

HUNTER PRE-HEALTH STUDENT GUIDE

Overview

This document is meant to serve as a guide for students pursuing careers in the healthcare fields. Being on the pre-health track is challenging and competitive, but the next few pages provide a general overview of the process at Hunter College and resources to help guide students, both undergraduate, transfer, and second degree, along the way. For undergraduate students there is a [Pre-Health timeline](#) that will assist you in staying on top of the pre-health track from freshman year.

Application to graduate schools in the health professions is an ongoing process that begins early on in your undergraduate education.

Hunter College is a leading CUNY institution and offers a rigorous academic curriculum, particularly in the sciences and math. Graduate schools in healthcare fields are aware of the level of difficulty and the depth of Hunter's coursework in the sciences and will take this fact into consideration when reviewing a student's application.

The Pre-Health Professions Office provides valuable pre-professional preparation services that are included in the cost of tuition at Hunter College. It is in the best interest of students who are interested in a healthcare career to seek the guidance and advice that our Office provides—at no additional cost to you. This is all the more reason why you should take advantage of the services provided by the Pre-Health Professions Office.

Acceptances Rates

The Pre-Health Professions Office has a proven track record of getting Hunter College students into medical, dental, optometry, veterinary, and other health professions graduate schools. Our rate of acceptance for Committee Letter applicants was 96% for the 2021-2022 application cycle.

The Pre Health Professions Office at Hunter

The Pre-Health Professions Office at Hunter College aims to educate and assist pre-health students with building the necessary skills and portfolio of experiences for their chosen healthcare profession. The Office also

provides mentorship opportunities, assistance with the application process, mock interview preparation, and access to resources regarding current news and events in the healthcare field as a whole. The Office organizes student orientations, skills-building seminars, information sessions, speaker events, panel discussions, and information about graduate school and summer research programs to educate our pre-health students about fields of interest, graduate school exam preparation, clinical and research opportunities, and other volunteer service activities.

All of the opportunities and resources provided by the Pre-Health Professions Office can be accessed by joining the Pre-Med Listserv. In order to subscribe to the **Pre-Med Listserv**, click on this link: premedinfo-l@hunter.listserv.cuny.edu. Fill out the form by adding your full name, your Hunter College email address, indicate "Regular" as Subscription type, and then click "Subscribe." An email message with a confirmation link will be sent to your Hunter email address. You must follow the instructions to confirm the subscription.

The Pre-Health Office advises students interested in the following areas of healthcare: **Medicine, MD/PhD, Dentistry, Veterinary Medicine, Optometry, Pharmacy, Physician Assistant, Podiatry, Physical Therapy, and Occupational Therapy**. Our Office **does not advise** students interested in **Nursing**. Please visit www.hunter.cuny.edu/nursing for information on Hunter's undergraduate nursing program.

The Pre-Health Program Application and the Pre-Health File

To join the Pre-Health Program, students must register for and complete the *Pre-Health Professions Advising Pathways Program* (PPAP). PPAP is a 2-semester program consisting of twice weekly virtual seminars. PPAP 1000 provides pre-professional skills building seminars and PPAP 1002 provides seminars about various career opportunities in healthcare. At the completion of the PPAP 1000 seminar series, you will be provided with a *Pre-Health Program Application* and a *Pre-Health Professions Advising Student Contract*. After timely submitting the Application and Contract, you will be able to schedule advising meetings with a Health Professions Advisor through the Navigate site.

Following completion of the PPAP 1000 and PPAP 1002 seminar series, you will be able to open your Pre-Health File provided that you meet certain additional GPA and science course credit requirements at Hunter College.

Pre-Health Transfer students must only complete PPAP 1000 in order to apply to the Pre-Health Program and open a Pre-Health File (transfer students do not need to register for and complete the PPAP 1002 seminar series.) Please refer to [Pre-Health Transfer Students](#) for further information about being a Pre-Health Transfer student at Hunter College.

What is a Pre-Health File? It is an online central location maintained by our office where students store their recommendation letters, course evaluations, resume, and transcript to be used later when applying to health professions graduate schools. The file accumulates these documents over time during your undergraduate years. *Opening a Pre-Health File is a 2-step process.* **First**, students must attend all PPAP 1000 seminars. After attending the last PPAP 1000 seminar: **“Everything You Need to Know to be a Pre-Health Student”**, students are sent a Pre-Health Program Application and Pre-Health Contract to complete and timely submit. **Second**, after students join the Pre-Health Program by submitting the Application and Contract, they must have completed the second seminar series: PPAP 1002, completed 12 science credits at Hunter, and have a minimum science and cumulative GPA of 3.3 in order to open a Pre-Health File. Once open, your Pre-Health File is kept active by (1) submitting at least one course evaluation per semester, (2) submitting letters of recommendation at the completion of an experience/program, and (3) attending at least 3 Pre-Health events per semester or 6 per academic year.

