

Health Professions

Kimberly Mueller (Director of Health Professions Advising)

Careers in the health professions demand more than just achievement in the life sciences. Maturity, compassion, leadership, ethical practice, integrity, communication skills, and knowledge of healthcare policy are essential for the health-care professional. Since the health professions seek individuals with a broad liberal arts and science education in conjunction with a rigorous major area of study in the natural sciences, arts, humanities, or social sciences, Whitman College does not offer "pre-nursing," "pre-med," "pre-vet," or any "pre-health" major. Although many students choose one of our life science majors — biology or biochemistry, biophysics, and molecular biology (BBMB) — more than one-third of our successful matriculants in medical or other health profession schools enter with majors beyond the life sciences, including anthropology, art, chemistry, English, foreign languages (Hispanic Studies, French and Francophone Studies), geology, history, music, philosophy, psychology, religion, sociology and Theater.

Whitman's liberal arts curriculum provides students with both the breadth and depth necessary to excel as physicians, nurses, physician assistants, dentists, veterinarians, physical therapists, occupational therapists, pharmacists, public health specialists, among others. Clinicians must have the ability to communicate by speaking and writing effectively, to gather and analyze data, to continually update knowledge and skills, to work with a team of professionals, and to apply new information to the solution of scientific, clinical, and public health problems — all skills that can be acquired from a liberal arts education.

In collaboration with Providence St. Mary Medical Center, Family Medical Center, the SOS Health Clinic, and Walla Walla Clinic, Whitman College facilitates the opportunity for students to gain exposure to the health professions through clinical shadowing/student observations in Walla Walla County.

Students considering a career in a health profession should attend the orientation meeting offered by the Office of Health Professions Advising (OHPA) during the opening week of their first year and meet with the health professions advisor once per semester before application. Additional opportunities to explore the health professions are available through enrollment in the Interdisciplinary Studies 100 level Health Professions courses (IDSC 100 A, B, or C), attending Health Speaker Series lectures by healthcare professionals, and participating in advising workshops sponsored by the (OHPA). Students should consider joining one of the pre-health student organizations.

For additional information on becoming a competitive applicant and applying to a health professions graduate program, see the Health Professions Web page: www.whitman.edu/academics/careers-professions-and-the-liberal-arts/health-professions or contact Kimberly Mueller.

More details about select professions are given below:

Dentistry

Schools of dentistry recommend that students acquire a broad, liberal arts undergraduate education. Students interested in the study of dentistry should become familiar with the specific requirements of the schools to which they plan to apply. These requirements are contained in the ADEA Official Guide to Dental Schools. See the American Dental Education Association website: www.adea.org. Participation in dental observation or internship programs are required at some schools and highly recommended for all programs. The following courses will meet the admission requirements for most U.S. dental schools, prepare students for the Dental Admission Test (DAT), and support the admission application process.

· Biology 101, 102 or 111, 112, and 205, 221, 221L, 222, 221L, 260, 260L · Chemistry 125, 126, 135, 136 or 140 and 310, 245, 246, 251, 252, · Physics 145 and 146 or 155 and 156 · Biochemistry 325 · English and Writing RWPD 170 or 180, 210 (recommended) · Other: Additional coursework is mathematics, statistics, behavioral sciences, and humanities are recommended.

Medicine

Allopathic (M.D.) and osteopathic (D.O.) medical schools value diverse educational backgrounds. While a strong foundation in natural sciences is necessary, a science major is not required. Admissions committees seek candidates with a broad, liberal arts education that equips them to analyze data, update their knowledge and skills continuously, and address medical, scientific, and ethical challenges. Contemporary medicine's preventative and curative aspects underscore the need for excellent communication skills and significant exposure to social sciences and humanities. The focus is on the breadth and quality of undergraduate coursework, and students are encouraged to exceed the minimum course requirements.

