From Drs. Bass, Moeller, Moss, as of 6/09:

**ATTENTION PREMEDICAL/PREDENTAL STUDENTS:**

If you are interested in attending medical or dental school, please consider the following:

1. **Keep your GPA up.** Most medical and dental schools consider GPA and entrance examination scores before all else. It is good to do volunteer work and to be active on campus, but don't over do it. If your GPA suffers too much, so will your application to medical or dental school. We consider 3.2 a *minimal* acceptable GPA to apply to the SC medical schools, but obviously the higher you go, the better your chances.

2. **You'll need some sort of clinical experience.** “Clinical experience” is generally defined as anything where you will have [or be “observing”] contact with patients. So working in a physician’s office would count if you’re shadowing the doctor, but not if you’re working in the business office.

   Different schools will expect different amounts of clinical experience. For the SC schools, 200 hours is a good rule-of-thumb. Interim is a good time to get about 150 hours of this, but many people choose to work in the medical field over the summer instead. When you do your clinical work, make sure you have your supervisor fill out a “clinical evaluation form” when you’re done. You can download the form at:

   http://webs.wofford.edu/mossre/hc/

   **MAKE SURE YOU FILL OUT THE TOP OF THE FORM, AND SIGN THE WAIVER, BEFORE GIVING THESE FORMS OUT.**

   Unsigned forms do not carry as much weight with admissions committees.

3. **You should consider taking the MCAT exam (med school) or the DAT** (dental school) as early as possible after completing your junior year. This will give you time to take the exam a second time before applying if need be. We consider a 24 a *minimal* acceptable MCAT to apply to the SC medical schools. Admissions directors tell us you should continue re-taking the MCAT until you reach the *average* MCAT at the school you hope to attend. For the SC medical schools, that would be a 28. For Emory, we suggest 31.

   These exams are critical. We strongly suggest that as of December 15 for the May or June MCAT exam, studying for the exam should become your top priority.

   You can find the schedule for the MCAT exams at:

   [http://www.aamc.org/students/mcat/reserving/deadlineandscorerelease.htm](http://www.aamc.org/students/mcat/reserving/deadlineandscorerelease.htm)

   Be aware of the following:

   a. The MCAT exam is a computerized exam, and is quite rigorous. You should spend lots of time that junior year preparing for the exam. That includes taking practice examinations, including at least one realistic “online”. One full-length online practice exam is available for free from the AAMC, the folks who write the exam, at [www.e-mcat.com](http://www.e-mcat.com). Others may be purchased for $35 each
from the same site; or check with Dr. Moss to see which ones he has available for $20 (advisors can purchase the same online exams in packs of 10). The biology department also has a collection of MCAT study books and flash cards available to sign out. Register to take the exam at least 4 months prior to test date. http://www.aamc.org/students/mcat/start.htm
The average score of students getting into SC med schools ranges from 27-30.
b. The DAT exam is given by computer only. You must register far in advance and take the test at a Sylvan Learning Center. There is a rather bizarre section on perceptual ability. You must prepare for this portion of the test. It is possible to purchase a full set of full-length computerized sample tests ... these are NOT prepared, however, by the people who write the actual DAT. They are available from Scholar Ware. (http://www.scholarware.com/).
There is a 90-day wait between the taking of DATs. MUSC's average DAT scores for admission are 19 on the perceptual ability and 19 on the academic portion as well
c. NEITHER EXAMINATION ALLOWS THE USE OF A CALCULATOR! In order to work general chemistry problems involving pH you will have to become familiar with logs and how to take the log of a number in scientific notation and how to reverse that process. Also, get yourself to the point that you can round off numbers and estimate your answer ... time is important on these exams.
d. Physics is on the MCAT ... but not on the DAT ... dental school does require Physics, however.
e. Before you take either examination you should have taken [or be finishing up] a year of General Chemistry, a year of Organic Chemistry, Genetics [bio212], Cell Biology [bio214], and preferably Physiology [bio342]. For the MCAT you should add a year of physics [121 and 122]. Biology 150, and 151 will be helpful, but many chemistry majors may be unable to fit these in.
f. You can learn more about preparing for the MCAT at: http://www.aamc.org/students/mcat/preparing/start.htm

