



DOCTOR SCHOOL

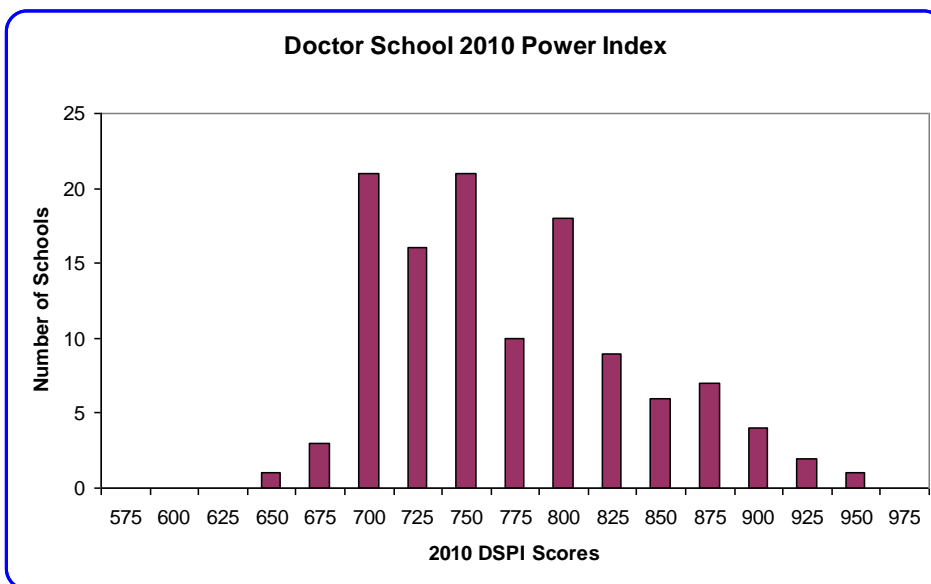
The 5 Things Every California Applicant Needs To Know

Your residence in the great state of California has made you more qualified for medical school and doctoring than you can imagine. But our great state is not showing the love back to you. Each of you should and can get into medical school and become a doctor. But by virtue of being a California resident you are up against some issues that residents of other states do not face. Here are five things of which you need to be AWARE:

1. California has some of the best medical schools in the country.

You should expect a great education, unlimited learning resources, and state-of-the-art everything from your medical school. One way to measure how schools compare to one another as they try to deliver these to you is to 'add up' some data. Other agencies also rate medical schools, and the schools themselves are quick to promote their high ranking on the annual lists of NIH funding and the US News and World Report™ surveys. **Doctor School** incorporates these ratings and then includes some features that students really value, such as tuition cost and peer accomplishments. The result is a student-oriented **Doctor School Power Index**.

The **DSPI** is designed to promote a program with very reasonable tuition, and vice-versa. The real difference between schools at the same >100 million-dollar NIH level is in what you have to pay to receive the benefit.



Three of the five UC medical schools rank in the top 10 of all schools nationwide. By any measure students get a tremendous experience for their tuition dollar at any of the UC medical school campuses, as well as at least USC and Stanford among the private programs.

Highest ranked programs on the 2010 DSPI chart

School		DSPI score
Johns Hopkins University	private	952
University of California - San Francisco	public	939
Washington University	private	926
University of Michigan	public	924
University of Pennsylvania	private	922
Yale University	private	906
Duke University	private	905
University of California - San Diego	public	900
University of California - Los Angeles	public	894
University of Washington	public	893
Baylor College of Medicine	private	889
Vanderbilt University	private	887
University of Pittsburgh	private	886
University of North Carolina	public	877
Stanford University	private	866
UT-Southwestern	public	865
Columbia University + Emory	private	862
Case Western Reserve University	private	858
Harvard Medical School	private	857
Mayo Clinic College of Medicine	private	850
University of Alabama	public	847
University of Colorado	public	846
University of Chicago	private	846
Mount Sinai School of Medicine	private	843
University of Oregon	public	839
University of Massachusetts	public	836
University of Wisconsin	public	827
Cornell University	private	826
Northwestern University	private	825
University of Maryland	public	824
University of Virginia	public	823
New York University	private	823
University of Iowa + University of Rochester	public	819
Indiana University	public	817
Albert Einstein College of Medicine	private	817
UT-Galveston Medical School	public	814
Boston University	private	813
University of Southern California	private	813
University of California - Irvine	public	812
University of Minnesota	public	811
Ohio State University	public	810
UT – San Antonio Medical School	public	807
University of California - Davis	public	805

2. You live in the worst state in the US for applying to medical school.

Approximately 5000 California residents apply to allopathic medical programs in California each year. The UC system medical schools, plus Stanford, USC and Loma Linda, enroll less than 1000 total students each year. This leaves, at a minimum, 4000 California resident applicants who do not place in California medical schools each year.

