

Work & Activities Section of Med School Application

Guidelines and Suggestions

AMCAS Info (similar for other application services)

- For AMCAS work & activities section you have up to 15 entries
 - You have 700 characters to describe each one
 - Designate three as “most significant” and receive additional 1300 characters
- For the entries:
 - Describe the activity
 - Your role in the activity
 - Learning outcomes/contributions based on AAMC competencies
 - Can also share appropriate anecdotes if space allows

AMCAS Categories

- Artistic Endeavors
- Community Service/Volunteer – Medical/Clinical
- Community Service/Volunteer – Not Medical/Clinical
- Conferences Attended
- Extracurricular Activities
- Hobbies
- Honors/Awards/Recognitions
- Intercollegiate Athletics
- Leadership – Not Listed Elsewhere
- Military Service
- Other
- Paid Employment – Medical/Clinical
- Paid Employment – Not Medical/Clinical
- Physician Shadowing/Clinical Observation
- Presentations/Posters
- Publications
- Research/Lab
- Social Justice/Advocacy
- Teaching/Tutoring/Teaching Assistant

Writing Tips

- With limited space, generally not room for anecdotes in shorter descriptions without compromising most important information.
- If activity is not self-explanatory (such as intramural soccer), make sure to give context and details about what it is.
- Write about roles and responsibilities.
 - Demonstrate results and impact, when possible. For example, if you worked on a fundraiser, how much money was raised and how did you reach the donors.
- What qualities and characteristics did you demonstrate; what insights you gained; how it impacted you?

Example (good)

- Name: FOOT: First Year Outdoor Orientation
- Experience Description: FOOT is a backpacking orientation program for incoming first-years. I love outdoor adventures and the collective problem-solving they bring. As a leader I supported the students' physical trials and served as a mentor for this difficult transition in their lives. Growing as a decision-maker and leader I prioritized their safety and comfort. As a co-leader, I reinforced my understanding of partnership: sharing responsibilities and being honest, thoughtful and transparent about challenges. As first-aid co-head I ensured the safety of leaders and students by coordinating Wilderness First-Aid and CPR training, first-aid kits and advocating administration for comprehensive COVID protocols.

Why is it good?

- Describes what FOOT is as an activity
- Explains duties and impact
- Reinforced competencies learned

Example (okay)

- Organization Name: Echo Hose Ambulance
- Experience Description: As an EMT, I am granted access to patients' homes on some of the worst days of their lives, which has built a unique appreciation of the trust placed in healthcare providers and our responsibility to act ethically to maintain that trust. In the uncertainty of the pandemic, patients often looked to us for reassurance and comfort. I have also learned about the importance of community outreach, such as providing standby at the 4th of July fireworks and other community events. Our efforts are often rewarded by the passers-by who express their gratitude. I aim to apply the empathy, understanding, and dedication to service I developed in the field to my patient care as a physician.

Why is it okay?

- People know what an EMT does, but context about community serving in would be helpful
 - Urban, Suburban, Rural
 - Types of calls typically received; approximately how many on a shift
- Passive understanding of competencies
 - More detail could be added about specifics

Example (needs improvement)

- Name: HAVEN Free Clinic
- Experience Description: As a patient's first point of contact, I had a vital role in setting the tone for the rest of their visit. Even simple acts could make a big difference in care. Having shown up 2 hours early by accident, "Maria" asked if there was a way to keep better track of her appointments. In Spanish, I walked her through setting up MyChart on her phone. The next week, she showed up at the right time and thanked me for my help. I also learned about barriers to care and ways to address them, by helping patients access our various services beyond primary and reproductive care, such as medical debt assistance, social services, transportation, and medication delivery.

Why does it need improvement?

- What is HAVEN?
 - HAVEN Free Clinic provides primary care to uninsured and underinsured residents of New Haven, CT
- What were specific roles and responsibilities?
 - Basic position description info since HAVEN has many different types of volunteers in the facility
- What were learning outcomes or competencies developed?
- Anecdotes are helpful only if they have the proper context of details provided.