

Core Competencies for Entering Medical Students

The Association of American Medical Colleges (the AAMC) Group on Student Affairs, Committee on Admissions developed a set of **fifteen core competencies** that they seek in entering medical students. Premeds should reflect on what activities are helping them to develop and/or demonstrate these competencies.

Thinking & Reasoning Competencies

- **Critical Thinking**: Uses logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions, or approaches to problems
- **Quantitative Reasoning**: Applies quantitative reasoning and appropriate mathematics to describe or explain phenomena in the natural world
- **Scientific Inquiry**: Applies knowledge of the scientific process to integrate and synthesize information, solve problems and formulate research questions and hypotheses; is facile in the language of the sciences and uses it to participate in the discourse of science and explain how scientific knowledge is discovered and validated
- **Written Communication**: Effectively conveying information to others using written words and sentences

Science Competencies

- **Living Systems**: Applies knowledge and skill in the natural sciences to solve problems related to molecular and macro systems
- **Human Behavior**: Applies knowledge of the self, others, and social systems to solve problems related to the psychological, social, and biological factors that influence health and well-being

Interpersonal Competencies

- **Service Orientation**: Demonstrates a desire to help others and sensitivity to others' needs and feelings; demonstrates a desire to alleviate others' distress; recognizes and acts on his/ her responsibilities to society, locally, nationally, and globally
- **Social Skills**: Demonstrates awareness of others' needs, goals, feelings, and the ways social and behavioral cues affect peoples' interactions and behaviors; adjusts behaviors appropriately in response to these cues; and treats others with respect
- **Cultural Competence**: Demonstrates knowledge of social and cultural factors that affect interactions and behaviors; shows an appreciation and respect for multiple dimensions of diversity; recognizes and acts on the obligation to inform one's own judgment; engages diverse and competing perspectives as a resource for learning, citizenship, and work; recognizes and appropriately addresses bias in themselves and others; interacts effectively with people from diverse backgrounds
- **Teamwork**: Works collaboratively with others to achieve shared goals; shares information & knowledge with others and provides feedback; puts team goals ahead of individual goals
- **Oral Communication**: Effectively conveys information to others using spoken words and sentences; listens effectively; recognizes potential communication barriers and adjusts approach or clarifies information as needed

Intrapersonal Competencies

- **Ethical Responsibility to Self and Others**: Behaves in an honest and ethical manner; cultivates personal and academic integrity; adheres to ethical principles and follows rules and procedures; resists peer pressure to engage in unethical behavior and encourages others to behave in honest and ethical ways; and develops and demonstrates ethical and moral reasoning
- **Reliability and Dependability**: Consistently fulfills obligations in a timely and satisfactory manner; takes responsibility for personal actions and performance
- **Resilience and Adaptability**: Demonstrates tolerance of stressful or changing environments or situations and adapts effectively to them; is persistent, even under difficult situations; recovers from setbacks
- **Capacity for Improvement**: Sets goals for continuous improvement and for learning new concepts and skills; engages in reflective practice for improvement; solicits and responds appropriately to feedback