

You've made the decision to apply to osteopathic medical school. Just what are the admissions committees and interviewers looking for in a prospective student?

Admission to osteopathic medical school is competitive. Of those *applying* in the 2007 cycle, the average (mean) MCAT scores were 7.60 verbal, 7.46 physical sciences and 8.30 biological sciences. The average (mean) overall grade point average was 3.35 and the average science grade point average was 3.20. Generally, MCAT scores and grade point averages are slightly higher for matriculating students than scores reported for the overall applicant pool (see tables).

In terms of academics, osteopathic medical schools are looking for an academic record that indicates the aptitude and the knowledge base to successfully complete the medical school curriculum.

Just as important are personal qualities. Osteopathic medical schools are looking for students who:

- Are well-rounded
- Have good communication and interpersonal skills
- Have a record of community service
- Have a record of leadership

- Have some clinical experience
- Have participated in a variety of extracurricular activities
- Come from diverse backgrounds
- Are motivated to pursue a career in osteopathic medicine
- Have knowledge of osteopathic medicine
- Have shadowed an osteopathic physician

Osteopathic medical schools also have a long tradition of accepting nontraditional students who may be looking at osteopathic medicine as a new career later in life.

Nearly all students who apply to osteopathic medical school have a bachelor's degree. There are a few exceptions for students in special programs that have prior arrangements with osteopathic medical schools. Many applicants have earned a master's degree or doctorate before applying to osteopathic medical school.

Many public osteopathic medical schools are mandated by state legislature to admit a certain percentage of in-state residents to each entering class. Contact the colleges in which you are interested for more information.

Grade Point Averages for Entering Students

Group	GPA		
	2005	2006	2007
Science	3.36	3.36	3.35
Non-Science	3.54	3.55	3.55
Mean GPA	3.44	3.45	3.45

Average (Mean) Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) Scores for Entering Students

Mean MCAT	2005	2006	2007
Biological Science	8.64	8.77	8.82
Physical Science	8.04	8.14	8.18
Verbal Reasoning	8.31	8.40	8.52
Writing Sample			
J (Lowest)	0.4%	0.2%	0.2%
K	1.4%	1.5%	1.6%
L	5.4%	5.5%	4.5%
M	20.5%	20.5%	18.9%
N	12.8%	14.7%	12.9%
O	17.0%	18.5%	17.9%
P	12.9%	13.0%	13.6%
Q	18.5%	16.7%	18.1%
R	7.4%	6.6%	7.2%
S	2.3%	1.9%	1.9%
T (Highest)	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%
Unknown	1.1%	0.7%	3.0%
Number of Scores Reported	3,797	3,928	4,392

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Source: American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine



Criminal Background Checks

Some state legislatures have considered or enacted legislation requiring criminal background checks for all medical students. Additionally, affiliated hospitals and clinical institutions of many medical schools have considered policies requiring criminal background checks for medical students completing clinical rotations at their facilities. Currently, the Department of Veterans Affairs mandates that all medical students involved in patient care at their hospitals undergo criminal background checks.

In large part, the movement toward criminal background checks across the health

professions is based on strengthening the public's trust in the medical profession. In addition, criminal background checks enhance the safety and well-being of patients; aid in the applicants' and enrolled medical students' ability to eventually become licensed as physicians, and minimize the liability of medical schools and their affiliated clinical facilities.

While a criminal background check is not part of the AACOMAS application for the 2010 cycle, many medical schools are requiring criminal background checks of all matriculating students, prior to the start of clinical rotations, or at some other specified time. It is your responsibility to become aware and informed of what will

be required of you during the application process.

When an individual applies through the AACOMAS application process, the applicant will be asked to disclose information regarding prior criminal offenses. Failure to accurately and truthfully disclose such offenses on the AACOMAS application may result in an offer of admission being rescinded or, if the omission is discovered after enrollment in medical school, in dismissal.

