



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY  
Career Center

# PSA Interview Workshop

## Admissions 2022

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## Interviewing: Tips and Advice

- **First Impressions:** You do not necessarily want to “stand out,” but there is no need to look like everyone else. **If in doubt, DON'T wear it!** The health care profession is still quite conservative. Many of your interviewers are of an older generation and may look down on modern interview appearances. You may be judged upon how you look, so make sure you look your best!
- **Attire (Men & Women)**

Current students can rent a suit from the TAMU Career Closet. Visit [careerclinet.tamu.edu](http://careerclinet.tamu.edu) for more information and to set up an appointment. (You may also find the link for the Career Closet and examples of professional attire if you're logged in to the Career Center website [hireaggies.com](http://hireaggies.com). Login→Resources→Job Search Prep→Dress for Success)

  - a. Men
    - Suit
      - pressed or steamed (LAUNDERED & NO WRINKLES).
      - cut the X off the back of a new suit jacket.
    - Shirt - white or light color.
    - Tie - can be colored with conservative pattern (NO wild colors, cartoon characters, etc.).
    - Polished shoes - \*COMFORTABLE\*
    - Dark socks & shoes.
  - b. Women
    - Suit
      - skirt or pants - skirt at or below the knee.
      - pressed or steamed (LAUNDERED & NO WRINKLES).
      - cut the X off the back of a new suit jacket and/or skirt.
    - No modern embellishments on suit (ribbons, ruching, etc.).
    - Blouse - white or light color (nothing low-cut or skin tight).
    - Polished shoes - \*COMFORTABLE\* you will most likely be walking a lot during the day.
- **Jewelry: Minimal is best (YES: Aggie Ring)**
  - a. Men
    - A watch and one ring (two if married).
    - No earrings, piercings, noticeable necklaces, or bracelets.
  - b. Women
    - One small pair of earrings (even if you have multiple ear piercings).
    - Two ring maximum (engagement ring-you might be asked about details).
    - Clear or nude fingernail polish.
    - No large dangling earrings, gaudy necklaces/bracelets or jewelry that makes noise.
- **Fragrances: Perfume/Lotion/Cologne**
  - Better to be safe and not wear any because you never know when your interviewer may be allergic.

- **MEN: Hair/Hygiene**
  - Short sideburns.
  - If you have facial hair, make sure it's neatly trimmed.
  - If you regularly have facial hair and would like to be clean shaven, shave at least two weeks ahead of time to give time for razor burn, etc. to heal.
  - No hair below top of collar.
  - Get haircut a week before interview.
  - Natural hair colors (No Aggie Maroon or other primary colors, etc.).
  - Brushed and/or combed.
  - If you smoke, don't smoke that day (check general odor of suit: i.e. laundered).
  - Breath mints are good to have on hand so you can freshen your breath because some interviews take place after you eat.
  - No chewing gum or dipping.
  
- **WOMEN: Hair/Make-Up/Hygiene**
  - Subtle, loose or in a low ponytail.
  - Try to look as you would in a normal day (fresh/natural). You don't need any extra makeup.
  - Get root color touched up and/or haircut a week before interview.
  - Natural hair colors (No Aggie Maroon or other primary colors, etc.).
  - If you smoke, don't smoke that day (check general odor of suit: i.e. laundered).
  - Breath mints are good to have on hand so you can freshen your breath because some interviews take place after you eat.
  - No chewing gum or dipping.

## Preparing for the Interview

- **Travel**
  - Schedule for a place to stay (if needed).
  - Book your hotel and/or flight in advance-review COVID protocols/testing/masking requirements
  - DO NOT check the bag with your suit and other essentials at the airport.
  - Attend night socials, if you can.
  
- **Research**
  - Know the interview type, if possible.
  - Know the institution's philosophy, research focus, class size, special features of the school, type of learning (PBL, Systems-based, class-based), etc.
  - Know your application, especially the ESSAYS (if it is mentioned on application it's fair to be asked).
  - Review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#), [Additional FAQs](#), [MMI](#), and [Behavioral Interviewing Questions](#) handouts provided in this packet.
  - Ask fellow Aggies who have already interviewed.
  - Be familiar with current events (HMO, PPO, etc.). You don't have to be an expert, just know SOMETHING about them.
  - Review [table manners](#) handout provided in this packet.
  
- **Prepare questions** (they don't have to be completely medically related)
  - You must have some. (refer to [35 Questions I wish I asked](#) provided in this packet)
  - Ask about the general atmosphere of school/city and being on campus late in the evening.
  - Ask the interviewer a question which shows you are interested and you know something about the school.
  
- **Find school's location**
  - Use an internet service/app to pinpoint the location of the school. Having a hardcopy of instructions on how to get there can be helpful in the event technology fails.
  - Get into town the night before the interview. Find parking, walk around campus, find the building location, and make sure you know how to get back to where you parked.
  - Find the exact location of the first building where you need to meet. There might be parking issues, or the building might be in an obscure location.
  
