

Preparing for the Health Professions at Pacific University

At Pacific University we help you prepare for our graduate and professional Health Profession programs along with other Graduate Health Professions such as Medical School, Dental School, and more!

Pacific University's Graduate and Professional Health Profession Programs

Audiology
Occupational Therapy
Optometry (in College of Optometry)
Pharmacy
Physical Therapy
Physician Assistant
Clinical Psychology
Applied Psychology
Speech Language Pathology (in College of Education)

Prerequisites for Health Profession Programs

Each program has specific prerequisite classes usually including Natural Sciences coursework. In most cases you will need Anatomy and Physiology, General Chemistry and General Biology. Additional science requirements could include Organic Chemistry, Microbiology, and General Physics.

Each program also has non-science prerequisites which will include some math (statistics or calculus), writing, psychology, and other non-science coursework.

[Check our website for the specific prerequisite coursework for your Health Profession program.](#)

Your Bachelor's Degree and Prerequisites

Your degree is divided into thirds. A third is your major, a third is general education (known as "core" at Pacific), and a third is electives. Any prerequisite that doesn't overlap with your major or core requirements will count as an elective.

Core Requirements (General Education)	Major	Electives
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Core is made up of courses taken from a broad selection of disciplines.• Some of these requirements will overlap with classes for your intended major.• Some health profession prerequisites will overlap with core requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You can be undecided for awhile.• You may change your mind about your major! (National average is that students change their major 3 times).• Depending on your major, you might have some health profession prerequisites that overlap, but it is okay if they don't!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can be anything! Although in some cases classes may need to be outside of your major and/or upper division (3rd and 4th year classes).• Any health profession prerequisites that don't overlap with your core or major requirements will count as electives towards your degree.

Major Choice

Since programs like Optometry, Physical Therapy, and other Health Professions are graduate programs you can't major in them as an undergraduate. "Pre-Optometry," "Pre-Pharmacy," etc are pathways but not majors.

You can major in any subject (related or not) and still prepare for a graduate Health Profession program! Your choice of major will not impact your competitiveness for entry into a Health Profession program. While many students choose to major in a science subject, students have majored in Business, Public Health, Psychology, Sociology, Spanish, Creative Writing, Dance, and others. You should select a major that you enjoy and feel you could excel in.

(This didn't used to be the case but in the late 1990's Medical Schools and other Health Profession programs started to realize their applicants weren't as well-rounded as they would've liked. At that time Health Profession programs quit using choice of major as competitive criteria for applicants.)

Competitive Entry

The Health Professions are very popular career choices right now so entry into any Health Profession program is competitive. To be a competitive candidate you need good grades in your prerequisite coursework and good overall college grades. Our Graduate Admissions website updates the statistics for the entering classes each summer. Check them out to see what the competitive GPAs are. Other school's Health Profession programs should have the same information on their websites.

For Pacific's Health Profession programs a good interview is another area that makes you more competitive.

The Advantage Program

While at Pacific you can apply for the Advantage Program which is a series of classes that help you prepare to apply to graduate health profession programs. Most students take the first class, HPE 190, in the fall of their first year. Upon completion of that class you can apply to the Advantage Program. If you get in, you take the additional two classes. If you successfully complete the Advantage Program you will get a guaranteed interview in the Pacific Health Profession program of your choice.

Graduate Health Professions not offered at Pacific

We have several students preparing for Graduate Health Profession programs not offered at Pacific, such as medical school. The information still pertains although the Advantage Program cannot offer a guaranteed interview to a non-Pacific program.

The Work Experience Requirement for the Physician Assistant Program

While many of our Health Profession programs have an observation requirement, the Physician Assistant program has a significant work experience requirement. Applicants for this program need a minimum of 1000 hours of clinical work experience. The average amount of work experience for applicants getting admitted to this program is 4000 hours. If you are thinking about this pathway and don't have any work experience you will need to plan for this by getting licensed in a healthcare field and building up work hours.

Dental Hygiene

Dental Hygiene is an undergraduate health profession. Please contact the Advising Center for information about this program.

Questions? Contact Us!

Advising Center

503-352-2800

advisingcenter@pacificu.edu