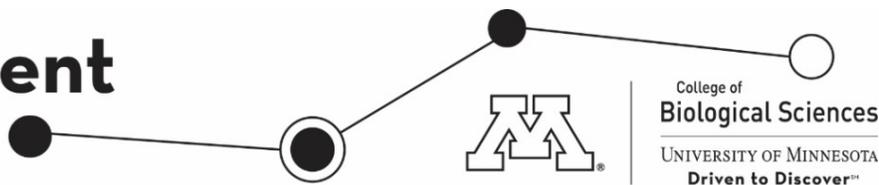


# CBS Student Services



## Becoming a Competitive Pre-Health Applicant

It is important to conduct an honest self-assessment of your progress towards your goal of attending a health professional school. Reflect on your progress in the following areas to identify your strong areas, as well as areas where you'd like to gain relevant experience.

- **Motivations for entering the field.** Are you able to answer the question, “Why do you want to become a \_\_\_\_?” If not, consider how you’ll gain additional experiences in the field and continue to practice “telling your story.” During the application you will answer this question in a **personal statement**
- **Academics.** How does your GPA at this point compare to the average GPA for students admitted to schools you might be interested in applying to? Are there changes you want to make to your academic plans and progress at this point?
- **Course prerequisites.** What are the prerequisite course requirements for the school(s) you are interested in applying to? Do you have these mapped out in your Grad Plan?
- **Entrance Examination.** What exam will you need to take for your profession (MCAT, DAT, OAT, PCAT, GRE). Have you taken courses to prepare for these exams? When will you begin to study for and take the exam?
- **Letters of Recommendation.** Do you have at least one to two science professors in mind who might write you a letter of recommendation? Outside of academia, who will you ask for a letter of recommendation?
- **Competencies.** Health professional schools will assess your candidacy based on skills and competencies you have demonstrated in a number of areas. Each health profession’s national association (such as the AAMC) provides a list of competencies they encourage candidates to develop. Below are opportunities that might help you develop different competencies.
  - **Research.** Have you gained undergraduate research experience either in a lab or through clinical research?
  - **Volunteering.** Have you volunteered in a medical/clinical/health setting and/or in a setting that allows you to demonstrate that you are interested in helping others?
  - **Shadowing.** Have you shadowed individuals who work in the profession you wish to enter? If not, how will you find someone to shadow?
  - **Leadership/Involvement.** Are you developing yourself as a leader through work, volunteer, or student group involvement? Have you considered joining a student organization for students interested in your same health profession?
- **Timeline until you apply.** Do you plan to take time off before applying to professional school, or do you intend to start immediately after graduating? When will you need to submit an application for your program of interest, based on your timeline to application?

*Use this space to identify your ideas for next steps towards your goal.*

**Below are suggestions for students interested in specific health profession fields.**

### **Medicine**

- Take AHS1600: The Future Physician I during the fall semester OR complete the Planning for Medical School Online Workshop (<http://z.umn.edu/mk5>).
- Review the AAMC Competencies:
  - <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/med-schools-looking-for-15-competencies/>

### **Dentistry**

- If you haven't already done so, begin shadowing a dentist. Many schools require a minimum number of shadowing hours. For example, the University of Minnesota requires a minimum of 50.
- Dental schools like to see applicants demonstrate fine motor skills. Consider a sculpture, art, or music class.
- Consider enrolling in an upcoming Dental School Preparation Course. <http://z.umn.edu/dentprep>

### **Pharmacy**

- Volunteer in a pharmacy or becoming a pharmacy technician to gain first-hand experience in a pharmacy setting.
- Attend an upcoming College of Pharmacy Preview Day, offered annually on the Twin Cities and Duluth campuses. <http://z.umn.edu/pharmpreview>

### **Physician Assistant**

- Direct patient care hours are important for applicants to PA programs. In fact, some programs have a requirement of at least 500 or more hours of direct patient care. Examples of direct patient care include: Personal Care Attendant, EMT, Nursing Assistant.

### **Veterinary Medicine**

- Attend a monthly info session and tour held by the U of M College of Veterinary Medicine; register at <http://www.vetmed.umn.edu/education-training/dvm-program/prospective-students/visit-or-contact-us>

### **Exploring Multiple Health Careers or Other Health Careers**

- Take AHS1101 or 1102: Orientation to Health Careers over the summer or fall semester.
  - Learn about hundreds of career options in the healthcare industry at [www.explorehealthcareers.org](http://www.explorehealthcareers.org)
  - Review professional organizations' websites for each health profession you are interested in (AAMC, ADEA, etc)
  - Schedule an appointment with a CBS Pre-Health Career Coach by visiting [cbsss.appointments.umn.edu](http://cbsss.appointments.umn.edu) or calling 612-624-9717
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### **Pre-Health Coaching**

CBS Career Support provides individual appointments for CBS students who are interested in pursuing a professional health-education program in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, physician assistant, or other health professions after graduation. We work with students at all points of their pre-health planning process from the initial steps of exploring health careers, understanding admissions requirements and developing a plan to become a competitive applicant, through the final steps of writing a personal statement and preparing for an interview.

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