And, with a big “thank you very much”, two of the UC campuses admit a relatively large percentage of out-of-state students (UCSF = 20%, UCLA = 12%).

Top Ten Schools Ranked by Number of Resident Applicants per Available Seat

	Enrollment	Resident Applicants	Resident App/Seat
University of California - Irvine	104	3749	37.12
University of California - Davis	105	3774	36.64
University of California - Los Angeles	169	5013	33.87
University of California - San Diego	134	3611	29.36
Texas A&M	105	2649	27.59
University of California - San Francisco	163	3305	25.62
Stony Brook University	116	2026	20.26
Texas Tech University School of Medicine	140	2599	19.99
State University of New York Upstate	160	1853	18.53
Pennsylvania State University	154	1029	17.74

Take a good look at those ratios, because not only are they the worst in the country, but they are the worst by far. So what is a good California applicant supposed to do? If you get into a UC program then GO. If you have options to go to a private program then of course you would evaluate among your choices. But any UC program choice is a very good choice based on the [Doctor School Power Index](#).

If you do not get into a UC program then your options become private programs in CA or other states. And this leads us to the next thing you should know as a California resident.

3. California applicants are a cut above applicants from every other state.

The average California applicant presents an MCAT Biology score of 10.4, the average matriculant a total MCAT of 33, and the average matriculant a GPA > 3.6. By the numbers there is no comparison between the “average” California pre-med and pre-meds from the rest of the country. And do not let the high value of those numbers intimidate you if you do not have them. The point is that all programs are well aware that California students are in their own league, and even being “below average” compared to other California applicants means that you could be, and likely are, “above average” compared to applicants from other states.

So take some assurance that your residency does confer a positive impression in and of itself to experienced admissions officers. And now let's punch that assurance in the belly as we move to Thing Number Four.

4. It is a numbers game...but not in the way you might be thinking.

There are too many of you for the system. Outside of California you are eligible primarily only for private programs. Some of those programs will be out of your reach for the same reasons that the UC programs might have declined to interview you. So that leaves the tier of private programs that are more liberal in terms of how they regard MCAT and GPA. This tier is not secret, of course. In fact, quite the opposite. If medical schools are ranked by the total number of applications they receive in a single year, here is how they would look:

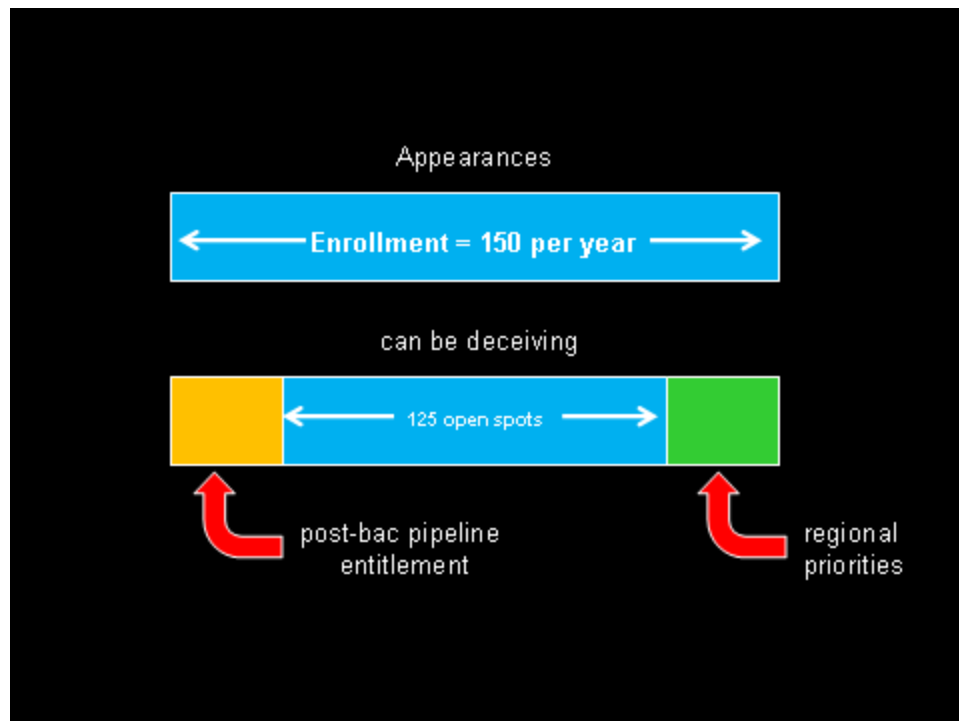
Program	Type	Enrollment	Total Applicants
George Washington University	private	177	13082
Drexel University	private	281	12174
Boston University	private	168	11137
New York Medical College	private	195	10652
Georgetown University	private	190	10643
Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine	private	190	9835
Temple University	private	178	9715
Loyola University School of Medicine	private	146	9487
Jefferson Medical College	private	259	8997
Albany Medical College	private	144	8897
Tufts University	private	173	8883
University of California - Los Angeles	public	169	7824
University of Chicago	private	112	7787
New York University	private	160	7573
Northwestern University	private	169	7527
Wake Forest University	private	120	7485
Albert Einstein College of Medicine	private	184	7416

