

## 2024 REQUEST FOR A PRE-MEDICINE COMMITTEE REVIEW INSTRUCTIONS

In preparation for your medical school application, the College of Arts and Sciences is offering the opportunity to participate in a Pre-Medicine Committee (PMC) review. We have found that students who utilize the PMC get accepted to medical school at rates well above the national average. The PMC review will not provide a recommendation/ranked letter but will give you valuable feedback about ways to improve your application, your preparedness for a career in medicine, and areas for growth. At the conclusion of the review, the PMC will also upload your letters of recommendation to the Centralized Application Service, if you would like.

The PMC will review your Personal Statement, 15 Experiences, Individual Recommendation Letters (optional), Transcripts, and Interviews (an MCAT score is NOT required for the review).

**Application Dates:** The PMC will start accepting applications immediately. You should plan to upload all materials (basic PMC application, personal statement, and list of experiences) at one time through the Qualtrics survey. Your completed application must be received by March 22, 2024 to be reviewed by the committee. All letters of recommendation must be received by that date as well to be reviewed by the committee and uploaded as a packet. We will review your application and conduct interviews within 4-6 weeks of the application deadline.

### **A completed application includes:**

1. Completed Qualtrics application (link on website)
2. Personal Statement (see guidelines below)
3. List of 15 Experiences (see guidelines below)
4. At least 3 Letters of Recommendation (See attached letter writer's instruction form)

Interviews will be scheduled after the deadline.

Questions can be directed to Erin Lawson [elawson1@kent.edu](mailto:elawson1@kent.edu) or [aspremedcommittee@kent.edu](mailto:aspremedcommittee@kent.edu)

## ***PMC Application Guidelines***

**Personal Statement:** Please adhere to the 5300-character limit established by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) and American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) (this includes spaces). Your essay should address why you want to become a medical doctor. You may wish to include experiences, motivations, challenges that distinguish you from other applicants. This is also the place to explain any significant fluctuations in your academic record. For help in creating an effective personal statement see the “Tips for Writing a Personal Statement” included in this application or contact Career Exploration and Development (261 Schwartz Center). This must be written in a final format (NOT a draft), as if you were submitting it to AMCAS or AACOMAS. Applications may be returned without review if the documents are not in a final format.

<https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/section-8-essays/>

[https://help.liaisonedu.com/AACOMAS\\_Applicant\\_Help\\_Center/Filling\\_Out\\_Your\\_AACOMAS\\_Application/Supporting\\_Information/5\\_Personal\\_Statement](https://help.liaisonedu.com/AACOMAS_Applicant_Help_Center/Filling_Out_Your_AACOMAS_Application/Supporting_Information/5_Personal_Statement)

**15 Experiences:** List up to 15 experiences that affected your life or decision to become a medical doctor. These may include (but are not limited to): volunteer activities, medically relevant experiences, laboratory research, shadowing experience, employment, leadership roles, etc. For each experience provide a title, start and end dates, total number of hours, name of organization, location, and, when possible, contact information for a person who can verify your participation, and a brief description (maximum 700 characters). For AMCAS, up to three experiences may be designated as most meaningful and given an additional 1325 characters. Tips and examples can be found in the “Guidelines for Completing Experiences/Activities Section” in this application. Please follow the proper formatting and provide your list in a final format (NOT a draft). Applications may be returned without review if the documents are not in a final format.

<https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/section-5-work-and-activities/>

[https://help.liaisonedu.com/AACOMAS\\_Applicant\\_Help\\_Center/Filling\\_Out\\_Your\\_AACOMAS\\_Application/Supporting\\_Information/2\\_Experiences](https://help.liaisonedu.com/AACOMAS_Applicant_Help_Center/Filling_Out_Your_AACOMAS_Application/Supporting_Information/2_Experiences)

**Letters of Recommendation:** You should have 3-6 individual letters of recommendation sent by e-mail to the address provided (aspremedcommittee@kent.edu). Give a completed and signed ‘PMC Recommendation Letter Request Form’ (given on the next page) to each individual from which you are soliciting a letter. **All letters should be addressed ‘To The Admissions Committee,’ signed and on letterhead paper.** Letter writers should be professional, non-related individuals who best know your attributes to become a medical doctor. It is strongly recommended that letters come from 1-2 science faculty (Biology, Chemistry, or Physics), 1-2 from allopathic and/or osteopathic physicians, and potentially an additional letter from a social science or humanities faculty, research mentor, employer, volunteer coordinator, coach, medical professional, etc. If your letters are submitted by the application deadline, you can choose to have these uploaded as a letter packet to AMCAS and/or AACOMAS. You may also be reviewed by the PMC without letters, but it is then your responsibility to have your letters uploaded individually to the application by your letter writers.

