The purpose of the Tarleton HPAC “mock” interview/evaluation process is twofold:

1. For any health pre-professional student, this process provides an opportunity for you to collect and prepare most, if not all, of the material you will need to complete your real application for professional school, and to gain some experience in an interview setting.

2. For medical and dental applicants only, the HPAC process provides the method to generate a HPAC letter of evaluation to accompany your application to medical or dental school. As a medical or dental school applicant you are given the choice of submitting letters of evaluation from 2 Science faculty and one extra letter OR one HPAC letter and one extra letter. The medical and dental schools have repeatedly expressed their preference in receiving an HPAC evaluation. Although you have the option of which evaluation route you choose, it is strongly recommended that you, as a medical or dental school applicant, participate in the Tarleton HPAC process. Most Science faculty who are participating on the Tarleton HPAC will no longer provide individual letters of evaluation for medical dental students.

This HPAC Application Guide is intended to provide you with the necessary information to complete the HPAC “mock” Interview/Evaluation process. As with your real application to professional school, it is critical that you know what is expected, accurately follow directions, and meet all deadlines. Failure to submit information requested by the HPAC in a timely manner, one meets all deadlines, may result in an incomplete HPAC application and can delay your evaluation for a full year.

The Tarleton HPAC “mock” Interview/Evaluation Process is, for the student, a 3 step process:

1. Step 1: Submit a notification of your intent to enter into the “mock” interview/evaluation process.

2. Step 2: Submit all components of your HPAC Application along with your request to schedule interviews.

3. Step 3: Schedule and participate in your interviews.

Key completion dates (deadlines):

- Friday, March 13, 2015: Last day to complete Step 1.
- Friday, April 3, 2015: Last day to complete Step 2.
- Friday, May 1, 2015: Last day to complete Step 3.
- Friday, May 1, 2015: Last day to receive HPAC letters of evaluation from evaluators. (Only applies to premedical and predental applicants)
Following the completion of interviews, the HPAC will meet in May to discuss the evaluation material submitted to us by the medical and dental school applicants, and begin the process of constructing the HPAC letter of evaluation. The one component of your HPAC Application that might be missing (because you have not yet taken the exam or are awaiting receipt of scores) is your MCAT or DAT scores. Although the HPAC will discuss your application package and begin the work of writing your letter, we will not submit your letter until you have submitted your scores to us. Please update the HPAC with your MCAT or DAT scores as soon as they become available to you.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

- Links to all forms required by the HPAC can be found as downloadable, form fill documents under the “HPAC EVALUATION” heading at [www.tarleton.edu/prehealth](http://www.tarleton.edu/prehealth).
- All forms must be returned to the Tarleton Health Pre-professional Advisory Committee office (i.e. Dr. Sanderford’s office, room 314). Some documents will be returned in person and some via e-mail.
- Your committee letter of evaluation (medical or dental only) will not be uploaded/mailed to a medical and/or dental school application service until your HPAC file is complete (see below for more information) and you have completed your mock interviews. It is your responsibility to insure that both are completed in a timely fashion.
- By design, the “mock” interview application is very similar to an application to professional school and our intent is to provide an incentive for you to complete your “real” application early.
- Do not wait for admissions test scores to complete your HPAC Application/“mock” interview process; scores can be forwarded to the HPAC after your “mock” interviews are completed.
- It is very important that you keep us informed of any developments concerning your application. Summer school grades, test scores (e.g. MCAT), observations or summer jobs, etc., should be reported to the Pre-Health Professions Office for inclusion in your application file.
- October 1 is the deadline for submitting your application to TMDSAS and AMCAS and many professional schools (some are quite a bit later though). Be aware that students are often interviewed and admitted on a rolling basis (i.e. as their applications are received). For schools with an October 1 deadline, you will be at a disadvantage if by mid-July you have not submitted your REAL, complete application to professional school (including secondary applications).
- Please contact Dr. Sanderford should you have questions about any aspect of this process.
THE 3-STEP PROCESS

Step 1: Submit notification of your intention to Participate in the “mock” interview/evaluation process.

Step 1 is simply a way for you to communicate to the HPAC your plan to apply to professional school in the upcoming months and your desire to participate in the HPAC “mock” Interview/Evaluation process prior to submitting your real application. You may submit an “Intent to Participate” as early as the beginning of the Spring semester, but be aware of the final day you may submit this form (see Key Completion Dates above). In addition to the “Intent to Participate” form, you will also be required to sign and submit several waivers: a photo release waiver and an information waiver to access academic records.

