

AACOM 2007-08 Academic Year Entering Student Survey Summary Report



Prepared by the Research Department
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine

Summary

Every year, AACOM sends each college of osteopathic medicine (COM) the AACOM Entering Student Survey. The survey collects data from entering osteopathic medical students about their anticipated debt and their graduate medical education, specialty and practice plans. In 2007-08, the survey was administered in both paper and online formats according to the choice of each COM. The response rate to the survey varied. While the average medical school response rate was 81 percent, the median response rate was 88 percent largely due to the nonparticipation of two COMs and very low participation by one other COM.

A problem in the online survey invalidated some of the data. We have included counts in the published tables below to indicate those tabulations that include only partial data.

Student Debt

New students entering osteopathic medical school in 2007 expect their medical education debt to total \$131,461, on average, by the time they graduate. Mean expected debt for students enrolled in the six public osteopathic schools was \$120,341, lower than the mean expected debt for all students; mean expected debt for students enrolled in the private colleges was \$133,804.

Less than one-quarter of the first-year students had obtained scholarship funds. Most scholarships were awarded by the student's medical school or its parent university, but the highest dollar awards were provided by the federal government in the form of National Health Service Corps Scholarships and Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarships, both of which require service after graduation.

Graduate Medical Education, Specialty and Practice Plans

Two-thirds of all survey respondents plan on entering an osteopathic or AOA/ACGME dual-approved residency. The main reason, chosen by 51 percent of the students, for planning an allopathic or dual-approved residency is that it offers more career opportunities.

Nineteen percent of respondents consider themselves most likely to work in a primary care specialty although 16 percent are undecided as to their future specialty choice. Restricting the tabulation to include only those students who have reached a decision concerning their future specialty raises the percent of respondents who consider themselves most likely to work in a primary care specialty to 22 percent. Primary care specialties include family practice, internal medicine and pediatrics.

**2007-08 First-Year Students' Response Rates to the AACOM
Entering Student Survey**

COM	First-Year Enrollment*	Surveys Received	Response Rate
ATSU/KCOM	183	175	96%
ATSU/SOMA	107	97	91%
AZCOM	158	114	72%
CCOM	183	153	84%
DMU-COM	217	153	71%
GA-PCOM	92	8	9%
KCUMB-COM	254	239	94%
LECOM	273	273	100%
LECOM-Br	165	164	99%
LMU-DCOM	160	156	98%
MSUCOM	231	165	71%
NSU-COM	251	205	82%
NYCOM	295	287	97%
OSU-COM	92	0	0%
OUCOM	110	27	25%
PCOM	270	262	97%
PCSOM	80	75	94%
TOUROCOM	135	95	70%
TUCOM-CA	135	114	84%
TUNCOM-NV	133	0	0%
UMDNJ-SOM	110	107	97%
UNECOM	131	63	48%
UNTHSC/TCOM	173	147	85%
VCOM	164	164	100%
WesternU/COMP	220	213	97%
WVSOM	208	201	97%
Total	4,530	3,657	81%

*Source: AACOM, Annual Osteopathic Medical School Questionnaires 2007-08

Expected Student Debt

(Data include all respondents to each question.)

Mean Debt, First-Year Students 2007-2008						
Source of Debt	All 2007-2008 First-Year Students		Public Schools		Private Schools	
	Mean Debt	Percent with Debt	Mean Debt	Percent with Debt	Mean Debt	Percent with Debt
Loans for Osteopathic Medical Education	\$131,461	89%	\$120,341	90%	\$133,804	89%
At Entry, Loans Owing for Undergraduate Education	\$14,258	51%	\$12,658	51%	\$14,597	51%
Family Loans to be Repaid by Student	\$1,329	2%	\$719	2%	\$1,456	2%
Non-Educational Debt	\$17,530	47%	\$15,741	47%	\$17,903	47%

Scholarships/Grants, First-Year Students 2007-2008 Average scholarship or grant amount based on those who received awards from each source						
Type of Scholarship or Grant	All 2007-2008 First-Year Students		Public Schools		Private Schools	
	Dollar Amount	Percent with Awards	Dollar Amount	Percent with Awards	Dollar Amount	Percent with Awards
Total Scholarships/Grants	\$65,902	24%	\$51,963	23%	\$68,759	24%
National Health Service Corps Scholarship	\$140,196	1%	\$101,460	1%	\$152,301	1%
Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarship	\$188,847	6%	\$187,855	3%	\$188,955	6%
State Government Scholarship/Grant	\$19,966	4%	\$19,291	6%	\$20,267	3%
Scholarship/Grant/Fellowship from Osteopathic School or its Parent University	\$10,156	10%	\$18,908	8%	\$8,655	10%
Tuition Waiver	\$39,183	0%	\$27,755	1%	\$50,611	0%
Osteopathic Association	\$7,851	1%	\$7,860	2%	\$7,848	1%
Other Sources	\$20,819	4%	\$14,208	4%	\$22,364	4%

Sources of Funds for Osteopathic Medical Education, 2007-2008 (Percent of total cost provided by each source)			
Source	All 2007-2008 First Year Students	Public Schools	Private Schools
Loans	79%	81%	78%
Scholarships	7%	6%	7%
Savings	3%	3%	3%
Earnings	2%	2%	2%
Parents	8%	7%	8%
Relatives	1%	0%	1%
Other	0%	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Specialty and Practice Plans