- **Preparation the Night Before**
  - Make sure you are not having to look for something the morning of and realize you forgot it.
  - Lay-out your clothes before you go to sleep and make sure they are free of wrinkles.
  - Get a good night's sleep the night before, it's going to be a long day.
  - Have a very small umbrella if it looks like rain, check forecast.
  - Review your essay and application.

# The Interview Day

- **The Day of...TURN YOUR CELL PHONE OFF!**
  - Get to the interview early (Strive for 30 minutes).
  - You are interviewing all day long, so be courteous to everyone (staff, employees, custodians, etc.). Remember your interview starts the minute you arrive on to campus.
  - Don't take anything with you except a pen, unless instructed otherwise. Usually, you will get a folder with information in it.
  - Women may bring a small purse.
  - Write down the names and titles of your interviewers.
  - When possible, ask for a business card from each interviewer. Refer to this information for "thank you" notes in-case you forget. Keep business cards because you never know when you will need to contact them again.
  
- **Eat carefully (refer to table manners handout provided in this packet)**
  - Oftentimes a meal/snack will be served, so be careful not to spill anything.
  - During lunch, there will be several ears carefully listening to you, so do not speak with your mouth full.
  - If you do not like what they are serving for the day, DO NOT comment on it, just graciously push it to the side and eat what you can.
  - Be sociable with those around you.
  
- **RELAX as much as possible**
  - The first interview may seem worse than it really is.
  - They will not interrogate you with a bright light, etc.
  - Try to make the interview conversational in nature.
  - If someone or something offends you, report it immediately to the admissions office.
  - They want to get to know you, so don't be afraid to talk.
  
- **Guests~** only take a guest (parents/spouse/fiancé) if they are invited.
  
- **Honesty**
  - Prepare answers so they do not sound rehearsed.
  - Be yourself and not who you think they want you to be.
  - Don't try to answer the questions the way you think they want to hear it.
  - Don't make up an answer.
  - It's ok to say "I don't know. I need to gain more information on this subject."

## **IMPORTANT: After the Interview**

- Mail a hand-written thank you note to each interviewer.
- Refer back to business cards for information.
- Always address your interviewer by the correct salutation (Dr., Mr., Ms.).
- NO FIRST NAMES.

# Table Manners

Visit [https://www.etiquettescholar.com/dining\\_etiquette/table\\_manners.html](https://www.etiquettescholar.com/dining_etiquette/table_manners.html) for more information

- 1.) **Seating Etiquette** ~ Your host may have seating arrangements in mind, so you should allow him/her to direct you to your seat. Keep personal items off the table (including phones).
- 2.) **Napkin Etiquette** ~ During informal meals, place the napkin in your lap immediately upon seating. During formal occasions, wait for the host to remove their napkin from the table and unfold it in their lap. Then you can unfold yours.
- 3.) **Food Service Etiquette** ~ During service of a formal dinner, the food is brought to each diner at the table; the server presents the platter or bowl on the diner's left. At an informal meal, either the host dishes the food onto guests' plates for them to pass around the table or the diners help themselves to the food and pass it to others as necessary.
- 4.) **The Table Setting** ~ Deciding which knife, fork, or spoon to use is made easier by the outside-in table manners rule – using utensils on the outside first and working your way inward. Our table setting section discusses in greater detail what you'll see at the table.
- 5.) **When to Start Eating** ~ During a formal or informal meal, you should either wait until everyone is served to start or begin when the host asks you to.
- 6.) **Handling Utensils** ~ The continental table manners style prevails at all meals, formal and informal, because it is a natural, non-disruptive way to eat.
- 7.) **Passing the Food** ~ Pass to the right. One diner either holds the dish as the next diner takes some food, or he hands it to the person, who then serves herself. Any heavy or awkward dishes are put on the table with each pass. Special rules apply to passing salt and pepper and passing bread and butter.
- 8.) **Resting Utensils** ~ When you pause to take a sip of your beverage or to speak with someone, rest your utensils by placing your knife and fork on your plate.
- 9.) **Meals End** ~ During a formal affair, plates are removed by a professional staff. But since most informal meals are served without help, the host/hostess clears the plates, often with the help of a guest or two.

When it's time to leave, rather than detain one's host with a lengthy good-bye, make the departure brief but cordial.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 1.) Why have you chosen to attend this particular college?

- a. What have you heard about this particular training program and can you explain how it works? (Refer back to your research on this specific institution)
- b. If you are interested in coming here based on the college's location, what will you do if you are not accepted here?
- c. Is your spouse willing to transfer if you are/are not accepted here?

The purpose of the question is to find out how much the candidate knows about the program, campus, living conditions, departments and geographical location as well as the degree of desire to attend the school.

## 2.) What are your plans to finance your education if accepted?

- a. The purpose of the question is to see if the student has given consideration to costs and has been pro-active in investigating financing. Parents picking up the tab is not considered detrimental. (Refer back to general institution research on offices that provide student assistance such as financial aid, etc.)

