

# The UWSOM Interview

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## OBJECTIVES

### 1. The Interview Mechanics

1. Logistics
2. What is the committee looking for?
3. Format of the interview

### 2. Preparation for the interview

1. Prompts for exploration

### 3. What happens after the interview

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## The Interview



- Acknowledge the milestone!
  - >8k applications to the UWSOM
  - Only ~750 invited to interview

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## Interview Dates & Locations

Site	Interview Dates	TRUST interviews
WA & OOR- Seattle	Oct. 2017 to Early-March	-
WA – Spokane	Nov. 20-22, 2017 & Jan. 8-11, 2018	Feb 5-7, 2018 for all WA applicants
WY- Laramie	Feb. 5-8, 2018	Same week
AK – Anchorage	Jan. 29- Feb. 1, 2018	Same week
MT- Bozeman	Feb. 12-15, 2018	Same week
ID – Boise	Jan. 8-11, 2018 & Feb. 26-Mar. 1, 2018	During Jan. 8-11, 2018

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## Interview Cohorts

- Regional applicants are considered as a cohort, compared to other applicants from that particular pool.
  - WA applicants that prefer Spokane for Foundations Phase will also be considered as a cohort, compared to other Spokane interviewees, rather than entire WA pool
  - e.g., MT applicants compared to other MT applicants

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## The Goal of the Interview

1. Welcome the applicant to the School, introduce our programs
2. Enrich details of applicant highlighted in the application, not just repeat
3. Explore more about the applicant not conveyed in the application
  1. The applicant as a person
  2. How he/she thinks
  3. How she/he communicates

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## INTERVIEW COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

1: ExCom Member	2: AdCom Member	3: AdCom Member
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applicant's representative</li><li>• Advocate for applicant</li><li>• Knows entire application (MCAT scores, GPA, prior apps)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• University, WWAMI, or Community member / Medical student</li><li>• Not aware of current MCAT scores, GPA, or prior apps or prior interviews</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• University, WWAMI, or Community member / Medical student</li><li>• Not aware of current MCAT scores, GPA, or prior apps or prior interviews</li></ul>

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## WAMI INTERVIEW COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

1: ExCom Member	2: AdCom Member	3: AdCom Member
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applicant's representative</li><li>• Advocate for applicant</li><li>• Knows entire application (MCAT scores, GPA, prior apps)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State member</li><li>• Not aware of current MCAT scores, GPA, or prior apps or prior interviews</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Member from different state</li><li>• Not aware of current MCAT scores, GPA, or prior apps or prior interviews</li></ul>

\*Makeup may vary depending on availability of interviewers and reapplications:  
- Re-applicants are screened / interviewed by members who have NOT seen earlier applications

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## INTERVIEW PREMISES: INTERVIEWERS...

### are Not:

- “out to get you”
- Trying to trick/trip up the applicant
- trying to weed out the pool
- looking for right / wrong answers

### are:

- Sensitive to interview may be anxiety-provoking
- Maybe recent interviewees!
- Looking for sincere answers
- interested in learning about applicants

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## OTHER EXPECTATIONS <sup>OJJ1</sup>

- Committee is not trying to ‘stress out’ the applicant
- -If a questions is too jolting because of recent development, can go to another question
- There are no right / wrong answers, just sincere responses
- Applicant may be ‘cut-off’ during response because of time constraints, not because we liked/ disliked the answer
- Applicants can expect a few minutes at the end to share something not explored during the interview

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**Slide 10**

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**OJJ1** what else goes on that waiting room sheet?  
Orozco, Johnnie J, 7/26/2017

## ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE IS LOOKING FOR...

**Motivation to pursue medicine?**

**Communication skills?**  
Transmitting info to others, across differences?

**Awareness of practice of medicine?**  
Health care delivery issues, eg social determinants of health?

**Ability to empathize?**

**Real time analytical skills?**  
Ability to present alternatives solutions?

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## The Structure of the Interview

- ALL follow relatively similar format
  - NOT RIGID! Not formulated except for role play scenario question
  - Based on specifics from application
- Each interview lasts 30min
- Applicant meets with 3 interviewers simultaneously
- Question about experience with difficult conversations (respectful discourse)
- Role Play Scenario question

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## The Role Play Questions

- Role Play: Opportunity to demonstrate communication skills and think on your feet
  - Interviewers pretend to be patients / colleagues / physicians in a scenario
  - Opportunity to listen and incorporate information to come to an agreement / solution / plan
- Not assessing medical fund of knowledge
- No right / wrong answers

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## Preparing for the Interview

- UWSOM Admission website
- HIGHLY recommend applicants familiarize themselves with content, advice, videos!
- Topics:
  - Motivation
  - Communication skills
  - Empathy
  - Knowledge of the Field of Medicine
  - Analytical thinking

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## Motivation prompts

- What excites you about a career in medicine?
- What concerns you about a career in medicine and how do you get past your concerns?
- How did you decide that being a doctor was the right career for you?
- How have your experiences prepared you for a career in medicine?
- What personality characteristics do you have that will make you a good doctor?

