

Health Professions Advising

For Prospective Students

What We Do

At the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign pursuing a health profession is a career goal not an academic major. Health professions advisors at The Career Center assist students in preparing to pursue health professions, typically defined as those involving direct patient care.

Who We Are

Health professions advisors at TCC are career coaches who complete additional training, including networking with admissions deans, visiting health professional schools, and attending professional conferences. Our health professions advisors are members of the National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions.

Fast Facts

- 2016 applicants matriculated into 64 different medical schools, 27 physician assistant programs, 22 physical therapy programs, 19 dental schools, and 12 pharmacy schools*
- Illinois is the 11th largest supplier of medical school applicants U.S. Allopathic Medical schools** and 14th U.S. Osteopathic Medical Schools***

Number of Students Accepted (Acceptance Rate)*	
Medicine	211 (50%)
Physical Therapy	65 (51%)
Dentistry	63 (69%)
Pharmacy	51 (89%)
Physician Assistant	51 (35%)

Note: Acceptance data for health professions (Vet Med, Optometry, Nursing, OT, etc.) has not been released to Health Professions Advisors

*Includes only applicants from the 2015-2016 application cycle who released data to Health Professions Advisors at Illinois

**Source: Table A-2: Undergraduate Institutions Supplying Applicants to U.S. Medical Schools by Applicant Race and Ethnicity, 2016-2017, AAMC

***Source: 2016 AACOMAS Applicant Pool Profile Summary Report

Core Services

Health Professions Advising

- Individual 30 minute appointments for current students and alumni
- Drop-in advising for for current students and alumni on Tuesdays and Fridays from 1:30-3:00pm

Health Careers Chronicle

- A weekly newsletter sent to over 2,800 subscribers including information about summer research and clinical experience programs, on-campus and off campus internships, paid employment, and volunteer opportunities, admissions representative campus visits, tips and career information, and more.

Workshops and Events

- Information sessions for first year and transfer students
- Health Professions Wednesdays Series addressing topics including undergraduate research, volunteering, summer enrichment programs, and more
- Health Professions RSO (Registered Student Organizations) Fair every September

Admission Visits

- Admissions Deans Nights and Visits from representatives from schools that recruit Illinois students
- One-on-one drop-in sessions with admission deans
- Graduate and Professional School Fair every October with 125 programs from across the country

Application Process Assistance

- Application Preparation Month every April including workshops on the application process
- Personal statement reviews
- Mock interviews

Health Professions Council

- Monthly meetings with representatives from Health Professions RSOs to foster collaboration and provide feedback to the Health Professions Advising Team

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the best major?

Simply stated, there is no best major. Choose a major that you will enjoy, keeping in mind that you will need to complete required and recommended courses to prepare for admissions tests (MCAT, DAT, OAT, PCAT) and for the rigors of professional school. These courses can be completed while pursuing any major on campus, though some majors may allow for more flexibility while others may be more structured. In 2016, Illinois graduates who were accepted to medical schools represented 64 unique major and major combinations (i.e. double major, major/minor). Admission committees are seeking an academically diverse student body, and consistently express that preference is not given to specific majors.

What prerequisite courses do I need to take?

Prerequisite guides for most health professions are provided on The Career Center's website in the Health Professions section. These guides are based on common prerequisites as well as content covered on admissions tests. Individual schools may require additional coursework.

May I use AP credit for prerequisite coursework?

Many professional programs, but not all, will accept AP credit. However, students are strongly encouraged to discuss whether to take 100 level science courses with their academic advisors. Typically, students are more prepared for higher level courses if they have taken 100 level coursework at Illinois due to the pace, rigor, and volume of content covered. We want students develop good study skills and earn strong grades in their first year at Illinois. Sometimes that means taking coursework that may initially feel repetitive.

May I take prerequisites at a community college?

Most health professional programs expect you to take prerequisite courses at your primary institution. Consult with a Health Professions Advisor if you have a compelling reason to take prerequisite courses at a community college.

What classes do I take next semester?

When you meet with your academic advisor, be sure to mention that you are pursuing a health profession. Academic advisors have access to your academic record and degree requirements. They will be able to help you choose your first semester courses. Once you are on campus, your academic advisor and health professions advisor can help you fit in the remaining prerequisite courses into your plan of study.

How much out of classroom experience do I need to become a competitive candidate?

While GPA and standardized test scores are important, admissions committees expect candidates to demonstrate a commitment to the profession and the competencies necessary to become a capable healthcare provider. Instead of focusing on quantity, consider experiences that allow you to showcase your interests and skills. Some examples include volunteering, leadership in campus organizations, research, shadowing/observation, and part-time work experience. Competitive applicants tend to have hundreds of hours of experience outside the classroom.

Does The Career Center match me with a health professional to shadow?

The Career Center does not match you with a health professional or provide a list of practitioners for you to shadow. However, a Health Professions Advisor can help you identify strategies to help you arrange these types of learning opportunities.

When should I start meeting with a Health Professions Advisor?

You can start meeting with a Health Professions Advisor during your first semester on campus. You do not need to have specific questions or prepare in advance for your appointment. We can assist you with exploring health careers, finding experiences and resources on and off-campus, the application process to graduate and professional schools, and even alternative career plans should you decide to pursue a career outside of healthcare. Our goal is to empower you to succeed at Illinois and beyond. We look forward to meeting you!

For More Information:

E-mail tcc-healthgrad@illinois.edu with additional questions or concerns. If you would like to meet with a Health Professions Advisor, you may utilize Drop In Advising (in person or on the phone) that occurs on Tuesdays and Fridays from 1:30-3:00pm. Please keep in mind that current students will be assisted first.