Podiatry (DPM)

Career Description

- Podiatric medicine prevents, diagnoses, and treats foot and ankle disorders, diseases, and injuries.
- Podiatrists are often the first to diagnose a number of systemic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease and are integral to the treatment of those diseases.
- Podiatrists use x-rays and laboratory tests to diagnose conditions, prescribe medications, order physical therapy, set fractures, and perform surgery.
- By helping patients with gait, balance and pain issues, DPMs are often able to make walking much more efficient and comfortable for their patients.
- Podiatric physicians work in many settings including private and group practices, hospitals, extended care facilities, public health, Veterans Affairs hospitals, and the U.S. Armed Forces.
- Although most practice general care, some podiatrists specialize in sports medicine, pediatrics, dermatology, radiology, geriatrics, surgery, and diabetic foot care.
- When you consider that 26 bones make up the foot and think about how much time we are on our feet, it is no surprise that a medical specialty has developed to treat foot and lower leg problems.

Becoming a Podiatrist

- Requirements are the same as those for medical school and preparation for the MCAT is necessary.
- After completing the bachelor’s degree, students attend a podiatric medical program for 4 years followed by a comprehensive 3 year podiatric medicine and surgery residency.
- A board exam is required for licensure.

Preparation

- Shadowing experiences with podiatric physicians is strongly encouraged to ensure this is the right field for you and that you have an accurate perspective on the field.
- Podiatry schools are competitive largely because there are so few of them.
- Research experience is a plus.
- Leadership, empathy, extra-curricular, and community activities are also needed.
- Prerequisite courses are fairly standard between programs. See chart below for information on requirements.
- All required courses must have a minimum grade of C.

Common Prerequisite Courses (pre-reqs determined by each podiatric school but similar to this list)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Purdue Equivalents (specific courses may vary by major)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Biology with lab</td>
<td>BIOL 11000-11100 or BIOL 13100 &amp; BIOL 23100 &amp; 23200 (lab) or BIOL 23000 &amp; upper level biology (including 2 hours of lab)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anatomy &amp; Physiology (recommended for the MCAT)</td>
<td>BIOL 20300-20400 or BIOL 30100-30200</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Chemistry with lab</td>
<td>CHM 11500-11600 or CHM 12500-12600 or CHM 12300-12400 or CHM 13600 or CHM 12901 (CHM 11500 credit exam recommended along with CHM 12901)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organic Chemistry with lab</td>
<td>CHM 25500-25600 or CHM 26100-26200 or CHM 26505-26605 or MCMP 20400-20500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biochemistry</td>
<td>CHM 33300 or CHM 33900 or CHM 53300 or BCHM 30700 or BCHM 56100 or MCMP 20800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physics with lab</td>
<td>PHYS 22000-22100 or PHYS 23300-23400 or PHYS 21800-21900 or PHYS 17200-27200 or PHYS 17200 &amp; 24100* (may need 1 hr lab such as PHYS 25200)</td>
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<tr>
<td>English (if required usually need 2 semesters)</td>
<td>ENGL 10600 or ENGL 10800 and another English course with strong writing component (either writing or literature)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychology (1 semester)</td>
<td>PSY 12000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sociology (1 semester)</td>
<td>SOC 10000 or higher level sociology course (Anthropology is also acceptable)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statistics (recommended)</td>
<td>A course in statistics is recommended</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-Med Planning Seminar (optional)</td>
<td>BIOL 39600 is a 0 credit 10 week class covering how to apply to medical school and other health professions programs</td>
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Student Organization: Caduceus Club, American Medical Student Association
Researching Programs

- American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine  Accredited Podiatric Program list  https://www.aacpm.org/colleges/

Applying

- Application is made through a centralized application service, the AACPMAS.
- Letters of recommendation can be collected in the Pre-Professional Advising Office for distribution.
- Take an aptitude test. The MCAT (the Medical School Admissions Test) is the most commonly required. A few programs will accept the GRE (Graduate Record Exam) or the DAT (Dental Aptitude Test).
- Competitive applicants will have:
  - Strong academic performance including a grade point average of about a 3.3
  - Scores on the MCAT, GRE, or DAT that mirror national average or above
  - Leadership, teamwork, and communication skills
  - Undergraduate research experience
  - Volunteer and shadowing/observation experiences
  - Strong, positive letters of recommendation (mostly from science faculty and a podiatrist)
- Early application is recommended, typically by October of the senior year (assuming a 4 year graduation timeline).

Fee Assistance

- Visit specific school websites to learn if fee assistance is available.
- MCAT Fee Assistance through the AAMC  https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/applying-medical-school-process/fee-assistance-program/
- GRE Fee Reduction Program  https://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/about/fees/reductions/
- Fee Waiver for the DAT  http://www.ada.org/~/media/ADA/Education%20and%20Careers/Files/dat_fee_waiver.ashx

Employment Outlook

- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics employment of podiatrists is expected to increase 10% through 2026.
- Due to our increasingly active society and our growing elderly population, more people will be turning to podiatrists for care.
- New legislation for the Veterans Affair classifies podiatry as podiatric surgery which places these professionals in the same pay level as physicians.
- Median salary for podiatrists in 2017 was $127,740 (though industry statistics show a higher salary).

Programs in the Region

- Des Moines University College of Podiatric Medicine  Des Moines, IA  https://www.dmu.edu/cpms
- Scholl/Rosalind Franklin College of Podiatric Medicine  North Chicago, IL  https://rosalindfranklin.edu/academics/dr-william-m-scholl-college-of-podiatric-medicine/
- Kent State University College of Podiatric Medicine  Independence, OH  http://www.kent.edu/cpm

More Information

- American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine  http://www.aacpm.org
- American Podiatric Medical Association  http://www.apma.org
- AACPMAS (Application service)  https://aacpmas.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login