

Applying to Professional School and Requesting Committee Letters

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**Grinnell
College**

Agenda

- ▶ Application Overview
 - Centralized application services
 - Timelines
 - Admissions exams
- ▶ Letters of Recommendation
 - Types of letters
 - Requesting a committee letter
- ▶ Admissions Data



Medical and Professional School Application

A two-step process consisting of:

- ▶ Primary application
 - Sent to all selected schools
 - Centralized Application Service (CAS)
- ▶ Secondary application
 - School-specific essay questions



What is a Centralized Application Service?

- ▶ Verifies coursework and calculates GPA across all institutions attended
- ▶ Gathers supporting documents and forwards them to the schools you choose

Examples:

AMCAS – allopathic medicine (MD)

AACOMAS – osteopathic medicine (DO)

TMDSAS – Texas public medical, dental, and vet schools

AADSAS – dentistry

SOPHAS – public health

PharmCAS – pharmacy

VMCAS – veterinary medicine

NursingCAS – BSN and MSN programs



General Timelines

May

- ▶ Most CASes open
- ▶ Allow 4–6 weeks for verification on receipt of transcripts

June – July

- ▶ Verified applications are sent to schools
- ▶ Secondary applications are sent to applicants

August – March

- ▶ Interviews

Most schools have rolling admissions so submit primary early and secondaries within 2 weeks of receiving them!



Parts of Your Primary Application

- ▶ Biographical information
- ▶ Colleges attended
- ▶ Coursework/Transcripts
- ▶ Work, activities, and experiences
- ▶ Test scores
- ▶ Personal statement
- ▶ Letters of recommendation

MD Applicants: Highlight the AAMC Premed Competencies in your Work & Activities descriptions



Admissions Exams

Research for every school:

- ▶ Required tests
 - Admissions tests (MCAT, GRE, DAT, PA-CAT)
 - Situational judgment tests (PreView, CASPer)
- ▶ Test dates vs. score release dates
- ▶ Oldest/Latest scores considered



Letters of Recommendation

- ▶ Individual letters
 - Research PI
 - Professor who taught you in a course
 - Work supervisor
 - Clinician
- ▶ Committee letter
 - Written by Health Professions Advisory Committee
 - Evaluation by faculty and staff across the institution

Research the letter requirements for every school!



Requesting a Committee Letter

Complete online HPAC Request Form

- ▶ Activities List
- ▶ Personal Statement
- ▶ Special Recommenders (3–5)
- ▶ Likelihood to Apply (10=high, 1=low)
- ▶ CAS and Letter ID numbers

Deadline – the spring you are applying *or* graduating

- ▶ Current students: April 13, 2026
- ▶ Alums: March 2, 2026 (update activities and personal statement if previously completed)



Requesting a Committee Letter

Please use the following for the contact information for your committee letter:

Lauren Hosch-Lorenzen, Academic Assistant
Hoschlor@grinnell.edu
641-269-4040
Noyce Science Center Room 1232
1116 8th Avenue

- ▶ This information can be found on the [HPAC website](#)



Letter Writing Timeline

▶ Late Spring / Early Summer

- HPAC updates and writes letters for alumni and previous applicants
- Faculty complete HPAC recommendation forms for current students and new applicants

▶ Summer

- Recommendations / ratings are compiled by committee
- Members of committee draft and revise letter
- HPAC co-chair reads and edits final letter
- Letter is uploaded about 4 weeks after you confirm submission by updating Letter and CAS ID numbers



Requesting a Committee Letter

Additional steps for alums:

- ▶ Maintain your grinnell.edu email account
- ▶ Install Duo Mobile 2-factor authentication app
- ▶ Register for or update [Alumni Directory](#) account
- ▶ Complete **Alumni Directory Access Qualtrics form** on HPAC website

See [HPAC website](#) > Applying > Requesting a Committee Letter
for links and instructions



Application Data 2021–2025

Average GPA and MCAT Scores Grinnell Applicants

	All Applicants	Admits MD	Admits DO	Admits All
BCPM GPA	3.56	3.65	3.54	3.62
CUM GPA	3.67	3.74	3.63	3.71
Total Score	510.5	513.2	509.1	512



Application Data 2021–2025

- **76%** of all Grinnell graduates who applied were accepted into a medical school program; the national matriculation rate over the same time was ~44%.
- **86%** of Grinnell graduates who applied with an **MCAT score at 85th percentile** or higher were accepted.
- **86%** of Grinnell graduates who applied with a **GPA of 3.7** or higher were accepted.
- **84%** of Grinnell graduates who applied with a **GPA of 3.7** or higher **AND** an **MCAT score at 85th percentile** or higher were accepted.



Most Common Enrolling Schools for Grinnell Students

MD	#		DO	#
Univ. of Iowa	11		Des Moines U	5
Univ of MN	3		AT Still	3
Univ of IL	2		KC Univ.	2
Univ of MI	2		Midwestern	2
Univ of ND	2			
Univ of SD	2			
Univ of WA	2			
Univ of WI	2			
Many others	1			



Resources

- ▶ Fee Assistance Programs
 - aamc.org/fap
 - See more at Health Pros website
- ▶ CLS Grants for Grad School, Interviews, Attire
- ▶ CLS Lending Library (MCAT, GRE)
- ▶ Applicant Workshops
 - Professional Associations
 - Health Pros Career Community (Handshake)
- ▶ Health Pros Pages at career.grinnell.edu
 - Application and interview information
 - Links to CASes and fee waiver programs



Questions



Requesting a Committee Letter

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- ▶ Personal Statement
- ▶ Special Recommenders
- ▶ CAS and Letter ID numbers

Deadline – the spring you are applying *or* graduating

- ▶ Current students: mid-April
- ▶ Alums: 1st week of March (update activities and personal statement if previously completed)

See [HPAC site](#) for
this year's dates

