

Biology and the Health Professions

The Biology department welcomes students who are preparing for the health professions. The major offers exceptional flexibility for pursuing interests in the life sciences while completing required and recommended courses for health professions programs. Biological and statistical competencies will be covered in depth, introductory and advanced research opportunities are readily available across the discipline, study abroad is encouraged, and two electives in related sciences may be included in the major for any of the four concentrations, in addition to CH125.

We believe the optimal strategy for students interested in the health professions is to choose the major where you are most likely to excel academically. At the same time, regardless of your major, complete the required and recommended health professions courses, and use extra- and co-curricular activities to address the non-academic criteria. Choosing your major based on the best match to your own academic interests and abilities is the best strategy to prepare for life-long learning and success in any field.

Skidmore students are accepted to all health professional programs at a much higher rate than the national average, regardless of their major. The selective nature of admission to Skidmore, the quality of a Skidmore education and easy access to health professions advising insures that Skidmore students, as a group, are competitive.

Pre-Med: The academic requirements for the health professions are generic and are the same for every applicant regardless of their major. Medical schools do not evaluate applicants based on their major (see below). As a practical matter, they may require a minimum GPA and MCAT score to evaluate your application. You will, most likely, earn the highest GPA by majoring in the subject you enjoy the most. The MCAT covers basic biology, chemistry, physics, statistics, and social science content, as well as verbal and analytical ability. These competencies are all relevant to the biological sciences. Regardless of you major, you will need to master all of the 300 or so specific MCAT competencies, which are only two of the 15 “core” competencies used to evaluate applicants to medical schools:

(<https://www.aamc.org/admissions/dataandresearch/477182/corecompetencies.html>)

Pre-Professional Competencies:

Service Orientation
Social Skills
Cultural Competencies
Teamwork
Oral Communication
Ethical Responsibility to Self and Others
Reliability and Dependability
Resilience and Adaptability
Capacity for Improvement

Thinking and Reasoning Competencies

Critical Thinking
Quantitative Reasoning
Scientific Inquiry
Written Communication

Scientific Competencies

Living Systems
Human Behavior

Admissions Statements from Medical Schools



Tufts University: "encourages applicants from all disciplines to apply and we do not favor any particular undergraduate major...we strongly encourage applicants to obtain a broad based liberal arts education. Course work may include studies in ethics, philosophy, sociology, psychology, history, and the arts. Knowledge of a second language is strongly encouraged. All of this will contribute to a well-educated and balanced physician."

<http://medicine.tufts.edu/Admissions/MD-Application-Process/Course-Prerequisites>



Weill-Cornell University: "The Committee on Admissions considers equally students with backgrounds in the basic sciences, social sciences and liberal arts. Each application is considered on an individual basis. We encourage applicants to...sample a broad range of academic disciplines, and to explore one or more areas in depth."

<https://medicaleducation.weill.cornell.edu/admissions/selection-criteria-requirements>



Stanford University: "Stanford Medicine seeks candidates who want to move the fields of medicine and biomedical sciences forward, whose past accomplishments show evidence for originality, creativity and a capacity for independent, critical thinking, who are academically ready to succeed at Stanford and whose personal qualities will serve them well in our profession."

<http://med.stanford.edu/md-admissions/how-to-apply.html>



Duke University: "Duke University School of Medicine strives to attract, educate, and nurture students who have extraordinary intellect, compassion, humanism and service to others. We have consistently encouraged our applicants to have a broad and balanced undergraduate academic education as well as a wealth of life experiences...a rigorous, challenging, and interdisciplinary academic preparation in the sciences and humanities is of

paramount importance." <https://medschool.duke.edu/education/student-services/office-admissions/admissions-process/academic-expectations>