## 3.) Why have you decided on a career as a \_\_\_\_\_?

- a. If you were influenced by a healthcare professional in your area of interest, how much time did you spend talking about his/her career and tell me what you learned.
- b. If you became interested by witnessing a recovery of an illness, how far do you feel healthcare professionals are able to be effective in curing illness?

## 4.) Are there any members of your family who are health care professionals?

- a. Have you talked about medicine as a career with any health care professionals? What did you learn about the good and bad points of the career? How do you plan to maximize the rewards over the negative aspects of the career?
- b. Describe the typical daily routine of the health care provider who you know or plan to be.
- c. Describe any technical procedures you may have talked about or witnessed.

## 5.) Have you given any thought about how you would handle losing one of your patients to death?

- a. How would you tell the family?
- b. Do you think you will become insensitive to death?
- c. How do you think the loss will affect your own personal confidence?

## 6.) What is your opinion about socialized medicine? Why?

## 7.) If you saw a fellow healthcare professional do something unethical, what would you do? What if the individual continued to practice? Explain your actions.

**8.) Discuss the ethics of a procedure that allows parents to choose the sex of their baby (or to transplant organs, euthanasia, etc.)**

- a. The purpose of the above question is to study how medically inquisitive the student is as well as how aware the student is of medicine as a career and of ethical choices. The response is only expected to show thought for what a doctor really does, not expertise.
- b. Steer away from politics and religion, stick to the facts on both sides of the issue.

**9.) Did you enjoy your undergraduate school?**

- a. How did you come to choose your major?
- b. Tell me about the course(s) outside of your major that you enjoyed the most.
- c. The purpose for these questions is to get to know you. Focus on the positives.

**10.) Do you have any hobbies or outside interests not related to school?**

- a. People who pursue hobbies with intensity seem to apply the same intensity to their careers. Someone with few interests outside of books may lack bedside manner; those who go from one interest to another may lack perseverance and commitment. It is best to be honest in this as well as all questions because the interviewer is guaranteed to probe further.

**11.) How have you spent your summers while attending college?**

- a. Have you had volunteer healthcare or research experience? If anything what did you learn? If not, why?

**12.) What was the last book you read other than those required by your courses?**

- a. Who is the author? Give me a brief synopsis.
- b. Why did you choose that book to read?
- c. If you don't have time for recreational reading, do you feel that you can handle the reading load necessary for your professional school coursework?

**13.) Tell me about your grades and your test scores.**

- a. How does your science GPR compare to your non-science GPR? Explain any difference.
- b. List your individual test scores. What reason can you give for your lowest score?
- c. Do not say scores are due to lack of ability or you have trouble taking standardized exams.

**14.) What do you think your chances are of being accepted to a health professions school?**

- a. What are your plans if you are not accepted?
- b. This is the time to accentuate the positive and express your desire as well as your smarts.
  - i. Do not attack the acceptance system because it is a reality.
  - ii. Do not dwell on your weaknesses, but compare yourself to the typical accepted student and summarize your strengths in a confident manner.
  - iii. Know your options for re-application.
  - iv. Be confident without appearing cocky.

**15.) What is the one question you do not want to be asked? Be prepared to respond to it. A very common question: Tell me about yourself.**

- a. Start describing background, likes, hobbies, steer it to something you enjoy talking about.

**16.) Do you have any questions? (refer to [35 Questions I Wish I Had Asked handout](#) provided in this packet)**

- a. Be prepared with specific questions about the school, curriculum or student life -- these also come in handy when faced with uncomfortable periods of silence.

**All of your answers should be consistent, straight forward, and sincere.**

Don't be shy but avoid the oversell.

If you are in a group interview situation, remember the interviewer cannot read your mind. You must give more information than "I agree with him/her." It's okay to agree with an answer someone else in your group gave, but be sure to expand on it to show who you are and what you think.

Follow typical proper interviewing checklist:

- a. Strong handshake
- b. Direct eye contact
- c. Conservative grooming & dress
- d. Clear voice
- e. Good posture
- f. Punctuality
- g. Use of proper titles
- h. Good manners toward all
- i. Thank you notes

## Additional Frequently Asked Questions

(TAMU students have shared the following questions with PSA throughout the years.)

Visit [tx.ag/psinterviewfeedback](http://tx.ag/psinterviewfeedback) to share feedback after your interviews.

These are not yes or no questions. You will need to explain or elaborate your answers.

