



2017-2018 APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Please type your answers into the fillable PDF application. All answers must be input into the application unless otherwise noted. Pay attention to length guidelines – we will not accept forms with unduly long responses.
- Take your time when completing this form. You will make the best impression by sharing thoughtful answers that are written with attention to detail, with proper punctuation and grammar. The Admissions Committee will be developing our initial opinion about your preparation, professionalism, and readiness for professional school when we read your responses in this form.
- Maintain a copy of your application for future use, as it will contribute to the committee letter writing process if you are admitted to this program.

PART I. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

DISADVANTAGED STATUS

Indicate disadvantaged status if one or the more of the following criteria pertain to you. When we know that applicants have overcome challenges of these types, it allows us to consider their applications in context:

- **First-generation college student:** This applies to you if neither of your parents has earned a bachelor's degree or higher.
- **Growing up in a medically underserved community:** This applies to you if, based on your own experiences or the experiences of immediate family and friends, you believe that there were an inadequate number of available hospitals, clinics, and/or health care providers in your community.
- **Family participation in state and federal assistance programs:** These programs provide cash and non-cash assistance to eligible individuals, families, or households. Examples include welfare benefit programs (federal, state, and local); Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC or ADC); unemployment compensation; General Assistance (GA); food stamps; Supplemental Security Income (SSI); Medicaid; housing assistance; or other federal, state, or local financial assistance programs.
- **Attending college on a Pell Grant:** A Pell Grant is money the U.S. Federal Government provides for students who need it to pay for college. To determine whether you were ever a recipient, you may wish to review your past financial award letters.

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

For each language you speak, follow these guidelines to determine your level of proficiency:

Language Proficiency	
Native/Functionally Native	I converse easily and accurately in all types of situations. Native speakers may think that I am a native speaker too.
Advanced	I speak very accurately, and I understand other speakers very accurately. Native speakers have no problem understanding me, but they probably perceive that I am not a native speaker.
Good	I speak well enough to participate in most conversations. Native speakers notice some errors in my speech or my understanding, but my errors rarely cause misunderstanding.
Fair	I speak and understand well enough to have extended conversations about current events, work, family, or personal life. Native speakers notice many errors in my speech or my understanding.
Basic	I speak the language imperfectly and only to a limited degree and in limited situations. I have difficulty in or understanding extended conversations.

PART II. PERSONAL STATEMENT

PERSONAL STATEMENT TIPS

- Orient the reader by explaining how you first became interested in a career in healthcare (in general) and this particular career (specifically). These topics should take up no more than about ¼ of your essay.
- The bulk of your personal statement should be devoted to discussing a few of the most meaningful experiences you've had on the prehealth path:
 - How have they shaped your understanding of what it means to be a great healthcare provider?
 - How have they allowed you to develop the personal skills that are going to make you great in your intended role? (Note: Do NOT blandly write, "X experience allowed me to develop Y attribute"; rather, share anecdotes and examples that convey those traits implicitly.)
- You should convey how you hope to do better than simply becoming a competent clinician. *What problem (large or small) do you hope to personally address once you are a clinician?* What you say here should follow naturally from the experiences you have shared and reflected upon in the essay.
- Explain why are you interested in completing your prerequisites by participating in the Post-Baccalaureate Health Professions Program at the University of Colorado Boulder.

WHAT APPROACH SHOULD YOU TAKE?

- Share a series of illustrative anecdotes of relevant, meaningful experiences. Anecdotes help the reader get a sense of who you are as a real person. Making use of anecdotes is also an effective way to convey your personal characteristics, values, and motivations.
- General Rule: If you find yourself making a general statement that any other applicant could make, that is your signal to develop that thought further so that you share your *personal, specific* reflections on your experiences.

