

To the Emory Pre-Health Community:

The current Coronavirus pandemic and subsequent fallout from COVID-19 have reshaped every aspect of our lives. As we watch this story unfold, we learn more about how these disruptions will affect us and those around us. This story is hardly complete, and the full impact is yet to be known.

The Pre-Health Advising office and the Emory University School of Medicine Admissions Office have been in contact regarding the issues facing you, and we would like to offer some words of reassurance and encouragement. As this semester unfolds for you, we know that there are concerns about the S/U grading policy put in place for the current semester.

In the words of Dr. Ira Schwartz:

“Here's what I will say (unequivocally): in the future, the Admissions Committee at Emory School of Medicine will overlook/discount/not pay attention to ANY grades from ANY college or university for the Spring Term 2020. This will NOT be an important discriminant in assessing an applicant's suitability for admission to our medical school. Ever.”

A few observations that we would like to highlight:

1. There is a lot of uncertainty in the world, and that includes the areas of education, healthcare and economics.
2. There is no doubt that the health care professions will be needed in the future, and in fact, there were concerns about shortages before the current pandemic struck.
3. In order to provide a workforce of healthcare professionals, the systems to educate and train them must prevail. Those very systems (medical schools and residency programs) are also in the midst of massive flux right now as well.
4. At the moment, while there are many issues to be considered, let's consider priorities that medical schools have right now:
 - a. Curricula have had to adapt to remote instruction and limited/no patient contact.
 - b. Current final year students need to finish (some schools have even pushed 'early graduation').
 - c. The current admissions cycle for the class that enters in 2020 is not yet complete.
 - d. The next admissions cycle for the class that enters in 2021 has not yet even started.
5. This pandemic is hardly over, and there will be issues to confront for several years into the future.
6. There is never a time like one of crisis for one to learn best about resilience, grit, perseverance and patience.

Below you will find some resources that will inform you about what is going on at a national level. Please focus on your work, stay well, socially distance but connect with your friends and family. And wash your hands! Reach out to us in the Pre-Health Advising office. We are here for you, and we want you to do the best you can do.

Sincerely,

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Ira Schwartz, MD
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For further information

From the Association of American Medical Colleges (MD schools):

- At this time, a decision has not been made regarding changes to the 2021 application cycle. We are working with the admissions community to determine if changes need to be made to AMCAS cycle dates. Please continue to monitor school-specific websites regarding their deadlines and requirements for the upcoming cycle.
- Medical schools are aware of this change and we are working with them regarding the impacts this may have on GPA calculations. The AMCAS application accepts pass/fail grades as part of official transcripts, however they are not included in GPA calculations.

<https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/coronavirus-covid-19-and-amcas/>

From the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (DO schools):

<https://choosedo.org/coronavirus/>

From the American Dental Education Association (Dental schools):

<https://www.adea.org/COVID19-Update/>