

Advice from UCSD Graduates in Medical School

"Be yourself! Take time at UCSD to take classes outside of Science that you are interested in - you won't get that chance in med school. Do something for fun as an undergrad - sports, drama, travel, music, hanging out at the beach. I think UCSF wants to see that you've made a sound decision to go into medicine - by finding out about it through volunteer work, research, or working with an M.D. They also like well-rounded people or people who have excelled at something besides biochem (and that can be sports, language, community service, etc.)." (UCSF)

"Do go to medical school if you are willing to work very hard, really care about people of different ages, races, economic and social backgrounds. Go to medical school if you want to be a doctor. Do not go to medical school if you (1) don't know what else to do with your bio degree, (2) think you'll make lots of money, (3) want job security. These are not good reasons to be a doctor." (Tulane)

"Make sure medicine is what you want to do. Investigate it thoroughly. It's a long road to travel just to find out that it wasn't the right decision. Talk to practicing physicians to find out what medicine is really about." (UC Davis)

"There is a lot of attitude and ego in medicine. One has to be able to deal with it. Don't take things personally, know you are just as bright as everybody else, have fun. Have a hobby or outside friends to keep in touch with reality." (UCSF)

"Medicine is a noble profession of patient care and of service. Don't do it for the money. You will work hard in order to serve other people better. You must have a genuine interest in the art and the science of medicine to enjoy doing what is required of you." (Utah)

"Grades are important, so study hard! But extracurricular activities can turn a good application into a great one. Try to be general, broad - do interesting things - major in an interesting field, do community work, not necessarily in hospital settings - be creative (easier said than done, I know), original." (UCLA)

"Take a class in bio-medical ethics ad/or read about and discuss the current controversial issues in medicine frequently because they can be a big part of the interview process."

"Have a life outside of school. When we interview applicants we look at those who only study and take tests as possibly not able to interact with patients, or with their team at the hospital, as well as someone who interacts with society in his or her activities." (UCI)

"It's still a great career choice, but consider the many obstacles that you'll face. (1) You'll work harder than most any one else and for many years will be underpaid, (2) your personal time is extremely limited and that will affect your personal life (especially if you have a spouse/children), (3) you will be at risk of contracting infectious disease (HIV, TB, hepatitis), (4) you'll be spending many hours working with doctors who are "Type A" personalities and, after being up for 36 hours, that may become a challenge. Consider these and many other issues before choosing this field." (U Texas, Southwestern)

Professional and Graduate School Opportunities Program, Career Services Center, UCSD