Pre-Health students interested in applying to Medical, MD/PhD, Dental, or Optometry schools with a Committee Letter, must submit a Pre-Health Application and Contract and open a Pre-Health File. The Pre-Health File must be open and active for one (1) year prior to submitting a Committee Letter Application. This is the first step toward qualifying for a Committee Letter or Letter Packet. **Please refer to: [Applying to Pre-Health in the Pre-Health website](#) for information on the PPAP seminars, the Pre-Health Application and how to open a Pre-Health File. Please refer to: [Committee Letters](#) for further information. Students who are applying for a Committee Letter must complete the PPAP 1003: Application Planning seminars.**

Transfer Students

Transfer students to Hunter College have certain requirements for completing science and math courses at Hunter for purposes of opening a Pre-Health File and applying for a Committee Letter. Please refer to [Special](#)

[Requirements for Transfer Student Applicants](#) to learn more about these requirements.

If you are a Transfer Student, you do not need to complete PPAP 1002. You can open a Pre-Health file after completing PPAP 1000 and fulfilling the science credit and GPA requirements.

Applications to Pharmacy, Physician Assistant, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Veterinary and Podiatry programs do not require a Committee Letter. Accordingly, students who are pursuing these pre-health tracks are not required to open a Pre-Health File. **However, students pursuing these pre-health tracks must still submit a Pre-Health Program Application and Pre-Health Contract in order to join the Pre-Health Program, and are still encouraged to open a Pre-Health File in order to have a central location for storing their letters of recommendation as well as to take advantage of the many opportunities for advising and application assistance.** The Pre-Health Professions Advising Office provides students who are applying to Pharmacy, Physician Assistant, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Veterinary and Podiatry schools the option to receive a Letter Packet to accompany their applications. To learn more about a Letter Packet and how to qualify for a Letter Packet please see [Letter Packet — Hunter College](#).

Pre-Health Academic Requirements

Health professions graduate schools require that applicants complete certain science and math courses by the time they enter these programs. See [COURSE REQUIREMENTS](#). These subjects are also covered by the standardized exams needed to apply. SEE **Relevant Standardized Exams and Central Application Forms**, below.

In addition to this list, there are also other courses that the Pre Health Professions Office recommends according to the desired health professions career.

The Pre Health Professions Office strongly advises students not to e-permit their science courses as health professions graduate schools understand the difficulty of science classes at Hunter; therefore, students who

consistently e-permit their science courses appear as if they are opting for an easier equivalent class at a different college. If a student must e-permit a science course in order to stay on track with their requirements, we advise students to e-permit the course at a 4-year CUNY college, and not at a 2-year CUNY community college.

GPA

A high GPA is an important factor in the application process for health professions graduate schools, and students with a cumulative and science GPA of 3.7 or above are considered strong applicants. Although pre-health students with a wide range of GPAs have been accepted into health professions graduate schools, Hunter College students must have a minimum science (BCP) and cumulative GPA of 3.3 to open a Pre-Health File. **Further, a science and math (BCPM) GPA and cumulative GPA of 3.45 is required to qualify for a Committee Letter.** In calculating the BCPM GPA for the Committee Letter, only courses given by the Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Math Departments are considered.

Choosing a Major as a Pre-Health Student

There is no Pre-Health major at Hunter College. Pre-Health students can choose any major or combination of majors, concentrations, and certificate programs, as long as the student also completes the required courses for the health professions graduate schools that they plan to apply to. Despite this general rule, many Pre-Health students choose to major in Biological Sciences, Biochemistry, or Human Biology, **especially if they must meet financial aid requirements.**

Pre-Health Required Courses

The Chart below provides the basic sequence of Pre-Health Courses at Hunter College. Your track may or may not require that you take all the courses listed. Further, your major may include additional required math and science courses.

Course Title (Credits)	Subject	Pre-requisites MUST BE TAKEN PRIOR TO THE COURSE	Co-Requisites MUST BE TAKEN WITH OR BEFORE THE COURSE
ENGL 120, ENGL 220 or Equivalent	Two semesters of writing intensive courses.		
BIOL 100 (4.5) <i>Spring only or Summer</i>	General Biology I (includes Lab)	MATH 125 and CHEM 102	
BIOL 102 (4.5) <i>Fall only</i>	General Biology II (includes Lab)	BIOL 100	
CHEM 102 (4)	General Chemistry I		MATH 125
CHEM 104 (4)	General Chemistry II	CHEM 102	
CHEM 106 (3)	General Chemistry Lab	CHEM 102	CHEM 104
CHEM 222 (4)	Organic Chemistry I	CHEM 104	
CHEM 223 (2.5)	Organic Chemistry Lab I	CHEM 106	CHEM 222
CHEM 224 (4)	Organic Chemistry II	CHEM 222	
CHEM 225 (2.5)	Organic Chemistry Lab II	CHEM 223	CHEM 224
BIOL 300 (4.5) <i>Fall only</i> or CHEM 376 (3)	Biochemistry	BIOL 100, BIOL 203 (for BIOL majors) CHEM 224	CHEM 222
PHYS 110 (4.5)	General Physics I (includes Lab)	MATH 125	
PHYS 120 (4.5)	General Physics II (includes Lab)	PHYS 110	
MATH 150 (4)	Calculus I	MATH 125	
STAT 213 (3), STAT 295 (3) or PSYCH 248 (4)	Statistics	MATH 125 MATH 125, PSYCH 100, and other 3 cr PSYCH course	ENGL 120

