

## Summary Advice for UI Pre-Med Students

### **1) Pre-med Preparation and Coursework**

- Take prerequisite courses for med school; **and carefully check specific admission requirements** at your desired med schools, as the courses tend to be similar but not identical. The basic set of requirements that cover most US medical schools are:
  - One year of general chemistry: Chem. 111 and 112 (8 cr including labs)
  - One year of physics: Physics 111 and 112 (8 cr including labs)
  - One year of biology: Biology 115 and 116 (8 cr including labs)
  - One year of organic chemistry: Chem. 277/278 and 372/374 or 376 (8 cr including labs)
  - MMBB 300 (Survey of Biochem) OR MMBB 380 (Intro to Biochem) is **strongly recommended**
  - Additional courses that would enhance your med school preparation include Statistics 251, Biology 212 (Molecular and Cellular Biology), MMBB 250 (General Microbiology) and Bio 310 (Genetics). Based on AAMC preliminary recommendations, the MCAT for 2015 will likely change significantly to include a new section on behavioral and social sciences that will likely require a general introductory sociology **and** psychology course.
  - Univ. of Utah requires research experience and a course in diversity (consider Soc. 301)
  - Univ. of Nevada requires one lower and one upper division course in psychology
- Carefully review the Allied Health website (<http://www.webs.uidaho.edu/alliedhealth/>) and **read and re-read** the comprehensive UI pre-med manual at <http://www.sci.uidaho.edu/biosci/faculty/Pre-Med%20Manual.pdf>
- The book Medical School Admission Requirements put out by AAMC is an excellent guide to U.S. medical schools and their entrance requirements: <https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/requirements/msar/>

### **2) “Best Advice” to prepare for med school and/or to build your resume and enhance your life experiences**

- Choose a major that interests you!!
- Become a well-rounded, broadly educated, interesting person!
- **Develop a 4-yr dream resume** as a goal setting exercise, then work to make it happen with extracurricular activities, volunteer/work experiences, honors, target GPA etc.
- Develop good study and time management skills, particularly during your freshman year!
- **Focus on learning your coursework and on maintaining a high GPA!** Take 15-18 credits per semester, but be sure not to overload during your freshman year. Successful applicants to MD programs have an average GPA of 3.65-3.70 and to Doctor of Osteopathic programs have an average GPA of 3.50.
- **Take your pre-med courses early and evaluate whether medicine is right for you—test your interest and your aptitude!!!**

- **Develop your personal, interpersonal, and leadership skills.** Practice and demonstrate personal attributes and strengths (leadership, involvement, service, volunteerism etc.) that carry through your 4 years, that will show up in your application and reference letters, and that set you apart from other applicants. Do a mixture of things that interest you.
- **Get involved and build a strong resume** through extracurricular activities. Get involved in fun, interesting activities/clubs as well as professional activities/clubs that relate to your major and intended career.
  - Consider a mixture of volunteer activities, maybe target one each semester.  
<http://volunteer.asui.uidaho.edu/Volunteer/About>
  - Consider joining the Honors Program to enhance your education and to be around a high-achieving, motivated, and interesting peer group. Consider an Honors living community.
  - Consider study abroad and/or national student exchange.
  - Consider getting involved in undergraduate research.
  - Consider developing your leadership skills.
  - Apply for awards or other recognitions, such as the ASUI Outstanding Freshmen, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior Awards.  
[http://www.asui.uidaho.edu/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=3&Itemid=10/](http://www.asui.uidaho.edu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=3&Itemid=10/)
- **Get volunteer medical experience in health/clinical settings.** Find out if medicine is right for you!! Volunteer, work, observe, and spend hours over the summer and during the school year. Spend time with health care workers, physicians, and patients!! Show that you are serious about medicine and be able to justify through experience that you know that you want to be a doctor. Maintain a formal work/volunteer log as most med school applicants will have several hundred hours of volunteer time. Consider different volunteer experiences that engage you. See local volunteerism examples and contacts in the UI pre-med manual: <http://www.webs.uidaho.edu/alihealth/premed/>
- **Develop strong relationships with faculty mentors and other professional references.** Get to know your professors from day one, and set a goal of finding at least one professor each semester who knows you well enough to write a reference letter for summer jobs, scholarships, honor nominations, and ultimately for med school. Then, you will easily be able to choose your top 3 or 4 profs. Ask for advice, and share your goals.
- **Find meaningful summer work, internships, and/or research experiences.** Examples include biomedical research (INBRE at <http://inbre.uidaho.edu/>) and NSF Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REUs) ([http://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/reu\\_search.cfm](http://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/reu_search.cfm))
- **Prepare early for the MCAT** (Medical College Aptitude Test, similar to SAT/ACT) by buying a study guide and/or check out the guides on reserve under Pre-Med in the library. As you cover the material in your courses, look over the pertinent questions to assess your knowledge and understanding.
- **Have fun and don't take life and school too seriously.** Just set your goals, gradually get going, and you will be surprised at how quickly your resume grows.

**3. Apply to med school when the time is right.**

- Study for MCAT, take a number of practice tests, then take the real MCAT in the spring before you apply.
- Complete applications through AMCAS and/or AACOMAS. Get feedback on your application (personal statement) as well as secondary applications (Writing Center, Career Center, Allied Health Adviser, faculty/references, peers etc.)
- Solicit reference letters. Help your references write strong letters by giving them your resume which summarizes your activities and accomplishments and perhaps even list a few bullet points or real life examples that would help them better represent your unique skills and background.
- Schedule a “mock videotaped interview”
- Interview, get accepted, and make decision!

**4. Develop a “Plan B” in case you change your mind about medicine as a career or you don’t get admitted.** Also, this is a common question in med school interviews.

**5) Additional resources:**

- Conduct a med school self-assessment as outlined by the University of Utah: [http://www.uvu.edu/csh/prehealth/pdf/Self\\_Assessment08-09.pdf](http://www.uvu.edu/csh/prehealth/pdf/Self_Assessment08-09.pdf)
- Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT): <https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/>
- Student applicant and admission data: <https://www.aamc.org/data/>
- Applying to MD schools: <https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/amcas/>
- Applying to DO schools: <http://www.aacom.org/Pages/default.aspx>
- Shadowing physicians: <http://www.idahofamilyphysicians.org/jobs.html>
- Aspiring Docs.org: <http://www.aspiringdocs.org/>
- Summer Medical and Dental Education Program (SMDEP) for freshman/sophomores in underrepresented groups: [www.smdep.org](http://www.smdep.org)
- UW and WWAMI program: <http://uwmedicine.washington.edu/education/Pages/default.aspx>
- UI Pre-med Club: “Academics Interested in Medicine” (AIM) ([premed@uidaho.edu](mailto:premed@uidaho.edu))?
- General information:
  - <http://www.aamc.org/audienceamcas.htm>
  - <http://www.xmarks.com/site/www.aamc.org/audienceamcas.htm>

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