

Report from the Admissions Committee, 2017 - 2018

Submitted by Carol Howe, MD

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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 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 2017 - 2018 admissions cycle, the Admissions Office received 9,546 applications through AMCAS (a 273.62% increase from the 2,555 applications received in the 2010-2011 cycle). Of these, 5,787 applicants (an increase of 21.63% from last year) met the minimum standards of MCAT 498 and GPA 3.0 and submitted their secondary applications, which addressed questions specific to the UACOM-T.

- AMCAS Applications: 9546
 - Resident: 836
 - Non-Resident: 8710
- Accepted Applicants: 181
 - Resident: 119
 - Non-Resident: 62

Under the direction of the Admissions Office, screeners reviewed and scored the secondary applications. The Admissions Office invited 537 applicants for on-site interviews; 515 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 515 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 181 applicants; 118 accepted entry into the Class of 2022 (7 returning students will join the class from a Leave of Absence – actual class total: 125). UACOM-Tucson has retained **65%** (78) of the top 120 applicants accepted. **25%** (29) of the Class of 2022 had multiple acceptances & chose UACOM-Tucson.

The number of total applications for the Class of 2022 reflects a national trend; several other medical schools are also experiencing increased numbers of applicants for enrollment. Nationally, medical school enrollment numbers are up 29% since the 2002-2003 applicant cycle. It also reflects the success of our recruitment strategies, including competitive scholarships and engagement of applicants as they consider which medical school to attend.

Outcomes

The class of 2022 has an average GPA of 3.76, an average science GPA of 3.56, an average “new” MCAT score of 507 (the “new” MCAT was introduced in the spring of 2015, and is now required for all applicants, even if they took the previous version of the MCAT). The average age is 25 (range, 21-35), with 53% female students and 48% male students. Arizona residents comprise 74% of students, while out-of-state residents comprise 26% of the class; for comparison, the Class of 2021 had 67% in-state residents. Students who are underrepresented in medicine (URiM) comprise 31% of the class: 21 Hispanic (18% of total class), 7 African American (6% of total), and 2 Native American students (2% of total). The Admissions Committee is unaware of the URiM status of the candidates during its deliberations.

1. The initial acceptance cutoff score was 4.3. The approach was more conservative this year than in some previous years because of the need to limit the incoming class to between 115 and 120 students. As the season continued, the threshold was expanded to 4.25 and finally landed at 4.1
2. Of the top 50 original acceptances offered, 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.
3. We did not go to the waitlist this year and the class was completed by May.

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 earlier “Second Look” program, and, perhaps most importantly, the ability to provide scholarship assistance.

Scholarships

A substantial increase in funding for scholarships has enhanced recruitment of a talented Class of 2022. For the fourth 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. Beginning in February 2018, the total amount of scholarships offered was \$482,000.00. There were 17 renewable scholarships and 17 non-renewable scholarships. Donor scholarships totaled \$78,382 and grant awards totaled \$403,618.

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. This year the Admissions Committee selected 4 applicants (3 males and 1 female) for the MD/PhD program. Their average GPA is 3.81 and combined MCAT score average is 5011. These 4 students are included in the total of 117 members of the class of 2022.

Pre-Medical Admissions Pathway (P-MAP)

Currently in its fourth 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 either 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 an MCAT score of 495 or higher and a GPA of at least 3.0 in P-MAP coursework, students will be offered admission to the UACOM-T.

Nine of the 12 members of the fourth P-MAP cohort successfully completed the program and matriculated into the class of 2022. These students are included in the total of 117 members of that class. These matriculating P-MAP students (3 male, 6 female) include 6 Hispanic students, 1 African American student, 1 Native American students, 1 Pacific Islander student.

The program has been paused for 2018 and has been slated to restart in 2019. All applicants will meet the mandatory requirements for the college of medicine and will apply through the AMCAS.