

**Holy Cross Health Professions Advising Committee**  
**materials required for review**  
(revised September 2018)

Please read and follow these instructions carefully. We have revised file requirements for Health Professions Advising Committee review this year (2018-19). **In order to submit your materials for this cycle, you must have requested an advisor by October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018 via the HEALTH PROFESSIONS ADVISOR REQUEST FORM, even if you have requested an advisor in the past. The request form is found here: (Log in to your Holy Cross GMail account) <https://www.holycross.edu/academics/programs/health-professions-advising/important-documents>**

**Medical, dental and veterinary school materials**

**Materials you prepare and submit**

The Health Professions Advising Committee seeks to provide applicants with the best possible feedback on their readiness to apply to graduate programs as well as writing meaningful letters of recommendation. As a result, we require you to submit the following items in the formats described below:

1. A cover sheet with your name, contact information, target type of health professional school (MD/DO, DMD, or DVM) and recent picture (head shot) of yourself. Make sure the picture is professional-looking. You do not have to hire a professional photographer but please don't send in a group party picture with other people cropped out, for example.
2. A list of all the courses you have taken at Holy Cross and elsewhere with the teacher names and grades in these courses, organized by semester. Indicate which professors you asked for recommendation letters. Also on this sheet report all standardized test and entrance exam scores you have taken, e.g. SAT, ACT, MCAT, DAT etc. (but not AP, SATII, IB, etc.). We will use this for advising purposes only, and not to evaluate you.
3. An optional academic notation sheet on which you discuss any grades which you feel need to be explained. Use this to tell us about extraordinary circumstances, e.g. illness, family tragedy, etc. that impacted your ability to perform well in classes. Consult your advisor to make sure it will be helpful.
4. A separate sheet listing your extracurricular activities in college, post-college and high school. Please organize them by labeled categories: clinical experience, research experience, volunteer work, other activities, and other professional (work) experience. Indicate the date ranges for all activities, as well as the time (e.g. number of hours per week) that you have devoted to the activity and if appropriate the name of your supervisor. Provide a brief (one sentence) description of your involvement and indicate if you solicited a reference letter. For up to four of the experiences that are most meaningful to you, you may provide a short paragraph explaining why it was an important experience.
5. A personal statement of approximately 7 (double-spaced) pages in length in which you introduce yourself to the committee and explain why you are interested in a career in the health professions. Use this to reflect on the important experiences of your life so we understand why you are considering a career in a health profession at this point. You do not have to tell your whole life story. Attend the personal statement workshops if at all possible. Make sure you have worked on the statement with your advisor, well in advance of the deadline.
6. Official copies of transcripts for courses taken away from Holy Cross that do not appear on your Holy Cross transcript. If you still have courses in progress you can send an unofficial transcript now and an official transcript once all grades are in.
7. A copy of your most recent unofficial Holy Cross transcript (an e-mail PDF is fine).

Email a .pdf copy of materials 1-5 in that order to Ms. Kirkorian ([healthprofessions@holycross.edu](mailto:healthprofessions@holycross.edu)) in a single .pdf file. **The deadline to submit these items to guarantee a review by the committee is February 15th.**

If needed, also supply a sheet that explains how you took a medical school requirement in a non-standard way, for example, meeting the English requirement in a non-English Department course, or biochemistry by working in a lab. Use the form available on the "Key Documents" section of the web page.

## **Recommendation letters**

For a committee review you must have letters from the following individuals completed in your file:

1. A professor from your major department with whom who *completed* at least one class
2. A professor from a laboratory science course outside of your major with whom you *completed* at least one class
3. A professor, coach, advisor, mentor or supervisor who can review your academic, volunteer or professional activities. They should be able to comment critically on your personality, character, academics and/or motivation.

While we require a minimum of three letters to review a file, *more letters are helpful* for a review, and *we need additional letters* to write a strong composite/committee letter to your health professional school. We encourage you to solicit *at least five* letters from various people who have seen you in different environments before the winter holidays. Letters from your humanities classes are extremely helpful. ***Ask for at least three of the letters that meet the guidelines above to be submitted by February 15<sup>th</sup>.*** However, we will accept additional letters after that date. You may also solicit letters anytime in the spring or early summer to comment on courses or activities during that time. While these letters may not be used in your review, they will be useful in your committee letter. The office will provide you with a shared Google spreadsheet that will allow you to track when letters come in. Please use this sheet rather than calling the office. For procedures on how to see what letters are in your file, please review this page on our website:

<https://www.holycross.edu/academics/programs/health-professions-advising/health-professions-advisory-committee/committee>

**All letters of recommendation on and off-campus should be submitted on letterhead, signed, and emailed to the office at [hpletters@holycross.edu](mailto:hpletters@holycross.edu) in .pdf form.** If this is not possible, contact Prof. Cahill.

## **For those seeking a second, third or subsequent review**

**You must request an advisor by the October 5 deadline even if you were assigned an advisor in a previous cycle.** However, if you have been previously reviewed by the committee and want to be reviewed again, do not submit your original packet; only send in updated information. We have the information you submitted in the past. Please provide the following updates to the items 1-7 listed on the previous page:

1. Provide updated cover sheet; see item 1 above. Mark “addendum” and provide the date.
2. A list of all the courses you have taken since your last review, plus the teachers and grades in these courses, organized by semester. Indicate which professors you asked for recommendation letters and the institutions where you took the courses. Also on this sheet report all entrance exam scores you have taken as in item 2 above.
3. Optional short academic notation sheet as in item 3 above.
4. An addendum to the list of activities as described in item 4 above. List any new activities (and report activities you have continued) in the format described in 4 above.
5. An update and reflection on what you have done since your last review. This should be short, typically 2-3 pages. Use your statement to reflect on the important experiences since you were last reviewed and how these experiences have impacted your decision to apply to a health professional school or have helped you grow. Do not submit your original personal statement/autobiography (or an edited version of your original statement).
6. Official copies of transcripts for new courses taken away from Holy Cross.
7. Your most recent unofficial Holy Cross transcript (as a PDF).

Submit the .pdf files to the office as described above. The deadline to submit these items to guarantee a review by the committee is February 15th. You also need to solicit at least one new letter of recommendation (sent to the Health Professions Advising Office as above), as we cannot review your file again without a new letter. If for some reason you cannot obtain a new letter, please speak to Prof. Cahill. We will consider a change in rating without substantial new information, including letters. See above for new electronic letter procedure. **However, if you have applied this cycle and are concerned you will need to reapply in this coming cycle, you will need to submit these documents by May 1 to receive a committee letter in the next cycle.**

This is a lot of work, and a long process. However, we hope you find it helpful as you start the even longer process of applying to schools. Perhaps the most important part of this process is to allow you to work closely with and get to know your committee advisor. The biggest mistake many applicants make is to not consult with their advisor.