

**Guidelines For Writing Your Autobiographical Sketch**  
**Health Professions School Applicants**

Your autobiography has two important uses:

1. It helps the members of the Health Professions Advisory Committee get to know you better in preparation for your campus interview and writing the committee letter. It is particularly important to include information that is not revealed by your academic records and test scores, but which medical, dental, veterinary or other health professions schools would like to know about you.
2. It helps you get in touch with your own feelings about medicine/health care, clarify your thinking about medicine/health care, and give you ideas for the various essays/personal statements you'll have to write during the application process.

Your autobiography should be detailed, which means that it may be quite long!

**General directions:**

When you write your autobiography, BE YOURSELF. Don't worry excessively about grammar or spelling. Don't worry about being concise. DO be conversational. Think of what you're writing as a story or letter or journal entry (rather than as a formal part of your application). Include as much detail as you wish and please remember that what you write will not be read by anyone outside of the Health Professions Advisory Committee. If you "let yourself go" while writing the autobiography, then the process will likely lead to several good ideas for your personal statement.

**Specific directions:**

- Please **type** your narrative and have your **name** in the header or footer of every page!
- **Use the headings** in bold given below to organize your narrative.
- Please attach the completed information sheet
- Please write in **chronological order**
- Be as **specific** as possible – include dates, hours, responsibilities, etc. for jobs and activities

**Please include the following in your autobiography:**

- **MOTIVATION**  
Why do you want to be a physician, physician's assistant, dentist, veterinarian or other health care practitioner?  
When did you realize that you wanted to be a physician, physician's assistant, dentist, veterinarian or other health care practitioner?
- **YOUR ACADEMIC HISTORY**  
Your choice of major and why  
Honors received, if any  
Any graduate or professional education and why you pursued it  
Any research experience  
Your feelings about your academic experience  
Explain any "withdraw," "audit," or "pass/fail" work on your transcript(s)

- **WORK HISTORY**

What type of work, when did you do it, why did you do it, and what did you gain from it?

Campus jobs

Summer jobs

Full-time jobs, if applicable

- **MEDICALLY RELATED EXPERIENCE (DIRECT PATIENT CARE)**

Discuss each experience, what you did, how many hours per week you spent on the activity, and how long you were involved (a month? a year?)

What do you now know about the fields of medicine/health care relevant to your application?

- **OTHER VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

What, why, and when?

The extent of your involvement?

- **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES/CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES/ TALENTS**

During college

Special programs (e.g. study abroad)

Hobbies, talents, travel

- **YOUR BACKGROUND, FAMILY HISTORY, AND IMPORTANT INFLUENCES**

Discuss anything about your family and background that you think is relevant.

Have you carried any unusual burdens along with your normal course of study in college, which should be considered when examining your academic record? (e.g. part-time jobs, caring for a sick family member, etc.)

Please include each parent's occupation and highest education level

- **YOU!**

Given all that you've written and thought about yourself, what do you think distinguishes you as a candidate for medical school?

What makes you unique? What makes you different from all of the other fully qualified candidates?

- **OTHER COMMENTS**

Please specify how you are planning for the MCAT/DAT/GRE/PCAT, etc. and how you feel about your preparation. If you have taken one of these standardized tests before, please elaborate.

What plans do you have if you are not admitted to medical school (or other health professions school/program) on the first try?

If you are a Senior, please discuss what you plan to do during your application year (i.e. the time between when you graduate and when you begin medical/health professions school the following fall).

If you are an alumnus/alumna, please discuss what you have done since graduating from Stevenson University.

Please feel free to include any other information that you think would be useful for the Health Professions Advisory Committee to know.