The requirements for U.S. and Canadian allopathic medical schools are provided in the Medical School Admission Requirements (MSAR). See the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) website: www.aamc.org or the Association of American Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) website: www.aacom.org. The following courses will meet the admission requirements for most U.S. medical schools, prepare students for the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT), and support the admission application process.

· Biology 101, 102 or 111, 112, and 205. Recommended - one additional course (e.g. 200, 303, 305, 300, 315, 319, 320, 323, 328, 329, 342, 350) · Chemistry 125, 126, 135, 136 or 140 and 310, 245, 246, 251, 252 · Physics 145, 146 or 155, 156 · Mathematics 125, 128 or 247 or PSY 210 · English and Writing English and Writing RWPD 170 or 180, 210 (recommended) · Biochemistry 325 · Social Sciences Psy 110, SOC 117 or 208. One additional course recommended from anthropology (e.g., 201, 228), psychology (e.g., 225, 229, 230, 270) or sociology *Note:* Requirements vary. A course in human anatomy with a lab (e.g. Biology 221 or 222) is required or recommended by some schools. If you have AP/IB credit for Chemistry 125, Chemistry 310 is not required.

Nursing

Although Whitman does not offer a nursing program, many of our students opt to complete a degree in their field of choice before enrolling in a Master's or Doctorate in Nursing program at an accredited institution. These programs lead to RN licensure and offer opportunities for advanced practice specialization and certification in areas such as family practice, midwifery, pediatrics, critical care, and infectious diseases, among others. Admission requirements vary significantly among schools. For more information, visit the American Association of Colleges of Nursing website, <https://www.aacnnursing.org>

The courses most frequently required for admission include:

· Biology 101 and 102 or 111, 127 or 227, 221 and 222, 260, 260L
· Chemistry 125, 126, 135, 136 or 140 and 310, 245, 246, 251, 252 · Statistics MATH 128 or 247 or PSY 210
· Psychology 110, 240, 260 *Note:* Requirements vary. Some schools require biochemistry (BBMB 325), , English composition (RWPD 170, 180 or 210), , speech/public speaking (RWPD 110), and additional humanities and/or social science courses.

Occupational Therapy

Occupational therapy (OT) programs offer entry-level master's or doctorate degrees and seek applicants with strong interpersonal skills, teamwork capabilities, and a commitment to helping others. Desired qualities include creativity in problem-solving, effective listening, resourcefulness, compassion, and an interest in health, science, and the arts. Most OT schools require documented paid or volunteer experience. Prospective OT students should research the specific requirements of their target schools, which are available in the OTCAS Program Directory. For more information, visit the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) website at www.aota.org.

The following courses will satisfy the requirements for admission to most U.S. occupational therapy schools:

· Biology 101 and 102 or 111, 112 and 221, 222, · Mathematics 128 or 247 · Psychology 110, 240, 260

- Other Social Sciences ANTH 101 or SOC 117

Note: Requirements vary. Many schools require a medical terminology course. Some schools may require a chemistry or physics course or English composition (RWPD 170, 180 or 210)

Pharmacy

All pharmacy programs now award the Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) degree. Requirements for U.S. pharmacy schools can be found in the Pharmacy School Admission Requirements (PSAR), available on the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP) website at www.aacp.org. The following courses are generally required for admission to most U.S. pharmacy schools:

- Biology 101 and 102 or 111, 205, 221, 222, 260 · Biochemistry 325
- Chemistry 125, 126, 135, 136 or 140 and 310, 245, 246, 251, 252 · Physics 145 or 155 · Mathematics 125, 128 or 247 · English/Writing Two semesters of courses from English (literature or creative writing) or composition (Rhetoric, Writing, and Public Discourse 180 and 210). Social Sciences PSY 110, SOC 117

Note: Requirements vary greatly. Many schools require communication/speech (RWPD 110), economics, or additional humanities. Physical Therapy