- 1.) Discuss some of the factors that led up to your decision to be a healthcare provider.
- 2.) Do you think grades should weigh so heavily in the admissions process?
- 3.) Do you know what a doctor's life is like?
- 4.) Do you think doctors are viewed with as much awe as in the past?
- 5.) How do you handle stress?
- 6.) Do you feel you are prepared well enough?
- 7.) Give a brief review of your research.
- 8.) Give a two-minute presentation on any topic of your choice.
- 9.) How much do you know about current events?
- 10.) How do you think society should curb the rising cost of medical care?
- 11.) How will you support yourself while in school?
- 12.) How do you think the health care system will change in the years ahead?
- 13.) How would you handle a terminally ill patient?
- 14.) How do you think malpractice will affect you?
- 15.) How well do you cope with emergency situations?
- 16.) How do you plan for major projects?
- 17.) How do you know that medicine is for you?
- 18.) How do you think you'll be able to be a successful professional and maintain a healthy family life?
- 19.) How did your hospital experience relate to your decision to apply to medical school?
- 20.) Is medicine becoming more technical and is this beneficial?
- 21.) Tell me something of your outside reading interests.
- 22.) What do you think about the quality of today's medical care system?
- 23.) What are the negative aspects of being a doctor?
- 24.) What do you like about this school in particular?
- 25.) What do you see wrong with the medical profession? List three things.
- 26.) What factors will play a role in molding our decisions on extension of life?
- 27.) What is the most attractive aspect of medicine to you?
- 28.) What do you know about HMOs, PPOs or hospices?
- 29.) What qualities do you have that would make a good physician?
- 30.) What is the greatest medical problem in the U.S. today?
- 31.) What is your most unique quality?
- 32.) What are your alternate plans should you not be accepted?
- 33.) What are some past experiences that you feel will help you as a doctor?
- 34.) Tell me about yourself.
- 35.) Why do you want to become a doctor, dentist, nurse, OT, pharmacist, PT, PA, or veterinarian?
- 36.) What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- 37.) Why are you interested in our program?
- 38.) What are you looking for in a program?
- 39.) Can you tell me about this deficiency on your record?
- 40.) If you could do undergrad over again, what would you change?
- 41.) Tell us about your research experience.
- 42.) If you could not be a physician, what career would you choose?

- 43.) What do you see yourself doing in the future?
- 44.) What leadership roles have you held?
- 45.) What do you do in your spare time?
- 46.) What was your favorite course as an undergrad?
- 47.) What are your goals?
- 48.) Do you want to do research?
- 49.) What is your most important accomplishment?
- 50.) What motivates you?
- 51.) What will be the toughest aspect of becoming a physician for you?
- 52.) What do you think you can contribute to this program?
- 53.) Do you see any problems managing a professional and a personal life?
- 54.) Are you prepared for the rigors of professional school?
- 55.) How much did lifestyle considerations fit into your choice of becoming a healthcare professional?
- 56.) What is the greatest sacrifice you have already made to get to where you are?
- 57.) What problems do you think medicine will face in the next 5-10 years?
- 58.) How would you/friends describe you? (Three adjectives)
- 59.) Describe a particularly satisfying or meaningful experience during your life. Why was it meaningful?
- 60.) What is one event you are proudest of in your life?
- 61.) What was the most difficult situation you encountered in your life till now?
- 62.) How well do you take criticism?
- 63.) What questions do you have for me?
- 64.) When was one time you failed (not just partly failed, but completely failed) and how did you handle it?
- 65.) Describe a time you didn't manage something well.
- 66.) When was one time your values clashed with someone else's and how did you handle it?
- 67.) When did you have to work with someone difficult and how did you handle it?
- 68.) Who is your role model and why?
- 69.) Describe a time you did more than what was asked of you.
- 70.) What would you do if you received a patient who had a referral from a doctor who wanted you to complete a treatment that was contraindicative?
- 71.) Describe a time you worked with a difficult patient and how you handled it.
- 72.) Describe a time you had to present difficult information and how you did it.
- 73.) Describe issues in the field and your opinions on them.
- 74.) The following are all in group interview settings:
- 75.) Interviewees were required to play Jenga, and as each interviewee removed a block they also had to name a barrier to patient progress, and after adding a block to the top the interviewee spoke about potential patient progress. They continued around the group, until the game ended.
- 76.) Interviewees were given instructions for the group to build a structure. Each member of the group was also given a separate sheet of paper with secret instructions for his/her eyes only. The interviewers observed how the group members worked together and if each group member's main focus was the group task or their secret individual tasks.
- 77.) Find similarities between all of group members. How did you approach the activity, how does this relate to your future profession as a healthcare provider?

# Multiple Mini Interview (MMI)

<http://multipleminiinterview.com/>

The Multiple Mini Interview (MMI) is an interview style used by some professional programs as part of their admissions process. The MMI is used to assess a wide range of topics and skill sets that include non-cognitive qualities such as cultural sensitivity, maturity, teamwork, empathy, reliability and communication skills. The MMI is a completely different means of evaluation than other general assessment techniques. Although participants must relate to the scenario posed at each interview station, the MMI is not intended to test specific knowledge in the field. Instead, the interviewer(s) evaluate the candidate's thought process and ability to think on his/her feet. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions posed in an MMI scenario. The applicant should consider the scenario from a variety of perspectives.

## Multiple Mini Interview Tips:

**Understand the goal:** You should be able to answer the question(s) in a manner that will demonstrate you are capable of being an excellent student and thereafter, an outstanding professional. Make a list of attributes you believe are essential for success. Possible examples would be integrity, work in a team setting, and the ability to think critically. Practice integrating these key attributes into your answers.

