

20 Questions plus 2012 version

1. Why do you want to be a physician/dentist/health care professional?
2. What experience have you had in the last three years in a healthcare setting? How have these experiences helped you in your decision to pursue a health profession?
3. Outside of a healthcare setting, what have you done in the last 3 years to be of service to others? How have these experiences helped you in your decision to pursue a health profession?
4. Please describe any research – not necessarily science related – that you have done in the past 3 years, including anything of significance that involved you pursuing an interest independently, developing it into a research project, or working in a lab. What has your research experience meant for you? How did your project fit into the larger project/lab?
5. Explain how you are making an informed choice about a life in medicine. What do you know about what it is like to be a patient, directly or indirectly? What do you know about what it is like to be a physician?
6. Please tell us about your family. Some things you could include: What is your cultural background? What family structure/type of community did you grow up in? Did you live outside of the US during your childhood (Did you live in the US, conversely)? What are the occupations of your family income earners? Where did you grow up? How many siblings do you have? What are they doing?
7. Please describe your academic preparation in high school (public or private high school)? How was your transition to Cornell? Did you take AP courses in either science or non-science courses?
8. When you have been faced with multiple demands, how have you managed priorities – academic vs. extracurricular? How have you become better at this during your college years?
9. Who are your role models and why?
10. If we define a personal strength as something that, when you do it, makes you feel strong, competent, effective, as well as defining it as something you do well, what are your strengths? What do you think you are best at of the activities you regularly do in your daily life?
11. We will define a personal weakness as something that, regardless of your skill at it, when you do it, it drains you. Personal weaknesses could also include tasks for which you have an innate aversion, or simply things you don't naturally do very well. Given these definitions, what are your weaknesses? What are your principal faults? What do you think you are worst at of the activities you regularly do in your daily life? How do you try to overcome your weaknesses or faults?

12. How would your best friends describe you?
13. How do you handle your mistakes or errors? How would you handle them in medical practice?
14. In your college years, what did you do besides study a lot? Give an overview here in narrative form, concentrating on describing the big picture. What are your personal and talents? How did you become interested in your hobbies, pursuits, or avocation?
15. What life events or activities have changed you the most in the past 3-4 years and how have they changed you?
16. What experience have you had leading large or small groups of people? Think about leadership in broad terms that include not only offices you have held, but experiences such as tutoring and mentoring others.
17. If you could begin college again, what would you do differently? What would you do the same way again?
18. How have you developed cultural competence over the years since you lived at home? Do you think you gained cultural competence in your years at Cornell? Have you had international experience in a healthcare setting? Can you describe an experience or situation in which you became conscious that you were interacting with others who were different from you? How did it affect you?
19. Recognizing that you have much to learn about different medical careers, what type of medical practice interests you at this point? (Rural vs. urban? Primary care vs. specialty? Academic/research vs. private practice? Global health/International?)
20. What would you like to see emphasized in your HCEC Letter/application?

Supplemental Question - OPTIONAL: Have you ever been subjected to any institutional action, civil violation, or criminal action? Even if you were exonerated of charges, it is worth writing about them and discussing them with an advisor. In a separate place outside of the HCEC Registration, please describe what happened, what agencies got involved, and what you know about whether — and under what circumstances — the university or civil agency can or will report the action or offense to external parties. Finally, relate what you learned from the experience. If you have been subjected to such action, we suggest that you schedule a meeting to talk to the health careers advisor about this. This information is rarely used in a letter of evaluation, but with guidance, you can learn the best way to share it with schools.