



BECOMING A COMPETITIVE APPLICANT

Competitive applicants for admission to medical school have bachelor's degrees, solid academic records with mostly A/B+ grades, well-rounded profiles of co-curricular experiences, strong MCAT scores, supportive letters of recommendation, and can clearly articulate their reasons for pursuing medicine.

SELECTING A MAJOR

Pre-medicine is a pre-professional path that can be followed by students pursuing any major. Ideally, a major should be based on student interests and should support an alternate career. Intellectual engagement in your major is important to medical school admissions committees. Essential science background can be gained, and the ability to learn additional information in medical school can be demonstrated in any major.

GRADES & GPA

C is an honorable grade. However, grades below B, especially within the two academic years leading up to medical school application, could interfere with admission. Faced with a likely grade below C, some students should withdraw (W) and later try for a higher grade. Students should consult with advisors as they decide. More than two W's could indicate a lack of judgment or an inability to handle challenges in medical school.

GPA's calculated on medical school applications include coursework done at all colleges attended and all attempts at a course.

Aim for GPA's of 3.5 or above.

CREIGHTON PRE-HEALTH RESOURCES

Pre-Health Advisors in the Center for Advising Resources and Support are available to meet with students individually about their pre-health goals and path.

The Pre-Professional Communities assist students in exploring the medical profession, gaining experience in healthcare, and preparing for the application process. Students should participate in PHLC 200 in their sophomore year and in PMED 300 in their junior or senior year (depending on the student's application timeline).

PRE-MEDICINE FACT SHEET

PREREQUISITE & RECOMMENDED COURSES

Pre-medical students should complete the following coursework to be prepared for the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT). Students should research schools carefully, as additional courses may be required for admission. Students should meet with a Pre-Health Advisor to develop their application timeline.

COURSES TO TAKE BEFORE THE MCAT

- General Biology I & II w/ Labs - 8 hours - BIO 201/205 & BIO 202/206
- General Chemistry I & II w/ Labs - 8 hours - CHM 203/204 & CHM 205/206
- Organic Chemistry I & II w/ Labs - 8 hours - CHM 321/322 & CHM 323/324
- General Physics I & II w/ Labs - 8 hours - PHY 201/205 & 202/206
 - Alternate options available to math, physics and chemistry majors
- Biochemistry - 3 or 6 hours - CHM 371 or CHM 383 & CHM 384 (Biochemistry majors)
- Physiology - 3-4 hours - BIO 449 or EXS 320
- Statistics - 3 hours - Many options for courses developing competency
- Psychology - 3 hours - PSY 201
- Introductory Sociology/Anthropology - 3 hours - SOC 101, ANT 111, 112, or 113
- English - 6 hours - must include at least one course with significant composition/writing

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED COURSES

- Cellular Biology (BIO 362) - A few medical schools require this course, but many recommend it. Consider taking this during sophomore year as it is a prerequisite for BIO 449 and can be helpful on the MCAT.
- Genetics (BIO 317) - A few medical schools, including UNMC, require genetics. If possible, consider taking this before senior year. It is likely of increasing importance on the MCAT.
- Developmental biology, anatomy, evolution, immunology, molecular biology, microbiology, and neurobiology are some examples of additional subjects relevant to medicine. Students should choose appropriate courses in consultation with major advisors and Pre-Health Advisors.

CO-CURRICULAR EXPECTATIONS

LEADERSHIP & TEAMWORK

Students must demonstrate leadership and interpersonal skills. Consider initiating group projects, serving as an officer in a student organization, or working as a teaching assistant. Students must also demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively. Group projects within classes, team sports, and working on a research team are just a few ways to demonstrate this ability.

VOLUNTEER & SERVICE

It is important to demonstrate sustained commitment over time. Students should have service experiences in healthcare and non-healthcare settings. Check out the Schlegel Center for Service and Justice for opportunities: blogs.creighton.edu/ccsj

PATIENT CARE

Students must have experience working directly with patients, either through volunteer experience or through paid employment, such as CNA, phlebotomist, home health aide, pharmacy technician, EMT or medication aide.

SHADOWING

Students must gain knowledge of the profession by shadowing professionals in their field. Students should shadow in a variety of practice settings including primary care (family medicine/internal medicine). Acute and chronic care in hospitals and other settings are helpful.

