

MEDICAL SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

ADMISSIONS AND APPLICATION

Acceptance to medical school is very competitive. Applicants must submit transcripts, scores from the Medical College Admission Test, and letters of recommendation. Schools also consider character, personality, leadership qualities, and participation in extracurricular activities. Most schools require an interview with members of the admissions committee.

The MCAT is offered multiple times throughout the year and has four (4) sections: Biological Sciences, Physical Sciences, a Writing Sample, and Verbal Reasoning. In preparation for the MCAT, you should have completed Life Sciences 1-4; Chemistry 14A-14D or 20A-30C; and Physics 6ABC or 1ABC and 4AL/BL. Upper division course work in the life sciences, such as in Physiology or Histology, will help you on the MCAT. For more detailed information about the MCAT, visit <http://www.aamc.org/students/mcat/>.

PREPARATION COURSEWORK

*It is important to remember that different schools may require different coursework and strongly recommend other coursework. It is up to you to find out the specific requirements for the schools that you are interested in.

- One year of **BIOLOGY** with lab
 - Taking the Life Sciences series 1-4 can satisfy this. It is recommended that you take this entire series to prepare for the Biological Science Section of the MCAT. Upper division course work in the life sciences, such as in Physiology or Histology, will also help on the MCAT.
- Two years of **CHEMISTRY** (through Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry)
 - The Chemistry 14-series (through 14D) or the 20/30 series (through 30C) and Biochemistry 153A & 153L can satisfy this requirement. It should be noted that the Chem 20/30 series is actually the equivalent of two and a half years, due to the curriculum of each series taught at a different pace. The general chemistry coursework will prepare you for the Physical Science section while the organic chemistry coursework prepares you for the Biological Science section of the MCAT. The biochemistry does not need to be taken before the MCAT, however, 153A may help students since it combines biology and chemistry concepts.
- One year of **PHYSICS**
 - Taking the Physics series 6ABC or 6AH, BH, CH or 1ABC, 4AL, 4BL can satisfy this. One year with labs is generally required which is included in any of the series. Trigonometry-based physics can also satisfy this requirement, but UCLA only offers calculus-based courses and these are required for the various science majors. Physics prepares you for the Physical Science section of the MCAT.
- One year of **MATH**
 - Taking Math 3ABC or Math 31AB, 32A can satisfy this. This is your preparation for calculus-based physics. Several schools require one year of college level math. For other schools, this requirement is strongly recommended, especially as preparation for physics. One year of math can include statistics (see below) and computer programming classes (PIC 10A, 10B, 10C).
- **STATISTICS**

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- Taking Statistics 10, M11, M12, 13, Biostatistics or Biomath, Psychology 100A*
One quarter of statistics is required for some schools including UCLA and strongly recommended for others. *Check with individual schools for acceptability of classes offered outside of the Statistics department.
- One year of **ENGLISH**
 - One year of college level literature and composition. Writing I and Writing II courses, select general education literature courses, and any upper division English literature or English Composition courses will satisfy this requirement. Please see the “English requirement for health professions schools” sheet for a complete list of suggested courses. These courses will prepare you for the Verbal Reasoning and Writing Sample sections of the MCAT. A list of English courses that will satisfy this requirement can be found at:
<http://www.career.ucla.edu/Students/GradProfSchCounseling/PreHealthCareerServices/EnglishRequirement.aspx>
 - Knowledge and cultural competency of at least one **FOREIGN LANGUAGE**
This need not have been taken at the college level. If your future plans include working in California or the southwestern states, Spanish is highly valued and somewhat expected. Ask yourself: Can I walk into a hospital room and get a patient history in another language? If the answer is no, then consider taking college level foreign language classes to brush up on your skills.
- **HUMANITIES** and **SOCIAL SCIENCE** courses
 - The non-science GPA is an important component to your overall academic record, and liberal arts education. Courses in the following can enhance your communication skills and overall understanding of the world: Anthropology, Communication Studies, Economics, any ethnic studies area (e.g. Women’s Studies, LGBT Studies, Afro-American Studies, Chicana/Chicano Studies, Near Eastern Studies), Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, and Speech to name a few. It is important to look at individual school sites to find if they recommend any courses in particular.
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- **COMPUTER SKILLS** are highly recommended.
 - Many programs have incorporated computers and electronic media into their curriculum. It is not necessary to take computer courses if you feel you have sufficient knowledge. Several programs are strongly recommending that students own a computer. Other programs have indicated that they will soon have to purchase a computer as part of the requirements of their program.

UCLA is not responsible for coursework being accepted by recipient schools.

An applicant’s character, personal integrity and leadership abilities are other factors considered by medical schools to determine if you have a future in medicine and health care. To develop these aspects of your personality, consider volunteering at a local hospital or clinic to gain practical experience in the health professions. In addition, a well-rounded sample of extracurricular activities or work experiences, both related and unrelated to medicine such as community service and involvement, will help broaden an applicant’s knowledge and development:

- ✓ **Community service.** This is an indication of your commitment to helping others. Your community service doesn’t have to be through UCLA; it can be in your home community, through a church group, etc., but your record of service should show a genuine commitment.

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- ✓ **Experience in a health care setting.** This is to show that you have a realistic idea of what being a physician is about.
- ✓ **Research.** Some admission committees don't consider this absolutely necessary, but most schools will expect you to have done research if you were an undergraduate at UCLA. You needn't have earned units for it, but be prepared to answer a few questions about your research at your med school interviews. There is no minimum number of quarters of research involvement. Consult the Life and Physical Sciences Undergraduate Research Center for help in choosing a sponsor or enrolling in SRP (Student Research Program).

USEFUL WEBSITES

UCLA Career Center – Pre-Health Career Services in Medicine:

<http://www.career.ucla.edu/Students/GradProfSchCounseling/PreHealthCareerServices/Medicine.aspx>

American Association of Medical Colleges: www.aamc.org

AAMC - AMCAS Application Service: <http://www.aamc.org/students/amcas/start.htm>

Medscape – Medicine News, Journal Articles: <http://www.medscape.com/>

UCLA Premedical Peer Association: <http://www.studentgroups.ucla.edu/ppa/>

UCLA Health System Volunteer Services: http://www.uclahealth.org/homepage_site.cfm?id=11

The Student Doctor Network: <http://www.studentdoctor.net/>