

# Preparing for Professional School Timeline

This timeline is based on a standard 4 year graduation timeline. If you are doing co-ops or are planning a fifth year or a gap year, this may be pushed back or changed somewhat. Our advisors can always help you develop a plan specific to your needs.

## First Year

- Join a student organization and actively participate
- Learn where to go for academic and personal help and seek it out when needed
- Look for research and shadowing opportunities
- Make regular use of faculty office hours
- Refine reading comprehension skills
- Take required courses and develop academic skills
- Consider and plan ahead for study abroad
- Plan early for summer activities—applications for many internships and research opportunities are due in February or March
- Attend Health Programs Expo and professional school visits on campus

## Second Year

- Actively participate in student organizations—develop leadership and teamwork skills
- Consider and plan ahead for study abroad & summer internships or research opportunities
- Participate in research
- Continue to shadow professionals and keep track of hours and experiences
- Cultivate ongoing faculty relationships
- Develop academic skills and take required courses
- Consider taking BIOL 39600: Pre-Med/Pre-Health Planning Seminar or GS 49000 Law School Exploration
- Over the summer leading into Third Year, learn about your aptitude test and application
- Develop your plan study for your aptitude test—including the financial plan since the test and prep materials can be costly
- Start following news about your field in preparation of future application essays and interviews
- Begin researching schools
- Attend Health Programs Expo and any other professional school visits on campus
- Plan ahead for costs of professional school applications

## Third Year

- Continue to gain experiences related to your field
- Prepare for the aptitude test (MCAT, LSAT, GRE, OAT, or DAT)—register early for your test date
- Create a parallel plan—what will you do if you are not accepted to professional school?
- Continue to research schools
- Do not be afraid to contact schools if you have questions, but plan your communication carefully and be especially polite—they typically track all contact with students and notes on your contact with them will be part of your application file

# Preparing for Professional School Timeline

- Plan to apply early—within a month of your web-based centralized application opening for best results
- Keep following news about your field in preparation for future application essays and interviews
- Give letter writers plenty of notice—several months is ideal
- Send a thank you note to your letter writers after they have submitted your letters
- Complete school specific secondary/supplemental applications within 2 weeks of receiving them
- Prepare for interviews

## Final Year

- Be patient! This process takes a long time and has a lot of “hurry up and wait” moments
- Continue to pay attention to news in your field
- Prepare for interviews, if required
- If you do have interviews, send a thank you note after your interview
- Continue to add to your application in case you must apply again
- File your FAFSA, if eligible, even before you know you are admitted
- If not admitted, don’t panic—decide on a course of action (we can help)
- If you are not admitted, talk to admissions officers for advice on ways you can improve your application—do not ask why you didn’t get in, but ask for constructive criticism about ways to improve
- If accepted—celebrate, then start arranging housing, moving, and finances
- Please let our office know your results, and let your letter writers know if you were admitted as well