Getting Started

Admission to medical school involves rigorous academic preparation and student involvement in healthcare related activities - volunteering and community service outside the classroom. Together, each contributes to the development of the individual student and serves in providing the academic foundation, insight and perspective into what it means to practice medicine, an understanding of the health care needs of our society, and finally toward each students professional development. Combined, these elements of premedical preparation are part of a process of a holistic review of applicants.

This guide should be used in conjunction with the following websites that will be a part of your future as a student and as an applicant. All Texas residents apply to medical school through the website of the Texas Medical and Dental Schools Application Service (TMDSAS): [www.tmdsas.com](http://www.tmdsas.com). The website for the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), [www.aamc.org](http://www.aamc.org), is an excellent source of information for premedical students and should become a part of your everyday resources on all things premedical and medical. The American Medical Colleges Application Service, (AMCAS) is a part of the AAMC website and is used for applying to the Baylor College of Medicine, and out-of-state programs, if appropriate. Information on osteopathic medicine (D.O.) and applying to out-of-state osteopathic medical colleges is found at the website of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM): [www.aacom.org](http://www.aacom.org).

Pathways to Medical School

Course work in the basic sciences, social and behavioral sciences, and the humanities all contribute to becoming a well-rounded applicant, and each has relevance to the practice of medicine and to prepare for the MCAT. Therefore, students should seek a broad education during their undergraduate years. Students should choose a major that reflects their personal interests, but also be guided by what will be helpful in preparing for medical school. This should include course work that provides insight into the practice of medicine, health care and society more broadly. All applicants to medical school, however, must complete a minimum set of prerequisite courses, described below, in addition to the course work for the major they choose.

There is no required major for entrance to medical school programs. All undergraduate majors at UTSA can be found in the university catalog at: [www.utsa.edu/academics/ugrad-degree-programs.html](http://www.utsa.edu/academics/ugrad-degree-programs.html).

Prerequisites for Texas Medical Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UTSA Course Prerequisites:</th>
<th>Tracking your Grades:</th>
<th>UTSA Prerequisites:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Prerequisites Must Receive C or better</td>
<td>Program Prerequisites Must Receive C or better</td>
<td>Does the course require a prerequisite? Yes* or No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIO 1404 Biosciences I</td>
<td>BCMP (Biology/Chemistry/Physics/Math) GPA:</td>
<td>BIO 1404 - Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIO 1122 Biosciences Lab</td>
<td></td>
<td>BIO 1122 - Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIO 1413 Biosciences II</td>
<td></td>
<td>BIO 1413 - Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIO 2313 Genetics</td>
<td></td>
<td>BIO 2313 - Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 hours Upper Division (UD) Biology**</td>
<td>UD BIO</td>
<td>**See advanced biology electives list on back page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHE 1103 General Chemistry I</td>
<td>CHE 1103</td>
<td>CHE 1103 - Yes*: Chemistry placement test or CHE 1073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHE 1121 General Chemistry I Laboratory</td>
<td>CHE 1121</td>
<td>CHE 1121 - Yes*: Concurrent registration in CHE 1120 required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHE 1113 General Chemistry II</td>
<td>CHE 1113</td>
<td>CHE 1113 - Yes*: Concurrent registration in CHE 1130 required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHE 2603 Organic Chemistry I</td>
<td>CHE 2603</td>
<td>CHE 2603 - Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHE 2612 Organic Chemistry II</td>
<td>CHE 2612</td>
<td>CHE 2612 - Yes*: Concurrent registration in CHE 2610 required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHE 3643 Organic Chemistry II</td>
<td>CHE 3643</td>
<td>CHE 3643 - Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIO 3513 Biochemistry</td>
<td>BIO 3513</td>
<td>BIO 3513 - Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td>or</td>
<td>or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHE 4303 Biochemistry</td>
<td>CHE 4303</td>
<td>CHE 4303 - Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHY 1603 Algebra-based Physics I</td>
<td>PHY 1603</td>
<td>PHY 1603 - Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHY 1611 Algebra-based Physics I Laboratory</td>
<td>PHY 1611</td>
<td>PHY 1611 - Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHY 1623 Algebra-based Physics II</td>
<td>PHY 1623</td>
<td>PHY 1623 - Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHY 1631 Algebra-based Physics II Laboratory</td>
<td>PHY 1631</td>
<td>PHY 1631 - Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRC 1013 Composition I</td>
<td>WRC 1013</td>
<td>WRC 1013 - No*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRC 1023 Composition II</td>
<td>WRC 1023</td>
<td>WRC 1023 - Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STA 1053 Basic Statistics</td>
<td>STA 1053</td>
<td>STA 1053 - Yes*: Math placement test (if required)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td></td>
<td>or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STA 1403 Probability and Statistics for Biosciences</td>
<td>STA 1403</td>
<td>STA 1403 - Yes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td></td>
<td>or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 2073 Statistics for Psychology</td>
<td>PSY 2073</td>
<td>PSY 2073 - Yes*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All UTSA course requirement prerequisites can be found in the online UTSA Undergraduate Catalog. Click on "Course Descriptions" within your assigned catalog. UTSA Undergraduate online catalog at: [utsa.edu/ucat/index/html](http://utsa.edu/ucat/index/html)