4. OTHER COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
Other than the classes required to take the MCAT, SC medical schools have no specific course requirements. However, most other medical schools do. Some medical schools require a semester of biochemistry [Duke, U. of Miami and MCG 'recommend' a biochemistry course; U of F and FSU require 4 credits of biochemistry]. You can take either biochem in the chemistry department, or a 3 credit "advanced cell" course in the biology department.
Most out of state medical schools require 3-6 credits of math [including Duke, FSU and U of F, which require 6 credits]. The MUSC dental school also requires 6 credits of math. We recommend that you take six credits, to keep your options open: either two semesters of calculus, or one calculus plus statistics (math 140). We also recommend you take statistics early in your career, as it will help you in many of your science classes.
For calculus, it doesn't matter whether you take math 160 (calculus for the social sciences) or math 181 (calculus). But faculty who teach the course have suggested that science majors might enjoy 181 more, as the problems and examples used are more geared towards the sciences.
Also please note that to qualify for the new scholarship offered by the state of SC, you must take 6 hours of math during your freshman year.

5. YOU SHOULD BEGIN TO ROUND UP RECOMMENDATIONS TOWARDS THE END OF YOUR JUNIOR YEAR.
For most medical schools, you have the option of submitting a “committee evaluation”, or three separate letters of recommendations. A “committee evaluation” is actually a packet of information, which includes evaluations from all of your biology, chemistry and physics professors, as well as any “clinical evaluations” you have received from health professionals you have worked with. Some schools, including both SC medical schools, have a preference for the committee evaluations over the three separate letters. If, however, you feel that for some reason a particular professor may not give a good evaluation (due to grades or personality conflicts) you should go with the individual ones. Be certain that the professors you select are ones that you have performed well under and who see you as a bright student who is highly motivated. (All of us take evaluations seriously and are likely to be very candid regarding those evaluations.) Some professors are not on campus in the summer, so it’s best you get the process started before you leave campus in May.

If you choose to do a committee evaluation for medical school, you can download the form at:
http://webs.wofford.edu/mossre/hc/. Fill it out according to the instructions, print it out, and return the signed form to Ms. Thomas in the biology office. Dr. Bass has the form for dental school.

We suggest you submit the form late in your junior year, but it MUST be in no later than September 15 of your senior year. If any of the comments made by faculty on your evaluation would be detrimental to your application, you will be advised to seek out individual letters of recommendation instead.

If you do go with individual letters of recommendation, most medical schools will ask that they be submitted online. See the AAMC web site at: http://www.aamc.org/students/amcas/faq/amcasletters.htm

** IMPORTANT: ** If you do a committee evaluation, we will automatically send out your “clinical evaluations” along with your committee evaluation, to the institutions you designate on the form. However, if you do the three individual letters, since you will not be going through the normal committee procedure, we will not know to send these additional physician evaluations out for you. In this case, you must fill out a form to have Ms. Thomas send out your clinical evaluations.

6. BEGIN THE APPLICATION TO MEDICAL SCHOOL OR DENTAL SCHOOL EARLY!!!! THIS IS CRITICAL!! AMCAS & AADSAS APPLICATIONS MUST BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE FALL SEMESTER OF YOUR SENIOR YEAR BEGINS. You can find the AMCAS application, as well as lots of info on applying to medical school, at www.aamc.org. The AADSAS application will be available on May 17th and a link may be found at http://www.adea.org/

IF SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATIONS ARISE AS A RESULT OF YOUR APPLICATION YOU NEED TO TURN THOSE APPLICATIONS IN AS SOON AS YOU CAN! “Rolling admissions” means the longer you wait, the lower your chances. And some medical schools and dental schools will view late applications as a sign of a lack of commitment to attending professional school.

7. When interviewing you need to present yourself in the best light possible. You want to be perceived as knowledgeable about the medical field and to be certain that this is what you want to do with your life. You also need to show that you are a well-rounded individual so that you can communicate with all sorts of patients. Although you don't want to over-sell yourself, you do want to be open and talkative. Do not give the impression that you are an introvert. Work any internships that you may have done into the conversation ... also you may find the opportunity to mention any travel interims or service work that you have done. Read stories in
a national magazine or newspaper relating to medicine to “keep up” with topics you might be questioned on. And by all means, do get a mock interview from a member of the science faculty before the real thing!

Remember that this is a long process and that there are many more people wanting to get into medical school than there are slots available in medical school. You need to do all that you can to ensure that your application is viewed in the best-possible light.

* IF YOU PLAN ON STUDYING ABROAD the fall of your senior year, you must make arrangements for interviews, and for completing your application, before leaving. PLEASE SEE DR. SHIFLET, DR. MOSS, OR DR. BASS BEFORE THE END OF THE SEMESTER PRIOR TO YOUR TRAVEL.

