP) is an eight-year program that allows the university's most academically talented students to gain early admission into the University of Arizona's College of Medicine-Tucson at the end of their Junior Year. The goal of the program is to introduce a cohort of ten UA Honors students to the UA COM-Tucson's integrated sciences and systems curriculum, interactive medical problem solving and professional learning communities. The cohort will follow an academic plan to complete all medical school prerequisite coursework as well as individual learning modules to provide an early start to the content found in the Medical School curriculum. HEAP will incentivize our top undergraduate students to stay and study medicine in Arizona which may enhance retention of these future physicians to practice in the state. In April 2020, we accepted our first class of HEAP students. Cohort 1 has 7 members (5 females, 2 males), GPA average of 3.9 and MCAT average of 512. We have just started the application process for Cohort 2.



