

PATHWAYS TO MEDICINE

APPLICATION MANUAL

**2024 - 2025
APPLICATION CYCLE**

Updated: January 2024



CUMMING SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Pathways to Medicine Scholarship Program



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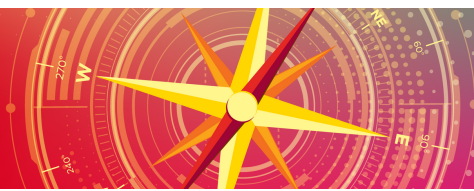
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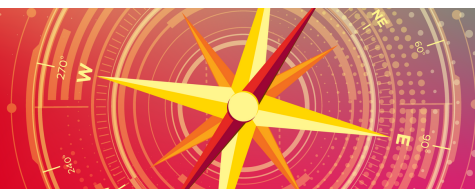
Section 1: General Information

1.1 General Information

The Pathways to Medicine (P2M) Scholarship is an initiative of the Cumming School of Medicine (CSM) at the University of Calgary. This scholarship aims to facilitate the career development of promising high school graduates from low socioeconomic, rural, or Indigenous backgrounds with a career goal of becoming a physician. Up to five P2M Scholarships will be awarded each year.

To be considered for a P2M Scholarship, students must be independently accepted into an undergraduate program at the University of Calgary. As part of the scholarship, recipients are guaranteed admission to the CSM MD program upon completion of their undergraduate degree, provided that certain conditions have been met as detailed below:

- Renewal of the P2M Scholarship for each year of undergraduate study
- Completion of a minimum of 24 credits in each academic year (Fall + Winter terms)
- Maintenance of a minimum GPA of >2.0 during the first year of undergraduate study
- Maintenance of a minimum GPA of >3.2 during the second, third and fourth years of undergraduate study
- Achievement of an overall GPA of 3.4+ throughout their undergraduate degree, as calculated by the CSM MD Admissions Office
- Continued involvement in community and campus activities as would be expected of traditional CSM MD applicants
- Participation in 100% of the required P2M enrichment program in the first year, and at least 80% in subsequent years (2nd, 3rd and 4th)
- Participation in a specified medical college admissions test (MCAT) preparation course
- Completion of the MCAT during the recipients' undergraduate degree
- Completion of the CSM MD application process, including participation in the multiple mini-interviews (MMI) during the recipients' undergraduate degree program
- Achievement of a score >20th percentile on the CSM MD applicant file review
- Achievement of a score >20th percentile on the MMI
- No "areas of concern" were identified during the recipients' undergraduate studies, as outlined in section 5.2 of this manual



1.2 Scholarship Program Details

The P2M Scholarship Program will consist of the following elements, in addition to the guaranteed admission to the CSM MD program as described above:

- Tuition support of \$ 5,000 per year, to a maximum of four years (contingent upon successful progress within the program)
- Identification of a senior P2M student to act as a peer mentor during the first year of undergraduate study, who will, in turn, act as a CSM medical student peer mentor for years 2, 3, and 4 of their undergraduate study
- Identification of a CSM faculty mentor during year 2 of undergraduate studies
- Formal clinical shadowing experiences within the CSM, typically after undergraduate year 2 (dependent on AHS & CSM COVID regulations and guidelines)
- Access to a specified MCAT preparatory course and MCAT exam, typically during the summer after undergraduate year 2
- Support for a summer research experience typically after undergraduate year 3
- Assistance from the program staff in securing external tuition support
- Participation in an enrichment program throughout the duration of the undergraduate degree

1.3 Scholarship Eligibility

The P2M Scholarship is open to anyone graduating from a high school in Alberta who has yet to begin a post-secondary degree program. To hold a P2M Scholarship, recipients must be accepted and enroll in an undergraduate program at the University of Calgary.

The P2M Scholarship is targeted at students from low socio-economic, rural or indigenous backgrounds.

Applicants whose parents hold graduate or professional degrees (i.e., MBA, Ph.D., MD, LLB, and more) will be considered case-by-case but are unlikely to be awarded a scholarship. The scholarship primarily supports individuals from socially disadvantaged backgrounds in addition to financial disadvantages.



1.4 Eligibility based on Citizenship

P2M Scholarship applicants must be Canadian citizens or landed immigrants (permanent residents) as of July 1, of the year they are entering post-secondary education at the University of Calgary.