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### Communication Skills prompts

- Can you express an idea or thought concisely? (in less than 1-2 minutes)
- Do you rephrase what someone has just told you to make sure you understood it correctly?
- Do you look for body language signifying emotional reaction such as agreement, disagreement, annoyance, happiness, fear, anger, excitement, disappointment, or despondency?
- Do you interrupt someone when they are speaking to you?
- How do you communicate across differences?

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### Empathy prompts

- Can you imagine yourself in someone else's position?
- Do you consider how someone else might feel about a situation given their experience, culture, and/or social context?
- Can you replace your hopes and plans for someone with their own hopes and plans?
- Can you understand, accept, and value someone else's opinion when it is different from yours?

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### Knowledge of the Field of Medicine prompts

- What personal attributes do you consider most important for success in research?
- What do you consider markers of success for a physician?
- What personal attributes do you consider most important for success as a physician?
- What attributes do you feel are necessary to elicit hope and trust in patients?
- What medical error(s) have you seen and what did you learn?

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### Knowledge of the Field of Medicine prompts

- Why do you think community service is a category on the AMCAS application?
- If you were putting together a health care team, who would be on it?
- How is the role of the physician changing?
- What does it mean to be a professional?
- Choose one of the issues facing health care today and describe how you might go about addressing it.
- What do you think people in the US are most concerned about? How might this affect their health (or not)?

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## Problem Solving prompts

- The committee will want to know how you “think on your feet”, we are as interested in your process as in your answer
- If you have been asked a question or given a scenario, rephrase the question or situation to make sure you understood it correctly. If not, ask for clarification
- What do you know about the problem? (describe it!)
- What do you need to know about the problem before you can provide a reasonable answer? What information is missing? (tell the interviewers)

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## Problem Solving prompts

- Gather the information you are missing, as much as is possible during a relatively brief interview
- If the problem is within a doctor-patient role play, you can gather information from all participants in the role play (patient, family, friends, etc)
- Provide your answer or alternative solutions based on your understanding of the problem, and the information gathered, and show how these have influenced your decisions

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### Practice Problem Solving questions

- If you had all the money in the world and could snap your fingers, what problem would you solve? How?
- You are on a committee to solve a particular issue. You disagree with the direction being set by the chair of that committee, and strongly feel that it is incorrect. What would you do?
- How do you resolve conflict at work, home, in the classroom?
- A patient brings you a very expensive gift. What would you do?
- A patient writes you a love letter. How do you handle this situation?

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### Practice Problem Solving questions

- You are called to the ER to see a patient that has a problem supposedly in your area of expertise. When you arrive it becomes obvious that this patient has a completely different type of problem. What do you do?
- You catch a fellow student cheating on an exam. What do you do?
- Describe a moral or ethical dilemma that arose out of an interpersonal relationship. How did you handle it?
- There is a new drug to cure a certain type of cancer, but it is extremely expensive. How do you decide who should get the drug?

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## Immediately after the interview

- Each interviewer assesses the applicant *independently*, summarizing key points, and then submits his/her evaluation
- Interviewers discuss their impressions, scores, & observations
- Additional EXCOM overall evaluation is submitted, encompassing all views
  - If there are significantly different impressions among the interviewers, then applicant may be invited to re-interview
- Summaries available to all EXCOM members when making admissions decisions

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## Day of the interview

### **Attend a Class**

Applicant may be able to attend a class. On some days classes may not be available because students are taking a test, practicing in the anatomy lab, or are learning at the bedside. Applicants will be informed on interview day whether they will be able to attend.

### **Meet Students**

Current students will meet applicants for lunch and will be happy to answer any questions. Applicants will also receive contact information for current students. If applicants are traveling to Seattle and are interested in staying with a student host, [see student host program](#).

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## After the interview

- Applicants may send inquiries to Office of Admissions
  - Applicants are asked not to contact interviewers directly
- At subsequent EXCOM meeting, applicants will hear status as either
  - Accepted
  - Rejected
  - Still under consideration

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## Useful Resources / Websites

- UWSOM Admission
  - <http://www.uwmedicine.org/education/md-program/admissions>
  - Section specific: Applicants, Advisors, UWSOM Stats, Diversity, Financial Aid
  
- National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions, Inc.
  - <http://www.naahp.org>

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## Questions?

**THANK YOU!**

[askuwsom@uw.edu](mailto:askuwsom@uw.edu)

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