
Pre-health 201

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Overview

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- Admissions Tests
- Essential Characteristics
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- Passions outside of healthcare
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Sophomore Year: A Transition

- In many ways, sophomore year is a transition. Some of you will begin taking upper level course work, while others will be exploring new areas of study you had not previously considered.
- All of you will be involved in selecting a major and in clarifying your interest in the health professions.
- As a sophomore you will also continue with some of the coursework and activities you began during your first year. It is up to you to decide what you want to continue, what you want to drop, and what you want to add to your schedule.

4 year planning: Academic

- Reflect on your first year - did you meet your goal of establishing yourself academically? **Your academics do matter during your first two years!** Figure out what it takes to do well and what you are capable of.
- *If you find yourself having difficulties, ask for help from your faculty, Supplemental Instruction leader, and the Academic Support Center*
- Continue to explore majors - we encourage you to major in a subject that most interests you
 - Have you declared a major? If yes, have you switched to a major advisor?

4 year planning: Academic

- **Get to know your faculty! Eventually you will be asking them for letters of recommendation**
 - Set a personal goal - for example: get to know one faculty member each semester
- A competitive GPA for medical school is 3.6 with a good MCAT score (~510 and above). If you do not have this GPA, it doesn't mean you will not go to medical school. What it means is that you will likely have a longer path.

4 year planning: Academic

- If you are struggling with time management, your sophomore year is an important time to discern your priorities.
- We have had several student athletes who have successfully matriculated into health professional schools. They often take a gap year (or two) in order to gain additional experience that was not possible during their time as a student athlete.

It is NOT too late to apply for a nursing major!

Why is nursing one of the most popular undergraduate majors among both parents and prospective students nationally? 42% of parents push majors based on earning potential (USNWP) -- ave starting salary < \$45k for college grad (USNWP); CS 70k, nursing 60k, accounting 50k; psychology 40k (Forbes)

170k PSAT test takers/year intend to pursue a nursing major: excellent job market; lower cost of education; flexible hours; advanced degrees (like DNP) with upward mobility; minimal chemistry requirements; begin clinical training years earlier than MDs; many union jobs

It is a different field! Training emphasizes: liberal arts, caring, critical thinking, clinical/technical skills, continuing education, public health, building relationships with patients (“1 patient at a time”)

St. Olaf: 45% of prehealth students are premed, less than 20% are pre-nursing (BA or MSN)!

Premed students can still apply for the nursing major in January on the condition that they complete the pre-requisites by the end of summer. But you must meet with the nursing dept. chair ASAP.

4 year planning: Personalizing your major

- **Personalize your major with research, internships, and independent study**
 - 396 Directed Undergraduate Research
 - 398 Independent Research
 - 294/394 Academic Internship
 - 375 Advanced Supplemental Research
 - 298 Independent Study
 - 291: Topics (.25 credit) a non-routine offering - a deep dive into something interesting

Concentrations (some of the options)

- Africa and the Americas, Asian studies, biomolecular science, environmental studies, family studies, Latin American studies, linguistic studies, management studies mathematical biology, Middle Eastern studies, Neuroscience, race and ethnic studies, statistics, women's and gender studies

4 year planning: Personalizing your major

- We strongly recommend that you consider **studying abroad** during your time at St. Olaf. If you have not already done so, we encourage you to explore the off-campus study options through the International and Off-Campus Studies office and to speak with your advisor about how a semester or even a year abroad could fit into your 4 year academic plan.

Gap Years

3 types:

1. Aspirational - following a passion, personal development
 - a. Fulbright, paid employment, entrepreneurship
2. Proactive - development
 - a. Service, research, healthcare experience
3. Involuntary
 - a. Focus on areas of growth

Admission tests

- It can be helpful to start thinking about when you might plan to take the MCAT, DAT, PCAT, etc.
- We strongly recommend that you take only 3 courses during the semester that you are studying for an admissions test
 - Treat studying as it were the 4th class you are taking
- The goal is to take the exam only once and to be happy with your score
 - Students generally study for 350+ hours for exams and take multiple practice tests to gauge their performance
- There is an on-campus MCAT prep course
- Options for preparing include an in-person course, online course, private tutor, or independent study

4 year planning: Experiential

- **Exploring** career options within healthcare through **shadowing, volunteering, and paid employment.**
 - Reflect: what did you do during your first year? What will you continue to do and what might you stop doing? Do you plan to add anything this year?
- Cultivating **professionalism**
 - Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits, e.g., punctuality, working productively with others, and time workload management, and understand the impact of non-verbal communication on professional work image. The individual demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, and is able to learn from his/her mistakes.

