Medical School Admissions Information and Strategies

Contact Information:
Pre-Health Professions Advisement Office
124 Health & Public Affairs Bldg. I
(407) 823-2670
www.biomed.ucf.edu
ALLOPATHIC MEDICAL SCHOOL

The American Association of Medical Colleges suggests that applicants reflect upon the following questions:

- Do I care deeply about other people, their problems, and their pain?
- Do I enjoy helping people with my skills and knowledge?
- Do I enjoy learning, gaining new understanding? Do I often dig deeper into a subject than my teacher requires? Do I understand the value of learning beyond just making good grades?
- Am I interested in how the human body functions? Am I intrigued by the ways medicine can be used to improve life?

If you answered “Yes” to most of these questions, chances are you have the right kind of personality for a medical doctor.
The first two years of medical school are devoted to the study of basic sciences—anatomy, biochemistry, physiology, microbiology, pathology, and pharmacology—as well as behavior sciences.

- Students also begin learning the fundamental techniques of taking a medical history and examining patients.

Next, during years three and four, students go into the hospital and various clinics to observe and work with experienced doctors and begin to learn how to take care of patients.

- At this time, students begin to explore the wide variety of career paths within medicine, such as family practice, internal medicine, surgery, psychiatry, obstetrics and gynecology, and pediatrics.
The student's final year is spent in continuing contact with patients and doctors in a clinical setting while taking elective courses.

After medical school, graduates will spend three to seven years in a residency, where they will gain further experience and training in the specialty they have chosen. The graduate already may have an idea of which specialties interest him/her; however, it is good to keep an open mind until the third year of medical school.
- Medicine has many rewards—personally, intellectually, and financially.
  - On average, doctors make about $160,000 a year, but this amount can vary depending on where physicians live, what type of medical specialty they practice, and how many hours per week they practice.
  - Doctors sometimes schedule themselves into working long hours. Physicians spent an average of 57.6 hours per week in professional activities in 2001, according to the AMA’s *Physician Socioeconomic Statistics, 2003-2004 Edition*.
- All states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico require a license for the practice of medicine.
  - To qualify for a license, an applicant must graduate from an accredited medical program and pass a state board proficiency examination.
- There are 130 allopathic medical programs in the United States, six of which are in Florida, at the University of Florida, University of Miami, University of South Florida, and at Florida State University. The two additional medical schools in Florida, located at the University of Central Florida and Florida International University, have welcomed their entering classes in 2009.
Entrance Requirements

- In general, a minimum of the baccalaureate degree is required prior to entering an allopathic medical program, though some outstanding applicants are accepted without the completion of a degree.

- The science and non-science GPAs are considered separately by schools, with the former usually carrying more weight. Some schools pay particular attention to the required science courses in biology, chemistry, and physics. The most recent grades are weighted more heavily.
To serve as a guide, the following is a list of minimal entrance requirements to the Allopathic Medical Programs in general, requirements at each school vary slightly. Please check the individual school catalog.

A. Minimum College Units
120 Semester Hours (B.A. or B.S. degree).
Three of the six Florida allopathic medical colleges offer the option of a combined B.S./M.D. Program, thus not requiring a total of 120 Sem. Hrs to enter such a program.

B. Science Courses (Numbers are applicable to UCF only)
**Biological Sciences with Laboratory – 6-8 Sem. Hrs.**
Biology I (BSC 2010C)
Biology II (BSC 2011C [not required for Molecular Biology and Microbiology majors]).
Other recommended courses include: Genetics (PCB 3063), General Microbiology (MCB 3020C), Human Anatomy (ZOO 3733C), and Human Physiology (PCB 3703C)
Minimum requirements cont’d

Chemistry with Laboratory – 14-16 Sem. Hrs.
- General Chemistry I (CHM 2045C)
- General Chemistry II (CHM 2046)
- Organic Chemistry I (CHM 2210)
- Organic Chemistry II (CHM 2211)
- Other recommended courses include Biochemistry I (BCH 4053C)

Physics with Laboratory – 8 Sem. Hrs.
- College Physics I (PHY 2053C)
- College Physics II (PHY 2054C)

Mathematics – 6-8 Sem. Hrs.