Criminal Background Check Requirements for Matriculation (subject to change by college)

College	Criminal background check required for 2010 application cycle?	Do you require Drug Testing prior to matriculation? At any other times?
A.T. Still University Kirksville COM (ATSU/KCOM)	Yes. Accepted students must submit PreCheck criminal background check within 30 days of signature on admissions agreement.	No.
A.T. Still University SOM-Arizona (ATSU/SOMA)	Yes. Accepted students must submit PreCheck criminal background check within 30 days of signature on admissions agreement.	No.
Arizona COM of Midwestern University (AZCOM)	Yes.	Criminal background check is required prior to matriculation. Drug testing is not required prior to matriculation. Drug testing may be required for clinical rotations as requested by specific rotation sites.
Chicago COM of Midwestern University (CCOM)	Yes.	Drug testing is not required prior to matriculation. Drug testing may be required for clinical rotations as requested by specific rotation sites.
Des Moines University COM (DMU-COM)	Yes. After acceptance, but prior to matriculation. Cost is covered by applicant.	No. Not at this time.
Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences COM (KCUMB-COM)	Yes. Must provide criminal background check prior to matriculation with KCUMB approved vendor.	No drug testing prior to matriculation.
Lake Erie COM-Erie (LECOM)	Yes. Accepted students are required to submit a criminal background check prior to matriculation. The cost is covered by the applicant.	Yes. Drug and alcohol testing is required as a part of the student health and immunization records submission. Additional testing may be required for clinical rotations as requested by specific rotation sites.
Lake Erie COM-Bradenton (LECOM-Bradenton)	Yes. Accepted students are required to submit a criminal background check prior to matriculation. The cost is covered by the applicant.	Yes. Drug and alcohol testing is required as a part of the student health and immunization records submission. Additional testing may be required for clinical rotations as requested by specific rotation sites.
Lincoln Memorial University-DeBusk COM (LMU-DCOM)	Yes. Prior to matriculation and again prior to the start of clinical rotations.	Yes. Prior to matriculation and again prior to the start of clinical rotations.
Michigan State University COM (MSUCOM)	No. Criminal background checks are required for all students during Spring semester of the 2nd year, prior to beginning hospital rotations.	No. During the 2nd year of medical school and randomly throughout the 3rd and 4th years.
New York COM of NYIT (NYCOM/NYIT)	No. Background checks are conducted prior to clinical rotations. Accepted students are informed of this and required to sign an acceptance form acknowledging this information.	Policy at: www.nyit.edu/about/general/pdfs/drugandalcohol.pdf

Criminal Background Check Requirements for Matriculation (continued)

College	Criminal background check required for 2010 application cycle?	Do you require Drug Testing prior to matriculation? At any other times?
Nova Southeastern University COM (NSU-COM)	Yes.	Not prior to matriculation. Yes. At the end of the 2nd year.
Ohio University COM (OUCOM)	Yes. All students will be required to submit to an FBI criminal background check at the time of matriculation and in the 3rd year prior to the start of clerkship.	No. Not at this time.
Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences COM (OSU-COM)	No. Student background checks are conducted prior to beginning 3rd year clinical rotations. Upon acceptance, incoming students sign an acknowledgement of the pending background check.	No. Not at this time.
Pacific NW University of Health Sciences COM (PNWU-COM)	Yes. Prior to matriculation through www.MyBackgroundCheck.com	Yes. Prior to matriculation as part of the physical exam. Also repeated prior to clinical rotations.
Philadelphia COM (PCOM)	Yes. PCOM uses preCheck for this process.	Not prior to matriculation. The campus Dean of the College may require a currently enrolled student to submit to confidential assessment/scanning based on reasonable suspicion of impairment. Institutional policy is found in the PCOM student handbook.
Georgia Campus-Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (GA-PCOM)	Yes. GA-PCOM uses preCheck for this process.	Not prior to matriculation. The campus Dean of the College may require a currently enrolled student to submit to confidential assessment/scanning based on reasonable suspicion of impairment. Institutional policy is found in the GA-PCOM student handbook.
Pikeville College SOM (PCSOM)	Yes. Through our contracted vendor: Verified Credentials, Inc. at www.myvci.com/pikeville	Yes. Each student will be drug tested after matriculation and before beginning clinical rotations.
Rocky Vista University COM (RVUCOM)	Yes.	Yes. Additional testing may be required during the 3rd and 4th year upon request by clinical sites.
Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine (TOUROCOM-NY)	Yes.	No.
Touro University COM-CA (TUCOM-CA)	As a part of professionalism, you may be required to submit to a background check at your expense either prior to or during your enrollment at Touro University – California. Facts uncovered as a result of a background check performed while you are enrolled that would preclude licensure and/or practice in the profession may be sufficient grounds to impact your ability to continue your education.	No. TUCOM-CA does not require drug testing prior to matriculation. Some rotation sites, however, may require students to pass such a test prior to commencing their rotations. Such requirements are communicated to students wishing to rotate at those locations.
Touro University Nevada COM (TUNCOM)	Yes. A criminal background check will be required of all accepted candidates prior to matriculation.	Yes. Prior to start of the 3 rd year.
University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey-SOM (UMDNJ-SOM)	Yes. All students accepted to UMDNJ-SOM are required to submit to a criminal background check	No. Drug testing is currently not required prior to matriculation.
University of New England COM (UNECOM)	Yes. A background check will be required of all accepted candidates prior to matriculation and again prior to the start of clinical rotations.	No.
University of North Texas Health Science Center/Texas COM (UNTHSC/TCOM)	No. However, students are subject to criminal background checks during their enrollment.	No. However, clinical affiliates may have their own policy for students who are on rotation. In addition, students who enter drug or alcohol treatment programs while enrolled may be required to submit to testing as part of that program.
Edward Via Virginia COM (VCOM)	Yes. All applicants who are offered and accept their seat in the Class of 2014 will be required to submit a criminal background check. The CBC must be submitted at the same time as the tuition deposit.	At the request of our clinical sites, VCOM requires drug screening prior to initiation of any clinical training. This is subject to change based on the requirements set forth by the clinical training sites. The student may also be required to submit to drug and or alcohol testing based on reasonable suspicion.
West Virginia SOM (WVSOM)	No. However, students are subject to criminal background checks prior to 3 rd year clinical rotations.	No. However, students are subject to drug testing prior to 3 rd year clinical rotations.
Western University of Health Sciences-COM of the Pacific (Western U/COMP)	Yes. All applicants who accept our offer of admission will be required to submit a criminal background check. Due to hospital requirements, a second background check may be necessary.	No.

