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 students gain admission and enroll.

The program is intended for two types of students: 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) and/or those that have a non-pre-med, science undergraduate degree, have completed all the requisite coursework for medical school, and wish to transition to medical school (career-changers).

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 profession schools
- Academic advising (https://lsom.uthscsa.edu/dcsa/education/postbac/academicsupport/)
- Small class sizes studying as a single cohort
- Opportunities to develop professionalism skills

Admissions to the program are currently paused until further notice.

Admission Requirements

Admission to the pre-professional program will be selective, and applicants' prior records will be evaluated according to 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. 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.
- A curriculum vitae/resume 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.
- One essay (up to 2500 characters with spaces) based on topic stated on the application form.
- Three letters of recommendation from science or math college-level faculty or health professionals 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 or served as a mentor/preceptor. 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 healthcare-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.

Update: Program admissions are currently on pause for the 2026-2027 academic year.

Certificate Requirements

The graduate certificate program consists of nine courses (21 semester credit hours). Students must earn a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 to receive a program certificate. Starting in the Fall 2025 semester, any student receiving a "D" and/or "F" grade will be dismissed from the program.

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, neuroanatomy, 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 preparatory course for the MCAT. Non-credit activities will include workshops on applying to medical schools, enhancing learning skills, alternate healthcare professional and biomedical research careers, as well as academic advising.

First Year		
Fall		**Credit Hours**
PHYL 5028	Fundamentals of Physiology	2
CSAT 5041	Neuroanatomy	2.5
CSAT 5045	Pre-Medical Biochemistry	2.5
MICR 5051	Intro To Immunology	2
CSAT 5046	Clinical Seminars	1
Spring		
CSAT 5022	Clinically-Oriented Human Anatomy	5.5
CSAT 5060	Human Histology	2.5
PHAR 6021	Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics	1
CSAT 5070	Introduction to Mechanisms of Disease	2
	Total Credit Hours:	**21.0**

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.