**Work on time management:** Pace yourself. You will have an allotted time to answer the scenario and the questions associated. Once time is up, the interview must end immediately even if you are not finished. Again, PACE YOURSELF. Practice 7 to 8 minute presentations in advance of your interview to get comfortable with timing. Managing your time will give you the opportunity to end the interview in an organized and effective manner.

**Listen carefully:** During the MMI, the interviewer will often provide prompts designed to direct you. Listen carefully to the cues provided so you can take advantage of any new information that may be introduced. The prompts may guide you to the specific issues that are the focus of each rotation.

Generally, the situational questions posed in an MMI touch on the following areas:

- Ethical Decision Making
- Critical Thinking
- Communication Skills
- Current Healthcare
- Societal Issues

### **Example Scenarios:**

- 1.) A close friend in your 1st-year medical school class tells you that his mother was recently diagnosed with breast cancer. He feels overwhelmed by his studies and is considering dropping out of medical school to spend more time with his mother. How do you counsel your friend?
- 2.) Joe is a pizza delivery worker. The pizza shop he works for has a 30 minutes or less delivery guarantee or else the customer does not have to pay. On Joe's most recent delivery, he spots a woman bleeding on the street. There is no one else around and the woman seems to be unable to move by herself. However, Joe knows that if he returns empty handed again, he will be fired from this job which he desperately needs. What do you think Joe should do? Justify your solution in terms of practical and ethical considerations.
- 3.) Discuss one of your pastimes outside of school and how the skills you acquired from this activity will help you in your career.
- 4.) You are a family physician seeing Jane, a 67 year old woman with a recent history of multiple fragility fractures. You diagnose her with osteoporosis and prescribe some bisphosphonate drugs and other pharmacological treatments. Jane tells you that she has heard some good things over the internet about alternative medicine treatments such as Chinese medicine, and she is adamant on trying these as well. You are concerned about the use of these alternative medicine treatments and the possible negative effects they could have on Jane's health. How would you handle the situation and what would you recommend Jane do? Discuss any ethical considerations that are present.
- 5.) Discuss an experience that allowed you to learn something important about yourself. How will this lesson help you succeed in your career?



## Behavioral Interviewing Questions

Your past behavior is the best predictor of your future behavior. Behavioral questions are commonly asked in interviews and focus on the attributes that are needed in successful applicants, such as Problem Solving, Collaboration, Initiative, Flexibility, Leadership and Time Management Skills. Interviewers will often ask about your past experience to determine your competency with these attributes.

A good way to organize your answer is to use the STAR or PAR formula.

**PAR = Problem, Action, Result** Describe the problem, the actions you took to address the problem and the results to show how things worked out.

**STAR = Situation/Task/Action/Result** Describe the situation, the task(s) you were trying to accomplish, the action(s) you took to accomplish the task(s), and end with a few sentences that describe how everything worked out. This helps in demonstrating your actions were effective in accomplishing the task.

In general, a behavior question can be answered in about 2-3 minutes. If you do not include the results in your answer, the interviewer will often follow up and ask you how everything worked out. The results are the most important part of your answer and demonstrate your competency related to that attribute.

A good way to begin preparing for behavior questions, is to recall 3 times in your life you felt a great sense of pride and accomplishment. Then look at the attributes listed below and see if these are included in your story. Often several attributes will be included in one experience.

### Judgment/Problem-Solving

- Recall a time when your education and/or experience did not prepare you for a task. What did you do?
- Describe a problem you've recently been asked to solve.
- Give me an example of a good decision you have made recently.

### Teamwork/Collaboration

- Interacting with others can be challenging at times. Describe a situation when you wish you had acted differently with someone.
- Describe a situation when you were able to help a team member or peer.
- Describe the best/worst team of which you have been a member. What did you do?

### Initiative

- Have you found any ways to make your job easier?
- Give me an example of doing more than is required in your current job/class.
- Can you think of some projects or ideas (not necessarily your own) that were implemented or carried out successfully because of your efforts?

**Adjustment/Flexibility**

- Tell me about a difficult situation you recently had to manage.
- Jobs/course work differ in the extent to which unexpected changes can disrupt daily responsibilities. How do you feel when this happens? Why? Tell me about a time when this happened.
- Describe a situation that required several things to be done at the same time. How do you multitask?

**Leadership**

- Tell me about a time when you were a leader.
- Describe a situation in which your efforts influenced the actions of others.

**Planning & Organizing/Work Management**

- Walk me through yesterday (or last week) and tell me how you planned the day's (or week's) activities.
- Tell me about a time when your course load was the heaviest. How did you get all of your work done?
- How were you able to balance your school work with extracurricular activities/work?

**Technical/Professional Knowledge**

- Sometimes complex projects require additional expertise. Describe a situation when you had to request help or assistance with one of your projects or assignments. (i.e. research or group task)
- Describe how you've gone about learning a new skill.
- Describe a time when you solved a specific problem. What steps did you take?

**Motivational Fit**

- When were you the most satisfied/dissatisfied in your work (school)? What was most satisfying/dissatisfying about that?
- (Achievement) Tell me about a time when you had a lot of challenges in your work/school schedule. How satisfied were you with that and why?
- Jobs differ in the extent to which people work independently or as part of a team. Which do you prefer? Why? Tell me about a time when you enjoyed working this way.