The numbers are staggering. Better than one in every four applicants in the entire country applies to GW. Five programs receive MORE THAN 10,000 applications a year. So while you are appealing to those programs just by virtue of being a California resident, how are you going to break out of a population that nearly beats the number of people who try out for American Idol?

p.s., did you see the only public school on that list? D___!

A secondary, but still important, consideration is that the number of seats a medical school appears to have is not always the number of seats that truly are open to competition. Many schools have arrangements with post-baccalaureate programs such that a certain (usually small) number of seats are reserved only for graduates of those post-bac programs. So the reason you pay \$20k for those programs is not because you get a killer one-year education. It is because you are competing only

against other graduates of that post-bac program for a spot at the liason medical school. Still other reductions in the actual number of available seats come about because of regional priorities. Delaware residents, for example, have access to dedicated seats at Thomas Jefferson University; likewise, Maine residents have access to Dartmouth (and University of Vermont) seats. So be aware that enrollment sizes are not all that they appear to be at some private programs.



5. NUMBERS get you interviewed. FIT TO MISSION gets you accepted.

There is no getting around the value of high MCAT and GPA numbers on your application. But your keys to success beyond having competitive numbers rely on your FIT TO MISSION, a concept explored in detail throughout [DoctorSchool.org](http://www.doctorschool.org). Within the UC system, each campus has its own identity and (explicit or otherwise) mission. Your secondary essays are key to showing admissions committees that you get the mission of their program and are the right fit for it.

As an example, one reason UCSF admits more out-of-state students is because it seeks an eclectic group of over-achievers (not just on the numbers). UC-San Diego, on the other hand, prides itself (rightfully so) on its research prowess. Global Health sells very well at UCSF but not so well at UC-Irvine or UC-Davis, which are the patient-based, primary care oriented campuses. And so on. But how are you supposed to know this? Short of being able to reconnaissance each campus and its history in person, you might need some help. By all means inquire with the

admissions directors (in terms of “What kinds of doctors thrive in your curriculum?, or “Do you think that your program emphasizes primary, secondary or tertiary care professional training?”). Visit campuses as often as possible to get a feel, if you can. If you have the financial means, use a consulting service (such as [Doctor School](#)). They are part of the system and so can help you see it from the inside – out.

And, no matter what, being a California resident obliges you to amp-up the basics of good application behavior. The following list is something that many pre-medical students are advised to abide, but ESPECIALLY California pre-medical students.

- **APPLY EARLY**
- **Apply widely to private programs**
- **Apply TO THE MISSION. The UC programs do not all have the same mission. The same is true for private programs. Applying to the mission is the best way to differentiate yourself if you do not have superlative differentials elsewhere in your application.**
- **If money and time are available, explore the post-bac universe.**
- **If the MCAT is not your thing, consider the DO option.**
- **If the MCAT is your thing, consider the DO option. It is better to have an option that you can decline than it is to wait another year.**