

# Freshman Pre-medical Guide

Biology Department  
University of Evansville

## Introduction

Students who intend to apply to medical schools should begin preparing during their first semester at UE. This guide will help you understand which classes you should take, how to prepare for the MCAT, how to work with your advisor, and how to prepare a successful application. Although classes, MCATs, and the application process are important, having a good relationship with your advisor is the single most important part of a successful premed experience. Biology premed advisors can help you schedule courses and research experience, prepare for standardized tests, and navigate the application process. Get to know your advisor as soon as possible!

## Classes and Majors

Medical school admission requirements are usually quite simple: a minimum of one year of biology with lab, one year of general chemistry with lab, one year of organic chemistry with lab, and one year of physics with lab. Most medical schools also require math and writing classes (like World Cultures 110 and 120). These requirements make a wide range of pre-med majors possible. As long as you take the required science, math and writing classes, you could major in literature, philosophy, or foreign language. From the perspective of medical school admissions, your choice of major does not matter - the admissions committee is interested in grades, MCAT scores, and letters.

Most successful premeds take many more science classes than those on the required list. The fact is that most students cannot score well enough on the MCAT without courses in genetics, physiology, microbiology, cell biology, and molecular biology. With this in mind, here is a suggested premed class schedule.

Freshman	Sophomore
General Biology General Zoology Principles of Chemistry Organic Chemistry World Cultures (Writing)	Adv. Organic Chemistry Calculus Genetics Bacteriology
Junior	Senior
Physics I Physics II Cell Biology Animal Physiology	Senior Seminar (Writing) Molecular Biology Biochemistry

The classes in this suggested schedule represent most of the requirements for a Bachelor of Science in Biology degree, so most premeds major in biology, even if they also get a degree in another field (double major).

## MCAT

In addition to coursework, medical schools require applicants to take a standardized test: the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT). While the MCAT score is not the most important part of your medical school application, there is no other time when your performance on one particular day will matter as much as with this test. The test is offered in April and August, and covers Physical Sciences (general chemistry and physics) Biological Sciences (organic chemistry and biology), and Verbal Reasoning. There is also a subjectively graded writing sample. Beginning in 2003 there will be fewer organic chemistry questions and additional questions on genetics and molecular biology. We recommend that premed students begin preparing for this test with their advisor early in the Junior year. It is very important to participate in the Biology Department's MCAT preparation program so that you can get the best score possible on the MCAT. If you take the test in April of the Junior year, you will

have time to retake the exam (if needed) before your application is due. With the MCAT, all scores are reported, so your first score matters, even if you take the test a second time.

## Application, Interview and Acceptance

The application process begins early in the fall of your senior year with the AMCAS application. This online application should be filed as early as possible; many medical schools have rolling admissions, and you want to have access to all possible spaces. Your AMCAS materials are forwarded to the medical schools you choose, and, if you make the first cut, schools will ask you to submit a secondary application. This is where the real selection begins. In order to make the final cut you must have good grades, high MCAT scores, good letters, and strong extracurricular experiences. For the 2002 entering class at IUSOM, for example, the average student had a 3.5 GPA and a 29.5 MCAT composite. Because there are a large number of qualified applicants, research and clinical experience can help you stand out. The following table gives a sample schedule for extracurricular and application procedures.

Freshman	Sophomore
Basic Science Research Other Extracurricular	Research Study Abroad Clinical Experience
Junior	
Research, Study Abroad, or Clinical Experience MCAT Prep AAMCAS Application	

Note that many of these activities can take place during the summer. As you can see, your preparation for medical school application really begins during your first semester and continues well into the senior year. Near the end of the process, most students can expect to be given an interview by members of the medical school admissions committee. These interviews are weighted heavily in making final selection decisions. While each medical school may have slightly different procedures, they generally seek the same information from the interviews (e.g., interest in and awareness of medical practice, breadth of college experiences, character and self-awareness). This is where you get a chance to explain how your extracurricular activities have made you a good candidate.

From choosing appropriate extracurricular activities to MCAT diagnostics to interview preparation, the Department of Biology has programs and opportunities to help you be successful. You can get started by filling out the information on the following page. When you are finished, please neatly detach and give your information to Mrs. Akrabawi in KC 219.

## AAMC

The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) website <http://www.aamc.org/> contains the latest application information as well as other valuable information about medical education and practice.

## Web Resources

This document and other premed resources are available online from the Biology Students Page at <http://www2.evansville.edu/biology/students.html>

**Pre-medical Information  
Fall, 2002**

Freshman Year Data:

Part One (all pre-medical students)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

UE email: \_\_\_\_\_

Major: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Home State: \_\_\_\_\_

Part Two (Biology majors only)

Which of the following supplemental pre-medical opportunities interest you? Please rate numerically in order of importance, with 1 being the most important and higher numbers being less important.

\_\_\_\_\_ Basic Science Research

\_\_\_\_\_ Clinical Experience

\_\_\_\_\_ Study Abroad

\_\_\_\_\_ Double Major (which one?) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ MCAT preparation help