C. Non-Science Courses
- English/Communication Skills - 6 Sem. Hrs. [1 year]
Letters of Recommendation

Five letters of recommendation are suggested, and it is helpful that one be from a practicing M.D. After the student requests the letters of recommendation from the letter writers, the Pre-Health Professions Advisement Office (PHPAO) offers UCF students the service of sending letters of recommendation to respective schools on behalf of the applicant. Letters sent through the PHPAO are kept confidential and are only sent for the purpose of admission to a health professional school. If the applicant chooses to apply independently of the PHPAO, letters must be sent directly to the admissions office of the chosen school or to the national application service organization (AMCAS).

Interview

A personal interview, arranged only by invitation of the Admissions Committee is required. In addition to competitive academic and national test requirements (MCAT), applicants invited for interviews typically possess a rich array of extracurricular qualifications including extensive clinical and research exposure. Many medical schools have recently adopted a policy of requiring an on-the-spot essay to be written at the interview. The topics for these essay are usually personal in nature and do not require research on any topic.
Degree/Major

- Any major is acceptable as long as the minimal entrance requirements listed above are met. Traditional majors with degree requirements that satisfy minimal entrance requirements are biology, microbiology and molecular biology, and chemistry. Non-traditional majors seldom include the biology, chemistry, physics, and mathematics required for admission.

- Applicants are generally appraised on the basis of their academic performance record (undergraduate), the admission test (MCAT), clinical exposure/experience, personal attributes, extracurricular activities/diversion involvement, service to others, and a personal interview.

- A sustained record of high-level academic performance while carrying heavy credit-hour loads is the hallmark of successful applicants. The recommended format is 15+ semester hours per term with at least two science classes per semester.
Financial Aid

► There is a wealth of federal and state financial aid available to students in the health professions, as well as loans with low interest rates and even forgiveness programs for certain kinds of service. No student should ever decide to forego a medical education because of cost.

► Contact the financial aid officer for the schools of interest to make necessary arrangements for a financial aid package. Catalogs for M.D. programs in the U.S. are available in the Pre-Health Professions Advisement Office.

► At least 90% of allopathic medical students graduate with debt-owing an average [among only those with debt] of more than $142,000.

► Financial aid is available in the form of student loans (Federal Stafford Loan, Federal Unsubsidized Loan and Federal Perkins Loan).

► Check also: Medfund Loans (1-800-665-1016)
  Teri Loans (1-617-426-9681)
ADMISSION TEST

The MCAT is required. Currently, this test is offered 25 times per year beginning in late January and ending in mid-September, with no offerings from October to December, and February. As opposed to the previous “pencil and paper” approach which lasted until August 2006, the MCAT is currently offered only in electronic form and its length has been reduced by 33% as has been the length of the testing time (one-half day). The original four testing categories (Verbal Reasoning, Physical Sciences, Biological Sciences, and the Writing Essay) have been retained, and the test value of each category (1-15) remains the same.

MCAT (Medical College Admissions Test)
MCAT Program Office
P.O. Box 4056
Iowa City, IA 52243-4056
(319) 337-1357
www.aamc.org/mcat
Study Sources

► Kaplan Test Prep and Admissions MCAT Programs
3403 Technological Avenue Suite # 13
Orlando, FL 32817
(Office also located in UCF Student Union)
(407) 273-7111
www.kaptest.com/mcat

► Princeton Review MCAT Prep Programs
400 N. New York Avenue #214
Winter Park, FL 32789
(800) 2REVIEW
(407) 647-6010
www.princetonreview.com

► UCF Test Prep Courses
UCF Test Prep Program
(407) 882-TEST
www.testprep.ucf.edu

APPLICATION SERVICE

American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS)
Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)
Section for Student Services
2450 N Street NW
Washington, DC 20037-1123
(202) 828-0600
http://www.aamc.org
RESOURCE MATERIALS

Medical Professions Admissions Guide: Strategy for Success
National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions, Inc.
P.O. 1518
Champaign, IL 61824-1518
(217) 355-0063
(217) 355-1287 fax
www.naahp.org

Medical School Admission Requirements, U.S. and Canada
Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)
Section for Student Services
2450 N Street NW
Washington, DC 20037-1123
http://www.aamc.org
(202) 828-0600

Get Into Medical School! A Guide for the Perplexed
By Kenneth V. Iserson, M.D.   ISBN 1883620236
Galen Press, Ltd.
(800) 442-5369
fax(520) 529-6459