# 35 Questions I Wish I Had Asked

<https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/selecting-medical-school-35-questions-i-wish-i-had/>

Created by the AAMC's Organization of Student Representatives (OSR)

Medical schools, like individuals, are very different. Selecting the "best" medical school for you can be challenging. While this list is by no means complete, it can help serve as a base for your own questions. Be sure to research each school before your interview so you can ask informed questions.

## Curriculum

- 1.) Are there any special programs for which this medical school is noted?
- 2.) Please tell me more about the integrated curriculum.
- 3.) What modalities are used for student lectures?
- 4.) What are the opportunities for research? What are the policies for taking time off for research opportunities?
- 5.) How do students get assistance if an academic need arises?
- 6.) Is there flexibility in the coursework (the number of electives) and the timing of the courses (accelerating, decelerating, and time off) during the pre-clinical and clinical years?
- 7.) Are standardized tests used such as the NBME shelf exams?
- 8.) Has this medical school, or any of its clinical departments, been on probation or had its accreditation revoked?
- 9.) How do students from this medical school perform on the National Board Examinations? How does the school assist students who do not pass?

## Evaluations

- 10.) How are students evaluated academically? How are clinical evaluations performed?
- 11.) Is there a formal mechanism in place for students to evaluate their professors and attending physicians? What changes have been made recently as a result of this feedback?

## Counseling/Student Support

- 12.) What kind of academic, personal, financial, and career counseling is available to students? Are these services also offered to their spouses and dependents/children?
- 13.) Is there a mentor/advisor system? Who are the advisors—faculty members, other students, or both?
- 14.) How diverse is the student body? Are there support services or organizations for ethnic/cultural minorities, LGBT students, and women?

## Facilities

- 15.) Tell me about the library and extracurricular facilities (i.e., housing and athletic/recreational facilities). Is designated study space available?
- 16.) Are students required to have a laptop?
- 17.) What type of clinical sites—ambulatory, private preceptors, private hospitals, rural settings, international—are available or required for clerkships? Does this school allow for students to do rotations at other institutions or internationally?
- 18.) Is a car necessary for clinical rotations? Is parking a problem?

### ***Financial Aid***

- 19.) What is the current tuition and fees? Is this expected to increase yearly? If so, at what rate?
- 20.) Are there stable levels of federal financial aid and substantial amounts of university/medical school endowment aid available to students?
- 21.) Are there students who have an "unmet need" factor in their budget? If so, how do these students come up with the extra funds?
- 22.) Are spouses and dependents/children covered in a student's budget?
- 23.) Are there services/staff available to assist students with budgeting and financial planning?
- 24.) Does this school provide guidance to its students and to its graduates/alumni, on debt management?

### ***Student Involvement***

- 25.) What medical school committees (e.g., curriculum committee) have student representation?
- 26.) Are students involved in (required or voluntary) community service?
- 27.) How active is the student council/government? Are there other active student organizations?

### ***Policies***

- 28.) What is the student medical insurance coverage and what is the cost to students?
- 29.) Is there an established protocol for dealing with student exposure to infectious diseases?
- 30.) Does this school provide, or does the student pay, vaccinations against Hepatitis B or prophylactic AZT treatment in case of a needle-stick or accident?
- 31.) Is disability insurance provided to cover exposure?
- 32.) Is there a school honor code? Is there a grievance process/procedure? Are the students involved?

### ***Residency***

- 33.) May I see a list of residency programs to which this school's recent graduates were accepted?

### ***Questions to Ask Yourself***

- 34.) Does this school have strengths in the type of medicine (primary versus specialized care, urban versus rural practice environment, academic medicine versus private practice) that I will want to practice?
- 35.) Would I be happy at this school for at least the next four years?

# Medical School Interview: 6 Common Mistakes

<http://www.studentdoctor.net/2013/12/medical-school-interviews-6-common-mistakes-that-admissions-officers-hate/>

- 1.) Don't assume that the interviewer knows how serious you are about becoming a doctor.**
  - When asked why you wish to become a doctor, make your answer specific. Don't say, "I've always wanted to help people."
  - Say *how* you want to help people. Give a short story that is representative of what you want to do, and why.
  - Be specific and concrete.
  
- 2.) Understand how difficult medical school and practicing medicine can be – and be able to explain why this isn't a problem for you.**
  - Make sure that you take a moment in your interview to show that you know something about the challenges you will face, and that you are fully committed to facing them head-on.
  
- 3.) Compassion is key – don't forget to show that you're human.**
  - Make sure that you don't ignore the human element of your candidacy. Interviewers know your test scores, your GPA, they've seen your resume, now show them that there is a compassionate, amiable human being behind it all.
  
- 4.) A Student Interviewer is not an excuse to relax.**
  - Keep it professional regardless of who is interviewing you.
  
- 5.) Know your application.**
  - You should be able to recall every part of your application so that you can talk about it fluently if and when you are asked.
  
