

Undergraduate Pre-Professional Preparation

Students planning to pursue pre-professional studies should refer to the general recommendations given below. For more specific recommendations, visit the appropriate webpages.

Architecture

Please refer to the College of Architecture section in this *Bulletin*.

Business Administration

Students in the College of Arts & Sciences are welcome to consult with the associate dean for the undergraduate program in the Olin Business School concerning any aspect of preparation for careers in business. For more information, visit the Olin Business School website.

Law

The two most significant factors law schools use in determining who to admit for legal study are the undergraduate GPA (taking into consideration the difficulty of courses attempted and the breadth of study) and the score on the Law School Admission Test (LSAT). Admission to law school requires a bachelor's degree.

There is no required set of courses for pre-law study at the undergraduate level. Many law school applicants have majors in economics, English, history, philosophy, and political science, but law schools also seek students with undergraduate majors in business, engineering, science, and other disciplines. Whatever areas pre-law students choose to emphasize in their undergraduate studies, they should take courses that require significant amounts of writing, that develop analytic thinking skills, that encourage the application of principles or theories to new situations, and that require the original writing and revision of written work in response to comment and critique. It is also important to learn to read and analyze complex written material and to develop sound research skills.

Economics, history, philosophy, and political science courses can help students to develop an understanding of the traditions behind and the development of the U.S. legal system. Accounting, logic, and statistics courses also provide valuable background for legal study and the practice of law.

The pre-law advisors in the College of Arts & Sciences are available to help students plan a course of study and prepare a strategy for applying for admission to law school. For more information, visit the pre-law website.

Medicine

Pre-medical students in the College of Arts & Sciences of Washington University complete the bachelor's degree before admission to a medical school. In addition to fulfilling the requirements for the AB, pre-medical students must fulfill the entrance requirements of the medical schools to which they plan to apply. Specific requirements, which may vary, are summarized in the *Medical College Admission Requirements* online handbook, published annually by the Association of American Medical Colleges.

Pre-medical students must demonstrate high academic achievement and possess the character, responsibility, and level of commitment suitable for a career in medicine. Although requirements for specific medical schools are increasingly varied, most schools have traditionally required at least one year each of English, general biology, inorganic chemistry, organic chemistry, and physics with laboratory components traditionally required for all of the core science courses. In addition, students preparing to take the Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) should take one semester each of biochemistry, psychology, and sociology. Medical schools also encourage applicants to develop a broad intellectual background that includes the humanities, the social and behavioral sciences, and a demonstrated understanding of and appreciation for social and cultural diversity.

Students interested in the health professions may choose a major in any field — the humanities, the social sciences, or the natural sciences — as long as they complete the pre-medical requirements. Any student planning to apply to MD/PhD programs is strongly advised to major in one of the natural sciences and to begin gaining bench research experience no later than the beginning of their sophomore year. Research opportunities are available on the Danforth Campus and at the School of Medicine, and these opportunities are open to both science and nonscience majors. Health-related volunteer opportunities are also widely available.

Students who enter the university planning to apply to medical school should, with the aid of their advisors, structure their course of study to include the medical school requirements. There is no one right or best sequence of courses, and there are numerous pathways to medical school. Because each student's pathway is different, students interested in a career in the health professions are encouraged to consult the PreHealth deans in the College in addition to their academic advisors. Additional information can be found on the PreHealth website.

Other Health Professions

Students interested in pursuing other careers in the health professions — including dentistry, nursing, occupational therapy, optometry, physical therapy, and veterinary medicine — are invited to visit with a specialist advisor from the PreHealth advising team. Interested students will find additional information on the PreHealth advising website.