Pre-professional Programs

Students at the University of Missouri-St. Louis may develop pre-professional study programs in either law or the health professions. With early and careful advising, students may develop an appropriate program to prepare for the intended professional study.

Students should seek pre-professional advisors in their interest area early in their academic careers to ensure development of sound, comprehensive study programs that fulfill the admission requirements of the professional program to which they wish to apply.

The following information on pre-professional study at UMSL is provided to give students minimal guidelines and assistance in planning a program.

For advisement and information, contact the Office of Undergraduate Student Affairs in the College of Arts and Sciences, 303 Lucas Hall, 314-516-5501

Pre-Law

There is no pre-law major or minor at UMSL. There is a pre-law track available within the philosophy major, and a public law minor within political science, but you need not major or minor in philosophy or political science in order to be a pre-law student. According to the Pre-Law Committee of the American Bar Association (ABA):

The ABA does not recommend any undergraduate majors or group of courses to prepare for a legal education. Students are admitted to law school from almost every academic discipline. You may choose to major in subjects that are considered to be traditional preparation for law school, such as history, English, philosophy, political science, economics or business, or you may focus your undergraduate studies in areas as diverse as art, music, science and mathematics, computer science, engineering, nursing or education. Whatever major you select, you are encouraged to pursue an area of study that interests and challenges you, while taking advantage of opportunities to develop your research and writing skills. Taking a broad range of difficult courses from demanding instructors is excellent preparation for legal education. (http://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_education/resources/pre_law.html)

The pre-law advisor can assist you in selecting courses that will best meet your interests while also allowing you to develop the skills that are important for success in law school and within the legal profession. The ABA recommends that you take courses that allow you to develop the following seven sets of skills:

1) Analytic / Problem Solving Skills
2) Critical Reading Skills
3) Writing Skills
4) Oral Communication / Listening Abilities
5) General Research Skills
6) Task Organization / Management Skills
7) Public Service and the Promotion of Justice

Pre-law advising is done through the Department of Philosophy in the College of Arts and Sciences. For further information, please consult the pre-law advising website: http://www.umsl.edu/divisions/artsscience/Advising%20and%20Student%20Resources/prelaw.html. The website contains information about the pre-law advisor, the law school application process, preparation for the LSAT, UMSL’s Pre-law Advisory Council, and the Friends of the Pre-Law Advisory Council Scholarship.

Pre-Health Sciences

The University of Missouri - St. Louis offers the prerequisite classes necessary for entry into health professions schools. Students planning on applying to a health professions school should complete a baccalaureate degree of their choice while completing the prerequisite courses. Even though some programs might not require a baccalaureate degree, it is strongly recommended to complete one in order to be as competitive as possible when applying.

Programs that are covered by UMSL’s pre-health advising include: medicine, dentistry, optometry, pharmacy, veterinary science, physician assistant, occupational therapy, physical therapy, chiropractic, and clinical lab science. For pre-health advising please contact 314-516-5501 or prehealth@umsl.edu for an appointment.

In addition to the courses listed below, students should actively seek out extracurricular opportunities. Such activities can include volunteering, shadowing, research, and organizational leadership. Students are encouraged to join some of the many on-campus organizations including one of the pre-health societies. Information about student organizations can be found at the Office of Student Life (http://www.umsl.edu/studentlife/osl).

Since admission requirements may vary between schools, students should consult the catalogs of the programs to which they intend to apply. Updated information may be found in:

Medical School Admission Requirements (MSAR)
Phone: 1-202-828-0400; Website: www.aamc.org (http://www.aamc.org)

American Dental Education Association Official Guide to Dental Schools
Phone: 1-202-289-7201; Website: www.adea.org (http://www.adea.org)

Schools and Colleges of Optometry Admission Requirements
Phone: 1-301-231-5944; Website: www.opted.org (http://www.opted.org)

Pharmacy School Admission Requirements
Phone: 1-703-739-2330; Website: www.aacp.org (http://www.aacp.org)

Veterinary Medical School Admission Requirements in the United States and Canada
Phone: 1-202-371-9195; Website: www.aavmc.org (http://www.aavmc.org)

Suggested Courses

Many health professions schools require or recommend the following undergraduate courses:

| Biology |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| BIOL 1831        | Introductory Biology: From Molecules To Organisms | 5 |
| BIOL 1821        | Introductory Biology: Organisms And The Environment | 5 |
| BIOL 2012        | Genetics                           | 3 |
| BIOL 2482        | Microbiology                        | 3 |
| BIOL 3622        | Cell Biology                        | 3 |
| BIOL 1131        | Human Physiology And Anatomy I      | 4 |
The University of Missouri-St. Louis offers a four-year program of study leading to the Doctor of Optometry degree; this professional degree is administered by the College of Optometry. It is one of only 20 schools or colleges of optometry in the United States and the only one in the state of Missouri. This program, as a result, makes UMSL an ideal institution for Pre-Optometry education. Various programs are available for Pre-Optometry students as noted below.

Students may pursue a traditional 4 + 4 program, which is a bachelor’s degree followed by the four-year graduate optometry program. In this case, students may pursue any bachelor’s degree, as long as the pre-optometry requirements are met in biology, chemistry, math, physics, psychology and English.

Alternatively, the Department of Biology, the Department of Physics & Astronomy, and the Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry sponsor 3+4 Programs for the UMSL College of Optometry, for which a student may be admitted after completing three years (90 semester hours) of study in their respective majors and successful completion of the Optometry Admission Test (OAT). See your specific department for undergraduate degree requirements.

The Pierre Laclede Honors College and the College of Optometry also offer the Scholars Program, which allows a student to complete both the undergraduate and Doctor of Optometry degrees in seven years. To qualify for this program, a student must be a senior in high school; score a minimum composite of 27 on the ACT; and be accepted to the UMSL Pierre Laclede Honors College program. For more information about the Scholars Program, contact the Pierre Laclede Honors College, 314-516-7769.

For the programs described above (3+4 or Scholars), the undergraduate degree is granted when the student satisfactorily completes the first year of the professional program and has met all of the conditions for the specific undergraduate degree for which the student has applied.

1. All general education requirements and all requirements for the biology, physics, or chemistry major, except electives, must be completed.
2. Any deficiency in required courses must be remedied with courses taken at UMSL within three years after entering the College of Optometry.
3. Up to 6 hours from the College of Optometry may be substituted for undergraduate degree in Biology with approval of the Department of Biology.
4. Up to six hours is used to satisfy degree requirements in biology, and 14 hours in physics to complete the B.S. in Physics degree.

For more information, contact the Department of Biology, 314-516-6200 or the Department of Physics & Astronomy at 314-516-5931. The Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry offers a similar program, which may require taking summer classes in order to complete the degree requirements for a B.A. or B.S. degree in three years. For more information, please contact the Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry at 314-516-5311.

In some cases, students are admitted to the College of Optometry program prior to completing the requirements for their baccalaureate degree.

Note: MATH 1800 (p. 1), Analytical Geometry and Calculus I must be taken in the first semester for most 3+4 or Scholars Programs.

For more information on admission requirements for the College of Optometry, please refer to the Optometry section of this Bulletin.