

# Navigating the Path to Medical School

*Essential Tips and Strategies for Aspiring Doctors*



Jennifer Lucero, MD, MA  
Associate Dean of Admissions  
UCLA



Mark Henderson, MD  
Associate Dean of Admissions  
UCD



Kama Guluma, MD  
Associate Dean of Admissions &  
Student Affairs  
UCSD



Cristobal Barrios Jr., MD, FACS  
Assistant Dean of Admissions  
UCI



Hallen Chung, MA  
Director of Admissions  
UCSF



Daniel Teraguchi, MD  
Associate Dean of Admissions  
UCR



Dena Bullard, MHS  
Senior Director  
Health Sciences &  
Workforce Innovation  
UC Office of President



## Agenda

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**Overview of  
University of California  
Medical Education System**

**Requirements**

**Recommendations & Tips**

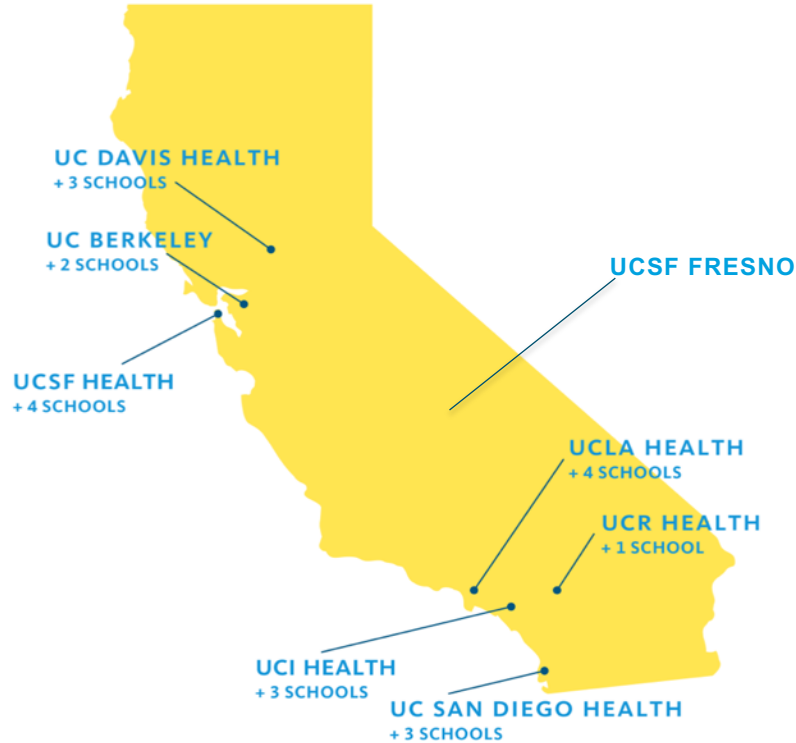
**Pathway Programs**

**Q&A**





# University of California Health



**6 Academic Health Centers**

**20 Health Professional Schools**

**One of the Largest Health Sciences Instructional Programs in the Nation with 15,000 students and trainees**



# University of California Health

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## Nursing

UCD, UCI, UCLA, UCSF



## Dentistry

UCLA, UCSF



## Medicine

UCD, UCI, UCLA, UCR  
UCSD, UCSF



## Optometry

Berkeley



## Pharmacy

UCI, UCSF, UCSD



## Public Health

Berkeley, UCLA, UCSD



## Veterinary Medicine

UCD



# University of California Medical Schools

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## Nationally Recognized for Diversity by U.S. World & News Report

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#3 UC Davis

#5 UC Riverside

#9 UC San Francisco

#13 UC Los Angeles



# University of California Medical Schools

## Number of First-Year Positions in 2023

UC Davis	137
UC Irvine	113
UCLA	175
UC Riverside	86
UC San Diego	140
UC San Francisco	173
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>824</b>

**50%**  
identify  
with races that are  
under-represented  
in medicine







## Holistic Review and Being Competitive Applicant

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Metrics

GPA  
Test Scores (MCAT)

