Instructions for Completing the Personal Information Form (PIF) and Securing Letters of Recommendation

The composite letter of recommendation written by the pre-health professions advisory committee is an extremely important part of your medical school application process. In order for the committee to write the best possible letter for you, several documents need to be completed and submitted to me prior to your committee interview and the subsequent writing of this letter. Some guidelines for the proper completion of these items are described below. Please read this material carefully and complete these documents in a thorough and timely manner. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me by phone (X3936) or email.

< The completed PIF is due by February 15th. A hard copy of the entire packet should be given to Martha Smith (Kline 128, Box 3030), and an electronic version of the essay Why I Want To Go To Medical School should be sent to Martha at msmith@messiah.edu. An unofficial copy of your transcript from all post-secondary schools attended should be stapled to the packet. Messiah College transcripts can be obtained from the Registrar or your advisor.

< Completed references are due by April 15th. Two reference letters are mandatory, but four are strongly suggested so that the best possible composite letter can be written. Of these references, at least two should be from faculty members (at least one of these from a science faculty member), and the other two from co-curricular educators who have known you well in the recent past. Two versions of the reference letters have been requested: an original hard copy that is signed and on letterhead stationary and an electronic version (if possible) sent to msmith@messiah.edu.

< Contact Martha Smith to register for an interview with a Pre-Health Professions Advising Committee member after the aforementioned materials have been completed and turned into the Pre-Health Professions Advising Office.

< I will present the names of students applying to medical school to the Pre-Health Professions Advisory Committee and committee members will decide who they will interview.

< I will contact you and let you know who to contact to arrange a committee interview.

< After I hear from you, I will compile a packet and give it to your committee interviewer at least one week prior to the interview. This packet will contain the completed PIF
including your unofficial transcript(s), MCAT scores (if available), and reference letters received to date. This packet will be sent at student request, so please be sure to let me know when and with whom your committee interview will be as soon as you can.

< You are strongly encouraged to schedule at least one mock interview in the career center during the Spring, ideally before the committee interview. Packets will be made available to your mock interviewer at your request.

< Your committee interviewer will interview you and begin to draft your composite letter of recommendation during the Spring.

< Additionally, MCAT scores should be sent to the Pre-Health Professions Advising Office as early as possible so that this information can be made available to the appropriate committee member for use in letter writing.

< You need to submit complete addresses of medical schools to which you will apply to Martha Smith prior to leaving campus for the Summer.

< Please notify Martha Smith of your formal intention to apply to medical school by July 1st to give faculty enough time to prepare the best possible letter of recommendation.

< Contact Martha Smith when you receive notice that a letter of recommendation has been requested.

< I will, in turn, contact your committee interviewer and he/she will finalize your letter of recommendation, and then it will be sent to the appropriate medical school.

Link for Physician Assistant (CASPA) applicants needing letters of recommendation:

https://secure.caspaonline.org/CASPAreference.pdf