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I. INTRODUCTION

This brochure is intended to provide a general overview of important information for students interested in applying for admission to medical, dental, veterinary or other health professional schools. It is not intended to be an “all you need to know” packet, but may supplement the Preprofessional Advising Office’s yearly meetings and students’ individual advising appointments. We hope you find it helpful as you consider your course selection, extracurricular activities, and the application process. Do not be a stranger - come and talk to us!

The Preprofessional Advising Office is located at 100 Bay State Road, 4th Floor. If you are considering a career in allopathic medicine, osteopathic medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, or one of the related health professions (nursing, optometry, public health, physician assistant, or other health professions), you should open a file in the Preprofessional Advising Office. The Assistant Dean for Premedical Studies and premedical advisors are available to counsel you about all matters pertaining to your professional goals. We organize informational meetings throughout the undergraduate years and maintain an extensive premedical/prehealth library. In addition, you may apply to have the Assistant Dean prepare a Letter of Evaluation or Dean’s Letter for professional schools as part of the application process.

Students may fulfill prehealth (premedical, preveterinary, predental, or other health related program) requirements while enrolled as degree candidates in any school or college of the University. The advising resources provided by the Preprofessional Advising Office are available to all undergraduate students in degree granting programs and alumni of undergraduate degree programs. Students who transfer to Boston University should open a file in the Preprofessional Advising Office as soon as they arrive and make an appointment to see a premedical advisor. In order to enhance the information in their files, transfer students should submit transcripts from their previous college or university.

All prehealth students should make every effort to attend the informational meetings that are held each year and to schedule appointments with a premedical advisor to get your specific questions answered. We recommend that you meet with a premedical advisor at least once each semester. You may schedule an appointment by calling the Preprofessional Advising Office at 617-353-4866 or by visiting the office.

Please note that we often use the term “premedical” in this brochure to refer to premedical/predental/preveterinary and other prehealth studies. If you have a question about a particular field do not hesitate to make an appointment with an advisor.

II. CHOICE OF MAJOR

The premedical, predental, and preveterinary programs are curricular pathways and not majors. Students may major in any field in the College of Arts & Sciences or in another school or college at the University while also fulfilling professional school requirements. Medical and dental schools do not show a marked preference for the applicant’s choice of major. Because of the variation in preveterinary requirements at individual schools, preveterinary students usually major
or minor in Biology. The quality and scope of one’s academic work is also very important to consider. Professional schools usually prefer students who do well and display a variety of interests in their course work. Personal qualities that admission committees deem valuable can be demonstrated in any academic field.

The core premedical science courses include one year each of biology, general chemistry, organic chemistry, and physics (each with laboratory) and one year of English. Many medical schools also require or strongly recommend one to two semesters of mathematics. Students who major in one of the social sciences or humanities may register for the required science courses as electives. However, it must be emphasized that students who only complete the minimum science requirements should maintain a uniformly high performance level in their science courses. Cell Biology (CAS BI 203/213), Genetics (CAS BI 206/216), Systems Physiology (CAS BI 315), and Biochemistry (CAS BI/CH 421/422) are examples of courses suggested for premedical students who are not majoring in a biological science and who wish to take more than the minimally required science courses. Students should be aware that individual schools may have additional or different requirements. This is especially true of veterinary and optometry schools. Additionally, many dental schools require biochemistry. For students preparing to enter medical school in the fall of 2016, coursework in biochemistry, statistics, psychology, and sociology will be necessary.

Academic achievement may be the single most important factor in the evaluation of credentials and an important predictor of success in professional school. Although some schools state that it may be possible to enter professional school after only three years of college, undergraduates who accelerate their programs with early admission as their objective should keep in mind that the baccalaureate degree is usually required before matriculation.

III. REQUIRED COURSES

The minimum requirements for admission to most medical and dental schools are listed below. Please be aware that medical schools are currently reconsidering their requirements in light of upcoming revisions to the Medical College Admission Test. As early as possible in your undergraduate career, you should consult the Medical School Admission Requirements (www.aamc.org). This on-line resource has information about each school and lists the specific requirements for all schools in the United States and Canada. A comparable volume, Official Guide to Dental Schools, (American Dental Education Association, 1625 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20036; 202-667-9433; www.adea.org), lists the criteria for admission to dental schools and is available in the Preprofessional Advising Office. Veterinary Medical School Admission Requirements in the United States and Canada (Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges; www.aavmc.org), lists the criteria for admission to veterinary schools and is also available in the Preprofessional Advising Office. The premedical library also contains publications that outline the requirements for admission to other health-related schools.

