



Secondary Application Workshop

How to effectively submit secondary applications for health professional programs.

Agenda

- Secondary Application Logistics
- Pre-Writing Secondaries
- Receiving your Secondaries
- Timeline to Submit Secondaries





Secondary Application Logistics

What is a Secondary Application?

- Additional questions beyond the primary application questions that are school specific.
 - To learn more about the applicant.
 - To gauge interest of applicant to their institution.
 - To assess how the applicant may connect with institution's mission/values.
 - To assess core competencies.
 - To determine who to invite for an interview.



Where are the Secondaries?

- Secondaries are sent directly to your email on file with the application service (mostly MD, DO). Please check your spam/junk folders!
- Secondaries may be embedded within your primary application under "Program Materials" (mostly DO, PA, Dental, Optometry, Veterinary, Podiatry).



When do you Receive Secondaries?

- Secondaries may be sent individually by specific programs, often scattered through the months of July and August.
- Secondaries are not automatically sent to students. Each school has their own process and may choose not to send a secondary application to an applicant.



Secondary Application Fees

- If there is a fee, it can vary (\$30 - \$250) by each school, but they are usually around \$100.
- Most programs will waive secondary application fees for students who have fee assistance through the Centralized Application Service.





Preparation & Pre-Writing Secondaries

When to Start Pre-Writing

- After you've submitted your primary application, it takes several weeks for your application to be verified and the data transmitted to health profession schools.
- During the verification period is a great time to start pre-writing secondaries.



Common Prompts

- Fine-tune responses to common prompts...
 - Why are you interested in our school?
 - How would you add to the diversity of our school?
 - Describe an obstacle you have faced.
 - Have you taken any time off from your undergraduate studies?
 - Co-op is PART of your undergraduate education, **it's not time off.**
 - Is there anything else we should know?
 - This is OPTIONAL. If there's something that you haven't talked about in your application that answers the question "Why this school?", you can talk about it here. Leave this blank if you do not have anything NEW to add – medical schools appreciate brevity!
 - COVID-19 Related Questions
 - Answer if you have something significant you would like to share/explain regarding disruptions to your academic/experiential preparation, or a personal challenge, you've faced during the pandemic. You do not need to explain or justify circumstances that impacted all applicants, such as online coursework during COVID semesters.
 - *Example: "In clinical bioethics, you will learn how we all have to make complex decisions that sometimes do not match our personal beliefs. Accordingly, is it important to do what you believe is right or what you have been instructed to do? How would you approach this dilemma?"*

Committee Letter Question

- Some programs may ask why you did not receive a Committee Letter. Feel free to use the respective blurb to answer that question:
 - If you are receiving a Letter Packet:
 - Starting from the 2025 application cycle, the Northeastern University PreMed and PreHealth Advising Program will exclusively provide a Letter Packet service, discontinuing the additional Committee Letter service. As I have fulfilled all requirements and deadlines, I am applying using the Letter Packet service provided by my institution, which is now the sole option available.
 - If you are receiving Individual Letters:
 - I have chosen to utilize individual letters of evaluation in support of my application to your program. This decision is based on my careful consideration of the plans for my application and the belief that these specific letters more accurately reflect my competencies.

General Chemistry Question

- Some secondary applications may require you demonstrate how you've met a program's course requirements.
- General Chemistry (CHEM 1161 or CHEM 1151), in combination with your upper-level chemistry courses, is sufficient for meeting most programs' chemistry requirements! Additionally, the Northeastern University PreMed and PreHealth Advising Program Letter Packet includes information about the nature of this course.
- You can include the following excerpt in your secondary application, as applicable and if space permits:
 - Most colleges at Northeastern University have implemented an integrated general chemistry course that combines learning objectives of both General Chemistry 1 and 2. Consequently, I have earned a total of five credits in general chemistry before completing subsequent coursework in X, X, and X [list upper-level chemistry courses such as Organic Chemistry 1 and 2, Biochemistry, etc., as applicable]. In total, I have completed X credit hours of chemistry coursework. If additional information about our General Chemistry course is needed to verify its fulfillment of your prerequisites, I am available to provide that upon request.
- **Please refer any inquiries from an admissions office seeking additional information to your PreHealth Advisor.**

Stay Organized!