Other Requirements

In addition to academic requirements, there are other requirements that will strengthen a student's application and get them more acquainted with their future profession. The Pre-Health Professions Advising Office recommends that students contribute a significant amount of time to a select number of opportunities to demonstrate a commitment to their chosen health profession. Each experience should culminate with a strong letter of recommendation regarding your performance. Each letter should be uploaded to your Pre-Health File.

You should obtain at least one experience in each of these areas:

1. Clinical Experience

A great way to learn more about your future profession of interest is by gaining clinical exposure to your area of healthcare. Different ways of getting this experience are by shadowing, volunteering in a hospital or medical clinic, or by working as a medical assistant, medical scribe, dental assistant, or EMT. The minimum number of hours for these experiences will vary depending upon the health profession but, in general, students should aim for a minimum of 200 hours of clinical experience by the time they submit their application.

2. Research Experience

Research experience is very important for applicants to medical school and it can also make you a stronger applicant for dental, veterinary, optometry, physician assistant, physical therapy, and pharmacy schools. Admissions Committees value applicants who have demonstrated that they know how to think like a scientist and work as a team in a bench lab or clinical research setting outside of the lab work connected with their courses. Students applying to medical school should aim for at least one intensive summer research experience or at least one year of bench research in a lab during the academic term.

Research is also particularly important for those pursuing a MD/PhD program. Students interested in a MD/PhD program need

multi-year research experience. Students should also strive to present their research at conferences and/or be named on a research abstract or publication.

3. Extra-Curricular Activities

Extra-curricular clubs or other activities are a good opportunity for pre-health students to contribute to their school community and to demonstrate leadership skills. Students interested in the health professions should join one of [Hunter's Pre-Health Clubs](#). There are many additional ways to get involved from Hunter Student Government to the many other organizations on campus.

4. Non-Clinical Volunteer Community Service

Health Professions graduate schools also look for applicants who have given back to their communities or to the needy in underserved areas. This service is volunteer and non-clinical in nature and can include volunteering at a food pantry or a soup kitchen, assisting the homeless by delivering food or supplies, volunteering for NYCares, the American Red Cross, or at your place of worship. Even signing up to be a volunteer tutor is considered to be non-clinical, volunteer, community service. Such opportunities are also posted on the Pre Med [Listserv](#).

A Committee Letter

A Committee Letter is a multi-page comprehensive document that incorporates all instructor evaluations and letters of recommendation in a student's Pre Health File in addition to a personal interview and recommendation by the Pre-Health Committee. A Committee Letter provides the applicant with an endorsement from Hunter College and rates the applicant using a standard [Evaluation Rubric](#) that includes: Academic Ability, Clinical Experience, Research Experience, Non-clinical Community or Public Service, Communication Skills, Aptitude for Collaboration/Teamwork, Passion/Motivation/Commitment, and additional categories.

This Committee Letter will be uploaded to the relevant central application service for the professional schools the student is applying to (eg. AMCAS, AACOMAS, AADSAS or OptomCAS).

Medical, Dental, and Optometry schools know that the Hunter College Pre-Health Professions Office provides a Committee Letter and will inquire

if a pre-medical, pre-dental, or pre-optometry student applies without one. Hunter students must [apply and qualify](#) for a Committee Letter.

Relevant Standardized Exams & Central Application Forms

MEDICINE: M.D./D.O./MCAT/AMCAS/AACOMAS

[Medical College Admissions Test](#)

<https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school-amcas/applying-medical-school-amcas>

[AACOMAS Application](#)

DENTISTRY D.D.S./D.M.D.: DAT/AADSAS

[Dental Admission Test](#)

ADEA GoDental website

VETERINARY D.V.M.: GRE/VMCAS

[VMCAS Application Service](#)

OPTOMETRY O.D.: OAT/OptomCAS

<https://www.optomcas.org/>

[Optometry Admission Test](#)

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT M.S., PA-C: GRE/CASPA

<https://paeaonline.org/>

<https://paeaonline.org/caspa/>

PHYSICAL THERAPY D.P.T.: GRE/PTCAS

<http://www.ptcas.org/home.aspx>

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY: GRE/OTCAS-OTACAS

<https://www.aota.org/Education-Careers/Find-School/OTCAS.aspx>

PHARMACY Pharm.D.: PCAT/PharmCAS

<http://pcatweb.info/>

<http://www.pharmacas.org/>

PODIATRY D.P.M.: MCAT/AACPMAS

<https://www.aacpm.org/becoming-a-podiatric-physician/admissions/>

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