

# **Dos and Don'ts for Premeds and Others Interested in Health Professions**

## **Do**

feel free to major in whatever area most interests you. In order to make that decision wisely, you should try a course in your intended major in the freshman year. Do not listen to comments about this or that particular major leading to a higher success rate since there may be no causative relationship.

## **Do not**

fall behind in completing your standard premedical science and math requirements. It is becoming increasingly important that you complete these by the end of your junior year so that you can take the MCAT as soon as you can during the year (students who delay taking the MCAT until August or later may delay being seriously considered until so late in the admissions cycle that the best they can hope for is to make the waiting list, and movement from it to acceptance status is always questionable). Since this represents ten courses (and maybe more if you are required to take precalculus offerings), you should take two of the ten in your first semester. Which two is not critical, but you should lean toward doing Introductory Chemistry since there is a four-semester chemistry requirement. Since the spring MCAT offerings are near final examinations, you are also well advised to elect a program that will allow you study time in addition to that required to maintain a good academic record that semester.

## **Do**

develop good study habits that lead to long-term retention. This will enable you to do good work in the courses themselves and also facilitate preparation for the MCAT.

## **Ignore**

advice to fulfill your perspectives as soon as possible. It may be neat and tidy to do that, but it may hinder your ability to fulfill standard premedical requirements by the end of your junior year and force you to postpone going on to medical school for a year.

## **Do not**

take any of your major or premedical courses on a Pass/No Record basis.

## **Avoid**

taking math or science courses in summer school, in SPS (School of Professional Studies) evening division, or at less-competitive institutions.

## **Do not**

intentionally carry a short program (less than four courses) or do anything else that will appear manipulative or suggest that you will have trouble carrying the heavy academic load in medical school.

## **Do**

try to get some health-related experience sometime before you apply, or at the very least, some experience that suggests that you are caring and/or that you have good interpersonal skills. You need to find out whether you have a "stomach" for medicine and whether you enjoy helping others, and these experiences may also help provide useful material to include in your personal statement and about which to talk at your interview.

Without being too forward about it, try to make yourself known to some of your professors so that they can write meaningful recommendations for you.

## **Do**

[contact the Chair, Dr. Larochelle, or other members of the Committee](#) if you have any problems. Contact Dr. Larochelle if you are neither a U.S. citizen nor a resident alien, i.e., are here on a student visa.