It is not advisable to take college-level courses on nontraditional grading systems (e.g. pass-fail), and the required premedical courses should never be taken on a pass-fail basis. Also, Advanced Placement (AP) credit in a core science course may not count as one of your premedical courses, since many medical schools prefer that you take your science requirements while you are in college. However, most schools accept AP credit for their mathematics requirements. If you
utilize Advanced Placement credit for a core science, be sure to check individual schools’ policies and take another laboratory course at a higher level in the same discipline. Please make an appointment with a premedical advisor if you have questions related to the use of AP credit.

**BIOLOGY:** A minimum of one year of biology with laboratory is required. This requirement is generally satisfied by Biology I and Biology II (CAS BI 107/108 or CAS BI 107/118), though this may vary depending upon your major. Although only one year of biology is required, an additional year will better prepare students for medical school and the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT). Students who do not concentrate in a biological science and post-baccalaureate students are encouraged to enroll in more than the minimum requirements in the life sciences by taking at least two additional courses (e.g. Cell Biology, Genetics, Systems Physiology, or Biochemistry). Biochemistry will be necessary for students preparing to enter medical school in 2016 and is currently required by several medical, dental, and veterinary schools.

**CHEMISTRY:** One year of general chemistry with laboratory is required. This may be fulfilled by CAS CH 101/102, CAS CH 109/110, or CAS CH 111/112. One year of organic chemistry with laboratory is also required. This may be fulfilled by CAS CH 203/204, CAS CH 211/212 or CAS CH 203/214. Quantitative analysis, physical chemistry, or other related areas of theoretical or quantitative chemistry are suggested by some schools.

**PHYSICS:** One year of physics with laboratory is required. You should select Elementary Physics (CAS PY 105/106), General Physics (CAS PY 211/212), Principles of General Physics (CAS PY 241/242), or Principles of Physics (CAS PY 251/252), depending upon your preparation in mathematics and your interests.

**MATHEMATICS:** One year of mathematics is recommended and specifically required by some schools. Students applying to medical school have the option of taking either two semesters of calculus or one semester of calculus and one semester of statistics to satisfy this requirement. For students preparing to enter medical school in 2016, a background in statistics will be helpful for the Medical College Admission Test. The calculus requirement may be fulfilled by CAS MA 121, 122, 123, 124, 127, or 129. The statistics requirement may be fulfilled by CAS MA 113, 115, 116, 213, or 214. Students who are required to take a department-based statistics course as part of their major (e.g. Economics and Psychology) will need to consult individual schools to verify that the course will satisfy the schools’ prerequisites.
HUMANITIES/SOCIAL SCIENCES: The General Education (Divisional Studies or Core Curriculum) requirements for the Bachelor of Arts degree at the College of Arts & Sciences usually satisfy medical and dental school requirements in these areas. Students not in CAS should consult the admission books listed on page 3 to be sure they meet the minimum requirements. Increasing emphasis is being placed on coursework in the humanities and social sciences by professional schools. Students who complete General Education requirements with AP credits will likely need to take additional college courses to fulfill professional school requirements. For students preparing to enter medical school in 2016, a background in psychology and sociology will be necessary for the Medical College Admission Test.

ENGLISH: Many medical schools require one year of English at the college level - composition or literature or a combination of both. Courses in the CAS Writing Program (CAS WR 100 and CAS WR 150) will fulfill this requirement at most schools.

OTHERS: Health professional schools may have course requirements in addition to the courses stated above. Students should always check the requirements of individual schools. This is especially true for veterinary and optometry schools, many of which have additional biology course requirements. The reference materials listed on page 3 discuss such requirements.

Your choice of major as well as the breadth and level of courses you select should reflect your academic interests and degree of preparation. Although you should not select courses solely with a view toward making an impression on admission committees, you should be aware that these committees give serious consideration to the quality and scope of your education.

