

Many UC Davis undergraduates are interested in health profession careers. Health Sciences Advising (HSA) provides a wide variety of services to help students reach their educational goals. The advisers are knowledgeable about health professional schools, and can provide information about course prerequisites, application procedures and curricula. An extensive library of resource materials providing statistics and admission information on health professional schools is available through HSA. There is also an e-mail list service to keep students informed about pre-health workshops on campus, events, news and opportunities. Below are answers to students' most frequently asked questions.

Undergraduate

Subject Requirements for Professional Schools

Each professional school has a minimum number of prerequisite courses to be taken at the undergraduate level. The following is not a definitive list, but an overview of requirements for most schools. Since course requirements vary somewhat for each school and sometimes even change, it is very important to check individual Web sites or see an adviser in HSA for more specific information.

Medicine

- Inorganic Chemistry (1 year with lab)
- Organic Chemistry (1 year with lab)
- Biological Science (1 year with lab)
- Physics (1 year with lab)
- English (1 year)
- Mathematics (varies)
- Social Sciences and Humanities (varies)
- Some schools may require Biochemistry and Genetics courses

Dentistry

The requirements for dental school are similar to those for medical school. Some schools may require additional Psychology and Biochemistry courses.

Veterinary Medicine at UC Davis

- Inorganic Chemistry (1 year with lab)
- General Biology (3 quarters)
- Organic Chemistry (2 quarters)
- Physics (2 quarters)
- English (1 year, including 1 composition course)
- Biochemistry (1 course)
- Genetics (1 course)
- Physiology (1 course)
- Statistics (1 course)
- Humanities and Social Science (12 units)
- Other schools may have different requirements

WHAT HIGH SCHOOL COURSES SHOULD I TAKE TO PREPARE FOR A CAREER IN THE PROFESSIONAL HEALTH SCIENCES?

Beyond meeting the University of California "a-g" requirements, you should take as many mathematics and science courses as possible. This will best prepare you for the undergraduate math and science requirements you will have at UC Davis. It is also important for you to explore your interest in the health sciences from a practical standpoint. For example: for the pre-vet student, it is important to gain experience working with animals; for the pre-med student, clinical experience is important. A strong background in humanities and social sciences is also very important, especially in medicine.

SHOULD I MAJOR IN PRE-MED (OR PRE-DENTISTRY, ETC.) AT UC DAVIS?

Many students have the misconception that "pre-med" is an academic major. It is not! A medical student's undergraduate degree might be in environmental toxicology, civil engineering or communication. Usually when students refer to "pre-med" they mean one of two things: either a designation for a career objective ("Ann is a pre-med student; she hopes to be a surgeon.") or a generalized course of study ("John is a sociology major but he is also taking pre-med courses as prerequisites for medical school.").

You should major in whatever you will enjoy! As long as you do well in the courses required for admission to your school of choice, you can major in any area. Some students choose majors in the biological sciences, where there is a great deal of overlap between courses required for their major and professional school prerequisites (courses in biological science, chemistry, physics, mathematics). Many other students choose majors not directly related to their career objective, such as English, anthropology or psychology, and use their elective units to meet the professional school requirements. Professional schools, especially medical schools, are looking for well-rounded students who have taken courses in the humanities and social sciences, and who have participated in school activities and community service. Transfer students who have completed all of their pre-med prerequisites at a community college should plan to take a number of upper-division science courses at UC Davis if they choose a non-science major. Visit HSA for more information.

DOES UC DAVIS OFFER DEGREES IN NURSING?

The Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing at UC Davis anticipates admitting its first students in the Master of Science (M.S.) in Nursing and the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Nursing programs in fall 2010. Additional students and programs will be phased in over the coming years. The vision for the proposed Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing at UC Davis is to transform health care through nursing education and research. Graduates of the Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing at UC Davis will serve as educators, researchers and leaders who promote health, advance quality of care and safety, and shape policy. For more information about the Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing at UC Davis, visit nursing.ucdavis.edu or contact our HSA for advising assistance.

WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION TO PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS?

The criteria for admission generally include:

- appropriate coursework
- strong cumulative and science GPAs
- strong standardized test scores
- strong letters of recommendation
- extracurricular activities including volunteer and work experience (especially clinical experience)
- interviews

Applicants do not need a 4.0 to get into health professional schools! A GPA, though an important part of your application, is an impersonal reflection of your ability to handle university work. A desirable candidate must also be able to offer attributes such as self-motivation, social concern, communication skills and maturity. Do not limit your experiences or opportunities to discover yourself. The lessons you learn outside the classroom are as pertinent as your studies; try to be as "well-rounded" as possible.

Other Health Sciences

The following is a partial list of health professions for which UC Davis offers preparatory coursework.

Contact HSA for further information.

Chiropractic Medicine
Clinical Lab Specialist
Dentistry
Hospital Administration
Medicine
Naturopathic Medicine
Nursing/Nurse Practitioner
Occupational Therapy
Optometry
Pharmacy
Physical Therapy
Physician Assistant
Podiatric Medicine
Public Health
Speech/Language Pathology
Veterinary Medicine

ARE MY CHANCES FOR ADMISSION GREATER IF I ATTEND THE SAME UNIVERSITY FOR BOTH MY UNDERGRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES?

Generally, there is no direct correlation between attendance at any undergraduate school and acceptance into professional school at the same institution. At UC Davis, the School of Medicine and the School of Veterinary Medicine do not have quotas to accept or limit acceptance for our undergraduate students. However, they are very familiar with the excellent preparation that students receive at UC Davis and the tremendous potential they have to successfully handle rigorous professional training.

HOW DO I DEVELOP ALTERNATIVE CAREER GOALS?

The best career preparation is to explore as many academic areas as possible and discover what interests you the most. From this exploration, certain career areas will emerge as possibilities. If your interests are in the health sciences, the staff at Health Sciences Advising will be happy to talk with you about your plans and how to prepare for acceptance into any health professional schools.

QUESTIONS?

UC Davis Health Sciences Advising, 160 South Silo, University of California, One Shields Ave., Davis, California 95616-8508, (530) 752-4475, advisingservices.ucdavis.edu/advising/hsa

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Discover What Matters

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