Pre-Health Professional Career Handouts And Advisor’s Notes
(on each 4-year health profession)
Available in the Pre-Health Professions Advisement Office
(407) 823-2670
MEDICAL EDUCATION

PRE-MEDICAL

1 2 3 4

BACHELOR DEGREE

MCAT, DAT, etc.
& Apply

4

MEDICAL SCHOOL

1 2 3 4

Basic Medical Sciences

CLINICAL ROTATIONS

USMLE (NBE)
Part I: BMS

USMLE (NBE)
Part II:
Clinical Sciences

4

POST GRADUATE RESIDENCY TRAINING

1 2 3

R1 R2 R3

MEDICAL DOCTORATE

MEDICAL DOCTORATE

Internship Year

USMLE Part III: Specialty

State Board Exam

Board Certified in Specialty

(Certain Specialties)

R4 R5 R6

STATE BOARD EXAM

ATTENDINGS

3
Health Professional Links

➤ Allopathic Medicine
  - American Medical Association
    ➤ www.ama-assn.org
  - Association of American Medical Colleges
    ➤ www.aamc.org

http://www.naahp.org/prof_linksflat.htm
A SAMPLE OF THE BASIC CURRICULUM

The first two years are usually a balance between general education requirements (for all majors) and getting started with your major degree requirements. For pre-health professions students, this means including the basic biology, chemistry, physics, and mathematics courses that all medical, dental and other health professional schools require. Therefore, these years allow limited scheduling flexibility and should be essentially the same (for all pre-health professional students regardless of their elected major.)

A typical schedule for the freshman and sophomore years would look something like this........
A SAMPLE OF THE BASIC CURRICULUM
(continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Freshman: Fall</th>
<th>Semester Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHM 2045</td>
<td>Chemistry Fundamentals I</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSC 2010C</td>
<td>General Biology I</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>MATHx</td>
<td>(See Below)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENC1101</td>
<td>Composition I</td>
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<td>Total 14 or 15</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th>SPRING</th>
<th>Semester Hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHM2046</td>
<td>Chemistry Fundamentals II</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>CHM2046L</td>
<td>Chemistry Fundamentals Lab</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZOO2010C</td>
<td>General Biology II</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATHx</td>
<td>(See Below)</td>
<td>3 or 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENC1102</td>
<td>Composition II</td>
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<tr>
<td>LD</td>
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<td></td>
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## A SAMPLE OF THE BASIC CURRICULUM (continued)

### Sophomore: Fall

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<thead>
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<td>CHM2210</td>
<td>Organic Chemistry I</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHY2053C</td>
<td>College Physics I</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCB3020C</td>
<td>General Microbiology</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATHx</td>
<td>(See Below)</td>
<td>3 or 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*LD</td>
<td>General Education Program</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Total 18 or 19**

### SPRING

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Semester Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHM2211</td>
<td>Organic Chemistry II</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHM2211L</td>
<td>Organic Chemistry Lab</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHY2054C</td>
<td>College Physics II</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCB3063</td>
<td>Genetics</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCB3063L</td>
<td>Genetics Lab</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LD</td>
<td>General Education Program</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total 15**

(Note: Remember the summer term to spread out the sophomore science load)
Ideally, your mathematics courses should include a statistics course plus at least one semester of calculus. The college physics sequence PHY 2053C and PHY 2054C will satisfy admissions requirements.

To complete the picture, your junior year might include PCB 3703C-Human Physiology, and at least one additional biology or molecular biology/microbiology course.

- Your senior year should include the biochemistry sequence, BCH 4053 and BCH 4054 (at least the first one), one biology or molecular biology/microbiology course and the remainder of your major and general education requirements.
- This rigorous program has limited flexibility, but it is the type which should make you competitive for admission.

