MD/PhD

APPLICATION PROCESS OVERVIEW

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MD/PhD: Physician Scientist Career

"true chimeras who blend clinical medicine with the discovery and application of new knowledge"

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

- Start asking now!
- 5-6 Letters total
  - As many as possible from research mentors**most important (counts as your "personal" one too)
  - 1-2 science professors, preferably ones you know personally.
  - 1 non-science professor that can attest more to your character
- Can send a "chaser" later

PERSONAL STATEMENTS

- 1. Why do you want to be a doctor?
  - Creative, but not cheesy
  - Try to make your essay stand out
- 2. Why do MD/PhD?
  - Do not repeat your reasons for becoming a doctor, but rather why you want to be a jack of all trades (what value there is to both degrees, what will you do with it)
- 3. Describe your research background/experiences.
  - This is more dry/grad school focused, and by far the longest essay.
  - Discuss all previous research experiences—project goals and outcome, what you learned (not just techniques, but more critical thinking, presentation skills, the reality of failed experimentation, etc)
  - mention any posters/publications you have had or conferences you have attended

CHOOSING A SCHOOL

- MD/PhD vs MSTP
- Aspects of Program
  - Grand Rounds, Journal Club, Retreats
- Look for schools that have labs that match your interests.
- Location—you'll be living here for most of your 20's!

TIMELINE TIPS

- Submit as early as possible
- AMCAS opens June 1….so try to submit during the month of June
  - then you will be able to get a bulk of the secondaries done before school starts
  - Also—on the form you can apply MD/PhD and many schools will ask if you also want to be considered for MD.
- Take a lighter course load in the fall.

SECONDARIES

- Keep on top of them!
- Write something new that you haven't yet mentioned previously on your primary application.
- Common questions:
  - Describe a challenge you have faced and how it has shaped you.
  - What is something you are passionate about?
  - What unique aspects will you bring to the table as a potential member of the X med school community?

INTERVIEWS

- In addition to the business suit, make sure to have a few business casual outfits, as many schools even request that you not bring a suit.
- Highly research-focused
  - Select professors
  - Be prepared for questions:
    - Describe your research.
    - What type of research are you interested in for PhD work?
    - Why X school?

INTERVIEWS

- Do you have any questions? YES!
  - Ask about their own career path.
  - Show interest in that professor's research.
  - Why did you choose to join the faculty at this institution?
- You'll have plenty of opportunities to talk with current students.
  - Make sure to find out: Are they happy? What do they like/dislike about the program?

PITFALLS TO AVOID

- Assuming your interviewer knows everything about your field of research
- Not acting professional throughout the entire weekend, including during social events. (current students a lot of times have a say in the admissions process too)

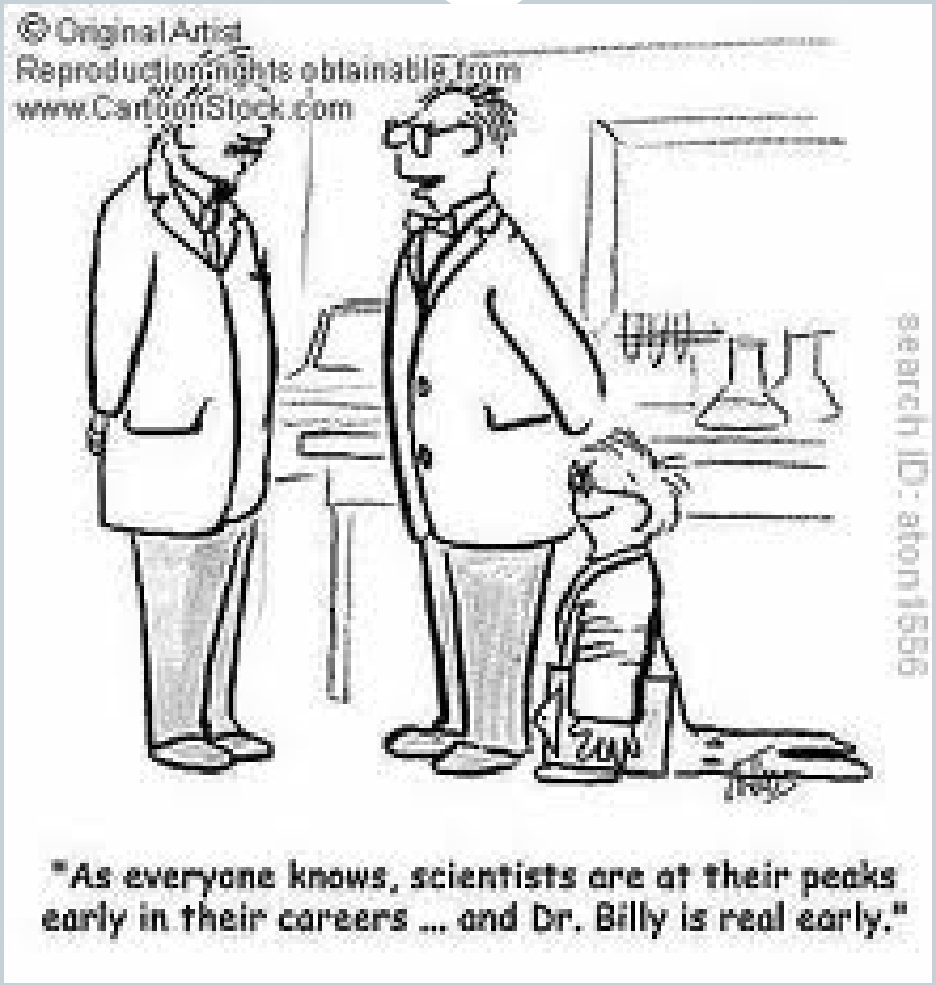
FOLLOW-UP

- Send thank-you emails or cards.
  - Directors and faculty interviewers.
- Jot down notes after each interview with your thoughts on the program, etc.
- If you are waitlisted, contact the school, send updated fall transcript or letter.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- Summer research programs
  - https://www.aamc.org/members/great/169782/mdphdsummerprograms.html
- Do research at NIH
- MD only, can consider doing research through HHMI
- Case Western College Program—5 years, includes research project
  - http://casemed.case.edu/admissions/education/cp_program.cfm

QUESTIONS?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"As everyone knows, scientists are at their peaks early in their careers ... and Dr. Billy is real early."