



The University of Texas at Austin  
**Health Professions Office**  
*College of Natural Sciences*

We welcome you to the UT Austin Health Professions Community! The Health Professions Office is here to guide you in your exploration of and preparation for application to health professions schools. Here you will find a large and diverse community of students, estimated at more than 4,000 students, pursuing studies in most of the colleges and schools across our campus.

Come to one of our Health Professions Information Sessions. See our [Events & Workshops](#) page to learn about these and other interesting offerings.

Subscribe to our [HPOinfo](#) email to keep up to date!

### **KEEP YOUR GRADES UP**

To be competitive for professional school, you will need a GPA in the range of 3.4 to 3.8 and above. This means you need to be making As and Bs with more As than Bs. If you feel that you are behind in your classes, please don't wait until you get your first poor test score to ask for help. There are numerous resources on campus to help you with tutoring! Start with visiting your faculty members & teaching assistants during office hours.

### **GET TO KNOW YOUR FACULTY**

This can be challenging at UT Austin—the campus is huge and most of the classes in your first year have large numbers of participants. Even though the professors can sometimes seem tough or intimidating, most of them are very approachable one-on-one. Visit your professors during office hours, even if you are doing well in their class. It will make your request for a future letter of evaluation much easier!

### **LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CAREER YOU HAVE CHOSEN**

This will give you a better understanding of what it takes to be successful. A good place to start is to visit the [Explore Health Careers website](#). Another way to learn is to read up on current events affecting your chosen field.

### **SHADOW**

Shadowing means working directly with a health care provider in their professional environment. You have the opportunity to observe how they plan their day, how they interact with their patients, how they chose their career, and how they feel about current events! Finding a healthcare provider who is willing to allow you to shadow can be a challenge, but it is worth the effort. Many students start with their own health care providers. You may also network with other pre-health students to see where they have shadowed.

### **VOLUNTEER**

Any experience giving back to the community will be looked upon favorably by professional school admissions committees. It would be ideal if some of your volunteering was in a healthcare setting. This would combine volunteering with exposure to the field. Get in the habit of tracking your volunteer hours, as most professional school applications will ask for an estimate of the time you spent volunteering.

## DEVELOP DESIRED PERSONAL QUALITIES

Individuals who are successful in their pursuit of a health care career possess a set of qualities that they develop as young adults. These include qualities such as: Good Judgment, Self-Discipline, Maturity, Compassion/Empathy, Integrity, Intellectual Curiosity, Strong Work Ethic, Leadership/Accountability, Reliability, Motivation/Persistence, Honesty, Cultural Competency

## GET INVOLVED

There are over 1000 registered student organizations on campus, so there are lots to choose from. There are close to 30 health-related organizations. Check the Office of the Dean of Students website for a searchable database of student orgs. Extracurricular activities help you become a well-rounded student because you develop not only knowledge and thinking skills but also social skills, group work, empathy, team building, organizational and motivational skills relevant when participating in an organization. [Connect now!](#)

## GET IN THE HABIT OF PERSONAL REFLECTION

Your insights about who you are as a person and how your experiences have shaped you will be of tremendous benefit when it is time to write your personal statement (a required part of your professional school application). Keep a journal handy so you can jot down your thoughts and observations!

## HEALTH PROFESSIONS SCHOLARSHIPS

- Find out about [Health Professions Scholarships](#)
- The College of Natural Sciences [Common Scholarship Application](#)

You may be wondering which major to choose. We recommend that you select a major that matches your interests and abilities and that may also serve as an alternate career path should you change your mind about pursuing a career in the health professions. Professional schools for dentistry, medicine, occupational therapy, optometry, pharmacy, physical therapy, physician assistant studies, and veterinary medicine admit students from many academic majors. You can see an example of this by viewing our [pre-med statistics](#).

Pre-pharmacy students are sometimes the exception to the rule and move on to Pharmacy programs after year two; however, it has become common for these students to complete three to four years of school before entering professional school, and many complete undergraduate degrees. The [UT College of Pharmacy](#) provides statistics that demonstrate this.

[Explore Health Careers](#) is a free, multi-disciplinary, interactive health careers website designed to explain the array of health professions and provide easy access to students seeking information about health careers. This website is a joint initiative involving national foundations, professional associations, health career advisors, educational institutions, and college students. To explore health professions not offered at UT please visit [Austin Community College Health Sciences Division](#). Explore different majors using UT's [Wayfinder](#).

You can also use [My Next Move](#) or the [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#) to research your future healthcare career options.

Interested in becoming one of the following professionals, check them out:

- [Physician](#)
- [Dentist](#)
- [Physical Therapist](#)
- [Occupational Therapist](#)
- [Optometrist](#)
- [Veterinarian](#)
- [Pharmacist](#)
- [Physician Assistant](#)
- [Naturopathic Physician](#) | [AANMC](#)
- [Podiatrist](#) | American Podiatric Medicine Association ([APMA](#))
- Health IT Professional - Check out UT Austin's [Health IT Program](#)
- [Osteopathic Medicine](#) - Check out this awesome [guide](#)
- Learn more about [MPH Dual Degree options](#) (e.g. MD/MPH)
- Public Health [degree options](#) & [Online MPH Programs](#)
- UT Austin's [Portal to Public Health](#) & [This is Public Health](#)
- Check out this [in-depth guide to a degree and career in healthcare administration](#)

#### NOT SURE WHERE TO START? - DO AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

Informational interviewing is just what it sounds like. It is a great way to explore and research a chosen health profession's pathway. It is the process of spending time with one of your network contacts in a highly focused conversation that provides you with key information you can use to decide which path is right for you. Research shows that the best way to predict if you will be happy in a future profession is to talk to someone currently working in that field and ask them if they are happy with the work and why they are happy.

- Informational Interviewing [handout](#).

See the pre-health professions courses that you will incorporate into your degree plan on our [health professions pathway page](#). For each area, we provide a prerequisite courses list and a timeline that shows what your academic path may look like. Your Academic Advisors are knowledgeable and will help you with your academic planning and registration in the appropriate courses.

While we generally recommend that as a Pre-Health Professions student you not "claim" AP/IB credit for prerequisite courses such as Biology, Chemistry, English, Physics, and Mathematics, these are important decisions that you must make and that require your careful consideration. If you would like to know more about claiming your AP/IB Credit please read our [detailed recommendations](#).