[Pre-Medical and Pre-Dental Advising Office](#)
Information for Orientation Advisors
Summer 2021

This information is for advisors to use in counseling students interested in preparing for application to allopathic medical schools (MD programs), osteopathic medical schools (DO programs), dental schools, and physician assistant programs.

1. **Required Coursework:** Most health professions programs require some college mathematics, biology, chemistry, and physics as part of their specific course prerequisites, but many also have requirements related to statistics, psychology, social sciences, and upper division sciences.
   - Health professions programs typically speak in terms of "a broad liberal arts preparation with completion of the core math and science prerequisites."
     - Students should major in the area(s) they are most interested in; they do not have to major in one of the sciences or health science related programs, but they have to do well with their math/science coursework.
     - For specific information regarding course requirements and expectations, please visit the [Course Requirements](#) page on our website.
2. **Breadth, depth, and rigor:** Each student's program should achieve a mix of sciences and other subject areas within each semester so that they take a good balance of humanities, social sciences, and sciences.
   - See our page on [Breadth, Depth, and Rigor Expectations](#) for more information.
3. **Suggested Courseload:** Our general rule of thumb is to have a student begin with **two** math/science selections per semester and then move to three math/science selections once the student has established a strong performance record.
   - Exceptionally strong students can proceed with the traditional three math/science selections in the first year (Calculus, General Chemistry, and Principles of Biology) if their record clearly suggests they will be able to manage this load.
4. **AP Credit:** Health professional schools differ in their policies related to Advanced Placement credits; for more information, visit the [AP Credit Policies](#) page on our website.
   - **General rule of thumb**: Advise students to bring in AP credit if the student has:
     - Achieved a 4 or 5 on the AP exam,
     - Taken the course in the junior or senior year of high school, **and**
     - Reports a very strong laboratory component for the high school course taken.
   - In instances where all of these conditions are <u>not</u> met, talk through the student's comfort level and strength of high school preparation and make your best call.
   - In cases where the student/parent argues that if AP (or ECE) credits are earned, then the student should bring them in regardless, they will need to understand the implications of doing so. We encourage you to refer them to our [AP Credit Policies](#) page.
5. **ECE Credit:** General rule of thumb: bring in ECE work if the student has an A- or better grade.
   - For students clearly headed toward allopathic medical school (MD) programs, the median college GPA for students matriculating to allopathic medical school programs now sits at a

3.7+, so students need to recognize that if they bring in a B+ (3.3 GPA) they will already have to make up some GPA ground on other applicants to medical school programs.

6. **A final note about AP and ECE**: We are here to fashion a sound and challenging collegiate experience for our students; we do not want students repeating work when they have demonstrated competence and are well equipped to move on to other challenging upper-division work. Counselor judgment is key.

7. **Community College and Summer Coursework:** Some professional schools do not accept community college credits, and some caution against pursuing the course prerequisites as summer courses. Refer to specific schools' websites for more information.

8. **Applying to Health Professions Schools:** Health professions schools engage in holistic admissions. This includes consideration of the following elements as they assess and review applicants:
   - **Academic metrics:** Strength of overall GPA; strength of science GPA; score on MCAT, DAT or other qualifying exam; breadth, depth, and rigor of coursework
   - **Involvement in health-related experiences**, including shadowing and direct patient care experience
   - **Demonstrated leadership and service experience,** particularly in the health professions
   - **Clear motivation for pursuing this field**
   - **Familiarity with current issues in health care**
   - **Investment in and demonstration of proficiency in the Core Competencies**

9. **School-Specific Guidelines:** To explore course prerequisites of specific medical or dental schools, visit consult each school's catalog and/or the Medical School Admission Requirements (MSAR), Choose DO Explorer, or ADEA Official Guide to Dental Schools.
   - For most advising situations, it is best to identify the traditional core requirements of most schools and to note that each school may have some additional course selections they require or prefer. We are happy to work with students throughout their process.

Finally, while we note the basics needed for medicine, dentistry, and physician assistant programs below, we also encourage you to visit our website for more information and resources:

Medicine	Dental Medicine	Physician Assistant
English (year)	English (year)	English (year)
Calculus (varies)	Calculus (varies)	Statistics (varies)
Statistics (varies)	Principles of Biology (year)	Principles of Biology (year)
Principles of Biology (year)	General Chemistry (year)	General Chemistry (year)
General Chemistry (year)	Organic Chemistry (year)	Organic Chemistry (semester)
Organic Chemistry (year/varies)	General Physics (year)	Anatomy & Physiology (year)
General Physics (year)	Biochemistry (semester)	Biochemistry (semester)
Biochemistry (semester)	Microbiology (varies)	Psychology (year)
Other advanced biology (varies)		Genetics/Cell Biology/
Behavioral/social sciences (varies)		Microbiology (semester)

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any further questions!
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Learn more about our advisors here