Experiences

Not one aspect tells the entire story of an applicant, rather it is the collective story of applicants and aligning fit to the mission of the medical school

Attributes





## Required Courses

	UC Davis	UC Irvine	UCLA	UC Riverside	UC San Diego	UCSF
Biology	1 year	3 semesters/5 quarters	<b>Competency based</b> – applicants should demonstrate competency in biological sciences and physiology, chemistry, biochemistry, and physical sciences, humanities, and mathematics and statistics.	8 semester hours	1 year recommended	1 year
Chemistry	1 year	4 semesters/6 quarters (includes general/inorganic, organic chemistry, and biochemistry)		16 semester hours (includes general chemistry, organic chemistry, and biochemistry)	1 year recommended	1 year (can include organic chemistry)
Organic Chemistry	1 year				1 year recommended	
Physics	1 year	2 semesters/3 quarters		8 semester hours	1 year recommended	1 course
Biochemistry	Can be included w/organic chemistry				1 term recommended	1 course
Math				8 semester hours	1 year recommended	
English/Writing				Recommended		
Humanities		1 semester/1 quarter		Recommended		

# Experiences

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What? Where? and Why?.....WHYYYYY...?

- Research
- Clinical Exposure
- Community Service





# Letters of Recommendation – WHO

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Professor



Research mentor



Coach

**Have at least 1 - 2 letters from an activity described as most meaningful**



Employer / manager



Clinical mentor



## Letters of Recommendation – WHAT they should do

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- **GOOD** letters of recommendation describe...
  - How well you did (in a class, in a project, on a team)
  - How much you did (in a class, in a project, on a team)
- **BETTER** letters of recommendation also describe things like...
  - Your drive to help others; your drive to overcome barriers
  - Your passion; your compassion; your ethics
  - Your good character and how you treat others
  - How you stand out from others (in a good way)





# Letters of Recommendation – WHAT they should (ideally) *not* do

Letters of recommendation that may be viewed with some skepticism



From a physician who is a friend of the family

**“I’m a friend of the family, and have known Johnny since he was a baby. He’s wanted to be a doctor since he was in diapers. Johnny walks on water...”**

From some high-stature person who hardly knows you

**“I asked my lead post-doc about Sabrina. He then asked our TAs about her, and here is the feedback from them: ...”**

From someone who doesn’t have much to say about you

**“In my class I have my students do A, B, and C. Then we do X, Y, and Z. Yada yada *[Insert more detail about the class here]* *[Insert even more detail about class to fill space here]* ...and Juan did really well in my class.”**

From someone who doesn’t “get” what med schools are looking for

**“Susan worked in my lab, and was *outstanding* with Western blots, and using the mass spect machine...”**



## Personal Statement/Essay

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Questions to consider while writing your essay(s):



- Why have you selected the field of medicine?
- What motivates you to learn more about medicine?
- What do you want medical schools to know about you that has not been disclosed in other sections of the application?



## What else can you include in your essay?

Unique hardships, challenges, and obstacles that may have influenced your educational pursuits

Comments on significant fluctuations in your academic record not explained elsewhere in your application

An experience that challenged or changed your perspective about medicine

A relationship with a mentor or another inspiring individual

Gaps between your last degree and matriculating to MD program (“gap years”)