1.5 Applying for the P2M Scholarship

Applications for the P2M Scholarship are made through the **Undergraduate Scholarships and Awards application** once the student has applied to the University of Calgary. Below is a screenshot of where to find the checkbox on the awards application on your student centre (my.ucalgary.ca). When completing the form for student awards, applicants must indicate interest in a Pathway to Medicine Scholarship. Please note that it is near the end of the application form.

The deadline is **March 1**.

The registrar's office will forward a list of applicants who have indicated interest in the scholarship to the P2M Scholarship team. Our team will vet the applications, and those deemed eligible will be contacted via e-mail and asked to submit a Preliminary Application.

Pathways to Medicine

I would like to be considered for the Pathways to Medicine Scholarship as I have plans to attend the Cumming School of Medicine after completing my undergraduate degree.

☐ Yes

[Click here for further information](#)

First Generation Post-secondary Student

Are you the first generation in your family to participate in post-secondary studies and do you confirm that your parent(s)/guardian(s) did not attend post-secondary studies, full-time or part-time in or outside of Canada, at any time or in any program?

☐ Yes

PREVIOUS

NEXT

SAVE

[Return to Student Center](#)



1.6 Application Timelines

March 1

Apply to an undergraduate program at UCalgary &
Apply for the P2M Scholarship on the Undergraduate
Scholarship and Awards form (screenshot on the previous
page)

Early March

Eligible Applicants will receive the Preliminary Application

Late March

Preliminary Applications Due

April

P2M Selection Committee to review Preliminary
Applications

May

Shortlisted Applicants are to be notified to submit
a Secondary Application

Late May

Secondary Applications due

Early June

Multiple Mini-Interviews

July

P2M Finalists Notified



Section 2: Submitting a Preliminary Application

Applicants deemed eligible to submit a Preliminary Application will be contacted within a few weeks of the March 1 deadline.

The Pathways to Medicine team will share the due date for Preliminary Applications via e-mail.

2.1 Completing a Preliminary Application

Applicants selected to submit a Preliminary Application will need to complete all four (4) sections (A – D) of the application:

Section A: Basic Demographics

The Program Coordinator will send out a form (Word Doc) asking the applicant for basic demographic information including:

- Name, Address, Birthdate
- Financial Information (tax forms over the past two years & net familial income)
- Name, Occupation, and the Highest level of Education for each family member in the household
- Declaration of Indigenous Ancestry (if applicable)

Please ensure you are accurately filling out the form. Since the form asks questions of financial nature, we recommend you sit with a parent or guardian who can share net family income and tax documents while filling out the form.



Section B: Applicants Essay (2 parts)

B.1 The CSM recognizes that socio-economic advantage plays a significant role in determining a student's future. Please provide a one-page essay **(250 words max.)** that will assist the selection committee in better understanding you as an applicant. Please include the following:

- The nature of the economic or social disadvantages you have overcome thus far or continue to struggle with.
- Level of engagement with your community (geographic, cultural, etc.).
- Your aspirations and strengths concerning post-secondary education.
- The resources and protective factors that have allowed you to succeed thus far in your academic journey.

B.2 - On the Preliminary Application, we have requested that applicants list their program choices – first and second. As a separate document, in **250 words** or less, please indicate why you chose your university major and how you envision the program courses preparing you for success in medical school.

Section C: High School Transcripts

Please include a copy of your most current transcripts, including scores from grade 10 to 1st semester of grade 12. The easiest way to do this is to download a DAR (Detailed Academic Record) from MyPass Alberta.

Section D: Nomination Letter

Applicants must include a Letter of Nomination from a principal, vice-principal, teacher, coach, leader of a community-based organization, or another type of “mentor or educator” related to their life. This letter should include how long the nominator has known the applicant and why they feel the student would be a good candidate for our scholarship. Please send your referee the Letter of Reference document sent out by the Program Coordinator in the Preliminary Application e-mail.



2.2 Submitting Preliminary Application Documents

Please ensure all four parts (Sections A – D) of the application include accurate information, are fully completed, and genuinely reflect you as a candidate. Students whose parents have higher education degrees (Master's, Ph.D., and others) will likely not qualify for our program.