Developmental Courses

Students who are not academically prepared to go directly into required prerequisite courses may need to enroll first in developmental courses. These include mathematics or writing courses which are designed to build your collegiate academic foundation. Placement tests in math and chemistry are available through UTSA Testing Services: [http://www.utsa.edu/testing/](http://www.utsa.edu/testing/)

Time Line For Applying to Medical School

For traditional undergraduate students the first three years of university studies is when the premedical courses are completed. These prerequisite courses are also foundational for the MCAT, which should be taken, ideally, during the spring semester of junior year, January - May. The application process through TMDSAS begins May 1st and closes October 1st. It is more favorable to apply during the first half of the application cycle, but is not always possible. During the fall of senior year competitive applicants are invited to interview at medical schools, and during the final year complete undergraduate requirements. All premedical requirements should be completed prior to the MCAT and the application. Performance in the premedical courses and MCAT exam determines an applicants’ academic competitiveness.

Apply

For a first time college student, the time required to earn a Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) or (D.O.) is typically eight years: four years earning a bachelors degree (and required pre-requisites) and four years in medical school. Residency typically ranges three to eight years depending on specialty.

It is not unusual, however, that a student will decide later in their academic career to pursue medicine. Arriving at the decision later does not necessarily place a student at a disadvantage. It will, however, require a student to postpone the application to medical school until pre-requisites and admission requirements are fulfilled.

The University Health Professions Office (UHPO)

University of Texas at San Antonio
Multidisciplinary Studies Building (MS), Room 3.02.10 (Main Campus)
[www.utsa.edu/healthprofessions](http://www.utsa.edu/healthprofessions)
(210) 458-5185
hpoffice@utsa.edu

Placement tests in math and chemistry are available through UTSA Testing Services: [http://www.utsa.edu/testing/](http://www.utsa.edu/testing/)
An integral part of preparation for medical school entails involvement in community service projects and volunteer work in a hospital or clinical setting. These activities serve to familiarize prospective medical students with the realities of everyday clinical practice as well as to underscore the role of physicians and healthcare in relation to broader community level concerns and issues. Students must exercise personal initiative and develop professional relationships that would allow them to have this supervisors, who know them from various perspectives and know them well. Many medical schools also highly value letters from physicians whom students have shadowed. Referees letters of evaluation from individuals, such as professors, work supervisors, and volunteer opportunities is available on the UHPO website. http://utsa.edu/healthprofessions/volunteer.html

We do not, however, provide a list of available shadowing experiences as we encourage students to build their own professional network and opportunities. For additional tips, please seek the AAMC “Get Experience” section: https://www.aamc.org/initiatives/admissionsinitiative/competencies/

AAMC also provides full information including test format, preparation materials, registration and is the primary source of information to begin preparing for the exam. It can be found at: www.aamc.org & www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/ When do I take the MCAT? To be an early applicant to medical school, it is extremely important to take the test with adequate preparation. Disciplined review and preparation for the exam should begin a minimum of six months prior to testing.