- 6.) Be honest about your weaknesses.**
  - You can and should talk about things that you really do struggle with, and how you're working to improve on those things (this latter component is very important). You have weaknesses which are undesirable. Pick one of them, work on it, and then tell your interviewer about it with a straight face.

# Medical School Interview: Biggest Mistakes

<http://medicalschoollhq.net/mshq-146-common-medical-school-interview-mistakes-and-how-to-fix-them/>

## 1.) Sounding too rehearsed

- It should be conversational between you and your colleague.
- It has to flow back and forth.
- Try not to sound like you're reading a script.
- Following a script makes it hard for you to find your place in your head in case the interviewer throws you off, therefore, rehearse it enough so that you know what the key points are without sounding scripted.

## 2.) Sounding like you're reading your application or resume

- Tell them something exciting.
- Show them what you've done and tell them something memorable about you such as favorite hobby, sport, coolest place you've ever been to, something that sets you apart.

## 3.) Dressing inappropriately (see [Attire](#) at the beginning of the packet)

- Wear a suit.
- For men, shave.
- Dress neutral.

## 4.) Not taking the time to think before answering the question

- Do not answer the questions so quickly that you're not taking the time to think and do not interrupt the interviewer.
- Take a pause after the interviewer asks the question.
- Ask yourself, did you understand what he/she just asked you? If not, ask for clarification.
- Should you need to pause, tell the interviewer (ex: let me think about that for a moment).

## 5.) Not staying on topic

- You may go down rabbit holes that might not have been asked by the interviewer.
- You might have the tendency to say things you're not sure it's true or don't know all the facts of and the interviewer may ask follow-up questions.
- Answer what is asked of you and no more.

## 6.) Being negative

- Don't push blame on other people.
- Don't be negative about former bosses, classmates, or teachers.
- Being "unmotivated" is not a good word you can use. Rearrange your words to come up with a stronger answer and make it less negative or have a positive spin to it.

## 7.) You don't put on a smile.

- Understand your nervous tics and gestures that get in the way of the interview.

## 8.) Not having good, solid, informed questions to ask

- Be prepared and show that you care by asking informed questions that connect you to the interviewer.

- 9.) **Not doing a mock interview** Visit [tx.ag/mockinterviewtips](https://tx.ag/mockinterviewtips) to learn how to use the HireAggies Virtual Mock Interview tool or visit Career Center website [hireaggies.com](https://hireaggies.com). Login→Resources→Job Search Prep→Interviewing→Virtual Interviews→Virtual Mock Interview tool then choose from various options such as Health Professions, Science-Professional School #1 or #2, General Undergrad-Focus on Judgment/Ethics, and more!)
- Prepare for a mock interview like it's a real interview.
  - Get it recorded to see your vocal pauses and nervous tics.
  - Understand your stress level so you're able to control your response.

## Other Interview Issues

- Lack of interest and enthusiasm
- Little to no eye contact with interviewer
- Limp handshake
- Late to interview
- Failure to express appreciation for interviewers' time
- Does not ask questions about school
- Indefinite response to questions (rambles)
- Overbearing, over aggressive, conceited with superiority or "know it all complex"
- Inability to express self clearly: Poor voice diction, grammar
- Lack of confidence and poise: nervous and ill at ease
- Lack of courtesy: ill mannered
- Lack of maturity
- No interest in the school or career
- Low moral standards
- Cynical and/or lazy
- Intolerant: strong prejudices
- Narrow interests~ only interested in medicine and nothing else
- Inability to take criticism

# EY 2022 Interview Workshop

Dental	Interview Dates	Interview Style	Available Seats
Texas A&M	Mid-August to end of Jan	Virtual. Two, one-on-one interviews, 20-30 min. Campus visit later in the cycle.	106
UT Health Houston	Mid Aug - Jan	In Person. Two, 25 minute interviews, programs (school financial aid, housing etc.), hour long lunch with presentation and Q&A, end with Q&A with Dean. In person	105
UT Health San Antonio	Mid Aug - early Feb	Virtual. Two one-on-one interviews with faculty and student. 30 minute student panel. Campus visit later in the cycle.	100
Woody L. Hunt TTUHSC	Sept- Jan	In Person. 4 MMI, 1 group, 1 traditional: in person	60

Medical	Interview Dates	Interview Style	Available Seats
Baylor	Aug-Feb	one-on-one: Virtual	186
Long School of Medicine	Aug - Jan	one-on-one - 2x- faculty then MS4	220
Texas A&M	Late July (29th) - Feb	one-on-one - 30 min- 2x	200
TTU El Paso	Aug-Feb	one-on-one x2 faculty (virtual)	117
TTU Lubbock	Aug - Dec (Fridays)	one-on-one x2	180
UIW	Aug - Mar	MMI (may be virtual or in person, TBD)	162-165
UNT - TCOM	Aug- Feb	MMI: In person	230
UT Dell	Aug-Feb	asynchronous video secondary, one-on-one, MMI, and group interview	50
UT McGovern	Aug - Jan	one-on-one - 2x: virtual	240
UTMB	Aug 11th - Jan 7th	MMI	230
UTRGV	Aug - Jan	one-on-one 30 min - 2x	55
UTSW	Aug - Jan	one-on-one - 25 min - 2x with faculty (virtual: zoom)	235
SHSU	July- Jan	Closed file with faculty and staff	112+
UH	Sept-Feb/Mar	MMI x7	60

