

U.S. Visiting Student FAQs

1. Who can apply to the Visiting Student Program at Baylor College of Medicine?

Baylor College of Medicine (BCM) partners with the AAMC® Visiting Student Learning Opportunities (VSLO) portal. Students must use the Visiting Student Application Service (VSAS) found in VSLO to apply for electives at BCM. Visiting students must be in their **FINAL YEAR** of study to be accepted to a visiting rotation.

Visiting Student applications are accepted from students attending medical schools that are LCME accredited and affiliated with VSLO. These medical schools can be located in the United States or Puerto Rico.

2. What are the basic eligibility requirements for the Visiting Student Program?

Visiting Student rotations are designed specifically for students enrolled in their **FINAL YEAR** of medical school with a current status of Good Standing with their institution. Please check individual listings in the [BCM Electives Catalog](#) for details.

3. How can I apply to the Visiting Student Program at Baylor College of Medicine?

Applicants should submit a completed application in the VSLO portal. You can find our institution page on the [VSAS Website](#). For more information on VSAS, please visit www.aamc.org/vsas, or contact VSAS at vsas@aamc.org by email and (202) 478-9878 by phone.

4. Can I send paperwork directly to the department or a faculty member?

No. All application documents and supporting material will **ONLY** be accepted through VSLO.

5. Is it possible for my elective application to automatically move to another elective if I am not accepted for my original choice?

No, you must submit separate applications for all electives and timeframes you are interested in attending at BCM. The VSAS system does not allow users to shift the application from one elective to another. You must apply to all electives individually (even if they are within the same department).

6. My home institution requires that an affiliation agreement be signed in order for me to complete a rotation at Baylor College of Medicine. Is this possible?

Yes, Baylor College of Medicine participates in AAMC Affiliation Agreements between home and host institutions. Once you have accepted the elective offer on VSAS, have your VSAS home representative contact Baylor's Senior Coordinator to begin the initiation process. You may contact the Senior Coordinator at visitingmed@bcm.edu.

7. When should I submit my application on VSAS?

Each elective month will automatically close in VSAS exactly **45 DAYS PRIOR** to the start date of the elective. After this deadline, VSAS will close the rotation timeframe and no further applications (including applications to additional electives) will be accepted for that month of rotations. Please refer to [BCM's Academic Calendar](#). Incomplete applications will be marked ineligible.

8. Can I modify Baylor College of Medicine's calendar?

All visiting students **MUST** follow the Baylor College of Medicine [Academic Calendar](#). Please do not apply for electives that you will not be able to attend for the full rotation period.

9. I know a Faculty member who has told me that I may attend their elective. Is automatic acceptance allowed?

Knowing a BCM Faculty member **DOES NOT** guarantee acceptance to rotate at Baylor College of Medicine. To assure credit and fairness, processing is the same for all students. Scheduling is done upon the holistic review of a complete application. All applications are reviewed and processed in VSAS by the Senior Coordinator in the Office of the Registrar at BCM.

10. Can a department reserve a space for me on a rotation?

No, pre-approval is not permitted. All applications must be reviewed by the Senior Coordinator. To preserve applicant fairness, our departments, coordinators, and faculty cannot override enrollment in elective rotations.

11. How can I find out about availability of a rotation?

Please DO NOT CONTACT course directors, department heads, or the Senior Coordinator regarding availability.

This information fluctuates due to add/drop requests from BCM students and therefore cannot be maintained in real time. For this reason, all electives are considered open unless it has been closed in VSAS. There is no guarantee that an elective will have availability at the time that you apply. Please apply to any and all electives you are interested in taking at BCM. Please refer to [BCM's Electives Catalog](#) and the VSAS elective description for when an each elective is offered.

Application Processing

12. How are applications processed by BCM through VSAS?

The Senior Coordinator confirms an applicant submitted all the required portions of an application and that (s)he meets all of the basic requirements. All applicants are required to submit a photo, official transcript (uploaded in VSLO by home institution), AAMC Immunization form, and CV.

Basic requirements for visiting students, verified by documentation provided by the home school include the following:

1. Enrolled in the final year of medical school (or equivalent) at the start of the elective.
2. Good academic standing.
3. Completion of the home school's clinical core clerkships.
4. Passing score on either USMLE Step 1 or COMLEX Level 1 examination.
5. Additional requirements / pre-requisites may be found on the Elective Course Catalog.
6. The student has completed a criminal background check

If the requirements are not met at the time of application, the basic requirements must be met prior to the start of the rotation. All requirements must be met no later than 2 weeks before the start of the rotation.

Additional qualifications verified by the home school are OSHA, ACLS, BLS, Mask Fit, and HIPAA certifications, as well as student personal health insurance, immunizations, tuition, and elective credit verifications.

If an application is missing an item or contains an error, the application will be marked "ineligible" and the student will be notified via email. An ineligible application will only be reconsidered once the necessary corrections are made and the Senior Coordinator is notified via email at visitingmed@bcm.edu (no phone calls).

Once the application has been marked "eligible," each submitted application is reviewed by the specific department to determine if the application meets all the elective specific criteria. The application status is listed as "Pending Host Institution Review" until the elective application is accepted/denied. If the individual application DOES NOT meet the criteria stated in the BCM Electives Catalog, then that application may be marked as "denied." In this case, the student will receive an email notification of this application status change. Applicant spaces are not first come, first served. Having an application "Available for Scheduling" does not automatically guarantee acceptance. The department will review the application and determine if an offer should be made based on academic merit and availability as well as any other criteria, as determined by the department itself.