4 year planning: Experiential

- Developing your **skills** through internships, research, volunteering and paid employment
 - Communication
 - Cultural sensitivity
 - Teamwork
 - Initiative
 - Time management
 - Prioritization
 - Critical thinking
 - Problem solving
- Articulating your experience through a resume, cover letter, personal statement and application, as well as through interviewing

Essential characteristics to develop

- A commitment to delivering patient care that is compassionate and of a high quality
- A high degree of personal integrity
- Skill in communicating with diverse groups
- A commitment to improving the human condition
- Professional conduct
- Outstanding interpersonal skills
- A dedication to lifelong learning

[AAMC's 15 Core Competencies of Entering Medical Students](https://www.med.umn.edu/admissions/how-apply/selection-criteria/essential-and-desired-qualities)

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Shadowing

- Remember: For some health professions, **shadowing is a prerequisite** to admission to professional school.
 - Dentistry, medicine, osteopathic medicine, occupational therapy, physical therapy, physician assistant, etc.
- You **may** have a personal network of healthcare professionals. If you don't have one, you are not alone. The Piper Center can help you build one
 - Family, friends, friends of family, family of friends, your own healthcare providers
- **Strongly recommended that you shadow multiple professionals in different settings who work with a variety of patients**
- Reach out to alumni in the field: set up **informational interviews**
- Keep a journal while shadowing

Passions outside of healthcare

- Fine Arts - music, dance, visual arts, drama
- Athletics
- World languages
- Crafts and hobbies

Health professional and graduate schools are interested in admitting students who are aware of their interests/passions and how they are (or are not) related to their future careers.

Volunteering

- Recommended that you volunteer in AND outside of healthcare
- **Sustained and meaningful experience**
 - Did you volunteer during your first year? If not, consider volunteering this year. If so, what will you continue this year, what will you drop, and what (if anything) will you add?
- Gain experience working with people from a wide variety of backgrounds
 - step outside of your comfort zone!
 - Serve vulnerable and marginalized populations in your own community
- **International volunteering: ethical considerations**
- Enhance your ability to view situations/perspectives from multiple angles

Student Organizations & Leadership

- There are **many** student organizations at St. Olaf, including 12 health-related student organizations.
 - Explore your interests through students organizations, both in AND outside of healthcare
- Manage your time and involvement to set yourself up for success
 - Recommended that you join no more than 1-2 organizations
 - If you are an athlete or are involved in a music org, no more than one

Student Organizations & Leadership

- There may be opportunities for leadership through student organizations if you are an active member
 - Leaders can enhance their communication and organizational skills, as well as learn how to interact with individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds
- Leadership opportunities exist outside of student organizations!
- Some leadership positions will also be volunteering (don't worry about classifying your experiences at this point)

Summer - planning ahead

- It is not too early to be thinking about what you will be doing next summer
- If possible, gain experience related to your area of interest:
 - Shadowing
 - Volunteering
 - Interning
 - Researching
 - Taking a paid position
- Students sometimes pursue certification as a nursing assistant (NAR), an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), or a pharmacy technician
- Not sure where to start? Swing by the Piper Center

Internships & Opportunities

- Rockswold Health Scholars
- Health Scholars at the Mayo Clinic
- TRIA Orthopaedic
- Allina Clinic
- Fairview
- Wieber PT
- Consultative Health and Medicine
- Study Abroad
 - DIS Denmark
 - Peruvian Medical Experience
- Pathways to Healthcare
- Northfield Hospital Rehabilitation Services
- Blood and Marrow Transplantation research
- Cadaver team
- CURI
- Mayo Innovation Scholars
- Norway Innovation Scholars
- Peer Advisor
- Peer Educator

Internship Showcase

- Students who have participated in internships and research will share their experiences with their peers.

Monday, October 7 @ 7-8:30 in Tomson 280.

- A “must attend” for sophomores!

Health Professions Committee (HPC)

The Health Professions Committee is comprised of faculty from the sciences and mathematics, and it is chaired by Dr. Kevin Crisp. The HPC provides both informal advising and a formal service to students interested in medical, dental, and many other health careers.

Committee Members

Kevin Crisp, Chair of the HPC, Biology

Lisa Bowers, Biology

Mary Beth Kuehn, Nursing

Elodie Marlier, Chemistry

Gary Muir, Psychology

Matthew Wright, Mathematics

Beth Abdella, Chemistry

Diane Angell, Biology

Amy Larsen, Physics

Ashley Hodgson, Economics

Jean Porterfield, Biology

Committee Administrator

Laurie Prior, Chemistry AAA

Committee Liaison

Katie Hughes, Pre-Health Career Coach

Maintaining a positive profile

- Misuse of social media
- Violation of college rules
 - Alcohol violations
- A breach of academic Integrity (plagiarism)
- A failure to act professionally

What conduct can get you in trouble?

Next time we see you: Advising Open House

- Meet with your academic advisor before the advising open house
- Common courses taken spring of your sophomore year: Chem 247, Bio 150 or 227 or 233, social science course (Psych 125 or SoAn 121), statistics for science course.

Fall Advising Open House

- **Date TBD (registration for Interim/Spring)**
- Your advisor approves your schedules for registration (releases the hold on your account for registration)- not Professor Crisp! **Please meet with your academic advisor before the open house**

Resources

[Pre-Health Website](#)

[Health Professions: Coursework and Preparation for Graduate or Professional School \(Advising Guides\)](#)

[Pre-Health Google Calendar](#)

[Handshake](#)

[Academic Support Center](#)

[Speaking Space](#)

[Writing Desk in Rolvaag Library](#)