# The Application Process

## Primary Application (AMCAS)

*June 1 – November 1*

Biographical Info

Coursework

MCAT

Work/Activities

Letters of Recommendation

Personal Statement



## Secondary Application

*June 1 – January*

More info about you

School-specific short essays

## Interview

*August – April*

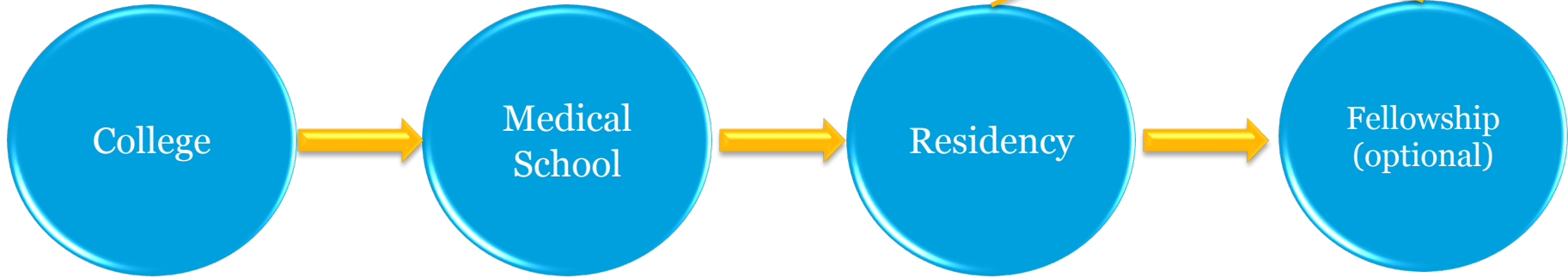
## Final Decision

*October - August*





# The Traditional Pathway





A photograph of a dirt path in a dense forest. The path starts from the bottom center and splits into two paths that curve away from each other towards the left and right sides of the frame. The forest is filled with various green plants, trees, and undergrowth, creating a vibrant and natural setting. The lighting is soft, suggesting an overcast day or a shaded forest interior.

**There are many pathways to becoming a doctor.**





# University of California Programs

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## UC Davis

### **ACE-PC**

Accelerated Competency-based Education in Primary Care

### **REACH**

Reimagining Education to Advance central California Health

### **TEACH-MS**

Transforming Education and Community Health for Medical Students

### **COMPADRE**

California Oregon Medical Partnership to Address Disparities in Rural Education and Health

### **Undergraduate and Community College Outreach Programs**

- Medical School Preparatory Enhancement Program
- MCAT Preparatory Scholarship Program

## UC San Diego

Pre-Health Guidance/Conferences

Health Professions Recruitment & Exposure (HPREP) program

UCSD Post-baccalaureate program

Conditional Acceptance Program





# University of California Programs

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## UCLA

- Pre-Health Guidance Center
- Re-Application Program
- UCLA/DREW Summer Health Professions Education Program
- UCLA Premedical Enrichment Program
- Charles R. Drew/UCLA Medical Education Program

## UCI

- Pre-Health Professional Advisement
- Open Medical School
- PRIME LEAD-ABC Academy
- PRIME-LC Academy
- Only PRIME GME Program







# University of California Programs

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## UC Riverside

### **Thomas Haider Early Assurance Program**

- Have completed a minimum of four quarters at UCR **prior** to applying to this program (and must complete at least six quarters at UCR before matriculation)
- Do not need to take MCAT & BCPM GPA 3.40 or greater

### **Thomas Haider Program**

- At least 24 seats in each medical school class for qualified UCR undergraduate students
- Must have attended UC Riverside for six consecutive quarters and have completed their bachelor's degree at UCR





# University of California PRIME Programs

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- UC Davis**    **Rural Health (2007)**  
**Tribal Health (2022)**
- UC Irvine**    **Latino Community (2004)**  
**African, Black, & Caribbean Community (2018)**
- UCLA**    **Leadership & Advocacy (2008)**
- UCR**    **African, Black, & Caribbean Community (2022)**
- UCSD**    **Health Equity (2007)**  
**Indigenous Community (2022)**
- UCSF**    **Urban Underserved (2007)**  
**San Joaquin Valley (2011)**



## Other Pre-Health Programs

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### California Medicine Scholars Program

#### California Medicine Scholars Program

- UC Davis
- UC Riverside
- UC San Diego
- UCSF Fresno

#### Post Baccalaureate Programs

#### Conditional Acceptance Programs

#### Undergraduate Enrichment Programs