PERSONAL STATEMENT CHECKLIST: OUR ADMISSIONS TEAM HOPES TO LEARN ABOUT THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS OF YOUR PREPARATION AND DECISION TO CHANGE CAREERS

1. What led you to become interested in a career in healthcare in the first place?
2. Of all of the healthcare careers, what are unique elements of the one you've chosen that makes it the best fit for you, personally?
3. From the healthcare providers whom you've come to admire, what have you learned about truly outstanding approaches to patient care? From your work and volunteer experiences in college, how have you been developing those same traits in yourself?
4. Why are you drawn toward a career requiring a master's or doctoral-level science education?
5. Why are you passionate about patient care? From your own experiences interacting with patients in clinical settings, what is your approach to offering care to those who are dealing with illness/injury/pain?
6. What is the positive change you hope to personally bring to the profession? Your answer may relate to the personal approach you intend to take to patient care. Or, if your past experiences have led you to develop a strong interest in caring for patients in a special population (such as providing care in a medically-underserved rural or urban area, or focusing on providing care to people with disabilities, etc.), say so. However, only make a statement to this effect if you can back it up with extensive, relevant experience to date.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

- Proofread carefully! An essay containing spelling errors and/or grammatical mistakes is unprofessional and indicates a lack of attention to detail.
- If you were involved in research as an undergraduate or since graduation, be sure to speak to the intellectually satisfying aspects of doing research rather than the lab techniques you learned. We are interested in your intellectual engagement in the topic and in the critical thinking skills you used when dealing with unexpected results or difficulties.
- If you mention another person who has inspired you, do so in a concise manner. Refer to their example only as a way to lead into a discussion about subsequent experiences you've had, as inspired by them.
- When describing your interactions with patients, focus on *them* rather than on the gratitude they may have expressed or the interest they may have taken in your career path.
- If you have overcome significant life challenges (economic challenges, first-generation college student, etc.), speak to that. We consider it a strength to have overcome such challenges.
- The personal statement should *not* be a chronological retelling of the activities you are listing in the *Experience* section of your application.
- Do not assume that your reader will have read the *Experiences* section of your application. We usually read your Personal Statement first. When describing any activity, put it into context for your reader. That said, do not use up valuable space in the personal statement by reiterating detailed information found in the *Experiences* section.
- Ask someone who knows you well to read your first draft and tell you if it really sounds like you. Also ask some people who do not know you very well to read it and to give you feedback on the main impressions they gained about you from the essay. See which comments come up consistently among various readers. If those consistent impressions match what you hoped to convey, then you're on the right track!

TOPICS TO AVOID

The following topics tend to be quite common in the personal statements of health profession applicants. We recommend avoiding these topics so that your essay does not end up sounding similar to many other essays.

- Describing the “eye-opening” or chaotic experience of an international medical relief trip or in an Emergency Department. (The chaos of a setting is not the point. The point is what you learned from the experience about authentic, compassionate service to others.)
- Referring to Paul Farmer
- Referring to a TV show
- Beginning the essay with a statement indicating that you have/haven't always known that you want to be a healthcare professional.

PART III. ACADEMICS

AP/IB CREDIT

- If you earned college credit for AP or IB Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Math, English Literature, Writing, Psychology or Sociology course work, please list that credit on your application. These courses do not have grades, so you only need to list the course subject and the name of the college that granted credit for it.
 - Note: Some college transcripts show only the *total number of AP/IB credit hours* that have been granted. You may be able to ask the registrar's office at the undergraduate institution that accepted your AP/IB course work to provide you with an *itemized list* of the credit granted.

LIST OF BCPM COURSES

- BCPM = Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Math (refer to this Course Classification Guide for guidance: https://aamc-orange.global.ssl.fastly.net/production/media/filer_public/e5/68/e5687e03-f55e-4ce6-a4e4-892eaab328dc/amcas_course_classification_guide.pdf)
- List *all* such courses that you have attempted, even if you withdrew from them, repeated them later, or earned a non-passing grade.
- **Pay attention to these exceptions:**
 - A scientific writing course taught in a science department is NOT considered a BCPM course
 - Please note that Psychology, Geology, Anthropology, and Engineering courses are NOT considered BCPM courses.
- **College-level BCPM courses taken in High School:** If you took college-level BCPM courses while in high school that resulted in a W or grade on a college transcript, list it. You should list the college that granted that credit as one of your *Institutions Attended* and must provide us with that transcript.