### **Do you need help with your Personal Statement and 15 Experiences?**

The Writing Commons and Career Exploration & Development are available to Kent State students to provide writing help! Utilize these services to produce the best application materials possible!

1. Writing Commons: <https://www.kent.edu/writingcommons>
2. Career Exploration & Development: <https://www.kent.edu/career>

# Request For Recommendation for Medical School

Dear Letter Writer,

On behalf of the Kent State University's Pre-Medicine Committee (PMC), we would like to extend our gratitude for taking the time to participate in this student's pursuit of entry into medical school. As a letter writer, you are providing an important and integral service for the medical bound student. **All letters should be addressed 'To The Admissions Committee' and must be on professional letterhead paper and signed.**

Below is a basic set of guidelines to assist in writing a strong letter for the requesting student.

- **Briefly explain your relationship with the applicant** (e.g., How long you have known the applicant; In what capacity you have interacted with the applicant)
- **If possible please comment on attributes that medical schools expect in candidates**, such as: Competence, Compassion, Empathy, Respect for others, and Communication skills
- **Please provide how this candidate compares to other medical bound students that you have interacted with.**

**Send Letter of Recommendation electronically to:**

[aspremedcommittee@kent.edu](mailto:aspremedcommittee@kent.edu)

Questions can be directed to [aspremedcommittee@kent.edu](mailto:aspremedcommittee@kent.edu)

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**Name of Applicant** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Letter requested of** \_\_\_\_\_

Under the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, students are entitled to review their records, including letters of recommendation. It is your option to waive your rights to access to these recommendations or to decline to do so. Please mark the appropriate phrase below, indicating your choice of option, and sign your name. If the applicant retains their right, it is the applicant's responsibility to request a copy of the letter from the letter author.

\_\_\_\_\_ I **waive** my right to review the letter of recommendation  
\_\_\_\_\_ I **do not waive** my right to review the letter of recommendation

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**Applicants signature**

**Date**

Letter writer: Please retain for your records.

# General Tips for Writing a Personal Statement

## 1. Know your audience.

Start by creating a list of the qualities/attributes you think are important. What will the admissions committee be looking for in an applicant? For each attribute write down as many examples from your own experiences that demonstrate you possess that attribute.

<https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/core-competencies/>

## 2. Relay your professional and personal goals.

Most opening paragraphs are short and present a summary of your background, academic and career interests, and future goals that justify your application to an advanced degree program. Subsequent paragraphs describe in more detail your actual background and experiences that led to or reinforced these goals. A closing paragraph (or statement) that describes how this particular program will help bridge your undergraduate years with your success in a professional career.

## 3. Talk from your heart.

One of the most important attributes of a candidate is their passion for the field. No program wants to accept applicants simply because they are capable of completing the program. They want individuals who are passionate about the field, that think about problems in the field, that have been driven to gain more and more experience in the field, that have overcome obstacles or made sacrifices in order to pursue their dream and, of course, have the intellectual ability to complete the degree program.

## 4. Be proud and positive.

You should be proud of your accomplishments and speak positively about your experiences. Do not belittle yourself or others. Do you like people who talk negatively about others, constantly complain or make excuses? Avoid negativity and show maturity! Talk positively about yourself and the type of professional you want to become.

