

The Master of Medical Science in Anesthesiology (MMSA) Program seeks to matriculate classes who will contribute to the Program mission and adhere to the values of the University of Colorado School of Medicine. Each applicant will be evaluated not only on his or her ability to become a competent Anesthesiologist Assistant (AA), but also on his or her potential to contribute to the educational experience of fellow AA students. The admissions process will evaluate both the individual capabilities of a student, and the overall composition of the matriculating class, with the goal of providing a rich and diverse educational experience for all members of the class.

The MMSA Program follows the University of Colorado guidelines and policies regarding diversity. In addition, the MMSA Program complies with all applicable federal and state laws. The MMSA Program believes that diversity is a value that is central to its educational, research, service and health care missions. Therefore, the MMSA Program is committed to recruiting and supporting a diverse student body, faculty and administrative staff. The University of Colorado School of Medicine adopts a definition of diversity that embraces race, ethnicity, gender, religion, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation and disability. The definition of diversity also includes life experiences, record of service and employment and other talents and personal attributes that can enhance the scholarly and learning environment  
<http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschoo/administration/diversity/Documents/iversityplanMay2007.pdf>.

Factors taken into consideration in the admissions process include, but are not limited to, educational background, life experiences, race, gender, cultural identity, geographic location, and languages spoken. The University of Colorado does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its education programs and activities. The University takes action to increase ethnic, cultural, and gender diversity, to employ qualified disabled individuals, and to provide equal opportunity to all students and employees  
<http://www.ucdenver.edu/about/departments/HR/HRPoliciesGuidlines/Documents/Nondiscrimination.pdf>.

Each Applicant will be treated with respect, and will be assessed individually for potential as an anesthesiologist assistant. Information used to assess individual potential will include:

1. CASAA application
2. Letters of recommendation
3. Personal statement
4. Interview with Admissions Committee

Each applicant in the pool of applicants will be reviewed for admissions. Each applicant will be individually assessed on **metrics, essential and personal attributes**, and on their **experiences** that might contribute to the educational experience at the MMSA Program and to the AA profession. Each applicant will also be assessed on the aforementioned while being compared to the larger applicant pool. The essential attributes are those considered essential to AA

practice and therefore are required of all students admitted to the University of Colorado MMSA Program. Personal attributes and experiences relate to the unique and valued characteristics that an applicant may possess, which would enhance his/her potential to contribute to the educational experience and diversity of the MMSA Program, and to the AA profession.

1. **Metrics:** This category includes the academic/quantitative components of the applicant's portfolio, most notably GPA and MCAT scores.
2. **Essential and Personal Attributes:** This category includes the applicant's skills and abilities at time of entry to the MMSA Program, personal and professional characteristics, and demographic factors. The following factors will be considered in determining an applicant's Essential and Personal Attributes:

**Personal Attributes:**

*Dedication to the AA profession:* Every effort will be made during the admissions process to assess the applicant's dedication to the AA profession. Assessment of dedication will include, but is not limited to, assessment of the application materials for documented interest in the AA profession, focused questioning during the interview, and the applicant's knowledge of current practice issues.

*Altruism:* Altruism, or the devotion to the needs of others, may be assessed through review of the applicant's activities such as participation in community service, or volunteer activities, as well as responses to interview questions about the applicant's goals and desire for a life of providing patient care.

*Integrity:* Honesty and integrity are essential in both the medical education process and eventual practice of anesthesia. Applicants should be able to articulate an understanding of the importance of ethical behavior, honesty, and professionalism in medicine. Dishonesty on the application form or in the interview may result in denied admittance. Information provided in the applicant's letters of evaluation will also be considered in assessing integrity.

**Essential Attributes:**

*Academic Excellence:* The curriculum at the University of Colorado MMSA Program is academically rigorous and requires that the applicant demonstrate prior ability to perform well in a challenging academic setting. The undergraduate grade point average and the Medical College Admissions Test scores are two measures that are used to assess the applicant's ability. Other factors used in the evaluation may include the quality of the undergraduate institution, the rigor of the course load and a longitudinal view of grades and test scores.

*Competency:* The MMSA Program strives to enroll students capable of accumulating the medical knowledge, the technical skills, and the interpersonal skills required for the development of competent AA providers. Assessment of competency will include

intellectual competency, technical competency, and communication competency. All students must be able to meet the medical school's published technical standards.

*Communication skills:* Potential AAs should demonstrate to the admissions committee an ability to communicate effectively. The personal statement, letters of recommendation, and the interview provide opportunities to assess effective communication skills.

3. Experiences: This category encompasses the path the applicant has taken to get where he or she is today. Examples of experience may include being the primary caregiver for an ill family member, educational background, employment history, research experience, or experience in a health care setting. While medical experience will add to the overall quality of the application, no credit or advanced placement will be awarded for prior medical experience towards graduation. Each year, there will be many more applicants who possess all of the essential attributes to become a competent and effective AA than there are positions available. Many of the applicants will also possess unique personal attributes and experiences that can contribute both to the educational experience of their fellow classmates and eventually to the AA profession. The admission process will seek to build a richly diverse class both to enhance the educational experience of the class itself and to provide for future patient care of the highest quality. The following factors will be considered in evaluating an applicant's experience:

- a. *Community Service:* The applicant should demonstrate a history of providing help to the community. Health care providers typically have strong altruistic motivations. Performing acts of service to individuals and populations in need can improve the health and well-being of these communities. This work can come in many forms and settings depending on the applicant's interests. Greater consideration is given to longitudinal efforts that exemplify the applicant's dedication and depth of commitment to the service chosen.
- b. *Leadership:* The Anesthesia team (Anesthesiologist, anesthetist) provides leadership and must be able to effectively direct the diagnosis and treatment course of patients in the perioperative setting. Previous team-leadership experience (for example, advancement in the military, captain of an athletic team, or selection for a leadership position in an organized environment), or leadership training experiences will be considered in assessing leadership.
- c. *Life Experiences:* Each AA must care for patients with a wide variety of racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Experiences with other ethnicities and cultures are deemed valuable. Such experiences may

include participation in study abroad programs, involvement with multicultural organizations, or other unique life experiences.