Applications, First-Year Enrollment, Total Enrollment and Graduates

COLLEGE	2006-07				2007-08			
	Applications	First-Year Enrollment	Total Enrollment	Graduates	Applications	First-Year Enrollment	Total Enrollment	Graduates
ATSU/KCOM	2,877	174	683	162	2,457	183	697	154
ATSU/SOMA					1,551	107	107	
AZCOM	2,680	155	583	137	2,794	158	589	135
CCOM	3,739	183	690	179	4,236	183	675	178
DMU-COM	2,660	218	814	185	2,794	222	840	185
KCUMB-COM	2,507	267	967	227	2,457	254	977	225
LECOM	2,980	236	900	230	3,193	273	942	210
LECOM-Bradenton	na	163	475	na	2,469	165	626	
LMU-DCOM					1,680	160	160	
MSUCOM	na	220	708	132	2,796	231	787	130
NSU-COM	na	244	884	187	3,081	249	917	178
NYCOM/NYIT	3,828	297	1,220	305	3,847	295	1,202	292
OSU-COM	1,451	93	352	92	1,447	92	343	83
OUCOM	na	109	428	104	2,802	110	439	105
PCOM	4,397	274	1,046	na	4,682	270	1,084	234
GA-PCOM	2,234	86	169	na	2,287	87	252	
PCSOM	1,742	80	301	71	1,795	80	301	66
TOUROCOM					1,162	135	135	
TUCOM-CA	na	135	549	142	2,594	135	544	138
TUNCOM-NV	na	134	320	na	1,852	133	440	
UMDNJ-SOM	2,808	108	398	95	2,951	110	413	88
UNECOM	2,894	123	496	111	2,899	131	501	108
UNTHSC/TCOM	na	161	555	127	1,966	173	593	126
VCOM	na	162	607	144	2,285	164	645	120
WesternU/COMP	na	216	762	148	2,607	220	829	148
WVSOM	2,307	196	502	102	2,448	208	596	97
Total	39,104	4,034	14,409	3,119	67,132	4,528	15,634	3,000

Sources: *Annual Statistical Report on Osteopathic Medical Education*, 2006, 2007; AACOM, Annual Osteopathic Medical School Questionnaire, 2007-08 academic year. Note: Schools without graduate data have not yet had graduates. ATSU/SOMA, LMU-DCOM, and TOUROCOM enrolled their first classes in Fall 2007. PNWU-COM and RVU-COM enrolled their first classes in Fall 2008.