IV. MMEDIC PROGRAM

The Modular Medical Integrated Curriculum (MMEDIC) is an Early Assurance Pathway to the Boston University School of Medicine. It was developed by the faculties at the College of Arts & Sciences and the School of Medicine to integrate the liberal arts and basic medical sciences and provide an enhanced educational transition from undergraduate to professional study. It is open to students in all undergraduate degree programs at the University, except students in the College of Engineering. The Engineering/Medical Integrated Curriculum (ENGMEDIC) is a similar program for students majoring in Biomedical Engineering. Students enrolled in the MMEDIC Program receive a bachelor's degree from Boston University in the major of their choice and a Doctor of Medicine degree from the Boston University School of Medicine. The MMEDIC Program does not accelerate the premedical-medical sequence. During their junior and senior years of undergraduate studies, MMEDIC students complete medical school-related courses that enhance their transition to
the curriculum at the School of Medicine. The MMEDIC program thus integrates certain of the preclinical subjects into the last two years of the undergraduate program.

Students who are interested in applying to the MMEDIC Program should pursue a rigorous premedical course of study and demonstrate superior performance in and out of the classroom. Course work must include one year of general chemistry, one year of organic chemistry, and one year of general biology by the completion of sophomore year. Additional biology courses are recommended, since MMEDIC students must have completed two courses from a selection of Cell Biology (CAS BI 203/213), Genetics (CAS BI 206/216), and Systems Physiology (CAS BI 315) before they are permitted to enroll in the science-related modules. Students apply to the program in the spring semester of their sophomore year at Boston University and begin the program during the fall semester of their junior year. Students should consult the Preprofessional Advising Office concerning application deadlines. Once accepted into the program, MMEDIC students must complete their undergraduate degree requirements and meet the academic and MCAT requirements of the MMEDIC Program for promotion into the Boston University School of Medicine.

Additional information about the MMEDIC and ENGMEDIC Programs and their requirements is available in the on-line Boston University Undergraduate Programs Bulletin. Students interested in the programs should meet with a premedical advisor during freshman year.

V. CONSIDERATION OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICAL SCHOOLS

In the United States, there are two types of fully licensed physicians: allopathic physicians (MD) and osteopathic physicians (DO). Osteopathic medicine has been practiced in this country for over a century, and the number of osteopathic medical schools has been rapidly increasing over the past few years. Currently, twenty percent of medical school students in the United States are enrolled at osteopathic medical schools. The following information about osteopathic medicine is taken directly from Osteopathic Medical Information Book (2012) published by the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine and is available in the Preprofessional Advising Office.

“Osteopathic medicine is a distinctive form of medicine practiced in the United States. Osteopathic physicians use all of the knowledge, skills, tools and technology available to modern physicians, with the added benefits of a holistic philosophy and a system of hands-on diagnosis and treatment known as osteopathic manipulative medicine. Doctors of osteopathic medicine emphasize helping each person achieve a high level of wellness by focusing on health promotion and disease prevention.”

“Osteopathic physicians, also known as DOs, work in partnership with their patients…DOs are licensed to practice the full scope of medicine in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and other territories of the United States. They practice in all types of environments, including the military, and in all specialties, from family medicine to obstetrics to surgery to cardiology. …Because of the whole-person approach to medicine, approximately 57 percent of all DOs choose to practice in the primary care disciplines of family practice, general internal medicine and pediatrics. The remaining 43 percent go on to specialize in one of any number of practice areas.”
Additional information about osteopathic medicine and schools of osteopathic medicine is available in the Preprofessional Advising Office and at the website of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (www.aacom.org).

VI. PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL ADMISSION TESTS

The Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) is required by almost all medical schools in the United States and is an integral part of your application to professional school. This standardized test is designed to compare applicants with different educational experiences.

Currently the MCAT includes three sections: Physical Sciences, Verbal Reasoning, and Biological Sciences. The two science sections assess knowledge of basic concepts in biology, chemistry and physics through their application to the solution of science problems. The Verbal Reasoning Section assesses your ability to understand, evaluate, and apply information and arguments in prose text.

The MCAT is a computer-based test and is administered numerous times each year, including morning and afternoon sessions on weekdays and Saturdays. It is advisable for students planning to start medical school in the fall after graduation to take the test in the spring or early summer of the junior year. Schools usually will not act on an application until all credentials have been submitted; thus, later test dates may postpone the evaluation of your application and put you at a selective disadvantage. Also, taking a spring test permits students whose scores are low to retake the MCAT during the summer. For students completing the required science courses during the summer right before applying, August and September test dates will be available, though some schools may not accept the September test results for entrance in the following year. Students may take the MCAT three times per year, but may only be able to be registered for one testing date at a time. Additional information about the MCAT may be found on the AAMC website, https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/.