## 5. The DON'Ts.

- Don't speak in generalities. Give specific examples!
- Don't ramble on. Provide meaningful information and make every word count!
- Don't use bad grammar or make typos. Proofread and edit!
- Don't make excuses or dwell on poor qualities. Explain yourself and move on!
- Don't list qualities. You need to demonstrate qualities!
- Don't write a flamboyant literary masterpiece to make yourself special. Let the details of your experiences make you unique!
- Don't restate scores and grades that are listed elsewhere in your application. Being proud doesn't include bragging!
- Don't be 'sterile' in describing your experiences. Show enthusiasm and passion by speaking from your heart. Thoughts and feelings make you unique too!

## **Personal Statement for Medical School Where to start?**

1. Make a list of your experiences.
2. Describe how each experience affected your life. What did you learn from the experience? Remember, not every experience needs to be medically related. Experiences that taught you a life lesson, developed a skill, or grew/matured a personal attribute are meaningful too. Also remember that each experience needs to be something you are willing to talk about. If you don't want to talk about an experience in depth & in person, then don't include it!
3. Is there a particular experience that you are truly passionate about? Maybe it was the "defining moment" in your life. Maybe it gave you a new perspective on life or taught you what is important in life. Maybe it was enlightening to what it means to be a doctor. It does not necessarily have to directly relate to medicine, it simply needs to be meaningful/impactful and unique to you. This should likely be the focus of your personal statement. List 2-3 things that you took away from the experience.
4. Describe the experience in more detail (who, what, where) to "set the stage." Communicate it sufficiently to let the reader stand in your shoes and know what you were experiencing, thinking, and feeling. This allows the reader to get to know you, a glimpse of your past, your personality, and make a connection with you.
5. Use different paragraphs to talk about the 2-3 things you took away from the experience. Remember to make logical transitions between paragraphs. You can incorporate other experiences along the way that taught you similar things or that have a connection to the ideas you are writing about.
6. In the end, you want to make sure that your personal statement communicates how you became the person you are, and the type of physician you want to become.
7. Here are some additional questions you may want to consider/address when writing the essay.
  - a. Why have you selected the field of medicine?
  - b. What motivates you to learn more about medicine?

## Kent State University, Biological Sciences Department Guidelines for Completing Experiences/Activities Section

For each activity provide:

Experience Type (options listed in box to the right)  
Organization Name  
Organization Location  
Contact Name & Title (if applicable)  
Contact Email & Phone (if available)  
Date(s) Experience Occurred  
Total hours  
Descriptive of Experience (700 character limit)  
Most Meaningful Experience (yes/no)  
If “yes”, add paragraph to describe why (1325 character limit)

### Experience Type Options in AMCAS:

Artistic Endeavors  
Community Service-Medical  
Community Service- Not Medical  
Conferences Attended  
Extracurricular Activities  
Hobbies  
Honors/Awards/Recognition  
Intercollegiate Athletics  
Leadership  
Military Service  
Other  
Paid Employment-Medical  
Paid Employment – Not Medical  
Physician Shadowing/Clinical Observation  
Presentations/Posters  
Publications  
Research/Lab  
Teaching/Tutoring/Teaching Assistant

Suggestions:

1. Ideal length: 3-6 sentences.
2. Spell out acronyms & describe organizations. Medical school reviewers are not going to know Kent State student groups or local area organizations!
3. Be specific! Provide details. Be positive! Share how it affected you.
4. Use factual descriptions. Avoid flowery descriptions and opinions.
5. Provide proper citations for publications and abstracts.
6. Avoids lists of techniques you learned in a lab. Focus on the scientific process, hypothesis generation, data analysis, presentation skills, working as a team, etc...
7. Group similar activities together into a single entry if the description is essentially the same. Separate similar activities if you want to highlight different things for each experience.
8. Do not include high school activities unless the experience continued into college. If a high school experience was impactful, consider including it in your personal statement.
9. Include hobbies! Having a life outside of being a pre-med student is acceptable & encouraged. Sharing your passions will “personalize” your application.
10. Don’t feel compelled to fill-up all 15 experiences. “Fluff” is a negative! It’s better to end with 9-10 strong experiences, then to add “filler” experiences that make you look desperate or unable to discern a meaningful experience.
11. Proofread! Proofread! Proofread!