13. What are my chances of an acceptance? How can I improve my chances?

Slots are extremely limited. Visiting Students are placed only after BCM Students are scheduled. Summer and Fall months (July through October) are extremely popular for students. We cannot guarantee nor confirm chances of acceptance. Decisions are typically made 4-6 weeks before the start of the rotation.

14. What communications can I expect regarding my VSAS application?

VSAS will notify you by email regarding the following:

a. When your application is released by your home school

This email is automatically sent to an applicant the moment your home school has released your application to BCM for processing.

b. If your application is missing any documents or has any errors in either the supplemental or required documentation

An “ineligible” email is sent to the applicant if the application is missing any required documents.

c. Once your Application is Accepted or Denied

You will be notified by the Senior Coordinator or via a VSAS generated email.

15. Can an incomplete application be processed? How will I know if my application is complete or not?

Incomplete applications will be marked as ineligible, and will only be reconsidered once the missing document(s) are uploaded/corrected in VSAS.

Once the necessary information is made available on the VSAS application, an email must be sent to visitingmed@bcm.edu so that the application can be reviewed again. **NO PHONE CALLS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** It is the responsibility of the student to submit a complete application for consideration.

NOTE: The immunization form is considered part of the application. Applications without the immunization form will be considered incomplete.

Applicants should carefully review our [Institution Information Webpage](#) and [BCM’s Electives Catalog](#) descriptions for the electives to which they have applied to ensure that they have submitted all requirements.

16. How long does the review of my application take?

Applications will be reviewed 6 weeks prior to the elective beginning. All decisions will be made by the department 4 weeks prior to the elective rotation start date.

17. How can I find out the status of my application?

Please refer to the VSAS Website regarding your status of submitted applications.

Students use their **VSAS Tracking Tab** to view each submitted application and its current status. Common VSAS application statuses are defined below:

- **Pending Home School Release:** The submitted application is at the home medical school and has NOT yet been received by the host institution.
- **Pending Host Institution Review:** The submitted application was released by the home medical school and is available to the host institution for review and processing.
- **Offered:** Student has been offered an elective and may now accept or deny this offer.
- **Denied:** Student's elective/date request was denied by the host institution.
- **Accepted:** Student has accepted an elective offer.

Please check VSAS for the most up to date status of your application. **DO NOT CONTACT COURSE DIRECTORS, ELECTIVE COORDINATORS, OR FACULTY REGARDING THE STATUS OF YOUR APPLICATION.**

Malpractice Insurance

18. What if my current malpractice insurance coverage does not meet Baylor’s required \$3 million aggregate/ \$1 million each occurrence?

All applications require an acknowledgement stating that you will provide proof of additional malpractice coverage, or that you will purchase additional coverage through BCM. If applicable, the Senior Coordinator will reach out to you regarding additional coverage after you have accepted and paid for an elective rotation at BCM.

Please note that military students will be required to purchase malpractice insurance through Baylor College of

Medicine, regarding of coverage provided by their home institution. This will be available for purchase via a link that the Senior Coordinator will send out after the elective offer is accepted in VSLO.

Transcripts

19. What if a grade for one of my core clerkships does not appear on my official transcript?

At a minimum, the pre-requisite(s) must be met and appear on the transcript your home institution has uploaded to your VSAS application. Please submit your most updated transcript. If a grade is unavailable, your home school will be able to verify in VSAS the date you have or will complete a core rotation or other course.

Health Records

20. Does Baylor use the AAMC standard immunization form?

21. Yes, the AAMC Immunization Form is a requirement for all applications. A substitute form is not permitted; however, you may attach additional health documentation. Please follow instructions carefully and upload all required lab tests, reports, etc. Incomplete health records will delay your application processing, and you may risk not starting on a desired date.

22. Does Baylor require proof of COVID vaccinations?

Yes, proof of COVID vaccinations must be uploaded with the application upon submission in VSLO. Students that do not have any COVID vaccinations or that are not fully inoculated at the time of application will need to provide updates regarding their vaccination status, should they be accepted for a rotation. Please note that the rotation hospital site policies will override any Baylor policies regarding COVID vaccination requirements. For example, the hospital site will have the right to cancel the student rotation, should the student not meet their COVID vaccination requirements.

23. How does the health record review process work?

Your immunization form is reviewed by the Baylor College of Medicine Occupational Health Program (OHP) once you have been accepted to an elective. BCM's Occupational Health Program will determine medical clearance for all visiting students.

24. How will I know if my records are cleared by OHP?

Once the Occupational Health Program at Baylor College of Medicine has reviewed your health records, you will be notified by email **only if they determine that your records are incomplete. It is then your responsibility to submit the missing immunization forms immediately to OHP (not the Senior Coordinator or VSAS) in order to gain clearance.** Applications with health records that OHP has determined as incomplete will be placed on hold, and the student will not be allowed to rotate at BCM until all missing documentation is received by OHP.

Fees

25. Are there any fees to rotate at Baylor College of Medicine?

Yes, a registration fee of \$165 is charged per elective when a student is accepted to a rotation. The fee must be submitted within 7 days of receiving a payment information email from the Senior Coordinator. This email is only sent if a student has accepted an offer in VSAS. **Failure to submit this fee will result in the withdrawal of the offer.**