

Pre-med/health career preparation at Oberlin College

One step at a time.

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Outline

- Introduction
- Course planning
- Non-academic preparations

A wide variety of careers are included in the health professions:

Human Health:

Direct patient care

- Physician/surgeon
- Nurse
- Physician Assistant
- Physical Therapist
- Dentistry
- Podiatry
- Pharmacy
- Genetic counselor
- Optometry

Other health careers

Animal Health:

- Veterinarian

Public Health/Global Health: local, regional, national or international.

- <https://www.apha.org/what-is-public-health>
- <https://sophas.org/>

What sorts of skills, experiences and traits are desired in these careers?

- Knowledge of specific academic areas: content learning
- Knowledge of the field and related experiences
- Communications and interpersonal skills
- Understanding of social determinants of health and compassion
- Leadership/service/teamwork
- Resilience/adaptability/integrity
- Ethical understanding/respect for differing viewpoints/values

Oberlin's liberal arts training is perfectly suited to pre-health careers

- Combination of science training, communication skills, understanding of how humans act as individuals and in groups
- Winter terms, co-curricular and summer experiences are great ways to develop non-academic skills
- Learning environment is supportive and team oriented
- Faculty and staff teach with an interdisciplinary mindset

Knowledge of specific academic areas: content learning

- The starting years are very similar for all these careers.
- All require at least a year of chemistry and introductory biology.
- Physics and English are VERY common.

You can be any major and be pre-health

- Fulfilling pre-health requirements can also be part of your major if you choose one that overlaps with required classes, but this is not necessary.
- The course requirements are a substantial number of courses, so leave room in your schedule, about 2 in most semesters some years.

There is not just one path

- Your journey should evolve as you grow and explore
- Be open to learning, challenge and growth

Course selection

Where to start

- Do NOT overwhelm yourself right away! Slow and steady works better for almost all.
- Everyone should take a First Year Seminar (FYS).
- There is no need to enroll in multiple science and/or math classes your first semester.
- Starting with Chemistry has some advantages.
 - Chemistry requirements are vertical and you must start sequence in the fall.

Chemistry path is vertical and must be begun in the fall

- 1 year of Chemistry: Chem 101 in Fall and **then** 102 in Spring

Another **uncommon** but possible option: **Chem. 103**

- For those who have exceptionally strong science backgrounds, perhaps high AP in both Bio. and Chem.
- Review this option with your individual advisor and proceed with caution.

First semester options

FALL : recommended

Free choices:

First Year
Seminar

Chem 101

Or for a few

Chem 103

(req. calc. pre-or co-req.)

Additional **STEM** pre-med science requirements for later years

- At least one more year of chemistry: including organic and bioorganic
- At least 2 biology courses: including a 200-level molecular, cellular biology & biochemistry class (requires one year of chemistry and biology 100)
- One year of physics

Biology does not allow you to use AP credit to replace the introductory class.

- Everyone starts with Biology 100
- Offered in every semester



Biol 100

First year suggestions IF Fall's good

FALL

SPRING

First Year
Seminar

Chem 101

??

??



Chem 102

Biol 100

“Requirements”

- Pre-medical requirements are less common than you might think; recommendations are more common. The entrance exam assesses your understanding of desired content, but many classes help you prepare.
- Other patient directed careers: nursing, PA, Vet, PT require longer and more detailed set of classes
- For public health: quite variable but stats is highly desirable.

What are non-science “requirements”*?

- For many pre-health professions you need an “**English**” class but that can include some non-English department classes
 - Rhetoric
 - Creative Writing
 - Comp. Lit (in English)
- **Math:** 1-2 semesters (somewhat variable depending on school): *STATS! (and maybe Calculus)*
 - Psychology research methods counts as Stats

Pre-med students:

- Introductory level **Psychology** (& *maybe Sociology*)

* there is variation among medical schools, many schools recommend a “behavioral” class: psychology, sociology, anthropology

Explore how to develop the essential “non-academic” skills

- See <https://www.aamc.org/services/admissions-lifecycle/competencies-entering-medical-students>
- Think and reflect on these
- How can you develop them in a manner that is fulfilling and genuine for you?

**Contact me via email
to be on my email list**

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