PART IV. EXPERIENCES

WHICH ACTIVITIES TO INCLUDE

In this section, you will list your relevant work and extracurricular activities *since graduating from high school*. (Exception: If you started a relevant experience while still in high school and have remained involved during your college years, then you can include it.)

There are many types of activities and experiences that are considered relevant. Think about your past experiences with attention to the ways in which they allowed you to develop personal skills that will relate to your future work as a clinician and/or informed your decision to pursue a clinical career. For instance, many non-clinical jobs that involve service to others are relevant, such as working as a restaurant server, a customer service agent, a bank teller, etc. People who have held service-oriented jobs in the past typically demonstrate strong interpersonal communication skills and a clear commitment to being of service to others. You may want to refer to the list of *Competencies for the Health Professions* at the end of this document as you think about which experiences to list on this application.

You may list as many entries as you would like under each category, but more is not inherently better. When choosing your entries, only include activities that you would be comfortable discussing with us, in-depth, during an interview. If you include an experience that “looks good on paper,” but then do not have much to say about it at your interview, that will hurt your candidacy. When calculating your hourly time commitment to each activity, do not exaggerate. Each year, we find entries that indicate that the person spent more time on extracurricular activities than there are hours in a week.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING THE EXPERIENCE DESCRIPTION FOR EACH ENTRY

- The experience description should be a narrative summary, written in complete sentences, with a *maximum length of 1325 characters*. (Though some will likely be quite short.)
 - Exception: For certain types of entries, such as Shadowing, Honors and Awards, or Publications, you may use a bulleted list. See examples below.
- Use your experience description to convey your level of involvement in the activity and to reflect upon the way in which the experience has contributed to your personal development and/or informed your decision to pursue a clinical career. We recommend that you refer to the *Competencies for Health Professions* at the end of this document as a guide for topics to discuss.
- Do NOT focus on technical skills. Most people can develop technical skills with proper training and experience. In contrast, we are interested in learning about the ways in which your experiences fostered your personal development and motivations. For instance, a pre-vet applicant describing work as a veterinary technician should convey his or her level of responsibility in the position (in terms of animal handling, communication with clients, and managerial experience if applicable) and why he or she found the work rewarding, rather than detailing specific technical skills he or she has honed.

DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS FOR ACTIVITY ENTRIES IN EACH CATEGORY

CLINICAL SHADOWING OR SCRIBING

Clinical shadowing is defined as the observation of a health care provider as that individual cares for and treats patients. (We include scribing in this category, as scribes typically do not interact directly with patients.)

If you have engaged in several one-time shadowing experiences, you may choose to group them together into one entry. Refer to the *Sample Entries* below for an example. With this approach, please use the *Experience Description* to provide a bulleted list of the individuals you shadowed, indicating each person's profession or specialty. Then use the rest of your *Experience Description* to share your reflections on what you have learned from your shadowing experiences, as a whole.

DIRECT PATIENT INTERACTION

Direct patient interaction is defined as being in a position to offer comfort and moral support to conscious patients in a health care environment. It may include hands-on involvement (as appropriate to your level of training), though such hands-on experience is more common for pre-dental, pre-vet and pre-optometry students than for pre-med students.

- Note that "health care settings" are defined as environments in which health care professionals are caring for patients. Examples:
 - Assisting a nurse who cares for patients in an assisted living facility IS considered healthcare experience.
 - Assisting a physician who is teaching a surgical course to other physicians IS NOT a healthcare experience.

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Research is defined as involvement in a scholarly or scientific hypothesis investigation that is supervised by an individual with verifiable research credentials. Research may be in any discipline and performed at any site, but it must involve the testing of a hypothesis.

List any significant research activities (paid or volunteer) you have participated in since graduating from high school.