Texas Medical Schools - (except Baylor College of Medicine) utilize the Texas Medical and Dental Schools Application Service (TMDSAS) at: www.tmdsas.com
Out of State Allopathic Medical Schools - (Including Baylor College of Medicine) utilize the American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS) at: www.aacomas.org/students/applying/amcas/
DO Schools - Utilize the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOMAS) www.aacom.org

Joint Admission Medical Program (JAMP): The program was created by the Texas Legislature as Senate Bill 940 to provide support and services to “highly qualified, economically disadvantaged students” who want to become physicians. Admission to JAMP is selective and limited. Students must meet with the JAMP Faculty Director during freshman year to review coursework and eligibility, submit a formal “Intent to Apply,” and formally apply online by October 1st of their sophomore year. For more information, please review the website at: http://www.utsystem.edu/jamp/ and contact the UHPO for additional information and advisement.

Application Process

Advanced Biology Electives Relevant to Medical Education:
The following subjects in biology have relevance to health professions education. Thus, taking courses such as those below during your pre-medical studies preparation is recommended.

BIO 3013 Introduction to Clinical Medicine
BIO 3163 Histology & Cytology
BIO 3433 Neurobiology
BIO 3663 Human Embryology
BIO 3813 Cellular Biology
BIO 4143 Developmental Biology
BIO 4743 Immunology
BIO 3123 Comparative Vertebrate Anatomy
BIO 3413 Advanced Physiology
BIO 3623 Neuropsychopharmacology
BIO 3713 Microbiology
BIO 3913 Molecular Biology
BIO 4453 Endocrinology

Advanced Elective Courses to Consider:
Health professions education is placing a greater emphasis upon course work in the social and behavioral sciences. Thus, an understanding of the broader contexts within which medicine and health education is practiced on an everyday basis can be beneficial to students.

BIO 3713 Microbiology
HCH 3121 Medical Sociology
HCH 4313 Medical Anthropology
HCH 4503 Human Disease and Epidemiology
ANT 3523 Medical Anthropology
PSY 4253 Psychology and Health
HHT 4533 Nutrition and Health
SOC 3213 Medical Sociology
SPH 2513 Spanish for Health Careers
HHT 4503 Human Disease and Epidemiology
HHT 2413 Introduction to Community & Public Health
MGT 4953 Introduction to Healthcare Management

Letters of Evaluation
Letters of evaluation are an essential part of the application to most medical schools. Because selection committees depend heavily on these letters to gain insight into applicants’ personal strengths, character, and accomplishments, students should be sure to request letters of evaluation from individuals, such as professors, work supervisors, and volunteer supervisors, who know them from various perspectives and know them well. Many medical schools also highly value letters from physicians whom students have shadowed. Referees may submit either electronic letters of evaluation or paper letters of evaluation directly to TMDSAS. For further information, refer to the TMDSAS website. www.tmdsas.com

Interviews
The UHPO can offer advice as students prepare for interviews and, after interviews, would like to debrief with students about their impressions. The UTSA University Career Center facilitates interview workshops and conducts mock interviews to provide students with feedback. Not sure what to wear for your interview or don’t have a suit? They also provide access to their “Career Closet” to check out a suit from their “Career Closet.” For more information about University Career Center services, please check out their website and contact them for more information. http://utsa.edu/careercenter/

Health Professions Advising
Undergraduate students receive advising upon entrance to UTSA from a placement advisor, and then from the advisor whom they are assigned once they have chosen a major. Advising for health professions is a separate process. It should be utilized early in a student’s education and throughout the application process and beyond. The services of the University Health Professions Office include careful advising for course selection and the timing of prerequisite course work, choice of appropriate majors, and guidance with preparation for the MCAT and the application to medical school. UHPO also works with UTSA postbaccalaureate students, non-degree seeking students, and alumni.

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MCAT Information

Letter of Evaluation

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Advanced Information/Resources
The UHPO keeps and maintains resources that will be available to students in our office. These include books, journals, handouts, and other resources. Useful information about medicine as a profession and other M.D. and D.O. program can be found on the following websites:

- Association of American Medical Colleges - www.aamc.org (See “Aspiring Docs” section)
- AAMC Core Competencies for Entering Medical Students - www.aamc.org/initiatives/admissionsinitiative/competencies/
- American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine - www.aacom.org (See “About Osteopathic Medicine” section)

Additional Information/Resources

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