The Association of American Medical Colleges recently announced that they will introduce a substantially revised MCAT in 2015, the year in which many incoming students will likely take the exam. The revised exam will necessitate additional preparatory coursework. Our preliminary recommendations are that students incorporate a course in biochemistry and a course in statistics, as well as introductory courses in psychology and sociology, into their curricula at some point before taking the new exam. We will provide additional information about course selections for premedical students after medical schools update their requirements in light of the revised exam. You may find more information about the revised MCAT at: https://www.aamc.org/students/download/266006/data/2015previewguide.pdf

All United States dental schools require applicants to take the Dental Admission Test (DAT). The DAT is also a computerized exam and tests the following areas: (1) knowledge of natural sciences (biology, inorganic chemistry, and organic chemistry), (2) reading comprehension (dental and basic sciences), (3) quantitative reasoning, and (4) perceptual ability (two and three-dimensional problem-solving). The DAT may be taken on almost any date, but may not be repeated until ninety days have passed. We advise students planning to start dental school in the
fall after graduation to take the DAT during the spring of their junior year. Additional information about the DAT may be found on the DAT website, http://www.ada.org/dat.aspx.

Students are encouraged to defer taking the MCAT or DAT until they have completed all of the required core science courses. Taking these examinations prior to the completion of all the course requirements on a “try-out” basis is strongly discouraged and rarely fulfills any useful purpose. It is important that students authorize the forwarding of the MCAT or DAT results to the Preprofessional Advising Office for their inclusion in the student’s file.

We strongly recommend that students allow sufficient time to prepare adequately for these tests. (Actually, one should begin preparation when one enters college through course choices that support the development of reading, analytical, and test-taking skills.) Since calculators are not allowed in the test centers, it is advisable to get comfortable not using one. These skills cannot be developed overnight. It is essential to carefully plan your studying for these tests by first identifying the broad areas that need to be strengthened and then organizing your time appropriately. Weak SAT/ACT scores may be an indication that additional preparation will be required.

There are many MCAT and DAT preparation books available at bookstores. The Preprofessional Advising Office also has guidebooks. In addition to self-study, there are a number of commercial review courses, the expense of which is one of the major disadvantages of this type of preparation. Each student should carefully consider whether taking these commercial preparatory courses is warranted in his/her particular case.

Most veterinary schools require the Graduate Record Exam (GRE). Information concerning the GRE is available in the Preprofessional Advising Office and at http://www.ets.org/gre.

Information about the Optometry Admission Test (OAT) is also available in the Preprofessional Advising Office.

VII. SELECTION FACTORS

The academic record is one of the most important factors in the application to professional school. Students with strong grades and standardized test scores have a distinct advantage in gaining admission. Without a competitive grade point average, the Letter of Evaluation or Dean’s Letter (see Section X) will not be especially helpful except in unusual circumstances. Although professional schools value the subjective comments contained in a Letter of Evaluation, they are not particularly interested in candidates who have weak academic records.

Successful applicants are usually highly motivated, have experience in clinical settings, and exhibit outstanding personal qualities. Evidence of genuine concern for others through volunteer work and community service as well as knowledge of and exposure to the healthcare field are important. Successful applicants have personal qualities such as maturity, integrity, compassion,
leadership, creativity, perseverance, and dedication. Those selected stand out from other applicants and have been involved, whether it be in research, as a volunteer in community projects, as candidates for degrees with honors in the major, as a volunteer in clinical settings, as an athlete, etc.

Most admission committees try to accept an entering class with a broad range of skills, interests, and abilities. They desire a diverse class of interesting and talented people. Therefore, students should pursue academic and extracurricular experiences that have meaning and value to them. Successful applicants, as varied as their backgrounds may be, all have somehow provided compelling evidence to admission committees that they are high achievers and that their achievements have been accomplished with excellence. The successful applicant has shown a realistic grasp of his/her strengths, weaknesses, and reasons for wanting to be a health professional.

Dental selection committees look for exactly the same characteristics as other health professional schools, with the exception that they also look for applicants who demonstrate some degree of manual dexterity. Be sure to mention any hobbies or extracurricular activities that involve manual dexterity, such as playing a musical instrument, painting/sculpture, jewelry making, and the like.