- In your *Experience Description*, identify:
 - Your research topic or specific question.
 - Your level of intellectual engagement. For our application review process, please indicate which of the following descriptions best fits your level of involvement:
 - *Introductory* (recent or limited engagement)
 - *Moderate* (assisted a graduate student with his/her project, regularly attended lab meetings or journal club)

- *Committed* (designed your own project, you may have publications or presentations, you may have completed an honors thesis)
 - How the experience has contributed to your personal development.
- If you have received any research grants, list them in this category. If you have received multiple grants, group them into one entry.
- If you have co-authored one or more publications, create a “Publications” entry under the Research category and provide a properly formatted citation for the article (as it would be formatted in the *References Cited* section of a journal article). If you have multiple publications, list each citation in this one entry.

NON-CLINICAL SERVICE TO OTHERS (EITHER PAID OR VOLUNTEER)

Outside of a healthcare setting, list any jobs or volunteer roles (since graduation from high school) in which a primary responsibility was to directly help other people. This category includes customer service positions (such as in restaurant or retail settings), tutoring/teaching roles, mentoring positions, dormitory resident assistant positions, coaching, etc.

- In your *Experience Description*, convey your level of involvement/responsibility and reflect on the way in which your experiences in this setting have helped you confirm your desire to pursue a career in healthcare.

HONORS, AWARDS, SCHOLARSHIPS, ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

- If you have graduated with honors or have completed an academic certificate (such as a Public Health Certificate) and would like to describe your intellectual interest in that area of study, those entries go here.
- Military honors go in this section.
- Include highly prestigious scholarships here.
 - Professional schools are unlikely to be swayed because a little-known organization granted you a scholarship – they will be reviewing your academic credentials and history of extracurricular activities directly.
 - If you have been awarded prestigious and highly competitive honors or scholarships, you should certainly list them. Your description should provide the reader with enough information to understand how great of an honor it is.

OTHER PAID EMPLOYMENT

Enter information for each example of summer, part-time, or full-time employment not included above.

LEISURE ACTIVITIES

List any significant extracurricular, leisure activities or hobbies you have participated in since graduating from high school. What do you love to do for fun? How do you relieve stress? These entries may include involvement in student politics, music, performing arts, athletics, or leadership positions not listed elsewhere. What are your personal interests and talents? *Dental applicants:* We encourage you to list activities that provide evidence of manual dexterity.

***VETERINARY APPLICANTS ONLY: ANIMAL HANDLING EXPERIENCE (NON-CLINICAL)**

Animal handling experience is defined as any formal animal care position that is not classified as “clinical” or “research.” They include dog walking and cat care positions at a humane society, working in a doggie daycare facility or on a farm, volunteering at an animal sanctuary, or 4-H membership. Owning a pet does not qualify.

SAMPLE EXPERIENCE ENTRIES

CLINICAL SHADOWING OR SCRIBING

Experience Name	Shadowing
Start to end date (mo/yr)	September 2013 - present
Average hours/week	Periodic
Total hours, to date	69
Paid or volunteer?	Volunteer
Organization Name	Various
Contact Name, Title, Email	Dr. ____, Volunteer Coordinator, ____@judishouse.org

Experience Description <i>(1325 characters limit, including spaces)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. ____, nephrologist. Contact: ____. September 2016, 8 hours total. • Dr. ____, family practice physician in a community health clinic that cares for patients from underserved populations. Contact: ____. May 2017, 16 hours total. • Ms. ____, physician assistant in OB/GYN office. Contact: XXX. August 2017, 45 hours total. <p>By shadowing a variety of healthcare providers, I have learned ...</p>
Leadership role? <i>(If yes, explain. Limit 600 characters, including spaces)</i>	No
Exposure to diversity? <i>(If yes, explain. Limit 600 characters, including spaces)</i>	No