2007-2008 First-Year Students' Immediate Post-Graduate Plans (After Internship)		
Plans	All 2007-2008 First-Year Students	
Osteopathic Residency	809	47%
Allopathic Residency	433	25%
Dual AOA/ACGME Approved Residency	336	19%
Government, NHSC, Military, V.A., etc.	80	5%
Other or Undecided	66	4%
Total	1,724	100%

Reasons Given for Planning an Allopathic or AOA/ACGME Dual Approved Residency*, 2007-2008	
Reason	All 2007-2008 First-Year Students
Opens More Career Opportunities	51%
Preferred Osteopathic Residency is not Available in Preferred Geographic Location	44%
Better Chance of Location in Larger Institutions	34%
Desire Specialty Training Not Available in Osteopathic Program	26%
Believe Better Training & Educational Opportunities Available in Allopathic Programs	25%
Better Chance of Being Accepted in Allopathic Program	21%
Higher Pay	10%
Allows for ABMS Board Certification	8%
Military or Government Service Obligation	5%
Other Reasons	4%
Shorter Training Period	1%

*Data represent the percent of the 769 respondents planning an allopathic or AOA/ACGME approved residency.

Long-Range Career Plans, 2007-2008		
Plans	All 2007-2008 First-Year Students	
Government, NHSC, Military, V.A., etc.	98	6%
Practice in an HMO	73	4%
Self-Employed with or without a Partner	285	16%
Group or Other Type of Private Practice	738	43%
Other Professional Activity	40	2%
Undecided	497	29%
Total	1,731	100%

Specialization, 2007-2008

Specialty Plans	All 2007-2008 First-Year Students	
Allergy and Immunology	6	0.4%
Anesthesiology	75	4.5%
Critical Care	9	0.5%
Dermatology	38	2.3%
Emergency Medicine	171	10.2%
Family Practice	180	10.7%
Geriatrics	10	0.6%
Internal Medicine, General	52	3.1%
Internal Medicine, Subspecialty	132	7.9%
Medical Genetics	3	0.2%
Neurology and Subspecialties	29	1.7%
Nuclear Medicine	2	0.1%
OB/GYN and Subspecialties	68	4.1%
Ophthalmology	21	1.3%
Orthopedic Surgery	109	6.5%
Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine	9	0.5%
Otolaryngology	10	0.6%
Pathology and Subspecialties	12	0.7%
Pediatrics, General	81	4.8%
Pediatrics, Subspecialty	107	6.4%
Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Med.	20	1.2%
Preventive Medicine and Subspecialties	8	0.5%
Proctology	0	0.0%
Psychiatry and Subspecialties	34	2.0%
Radiology and Subspecialties	52	3.1%
Sports Medicine	39	2.3%
Surgery Subspecialties	89	5.3%
Surgery, General	49	2.9%
Urology/Urological Surgery	0	0.0%
Vascular Surgery	2	0.1%
Undecided or Indefinite	261	15.6%
Total	1,678	100%

Factors Influencing Specialty Choice Decision, 2007-2008	
Factor	Mean Influence Rating* All 2007-2008 First-Year Students
Intellectual Content of the Specialty	3.1
Like Dealing with People More than Techniques	3.1
Skills/Abilities	2.9
Lifestyle	2.7
Role Models	2.3
Like the Emphasis on Technical Skills	2.4
Desire for Independence	2.3
Academic Environment	2.0
Previous experience	2.2
Peer Influence	1.7
Prestige/Income Potential	1.8
Opportunity for Research/Creativity	1.7
Debt Level	1.6

*Students were asked to rate the importance of each of the above factors affecting their specialty choice decision. Each factor was rated on a scale of 0 to 4 (with 0 being no influence and 4 being major influence) and the average response is used above.

Primary Care*, First-Year Students 2007-2008			
Primary Care*	Number	Percent All	Percent Decided
Primary Care	313	19%	22%
Non-Primary Care	1,104	66%	78%
Undecided	261	16%	---
Total	1,678	100%	100%

* Primary care includes family medicine, internal medicine and pediatrics. Results are calculated from responses to planned specialty choice.

Board Certification Plans, 2007-2008		
Plans	All 2007-2008 First-Year Students	
AOA Boards	592	34%
ABMS Boards	66	4%
Both Boards	905	51%
Other	2	0%
Not Planning Board Certification	1	0%
Undecided	192	11%
Total	1,758	100%

Reasons for Taking ABMS (Allopathic) or Both Boards*, 2007-2008	
Reason	All 2007-2008 First-Year Students
ABMS Board Certification Provides More Opportunities	56%
Personal Desire for Dual Certification	49%
Doing Allopathic Internship and/or Residency	40%
ABMS Board Certification is More Widely Recognized	37%
Hospital Privileges are More Readily Obtained with ABMS Certification	18%
ABMS Board Certification has More Colleague Acceptance	17%
Licenses More Readily Obtained with ABMS Certification	11%
ABMS Board Certification has More Prestige	10%
Other	3%

* Data represent the percent of the 971 respondents planning on taking the ABMS Boards or both Boards.

Expected Net Income, 2007-2008	
Years After Completion of Internship or Residency	Mean Expected Income All 2007-2008 First-Year Students
1 Year	\$121,526
5 Years	\$177,015
10 Years	\$238,807