



## PROFESSION OVERVIEW

Doctors of Osteopathic Medicine (DOs) are fully licensed physicians who practice in every medical specialty. They provide a full range of services, from prescribing drugs to performing surgery, and they use the latest medical tools. DOs generally use a more holistic approach to medicine and consider a patient's environment, nutrition, and body system as a whole when diagnosing and treating medical conditions.

## LENGTH OF PROGRAM (depending on specialty)

- **Medical School:** Four Years
- **Residency:** Three - Seven Years
- **Fellowship:** One - Three Years



## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The most common course prerequisites for students applying to osteopathic medical schools are listed below. However, most programs will require additional coursework. Check individual medical school websites or the *Osteopathic Medical College Information Book (CIB)* at [www.aacom.org](http://www.aacom.org). **Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the applicant to know the exact requirements and deadlines for each school to which they apply.**

- **One year of general biology\*** BIOL 101/BIOL 102 or BIOL 107/108
- **One year of general chemistry** CHEM 201/CHEM 202
- **One year of organic chemistry** CHEM 311/312
- **One year of physics** PHYS 101/102 or PHYS 105/106
- **One semester of biochemistry** BIOL/CHEM 317
- **Introductory psychology** PSYC 100
- **Introductory sociology** SOC 101
- **Schools may require one year of English, a calculus or statistics course, in addition to other courses**

*\*Only Biology majors interested in pursuing a career in medicine should take BIOL 101/102; all other majors should take BIOL 107/108.*

## ADMISSION CRITERIA

Medical schools look for well-rounded applicants. The following list identifies criteria considered during the application process. Check the *Osteopathic Medical College Information Book* for average grade point average (GPA) & Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) scores for programs of interest; [www.aacom.org](http://www.aacom.org).

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overall and science GPA</li></ul>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MCAT scores</li></ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Extracurricular activities</li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Health-related experiences</li></ul>                            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Research experiences</li></ul>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community service</li></ul>                                     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Leadership experiences</li></ul>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Letters of evaluation</li></ul>                                 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interview/Personal Statement</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Knowledge of, and commitment to, osteopathic medicine</li></ul> |

## APPLICATION TIMELINE

The application timeline is unique depending on when you are prepared and ready to pursue medical school. If you plan to apply directly after graduating from IWU, you will want to complete the prerequisite courses by the end of your junior year and apply during the summer before senior year. If you choose to take a gap year, you should complete your prerequisites by the end of your senior year and then apply the summer after graduation OR when you are ready.

Students today are often waiting a year or more after graduation before applying to a health professions school. This does not put the applicant at a disadvantage. Many programs look favorably upon applicants who have taken an extra year or two to mature and gain work experience, and who can make a better decision regarding a career in health professions; see **"Make the Most of Your Gap Year"** (<https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/making-most-your-gap-year/>).

## APPLICATION SERVICE

The American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Application Service (AACOMAS) is the centralized osteopathic medical school application processing service. Most U.S. osteopathic medical schools use AACOMAS as the primary application method. Texas Medical and Dental Schools use the TMSAS.

- American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine Application Service (AACOMAS; [www.aacomas.liaisoncas.com](http://www.aacomas.liaisoncas.com))
- Texas Medical and Dental Schools Application Service (TMSAS; [www.tmsas.com](http://www.tmsas.com))

## STANDARDIZED TEST

The Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) is a prerequisite for admission to nearly all U.S. medical schools. The exam is taken after all of the required biology, chemistry, physics, psychology, sociology and biochemistry courses are completed. The MCAT is offered many times throughout the year (see Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) website for schedule and registration dates; <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/taking-mcat-exam/>).

The test consists of four sections and takes 7.5 hours to complete. Scores range from 118-132 and will be sent about 30 days after the exam.

Biological and Biochemical Foundation of Living Systems

Chemical and Physical Foundations of Biological Systems

Psychological, Social and Biological Foundations of Behavior

Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills

The following resources can provide you with more information regarding the MCAT: (<https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat>)

- Free and low-cost preparation material ([www.aamc.org](http://www.aamc.org) & [www.khanacademy.org/mcat](http://www.khanacademy.org/mcat))
- AAMC Resources: MCAT Essentials, The Official Guide to the MCAT Exam, The Official MCAT Self-Assessment Package, Practice Test (first one free)
- [Mcatprep.com](http://Mcatprep.com)
- MCAT reference books and flashcards at the **Hart Career Center**

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM; [www.aacom.org](http://www.aacom.org))
- Student National Medical Association (AOA; [www.osteopathic.org](http://www.osteopathic.org))
- Student Osteopathic Medical Association ([www.studentdo.com](http://www.studentdo.com))
- Summer Health Professions Education Program (<http://www.shpep.org/>)
- Summer Enrichment Programs (<https://services.aamc.org/summerprograms/>)
- Student Doctor Network ([www.studentdoctor.net](http://www.studentdoctor.net))
- Explore Health Careers (<https://explorehealthcareers.org/>)

The American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine  
**aacom**unities

  
AMERICAN  
OSTEOPATHIC  
ASSOCIATION

  
STUDENT OSTEOPTHIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

 **The Student  
Doctor Network**  
a non-profit forum, helping students become doctors

  
Don't forget to check out **Handshake!**

**Handshake** is your one-stop source for internship and job postings, campus recruiting, career fairs, and career center resources. Once you're on the login page, enter your [iwu.edu](http://iwu.edu) email address and click next. If you are already in the system, then you can just select "IWU Single Sign-on" and enter your IWU net-ID and password.

Please visit [www.iwu.edu/career-center/handshake](http://www.iwu.edu/career-center/handshake) for more information on Handshake.

For more information or to make an appointment contact the  
Pre-Health & Biology Career Advisor, **Michele Darnell**.

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