To submit your documents, you have two options as outlined below:

Option 1:

Submit Section A-C electronically as 1 PDF document to pathways@ucalgary.ca

Please save the document as titled below:

Last Name, First Name – Preliminary Application

Option 2:

If you do not have access to a personal computer, please print the Preliminary Application at school or public library and fill it out in blue or black ink pen. Sections A-C can be dropped off or mailed via Canada Post to:

*Pathways to Medicine Program
HSC 1005 – 3330 Hospital Drive NW
Cumming School of Medicine
Calgary, AB T2N 4N1*

An applicant's documents and the letter of nomination (sent in by your referee) must be sent in by the deadline to pathways@ucalgary.ca. Only complete applications will be accepted.



2.3 Evaluation of Preliminary Application Materials

Members of the P2M Selection Committee will review documents and develop a shortlist of applicants, from whom they will request the completion of a Secondary Application. The Secondary Application follows the materials required of regular applicants to the CSM MD program. Applicants not invited to submit a secondary application will be notified of the committee's decision as soon as possible.

Section 3: Defining "Low-Income"

3.1 How P2M defines "low-income"

Our scholarship is a "needs-based" program. At the Preliminary Application stage, we require applicants to report their average familial income over the past three years as reflected in parental/guardian tax returns. The P2M Selection Committee will use this information, the size of the community the applicant resides in, and the family size based on the LICO chart (found within the Preliminary Application) to determine an applicant's "low-income" status.

3.2 Familial Income "Cut-Off"

There is no rigid cut-off regarding familial income; we recognize that socio-economic disadvantage encompasses more than simply financial resources. The greater an applicant's familial income, the less likely they are to be considered for a P2M scholarship.

Section 4: Submitting a Secondary Application

After the P2M selection committee has shortlisted a series of applicants, they will send a request to complete a Secondary Application by the first week of May. The deadline for receipt of the Secondary Application and Reference Letters will be noted via e-mail by the Program Coordinator.



4.1 Completing a Secondary Application

Applicants selected to submit a Secondary Application are asked to provide the following information for sections A to E:

Section A: Basic Demographics

Applicants are required to submit references from three (3) referees in support of their application. Although many of the questions asked of referees are common in all three forms, each of the three forms is unique and attempts to specifically obtain information that is helpful to the assessment of a particular set of attributes we look for in a P2M scholarship recipient. Therefore, applicants should choose referees carefully, considering the referee's ability to comment on the characteristics in question.

The three different forms focus on the following attributes and are noted as such on the form:

- Organizational, Management, and Leadership Skills
- Commitment to Communities and Advocacy
- Interpersonal Behaviours and Collaboration

The Program Coordinator will have provided three documents (one for each reference letter); please e-mail the corresponding letter to your referee. Each document has information for the chosen referee and must complete the Word document survey and provide a Letter of Reference.

Applicants are advised to carefully choose referees who have substantial knowledge of the applicant and can give an unbiased assessment. Family members, friends, and peers are not appropriate referees, regardless of their position or knowledge of the applicant. Applicants should also be aware that some volunteer organizations with large numbers of pre-medical volunteers previously have submitted the same standardized form letters. Given the specific nature of our requirements for a letter of reference, applicants should confirm with their referees the referee's willingness to write a personal letter.



Section B: Employment History

Applicants must provide a complete list of all their paid employment experiences to date. The opinion of the P2M Selection Committee is that all experiences are potentially valuable. Therefore, applicants should resist the temptation to consider early or short-term jobs as trivial. Please provide a descriptive title (i.e., Short Order Cook, Tree-Planter, Lifeguard, Farm Hand), the duration, and an approximate number of hours per week. You are not required to provide a detailed description, like a standard resume. If the job in question had significant importance, you could describe it in further detail in your “Top 10” (see section 4.5). For each job, the applicant must provide the name and contact information of a verifier who can attest to the duration and extent of the employment, either the employer or a direct supervisor. A co-worker is not considered an appropriate verifier.

Section C: Awards

Applicants must enter a list of all the awards they have received. Please list by name; the applicant should be prepared to provide proof of the award upon request.

Section D: Top 10 Experiences

Applicants must identify their top ten (10) activities or experiences that define them as individuals. These may be employment, volunteer, life, awards, educational or research experiences. For each experience or activity, the applicant must define a title and a more detailed description of the activity, providing insight into the experience's impact on them. Each experience must also have a verifier who can attest to the nature of the experience and the duration. If no such person is available, applicants should indicate this.