- Create a spreadsheet to help you organize your pre-writing for secondaries.
- Where to find secondary prompts from past years?
 - Check the school's website for past essay prompts (if none are listed, become familiar with the school's mission, values, vision and other relevant information about the program).
 - [Prospectivedoctor.com](https://www.prospectivedoctor.com) (MD)
 - [Secondaryapps.com](https://www.secondaryapps.com) (MD and DO)
- Review school specific MD [Secondary Application Policies](#)



Receiving Secondaries

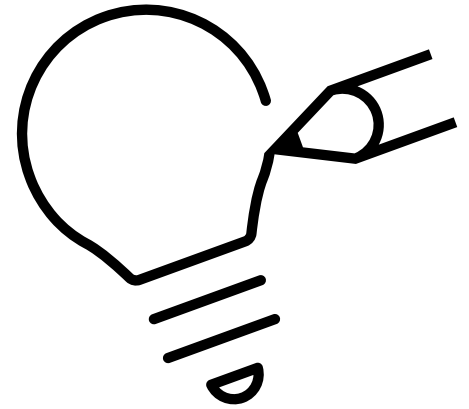
Using Secondaries to your Advantage

- Secondary Applications provide an opportunity for you to highlight school fit by integrating information about a specific school or program into your personal responses.
- In developing your responses, review the school's website to identify curricular and experiential philosophies that align with who you are as an applicant. Consider the following:
 - School mission/vision
 - Dean's letter/Overview page
 - Curriculum information
 - Special programs and elective opportunities
 - Research opportunities
 - [AAMC Competencies](#)



What to do When Secondaries Come In

- Review your pre-written responses for that school
 - Are they asking the same questions? Do you need to develop new responses? Plan your time accordingly!
- Edit your responses (EVEN PRE-WRITTEN ONES!)
 - Make sure you are answering the question being asked!
 - Proofread your responses.
 - Make sure you're using your character count wisely.
- Before you Submit your Secondary Application...
 - Do your responses connect with the school's mission/values?
 - Did you include the correct response for the correct question/school?
 - Did you answer **ALL** the required questions?
 - Ask someone to proofread your responses. Feel free to send secondary responses to your PreHealth Advisor for review.





Timeline

When do I Submit?

- **Set Deadlines**
 - Aim to have **ALL** secondaries submitted within two to four weeks of receipt, regardless of due date. Create a spreadsheet of your programs to help you keep track!
- **Prioritize**
 - Submit your secondaries based on the priority you give each of your prospective schools and/or the anticipated time it will take you to complete (e.g. if a school has few questions or a fee and no questions).
- **Maintain Quality**
 - REVIEW prior to submitting!
- **Submit Promptly**
 - Without a completed secondary, you're unlikely to get an interview invitation.
- **Payment**
 - Don't forget to pay your Secondary Fee if one is required.

What Else Happens During Secondaries?



**Situational
Judgment
Tests!**

Casper

- **What is Casper?** An online test where you are presented with a series of realistic, hypothetical scenarios and asked what you would do in each situation.
- **Why do schools use Casper?** To complement other evaluative tools for a more holistic assessment of candidates.
- **How do I study for Casper?** You DO NOT need to study for the test! Casper is not a pass/fail test, nor are there right or wrong answers to the questions. But you should familiarize yourself with what to expect!
- **What does the test assess?** Your interpersonal skills and how you would respond to an ethical dilemma.
- **How do I register to take Casper?** Visit <https://takecasper.com/> for registration, format familiarization and additional test information.
- **When should I take Casper?** Take the test early – ideally before the end of summer! You may register for Casper as soon as you know which schools you're applying to and if they require the test. Visit <https://takecasper.com/test-deadlines-ids/#americanmed> for a list of participating programs and testing deadlines. June and July are common months to take the exam!
- **I've taken Casper, now what?** Your score will automatically be sent to the schools you've selected at the time of registration.
- **What is Duet?** The same company that owns and operates Casper, Acuity Insights, offers additional modules included with the price of Casper, which may or may not be required by your programs. For example, Duet is a value-alignment assessment that compares what you value in a program with what the program has to offer and can be taken at any time after taking Casper. Applicants should thoroughly read through their program websites to understand if any additional modules are necessary to take, however there is no harm in completing them regardless.

AAMC PREview

What is the PREview exam?

The PREview exam is designed to assess examinees' understanding of effective professional behavior most relevant for entering medical students. It is a standardized exam that presents a series of hypothetical scenarios and asks examinees to evaluate the effectiveness of a series of behavioral responses to each scenario.

- Required/recommended by a small number of medical schools (MD and DO).
 - Check with the programs you are applying to!



Need More Help? Ask your PreHealth Advisor!



Emily Henderson, M.Ed.
PreHealth Advisor
e.henderson@northeastern.edu
PreMed (Last Names E-K)
PrePA (Last Names A-L)



Courtney Martinez, M.A.
PreHealth Advisor
c.martinez@northeastern.edu
PreMed (Last Names A-D)



Ciara O'Donnell, M.Ed.
Senior Associate Director
c.odonnell@northeastern.edu
PreMed (Last Names T-Z)
All PreDental
All PrePodiatry



Anna Pietrzak, MS, NCC
Assistant Director
a.pietrzak@northeastern.edu
PreMed (Last Names L-M)
All PreVeterinary
All PreOptometry



Tyler Rock, M.S.Ed.
PreHealth Advisor
t.rock@northeastern.edu
PreMed (Last Names N-S)
PrePA (Last Names M-Z)

Follow us on
Social Media!
@nuprehealth

