



**SCHOOL OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY  
HEALTH PROFESSIONS ADVISORY PROGRAM**

**TIMELINE FOR SSU STUDENTS PLANNING TO ENTER  
A HEALTH PROFESSIONS SCHOOL**

All students planning to enter allopathic medical, dental, veterinary, osteopathic medical, podiatry, chiropractic, pharmacy, physician assistant, or optometry schools **and** wish to be evaluated by the SSU Health Professions Advisory Committee (HPAC) in order to have a **Committee Letter of Evaluation** written to support your application, **MUST** follow the timetable and procedures listed below. **It is your responsibility to meet deadlines and ensure that all information you provide to the HPAC is accurate and complete.**

**GUIDELINES AND SCHEDULE**

- 1. Pre-Health Listserv:** Information about health professional school conferences and workshops, various schedules, updates on admission requirements, any changes in the HPAC mock interview schedule, etc. will be posted by the HPAC Chair on the **Pre-Health Listserv** and you should keep up-to-date. Make sure you are subscribed to the listserv in order to be informed and stay in the loop. To **subscribe** (or unsubscribe) to the Pre-Health Listserv, go to <https://mailman.sonoma.edu/mailman/listinfo/pre-health> and follow the instructions.
- 2. Standardized Admission Tests:** You need to take the appropriate standardized test to apply to many of the health professions schools: MCAT (Medical College Admission Test), DAT (Dental Admission Test), GRE (Graduate Record Examination), OAT (Optometry Admission Test), PCAT (Pharmacy College Admission Test), etc. Do this early enough, generally in the spring semester of your junior year, so you will then know early how well you did, and you can judge if you need to repeat the test. Visit the SSU HPAC website ([www.sonoma.edu/hpac](http://www.sonoma.edu/hpac)), or see the table below, for links to various websites where you can obtain important information about the tests.

**MCAT (Medical College Admissions Test):** Almost all U.S. medical schools and Canadian schools require applicants to submit MCAT scores. Medical college admission committees consider MCAT scores as part of their admission decision process. It is a standardized, multiple-choice examination designed to assess the examinee's problem solving, critical thinking, and knowledge of science concepts and principles prerequisite to the study of medicine. **Please keep in mind that beginning in 2015, the MCAT has significantly changed its format and scoring system.** For details about these changes see <http://www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/mcat2015/>

Many schools do not accept MCAT scores that are more than three years old. MCAT will be delivered exclusively at Prometric computer-based testing sites. For more details on testing dates, times, locations, registration process and questions about the computerized MCAT format, visit [www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/](http://www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/)

**DAT (Dental Admission Test):** The American Dental Association (ADA) administers DAT by computer through Prometric Testing centers throughout the year. Students can register for the test on-line at <http://www.ada.org/dat.aspx>. The testing program is designed to measure general academic ability, comprehension of scientific information, and perceptual ability. Ninety (90) days must elapse before an applicant becomes eligible for retesting. Walk-in registration for testing is not available.

**GRE (Graduate Record Examinations):** The GRE General Test measures verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning, and analytical writing skills that have been acquired over a long period of time and that are not related to any specific field of study. This type of test will help the admissions committees assess higher level critical thinking and analytical writing skills of applicants. The computer based GRE is offered year round at computer-based test centers. In order to register, call the test center directly (in Santa Rosa, 579-5163), or the Prometric® Candidate Services Call Center at **1-800-GRE-CALL** (1-800-473-2255). For more information, please visit the following web site: [www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org). Most veterinary schools accept GRE scores while few accept MCAT scores.

**OAT (Optometry Admission Test):** The OAT program is designed to measure general academic ability, comprehension of scientific information and perceptual ability. You can take the test as many times as you prefer, however, there is a 90-days waiting period between tests. Application information, preparation materials and test sites (Prometric Testing Centers) are available at [www.opted.org](http://www.opted.org) and/or <https://www.ada.org/oat/index.html>

**PCAT (Pharmacy College Admission Test):** The PCAT is a specialized test that helps identify qualified applicants to pharmacy colleges (California pharmacy schools often do not require PCAT scores). It measures general academic ability and scientific knowledge necessary for the commencement of pharmaceutical education. The PCAT is constructed specifically for colleges of pharmacy. You may apply online for taking the test by visiting [www.pcatweb.info](http://www.pcatweb.info).

The schedule given below indicates the dates of the admissions tests and the last day to register for the exam.