Example:

Top 10 Experiences

Summer Camp Lead

April 2018 – August 2018

[roles & responsibilities]

[impact]

Verifier: Name | (403.XXX.XXXX) or email:

From these Top 10 Experiences, file reviewers develop a sense of who the applicant is and what they will bring to medicine. Applicants are encouraged to reflect carefully on what they highlight in this section and what it says about them.

Please note that a Top 10 Experience may be something that has already been described under Awards or Employment. If so, it will appear twice in the application, as expected.

In Choosing your Top 10, applicants are encouraged to highlight the adversities they have overcome or continue to struggle within their personal or academic journeys. Similarly, the P2M selection committee is keen to hear about applicants' involvement in and connection with their community, whether that community be physical, religious, or defined differently.

The Top 10 Experiences section must be at **most three (3) pages**, using standard fonts and margins.

Students must provide one (1) PDF document, including sections B-E, via e-mail. As requested, we will receive reference letters from an applicant's referees via the Pathways to Medicine Scholarship Program e-mail inbox to an applicant's.



Section E: Headshot

The Pathways to Medicine program requires students in the Secondary Application round to provide a headshot within their application in the PDF file.

Section F: Interviews

The MMIs will take the form of several brief structured interviews done in succession. This is consistent with the Multiple Mini Interviews (MMI) format used by the CSM UME program. Each interview will last 10 minutes and focus on a particular theme or topic. The interviewer will score each scenario, and the final score will reflect the average of these 10-minute discussions.

The interviewers include CSM faculty members, students, and members of the P2M advisory committee.

Interviews will be held on the CSM campus; applicants will be given appropriate notice. For those outside of Calgary, the coordinator will connect with you about accommodation and travel plans to Calgary for our interview process.

Please remember to bring photo ID to the interviews to sign in.



4.2 Checklist for Secondary Application Submission

Please use the following checklist to ensure all parts of the Secondary Application are complete:



Identified three (3) referees for Reference Letters and sent their unique documents with appropriate information on their task well before the deadline (Word Document Survey & Letter)

- Organizational, Management & Leadership Skills
- Commitment to Communities and Advocacy
- Interpersonal Behaviours and Collaboration



Compiled the following in one (1) PDF document:

- Employment History
- List of Awards
- Top 10 Experiences (maximum three pages)
- Photo/Headshot



Received information on the Multiple Mini-Interviews and have RSVP'd to the Program Coordinator

- Practice MMI Scenarios/Interview questions
- Remember to bring photo ID



Section 5: Secondary Application Scoring

5.1 Scoring System

At the Secondary Application stage, each file is independently evaluated by as many as 15 individuals that comprise the P2M Selection Committee, including CSM faculty members, MD students, and community members. The entire file is reviewed holistically, with scores assigned for evidence of attributes that the MD program has previously identified as consistent with the terminal objectives of the program. As such, no discrete scores for extra-curricular activities or letters of reference are given, although these items inform the scoring in multiple areas.

Scores are assigned in the following areas:

- **30%** - Academic Ability (consisting of High School grades and courses)
- **10%** - Global Assessment of Academic Ability
- **30%** - Degree of “fit” with the goals of the P2M Scholarship Program
- **30%** - Evidence of Communication Skills; Evidence of Excellent Interpersonal Skills and Collaboration, Evidence of Maturity, Insight, and Resilience; Evidence of Commitment to Communities and Advocacy on behalf of others; Evidence of Organizational/Management skills and Leadership.

Each of these subjective assessments is done by the assessors looking at the totality of the application file, including extra-curricular activities, employment, letters of reference, academic history, and any other information in the file. This process aligns with the approach used in assessing individuals applying to the MD program through the traditional route during or after their undergraduate degrees.

5.1.1 Academic Ability (30%)

Grades are assessed using the applicant's high school grades (10 - 1st semester grade 12)



5.1.2 Global Assessment of Academic Ability (10%)

Each applicant is assigned a score based on the global assessment of the strength of their entire academic record. This includes but is not limited to the types of courses taken, grade trends over time, extenuating circumstances, and consistency. The overarching question to the reviewer is, “To what extent does this applicant demonstrate evidence of the academic skill necessary to master undergraduate studies at the University of Calgary?”

