Tips for a Strong Application

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Programs in Our Department

• Master’s
  • Biomedical and Health Informatics (M.S.)
  • Biostatistics (M.S.)
  • Clinical Research (M.S.)
  • Public Health (MPH)

• PhD
  • Biomedical and Health Informatics
  • Clinical and Translational Science
  • Epidemiology and Biostatistics
Your Application Needs to ...

• Convince us:
  • You can do well in our program (aptitude, prior success)
  • You know what the field is and why it makes sense for you
  • Your career/professional goals align with our program
    • Do your homework on our program
  • You and our program are a good “match”
  • For PhD program: demonstrate experience and commitment to research
General Comments

• Applications are reviewed holistically
  • Every part matters
  • Weakness in one area can be compensated for in other parts
• No official minimum GPA/score
  • But if its low, you need to compensate and/or explain
• We’re looking for win-win
  • If we aren’t the right program for you, we’ll say so
• OK to apply for different kinds of programs, but customize your application for each type of program
• Contact the program with questions
  • Almost all applicants are in contact with us
  • Ask your questions
Elements of an Application – They All Matter!

• Transcripts (upload an unofficial transcript to your application)
• Personal Statement / Statement of Purpose
• MPH only: Reflection Essay
• CV (Resume)
• Letters of Recommendation (3)
• International students need TOEFL, IELTS or Pearson scores *unless* they completed a Bachelor’s or more advanced degree in an English-based program.
• Standardized Testing – Not required, but if you wish to submit scores, you may, e.g. GRE, MCAT.
Transcripts

• All undergraduate and graduate transcripts
• Unofficial copies are fine
  • Sufficient to be reviewed
  • Official copy only needed to start program
• International students may need to have their transcripts evaluated for GPA or degree equivalency
Personal Statement

• Your background. Tell us your story. OK to brag a little, don’t overdo it.
• Why are you interested in this field?
  • Show us you know what the field is and why you want to pursue it
• What do you want to do for your career?
• How does this degree program fit in with your plans?
• Why *our* program? (Hint: Don’t just copy/paste from website)
  • For PhD program, higher bar for showing you checked us out thoroughly
• Address any “issues” – and why they won’t be a problem here
  • e.g. Low GPA – why? Health issue, family issue, wrong major
    • We are very understanding!
CV (Resume)

• Include education, work experience, skills, awards and publications
• Highlight anything strongly related to the field
• Highlight any research experience
• Highlight responsibility
• Highlight ability to multi-task
Letters of Recommendation

• Include three letters of recommendation
  • If applying to a Master’s program
    • At least 2 letters should be from professors / academics
    • A letter from a supervisor at work is fine
  • If applying to a PhD program
    • All three letters should be from professors / academics
    • One may be from a research job supervisor
  • If out of school for a while, one academic letter is acceptable

• Get letters from people who know you and can talk specifics. We already have your grades, so a letter that just says you got an “A” doesn’t help.

• Have recommenders:
  • Include personal interactions, projects you worked on together
  • Include research interest/aptitude, intellectual curiosity, related skills, responsibility
  • Provide a different dimension, not what can be seen on a transcript