Step 1 forms to be submitted by due date:
1. Intent to Participate form
2. Photo/Video Release form
3. Information Waiver form

Forms should be downloaded, signed and returned in person to Dr. Sanderford in room 314 of the Science Building.

Letters of Recommendation/Evaluation (ONLY FOR PREMED AND PREDENT APPLICANTS)

After submitting your intent to participate and waiver forms, you should begin the process of soliciting letters of recommendation/evaluation. Premedical and Predental students are required to solicit 3 to 5 letters of recommendation/evaluation to accompany the HPAC application. Two of these letters must be from Tarleton faculty. It is NOT required that these faculty members belong to the College of Science and Technology. Note: these letters will not be mailed to the medical or dental school, but will be used to evaluate you for your HPAC letter. If you plan to use one of these evaluators for your second letter to accompany your real application, be sure to make it clear to that evaluator that they will also be receiving a request for a letter from a medical or dental school application service in future.

You must provide each of your evaluators with a completed and signed "Letter Request" form (link to this form can be found at www.tarleton.edu/prehealth). The evaluator will return the form along with his or her letter directly to the HPAC. Directions to evaluator for returning the form and the letter are provided on the form. To be courteous, you should solicit a letter from an evaluator NO LESS than one month before the letter is due to be received by the HPAC. It is also a common courtesy to mail a handwritten thank you note to your evaluator. Hint: If you place a thank you note in the mail to your evaluator about 2 weeks before the due date, it can serve as a gentle reminder to write and send the letter if he or she has not yet done so.

You will need to complete, print and sign as many Letter Request forms as necessary and deliver to your evaluators. ***As you complete the form, be sure you have entered the correct date (see page 1) for when letters are due back to the HPAC.***
Step 2: Submit all components of your HPAC Application along with your request to schedule interviews.

Step 2 consists of the bulk of the HPAC Evaluation package. The items below should be included as multiple attachments in a single e-mail (use the subject heading, HPAC Application Package) sent to Dr. Sanderford at sanderford@tarleton.edu no later than the date indicated on page 1.

ALL documents must be submitted in pdf document file format except your photograph, which must be in JPG format. Name your documents consistently by including your last name in the file name. For example: "lastname_photo", "lastname_biography", "lastname_essay", etc.

HPAC Application Items

With only 2 exceptions, the following items must be submitted by the completion date for your application package to be considered complete. Exceptions: First, if you have not yet taken an admissions exam or have not yet received your scores, you may still continue with the process. Please submit your scores as soon as they become available to you. For medical and dental school applicants, your HPAC letter of evaluation will not be updated and forwarded until the scores are received by the HPAC. Second, detailed directions to the HPAC for sending letters of evaluation to an out of state professional school. If you are not applying to an out of state professional school, this is not applicable.

1. HPAC Application Checklist

The checklist is to aid you in making sure that you have collected all of the required information you need to include in your HPAC Application e-mail. The HPAC Application Checklist can be found by following links at www.tarleton.edu/prehealth.

2. Photograph

Your photograph should be an upper body or head shot that captures a sense of professionalism. Do not include other people or animals in the picture. It should be in JPG format, oriented as a portrait, and not larger than 3 MB in file size. It should be suitable to framing and potential display in the Science Building.

3. Biography

The Biography form can be found by following links at www.tarleton.edu/prehealth. This form mimics most applications to professional school and provides the HPAC with important information about your plans, honors, awards, and experience in a variety of settings.

4. Transcripts from all schools attended
Unofficial transcripts from all colleges and universities you have attended (including Tarleton) are fine. Make sure these are formatted in transcript form (semester-by-semester), not degree audit format. For students who are currently in classes, you must forward an updated transcript to the HPAC as soon as your semester grades become available to view.

5. Professional School Admission Scores

Your Admissions Test Scores (MCAT, DAT, PCAT etc.) should be saved or scanned as a pdf file prior to sending. If you have not taken your admissions exam or not yet received your scores, please e-mail them as soon as they become available. For medical and dental school applicants, your HPAC letter will not be sent until these scores are received and your letter of evaluation is updated to reflect the scores.

6. Personal Statement Essay

Your personal statement should answer the question, "What is your motivation for seeking a career in (field/discipline)?". Your essay cannot exceed 5000 characters and should be typed in 12 pt font. At this stage your essay may not be in its final form, but it should be polished.