VIII. EXTRACURRICULAR, VOLUNTEER AND WORK EXPERIENCES

The Preprofessional Advising Office maintains extensive resources for information concerning volunteer opportunities and internships. Additionally, information is available on enrichment programs for students who belong to groups that are underrepresented in medicine and students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Admission committees will take into consideration your participation in extracurricular activities when evaluating your record. You should participate in outside activities that have meaning and value to you and that demonstrate your leadership qualities, initiative, perseverance, and compassion. When applying to professional schools, do not just list a number of these groups or organizations; list those in which you have actively participated, have made a significant contribution, or have assumed a leadership role.

The importance of exposure to, and firsthand experience in, health care settings cannot be overly emphasized. Admission committees want to know what steps you have taken to find out about the health field of your choice. Although there is no “magic” number of hours of hospital experience as far as acceptance is concerned, working in such an environment can provide valuable experience. You will be able to see the role and responsibility of the physician or healthcare professional. Volunteer work in mental health institutions or action-oriented community projects can demonstrate your ability to relate to all kinds of people and your problem-solving techniques. Osteopathic schools of medicine expect you to be familiar with osteopathic medicine, and schools may require that you obtain a letter of recommendation from a doctor of osteopathic medicine. Preveterinary students are encouraged to acquire experience with large and small animals.

Research during undergraduate study can also provide a medium by which you can demonstrate your motivation to do additional work, your dedication to intellectual pursuits, and
Letters of recommendation are an important component of the application process for students applying to health professional schools. Letters of recommendation should be written on the Preprofessional Advising Office’s Recommendation Form or on your recommender’s letterhead stationery and attached to a Preprofessional Advising Office’s Recommendation Form. Recommendation Forms are available in the Preprofessional Advising Office, 100 Bay State Road, 4th Floor. It is important that these forms be used in order to state whether or not you waive your right of access to each letter of recommendation.

It is important to submit to the Preprofessional Advising Office letters of recommendation from individuals who know you well, since a vague and noncommittal letter is of marginal value. The most useful letters are those relating to your academic work, experience in clinical settings, community service, research activities, and employment. Letters of recommendation from faculty (at least one in the sciences at Boston University) and work/volunteer supervisors are an important component of the Letter of Evaluation (discussed in Section X), and early registration with the Preprofessional Advising Office allows you to begin requesting these recommendations at the conclusion of the freshman and sophomore years. Because of the large enrollment in some of the basic science courses, you may not always get to know your instructor well. Although you may solicit letters of recommendation from teaching assistants, discussion leaders, or laboratory instructors, it is recommended that you make every effort to become acquainted with the course instructors through the use of office hours or other contacts outside of class. Letters from faculty are usually afforded more weight. In order to qualify for a Letter of Evaluation or Dean’s Letter, you must obtain one letter from a Boston University faculty member in the sciences. A letter from your departmental advisor is strongly recommended, if you have had significant contact with him/her. In order to enhance the information in their files, transfer students may submit letters of recommendation from faculty at their previous college or university, though one letter from a Boston University faculty member in the sciences will still be required. Personal letters of recommendation from high school teachers, peers, clergy, congressmen, family physicians/dentists, or friends of the family are generally not helpful. Admission committees are interested in evaluators who are knowledgeable and experienced in assessing your academic abilities, character, and professional potential.

The most effective letters of recommendation from members of the faculty are those that stress the context in which the instructor is making the judgment, the duration of his or her acquaintance with you, and your performance level relative to other students in comparable settings. Your communication skills, laboratory performance, and personal characteristics are areas that your recommender should discuss. Cited examples of these qualities make for effective letters of recommendation. Letters from employers or supervisors of volunteer work carry the greatest weight when they include a description of duties, demonstrated initiative, capacity to assume responsibility, and identification of strengths and weaknesses.
Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, Boston University students are entitled access to letters of recommendation contained in their permanent educational records at Boston University. However, a student may waive this right of access to letters of recommendation. If this right of access is waived, letters of recommendation will be considered confidential and will not be available to the student. Please be aware that if you have waived your right of access to letters of recommendation and do not waive your right of access to your Letter of Evaluation, your access to the Letter of Evaluation will exclude citations from your letters of recommendation.

Schools generally prefer to receive letters for which applicants have waived their right of access. If you have questions about the waiver, please schedule an appointment with a premedical advisor.

