

Geisel Early Assurance Program (EAP) Application Writing Tips & Advice 2025-2026

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Writing for the Geisel EAP Application

Start preparing and writing for your Geisel EAP application early. A well-written application is an essential component of a strong application. The application itself contains a work and activities section, plus three essay prompts. It takes more time than you might think to gather and reflect on your experiences and write an effective narrative.

The Work & Activities Section

This section contains 10 entries, all of which have a 700-character limit to write about each of your experiences. You will also select three of your experiences as your “most meaningful” and expand on those with a 1,325-character limit. This allows you to provide more detailed information and examples about these experiences and their impact on you. We recommend doing the following to prepare:

- **Create a spreadsheet or document** that lists all of your experiences (ex., jobs, internships, research, extracurriculars, volunteer work, sports, etc.), even the ones you think might not be relevant. Include start and end dates, as well as the number of hours you were involved in each experience. Make sure to gather the contact information of your supervisors.
- **What did you learn?** Consider this question for each experience. You may also want to consider how you grew during this experience. What skills, abilities, competencies, or personal qualities did you develop? What were your specific tasks and responsibilities?
- **How was it meaningful?** Consider this question for each experience. How was each

experience meaningful to you? How did it influence or impact you personally, intellectually, or in some other way? Brainstorm specific moments or details to use as examples.

The Personal Statement

The process of gathering and reflecting on your experiences for the work and activities section will also help you to prepare your personal statement. Your personal statement should address your motivations for pursuing medicine and the ways you've explored, prepared, and developed these motivations. You'll have a 5,300-character limit to describe your motivations. To gather your thoughts and ideas, consider the following questions:

- Is there a connection between an experience and the growth or affirmation of your motivations?
- Are there any passions or inspirations you want to highlight?
- Did you navigate any challenges that impacted or influenced your pursuit of medicine?
- When did you initially become interested in medicine? What sparked this interest?
- What events or experiences did you have that confirmed this interest and why?

Tips for Writing Your Personal Statement

- **Be reflective.** The most common mistake we see is students spending most of their characters describing the event and not enough time reflecting on what they learned and how they grew from this experience.
- **Show AND Tell:** "Showing" is one way to add a compelling factor to your writing, but it's most important to make the connection about why the experience was important to you – being explicit and specific in your reflections is more important than having an anecdote.
- **Write in a narrative style and use an active voice as much as possible.** You want to write a personal statement that others will want to read! Keep it authentic.
- **Emphasize what you learned and the impact on you.** Do not just write about what happened; include why it was important to you and your journey. The goal is to help readers learn about YOU and not just what you did.
- **Do not just list or summarize your experiences.** Remember that this is what the work and activities section is for!
- **Do not focus too much on childhood experiences.** You may have had an early catalyst for pursuing a career in medicine, but medical schools want to know what happened next. What experiences or actions did you explore after that initial catalyst?
- **If you write about a challenging experience, be positive and don't focus on resentment or anger.** Focus on your strengths, growth, and resilience.
- **Be confident when writing about your feelings.** Don't be afraid to talk about your experiences, how you felt, and why you did what you did.
- **Format.** While there isn't a specific "template," your personal statement should include a distinct introduction, body, and conclusion.

General Writing Tips & Advice

- **Do not focus on character count at the beginning.** Focus on content. What do you want to convey? Once you figure that out, then work on editing your writing to fit the

character limit.

- **Do not rush your writing.** While there is a timeline to consider, allow yourself sufficient time to reflect on what you want to convey, and then write in a compelling manner.
- **Be sincere.**

The Autobiographical Sketch

While writing an autobiographical sketch isn't required, we do strongly recommend it to give to your support writers. An autobiographical sketch can provide helpful context about yourself, your abilities, experiences, motivations, and goals that can aid your support writers with the writing process. Additionally, it may be helpful to meet with your writers to discuss your application, if they are willing.

The self-reflection involved in writing an autobiographical sketch is a great way to begin the reflection that is essential for the application itself. The format is flexible. You can write your sketch as an essay or in sections. You can choose the topics you wish to write about based on what you think is most relevant or important (ex., family or childhood background, before college, academics, professional, extracurricular, or volunteer experiences, sports, music/arts, research, meaningful influences or experiences, passions, motivations for pursuing medicine, etc.).

The autobiographical sketch is also a place to share any unique challenges you have faced with your writers – if you want to. Feel free to discuss this with an advisor if you're unsure!

Self-Reflection & Questions to Consider

1. What were your formative experiences with your family, education, or community before college?
2. What experiences have you had over the years that have been meaningful to you?
3. How have you grown academically and personally? Do you have any academic challenges to discuss?
4. What classes have meant the most to you?
5. Have you conducted research? How has it been meaningful to you?
6. What extracurriculars or passions (music, athletics, etc.) are you involved in? How have they inspired or surprised you? What do you find meaningful about them?
7. Have you engaged in certain themes in your studies or experiences (ex., working with children, elderly, disadvantaged communities, etc.; research into autism, dementia, oncology, etc.)?
8. Why do you want to study medicine/dentistry? What has influenced and affirmed this choice? Who has influenced or inspired you?

Application Essay Prompts

1. Please provide an essay telling us how your background, experiences, and interests motivate you to pursue medicine. You may choose to write about challenges or obstacles you have overcome, activities that have sparked your interest, or experiences that have led you to want to become a doctor. (limit: 5300 characters)

2. Please reflect on your application and share something not addressed elsewhere that would be helpful to the Admissions Committee as we review your file. (Limit of 3,500 characters)
3. What aspects of the Geisel School of Medicine draw you to apply? Please include the characteristics and strengths you will bring to our program and how you hope to contribute to our community. (limit of 3,500 characters)
4. The Geisel School of Medicine values social justice and diversity in all its forms. Reflect on a situation where you were the "other." (limit: 3,500 characters)

Assessing Your Application

It's important to apply with a strong, competitive application. We are committed to helping you be well-positioned for success with personalized feedback based on our years of experience and assessment. We can review your academic and extracurricular portfolio to help you assess if any aspects of your application need strengthening. We can also help assess if it is in your best interest to apply to Geisel EAP, whether for personal, academic, or other reasons. We also recommend that you review the Geisel EAP requirements on your own beforehand to ensure you are eligible to apply. If you have any questions about these requirements, we are happy to discuss them with you.

You can schedule an appointment via Calendly with [Sarah Berger](#). If you are unable to find a time that works for you, please contact Rae Stokes at Health.Professions.Program@dartmouth.edu or 603-646-3377.

