

Health Sciences

Dentistry, Medicine, Optometry, Physical Therapy, Physician Assistant, Chiropractic

With a reputation for strength in the natural sciences dating to the institution's founding, along with experienced faculty members and exceptional classroom and laboratory facilities, UW-Green Bay places a good number of students and alumni into professional schools in the health sciences each year.

Students seeking admission to these schools typically complete a bachelor's degree at UW-Green Bay with a major in Human Biology (health science emphasis) or a major in Biology or Chemistry with a minor in Human Biology. Other combinations are possible, however, as most professional schools in health sciences will consider a range of undergraduate majors.

Competition for admission to schools of medicine and other health fields is often intense; typically, the number of applicants exceeds the number of positions for professional school openings. Given these circumstances, students should plan undergraduate programs that provide maximum flexibility for pursuing post-baccalaureate opportunities.

Those pursuing a career in medicine will typically follow their UW-Green Bay bachelor's degree with four years of medical school and at least three but as many as eight additional years of internship and residency, depending on the specialty. Students are highly encouraged to volunteer at local hospitals or clinics to gain practical experience in the health professions.

Most dental-school applicants have at least a bachelor's degree, although a few are accepted to dental school after two or three years of college and complete their bachelor's while attending dental school. Dental school usually lasts four academic years.

The doctor of optometry degree requires the completion of a four-year program at an accredited optometry school. As with dental school, most students hold a bachelor's degree or higher, but a small number of applicants will be admitted following at least three years of focused pre-optometric study.

Education programs for physician assistants are two-year programs at the master's degree level. Admission requirements vary, but many programs require some volunteer hours or work experience in the healthcare field.

According to the American Physical Therapy Association, there are about 200 accredited physical therapist programs in the United States, split between programs offering master's degrees and those awarding doctoral degrees. Specialized courses in biomechanics, neuroanatomy, human growth and development, and therapeutic procedures are required, and students receive supervised clinical experience.

Most state boards overseeing chiropractic require at least two years of undergraduate education; an increasing number are requiring a four-year bachelor's degree. All boards require the completion of a four-year program at an accredited chiropractic college leading to the doctor of chiropractic degree.

Typically, health-profession schools express a preference for students who have a long record of consistently high-level performance and come highly recommended by the undergraduate school. Personal references are important. UW-Green Bay undergraduates interested in professional schools in the health sciences are encouraged to take advantage of opportunities to assist faculty members with high-level research, and to pursue their own research projects. Historically, such experience has been extremely helpful to UW-Green Bay students who were successful professional-school candidates.

Admission committees — particularly for medical schools — tend to seek applicants who give evidence of having the ability to be critical thinkers, problem solvers and lifelong learners. A well-rounded record of campus and community involvement, and intellectual curiosity across multiple fields, are other positive factors. Also subject to evaluation are perceived personality traits including capacity for compassion, decision-making and coping skills, communication ability and personal determination, among other attributes.

The best advice for UW-Green Bay students is to seek preprofessional faculty advisers in their interest area early in their academic careers for help in selecting courses and, later, in studying for professional school admission tests and applying to professional schools.

A good starting point for new freshmen is to review the University's Human Biology major which encompasses five areas of emphasis:

- Health science emphasis – recommended for preparation for medical, dental or other health-related professional schools, or for graduate programs in biological or health sciences.
- Exercise science emphasis – provides background for careers in exercise physiology/fitness, sports medicine, biomechanics, physical therapy or occupational therapy.
- The cytotechnology emphasis – leads to professional certification as a registered cytotechnologist (specialist in the microscopic study of cells, primarily for the detection of cancer).
- The nutritional sciences/dietetics emphasis – provides a focus on the biological and physical principles of nutrition. See the "Dietetics" listing on the previous page for additional information.
- General emphasis – appropriate for sales, managerial and other positions in the health sciences including entry-level research positions with pharmaceutical or biotechnology companies.

Refer to the Human Biology, Biology and Chemistry majors described elsewhere in this catalog for additional information.