Letters of recommendation hand delivered by students will not be accepted. All letters should be mailed by the author directly to:

Dr. Glen B. Zamansky  
Assistant Dean for Premedical Studies  
Boston University  
100 Bay State Road, 4th Floor  
Boston, MA 02215

You are responsible for determining that your letters of recommendation are received in sufficient time for use in the application process. Providing a stamped, addressed envelope will serve as a reminder to your recommenders and will often be well received. In many cases, you will need to apply tact and diplomacy to remind your recommenders to submit their letters.

Letters of Evaluation, Dean’s Letters, or letters of recommendation are sent only to health-related schools and health-related scholarship programs. They are not sent by the Preprofessional Advising Office to other programs or to anyone else for other purposes, including job applications, internship applications, basic science graduate school applications, or other graduate programs.

X. LETTER OF EVALUATION/DEAN’S LETTER

Most medical and dental schools request that undergraduate students obtain a committee letter of evaluation from their schools as part of the application process. At Boston University, the Letter of Evaluation is by no means an objective checklist; rather it is a comprehensive and extensive letter that provides a candid opinion of the student’s prospects for success in professional school. It is a composite letter that includes substantial citations from a student’s letters of recommendation and is not usually accompanied by the actual letters of recommendation. The Letter of Evaluation may consider a student’s personal qualities, academic record, standardized test scores, course selection, experience in clinical and research settings, community service, motivation for a health-related career, information in the application for a Letter of Evaluation, material in the premedical file, and information from an interview with a member of the Premedical and Predental Advisory Board. The Boston University Premedical and Predental Advisory Board is a committee composed of faculty members from departments in the College of Arts & Sciences, the College of
Engineering, the College of General Studies, and Sargent College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences. The Assistant Dean for Premedical Studies serves as Chairman of the Advisory Board. Students who do not qualify for a Letter of Evaluation may receive a Dean’s Letter. The Dean’s Letter briefly discusses a student’s academic and non-academic accomplishments. The Dean’s Letter is sent to schools along with letters of recommendation in a student’s premedical file.

Students begin applying to professional schools approximately fifteen months before their intended date of matriculation. Each November, the Assistant Dean for Premedical Studies holds a meeting for students considering applying to professional schools the following year. At that meeting he reviews the application process and the office’s requirements for students to obtain a Letter of Evaluation or Dean’s Letter. The application for a Letter of Evaluation/Dean’s Letter will be distributed at the November meeting and will be available thereafter at the Preprofessional Advising Office, 100 Bay State Road, 4th Floor. This application should be completed carefully and thoughtfully, since it is an important source of information for the Letter of Evaluation or Dean’s Letter. Applications will not be considered complete until all required materials are received. A minimum of three letters of recommendation (one from a science professor at Boston University), a passport-style photograph, and unofficial transcripts for all college work completed at Boston University and elsewhere are some of the requirements of the application. An up-to-date summary of academic work, including honors and awards, is a critical element of the application. If courses are to be taken during the ensuing summer term, those grades must also be sent to the Preprofessional Advising Office as soon as they are available.

Students who have submitted a complete application (with all supporting documents) for a Letter of Evaluation/Dean’s Letter by the appropriate deadline and have achieved at least a 3.00 cumulative GPA and a 3.00 science GPA for courses taken at Boston University will be offered the opportunity to have a Letter of Evaluation and an interview with a member of the Premedical and Predental Advisory Board. Students who have not achieved cumulative and science GPAs of at least 3.00 will be offered the opportunity to have a Dean’s Letter accompany their letters of recommendation to admission committees of professional schools.

Additional details about applying for a Letter of Evaluation and having the Letter of Evaluation or Dean’s Letter sent to schools will be provided at the November meeting.

**XI. ADVISORY BOARD INTERVIEW**

The interview provides the Preprofessional Advising Office with an opportunity to learn more about you and provides you with an opportunity to practice talking about yourself. It is not intended to be a mock interview for professional school. You should be prepared to discuss yourself, your reasons for choosing a particular profession, your academic record, various employment records, and your goals and aspirations in whatever depth seems appropriate. The interviewer will have a copy of your application for a Letter of Evaluation and letters of recommendation. If you have had academic problems or inconsistencies, the interview may be an appropriate time to discuss them so that they may be explained and assessed as part of the evaluation. Be candid and honest, and be yourself. You should mention and be ready to discuss your extracurricular activities, research experiences, and hobbies, since your activities may provide additional information that will be used in your Letter of Evaluation. The interview is not intended
to be a stressful situation, nor is it intended as a means of subjecting you to pressure in order to evaluate your response. Rather, it is the time to discuss yourself.