DIRECT PATIENT INTERACTION

Experience Name	Certified Nurse Aide
Start to end date (mo/yr)	December 2016-present
Average hours/week	4 h/wk
Total hours, to date	190
Paid or volunteer?	Volunteer
Organization Name	TRU Hospice Care
Contact Name, Title, Email	Ms. ____, Volunteer Coordinator, ____@TRU.com
Experience Description <i>(1325 characters limit, including spaces)</i>	<p>I work closely with certified nurse aids (CNAs) to provide end-of-life care to terminally ill patients. Depending on my patients' needs, I provide support and compassion in whatever small way I can, helping them live their final days in comfort and dignity. I feed and dress patients, help CNAs reposition and provide personal care to patients, offer companionship and emotional support, and facilitate communication between patients or families and the care team. I also run errands and perform chores to help with the facility's general operation.</p> <p>I chose to volunteer with a hospice organization because I wished to experience the grace it must take to support someone at the end of his or her life. The experience was meaningful not only because it is personally rewarding to know that I am making a difference in another person's life, but also because it is teaching me about life and death on a personal level and showing me how death affects those close to dying. Instead of seeing death as something to fear and delay by all means, I now see it as a natural part of life that can be peaceful.</p>
Leadership role? <i>(If yes, explain. Limit 600 characters, including spaces)</i>	No
Exposure to diversity? <i>(If yes, explain. Limit 600 characters, including spaces)</i>	Yes. In this role, I have been partnered with patients (and their family members) who come from a wide range of economic backgrounds and have been exposed to a variety of cultural and religious belief systems. For instance, ...

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Experience Name	Publications
Start to end date (mo/yr)	January 2015
Average hours/week	n/a
Total hours, to date	n/a
Paid or volunteer?	n/a
Organization Name	University of _____
Contact Name, Title, Email	Dr. ____, Principal Investigator, [provide email address]

Experience Description (1325 characters limit, including spaces)	[List each publication here, using standard bibliographical formatting (as it would appear in the <i>References Cited</i> section of a journal article).]
Leadership role? (If yes, explain. Limit 600 characters, including spaces)	No
Exposure to diversity? (If yes, explain. Limit 600 characters, including spaces)	No

HONORS, AWARDS, SCHOLARSHIPS, ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

Experience Name	Academic Honors
Start to end date (mo/yr)	May 2015 [You do not need to provide inclusive dates for honors that were awarded on a certain date.]
Average hours/week	n/a
Total hours, to date	n/a
Paid or volunteer?	n/a
Organization Name	University of _____
Contact Name, Title, Email	Dr. ____, Professor, [provide email address]
Experience Description (1325 characters limit, including spaces)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summa Cum Laude—graduated with honors after completing my thesis research in _____. Contact information: Dr. ____, Professor of ____, [provide email address] • Certificate of completion for the Interdisciplinary Undergraduate Program in Public Health. Contact information: Dr. ____, [provide email address] • Boettcher Scholarship. Contact information: Ms. ____, CU Boettcher Mentor, [provide email address] <p>I was selected as one of 40 winners among over 1,300 applicants for a full ride scholarship awarded to Colorado high school seniors who demonstrate exceptional merit, service, leadership, and character. During my college years, I became very involved in the Boettcher community. The Special Undergraduate Enrichment Program (SUEP) offered yearly retreats, yearly Boettcher outings, and other events where scholars could get together and network. Additionally, I've helped at most of the Boettcher Semifinalist and Finalist days, where we meet potential scholars and their families and talk to them about our experiences at CU during different sessions, dinners, and tours. Being a part of the Boettcher family has offered me the incredible opportunity to not have to worry about financially funding my undergraduate college education, while also providing me with the ability to meet very successful peers and alumni.</p>
Leadership role? (If yes, explain. Limit 600 characters, including spaces)	No
Exposure to diversity? (If yes, explain. Limit 600 characters, including spaces)	Yes, through my involvement in the Boettcher community, I have served as a mentor to Boettcher applicants and scholars who hail from a variety of backgrounds in Colorado, including some from rural ranching communities and others who attended poorly funded urban public high schools. For the past two years, I have mentored a younger scholar who has DACA status.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR THE EXPERIENCES SECTION

1. What if I'm not sure which category is most appropriate for a given activity?

Choose the one that you feel fits best. For example, if you completed a summer engineering internship in a Research and Development group, but were not conducting hypothesis-driven research, then this would fall under the "Other Paid Employment" category.