If you elect a non-traditional major which requires courses quite different to those for pre-health professions students, you must be prepared to spend additional time in school in order to integrate all requirements and complete your degree. Because a limited number of science courses are offered during summer terms, you should plan to take most science requirements during the regular academic year.
For Success

- 15 semester-hour loads with 2+ sciences
- Attend class religiously / Sit in the first 6 rows
- Take meticulous notes / Organize all notes and handouts
- Check notes with 2 other high-achiever classmates
- Avoid studying alone completely / Form study groups
- Develop superb time-management skills / Priorities
- Finish strong during the last 3 weeks of each semester
- Maintain an O/GPA close to or above 3.5
- Show an upward trend in GPA as you progress

- Make informed judgments based upon fact, reality and the truth
- Avoid assumptions, half-truths and the student rumor factory
- Gain meaningful clinical exposure/experience
- Select meaningful electives
- Establish a sound Service-to-Others Record
- Follow instructions implicitly and pay attention to details
- Take admission test only after: Completing all relevant coursework
  Exhaustive review of:
  * Betz Guide *Columbia Review
  *Princeton Review *Kaplan
STRATEGY 1
(CAREER AWARENESS)

- Enroll in SLS 2311, Overview of Select Medical Careers, (Spring Semester) through the department of Molecular Biology and Microbiology.

- Review pertinent materials and other information in the Pre-Health Professions Advisement Office (PHPAO) on a periodic basis.

- Visit your pre-health advisor on a regular basis to assess your progress.

- Join a pre-health student organization on campus for mutual support and greater career knowledge.

- Attend pre-health conferences, workshops and meetings, on and off campus, to maximize your career understanding.
STRATEGY 2
(ACADEMIC PREPARATION)

- Choose a major which includes the pre-health course requirements in its degree curriculum.
- Visit your academic advisor early on in your career to develop a sound plan of study.
- Be smart in balancing your course load every term with science and non-science subjects for a maximum performance output.
- Remember that admissions committees prefer to see a strong GPA coupled with a respectable number (14-16) of credit hours per term.
- Identify classmates in each course who seem responsible and hard working, and recruit them into your study group for best learning results. Study groups are the passport to better grades.
- Attend all classes without fail and sit as close to the front of the classroom as possible.
- Get to know your professors well. Remember, they will write your letters of recommendation.
- Take selected, upper-division science courses as soon as feasible, as they will better prepare you for national admission tests and your career ahead.
- At all times, keep the course admissions requirements for your chosen career uppermost in your academic plan.
- Critically important: READ, READ, READ (books, magazines, newspapers) to increase speed, comprehension, and knowledge of current events THROUGHOUT your career.
STRATEGY 3
(APPLICATION PREPARATION)

- Review a current Admissions Requirements handbook for the health professional career you are interested in pursuing.
- Visit the PHPAO to view materials related to prospective schools you may apply to.
- Once identified, maximize your knowledge of your selected schools through the web or additional printed materials (catalogs) requested directly from them.
- Secure information about all admission test preparation/review materials available either as commercial courses, printed materials or computer software. The on-campus pre-health organizations are a good source of information.
- Remember: Take the test only when fully comfortable with your level of preparation, never earlier.
- Prepare for your national admission test over a sustained period of time, increasing the intensity of your efforts as test time approaches. If needed, decrease your course load for that semester.
- Timely submit your Pre-Application Materials packet (PHPAO), application service materials, and later your secondary applications. Be extremely careful in observing due dates and deadlines, as well as specific instructions.
- Work on your personal statement over a sustained period of time. Discuss it with your pre-health advisor and recognize its importance in the selection process.
- Critically important: Take courses, workshops, and tutorials which emphasize reading/writing skills as early as possible and throughout your career.
STRATEGY 4
(EXTRACURRICULAR PREPARATION)

- Begin on campus, as early in your career as possible, by joining a pre-health student organization. Don’t be just a regular member...become an officer, as it shows leadership traits.

- Take the initiative by establishing a record of service to others. Assist the community through blood drives, food drives, tutoring, Sunday school, etc.

- Gain clinical exposure in your chosen profession by joining structured volunteer programs in hospital/clinics. Shadow healthcare professionals to best learn about the challenges and rewards of the profession.

- Paid clinical activities are as good as volunteer ones. Committees will give you as much credit, so don’t shy away from them.

- Exposure to basic research (test tube) or clinical research (patients) activities has become an important item in admissions decisions (some schools more than others.) Do it for as long as possible prior to application and beyond.

- During the “waiting period” (between application and admission): Continue to excel academically and to perform your extracurricular activities. Prepare for the committee interview through “mock” interviews and a lot of research about interview techniques, remembering that in the end, it is best for you just to be yourself. Do not pester admissions offices with repeated inquiries about the status of your application. Show patience and restraint. Take science courses that will prepare you for the first two basic science years in health professional school.
PLEASE CONTACT US AT:

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