

NEWS

Med School: It's Still Hard To Get In And Hard To Get Out

by Laurie Denise Willis
Staff Writer

Each year 160 applicants are accepted at the UNC—CH medical school.

Acceptance into the medical school is based on undergraduate grades, the medical college admission's test and interviews, according to Dr. Gregory Strayhorn, associate dean in academic development.

"The application process has several phases; first you get a general application from the American College Admission Service that can be used for most every medical school in the United States and completed it... if everything appears in order a supplementary application is sent and if that's accepted you're called in for two interviews," said Strayhorn.

Each applicant has two interviews on the same day, one with a faculty member and one with a student, according to Strayhorn.

"During the interview we get the chances to know the applicant better and the applicant gets to explain any questions that might have come out of the applications...it allows us to see how serious the students are about medical school" said Strayhorn.

He said based on the interview you may find some students who are

not suitable for the medical school.

There are no set standards for the interview; they usually last 30 minutes but it really depends on the interview, according to Strayhorn.

According to Dr. Marion Phillips, the interviews are a very important to the students and faculty. "The interviews are a two way street...you get two different perspectives one with those teaching and one with those who you'll be working with.

Phillips, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs said the applicant will often raises candid questions during the student interview.

The student may be in either one of his four years but most student interviews are in their second and third years, he said.

Another criterion for admittance, the medical college admissions test, is an examination that examines a student's knowledge in six areas: biology; chemistry; physics; science problems' reading skills and quantitative analogy, according to Phillips. "All areas are important...some individuals feel that one area is a better prediction than others but that is a matter of opinion."

The first two years of medical school are considered the basic science years with the first being

more basic than the second, according to Strayhorn.

"During the first year they take basic sciences," he said.

The second year is an organ system approach during which you study the heart, lungs and other parts of the body, according to Strayhorn.

The third year is the clerkship year and the students spend all their time in the hospitals doing rotations. Strayhorn said during this year they have a six week free period which allows them to elect which courses they take.

During the final year of medical school students are required to complete seven courses and five of them are electives.

"Many times people will take electives in areas they want to go in...they will work in those residency programs they're applying to," said Strayhorn.

"I sort of think that the way it's done could be changed...there should be more clinical focus in the basic science years," he said.

Strayhorn said most of the medical students are North Carolina residents. "We accept around 20 out-of-state students apply per year so it's very competitive."

Franklin Hatchette, a second year medical student completed two

years of undergraduate study at Georgia Tech University and the other two at North Carolina A&T our course introduction to medicine—which has some clinical references, but the first two years mostly deal with University.

Hatchette said he was interested in going into anesthesiology. Special interests decisions are usually made either before the students come here or after the third year.

He said during his first year in the medical school he studied eight hours daily Monday-Thursday, outside of class. He said he did not study any on Friday but he studied eight hours a day on Saturday and Sunday.

"It's all a matter of discipline...I studied an average of seven hours a day," he said.

This year Hatchette said he studied about six hours a day Monday-Thursday, still none on Friday, basically none on Saturday and six on Sunday.

Hatchette said he enjoyed the first year because the students were taught how to do histories.

"One of the most important things a doctor can do to try and find out exactly what's wrong with the patient is a history...it saves money, time, unnecessary tests and surgery," he said.

Hatchette said he also enjoyed doing the histories because it allowed him to interact with the patients.

Hatchette said he was working in the medical business because he liked working with people.

Black President Heads First-Year Dental Hygiene Class

by Dawn Reavis
Staff Writer

Minority recruitment in the dental hygiene program at UNC—CH is a major concern of Sonya Morris. Morris, a junior from Greenville, was recently the first Black to be elected president of a class in the dental hygiene program.

Of the 28 first-year dental hygiene students (juniors) only six are Black. "It's the most minority students the program has ever had," Morris said. "Of the 24 second year students (seniors) only have three minority students."

As president of her class, Morris is a mediator between the faculty and the students and required to attend Spergen Dental Society meetings.

"I was surprised when I was elected president of the first-year class because I am a minority in the group," she said. "It gives me incentive to work harder because everyone is looking to me for leadership." Morris added she was not treated differently because she was Black.

"I was surprised when I was elected president of the first-year class because I am a minority in the group," she said. "It gives me incentive to work harder because everyone is looking to me for leadership." Morris added she was not treated differently because she was Black. "At first white students seemed to watch me closely to see how well I would do, but now I think they know I can do the job," she said. "I try not to make judgements, and I let them know that I am here for them because I cannot help them if I do not know about the problems that exists."

"More Blacks should be encouraged to choose dental hygiene as a major because it is an excellent program," Morris said. She said she didn't know whether lack of publicity about the program or fear of the course load kept Blacks away.

Another reason Blacks may not be applying to the program is that they are afraid they will only learn to polish teeth, she said. "We also learn proper care of teeth and disease prevention. Many Blacks think that

dental hygienists have to work for a dentist the rest of their lives; however, with a B.S. you can teach at a community college, go into research or be employed by a hospital. And, with a masters degree in dental hygiene you can teach at a University."

Dental hygiene students are required to take 17 academic hours the first semester in the program. Morris said dental hygiene students and dental students take some of the same courses.

Morris said the hard work is not a problem for her. She finds consolation in the fact that she is a part of one of the best dental schools in the nation. "It takes time to adjust to the long hours and the tremendous amount of outside studying, but you get used to the work."

After completing the dental hygiene program, Morris intends to go to dental school and eventually set up her own practice.

She said UNC-CH was her only choice. "I chose Carolina because I knew that they had the only dental

school in the state, and I wanted to do my undergraduate work at the same school I planned to do my graduate work.

Morris said majoring in dental hygiene was not the only way to get into dental school; a student could also major in a natural science or anything else as long as you fulfill all the pre-requisites.

There is a pre-dent program at UNC-CH; however, this program does not offer you a degree upon completion nor does it guarantee that you will be accepted into the School of Dentistry, she said.

"I chose to major in dental hygiene because I will already know all the basics about the teeth, and I will be used to the course load that comes with being in a professional school," she said.

"All dental hygiene students who go into dental school will have a slight advantage over others because they will know exactly what they are getting into and they will have already taken two of the required classes for dental students."

A member of the Opeyo Dancers, a Black dance troupe on campus, Morris said she had a chance to relieve stress and tension. "It's fun and I enjoy dancing besides it's good exercise."