### Example 1:

Experience Type: Physician Shadowing/Clinical Observation  
Organization Name: Kent General Physicians  
Location: Kent, OH  
Contact Name: Dr. James Kent MD, Family Medicine  
Contact Information: [jkent@familymedicine.net](mailto:jkent@familymedicine.net) (330) 666-1234  
Date(s): 12/2016-12/2017  
Total hours: 24  
Most Meaningful: No

I have shadowed four physicians specializing in Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Hospice Care, and Emergency Medicine for a total of 24 hours. I plan to do additional shadowing in the coming months with Dr. Flash Summit, a Neurologist at the Cleveland Clinic. I have observed the decision-making process to admit or transfer patients and how physicians work in teams to care for a diverse group of patients with various medical complaints. My shadowing experience has exposed me to a wide range of medical fields and how doctors in different specialties approach patient care.

### Example 2:

Experience Type: Physician Shadowing/Clinical Observation  
Organization Name: Kent General Physicians  
Location: Kent, OH

Contact Name: Dr. James Kent MD, Family Medicine  
Contact Information: [jkent@familymedicine.net](mailto:jkent@familymedicine.net) (330) 666-1234  
Date(s): 12/2016-12/2017  
Total hours: 24  
Most Meaningful: Yes

I have shadowed four doctors including Dr. James Kent (family medicine), Dr. Liz Cunningham (general pediatrics), Dr. Robin Williams (oncology), and Dr. Austin Henderson (internal medicine). I spent at least a day with each doctor, but I shadowed Dr. Kent the longest. By spending time with these physicians, I reaffirmed my drive and motivation to becoming one. I witnessed how the direct actions of physicians affect the health and wellbeing of patients. My time spent shadowing was a welcomed break from the grind of the academic life of a premed student, and reinvigorated my efforts to succeed in my goals.

Shadowing Dr. Kent impacted me the most because of how much I could relate to him. He was down-to-earth, shared his passions in music and theatre, and loved what he was doing. I watched as he interacted with his patients in a kind and considerate fashion. He took the time to listen to their complaints and ailments, and showed compassion when giving his assessment and advice. He did not avoid the tough conversations such as the poor eating habits of an adult man whose meals largely consisted of fast food or the use of birth control with a young college student. He was able to inform patients of his concerns regarding their health in a compassionate manner that put the patients at ease.

My shadowing experiences really helped me see how physicians can make a difference in the lives of others and reassuring me that despite the years of grueling training ahead of me, it is all worth it.

#### **Additional Examples published by Harvard's Premed Program:**

##### **Good example A (campus activity, longer example):**

*Harvard First-year Outdoor Program (FOP) is Harvard's largest and oldest pre-orientation program for incoming first-years. The goal of the program is to provide group adventure-based experiences that promote the development of social support and self-awareness for first-year students, as well as provide a leadership development opportunity for members of the Harvard community. By teaching cooperation, initiative, and endurance in a wilderness setting, FOP serves as a support system for these students, many of whom are away from home for the first time. I participated in the program as a first-year and applied to be a leader the following year. Throughout the spring and summer of that year, I trained in outdoor leadership and became certified in Wilderness First Aid and CPR. In my junior and senior years, I led groups of ten first-years on weeklong backpacking trips in the White Mountains, giving them my perspective of the Harvard experience along the way and answering their questions about Harvard and college life in general.*

##### **Good example B (campus activity, shorter example):**

*Let's Go Publications is a budget travel guide maker run entirely by Harvard students. During the spring and summer following my first year at Harvard, I edited two travel guidebooks, Let's Go: Roadtripping USA and Let's Go: Hawaii. I directly managed three travel writers, developing their itineraries before they traveled and managing their travel routes while they were on the road. I edited copy, wrote content, and organized chapters for the two guidebooks (1500 total pages), which were subsequently published.*

##### **Good example C: (another campus activity):**

*The Harvard Undergraduate Biological Sciences Society (HUBSS) is a student organization dedicated to advancing the study of biology and building a support network for those interested in the biological sciences. HUBSS provides advising and mentoring opportunities for undergrads, creates a forum of exchange between students, and applaud the work of both faculty and students while stimulating interest among younger students and the public. As President and former Director of Special Events, I manage and organize social events and faculty talks to encourage interdisciplinary discussion and mentorship opportunities. In my capacity as President, we initiated new collaborations with other student organizations and Harvard University Offices and Departments to plan and co-host national and regional events. In addition to organizing numerous science-inspired study breaks and faculty involvement throughout the year, I also serve as informal peer advisor for topics ranging from laboratory research to academics. This past year, we doubled membership thanks to rigorous recruiting during the yearly activities fair.*

