

Preprofessional Advising

HEALTH PROFESSIONS

WHAT WE DO: Our Health Professions

Advising Program offers workshops, guidance, and resources that enable students to plan for a future in the ever-changing profession of health care. Whether you are interested in matriculating to medical, dental, optometry, podiatry or veterinary school, or are exploring careers in allied health including public health, physician assistant, occupational therapy, physical therapy, chiropractic medicine or pharmacy, the advising offered by our program in conjunction with Career Services allows you to explore the range of healthcare professions. And while students are successful in traditional majors of biology, chemistry, neuroscience and biochemistry, healthcare professional schools are increasingly interested in those graduating with non-traditional majors including English, music, philosophy, economics, and others.

As part of the advising office, faculty and professional staff work closely with students and alumni to develop credentials that will gain them admittance to programs across the country. To learn more about our program, please visit our website at healthprofessions.lafayette.edu. Lafayette students may register for our hp listserv at healthprofessions@lafayette.edu.

Given the competitive nature of health professional careers, it is imperative that students are proactive in their class selection as well as extra-curricular activities from the very onset of their studies at the College. This does not limit our students, but fosters in them a sense for making judicious choices and exploring courses across the spectrum of their liberal arts education. Course requirements are extensive, so the advising office provides tools to enable aspiring students to plan and complete their programs successfully. We cultivate an atmosphere of honest yet rigorous self-assessment coupled with compassionate yet critical assessment by the advising team. We expect students to work closely with their academic advisors, health professions advisors, and Gateway advisors in the Career Services Office in acquiring the requisite coursework and experiences to prepare them for matriculation into a health professional graduate school and launch them on the career of their choice. To capitalize fully on the benefits of our health professions advising process, students are encouraged to engage in health professions programs/activities as early as possible.

HEALTH PROFESSIONS PROGRAMMING: The hallmarks of our student advising rest on cultivating honest self-assessment and sensitive external assessment.

- Individual student counseling
- Presentations by health professions experts and visits from health professional school admissions personnel

**Health Professions Advising Program
105 Scott Hall, 714 Sullivan Road
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The following is excerpted from 'The Lafayette Advantage' brochure published annually by the Office of Admissions. Requests for the complete publication should be directed to the Office of Admissions 118 Markle Hall, 730 High Street, Easton PA 18042 admissions@lafayette.edu 610.330.5100

- Targeted small-group information sessions as diverse as updates on health professional school application procedures, techniques for reflective essay writing in conjunction with the College Writing Program, how to match your vision to the mission of a professional school, ways to finance your education, and more
- Comprehensive advice for applicants to gauge their competitive standing for entry into health professions schools, including a holistic review of their application portfolios, academic records, admissions test scores (MCAT, DAT, OAT, GRE) when available, co-curricular activities, and medical-related experiences
- Extensive on-campus interview process with the Faculty Health Professions Advisory Committee resulting in a composite letter of evaluation sent by the committee on behalf of candidates for medical (allopathic, osteopathic, podiatric), dental, veterinary, and optometry schools

Furthermore, we partner with our Career Services Office to provide opportunities for students to secure meaningful health care experiences and for interview preparation and practice. We also support the efforts of career services in offering information sessions and connecting with alumni practitioners in allied health professions including physician assistant, occupational therapy, pharmacy and genetic counseling, among others. These require the dedicated assistance of our extensive cadre of alumni who mentor our students and contribute to their professional development and aspirations.

LET'S GO TO THE NUMBERS: Nationally, despite the recent modest increase in the number of accredited medical, dental, veterinary, and optometry schools along with a slight expansion of incoming class sizes at some schools, admission to health professions schools continues to be highly competitive. For example, allopathic medical (MD) schools seated a class in fall 2015 of 20,627 students with a mean GPA of 3.7 from a pool of 52,536 applicants, amounting to only a 41% acceptance rate. For osteopathic schools, 20,447 applicants vied for the 6,797 seats in DO schools, for a 33% acceptance rate characterized by a mean GPA of 3.55. As the age of those matriculating to medical school rises to an average of 24-25, more and varied experiences impact the admissions process for our students and alumni. As such, it is no longer sufficient nor advisable for applicants to believe that merely maintaining a high GPA and obtaining a strong admissions test score ALONE will result in acceptance to a health professions school. Schools are seeking candidates with ADDED evidence of dedicated community engagement, clinical research, cultural sensitivity, and interpersonal and intrapersonal competencies. Even application timing plays a very important role in securing acceptance as well as successful completion of one's health professions graduate school training.

In comparison, the incoming medical school class for fall 2015 saw 61% of our 18 Lafayette applicants accepted into either an allopathic or osteopathic medical school, well above the national average for MD (41%) and DO (33%) schools. Of the 10 Lafayette student applicants with a GPA of 3.6 or above, eight of them (80%) were admitted, most to multiple programs.

Medical School Acceptance Statistics for Lafayette College*			
GPA	Applied	Accepted	Percentage
3.60 and above	50	41	82%
3.20 to 3.59	59	34	58%
Lower than 3.20	16	5	5%

**Data are for all students applying for admission to medical schools (MD, DO) in the past five years (2011 through 2015). In the same period, 68% of students (13 of 19) who applied to dental schools were accepted, 100% of students (8 of 8) who applied to veterinary school were accepted, and 83% of students (5 of 6) who applied to optometry school were accepted. These data include first-time applicants as well as re-applicants.*

REQUIRED COURSEWORK: The Health Professions Advising Office provides guidance for students to plan their coursework to augment completion of their major. It is critical that students applying to health professions discuss course selection options with their academic adviser. A listing of recommended coursework can be found at healthprofessions@lafayette.edu, but the minimum core requirements include

- two college level biology courses, with laboratories
- two introductory chemistry courses, with laboratories
- two physics courses with laboratories
- two organic chemistry courses with laboratories
- ...PLUS...mathematics (the calculus usually), biochemistry and English composition.

Competence in psychology, sociology, and statistics must be demonstrated. As health profession schools vary in required coursework, students are urged to investigate individual schools for specific requirements.



While AP credit for some introductory classes is admirable, health professional schools prefer to see undergraduates handle the rigor of college-level technical coursework with laboratory in the context of a normal semester load. Therefore, we advise use of AP credit toward non-core requirements. When used for core courses required for health professions school, AP credit should be used for students to elect more advanced level coursework, and thereby demonstrate their commitment to the profession. In summary, we in the HP Advising Office stand ready to assist and guide our student applicants to reach their potential.