Pathways to Medicine

Scholarship Application Manual

2022-2023 Admissions Cycle
Updated March 2022
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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. The goal of this scholarship is to facilitate the career development of promising high school graduates who come from a low-income background and who have 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 degree 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 (i.e., 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 studies
- Achievement of an overall GPA of 3.4+ throughout the undergraduate degree, as calculated by the CSM MD Admissions Office
- Continued involvement in community and/or campus activities as would be expected of traditional CSM MD applicants
- Participation in at least 80% of the required P2M enrichment program
- Participation in a specified medical college admission 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-interview (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” identified during the recipient’s 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 $5000 per year, to a maximum of four years (contingent upon successful progress within the program)
- Identification of a CSM faculty mentor
- 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 student peer mentor for years 2, 3, and 4 of their undergraduate study
- 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
- A paid summer student research experience typically after undergraduate year 3
- Assistance from the program staff in securing external tuition support
- Participation in an enrichment program for pipeline students throughout the duration of the undergraduate degree

1.3 Scholarship Eligibility

The P2M Scholarship is open to any individual graduating from a high school in Alberta who has not yet begun a post-secondary degree program. To hold a P2M Scholarship, recipients must be accepted to, and subsequently enroll in, an undergraduate degree program at the University of Calgary.

Although the P2M Scholarship is exclusively reserved for low-income students, there is a particular interest in low-income students of rural and/or indigenous backgrounds.

Applicants whose parents hold graduate or professional degrees (i.e., MBA, Ph.D., MD, LLB, etc.) will be considered on a case-by-case basis but are unlikely to be awarded a scholarship. The scholarship is intended to primarily support individuals who come from socially disadvantaged backgrounds in addition to financial disadvantages.

1.4 Eligibility based on Citizenship

P2M Scholarship applicants must be a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant (permanent resident) as of July 1, 2022.
1.5 Applying for the P2M Scholarship

Application for the CSM P2M Scholarship is made through the Undergraduate Scholarships and Awards application once the student has applied to the University of Calgary. When applying for student awards, applicants must indicate the desire to be considered for a Pathway to Medicine Scholarship. The deadline for application is March 1, 2022. A screenshot has been provided below as to where to find the checkbox on the application.

The registrar’s office will forward a list of applicants who have indicated interest in the scholarship to the P2M Scholarship team. Applicants will then be vetted and those deemed eligible will be contacted and asked to submit a Preliminary Application.

1.6 Application Timelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apply to an undergraduate program at UCalgary</td>
<td>March 1, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply for the P2M Scholarship on the Undergraduate Scholarship and Awards Form *screenshot above</td>
<td>April 1, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicants will receive the Preliminary Application</td>
<td>April 8, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preliminary Application due (Parts A-D)</td>
<td>April 29, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2M Selection Committee to review applications</td>
<td>Mid-May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortlisted applicants will be notified on submitting a Secondary Application</td>
<td>May 25, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Applications Due</td>
<td>June 10, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Mini Interviews (online)</td>
<td>June 12, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2M Finalists Notified</td>
<td>Early July 2022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 2: Submitting a Preliminary Application

Applicants deemed eligible to submit a Preliminary Application will be notified by early April 2022.

The deadline for the receipt of the Preliminary Application will be notified by the Pathways to Medicine team via email.

2.1 Completing a Preliminary Application

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

Part A: Online Demographics and Other Information

The Program Coordinator will send out an online form, asking the applicant basic demographic information in their initial application, 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. You should be able to go back to review your answers before submitting the final application. If, for any reason you make a mistake or need to change your answers after submitting, please connect with the program coordinator to let them know to receive an editable link.

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.
PATHWAYS TO MEDICINE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Part B: Introductory Essay

The CSM recognizes that socio-economic advantage plays a large role in determining a students’ future. The Pathways to Medicine Scholarship Program is designed to support individuals from low-income and otherwise socially disadvantaged backgrounds (with a focus on Indigenous and/or Rural Identity), that wish to pursue a career in Medicine. Please provide a one-page essay that will assist the selection committee in better understanding you as an applicant.

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

Part 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.

Part D: Nomination Letter

Applicants are required to 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” that relates to your 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 email.

2.2 Submitting Preliminary Application Documents

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

When sending back your documents (Part B + C), please enclose them in 1 PDF document titled: 

*Last Name, First Name – Preliminary Application*

An applicants’ documents and the letter of nomination (sent in by your referee) must be sent in by the deadline, to pathways@ucalgary.ca. Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted.

2.3 Evaluation of Preliminary Application Materials

Preliminary Application materials will be reviewed by members of the P2M Selection Committee who will 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 do we define “Low-Income”

The P2M Scholarship Program relies on the determination of financial needs conducted by the Admissions Office at the University of Calgary as an initial assessment of low-income status. Students who are not identified as having significant financial needs by the Admissions Office will generally not be invited to submit a Preliminary Application. At the Preliminary Application stage, we require applicants to report the average familial income for the past three years as reflected in parental tax returns. The P2M Selection Committee will then use that information, taking into consideration both the size of the community in which an applicant lives, and the size of their family.

3.2 Is there a rigid 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 Early May 2022. The deadline for receipt of Secondary Application and Reference Letters will be in June, which will be later finalized via email by the P2M team.

