



Pre-Professional Health

at Benedictine University

Why study in a pre-professional health program at Benedictine?

When you decide to prepare for a health-related career at Benedictine, you will be assisted by a faculty advisor and members of the Benedictine University Health Sciences Recommendations Committee. The committee is comprised of faculty members who are interested in pre-professional studies and have special knowledge of the academic subjects and qualifications needed for a career in allopathic or osteopathic medicine, chiropractics, dentistry, nursing, optometry, occupational therapy, physical therapy, veterinary medicine, pharmacy or podiatry.

A pre-professional program is a series of courses prescribed in addition to other requirements for your degree in a specific major. These courses satisfy the entrance requirements for most professional schools. You can choose any major. Most professional schools have no preference, so your choices should be based on your own interests. Your grades may be better if you are interested in your major, and grades are important in competing for admission to professional school. Your major can help you begin a satisfying career. While more students enter medical and dental schools as biology or chemistry majors, they are not given first priority by the professional schools. It is because more students in these disciplines apply than others. You can acquire a solid background in science at Benedictine without being a science major. No matter what your major, you will benefit from a well-balanced education that is strong in the humanities and social sciences because of the interdisciplinary core all students complete. Professional schools want students who know and understand themselves, society and the culture around them.

The director of Pre-Professional Health programs can assist you throughout your preparation for your professional career. The health care education office provides numerous resources such as video tapes, catalogs, testing packets (MCAT, DAT, PCAT, OAT), application information (AMCAS, ADAS, VMCAS, AACOMAS) and general information representing many of the professional schools across the country.

Practicum/Clinical Experiences

Students pursuing a degree in Health Science may earn credit hours during their junior or senior years observing in a department of a hospital, medically oriented industry or private practice where they are assigned to clinical preceptors by the Benedictine University director of Pre-Professional Health Programs. Written reports of your experiences will be reviewed by the director at frequencies of mutual agreement. Through this, you may relate academic materials to your applications in the clinic and determine through immediate contact with your chosen field whether you want to continue in them. These practica do not ensure clinical certification.

Pre-Chiropractic

We strongly recommend that you complete the four-year bachelor's degree program. You should follow programs for the major in Biochemistry, Health Science or Biology, since most of the chiropractic schools require six semester credit hours in biology, 12 in chemistry, six in physics and at least 30 semester credits in humanities and social science. The mean cumulative GPA is 3.3 (on a 4-point scale). Admission requirements at individual chiropractic programs and institutions may exceed these minimums. Application is made to each individual chiropractic school.

You should arrange for interviews and a subsequent letter of recommendation from the Health Sciences Recommendation Committee during the spring of your junior year or fall of your senior year.

Pre-Professional Health

Pre-Dentistry

If you are seeking a career in dentistry, you should plan to complete a four-year degree program. Most dental schools require one year each of general chemistry, organic chemistry, physics and biology. We recommend that your courses include genetics, anatomy, microbiology, physiology, biochemistry and calculus. The Dental Admission Test (DAT) is now computer-based testing and should be taken during the spring/summer of your junior year of college. The mean score of the DAT and the cumulative GPA of those students who are accepted to dental school is approximately 19 and 3.5, respectively.

You should arrange to be interviewed by members of the Health Sciences Recommendation Committee during the spring of your junior year or fall of your senior year at Benedictine University. We recommend that you apply to dental schools through the American Association of Dental Schools Application Service during the summer before your senior year.

Pre-Medicine

If you are seeking a career in medicine, you should plan to complete four years of college. To be a well-qualified candidate, you should have a strong foundation in basic science and mathematics with advanced science courses that emphasize biology or biochemistry. We offer a wide selection of appropriate advanced courses, including histology, immunology, endocrinology, cell biology, nutrition, microbiology, biochemistry and intermediary metabolism. Medical schools are now placing increased emphasis on humanities courses and volunteerism in the community and at the University.

The Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) is now administered by computer and should be taken during the spring/summer of your junior year. The mean MCAT score for students accepted to medical schools is approximately 10.0 or higher in each section of the exam and the mean cumulative GPA is 3.5 or higher (on a 4-point scale).

You should arrange for interviews from the Health Sciences Recommendations Committee during the spring of your junior year or fall of your senior year at Benedictine University. We recommend that you apply to medical school through the American Medical College Application Service or to osteopathic medical school through the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Application Service the summer prior to your senior year.

