

Hello everyone,

Since many of our freshmen are premed you can all expect that you may get a premed advisee. I get a lot of questions every year about advising premeds, so I thought I would put together a reference sheet.

It's actually very simple at the freshman level, most people are surprised to find out how few courses medical schools actually require. Most med schools require only the following:

- 8 credits of biology (BSC 1010, BSC 1011, and their labs)
- 16 credits of chemistry (General Chem. 1&2, Organic Chem. 1&2 and labs)
- 8 credits Physics (Physics 1&2 and the labs)

That's it! There are some variations on this, but students can look those up when they decide on which schools they are interested in. The variations usually have to do with Biochemistry (which would come after organic 2, so don't worry, they will probably change majors or switch to a new advisor by then).

The courses listed above obviously don't constitute a major (concentration), so what should premeds major in? I think the best answer is: Whatever they are most interested in, so that they will get the best grades possible. Med schools primarily look at G.P.A. and MCAT scores (a test in the junior year). Obviously, since they need to take the above classes and the MCAT test covers sciences, the path of least resistance would be to concentrate in biology or chemistry, since the required courses get them started in that direction already.

Most premeds are interested in concentrating in sciences of some sort, so which courses do you want to start them in? If they are interested in biology then Biological Principles is the choice. Since they need at least 2 years of Chemistry, Chem. 1 is always a safe choice. Unless they want to concentrate in Physics, Physics 1 is not a good choice for freshmen, but since they will need calculus 1 and 2 to take Physics 1 and 2, some math is also a good choice.

That's a pretty full schedule. If they don't need to take ENC 1123 then they may be able to fit one other course in, but remember these are high credit courses, so Calc 1, Chem. 1, Biological Principles, and Forum is 13 credits, plenty for most freshmen. It's not unusual for premeds to take a couple core courses as seniors. Feel free to distribute this to students, or to have them come and talk to me.

--Paul Kirchman