# Health Professions Advising Manual

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Dear ECU Student:

Congratulations on your decision to pursue a career in health care. It is a challenging yet very rewarding field. Whether you have known what you want to do your whole life or are still unsure about your future career, selecting a major and/or choosing a career path can be an overwhelming and exciting journey. We hope this Health Professions Manual will be a valuable resource and will help to “demystify” the process for preparing and applying to a health professions program.

One of the most important things for you to be aware of is that YOU CAN MAJOR IN ANYTHING to prepare for a health profession as long as you incorporate the appropriate prerequisite courses for your intended program. It is recommended that you select an undergraduate major that you will enjoy, have a natural ability in, think you will excel in, and that will lead you to a satisfying career as a parallel plan. All of the health professions programs are highly competitive, so it is important to have multiple options to consider.

Demonstrating a passion for your intended profession is just as important as your academic record and test scores. Your grade point average and standardized test score will be the factors that are likely to determine whether or not you are selected for an interview (if it is required), but the experiences you have outside of the classroom are the ones that will set you apart from other applicants. It is important to shadow professionals in your intended profession, gain volunteer experience in different settings (they do not have to be health-related), strengthen leadership skills, perform research, and participate in extracurricular activities. All of these factors will be taken into consideration in your admission decision. It is important that you have the aptitude to be successful in professional school, but it is also important that you have the personality and social skills to be a successful health care provider.

ECU provides many resources to assist students in pursuit of furthering their education – use these resources to your advantage. Pre-Professional Advising offers a shadowing program, a research program, workshops, guest speakers, college fairs, and other opportunities to help with your exploration and development. Be sure to review the information in this Health Professions manual. Complete the first section “Deciding Upon a Career in Health” and then make an appointment with your advisor or the Career Center if you have questions. Use the “Pre-Health Assessment Worksheet” at the back to track your grades and activities, and take it with you when you meet with your advisor.

Best wishes as you “chart your course” to a health profession!

Sincerely,

Elizabeth McAllister
Director, Pre-Professional Advising
DECIDING UPON A CAREER IN HEALTH

THINGS TO CONSIDER

Your interests

• What do you like to do?
• How do you like to spend your time?
• Would you rather work with people, things or data?

Your values

• What is important to you (helping others, making money, gaining knowledge, making new discoveries, having a challenging career)?

Your skills

• What are you able to do well?
• What comes naturally to you?
• Which of these skills do you possess?
  Supervising, Solving problems, Communicating, Speaking in public, Teaching Writing, Listening, Managing, Budgeting, Conceptualizing Negotiating, Researching, Designing, Planning, Facilitating Drawing, Developing, Making decisions, Handling crisis, Performing List others:

Your personality

• How would others describe you?
• How would you describe yourself?
• Which words describe you?
  Honest, Ambitious, Assertive, Quick Learner, Hard-working Flexible, Adaptable, Mature, Dependable, Open-minded Sincere, Trustworthy, Persistent, Friendly, Curious Funny, Positive, Motivated, Enthusiastic, Able to lead List others:
KNOWING YOURSELF

There are many health-related careers. By answering some of these questions and learning about various careers you can find a fit that’s right for you. There is no right or wrong response. You can check more than one response for each question. Think about yourself and check the answer that describes you best.

How much do you wish to work with people?
   ____ I want on-going interaction with people, like a nurse.
   ____ I would like some contact with people, but would rather focus on my skills and abilities than interpersonal relationships, like a surgeon.
   ____ I would like little to no contact with people, like a researcher or lab technician.

Are you comfortable with science studies?
   ____ I like science and do well academically in sciences. Science comes naturally to me.
   ____ I like science, but need to focus, study hard and ask for assistance. Understanding science does not come easily to me.
   ____ Sciences are not very interesting to me. I will have to make myself get through them to be a health professional.

Are you prepared to enter a career where you will have to spend significant time and effort keeping up with the latest developments in your field?
   ____ The idea of on-going study of my chosen career is motivating to me.
   ____ I understand that I will have to continue learning about my field, but the thought is not exciting to me.

What type of health-care setting would you prefer?
   ____ I would like to work with a wide variety of people.
   ____ I would rather focus on a particular age group.
      _____ adult
      _____ elderly
      _____ infant
      _____ youth
   ____ I would like to work with technology.
   ____ I would like to work with data or records.
   ____ I would consider working in a rural area.
   ____ I would like to work in a large medical center.
   ____ I would like to work in a small office setting.

What kind of lifestyle do you envision?
Level of responsibility
   ____ I would like to deal with life and death situations.
   ____ I would like to assist other medical professionals and be part of a team.
   ____ I would like to have direct patient care.
   ____ I would like to advance medical knowledge through research.
   ____ I would like to manage other people.
Time/Work/Leisure/Family
_____ I am comfortable spending more time at work than with my family.
_____ I would like a career where I am “on-call” and must respond at any time.
_____ I would like a balanced life, where work, family, and leisure are all equal.
_____ I would not like a career where I was “on-call”.
_____ I would like a career where I could put my work aside to focus on family and other activities.

