You should prepare for a career in medicine by building credentials in scholarship, leadership, community service, clinical experience and by shadowing in the various settings of the profession. There is no “best” major for pre-medical students. Instead, you are encouraged to pursue a major you are genuinely interested in as that will help you excel. Remember to consult a pre-health advisor about your individual plan.

**Pre-Med Quick Facts**

Advised Pre-MCAT
- **Biology** BIOL 1107/L & 1108/L
- **General Chemistry** CHEM 1211/L & 1212/L
- **Organic Chemistry** CHEM 2211/L
- **Physics** PHYS 1111 & 1112 or 1211 & 1212
- **Biochemistry** BCMB 3100 or BCMB 4010 & 4020
- **Statistics** STAT 2000 or BIOS 2010

Recommended Pre-MCAT
- **Physiology** VPHY 3100, PMCY 3000, or CBIO 3710
- **Genetics** GENE 3200
- **Psychology** PSYC 1101
- **Sociology** SOCI 1101

DISCLAIMER: This is not a definitive list of the classes you will need for every school. Always check with the individual schools to see their specific requirements regarding coursework and AP/IB credit.

If you wish to enter a medical program, you will need to have both a strong science and strong overall GPA. Admissions committees also look for trends on transcripts—so all is not lost if you stumble in your first semester or two, but then show substantial improvement each subsequent year. However, they will also notice negative trends such as if you consistently withdraw from or perform poorly in hard science courses or if you take many courses away from UGA. While an instance or two is not a deal-breaker, a pattern of behavior should be avoided. You must demonstrate the ability to handle difficult scientific content.

**Science GPA Calculations (MD v. DO)**

M.D. programs via the AMCAS application use the BCMP GPA, which takes into account biology, chemistry, mathematics, and physics courses. All attempts at a course will be included in the GPA calculation.

D.O. programs via the AACOMAS application use the BCP GPA, which only includes biology, chemistry, and physics courses. As of the 2017 application cycle, all attempts at a course will be included in the GPA calculation.

**Shadowing**

You are expected to spend time shadowing a physician to experience the “doctor/patient” interaction, and should plan to begin shadowing as soon as possible. This experience demonstrates that you understand the profession, but there is no specific hour requirement. While it is helpful to shadow a specialty that you are interested in, any physician shadowing is better than none. You should try to get a variety of experiences with physicians in various fields in order to understand the breadth of the medical profession. Ideally, you should build a good relationship with at least one M.D. or D.O. so that you may request a letter of evaluation. Shadowing means hands-off observation only.

**Average Matriculant Numbers**
- Overall GPA: 3.7
- Science GPA: 3.7
- MCAT: 512; ~85th Percentile

**Pre-Medical Advising Test (MCAT)**

The MCAT is required for admission into medical school and is offered multiple times per year at a cost of $320. You should plan to take the exam only once. You may retake the exam if you believe your score doesn’t accurately reflect your knowledge —i.e. if it is significantly different than what you have consistently scored on practice exams. However, retakes are limited and should be considered very carefully. You will receive your score a month after the exam date. If you have time in your schedule, take the recommended pre-MCAT courses as they will be very helpful for the exam.

You should plan to take at least 5-6 full length practice exams (~$40 each) since this is the best way to prepare and to gauge your progress. Commercial prep courses (~$2000) can provide structure for studying, but you can succeed on the MCAT without them.

**Required Courses and GPA Expectations**

**Typical Medical Pre-Requisites**
- **Biology** BIOL 1107/L & 1108/L
- **General Chemistry** CHEM 1211/L & 1212/L
- **Organic Chemistry** CHEM 2211/L & 2212/L
- **Physics** PHYS 1111 & 1112 or 1211 & 1212
- **Biochemistry** BCMB 3100 or BCMB 4010 & 4020
- **Statistics** STAT 2000 or BIOS 2010

ppao.uga.edu
**Clinical Experience, Volunteering & Research**

While shadowing is important, students need to aim for more hands-on **clinical experience**. It is ideal to have a history of ongoing volunteer or paid work engaging with patients relating to their care. The goal is to develop a passion for patient care and build on your reasons for pursuing medicine.

**Volunteering** in the community is another important part of the application. Being involved in service shows commitment to your community, provides an opportunity to learn about social issues less familiar to you. Medical schools want to see depth of commitment and substantial involvement and leadership in the community. Volunteering can be done in a variety of setting such as Habitat for Humanity, or anything else that you are passionate about.

There are many benefits to getting involved in undergraduate **research**, and the majority of successful applicants to medical school do have research experience. You are highly encouraged to pursue research opportunities as early as freshman and sophomore year. You should plan to dedicate at least a year to a specific project or lab, and you must be able to discuss your research at various levels (“elevator speech” and in-depth). For M.D./Ph.D. programs, you will need to be substantially more involved in research. If you are not interested in research at all, you would be better served dedicating your time to other activities which you are passionate about such as volunteering or shadowing.

**Letters of Evaluation**

Most medical schools require at least three letters of evaluation, but specific requirements do vary between schools. Ideally, you should try to get two letters from hard science faculty since this is a common requirement. Research mentors do not always count for these letters since some schools draw a distinction between mentorship and classroom instruction. Regardless, you should always plan to include a letter from your research mentor.

At UGA, it can be difficult to build a close relationship with faculty since many of the science courses are large lectures. You must be mindful of this and do your best to foster a strong relationship with faculty to be able to request a letter.

A letter from an M.D. or D.O. is strongly encouraged as is a letter from a non-science faculty member. For additional letters, ask someone who will write the most compelling letter (volunteer coordinator, other faculty, employer, etc.). Most students include 4-6 letters in their application, but you are allowed a maximum of 10 for M.D. and 6 for D.O.

**Medical School Application Timeline**

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<tr>
<th><strong>Freshman &amp; Sophomore Year</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Build credentials for medical school: shadow, volunteer, do research, build relationships with faculty, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do <strong>not</strong> wait until junior year to begin!</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fall</strong></td>
<td>Continue shadowing, doing research, volunteering, etc. Register for Spring MCAT dates in October.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Jan - May</strong></td>
<td>Study for the MCAT</td>
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| **Feb/March/April** | Write Personal Statement  
Ask for Letters of Evaluation (give letter-writers at least a month to compose) |
| **April/May/June** | Take MCAT |
| **May** | Begin completing AMCAS or AACOMAS application |

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<th><strong>Summer</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>June</strong></td>
<td>Submit AMCAS/AACOMAS (submit as soon as possible – even if MCAT score or LOEs are not in)</td>
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<td><strong>June/July</strong></td>
<td>Prepare for secondary applications (look online for previous year’s questions)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>July/August</strong></td>
<td>Complete secondary applications (within 2 weeks of receiving them)</td>
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<th><strong>Senior Year</strong></th>
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| **Fall** | Interview (beginning late August/early September through Spring)  
Continue shadowing, doing research, volunteering, etc. |
| **Spring** | Graduate |