Questions To Ask Health Professions Programs

(IMPORTANT: This handout is not intended for premedical or predental students. It pertains to most of the other health professions listed in the Other Health Professions section of the HPPLC web site.)

Not sure what to ask when researching health professions programs? To begin with, you might ask yourself whether there are geographical limitations on where you can or are willing to attend a program. Oftentimes this is the first question students ask themselves as a way of narrowing their list of potential programs. Of course, you'll also want to do preliminary research on the web to learn about admission prerequisites and other admission requirements.

Below are some additional ideas for research questions; you will probably come up with others as you do your research. HPPLC advisors suggest that you record the questions along with the answers you get in an organized log that you keep for each program. Doing so will enable you to make side-by-side comparisons of programs.

1) I'm a (freshman, sophomore, etc.) student, and I'm very interested in this particular health profession. What advice do you have about how I should prepare for this career?
2) What are your program's greatest strengths compared to other such programs?
3) What is the class size and student-faculty ratio?
4) Are there special issues transfer students should be aware of when considering your program?
5) Do you have "rolling admissions" (i.e., seats are filled right when the application cycle opens). By when do I need to apply in order to be competitive for admission?
6) (If it is a graduate program, other than medical school) Is the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) or another admissions exam required? If so, what is a competitive score range for admission. Are certain sections of the exam given greater weight than others?
7) All other things being equal, what is a competitive Grade Point Average range for admission to your program?
8) Is there an admissions interview? If so, how are your interviews conducted?
9) Is a personal statement required? If so, what do you look for in the statement?
10) Are letters of recommendation required or suggested when applying to your program? If so, what are your guidelines for the number / type of letters? From whom will you accept letters (e.g., faculty, Al's, professionals).
11) What types of extracurricular, shadowing, or clinical experiences do you think are most helpful in preparing for your program?
12) What does your program look for in the applicant pool?
13) Do you give preference to in-state residents? Typically how many students accepted are in-state and out-of-state?
14) What types of problems could prevent good students from being accepted into your program?
15) In what ways and how early in the program are students given opportunities for patient contact and clinical experience?
16) How diverse is the student body? Are there support services or organizations for students from underrepresented groups in the medical professions?
17) Where do most of your students come from? How much geographical diversity is there in your classes?
18) (If it is a graduate or professional program, other than medical school) Is someone available to help with budgeting / financial planning?
19) Are there any scholarships, honors programs, or other special opportunities I should be aware of?
20) Is there anything else you think I ought to know about the admission process, about your program in general, or about the career in general?