- d. *Scientific or social research experience*: Advancement of medical knowledge benefits large populations of patients, and applicants with skills in research have the potential to provide such benefits. While involvement in research is not an absolute requirement, it is considered a very desirable experience for the admission evaluation.
- e. *Additional degrees*: Applicants who present with another graduate degree such as a JD, Masters in Public Health, or Ph.D. bring a unique set of skills that may be valuable both to the other members of the class and to the future cohort of AAs.
- f. *Educational background*: Although the practice of anesthesia is heavily grounded in the sciences, the art of anesthesia requires an understanding of and appreciation for psychosocial issues such as economics, history and philosophy. Students who have undertaken studies in these areas and have met the required program prerequisites will be assessed for their potential to contribute to the educational experience of the class.

## **Admissions Procedures**

### A. Processing of applications

Applicants to the University of Colorado Master of Medical Science in Anesthesiology Program are required to complete the following prior to consideration for admission:

1. Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution
2. Completion of prerequisite courses
3. Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) (within 5 years)
4. Submission of an application through the CASAA
5. Submission of 3 letters of recommendation
6. Completion of 8 hours (*minimum*) anesthesia shadowing
7. Completed Background Check

### B. Review of Applications

1. Each applicant's file will be reviewed individually to assess his or her suitability for a career in anesthesia. Materials reviewed prior to the interview will include the CASAA application and all of its components, all secondary materials, and letters of recommendation when necessary. Each applicant's file will be assessed to determine whether

the applicant will be invited to campus to interview, or whether the applicant will be denied admission.

2. A select group of applicants will be invited to campus for an interview. The Program Director and Admissions Committee will review application materials prior to making the decision of whether to invite the applicant to interview. Applicants are reviewed and invitations are generally extended from August to February each year.
3. Each applicant is considered fully and will not be denied an interview based on a single factor.
4. Reapplicants: Add verbiage.

#### C. Interview Process

1. Invited applicants will participate in four 30-minute interviews with members of the admissions committee, an introduction to the curriculum and mission of the program, lunch and a tour with current AA program students.
2. Each applicant will be interviewed by at least one interviewer who is an MD within program leadership.
3. Interviewers will be provided with guidelines and an orientation to the basics of the interview process, including concepts such as treating the applicant with respect, which questions or topics are inappropriate for the interview, and which qualities are to be evaluated.
4. Interviewers will complete a standardized evaluation form for each interviewee that provides a clear definition of qualities to be evaluated.
5. Interviewers will not have access to the applicant's MCAT or GPA prior to the interview. After the interview and prior to the committee discussion, interviewers will have access to this information along with letters of recommendation.
6. Interviewees will be provided an opportunity to anonymously evaluate the interview process and provide feedback to the Program regarding the quality of the interview experience.

#### D. Selection Process

1. Upon completion of each interview day, the committee will meet and review the applicants interviewed on that day. Each interviewed

candidate receives a numerical score. Applicants who are interviewed will ultimately be given one of three decisions: Accept, Waitlist or Deny.

2. Applicants will be selected for admission based on their interview score and the overall recommendation of the Admissions Committee. Each applicant's file, including interview notes, will be reviewed in its entirety by the Program Director before a final decision of acceptance is rendered.
3. If an applicant is not selected for admission, the applicant's file will be put back into the application pool for future consideration for that application season only.
4. Interviewed applicants will continuously be considered for admission throughout the admissions season, which generally occurs from October through February of each year. It is during the month of March that final decisions of "Waitlist" and "Deny" are made.
5. Each applicant is considered fully and will not be denied admission based on a single factor.
6. The Program Director, based on the decisions of the Admissions Committee, will extend offers of admission on a rolling basis until March 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **Admissions Committee**

### Purpose and Responsibilities

- A. The Admissions Committee is the body of the MMSA Program that is responsible for the assessment of individual applicants, both via review of the applicants' files and the face to face interviews.
- B. Members of the Admissions Committee will interview and provide an assessment of the essential and personal attributes and experiences of each interviewed applicant.

### C. Structure and Membership

#### a. Admissions Committee

- Membership will be sufficient to interview the 40-60 applicants interviewed each year. Members may be faculty members, university administrators and AA students.

- Faculty members will constitute the majority of voting members at all meetings.
- Each committee member is expected to participate in at least three interview days each year.
- Nominations for the Admissions Committee will be solicited from Departmental Chairs, members of the Admissions Committee, leadership of the MMSA Program, and from the faculty at large. Student members will apply and interview to be on the committee at the end of their first year of medical school.
- Individuals selected to join the Admissions Committee will be provided with specific instruction and guidelines regarding the policies and procedures of the admissions committee and the interview process. In addition, each new member of the admissions committee will observe a limited number of interviews with an experienced committee member.