4-YEAR PLANNING
for pre-health students
Your Presenters

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Co-hosted by GW AMWA
American Medical Women's Association which aims to advance women in medicine, advocate for equity, and improve healthcare. We are a welcoming community of pre-health women empowering and supporting other pre-health women.
What is a 4-Year Plan & why is it important?

What special considerations for pre-health students must you keep in mind?

Steps to make a 4-year plan

Let's walk through an example!

Breakout rooms

What questions came up?

Who should review your plan?

What about extracurriculars?

Anatomy of a Perfect Daily Schedule
What is a 4-Year Plan? Why is it important?

- A semester-by-semester plan for completing degree requirements & pre-health prerequisites
  This is a working document that can be adjusted as need be and mainly serves as a guide.

- A 4-year plan can ease anxiety
  Simply looking at a list of 120 credits can be overwhelming. Breaking it down by semester is much less daunting.

- A 4-year plan reduces the possibility of forgetting requirements
  Making a plan and updating it frequently in collaboration with your advisors reduces the risk of forgetting vital graduation requirements or prerequisites.
How do I make a 4-Year Plan?

1. **Pre-Health Considerations**
   First things first: There are certain things that you, as a pre-health student, have to keep in mind before and during the planning process.

2. **Materials**
   Before you jump into picking courses, you need to know what those courses are. Let’s pull up a few resources to help!

3. **Lay out all classes**
   You’ll have several “buckets” of requirements to fill. Let’s lay them all out using the materials we pulled up previously.

4. **Slot them in**
   Now comes the fun part: Start slotting your required courses into the appropriate semester and check them off as “planned” as you go.

5. **Review**
   Consult all of your advisors to ensure your plan encompasses all requirements and that it will allow you to graduate on time.
Special pre-health considerations

**AP/IB/DE Credit**

Did you get credit for any of your prerequisites through AP/IB/DE credit? If so, which ones? Do you need to retake any or take additional upper-level courses?

*Ex.: Students with AP Bio credit should take at least 8 credits of upper-level BISC courses (2 of those credits must be labs)*

**Study abroad**

None of your prerequisites can be taken abroad. They must all be taken in the US. This either means focusing on summers for study abroad, taking summer courses, saving study abroad for your senior year and/or considering a gap year.

**Your timeline**

When do you plan to apply? Are you open to a gap year or not? Do you wish to study abroad? What is your intended major/minor?
Let's talk about the application cycle really quickly
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- Finish any remaining prereqs
- MCAT/DAT Prep & HPAC
Let's talk about the application cycle really quickly

- **MCAT/DAT/GRE**
  - **prereqs should be done the semester prior**

- Should have competitive hours for extracurriculars at this time
Let's talk about the application cycle really quickly

- MCAT/DAT/GRE
- Begin application & submit primary
Let's talk about the application cycle really quickly

- MCAT/DAT/GRE
- Begin application & submit primary
- Receive secondaries
Your timeline

Let's talk about the application cycle really quickly

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- Some schools begin sending out interview invites
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Interviews & lots of waiting
Special pre-health considerations

**Summer Classes**
Keep them to a minimum. Most health professions programs don't like them especially if you have a trend of taking prerequisites over the summer.

**Academic Forgiveness & P/NP**
Academic forgiveness does not apply to pre-health students as most health professions programs do not honor your undergraduate's academic forgiveness policy. This means that for classes in which you're currently struggling, dropping or withdrawing may be more appropriate than earning a D or an F with the plans of repeating.

Most schools made exceptions regarding P/NP for "covid semesters" (i.e. Spring 2020). Those exceptions are not being made anymore so courses, especially prerequisites, must be taken for a letter grade (must earn C or higher).

**Online Courses**
When in doubt, avoid them especially for labs. Most schools won't accept online versions of prerequisite courses.
General GW Policy Considerations

Transfer/Consortium

Be sure to get approval from the appropriate department before taking courses outside of GW, such as at a community college or at a consortium institution. In addition, GW policy limits how many courses you can take outside of GW.

Course sequencing

When creating your 4-year plan, be aware of when courses are offered (ex.: Orgo 1 is only offered in fall). Check prior semesters on the Schedule of Classes to identify the pattern.

Repeating prereqs in which you earned a C-

Most programs require that you earn a C or above in all prereq courses, which means that prereqs in which you earned a C- or lower must be repeated for a higher grade. If you earned a C- and choose to retake it at GW, you’ll lose the credit you earned from the original attempt but the grade still factors into your GPA.
You can declare your major at any time, however, most CCAS students will declare their major in their third full-time semester (or after completing 45 credits, whichever comes first), and no later than the registration period before the fifth full-time semester. Transfer students are recommended to declare their major during their first or second semester at GW.

GW students across the university must complete the Tier One requirements. In addition to the Tier One requirements, all students in the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences must also complete CCAS 1001 First Year Experience and additional Tier Two courses.
Before we start, pull up the following:

- **Degree Map**
  - Go to gweb → Student Records & Registration → Student Records Information Menu → DegreeMAP

- **Major Bulletin**
  - Go to bulletin.gwu.edu → Select your school (ex.: CCAS) → Select your major → Go to "Requirements"

- **Academic Planning Worksheet**
  - Open the google doc & make a copy

- **Prerequisites**
  - Go to: prehealth.gwu.edu/health-professions → Select your profession → Scroll down to "Course Prerequisites"
Lay out your courses

Pre-health Requirements
A list of commonly required prerequisites can be found for each health track on the prehealth website.

School Requirements (ex.: GPACs)
You don't need the exact course you'll take each semester, since they vary based on availability.

Major Requirements
If your major has concentrations, be sure to include the appropriate courses for your chosen concentration too.

Considering an additional major, minor(s) or micro-minor(s)? Be sure to include those buckets as well.
Let's get started!

We'll work through an example together
What questions/concerns came up as you worked on your plan?
Who should you consult about your plan?

**GW Pre-Health Advising**
Meet once per semester to ensure you're on track with prerequisite courses and extracurriculars based on your preferred timeline.

**Homeschool Advisor**
Meet once per semester to ensure you're on track to graduate within 4 years.

**Faculty Advisor**
Meet once per semester to ensure you're successfully completing all of your major requirements.
What about extracurriculars?

- **Take your first semester to learn**
  - How to study
  - How to manage your time
  - How long it takes you to complete assignments & study for exams
  - How to take care of yourself

- **Create a time audit**
  - How much actual free time do you have after accounting for classes, study time, eating, sleeping, etc.
  - How do you want to spend that time?

- **Plan out your extracurriculars**
  - Determine what you want to be involved in each semester and for how many hours
    - Do you need any training ahead of time? Ex.: EMT
    - Are there minimum hours the organization/employer require of you?
Anatomy of a Perfect Daily Schedule
Before you go...

We need your feedback!

Have more questions? Email us at prehealth@gwu.edu