

# An Introduction

The Health Professions Office assists students of Rutgers University – New Brunswick who are interested in pursuing a career in a health-related field.



## Health Students

Health Professions Students are encouraged to contact the office and open up a file. The file will subscribe you to our listserv which will keep you informed of events, opportunities, and important dates. Advising appointments are available with or without a file by logging on to RU-Scheduler or contacting the office via Live Chat. Also, check our website for weekly walk-in hours. In addition, a knowledgeable staff is on hand to help with the more basic questions.



## Mission Statement

Our mission is to help students explore their interests in pursuing a career in the health professions. We serve as a resource for advising and information, and provide guidance in the application process to graduate and professional programs in the health professions. We provide one-on-one advising to help students plan their academic and co-curricular activities to explore their interests in the health professions. Up-to-date and relevant information is provided through our listserv, Facebook and Instagram pages, website, workshops, and newsletters. We also provide a letter storage and forwarding service for students who may eventually decide to apply to medical or dental school.



## Core Pre Reqs

Course requirements for different professional schools vary. Some require more science, some more social science and humanities background. For example, students who are considering medicine, dentistry, PA, Optometry, Podiatry, Physical Therapy, and/or research will often include the following courses in their undergraduate program:

General Biology I and II with lab, 01:119:115, 116, 117 (10 credits) General Chemistry I and II with lab, 01:160:161, 162, 117 (9 credits) Organic Chemistry I and II with lab, 01:160:307, 308, 311 (10 credits) General Physics I and II with lab, 01:750: 203, 204, 205, 206 (8 credits) Two semesters of college-level English or writing

One year of mathematics at the college level. This should include one semester of statistics. Most medical schools do not require calculus but your major may and it is your responsibility to check the requirements of the schools to which you will apply. A course in Biochemistry (required for med school, recommended for most others)

A course in Psychology

\*Note: there are other options for the Chemistry, Organic Chemistry and Physics sequences. Speak with an advisor if you want more information. Students interested in Nursing, Occupational Therapy, or one of the many other health professions, will take a somewhat different set of courses. We encourage students to see an advisor for help in selecting courses that will help you explore and/or pursue specific goals.



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## Recommended Courses:

- Philosophy courses, especially Current Moral and Social Issues, Introduction to Moral Theory, and Medical Ethics
- Psychology – General Psychology, Physiological Psychology, & Effective Thinking
- Sociology – Sociology of Medicine and Health Care
- Public Health – Introduction to Public Health, Health and Public Policy
- Foreign language, particularly Spanish or Mandarin
- Career Explorations



## Entrance Exams

Most health professional schools require a standardized admissions test. The scores are used, in combination with grades, recommendations, personal statements, and interviews to evaluate a candidate's admission. These exams may be taken any time after completing the required course work.

## Contact Information

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## Choosing a Major

In general, students should major in a subject that they like. They may fulfill prerequisites for professional schools as part of their major, minor, or elective courses. While it is important to do well in the sciences, and majoring in a science is fine if that is what you really love best, exploring another interest is absolutely great! Regardless of your major, a strong liberal arts background is a great preparation for graduate work in the health professions.

For example, it is recommended that students take course work in psychology, sociology, statistics, and the humanities. These courses will help prepare for entrance exams (see below) and in preparing for professional school studies.

## Other factors:

1. Clinical exposure: Students must engage in activities that provide the opportunity to have some exposure to their chosen career. Volunteer or paid employment in a health care setting shows an interest in gaining experience and provides a chance to sample the atmosphere.
2. Community service: Health care professions are helping professions and it is expected that students will have demonstrated a commitment to serving others without benefit or reward in a sustained manner. Service does not have to be health related but should be centered around something that the student thinks is important in some way. Leadership: Aspiring health care professionals should have some leadership experience by the time that they are ready to apply to professional schools. This important experience can be gained in many ways, not just as membership on an e-board of a club.
3. Research: This may, or may not, be relevant depending on the desired profession. However, Rutgers is a major research university and there are many opportunities to participate in the creation of knowledge through research. This does not always have to mean the sciences and is a great way to develop competency in teamwork, critical thinking, resilience, and written communication. If a student is continuing down the MD/PhD path, substantive and sustained undergraduate research experience is required. Other extracurricular activities: Students should explore any areas in which they have interest.