##### **Good example D (research):**

*Professor Joyce Kitzinger's Lab for Vascular Research studies the potential of blood-derived endothelial progenitors to repair cardiovascular defects using tissue engineering approaches. I initiated a 4-month collaborative venture between the Kitzinger and Malroneu labs (using the Herchel Smith Fellowship summer funding) to characterize and compare the angiogenic potential*

*of endothelial progenitors differentially isolated from human cord blood. I tested each endothelial cell subpopulation for variances in proliferation, functionality, and cytokine and marker expression using a variety of molecular biology approaches to ultimately determine differences in cell response after exposure to controlled 3D environmental cues (chemical and mechanical). As part of the collaboration, I attended both the Kitzinger and Malroneo labs' weekly group meetings and presented my own research in addition to reporting individually to both professors. [Note that this blurb does NOT list laboratory techniques!]*

**Good example E (clinical):**

*I completed a summer internship at the Mid-America Heart Institute in Kansas City, Missouri. Half of my time was spent as a Cardiovascular Research Intern, studying the effects of gestational diabetes mellitus on heart disease. I became familiar with reading and analyzing scientific literature, and was first exposed to the clinical research process. Outside of the research, I gained experience in the clinic by shadowing physicians in different areas of the hospital, including the coronary care unit, the catheterization lab, the ICU, and surgery. I made rounds with the physicians on service and observed stent and pacemaker implantation procedures in the catheterization lab. My most memorable experience was scrubbing into a triple bypass surgery, where I observed the procedure as the surgeon explained the anatomy of the patient's beating heart.*

**Good example F (service):**

*The Vernon Hall Nursing Home Program is under the Elderly Affairs Committee of Phillips Brooks House, the biggest student run public service/social action organization at Harvard College. The program supports Vernon Hall Nursing Home in Cambridge, where volunteers host bingo games every Saturday as an introduction to lively interaction with the residents. I joined Vernon Hall sophomore year as a volunteer and went every Saturday to invite residents to play bingo with us. As a volunteer, I assist in setting up the premises, gather the residents in the activities room, call the numbers and assist residents during the game. At the end of 2 hours, we wheel residents back to the common room or their private quarters where we engage in individual conversations. Over the summer between sophomore and junior years, I served as Program Co-Director and increased attendance by 30%. My responsibilities were the same as those volunteering, with the added task of coordinating activities with the nursing home activities director and volunteers.*

**Bad example 1 (not enough info):**

*I was a member of this organization for three years. We did a lot of things with the residents including playing bingo. I like interacting with older people.*

**Bad example 2 (not enough info):**

*(Imagine that the person typed "JV Baseball" "20 hours/week" and "Coach Smith" into the title line and then left the description section entirely blank.)*

**Bad example 3 (inappropriate tone/info):**

*WHRB is a student-run radio station at Harvard that broadcasts to the greater Boston area. As a DJ in the rock department, I got to play my favorite tunes. Kinda like spinning in a club, only not. It was totally awesome even if no one was out there listening to my random records in the middle of the night. Sometimes some dude would call the station and then I'd ask him to get me on the list when his band next plays in Central Square. That was great.*

**Bad example 4 (assuming too much, not defining what and who the blurb describes):**

*I was selected for PRISE for my junior summer. It allowed me to work in lab without paying for housing. I finished my honors thesis research project that summer, and I got good advice about my experiments from the students who were in PRISE with me. I enjoyed presenting my research to other Harvard students at the end of the summer.*

**Bad example 5 (overly generic/immature research description)**

*I worked in this lab 40 hours a week in the summer. I worked with a post-doc who helped me analyze my data. Occasionally I got to present my data to the PI. I appreciate the time spent in this laboratory because I got to learn*