Should you have any questions about this or other advising matters, please feel free to contact one of the Health Careers Advisors. For medical school these are Drs. Shiflet, Moss, and Bass; for dental school, Dr. Bass.

Further information on dental school can be found on Dr. Bass’ web site, at http://webs.wofford.edu/basscg/predent.htm
Further information on other health careers can be found at Dr. Moss’ site, at http://webs.wofford.edu/mossre/hc/

MEDICAL/DENTAL SCHOOL APPLICATION CHECKLIST: JUNIOR & SENIOR YEAR
Please see Dr. Moss, Dr. Bass, or Dr. Shiflet if you have questions about any of these items!

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<th>DATE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>CHECK OFF AS COMPLETED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February of your Jr year</td>
<td>Register to take the MCAT/DAT. For MCAT, <a href="http://www.aamc.org">www.aamc.org</a></td>
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<td>Summer after your Jr year</td>
<td>Prepare for your AMCAS or AADSAS application:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- View or download the application at:</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.aamc.org/students/amcas/start.htm">http://www.aamc.org/students/amcas/start.htm</a> for medical school;</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.adea.org/">http://www.adea.org/</a> for dental school.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Write your personal essay.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Submit your personal essay to a science professor, and an English/humanities professor for comments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Submit your AMCAS application or AADSAS application by 9/1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soon after submitting your application</td>
<td>- Initiate your committee evaluation, OR choose 3 professors to write letters [evaluation is preferred, unless you have any grades in science courses below a B-, or have a reason to believe one of the science faculty would give you a poor evaluation].</td>
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<td>IF you choose 3 letters, make sure you still submit to Ms. Thomas a request to</td>
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have any “clinical evaluation forms” on file to be sent. They are sent automatically with the committee evaluation. 
You can download the form at: [http://webs.wofford.edu/mossre/hc/med.htm](http://webs.wofford.edu/mossre/hc/med.htm)

The MUSC secondary applications for medical and dental schools are available on their website; you can start that as soon as you have completed the AMCAS/AADSAS application.

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<tr>
<td>10/15</td>
<td>- If you haven’t received notification that your committee evaluations have been mailed, please check with your premedical/predental advisor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/1</td>
<td>- If you haven’t received secondary applications from each medical school you listed on your AMCAS application, call the medical school admissions offices.</td>
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<td>- Complete them and submit them ASAP! The longer you wait, the lower your chances become.</td>
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<td>2-4 weeks before your first interview</td>
<td>- Schedule a “mock interview” with one of the science faculty.</td>
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<td>Upon receipt of secondary applications</td>
<td>CONGRATULATIONS! Please let your health careers advisor know!</td>
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<td>Any time you’d like, during the process</td>
<td>- Schedule a meeting with your health careers advisor!</td>
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A few other points that will _strengthen_ your application:
- “Leadership”: Schools do look for leadership; MUSC actually gives ‘points’ for it. If you have served in any position that would be considered “leadership”, you should document that somewhere in your application. This is not a major factor, so I would not suggest going out and doing things you’re not interested in just be able to say you have shown leadership! But if you choose an activity that does involve leadership, make sure you mention it.
- “Clinical Experience”: Schools will want to see that you have enough experience shadowing or volunteering in a clinical setting to know what medicine/dentistry really is, and that it’s right for you. You’ll need to document this experience with letters from the health care professionals you work with. We have “clinical evaluation forms” that you can give to them.
- “Faculty evaluations”: Your biology, chemistry and physics professors will contribute to a group “committee evaluation” that will go out to medical schools on your behalf. It’s a good idea to get to know your professors, so they will have more experience with you to base their evaluations on. Doing research with a professor, lab assisting, or working as an office assistant will all help the faculty to get to know you.
- “Academic Integrity”: Of course the honor code, and your own integrity should be enough reason to keep you from violating academic integrity. And the great majority of you would never do so. But to add one more reason to the list: Most recommendation forms contain the question: “Do you have any reason to question this student’s integrity?” If any of the faculty must answer “yes”, it’s
quite unlikely that you will be accepted into any graduate program. So if something you’re considering even MIGHT be thought of as dishonest, or plagiarism, *don’t do it.*

You can find answers to many of your questions on the FAQ of our premed advising site: [http://webs.wofford.edu/mossre/hc/premed_faq.htm](http://webs.wofford.edu/mossre/hc/premed_faq.htm)