Physician Assistant	Interview Dates	Interview Style	Available Seats
Baylor	Nov	one-on-one - faculty - 3x (Zoom or in-person TBD)	40
HSU	Rolling	one-on-one - 2x, group interview, transcript evaluation (zoom)	30
TTU	Secret	Secret	Secret
UNT	Sep - Jan (same as last year)	Virtual MMI (same as last year)	75
UTHSCSA	sept-dec	3-4 interviews, MMIs, Skills Exam (secret this year)	45
UTMB Health	Not finalized yet possibly secret	one-on-one - 2x Zoom	90
UTRGV	November	MMI through zoom	100
UTSW	Aug - Nov	MMI	60

Pharmacy	Interview Dates	Interview Style	Available Seats
Texas A&M	(priority- oct 28 and 29th) (regular- nov 18th and 19th) (regular- december 16th-17th) (regular- jan 27th and 28th) (regular- feb 17th and 18th)	MMI - 5 min each - up to 10x	120
TTUHSC	Sept - Jun	one-on-two+ interviewers	155
UH	Oct-May	one-on-two+ interviewers, MMI	125
UIW	Oct - Mar	MMI; critical thinking assessment and writing sample	100
UNT	Sept. 23rd, Oct. 21st, Nov. 17th, and Dec. 1st/13th)	one-on-two, Written Assignment, Calculations Exercise, File Review (virtual)	100
UT Austin	Fall Priority Interviews: Saturdays- 9/26, 10/10 and Spring Interviews: Saturdays- 1/23, 1/30 and additional dates as needed	virtual MMI - 5 min - 6x (Zoom)	125

# EY 2022 Interview Workshop

Pharmacy	Interview Dates	Interview Style	Available Seats
UT El Paso	Fall: Oct 1-2 Winter: Jan 21-29 Spring: Apr 1-9 Summer: May 18-20	online via Blackboard Collaborate; MMI - 7-10x on breakout rooms on Collaborate; will offer opportunity to do in person	65
UT Tyler	oct 29th-30th and dec 3rd- 4th	tentative (might move online) one on-site interview ; MMI; <b>NO</b> Team Based Learning Session this year, Math and Writing Session still planned	102

Occupational Therapy	Interview Dates	Interview Style	Available Seats
ACU-MSOT & OTD	No Interview	No Interview	45
TWU-OTD	early to mid-Nov	Group Activity, Speed Dating 8x 2.5 min, Writing Analysis Essay	144
UTEP-OTD	No Interview	No Interview	24
UT Health SA-OTD	Not decided (Check back in Sept)	Secret	40
UTRGV-OTD	No Interview	No Interview	32
Baylor-OTD	ongoing as of August	responses to a series of standardized interview questions for review by program faculty and the Admissions Committee. S	70
USAHS-MOT & OTD	Year Round (last year)	40 mins) (last year)	55
TTUHSC-OTD	Oct - Jan (last year)	Zoom; Secret (last year)	53
UTMB Health-OTD	end of Jan	individual interview, a group interview, and meet with current OT students at the UTMB campus; Applicants must attend in person	60
UMHB-MSOT	Secret	both virtual and in-person interview options, Individual Interview, Group Interview and Activities	30

Physical Therapy	Interview Dates	Interview Style	Available Seats
Army Baylor	15 OCT 21 - 15 NOV 21	submit an online interview video as part of their PTCAS packet (no change from last year)	100
Angelo State	Saturdays in Nov	one-on-two faculty	28
HSU	Sep-Nov	one-on-two (faculty and current student)	40
USAHS	Year Round (last year)	fully virtual; Group Interview (last year)	55-65
Texas State	Nov 19, 2021	one on three (2 clinicians and faculty)	40-44
TTUHSC	late September (last year)	virtual via Zoom; one-on-one; video tours of campus and meeting current students in breakout rooms (last year)	72
TWU	No Interview	No Interview	54
UMHB	Sept 22, 2021 Sept 24, 2021 Oct 15, 2021 Oct 18, 2021 Nov 17, 2021 Dec 6, 2021	"in person and via Zoom as needed"; 50-minute essay, 15-minute intellectual assessment; interview with 2 faculty members	40
UIW	Oct 8-9 Nov 12-13 dates in February are tentative	MMI modified	54
UNT	Sep - Jan (last year)	MMI - 10 min - 7x (last year)	46
UTEP	No Interview	No Interview	36
UT Health SA	and 1-5 blocks; and Dec 11th 8-12.	Secret possibly hybrid	60
UT Southwestern	January	group interview with three or four other applicants; tour of campus	43
UTMB Health	Dec - Feb	online via either Skype or Zoom; one-on-one and possibly group	56