

# Pre-Health Planning Workbook: Beginning the Process

The journey to a career in healthcare involves many intentional choices. In order to reach your goals, you must understand how to be a competitive applicant and how to best utilize your time at Denison. The admission requirements for each professional program and institution often vary greatly. At Denison, you have an excellent support system of faculty members to guide you in selecting classes. However, a great deal of the responsibility in understanding admission requirements and timeline to application falls to you as a student. Utilize this packet as a guide to research requirements for programs you are interested in and begin to plan your career at Denison.

**DENISON**

Austin E. Knowlton Center for  
Career Exploration

## What are the Academic Requirements for your Goals?

Pre-health programs require students to meet certain requirements in order to be eligible to apply. In particular, most programs ask students to complete specific courses, called **prerequisites**. Prerequisites are not the same across all pre-health disciplines. For example, a student applying to a school of veterinary medicine may be required to have completed different courses than those required of a student hoping to attend a Physical Therapy program. In addition, requirements may differ among schools of the same type. For example, a student applying to multiple medical schools may see slight variations in requirements even among medical schools. **It is therefore important to understand the prerequisites generally required for your healthcare interest AND the specific prerequisite expectations of the institutions you intend to apply to.**

### **Medicine: MD**

-Medical School Admissions Requirements (there is a cost for this resource)

<https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/applying-medical-school-process/deciding-where-apply/medical-school-admission-requirements/>

-Individual medical school websites

### **Medicine: DO**

-Osteopathic Medical College Information Book (published yearly)

<https://www.aacom.org/become-a-doctor/us-coms>

### **Dental school:**

-Check individual school websites through this list of all institutions:

[http://www.adea.org/dental\\_education\\_pathways/aadsas/Pages/PDS.aspx](http://www.adea.org/dental_education_pathways/aadsas/Pages/PDS.aspx)

### **Physical Therapy:**

- Course prerequisite summary chart for all programs:

<http://www.ptcas.org/uploadedFiles/PTCASorg/Directory/Prerequisites/PTCASCoursePreReqsSummary.pdf>

### **Physician Assistant:**

-Review individual school requirements and prerequisites:

<http://directory.paeaonline.org/>

### **Occupational Therapy:**

-Check individual school requirements:

<http://www.aota.org/Education-Careers/Find-School/AccreditEntryLevel/OTMasters.aspx>

### **Veterinary:**

-2017 Prerequisite requirement chart:

<http://www.aavmc.org/data/files/vmcas/prereqchart.pdf>

-Check each individual institution for additional requirements and specifics

## Prerequisite Planning: What is your Academic Plan?

Use this space to research and take notes on the prerequisite requirements for the programs that interest you. Bring this worksheet to appointments with your academic advisor and consult on how to best mold your undergraduate academic experience for your future goals.

Course Area:	Required	Recommended	Notes: What levels are necessary? How many credits do you need? What institutions ask for these courses?	Potential Term to take Class(es):
Biology				
General Chemistry				
Organic Chemistry				
Physics				
Math and Statistics				
Psychology				

<b>Course Area:</b>	Required	Recommended	<b>Notes:</b> What levels are necessary? How many credits do you need? What institutions ask for these courses?	<b>Potential Term to take Class(es):</b>
Social Sciences				
Anatomy and Physiology				
Humanities				
Biochemistry				
Other:				
Other:				
Other:				
Other:				

## What are Professional Schools looking for?

- **Strong academics**, particularly in the sciences but in all courses:
  - Utilize your resources on campus to achieve the best grades possible
    - [Academic Support and Enrichment](#)
    - [Writing Center](#)
    - Faculty and tutoring in departments
    - Peers
  - Research the GPA of matriculates in your program of interest. Some programs may even have a minimum GPA you must reach in order to be eligible to apply.
  - What will you need to do to succeed academically? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- **Letters of recommendation** that demonstrate you have formed relationships:
  - Goal: each semester, get to know one new faculty member well
    - How can you form such relationships?
      - Ideas: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - Some programs require that you have a letter written for you by a professional in the field. Know these expectations early.
- **Exposure to healthcare** and the field:
  - **Volunteer** in healthcare and non-healthcare related capacities
  - **Seek research experiences**
  - Pursue externships and informational interviews with a wide variety of professionals
  - Some professional programs require specific types of experiences, such as direct patient care hours, and in certain quantities, such as a minimum number of hours. Talk to the Knowlton Center about how to research these requirements.
  - **Track everything.** Select a method for keeping track of experiences, contacts, and reflections. Example: EXCEL spreadsheet, journal
  - Where can you start?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- **Strong standardized test scores:**
  - What are these tests?
    - Medicine: Medical College Admission Test (**MCAT**)
    - Dental Admission Test (**DAT**)
    - Pharmacy College Admission Test (**PCAT**)
    - Graduate Record Exam (**GRE**)
  - Tips:
    - Keep notes from key science classes
    - Structure your studying for long-term learning and retention, not just to pass tests in college
    - Know the competitive score range for your schools of interest
    - Plan to take the test at a timely manner:
      - When is an ideal time to take the standardized test for your interest? \_\_\_\_\_

## What makes a good practitioner?

Consider the profession you wish to enter, whether it is becoming a physician, dentist, veterinarian or pursuing another healthcare career. What characteristics does an individual who excels within that profession possess? How can you, through your time at Denison, cultivate those qualities? Select five character traits that you perceive make a good practitioner in your desired field and begin to brainstorm ways to embody those traits at Denison and beyond.

Example:

Characteristic: Intellectual curiosity

Potential Experiences: undergraduate research, rigorous course schedule, taking courses across wide spectrum, etc.

**1). Characteristic:**

Potential Experiences:

**2). Characteristic:**

Potential Experiences:

**3). Characteristic:**

Potential Experiences:

**4). Characteristic:**

Potential Experiences:

**5). Characteristic:**

Potential Experiences:

## Begin your Plan: How can you use your time at Denison?

Continue to brainstorm the ways you can maximize your time at Denison to address the many factors that are involved in being competitive for a professional pre-health program. Utilize the chart on the next two pages to begin planning WHEN you may be completing certain experiences or tasks. Feel free to be as specific or general as you currently feel comfortable with. This is a document that will grow and change over time. Things you may consider including on this timeline:

- Specific prerequisites
- Internships
- Research Experiences
- Study Abroad
- Standardized tests
- Starting/Completing applications
- Volunteering
- Shadowing
- Student leadership
- Student organization involvement

# First Year

Fall Semester	Spring Semester	Summer

# Second Year

Fall Semester	Spring Semester	Summer



# Third Year

Fall Semester	Spring Semester	Summer

# Fourth Year

Fall Semester	Spring Semester	Summer