PRE-MEDICAL AND PRE-HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Program Director: Allyson D. Backstrom, PhD

INTRODUCTION

The Dr. George E. Schreiner ’43 Pre-Medical Center has been established to enhance the quality of the undergraduate experience for students who wish to enter the many fields of medicine and the health professions including medicine (allopathic and osteopathic), dentistry, podiatry, optometry, physician assistant, pharmacy, and veterinary medicine among others. The Pre-Medical Center supports students through one-on-one advising, hosting seminars to assist students learning about various health careers and professional schools, connecting students with shadowing and volunteer activities, and assisting students with the application process to gain entry into professional schools. It is important to understand that Pre-Med/Health Sciences is a support program and not an academic major. Students interested in careers in medicine and other health professions frequently major in biology, chemistry or biochemistry, however, students may major in any academic area. Pre-Med/Health students have recently majored in psychology, mathematics, English and philosophy among others. Further information can be found in the catalog sections for each major. Along with the academic major requirements, students complete specific course requirements for the health professional schools of choice. All programs require a broad liberal arts education which is achieved through the Core Curriculum. Specific requirements vary from one professional school to another so it is important for students to utilize the advising services of the Pre-Medical Center beginning in their first college year. For more detailed description of the program please go to the Pre-Med/Pre-Health website [https://www.canisius.edu/academics/programs/pre-medical-and-pre-health-professions].

ADVISEMENT

All pre-med/pre-health students should register with the PreMed Center upon arrival at Canisius their freshman year. Additionally, students who develop an interest in the health professions after matriculating at Canisius are able to register with the PreMed Center at any time. Pre-med advisors assist students in all aspects of their preparation for entry into the health professions and serve in addition to Griff 101 and major advisors. All students should work closely with the advisor in their major and the Pre-Med Advisor in discussing career expectations, choosing major electives, developing their entire academic program, and planning co-curricular or supplemental academic experiences. This process should start in the first college year. The PreMed advisors assist students in completing appropriate documentation each year to maintain good standing in the pre-med/pre-health program.

QUALIFICATIONS

To meet minimal requirements for most health professions, students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0. Students with a GPA lower than this should contact the Pre-Med Advisor for assistance. Higher GPAs are needed to be competitive applicants for most health professions with many programs looking for a GPA of 3.6. Competitive scores on professional exams (MCAT, DAT, GRE, PCAT, OAT, etc.), demonstrated commitment to serving others, and thorough exploration and understanding of the desired profession are also critical. Full understanding of the profession includes multiple shadowing experiences with different professionals over time and clinical volunteer experiences. The Pre-Medical Center will help students plan appropriately for each of these qualifications.

EARLY ASSURANCE AND JOINT DEGREE PROGRAMS

Canisius College maintains relationships with health professional programs allowing students to gain early acceptance into medical, dental, pharmacy, optometry, and veterinary programs among others. Relationships with professional schools also allow for students to be admitted into joint programs upon enrolling at Canisius as freshmen or during the first college year. These programs are competitive and appropriate for the highly motivated student who has thoroughly explored the health professions to develop an understanding and commitment to their chosen profession. Depending on the program, an outstanding high school record or early record in college is required. Please visit the Pre-Medical Center for the most up-to-date details on the various programs.

Early Assurance Program

Pre-Medical Early Assurance programs at Canisius are offered in conjunction with the State University of New York Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, and the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (PA and FL campuses). Pre-Dental Early Assurance programs are offered in conjunction with the State University of New York at Buffalo School of Dental Medicine and LECOM School of Dental Medicine (Bradenton, FL). Pre-Pharmacy Early Assurance Programs are offered in conjunction with the State University of New York at Buffalo School of Pharmacy and LECOM School of Pharmacy (PA and FL campuses).

Joint Degree Programs

Canisius College has six- and seven-year joint degree programs with the following professional schools; University at Buffalo School of Dental Medicine, Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, University at Buffalo School of Pharmacy, LECOM School of Pharmacy, the SUNY State College of Optometry, among others. The first three years are spent at Canisius and the last three or four years at the professional school. A bachelor’s degree (BS) will be awarded from Canisius College after completion of the first professional year of dental, pharmacy, osteopathic, or optometric school. The DDS, DO, PharmD, OD or other appropriate professional degree will be awarded at the end of six or seven years. To remain in good standing, students must fulfill all requirements established by the professional school. University of Guelph Ontario Veterinary College has also reserved seats for Canisius students.