Stress
_____ I thrive on stress, the higher the better.
_____ I know how to handle stress and high stress doesn’t bother me.
_____ I would do well in a setting where the stress level varies from low to high.
_____ I know how to handle stress, but prefer situations where stress is low.
_____ I need to work on my stress management skills, but think I could do well in a high-stress situation.
_____ I need to work on my stress management skills and know that high stress situations are not motivating or healthy for me.

THE DESCRIPTION OF YOUR IDEAL CAREER
Compile the statements you have checked and the questions you have answered by putting them together and writing a descriptive paragraph.

SAMPLE
I would like a career that fits my interests, values, skills and personality. I enjoy reading, meeting new people and being creative. Family is very important to me. I would like a career where I am recognized for my accomplishments and where I can be promoted. Some of my skills are researching, writing, and communicating. People would describe me as dedicated, reliable, and serious.

I want a career where I have ongoing interaction with people. I feel uncomfortable with science and would not want a health-career that requires a lot of science classes. I understand that I will have to keep learning after I graduate, but that is motivating to me. I would be willing to work in a rural setting, but would like to work with the elderly. I would like to be part of a team of medical professionals and have direct patient care. I would like a career that allows me to balance work, family and leisure, where I am not on-call and where the stress level varies from low to high.

MY IDEAL CAREER
INVESTIGATE AND EXPLORE
Now that you have described your ideal career, the next step is to explore health careers and find a match. There are many ways to learn about different careers, here are a few ideas to help get you started.

Read about different health careers online:


Meet with people in different health careers. Ask them some of these questions.
- What is a typical day like?
- What type of education and experience did you need to get into your field?
- What are the best and worst things about your job?
- What advice would you give me if I was to pursue the same career as you?

Volunteer in different health-care settings.

Make a list of careers you think you are interested in. Cross them off if you are no longer interested in them or can’t meet their academic requirements.

HELPFUL HINTS
Make an appointment with your Academic Advisor to discuss your options for an appropriate major. Take a major and career assessment: [www.cfnc.org](http://www.cfnc.org), click on “plan,” then “plan for a career”
Take an Interest Profiler online at [www.onetcenter.org/IP.html](http://www.onetcenter.org/IP.html)
Take the Work Importance Locator online at [www.onetcenter.org/WIL.html](http://www.onetcenter.org/WIL.html)
Take the ECU Allied Health Careers Assessment online at [http://www.ecu.edu/csdhs/ah/careerexplorer.cfm](http://www.ecu.edu/csdhs/ah/careerexplorer.cfm)
Health Professions Requiring Four or More Years of Education

**Acupuncturist:** uses needles, herbs, and other devices to treat ailments such as headaches, back problems, and foot pain.

**Anesthesiologist Assistant:** assists the anesthesiologist in the development and implementation of the anesthesia care plan. This may include taking the patient’s appropriate health history, and performing various preoperative tasks (insertion of intravenous and arterial catheters). They also provide support to other established protocols such as the pre-testing anesthesia delivery systems, the patient monitors, and the operating devices for critical cardiac, pulmonary, and neurological systems.

**Athletic Trainer:** provides a variety of services including prevention, recognition, immediate care, treatment, and rehabilitation after physical trauma.

**Audiologist:** determines if a person has hearing loss, the type of loss, and how the person can make the best possible use of remaining hearing. Using testing devices, they measure the decibel at which a person begins to hear sounds, the ability to distinguish between sounds, and the impact of hearing loss and/or balance problems on an individual’s daily life. Audiologists interpret these results and may coordinate them with medical, educational, and psychological information to make a diagnosis and determine a treatment plan.

**Biomedical Engineer:** combines biology and medicine with engineering to develop devices and procedures that solve medical and health-related problems. Many perform research, along with other scientists, to develop and evaluate systems and products for use in the fields of biology and health. These include artificial organs, prostheses, instrumentation, medical information systems, and health management and care delivery systems.

**Chiropractor:** diagnoses and treats patients whose health problems are associated with the body’s muscular, nervous, and skeletal systems, especially the spine. Chiropractors believe that interference with these systems impairs the body’s normal functions and lowers its resistance to disease. Also, that spinal and vertebral dysfunction alters many important body functions by affecting the nervous system and that skeletal imbalance through joint or articular dysfunction, especially in the spine, can cause pain.
**Dentist:** diagnoses, prevents, and treats problems with teeth or mouth tissue. They remove decay, fill cavities, examine x-rays, place protective plastic sealants on children’s teeth, straighten teeth, and repair fractured teeth. They also perform corrective surgery on gums and supporting bones to treat gum disease. Dentists extract teeth and make models and measurements for dentures to replace missing teeth. They provide instruction on diet, brushing and flossing techniques, fluoride treatments, and other aspects of dental care. They also administer anesthetics and write prescriptions for antibiotics and other medications.

**Dietitian:** provides medical nutrition therapy and the use of specific nutrition services to treat chronic conditions, illnesses, or injuries. They integrate and apply the principles derived from the sciences of food, nutrition, biochemistry, physiology, food management, and behavior to achieve and maintain the health status of the public they serve.