If an experience seems to fit under two categories, list it under the category that fits best, but use the Experience Description to tell us about the aspects of the experience that fall under a different category. For instance, a clinical research assistant whose primary job responsibility is to interact directly with the research participants would list this experience under the "Direct Patient Interaction" category but would also use the Experience Description to indicate any additional responsibilities that pertain directly to the research itself (such as attending lab meetings, conducting literature reviews, assisting with writing manuscripts, etc.).

2. How should I enter the contact information for the supervisors of my activities?

Indicate a person whom we can contact to verify that the experience occurred. For example, you may enter your supervisor or the individual in charge of a particular program. If the experience was a student-organized group and there is no official supervisor, you may list an advisor or a staff member in the Student Affairs Office who can verify your experience.

3. Why do you ask for inclusive dates, hours per week, and total hours?

These entries give us an idea of how much time you spent on each activity. If you spent a lot of time, we expect you to have more in-depth knowledge of the activity than if you spent just a little time on it.

Competencies for the Health Professions (*adapted from AAMC guidelines*)

Understanding of and suitability for the profession:

- Understanding of the realities of the profession, as informed by shadowing and direct patient interaction experiences; intellectual curiosity expressed in clinical settings; approach to interacting with patients and staff.

Competencies in Thinking, Reasoning, and Relevant Knowledge:

- **Critical Thinking:** Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions, or approaches to problems.
- **Scientific Inquiry:** Applying knowledge of the scientific process to integrate and synthesize information, solve problems and formulate research questions and hypotheses; ability to use the language of the sciences to participate in the discourse of science and explain how scientific knowledge is discovered and validated.
- **Quantitative Reasoning:** Applying quantitative reasoning to describe or explain phenomena in the natural world.
- **Human Behavior:** Applying knowledge of the self, others, and social systems to solve problems related to the psychological, social, and biological factors that influence health and well-being.

Interpersonal Competencies

- **Service Orientation:** Demonstrating a desire to help others and sensitivity to others' needs and feelings. Demonstrating a desire to alleviate others' distress. Recognizing and acting on your responsibilities to society, locally, nationally, and globally.
- **Social Skills:** Demonstrating awareness of others' needs, goals, feelings, as well as the ways social and behavioral cues affect peoples' interactions and behaviors. Adjusting behaviors appropriately in response to these cues. Treating others with respect.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Demonstrating knowledge of social and cultural factors that affect interactions and behaviors. Showing an appreciation and respect for multiple dimensions of diversity. Recognizing and acting on the obligation to inform one's own judgment. Engaging diverse and competing perspectives as a resource for learning, citizenship, and work. Recognizing and appropriately addresses bias in yourself and others. Interacting effectively with people from diverse backgrounds.
- **Effective Teamwork and Leadership:** Working collaboratively with others to achieve shared goals. Sharing information and knowledge with others. Putting team goals ahead of individual goals. Demonstrating insight into how to organize, motivate, and empower others to do their best work.
- **Oral Communication:** Effectively conveying information to others using spoken words and sentences. Listening effectively. Recognizing potential communication barriers and adjusting your approach or clarifying information as needed.

Intrapersonal Competencies

- **Ethical Responsibility to Self and Others:** Behaving in an honest and ethical manner. Cultivating personal and academic integrity. Adhering to ethical principles and following rules and procedures. Resisting peer pressure to engage in unethical behavior and encouraging others to behave in honest and ethical ways. Developing and demonstrating ethical and moral reasoning.
- **Reliability and Dependability:** Consistently fulfilling obligations in a timely and satisfactory manner. Taking responsibility for personal actions and performance.
- **Resilience and Adaptability:** Demonstrating tolerance of stressful or changing environments or situations and adapting effectively to them. Being persistent, even under difficult situations. Recovering from setbacks.
- **Capacity for Improvement:** Setting goals for continuous improvement and for learning new concepts and skills. Engaging in reflective practice for improvement. Soliciting and responding appropriately to feedback.

Factors that Would Allow the Applicant to Make Unique Contributions to the Profession

- **Obstacles that the applicant has overcome**, and how those obstacles led to new learning and growth.
- **Potential to contribute to a professional school's diversity**, broadly defined (e.g., background, attributes, experiences, etc.)