The opportunity for students to pursue a Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) degree after completing a bachelor's has grown over the years. Most DPT programs require three years to complete. Additionally, many schools require to have observed physical therapy practice in various settings before admission. Prospective physical therapy students should research the specific requirements of their chosen schools, which are detailed in the PTCAS Program Directory. For more information, visit the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) website at www.apta.org. The following courses generally meet the admission requirements for most U.S. physical therapy schools:

- Biology 101 and 102 or 111 and 112, 221, 222 · Chemistry 125, 126, 135, 136 or 140 and 310 · Physics 145 and 146 or 155, 156 · Mathematics 125, 128 or 247 · Social Sciences PSY 110 or 240 and one additional course selected sciences from anthropology, sociology or psychology
- Note:* Requirements vary. Many schools require courses in English composition (Rhetoric, Writing, and Public Discourse 180 or 210) , exercise physiology, medical terminology, or ethics (PHIL 127).

Physician Assistant

Pursuing a career as a Physician Assistant (PA) begins with obtaining a bachelor's degree, ideally in health sciences. Enrolled students in an accredited PA program then progress to earning a master's degree, typically requiring two years. This period encompasses both classroom learning and hands-on patient care experiences across various clinical settings. Graduation is followed by a national exam to achieve PA certification and state licensure for medical practice. Given their comprehensive medical responsibilities, including diagnosing illnesses and prescribing medications, PAs must excel in teamwork within healthcare environments. Prospective physician assistant students should research the specific requirements of their chosen schools, which are detailed in the PA Education Association (PAEA) Program Directory. For more information, visit their website at <https://paeaonline.org/>. The courses most frequently required for admission include:

- Biology 101 and 102 or 111 and 112, 205, 221, 222, 260 · Biochemistry 325
- Chemistry 125, 126, 135, 136, 245, 246, 251, 252 · Mathematics/Statistics 128 or 247 or PSY 210 · English/Writing Two semesters of courses from English (literature or creative writing) or Composition (Rhetoric, Writing, and Public Discourse 170, 180, 210, or 320)
- Psychology 110

Note: Requirements vary greatly. Many schools require a medical terminology course. Public Health

Many of the approximately 256 accredited schools of public health offer M.H.S., M.P.H, or Ph.D. programs for students to enter directly with a bachelor's degree. Others require one to two years of health-care experience, which can include service in the Peace Corps, international health programs, internships with county/state public health departments, or work with the CDC. The five core academic disciplines of public health are biostatistics, epidemiology, health services, health education and behavior, and environmental health, with many schools offering additional focus in international health, maternal and child health, nutrition, and public health policy and practice. Since each program and track sets its own requirements, it is difficult to list a recommended set of prerequisite courses. Majors in mathematics, chemistry, or the life sciences are beneficial for students interested in environmental health, epidemiology, or biostatistics, while anthropology, psychology, or sociology are good preparations for health education and behavior, and global health. Economics can provide a sound background for health policy. See the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH) website: www.aspph.org.

Veterinary Medicine

Schools of veterinary medicine value a liberal arts education underpinned by strong science fundamentals. Besides academic excellence, schools look for candidates with qualities such as compassion, strong communication skills, and animal handling experience. Specific admission requirements are detailed in the Veterinary Medical School Admission Requirements (VMSAR), accessible via the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC) website at www.aavmc.org. The following courses will satisfy the requirements for admission to most U.S. veterinary medical schools:

·Biology 101 and 102 or 111 and 112, 205, 260, 315. · Biochemistry 325
· Chemistry 125, 126, 135, 136 or 140 and 310, 245, 246, 251, 252 · Physics 145 and 146 or 155 and 156
Mathematics 125, 126, 128 or 247 · English Composition (Rhetoric, Writing, and Public Discourse 170, 180, or 210)

Note: Requirements vary. Some schools require courses in cell biology (BIOL 272), animal science, animal nutrition, or public speaking/speech (Rhetoric, Writing, and Public Discourse 110) and additional courses within humanities or the social sciences.