



## Pre-Med Advising Sheet

Admission to medical school is highly competitive. The Medical School Admission Requirements (**MSAR**) is published annually by the Association of American Medical Colleges and is an excellent resource to help students interested in medical school.

Educational philosophies and goals, undergraduate course requirements, and other admissions requirements vary by medical schools. However, they all stress the importance of a strong background in science, communication skills, and a breadth of knowledge in social science and humanities. Medical school usually takes four years of college to obtain the M.D. degree of which two years are dedicated to basic sciences and two years to clinical rotations. Residency can last anywhere from three to five years for sufficient clinical training. Some schools offer joint degrees such as MD/PhD, MD/MPH, or MD/MBA.

### Choosing an Undergraduate Major

“Pre-med” is **not** a major at universities. You should give careful consideration to your choice of major and select an area of study that interests you. Most medical schools do not require a specific degree in order to apply. Instead, they are looking for a well-rounded applicant who does well in the medical school admissions requirements. However, students should select an appropriate major that could lead to an alternative career, if necessary. The majority of entering medical students have four years of college completed and a baccalaureate degree. However, students with only three years of undergraduate coursework could be accepted. Students applying to medical school need to plan carefully and complete not only the medical school admissions requirements, but also the requirements for their undergraduate major and the general education required by the undergraduate transfer institution.

### Medical School Selection Criteria

Most schools require that you apply through the American Medical College Application Service (**AMCAS**). Visit their website (see recommended websites section below) and become familiar with the policies, procedures, and expected turnaround times. Read the FAQ section carefully on their website.

- Completion of the **prerequisite coursework**.
- **Bachelor’s Degree** or 3 or more years of undergraduate coursework.
- **GPA** in terms of overall college grades and science grades are a major factor in the selection process.
- Score on the Medical College Admission Test (**MCAT**), a standardized, multiple-choice examination designed to assess problem solving, critical thinking, and writing skills in addition to the examinee's knowledge of science concepts and principles prerequisite to the study of medicine.
- **Research experience/community service/leadership**
- **Letters of recommendation** from science faculty, non-science faculty, and a supervisor from relevant clinical experience, research, or relevant work.
- **Interviews** with faculty from the institutions you apply to.

### Recommended Websites

American Medical College Application Service	<a href="http://www.amcas.org">www.amcas.org</a>
Association of American Medical Colleges	<a href="http://www.aamc.org">www.aamc.org</a>
MCAT information	<a href="http://www.aamc.org/students/mcat/">www.aamc.org/students/mcat/</a>
MSAR information	<a href="http://www.aamc.org/students/applying/msar.htm">www.aamc.org/students/applying/msar.htm</a>
Osteopathic Medicine	<a href="http://aacom.org">http://aacom.org</a>
Volunteer Medical School Advising	<a href="http://www.naahp.org">www.naahp.org</a>

## Medical School Pre-requisite Courses

Medical School Pre-requisite Courses	Citrus College Courses
One year of English	ENGL 101 & 102, 103 or 104
One year of Biology	BIOL 124 & 125
One year of General Chemistry	CHEM 111, 112
One year of Organic Chemistry	CHEM 210/211 & 220/221
One year of Physics	PHYS 201 & 202 or 203
One year of Math	MATH 190 or 191



## Medical School Frequently Asked Questions

### Is there a pre-med major ?

Medical schools do not care what an applicant's undergraduate major is as long as the requirements for admission to medical school are met. In brief, the courses required for admission to medical school are: **1 year of English, 1 year of general chemistry with lab, 1 year of organic chemistry with lab, 1 year of biology with lab and 1 year of physics with lab.** But even taking all of those courses easily leaves room for a non-science major should you prefer that. Your major should be what you are most interested in exploring intellectually. If that is science, fine. If you are interested in the humanities or social sciences, that is also fine.

Premed students have majored in art, anthropology, environmental studies, management, philosophy, psychology and religion etc.

### What are the majors that medical schools look for?

Medical schools really don't care what your major is as long as you have taken the courses required for admission to medical school. Major in whatever you want, and do well in it....if it is science, fine. If it is non-science that is fine. There is no advantage to any particular major.

### Will AP credit satisfy pre-med requirements?

The majority of the medical schools in the United States accept AP credit for mathematics and physics. However, they do not accept AP credit for biology, chemistry or English.

### What kinds of experiences are helpful for medical school admission?

You must have some exposure to health care and people who are sick to make sure this is a field you truly want to enter. You should understand the changing nature of health care in this country and feel comfortable discussing the ethical and public policy issues that impact the delivery of health care. You should also be able to demonstrate strong interpersonal as well as intellectual skills.

### Do I need to do research to get into medical school?

One does not need to do research to get into medical school. However, if you are applying for an MD/PhD, and then research experience is necessary just to ensure you (and the medical schools) that you indeed do enjoy research. What is required to get into medical school is some sort of experience (during summers and/or the school year) that has put you in a setting where you gained exposure to health care and people who are sick. You need to be able to articulate why you have medical school and the practice of medicine as your goal and that articulation needs to be experientially based.

### How and when do I apply to medical school?

Application to medical school begins about 14 months prior to matriculation. So if you wanted to matriculate into medical school in 2010, you would take the MCAT (medical school admission test) in spring of 2009 (or earlier) and apply in early summer 2009.

Interviews would be the fall and winter of 2009, and ideally you will know where you are accepted during the winter or spring of 2010.

There is a centralized application service (AMCAS) that the majority of medical schools require you to use. You can obtain the application from either Career Services or the Pre-Med Advisor. The electronic version (AMCAS-E) can be downloaded from the internet and is much easier to use. We recommend that you use the electronic version of the application.

### When do I need to take the MCAT?

You need to take the MCAT the Spring before you apply (typically in April of your Junior year). If you have completed the background coursework, you could also take the MCAT earlier than that. It is possible to take the August MCAT and still apply the previous June, but it delays your application as the schools wait for your scores, so it is not recommended. There are several companies (Kaplan and Princeton Review) that can help you study/review for the MCAT. Kaplan often offers a free mock-MCAT exam on Eckerd's campus. I recommend you take the mock exam to get a feel for the amount of information on the test and the style in which the test is written. The MCAT exam is offered every April and August.