**XII. THE PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL INTERVIEW**

The personal interview is an extremely important step in the process of being admitted to a health professional school. The granting of an interview means that you have passed through the initial screening process, and the results of your interview will play a large part in whether or not you will be accepted.

The purpose of the interview is to exchange information between the candidate and the school. Although it is routine for the applicant to respond to a variety of questions, the candidate may also show an active interest in the school by asking pertinent questions of the interviewer. Substance as well as manner of presentation is important when speaking with the interviewer. You should respond to questions in a sincere, articulate manner. Sincerity is a quality valued highly by admission committees. Be prepared to discuss why you have chosen a particular profession. You may also be presented with questions regarding contemporary and/or controversial issues. You should be familiar with current social, legal, ethical, economic, and political aspects of your future profession and problems related to the delivery of health care. The point of view that you present, even if it differs from that of the interviewer, is generally less important than the manner in which you support your position. Also, be prepared to discuss any problems or inconsistencies in your application with your interviewer.

The interview provides an opportunity for the candidate to ask questions, the answers to which are not readily available on schools’ websites. It is wise to have done some research and to have formulated good questions ahead of time regarding a school’s curriculum, special programs, or particular areas of emphasis. This type of information can be obtained by reading a school’s catalogue, visiting a school’s website, and by speaking to alumni or currently enrolled students.

Dress conservatively, be confident and calm, maintain poise, and answer questions in the best way you can. Use logical thought, and if asked a question to which you do not have a good answer, stop and think a moment before answering. Never answer in a hostile, abrasive manner and do not hesitate to tell the interviewer that you do not have an answer to a particular question. Stress your positive qualities without being pretentious; discuss your achievements (for example, research, volunteer work, and leadership responsibilities) fully and accurately.

There are certain basic interviewing skills about which one should be aware before the interview. Be aware of speaking too rapidly or too slowly, harshly, loudly, or in a garbled, high-pitched, or very soft manner. Try to avoid nervous gestures and other distracting mannerisms. Eye contact is important - look at your interviewer. Above all, try to maintain a relaxed attitude. Do not attempt a slick or contrived demeanor, since it is artificial and easily discernible. It is natural to be nervous on such an occasion; interviewers are aware of this and usually try to put you at ease. The interview should confirm the applicant’s credentials to the admissions committee and should reflect the applicant’s overall experience, maturity and motivation, interpersonal skills, communication abilities, common sense, adaptability, sincerity, and intelligence.
The Center for Career Development, at 100 Bay State Road, 6th Floor (617-353-3590), sponsors programs related to interviewing. While the Preprofessional Advising Office does not provide mock interviews, the office sponsors a meeting entitled “The Interview” in the fall to help prepare you. It includes a panel composed of recent Boston University alumni who are enrolled in local medical/dental/veterinary schools. They discuss their experiences in interviews with time allotted for a question-and-answer period. The Office also has several books that discuss interviewing strategies.

XIII. POST-BACCALAUREATE STUDENTS

There has been a marked increase in the number of applications to professional schools submitted by post-baccalaureate students. These are often applicants who have returned to college primarily to fulfill requirements for health professional school, having completed other types of undergraduate programs at Boston University or at another institution.

Boston University has a post-baccalaureate program in Metropolitan College. Students in the program fulfill their required basic science courses through Metropolitan College and/or the College of Arts & Sciences. All post-baccalaureate students interested in professional school should open a premedical file in the Preprofessional Advising Office upon coming to the University and periodically meet with the Assistant Dean for Premedical Studies. The Committee Evaluation process (see Sections IX, X, and XI) is only available to post-baccalaureate students who have completed a degree-granting program at Boston University or who are completing the Post-Baccalaureate Premedical Certificate Program at Metropolitan College.

Post-baccalaureate students are cautioned against the practice of accelerating the completion of the premedical requirements in the shortest possible time. This may be counter-productive, since taking a highly compressed science program may result in poor grades. It is more advisable to start by taking one or two science courses with the possibility of accelerating during the ensuing semesters.