4.1 Completing a Secondary Application

Applicants selected to submit a Secondary Application will be asked to provide the following information from sections A to D:

Part A: Letters of Reference

Applicants are required to submit references from three (3) referees in support of your application. Although many of the questions asked of referees are common in all 3 forms, each of the three forms are 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 scholar. Therefore, applicants should choose referees carefully, keeping in mind the ability of the referee to comment specifically on the attributes in question.

The three different forms focus on the following attributes, and are identified 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 of the reference letters); please email the corresponding letter to your referee. Each document has information for the chosen referee, an online form.
Applicants are advised to carefully choose referees who have substantial knowledge of the applicant and who can give an unbiased assessment. Family members, family 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 in the past 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.

**Part B: Employment History**

Applicants are required to 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, and 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, etc.), the duration, and an approximate number of hours per week. You are not required to provide a detailed description for each, like a standard resume. If the job in question had significant importance in your life, you can 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. This is usually either the employer or a direct supervisor. A co-worker is not considered an appropriate verifier.

**Part C: Awards**

Applicants are required to enter a list of all their awards that they consider significant. They should be listed by name, and the applicant should be prepared to provide proof of the award upon request.

**Part D: Top 10 Experiences**

Applicants are given the opportunity to identify their top ten (10) activities or experiences that they feel have defined 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, as well as a more detailed description of the activity, providing insight on the impact the experience has on them. Each experience must also have a verifier who is able to 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:
It is from these Top 10 Experiences that file reviewers develop a sense for who the applicant is as a person and what they will bring to the practice of Medicine. Applicants are encouraged to reflect carefully about what they choose to highlight in this section, and what it says about them.

Please note that a Top 10 Experience may be something that has already been entered under Awards or Employment. If so, it will appear in the application twice, and this is expected. Conversely, if a job, award, or publication is entered in the Top 10 Experiences section, they must still also be entered in their appropriate “other” part of the application.

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

The Top 10 Experiences section **must not exceed three pages**, using standard fonts and margins.

Students are requested to provide one (1) PDF document including sections B-D, via e-mail. We will receive reference letters via email as requested by an applicant’s referees.

**Part E: 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 MD program. Each interview will last no longer than 10 minutes and will be focused on a particular theme or topic. Each breakout room will be scored by the interviewer, and the final score will reflect the average of these 10-minute discussions.

The finalists will be interviewed by a variety of people, including clinical and science Faculty members, students, and community members of the P2M admissions committee.

Due to the nature of COVID in our province, we have decided to keep the interviews online, through the Zoom online platform. The coordinator will be emailing students information on how to prepare, the Zoom link and password, and other information prior to the scheduled interviews.
4.2 Check List for Secondary Applications

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

- Identified 3 referees for Reference Letters & sent their unique documents with information on their task well before the deadline:
  - Organizational, Management & Leadership Skills
  - Commitment to Communities and Advocacy
  - Interpersonal Behaviours and Collaboration

- Compiled the following in 1 PDF:
  - Employment History
  - List of Awards
  - Top 10 Experiences (maximum 3 pages)

- Received information on Interviews, and have RSVP’d to the program coordinator
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 make up the P2M Selection Committee, including Cumming School of Medicine faculty members, MD students, and community members. The entire file is reviewed in a holistic manner, 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, there are no discrete scores assigned for extracurricular activities or letters of reference, 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 subjective assessment of academics)
- 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 contained in the file.*

*This process very closely aligns with the process 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 grade 11 average, and/or grade 12 grades, where available.
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, trends in grades over time, extenuating circumstances, and consistency. The overarching question that the reviewer is asked to answer 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 coming 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 posed 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 as well as from the letters of reference. Assessors will consider the life history, activities, and experiences of an applicant as they demonstrate either openness towards or proficiency in the skills and attributes in question. It is important for applicants to note that one of the reasons for adopting an attributes-based assessment tool was the recognition that the same attributes can be manifested in many ways, some of which appear superficially more impressive, but may not actually 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 to simply compile a list of their greatest 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, etc.), 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. In some cases, the P2M admissions office may contact third parties to explore the area of concern that has been brought forward. Once sufficient information has been gathered, the application will be reviewed by the P2M Lead and/or Advisory Committee, where the concern will be reviewed and considered. Notwithstanding any scores achieved by that application, the P2M Advisory Committee reserves the right to terminate any application pursuant 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 at the time of the interview or elsewhere. Of note, any attempts on the part of an applicant to misrepresent familial income, parental occupation, and/or education history will result in 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:

- Pre-Interview Score 70%
- Interview Score 30%

The aggregate scores are ranked in order and the scholarship offers are 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 the 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. If an applicant will require accommodation in order to meet those technical standards, he or she 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 who will review the applicant’s specific needs and abilities and will 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 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 on the part of applicants is voluntary but as a significant period of time is generally required to process accommodation requests, an early declaration is strongly advised. If an applicant does not indicate the need for accommodation until such time as an offer of admission is made, the Cumming School of Medicine reserves the right to defer matriculation for one year pending 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 as long as they are able to meet 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 in completing the application form, you can do so via email at:

pathways@ucalgary.ca

Mailing Address:

Pathways to Medicine Scholarship Program
Cumming School of Medicine
University of Calgary
HSC G802 – 3330 Hospital Drive NW
Calgary, AB T2N 4N1

- End of Document -