Pre-Occupational Therapy

You should plan to complete your Benedictine University degree as a Health Science or Psychology major with a concentration in Occupational Therapy and continue your education in an entry-level master's degree program in occupational therapy. In addition to your set curriculum, you will be required to complete a medical terminology course and a minimum of 50 clinical hours of observation.

Pre-Optometry

Although it is possible to enter optometry school after three years, we recommend that you plan to complete four years of college. To be a well-qualified candidate, you should have a strong foundation in basic science and mathematics, including calculus with advanced science courses that emphasize biology or biochemistry. We recommend that you follow suggested programs of study for Biology, Health Science or Biochemistry majors and take the Optometry Admission Test (OAT) during the spring semester of your junior year at Benedictine University. The mean OAT score for a student accepted into optometry school is in the 50th percentile or above, and the mean cumulative GPA is 3.5 (on a 4-point scale).

You will arrange for interviews and a letter of recommendation from the Health Sciences Recommendation Committee during the spring of your junior year or fall of your senior year at Benedictine University.

Pre-Professional Health

Pre-Pharmacy

To enter pharmacy school, you should complete the first two years in the pre-pharmacy curriculum. We recommend that you take the Pharmacy College Admission Test during October of your sophomore year. To apply for pharmacy school, we recommend that you earn a minimum GPA of 3.3 (on a 4-point scale). You should apply to pharmacy school between January 1 and May 1 of your sophomore year.

Dual Acceptance Program (Chicago College of Pharmacy and Benedictine University)

The Chicago College of Pharmacy (CCP) at Midwestern University and Benedictine University have an agreement for a Dual Acceptance Program. Under the provisions of the agreement, selected students who successfully complete the specified coursework at Benedictine University will be granted an early acceptance to CCP. The number of reserved seats is not predetermined and will vary year to year depending on the size and quality of the applicant pool. See the Pre-Pharmacy major sheet for more information.

Pre-Physical Therapy

You should plan to complete a degree in Health Science or Psychology. You will then be eligible to apply to an accredited doctoral program in physical therapy. Upon completion of your degree, you would be eligible to take the professional registry and the state licensing examination in physical therapy.

You will arrange for interviews and a letter of recommendation from the Health Sciences Recommendation Committee during the spring of your junior year or fall of your senior year.

Pre-Physician Assistant

If you are seeking a career as a physician assistant, you should plan to complete four years of college. You should have a strong foundation in basic sciences of biology, chemistry, physiology, anatomy and microbiology, and a balance of studies in the applied behavioral sciences.

A GPA of 3.4/4.0 (on a 4-point scale) and a graduate admissions exam may be required. Most physician assistant schools require prior health care experience (example, 2,000 work hours).

Students should arrange for interviews with the Health Sciences Recommendations Committee during the spring or fall of your junior year. The majority of the applicants to the pre-physician programs apply through the Central Application Service for Physician Assistants the summer prior to senior year.

Pre-Podiatry

Although it is possible to enter podiatry school after three years of college, we strongly recommend that you complete the four-year bachelor's degree. We suggest that you follow programs for the major in Biochemistry, Health Science or Biology, since most podiatry schools require eight semester credits in biology, 16 in chemistry, eight in physics and at least 30 semester credits in humanities and social science studies. We also recommend that you take the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) during the spring semester of your junior year at Benedictine University. The mean MCAT score for students accepted in colleges of podiatric medicine is approximately 8.0, and the mean cumulative GPA is 3.4 (on a 4-point scale). Applications should be made through the American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine Application Service.

You should arrange for interviews and a subsequent letter of recommendation from the Health Sciences Recommendation Committee during the spring of your junior year or fall of your senior year.

Pre-Professional Health

Pre-Veterinary Medicine

Illinois residents may apply to the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine after completing three years of college, but the majority of students accepted have earned a bachelor's degree. We suggest that you follow the program for a major in Biology or Biochemistry. Minimum requirements for veterinary school are eight semester credits in biology, 16 in chemistry, eight in physics and at least 30 semester credits in humanities and social science studies. The University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine recommends that you complete courses in genetics and biochemistry. We strongly recommend that you take the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) during the spring of your junior year. Apply to the Veterinary School in July with a deadline of October 1 through the Veterinary Medical Colleges Application Service. The mean cumulative GPA is approximately 3.5 (on a 4-point scale).

You should arrange for interviews and a subsequent letter of recommendation from the Health Sciences Recommendation Committee during the fall of your junior year or fall of your senior year.