

Required Coursework (Undergraduate)

Regardless of what your college major may be, all pre-med students must complete all of the required core science courses during their undergrad studies. Before applying to medical school all students must have completed and passed the following:

- 2 introductory courses of Biology with labs
- 2 General Chemistry courses with labs
- 2 Organic Chemistry courses with labs
- 2 courses in Physics
- One upper level Biochemistry course though the full year sequence would be better
- 2 courses in mathematics usually at least up to Calculus 1
- 2 courses in English/Writing
- 2 introductory courses in the behavioral sciences usually being Psychology and Sociology.

These courses are required in order to prep students in studying for the MCAT as well as be able to get a basic understanding in all of the general core science areas. It is important to do well especially in these required core classes. When applying to medical school a good science GPA is key and will look great on your application. A science GPA of 3.6 or better will definitely serve you well.



ADVICE FOR FUTURE MED STUDENTS

“Take Pride in Your Education. In college, do what makes YOU happy, not what you think will impress admissions committees. Do your research and find out what classes are required for your med school(s) of choice. After that, take the classes that you want and need to graduate. Don’t be fooled into taking hard classes because you think it will make you look good – an Engineering degree with mediocre GPA isn’t impressing anyone. Instead, choose classes that allow you to succeed. Med schools want to see that you love learning, because as a physician that’s what you’ll be doing for the rest of your life.

Stay Curious. Ask questions, dare to look stupid, and don’t assume anything! Navigating the path to medical school can be hard if you’re doing it all alone. The best way to get more info is to call the medical school’s admissions office. Call them as often as you have questions. In undergrad, find an advisor who has had previous students get into medical school, and see if they can put you in contact. The more people you talk to the more you will learn that lots of people are willing to help you reach your goals.

Embrace Your Community. Whether it’s your town, city, college campus, sports team, Church, or whatever if you see what makes your community special you can take advantage of it. Discover what is going well in your community and contribute to it to make it even better. Or, if there’s something in the community that’s not so great, try to use the strengths to make it better. By showing active involvement in your community, you learn a ton of real-life skills that overall will make you a better practitioner in the future”.

– Alyssa Espinoza,
New Mexico Highlands University Alumni
Class of 2016 and current Medical student at
the University of New Mexico.

The Guide For The Pre-Med Hopeful



By: Adrian George



What is a Pre-Med Student

Choosing to become a Pre-Med student is choosing a “Pre-Professional” student path with a focus on medicine. A pre-professional student is one who has chosen an academic pathway that will be ultimately leading them towards a post baccalaureate graduate school in order to obtain some sort of license to practice or professional licensure. In terms of medicine, a student must first complete undergraduate studies while also completing the required coursework to apply to medical school. The student will then take the MCAT as well as complete the medical school application prior to attending medical school. Once accepted the student will undergo 4 years of medical school followed by 3-7 years of residency training before they are eligible for medical licensing.

The MCAT

What is the MCAT?

The MCAT is the medical college admissions test required to take by all pre-med students prior to applying to medical school. The MCAT score is considered the single most important factor considered for medical school admission. The MCAT is designed to provide a common metric for evaluating the academic preparation for all medical school applicants. The test takes approximately 7-8 hours to complete and includes four sections:

- Biological and Biochemical Foundations of Living Systems
- Chemical and Physical Foundations of Biological Systems
- Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior
- Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills

Scores in each of the four sections range from 118 (low) to 132 (high) with a score of 125 being the center for each section score. Each of the four sections are then summed up to report an overall MCAT score which tend to range between 472 and 528 with 500 being the midpoint for all. The average MCAT score for previously accepted and enrolled medical students being 508.7. It is recommended to take the MCAT at least a year prior to the semester in which you wish to begin medical school. This is because MCAT take about one month to be returned to the tester, and are important to know to determine whether or not you are going to want to take the test again before submitting your application.

Applying to Medical School

The application process for students looking to attend medical school should begin 12-18 months prior to the semester in which classes begin. For example, if you wish to attend medical school starting fall of 2021 you must begin the application towards end of your spring 2020 semester of undergrad. The application required is the American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS) application. Along with the AMCAS application you will also need to provide:

- Your continually updated autobiographical sketch or essay
- A list of professional and personal references as well as a number of recommendation letters
- All college-level transcripts
- MCAT scores

Other things to include and that would look good on your application are those that prove your dedication to medicine. This can be either various numbers of hours spent shadowing physicians or even volunteer work at local hospitals or clinics. It's important to show that you are active in your goal to become a future physician.

Post-Application

After having submitted your application to the schools of your choice you may be contacted by those schools to schedule an interview. It is important at this point to be sure and research medical school interview questions as well as complete as many mock interviews as possible in order to get a feel for the interview environment as well as be well prepared with intelligent and decisive answers. Go in with confidence and prove to the interviewer that you deserve to be a medical student.