

How to Choose Your Medical Schools: A Practical Guide



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A Panel of Fabulous WU Students Who Applied Successfully



Summary of Dr. Ross' System

- **Research**—physician/scientists
- **Hybrids**—strong research and embedded in the community; family medicine and other primary care initiatives
- **Community-based/Community benefit**—most interested in training clinicians, not aimed at research but have some capacity

20 schools should be your MAX list!

- Honest self-assessment—It starts with the quantitative numbers and credentials, but doesn't end there.
- Must have self-understanding and demonstrate in your application portfolio the core set of entry-level competencies. REMEMBER YOUR PIR!?!?!?!?

School Criteria From The Student Panel:

- Location/Lifestyle (Yes! It is ok to put this into your decision!)
- Curriculum: Pass/fail vs. graded; How long to pre-clinical experiences?
- Research Opportunities
- Finances and debt-load
- Specialties you explored here, i.e. MPH, etc.
- International opportunities
- Student culture: Where will I feel most comfortable, fit in, competitive, etc?.
- Mentorship
- Commitment to underserved communities
- Certain about specialty for match?
- Primary care vs specialist training

Guiding Questions for Reflection:

- What makes me happy most here at WU?
- Where do I spend most of my time and why?
- What do I value and how is that illustrated in where I spend my time and attention?
- How have I demonstrated leadership, service, compassion for others?

Final Thoughts and Helpful Tips From Our Student Panel..

- Talk to people you know at the med schools; join the group.
- Career Center interview practice
- Look at the secondary questions from last 3 years of cycles. Available online. Pre-write secondaries! See this website: <http://www.prospectivedoctor.com/medical-school-secondary-essay-prompts-database/>
- Check out the online versions of the med schools' newspaper.
- Go beyond the med school mission statements because they all sound the same, but do read them! Do a deep dive, student interest group pages, etc.
- Talk with students and others at the schools you want to attend. Don't be shy!

More Helpful Tips From The Student Panel!

- Schools with residency preferences—Believe them and take them off your list no matter how tempting!
- Tuition is really cost of attendance. Public schools can be cost effective—you can become a resident of that state after a year.

Research the Schools! Talk with People!

- Do this NOW until the end of June.
- Look at secondary questions NOW and get started. This will signal what the schools care about.
- Apply to less schools and spend more time doing the 12-20 with excellence and in-depth. Secondaries need to be completed by August!
- Be honest with yourself. Ask: “If I only got in here, would I go?”
- You have more choice and agency than you think. Ask about fit and culture at interviews.