7. Out of State Application Directions

If you are applying to an out of state professional school, please create a document that identifies the school or schools to which you are applying and provide detailed directions to the HPAC regarding submission of an HPAC letter. Even if you are not premed or predent, but plan to apply out of the state, you should go ahead and provide this information. At some point you will be required to provide this information to the evaluator who will be supporting your real application to professional school.

8. Request to Schedule Interviews

The Request to Schedule Interviews form can be found by following links at www.tarleton.edu/prehealth. This form, submitted as part of the HPAC Application, initiates the interview process. See the "mock" Interview Policy under STEP 3 below for more information and advice about scheduling and conducting the interview. The key information in this form is that it allows you to identify faculty that you already know well. To best "mock" your professional school interview, you should be matched with faculty that you do not know.

Step 3: Schedule and Complete Your Interviews

Interviews benefit both the Tarleton HPAC as well as the applicants. They benefit the applicants because it allows the applicant a “practice” set of interviews. They benefit HPAC by allowing us to write a more informative letter of evaluation for premedical and predental applicants. These interviews are required of premedical and predental students if these students are seeking a HPAC letter of evaluation to accompany their real application to professional school.
The process is initiated by submitting a “Request to Schedule Interviews” form as part of your HPAC Application Package in Step 2. Within one week of submitting your Request to Schedule Interview form along with your HPAC Application Package, you will be assigned two HPAC members with whom you will schedule interviews. In addition, Dr. Sanderford or Dr. Bell will interview all applicants. This third interview with Dr. Sanderford or Dr. Bell must be scheduled last. If you know a professor well, please inform us on the Request to Schedule an Interview form. With the exception of Dr. Sanderford or Dr. Bell, you will not be assigned to professors you know well. Note: It is not uncommon for a professor to request that an interviewee be reassigned because she/he knows them too well to conduct an unbiased interview.

Once your interviewers have been assigned, it is your responsibility to contact the first two professors and arrange your interviews with them. Do not procrastinate! You should contact your interviewers two to three weeks in advance of possible interview dates. Contact them via email and give them a wide range of specific times and days you can meet. Do not ask them to give you days and times. **You should arrange for your interviews to be concluded by the deadline listed in the HPAC Guide.** Bear in mind that you are “mocking” at HPAC’s convenience. Please treat them with the utmost respect and be at their disposal. This is not a part of their job description, and they are doing this on a volunteer basis. Do not expect that they will be available in the evenings or on weekends. After scheduling your first two interviews, immediately contact your assigned final interviewer (either Dr. Sanderford or Dr. Bell) to schedule your last interview. Do not wait until you have completed your first two “mock” interviews before scheduling this final interview. In the event an HPAC member fails to respond to your email within **two working days**, you should send a follow-up email.

Completing the interview process does not obligate you to apply to a health professions school. Therefore, students whose application status is uncertain are urged to complete the interview process. On the other hand, do not waste the committee’s time by interviewing a year before you intend to apply. These interviews are not obligate; however, they are strongly encouraged because this is the way we get to know you and better assess your interest in health care.

The interviews will typically last for 20-40 minutes with a degree of formality approximating a medical school interview, followed by 20-30 minutes of feedback if your interviewer chooses to provide such information. **Applicants are expected to prepare, dress and act as if this were an actual medical or dental school interview.** Give thought to the sort of questions that might be asked in a medical school interview and have responses ready. You should be prepared to honestly and thoughtfully discuss why you want to pursue a career in medicine/dentistry/PA/etc, why you want a specific school, and what it might be like to be a doctor/dentist/PA/etc. These interviews serve two purposes: 1.) we are evaluating your motivation for professional school, and 2.) you are gaining valuable interviewing experience and building readiness for the all-important interviews we hope you will have.
Application and Interviewing Resources

**TMDSAS required applicant information**
Veterinary Applicant – [http://www.utsystem.edu/tmdsas/veterinary/section_Overview.html](http://www.utsystem.edu/tmdsas/veterinary/section_Overview.html)

**NAAHP** - The National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions publishes a brochure called “Interviewing for Health Professions Schools” (order at [http://www.naahp.org/Publications/InterviewBrochure.aspx](http://www.naahp.org/Publications/InterviewBrochure.aspx)). It is inexpensive and includes sample questions and a wide variety of quotes from admissions deans across the country.