RESEARCH

Experiences that are data-driven, collaborative, and investigative, with results communicated publicly are helpful (and essential for admission to some medical schools). See the Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship for opportunities: www.creighton.edu/curas

COURSE SCHEDULING CONSIDERATIONS

Freshmen and sophomores usually take only two natural science or math subjects each semester.

Chemistry: General Chemistry I (CHM 203/204) and General Chemistry II (CHM 205/206) are typical choices for freshman fall and spring. To be eligible to take General Chemistry in the freshman year, students must achieve a sufficient score on the Quantitative Assessment for New Students (QANS). Students who do not achieve a sufficient QANS score will need to complete an introductory chemistry course, CHM 105, with a grade of "C" or better to progress to CHM 203.

Biology: General Biology I (BIO 201/205) and General Biology II (BIO 202/206) are typical choices for freshman fall and spring. Completion of either General Chemistry I (CHM 203) with a grade of "C" or better or Introductory Chemistry (CHM 105) with a grade of "B" or better is required in order to take General Biology II.

Physics: Students who have sufficient math and physics (a year of high school physics or a semester of college introductory physics, math through pre-calculus) are eligible to take General Physics I (PHY 201/205) and General Physics II (PHY 202/206). Prospective math, physics, and chemistry majors may take alternate sections of General Physics and additional math.

Math: Pre-medical students need pre-calculus algebra and trigonometry knowledge. Students who did not complete those courses in high school should take MTH 139- Precalculus. NOTE: MTH 139 does NOT meet the Magis Core math requirement. The Magis Core math requirement will be met by MTH 231 or MTH 245. Math, physics, and chemistry majors will need more than one semester of calculus, and should take MTH 245.

Summer: Science courses may be taken in the summer, but only when there are good reasons for doing so (not just a vague desire to "catch up") and not at community colleges. Speak with a Pre-Health Advisor about timelines.

Sample First Semester Schedule

Course sequencing may vary depending on a student's readiness

- General Biology I w/ Lab (4 hours)
- General Chemistry I w/ Lab (4 hours)
- Magis Core Class (3 or 4 hours) - ENG or Critical Issues & COM 101
- Magis Core Class (3 hours) - PHL or THL
- Maybe another Magis Core Class (3 hours) - PSY, SOC or Foreign Language
- RSP Class (.5 hours)

MEDICAL SCHOOL APPLICATION PROCESS

ADMISSION TESTS

All applicants must take the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT), a national, standardized computer-based test. The MCAT is typically taken 13-15 months before intended matriculation to medical school. Seats fill quickly for each date and registration must be submitted early to test on your desired date. To do well on the MCAT, it is necessary to complete the appropriate pre-medical coursework and complete intensive study for the test.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Letters from three or four of the applicant's professors (at least two natural science/math and at least one humanities or social science) are usually a required part of the application process. Supervisors of relevant paid or volunteer work, research, etc. may also provide helpful evaluations. Some medical schools may require a letter from a practicing physician. Research individual schools for letter requirements.

INTERVIEWS

Most medical schools will interview promising applicants. The John P. Fahey Career Center offers interview preparation assistance, including mock interviews. Creighton School of Medicine gives special consideration to applicants who have attended Creighton for at least two years, but interviews are not guaranteed for Creighton students. Some special consideration is given by most schools to applicants from socioeconomic groups underrepresented in the profession.

PRE-MED GROUPS & RESOURCES

AAMC ANATOMY OF AN APPLICANT

Besides courses, other activities will also help develop and demonstrate your competencies in: Service Orientation, Social Skills, Cultural Competence, Teamwork, Oral Communication, Ethical Responsibility to Self/Others, Reliability and Dependability, Resilience and adaptability, Capacity for Improvement, Critical Thinking, Quantitative Reasoning, Scientific Inquiry, Written Communication, Science- Living Systems, and Human Behavior.

PRE-MEDICAL SOCIETY

All pre-medicine students should participate in the Pre-Medical Society. This student organization provides leadership opportunities to explore and gain experience in the medical profession:
<https://cuinvolved.creighton.edu/organization/premedsociety>

CU SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Make an appointment with medical admissions office personnel in the spring of junior year to personalize the application process.

HELPFUL LINKS

- CU School of Medicine | medschool.creighton.edu
- Association of American Medical Colleges | aamc.org
- American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine | aacom.org
- American Medical Student Association | amsa.org