Test	Test Date	Registration Date	Web site
MCAT	Check the Website (offered 25 times this year)	Registration open (check the Website)	<a href="http://www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/mcat2015/administration/">http://www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/mcat2015/administration/</a>
DAT	Scheduled at any time at Prometric Test Centers	None	<a href="http://www.ada.org/dat.aspx">www.ada.org/dat.aspx</a>
GRE	Scheduled at any time at Prometric Test Centers	None	<a href="http://www.gre.org">www.gre.org</a>
OAT	Scheduled at any time at Prometric Test Centers	None	<a href="http://www.opted.org">www.opted.org</a>
PCAT	Check the web site for information	Look for updates online	<a href="http://www.pcatweb.info">www.pcatweb.info</a>

**The Nearest Prometric Testing Center is ([www.Prometric.com](http://www.Prometric.com)):**

1421 Guernville Rd, #112  
 Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
 (707) 579-5163

### 3. HPAC Credential File

Those applicants who wish to be evaluated by the Sonoma State University HPAC in order to have a Committee Letter of Evaluation written to support your professional school application, **MUST** get their HPAC Credential File in order **at least TWO WEEKS before your mock/practice interview** with members of the committee. Please contact Ms. Liz Kettmann in the HPAC Office (Darwin Hall 200) as soon as possible to receive further assistance with setting up your HPAC Credential File. Your HPAC file **MUST** contain the following items:

- **completed current SSU Personal Information Form**
- **completed GPA Calculation Forms**
- **at least three (3) Letters of Evaluation Statements**

(All required forms, including the Letters of Evaluation Statement Form, are available in .pdf on the HPAC website: [www.sonoma.edu/hpac](http://www.sonoma.edu/hpac))

**Re-applicants:** If you are a **re-applicant this year**, your HPAC file must include an updated SSU Personal Information Form, at least two **RECENT** Letters of Evaluation. Please check with Dr. Lin as soon as possible.

#### **Notes on HPAC File Components:**

**A) Personal Information Form:** The SSU Personal Information form you will see on the HPAC website is prepared to look as general as possible. For example, some of the classes listed on that form may not perfectly match with the ones you have taken here or elsewhere. Do your best when filling out the form to get the information across, and please contact Dr. Lin for assistance.

**B) GPA Calculation Forms:** All students wishing to be interviewed by the HPAC must complete the HPAC GPA calculation forms (part of your HPAC file). Get unofficial copies of transcripts or grade reports from **all** the colleges or universities you have attended in order to fill out the HPAC GPA calculation forms. Attach copies of the transcripts or grade reports with your GPA Calculation Form. Be sure to include all schools, even if you only took one summer school course at that institution. Using the HPAC GPA calculation forms, list your courses for each year and calculate your GPA according to the directions given on the form. If you have any questions, contact Dr. Lin.

**Attention Pre-meds: GPA Requirements for HPAC Mock Interview:** *Since competition for allopathic medical school has been so intense, the applicant pool is being screened initially essentially on GPA and MCAT scores. It has been the experience of the SSU HPAC over the last several years that no one at SSU with a GPA of 3.0 or below has ever been interviewed at a US allopathic medical school. If your calculations show you have an overall, science, **or** last two years of GPA below 3.0, you will not be interviewed by the HPAC. However, if you achieved high MCAT scores, have substantial extracurricular activities, and obtained significant experience in the medical field, you may request the committee in writing to consider interviewing you. **Please note** that if you do not meet the GPA and test score requirements for an HPAC interview, it is still possible for you to apply to health professions schools by having individual evaluators send their letters directly to AMCAS and/or to the schools.*

**C) Evaluation Statements and Letters:** These evaluations should come from people who can comment on your suitability for the kind of health profession you want to enter (e.g. your

college instructors, job supervisors, health professionals you have worked with, etc.) It is helpful to give the letter writer specific information about yourself, e.g. when you were in their class or worked with or held a volunteer position under their supervision, and your professional ambition. Make an appointment to meet with your letter writers, and provide them with a signed, hard copies of the Evaluation Statement Form. Ask for the completed "Evaluation Statement" forms to be sent directly to: Dr. Joseph Lin, Chair, Health Professions Advisory Committee, Department of Biology, Sonoma State University, 1801 E. Cotati Ave., Rohnert Park, CA 94928, at least TWO WEEKS in advance of your HPAC mock interview. You may have more letters in your HPAC file but we highly recommend a minimum of three.

#### **4. Mock Interview with the HPAC**

**At the end of February, the winter/spring prior to your application period, an email will go out instructing you to sign up for a 45-50 minute mock interview**, taking place in March or April. Once interview slots have been finalized, you will receive a date, time, and location confirmation along with the interview questions to use for preparation. Do not delay in scheduling your mock interview. The sign-up period will end in early March.

After all the candidates have been interviewed, the HPAC will meet and draft individual memos for all the interviewees, and they will be available for you to pick up by the end of the semester. This memo will have important guidelines you have to follow in order for the HPAC to prepare and send out committee evaluation letters in a timely fashion. You must pick up your memo from the HPAC office before you leave campus for the summer break.

#### **5. HPAC Evaluation Letters**

As soon as you have sent in your primary application, place a hard copy of it (including up-to-date GPA calculations, list of schools to which you are applying, and any other material you sent with the application) in your HPAC file. When you get requests for letters, notify Dr. Lin (linj@sonoma.edu) via email with addresses of the school(s) where the committee letter should be sent. See the memo you will be receiving after your mock interview for more information about this.