**AAMC** - The American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC) has compiled some great information related to interviewing on their website:

- Aspiring Docs “Ask The Experts”:
  [https://www.aamc.org/students/aspiring/basics/280914/interview.html](https://www.aamc.org/students/aspiring/basics/280914/interview.html)

- “Thirty-Five Questions I Wish I Had Asked” at
  [www.aamc.org/students/applying/310556/selectingamedicalschooolthirtyfivequestionsiwishihadasked](http://www.aamc.org/students/applying/310556/selectingamedicalschooolthirtyfivequestionsiwishihadasked).

AAMC’s Medical School Admission Requirements: Getting Started guidebook (MSAR) is another great resource. Here are some excerpts:

**Know What Type of Interview to Expect**
It will also be helpful to be ready for any number of different interview formats. At some schools, interviews are held with individual admission committee members; at others, group interviews are the norm. In addition, while most interviews are typically held on the medical school campus, some schools have designated interviewers in different geographic regions to minimize time and expense for applicants. (Information about a school’s interview policies and procedures is usually provided to applicants in the initial stages of the selection process.)

**Be Comfortable with Different Interviewing Styles**
You’ve probably had some experience interviewing for summer and part-time jobs (and possibly for your undergraduate school), so it won’t surprise you that interviewers have their own styles and follow different formats. Some follow a structured design, asking questions from a predetermined list and assigning numeric scores to each answer. Others prefer a more free-flowing arrangement and provide the applicant with a greater degree of open input. Still others fall somewhat in the middle. Again, be ready for any approach.

**Do Your Research**
Investigate the school thoroughly by reviewing its profile on the MSAR Online, its web site, the information packet sent to you, and any articles you can get your hands on. Try to talk with current students to get an accurate sense of what the school is like from a student perspective. You’ll want to impress your interviewer with not only your potential for success but also your
interest in his or her specific institution. You can demonstrate these qualities through the answers to the interviewer’s questions as well as by the questions you ask.

**Practice**
Since most admission committee members are experienced interviewers who want to learn about the “real” person, you should be forthright and open in your meeting and not try to “game” the interviewer. If you’re apprehensive about the process, find a trusted advisor or friend with whom you can conduct “mock” interviews to help build your confidence.

Remember, the interview provides applicants with opportunities to discuss their personal histories and motivation for a medical career and to draw attention to any aspects of their application that merit emphasis or explanation. Make certain you present yourself in the best possible light by preparing thoroughly for your meeting. Think about how you conduct yourself among current students and staff during informal meetings, too. These interactions still create an impression of who you are and how you present yourself may come up during a post-interview discussion.

**Know Your Interview Rights and Responsibilities**
Although interviewers are instructed by admissions officers and guided by federal statutes on what are unfair or discriminatory pre-admission inquiries, there may be an occasion when an interviewer asks an inappropriate question. (See examples below.)

You have the right not to answer what you sense is an inappropriate question. If such a question is asked, try to relax and provide a thoughtful and articulate response (two essential characteristics of a good physician). You may also respectfully decline to answer the question and explain that you were advised not to answer questions that you sensed were inappropriate.

You have the responsibility to report being asked an inappropriate question to help prevent further occurrences. Medical schools have the responsibility to establish procedures that enable applicants to report such incidents in a confidential manner. Medical schools should inform applicants of these procedures prior to interviews and assure them that reporting an incident will not bias the applicant’s evaluation.

If a medical school did not inform you of its procedure and an incident occurs, use these guidelines. If possible, report in confidence the interviewer’s name and the interview question(s) that was asked to an admissions officer during the interview day. Otherwise, e-mail this information to an admissions officer within 24 hours of the interview noting the date and time of the incident. Furthermore, you have the right to ask if another interview is deemed necessary to ensure an unbiased evaluation of your application to that medical school.

Some interviewers use the interview to assess how well you function under stress and may purposely ask challenging questions to observe how you respond under pressure. How you communicate will be a critical part of the encounter; however, this does not give an interviewer the right to ask you inappropriate questions in their attempt to challenge you during the interview.

**Examples of inappropriate questions:**
• What is your race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, political affiliation, marital status, opinion on abortion and/or euthanasia, income, value of your home, credit score, etc.?
• Are you planning on having children during medical school?
• Do you have any disabilities?
• Will you require special accommodations?
• Have you ever been arrested?
• Have you ever done drugs?
• How old are you?

**Sample response to inappropriate questions:**
Q. What are your plans for expanding your family during medical school?
A. Can you please clarify your question? I want to make sure that I’m providing information that is most relevant to my candidacy.
Q. Have you ever done drugs?
A. I am uncomfortable discussing my medical history and possible use of prescription medications during this interview.