PRE-PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE

Overview

The Pre-Professional Graduate Certificate Program is a highly intensive and focused one-year full-time post-baccalaureate graduate certificate program designed for applicants who have completed undergraduate degrees and are interested in pursuing a career in medicine. The program allows qualified individuals to start this gap year program immediately after spring term graduation and, upon completion, become ready for applying to medical or osteopathic schools as desired the following year.

The program is designed to strengthen the biomedical knowledge of participants, enhance professionalism skills, and improve qualifications for future application to, and competitiveness for, admission to medical school. In addition, because of the similarity of the coursework in this proposed program to the preclinical coursework in medical school, the program is intended to enhance performance in medical school once they gain admission and enroll.

The program is intended for two types of students: those that have a non-pre-med, science undergraduate degree who wish to switch focus from a previous major and transition to medical school (career-changers) and/or those with a pre-med background who require grade and/or Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) enhancement of their competitiveness for admission to these schools (career-enhancers). Although not designed exclusively for students from groups underrepresented in medicine (URMs), the program will make every attempt to encourage participation of URMs.

Features of the program include:

- Preparation for Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) (https://lsom.uthscsa.edu/dcsa/education/pp/curriculum/)
- Curriculum (https://lsom.uthscsa.edu/dcsa/education/pp/curriculum/) similar to the pre-clinical years of medical school
- Faculty involved in training students in the medical, dental and health professions schools
- Personalized academic advising (https://lsom.uthscsa.edu/dcsa/education/postbac/academicssupport/) that includes workshops on applying to medical schools
- Small class sizes studying as a single cohort
- Opportunities to develop professionalism skills

Admission Requirements

Admission to the Pre-Professional program will be selective, and applicants’ prior records will be evaluated in the light of the program’s requirements. Applicants must hold U.S. citizenship or have U.S. permanent resident status. All applicants must submit the following information for their application to be considered by the program admissions committee:

- A completed online application (https://www.uthscsa.edu/academics/biomedical-sciences/what-know-you-apply/).
- Transcripts from all colleges and universities attended. At the time of matriculation into the program, applicants must have a baccalaureate degree in a relevant discipline (e.g. chemistry, physics, psychology, biomedical engineering), one year each of General Biology, General Chemistry, Organic Chemistry and Physics, with accompanying labs, with a grade “B” or better, and a minimum overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale for the last 60 hours of major coursework completed. College seniors may apply and be offered admission to the program before they have earned their degrees. However, a final transcript must be submitted to the program upon graduation before any student can matriculate into the program. Unofficial PDF copies of transcripts can be submitted with the application; however, official copies are required to be submitted for registration in the program. Transcripts from institutions outside the United States must be submitted in the original language and must be accompanied by an acceptable evaluation agency translation for each course from NACES® members.
- Official Medical College Admission Test® (MCAT®) scores, taken within 3 years preceding submission of an application to the program.
- A curriculum vitae/resumé documenting educational background, volunteering, and work experience.
- A Statement of Purpose (Personal Statement) (1-2 pages) submitted with the on-line application that includes a brief description of the applicant’s background, motivation for becoming a physician, and how this program fits into the applicant’s career objectives. Any relevant past activities such as volunteering or shadowing and their effect on the applicant may be mentioned in this statement.
- Three essays as stated on the online application form, up to 2500 characters with spaces.
- Three Letters of Recommendation from science or math college-level faculty qualified to judge the student’s academic and professional potential and are knowledgeable about the quality of the applicant’s scholarly activities and/or work experiences. The letters must attest to the applicant’s readiness for graduate-level studies. Recommenders must have taught the applicant for at least one semester-long didactic undergraduate/graduate-level course. All letters should be received before the deadline.

It is the responsibility of the applicants to ensure timely submission of documentation during the application process, and, after acceptance, to the Registrar’s office.

In addition, competitive applicants will have demonstrated motivation to apply to and attend medical school evidenced by past activities, e.g. volunteering or shadowing in a health-care-related setting. The applicant must be willing to submit additional information as requested by the program.

On a case-by-case basis, specific admission requirements may be waived by the Graduate Faculty Council.

Certificate Requirements

Students must complete 21 semester credit hours with a grade of ‘B’ or better to obtain this graduate certificate.

Sample Plan of Study

The Pre-Professional (PP) Graduate Certificate Program provides advanced preparation in two core areas. The first is graduate-level coursework in subjects that are relevant to the medical school curriculum and that provide fundamental understanding of the function of the human body during normal and disease states. These include gross anatomy, neuro-anatomy, histology, physiology, biochemistry and pharmacology. Students must complete all 21 credit hours of course
work as approved by the program’s oversight committee (i.e., Committee on Graduate Studies); there are no electives. The second core area involves preparation for the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT). In addition to the coursework, the plan of study includes a requirement to complete a preparatory (Kaplan) course for the MCAT and to take the MCAT. Non-credit activities will include workshops on applying to medical and osteopathic schools, enhancing learning skills, alternate healthcare professional and biomedical research careers as well as academic advising.

First Year

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<th>Credit Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fall</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>PHYL 5028</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Physiology</td>
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<tr>
<td>MICR 5031</td>
<td>Pathogenic Microbiology</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSAT 6077</td>
<td>Eucaryotic Cell Biology</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSAT 5041</td>
<td>Pre-medical Neuroanatomy</td>
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<td>CSAT 5045</td>
<td>Pre-Medical Biochemistry</td>
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<td><strong>Spring</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>CSAT 5060</td>
<td>Human Histology</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSAT 5022</td>
<td>Inter-professional Human Gross Anatomy</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHAR 6021</td>
<td>Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Credit Hours:</strong></td>
<td><strong>21.0</strong></td>
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Objectives/Program Outcomes

The objectives of the program include:

- Demonstration of an in-depth understanding of the biological basis of health and disease.
- Preparation for achieving minimum standards on the MCAT (Medical College Admissions Test).
- Provision of access to one-on-one advisement on applying to medical school and the medical profession as a career.
- Participation in learning outside the classroom through extracurricular activities including workshops and volunteer opportunities.

Three student learning outcomes have been established to identify and develop direct measures of student assessment. Students will be expected to:

- Acquire a fundamental understanding of the function of the human body during normal and disease states.
- Achieve national average standards on the MCAT.
- Develop a Personal Statement that clearly delineates rationale/interest in attending medical school.