5.1.3 Degree of Fit (30%)

Applicants will be assessed based on the extent to which their personal background and individual characteristics fit with the goals of the P2M Scholarship – specifically, the desire to increase the numbers of MD students from low-income and other under-represented backgrounds. This will include a subjective assessment regarding the ability of the scholarship program to benefit the student.

5.1.4 Evidence of Specified Non-Cognitive Attributes (30%)

The question to assessors is, “To what degree does this applicant demonstrate evidence of [attribute X]?” To answer this question, assessors draw information from the application itself and the letters of reference. Assessors will consider an applicant’s life history, activities, and experiences of an applicant as they demonstrate either openness towards or proficiency in the skills and attributes in question. Applicants must note that one of the reasons for adopting an attributes-based assessment tool was the recognition that the same qualities can be manifested in many ways, some of which appear superficially more impressive but may not provide evidence of greater likelihood of success within the medical school. Applicants are encouraged to think carefully and critically about their own experiences and to highlight those things that demonstrate those abilities essential to the practice of medicine rather than compile a list of their most significant accomplishments.



5.2 Application Irregularities / Areas of Concern

Applicants should be aware that although scholarship offers are generally made based solely on the composite scores achieved in each of the different areas of the assessment (application review, interview, grades), there is one exception to this rule. At any time in the application process, an applicant may be flagged by an application reviewer or member of the P2M admissions office as possibly demonstrating evidence of characteristics inconsistent with the practice of medicine at the University of Calgary. Sometimes, the P2M admissions office may contact third parties to explore the concern brought forward. Once sufficient information has been gathered, the P2M Academic Lead and Advisory Committee will review the application, where the matter will be reviewed.

Notwithstanding any scores achieved by that application, the P2M Advisory Committee reserves the right to terminate any application according to this “area of concern” process. Common reasons for review at the sub-committee level include academic misconduct, misrepresentation on the application, prior criminal behaviour, and unprofessional behaviour exhibited during the interview or elsewhere. Of note, any attempts by the applicant to misrepresent familial income, parental occupation, or education history will result in the loss of the scholarship. Further, such incidents may be reported to the admissions committee of the MD program and may adversely affect subsequent MD application outcomes.

5.3 Final Ranking

The final application score will be calculated as follows:

- Applicant Documents - 70%
- Interview Score - 30%

The aggregate scores are ranked in order, and the scholarship offers will be made accordingly.



Section 6: Other Considerations

6.1 Applicants in need of Special Accommodations

The Faculty of Medicine at the University of Calgary is committed to supporting applicants and students with disabilities (physical, learning, or developmental) using appropriate accommodations. Students with these requirements are encouraged to contact **Student Accessibility Services** with any questions regarding accommodation for their needs while enrolled in the medical program.

All applicants offered interviews will be asked to attest to their ability to meet the technical standards of the CSM MD program at that time. Suppose an applicant will require accommodation to meet those technical standards; in this case, they will be asked to indicate that in the final year of their undergraduate program. Any applicant who indicates a need for accommodation will be referred to the Accommodations Committee, which will review the applicant's specific needs and abilities and determine whether appropriate accommodation can be offered. This information will not form part of the application file, and no individuals involved in the application process will be made aware of the applicant's request for accommodation. A more detailed description of this process is available in the Cumming School of Medicine's policy on Accommodation for Applicants with Disabilities. This is available from the Office of Admissions upon request.

Applicants with a learning disability that is expected to impact their educational course of study are encouraged to identify themselves to the P2M Academic Lead as soon as they feel comfortable doing so, such that appropriate arrangements may be made to accommodate their disability while in the MD program.

The declaration of a need for accommodation by applicants is voluntary. However, an early declaration is strongly recommended because a significant period is generally required to process accommodation requests. Suppose an applicant does not indicate the need for accommodation until an offer of admission is made. In that case, the Cumming School of Medicine reserves the right to defer matriculation for one year, pending a review of the request by the Accommodations Committee.



Students with disabilities are encouraged to pursue their studies if their continued involvement does not pose a health or safety hazard to themselves or others and if they can meet the core requirements for a medical degree.

Section 7: Contact Information

7.1 Contacting the Program

If you would like to contact the Pathways to Medicine team for clarification on how to apply or to complete an application form, you can do so via e-mail:

pathways@ucalgary.ca

**Pathways to Medicine Scholarship Program
HSC 1005 - 3330 Hospital Drive NW
Cumming School of Medicine
Calgary, AB T2N 4N1**

