

# Want a Career in Health Care? Who should I talk to?

There are many sources of advice and support for you along your path to a career in a health profession. Current students should first meet with their academic adviser and then make an appointment with a Pre-Health Career Coach.

Not sure who to meet with? Use the chart below to understand how an adviser or coach can help you.

## ACADEMIC ADVISING

Meeting with an adviser can help you prepare for your chosen healthcare career by:

- Helping you decide which courses you need for your chosen health professional school and when to take them
- How to choose the major that is the best fit for you
- How to combine major requirements with pre-health requirements

*Advising Office  
Mary Gates Hall (MGH) 141  
206-543-2550  
Washington.edu/uaa/advising*

## CAREER COACHING

Meet with a Pre-Health Career Coach who can help you with questions about:

- Which health career is the best fit for you
- Getting clinical experience & exposure
- Getting involved in research & leadership activities
- Your timeline for preparation & application to health professional schools

*The Career & Internship Center  
Mary Gates Hall (MGH) 134  
206-543-0535  
Careers.uw.edu*

## For Additional Information & Resources:

- For more information about what it means to be “pre-health” at UW and resources on how to explore, prepare, and apply to professional health programs, please visit UW’s Pre-Health Portal: <https://www.washington.edu/uaa/prehealth/>
- For more information on how to meet with a career coach, where to find clinical experiences, and video resources, please visit the UW’s Career & Internship Center Pre-Health Webpage: <https://careers.uw.edu/pre-health/>

## For Pre-Health Assistance & Questions:

- 30-Minute Appointment with a Pre-Health Career Coach: Please make an appointment through Handshake: <https://uw.joinhandshake.com>
- 15- Minute Drop-Ins with a Pre-Health Career Coach: Fall 2019: Tuesdays 10AM-12PM & Thursdays 2-4PM at the Career & Internship Center MGH 134. First come, first serve. Please sign in at the front desk.
- Email: [prehlth@uw.edu](mailto:prehlth@uw.edu)



# Pre-Health FAQs Handout

## Where do I get started as a Pre-Health Student?

A great place to get started is to visit UW's Pre-Health website where students can access all of our support services as they explore, prepare for and apply to health professional school.

We advise students who are in the exploration stage to first meet with their advisors (either general in UAA, departmental, and/or OMA&D) before meeting with a Pre-Health Career Coach at the Career & Internship Center to talk about the preparation and apply stage.

## What should I major in?

Students can **major in anything** along the way towards a career in health and health care. Health professional schools don't consider an applicant's major in the admissions process. Keep in mind that choosing a career in health care is not one decision but a series of decisions based on exploration, investigation and reflection. **Just completing a major is not enough to be successfully prepared for a health care program.** Students should continually assess their academic readiness, motivation, and skills in sciences as well as humanities and social sciences. Getting involved in health care (volunteering and shadowing) as well as community service are essential elements to exploring what the profession is really about and if it is a good match.

## How can I get clinical experience?

Students are encouraged to complement their coursework with clinical exposure every quarter. We encourage students to think about clinical experience in two ways: **professional-facing time** (e.g. shadowing, scribing) and **patient-facing time** (e.g. volunteering or working in a clinical setting). Students can explore health-related volunteer opportunities on the C&IC website.

## Is research a requirement or necessary to get into health professional school?

While research experience is not a requirement for most health professional schools, they provide students the opportunity to explore the intersection of research and medicine, to confirm which career is the best fit with their skills and interests. Research experience may add an extra layer to a student's application if the institutions where they are applying have a research focus, or if the student is particularly interested in research. While many students think that lab research is most important, experience with social science research is just as fascinating and valuable. Visit the UW Undergraduate Research Program and attend an Undergraduate Research Info Session to learn more about research opportunities at UW.

## How do I finish everything before I graduate?

There is no need for students to rush complete all of their prerequisite coursework before graduation. Whereas in the past it was common for students to apply to health professional school before their senior year, it is increasingly common for applicants to take multiple "gap years" after graduation to gain more clinical experience, prepare for exams, travel and prepare for application. Health professional schools are looking for evidence of **maturity** in a strong application, and older applicants have more life experience which usually translates into more maturity. Taking extra time to finish college will not negatively affect an application, and may even strengthen it. Students who want to complete all of their prerequisite coursework before they graduate are encouraged to work closely with general and departmental advisers to ensure that they are completing all of their graduation requirements along the way. Finishing all requirements before graduating

will require a relentless focus on time management to ensure balance in completing coursework, gaining clinical/research/leadership experience and prioritizing self-care.

**How do I find out what prerequisites I need to take?**

A good place to start is to the Explore section of the UW Pre-Health website where we provide several Career-Specific Planning Guides. Because every health graduate program is different, we encourage students to research specifically into the schools they are interested in and start gathering information on what their prerequisites are.

**How important is my GPA?**

Even though an applicant's GPA is important to health professional schools, admissions committees consider many factors in their selection processes. Admissions committees look for upward trends in applicants' grades during their college career, as it is expected that a student's performance improve as they build their skills and knowledge in the classroom. Inconsistent academic performance (variable grades, frequent withdrawals) may indicate to admissions officials that an applicant may not be able to handle the rigors of health professional school. Students should be sure to prioritize self-care along with their studies and co-curricular activities – their academic success should not determine their self-worth.

The importance of GPA varies from school to school so we encourage students to do their research by attending information sessions and getting to know a school's admission process. GPA is one of many factors in the admission process. We encourage students to research schools they are interested in and take note of not only the average GPA, but the range (10<sup>th</sup> -- 90<sup>th</sup> percentiles) in which students are accepted.

**Where can I seek help for my application to pre-health professional schools?**

Students can make a 30-minute appointment with a pre-health career coach on Handshake to go over their materials. Students are encouraged to send their materials at least two days in advance via email to give the pre-health career coach enough time to look over materials.

Students can also access various workshops that cover this topic. Please see C&IC website events calendar to see when these workshops are happening. Students are also encouraged to access their departmental advisors, professors, and/or mentors to help with the writing process. Students can also see and make appointments with tutors at the Odegaard Writing and Research Center (OWRC), CLUE Writing Center, Instructional Center (IC), and other departmental writing centers.

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**What other questions do you have for your adviser or pre-health career coach?**

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2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Please bring these questions to your adviser or pre-health career coaching appointment.

*Note: If your questions are about course planning, please see your advisor first.*



CAREER & INTERNSHIP CENTER  
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON  
Division of Student Life

# UW CAREER & INTERNSHIP CENTER AUTUMN 2019 PRE-HEALTH CALENDAR

## Pre-Health Drop-Ins

- 15-minute time slot, first come first serve,
  - Please sign in at the C&IC front desk
  - Fall 2019:
    - Tuesdays, 10:00AM-12:00PM
    - Thursdays, 2:00PM-4:00PM
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## Workshops

Please register on Handshake!

SEP  
30

Pre-Health: Getting Started Workshop

Monday, September 30, 2019  
1:30pm - 2pm  
134 Mary Gates Hall

<https://uw.joinhandshake.com/events/360815>

OCT  
24

Getting Great Clinical Exposure Workshop

Thursday, October 24, 2019  
1:30pm - 2pm  
134 Mary Gates Hall

<https://uw.joinhandshake.com/events/360818>

Please check Handshake or <https://careers.uw.edu/events/student/> periodically to see additional workshops, updates, or events.