



Undergraduate Academic Affairs Academic Advising

Pre-Health Advising · 141 Mary Gates Hall · (206)543.2550 · prehlth@uw.edu

Pre-Health Information - Medical School

Explore

Motivation for medicine/personal characteristics

A qualified applicant to medical school must have not only a general understanding of the profession, but also a demonstrated interest in and awareness of medical and social issues. Prospective applicants should be prepared to answer the question, “Why do you want to be a physician?” with a response that goes beyond “I want to help people.”

Experience

Desirable qualifications are a well rounded academic background, a knowledge of and exposure to the needs of individuals and society, and an awareness of current health care delivery systems. Diversity and cross-cultural competency are critical. Further, motivation for medical careers can be measured in part by the candidate’s exposure to health-care environments.

Choosing a Major

While a bachelor’s degree is necessary to be a competitive applicant to medical school, **medical schools do not give preference to any particular major**. You should be considering majors that align your interests, passions, and abilities. Your departmental adviser, in partnership with your pre-health adviser, can help ensure you take the appropriate pre-requisite courses for medical school as part of your coursework.

Prepare

An excellent medical school applicant will have a strong grade point average, both overall and in the pre-requisite coursework. Additionally, a strong applicant will have competitive MCAT scores. Beyond grades and test scores, medical schools will look for ample time spent shadowing a physician, experience volunteering in a clinical setting, and both research and leadership experiences.

Prerequisite courses for most medical schools are listed below; you should review the admissions information for each of your desired schools to be sure you are meeting all coursework and other requirements.

| Math/Stats | Chemistry | Biology | Physics | Behavioral Science | English |
|------------|--------------|---------|--------------|----------------------|----------|
| MATH 124 | CHEM 142/145 | BIO 180 | PHYS 114/117 | PSYCH 101 | COMP |
| or | CHEM 152/155 | BIO 200 | PHYS 115/118 | <i>Psychology</i> | ENGL LIT |
| QSci 291 | CHEM 162/165 | BIO 220 | PHYS 116/119 | <i>Bioethics</i> | ENGL LIT |
| | | | or | GWSS | |
| | CHEM 237/335 | | PHYS 121 | <i>AES</i> | |
| | CHEM 238/336 | | PHYS 122 | <i>Anthropology</i> | |
| | CHEM 239/337 | | PHYS 123 | <i>Global Health</i> | |
| Stats | CHEM 241/346 | | | <i>Public Health</i> | |
| | CHEM 242/347 | | | <i>Geography</i> | |
| | | | | <i>Sociology</i> | |
| | BIOC 405 | | | | |
| | BIOC 406 | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Sample Schedule 1: No gap year

| | Autumn | Winter | Spring | Summer |
|----|----------|-----------|--------------------|----------|
| FR | MATH 120 | QSCI 291 | PSYCH 101 | |
| | CHEM110 | CHEM 142 | CHEM 152 | |
| | | Comp | Behavioral Science | |
| SO | BIOL 180 | BIOL 200 | BIOL 220 | CHEM 239 |
| | CHEM 162 | CHEM 237 | CHEM 238 | CHEM 242 |
| | | | CHEM 241 | |
| JR | PHYS 114 | PHYS 115 | PHYS 116 | |
| | PHYS 117 | PHYS 118 | PHYS 119 | |
| | BIOC405 | BIOC 406 | Statistics | |
| SR | ENGL | ENGL | | |
| | | Sociology | | |

Other Important Activities

Freshman Year

- Meet with your general adviser
- Consider taking GEN ST 297, "Pre-Health 101"
- Consider joining a pre-health RSO
- Begin establishing relationships with faculty for future letters of recommendation
- Identify summer volunteer, research, and/or leadership opportunities related to medical field
- Review pre-health website

Sophomore Year

- Meet with your general adviser
- Check in with a pre-health adviser
- Continue involvement with pre-health or other RSO
- Pursue meaningful clinical experiences (paid, volunteer, and/or research)
- Begin researching medical schools and MCAT on AAMC site

Junior Year

- Meet with your departmental adviser
- Meet with a pre-health adviser to strategize coursework, MCAT, and application(s) timing
- Consider taking GEN ST 297, "Pre-Health Application Class" in winter or spring quarter
- Seek leadership position(s) in RSO or other activity
- Continue meaningful clinical experiences
- Finalize list of 10-15 medical schools
- Familiarize yourself with application to medical schools: AMCAS or TMDSAS (TX only)
- Request recommendation letters

Spring quarter:

- Take MCAT by mid-April (or earlier)
- Apply to medical schools beginning June 1 (opens May 1)

Senior Year

- Meet with your departmental adviser
- Meet with a pre-health adviser to prepare secondary application materials
- Prepare for campus visits and interviews
- Receive acceptances!
- Notify schools you will not be attending
- Complete UG coursework and graduate!
- Apply for financial aid as early as possible

Sample Schedule 2: Gap year

| | Autumn | Winter | Spring | Summer |
|----|----------|----------|------------|----------|
| FR | Comp | MATH 120 | CHEM 152 | |
| | CHEM 110 | CHEM 142 | PSYCH 101 | |
| SO | MATH 124 | BIOL 180 | BIOL 200 | |
| | CHEM 162 | CHEM 237 | Statistics | |
| JR | BIOL 220 | CHEM 238 | PHYS 114 | CHEM 239 |
| | ENGL | CHEM 241 | PHYS 117 | CHEM 242 |
| SR | PHYS 115 | PHYS 116 | ENGL | |
| | PHYS 118 | PHYS 119 | Sociology | |
| | BIOC 405 | BIOC 406 | | |

Other Important Activities

Freshman Year

- Meet with your general adviser
- Consider taking GEN ST 297, "Pre-Health 101"
- Consider joining a pre-health RSO
- Begin establishing relationships with faculty for future letters of recommendation
- Identify summer volunteer, research, and/or leadership opportunities related to medical field

Sophomore Year

- Meet with your general adviser
- Check in with a pre-health adviser
- Continue involvement with pre-health or other RSO
- Pursue meaningful clinical experiences (paid, volunteer, and/or research)

Junior Year

- Meet with your departmental adviser
- Check in with a pre-health adviser
- Seek leadership position(s) in RSO or other activity
- Continue meaningful clinical experiences
- Begin researching medical schools and MCAT on AAMC site

Senior Year

- Continue meaningful clinical experiences
- Meet with pre-health adviser to strategize coursework, MCAT, and application(s) timing
- Finalize list of 10-15 medical schools
- Consider taking GEN ST 297, "Pre-Health Application Class" in winter or spring quarter
- Familiarize yourself with application to medical schools: AMCAS or TMDSAS (TX only)
- Request letters of recommendation

Spring quarter:

- Take MCAT by mid-April (or earlier)
- Apply to medical schools beginning June 1 (opens May 1)

After Graduation

- Continue meaningful clinical experience
- Meet with pre-health adviser to prepare secondary application materials
- Prepare for campus visits and interviews
- Receive acceptances!
- Notify schools you will not be attending
- Apply for financial aid as early as possible