

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



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)
 - 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
- ▶ CAS and Letter ID numbers

Deadline – the spring you are applying *or* graduating

- ▶ Current students: 3rd week of April
- ▶ Alums: mid-March (update activities and personal statement if previously completed)

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



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



Letter Writing Timeline

▶ Late Spring/Early Summer

- Faculty complete HPAC recommendation forms

▶ 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