**Environmental Health Specialist:** helps keep the environment healthy and habitable for all living organisms. They protect many life forms by trying to prevent air and water pollution, poisonous chemical use and unsafe waste disposal. They teach people and businesses about helpful methods for caring for the environment.

**Epidemiologist:** studies biological systems to understand the causes of disease and other health problems to development treatments. They try to identify changes in a cell or chromosomes that signal the development of medical problems, such as different types of cancer. They investigate the causes of disease and other public health problems to prevent them from spreading or from happening again. They report their findings to public policy officials and to the general public.

**Exercise Physiologist:** uses physical activity to treat individuals with illnesses. Some work settings include hospitals, physical therapy offices, and sports medicine clinics. Others manage fitness programs for corporations and fitness centers or professional athletic training programs, using their knowledge of the effects of exercise to analyze each athlete’s sport and design an exercise program tailored to that sport.

**Forensic Scientist:** As a vital part of the entire justice and regulatory system their goal is to analyze all available information to determine the facts and the truth. Issues range from questions of the validity of a signature on a will, to a claim of product liability, to questions of whether a corporation is complying with environmental laws, and the protection of constitutionally guaranteed individual rights.
**Genetic Counselor:** consults with individuals and/or their families, with birth defects or genetic disorders and who may be at risk for a variety of inherited conditions. They identify families at risk, investigate the problems present in the family, interpret information about the disorder, analyze inheritance patterns and risks of recurrence, and review available options with the family. They also provide supportive counseling to families, serve as patient advocates, and refer individuals and families to community or state support services.

**Health Care Administrator:** oversee the day-to-day operations of a health care facility. This includes all people who plan, direct, coordinate, and supervise the delivery of health care, including specialists and generalists. Specialists manage specific departments or clinical services while generalists manage or help to manage an entire facility or system.

**Health Information Manager:** perform tasks related to the management of health information and the systems used to collect, store, process, retrieve, analyze, and communicate that data. They assess the uses of information and identify what information is available and where there are inconsistencies, gaps, and duplications in health data sources.

**Medical Social Worker:** are caseworkers who help patients when personal or social problems impede recovery. They work with doctors to identify environmental relationships underlying the patient’s health problem. They also help the patient to understand and follow medical recommendations.

**Naturopathic Physician:** believes in understanding patients from the cellular-level up and pursues the latest biochemical findings relating to the workings of the body and the dynamics of botanical medicines, nutrition, homeopathy, and other natural therapies. Their diagnoses and therapeutics are science-based and increasingly evidence-based.

**Nurse Anesthetist:** provides anesthetics to patients in collaboration with surgeons, anesthesiologists, dentists, podiatrists, and other qualified healthcare professionals. When anesthesia is administered by a nurse anesthetist, it is recognized as the practice of nursing. When anesthesia is administered by an anesthesiologist, then it is recognized as the practice of medicine.

**Nurse Midwife:** provides health care to women and their newborns. Focuses on the needs of the individual and family for physical care, emotional and social support, and active involvement of significant others -- according to cultural values and personal preferences.
**Nurse Practitioner:** is a registered nurse with advanced academic and clinical experience, which enables him or her to diagnose and manage most common and many chronic illnesses, either independently or as part of a health care team. They provide some care previously offered only by physicians, and in most states have the ability to prescribe medications. Working in collaboration with a physician, a nurse practitioner provides high-quality, cost-effective, and individualized care for the lifespan of a patient’s special needs.

**Nurse:** Registration Nurses (RNs) work to promote health, prevent disease, and help patients cope with illness. They are advocates and health educators for patients, families, and communities. When providing direct patient care, they observe, assess, and record symptoms, reactions, and progress towards recovery, as well as administer medication. They assist in convalescence and rehabilitation. They also assist physicians during surgeries, treatments, and examinations. RNs also develop and manage nursing care plans, instruct patients and their families regarding proper care, and provide preventative health care information to individuals and groups.

**Occupational Therapist:** services are based on assessment methods that include the use of skilled observation or the administration and interpretation of standardized or non-standardized tests or measurements in order to create purposeful activity and interventions to achieve functional outcomes and to maximize the independence and the maintenance of wellness of any individual who is restricted by a physical injury or illness, cognitive impairment, a psychological dysfunction, a mental illness, a developmental disability, learning disability, or an adverse environmental condition.

**Optometrist:** provides primary vision care to patients. They examine patients’ eyes to diagnose any vision problems and eye diseases they may have. They test patients’ visual acuity, depth, and color perception, ability to focus and coordinate the eyes. Optometrists also prescribe eyeglasses and contact lenses for their patients, and provide vision therapy and low-vision rehabilitation. Optometrists analyze test results and develop a treatment plan for their patients.

**Organ Transplant Coordinator:** plans and coordinates in-hospital services, solicits organ donors, and assists medical staff in organ retrieval for patients having an organ or tissue transplant. Communicates with donors, patients, and health team members to ensure thorough documentation, analyzes medical data of potential donors and recipients, and consults with health team members to perform preliminary physical assessment and screen potential recipients and donors.
Pharmacist: dispenses medications prescribed by physicians and other health practitioners, and provides information to patients about medications and their use. They advise physicians and other health care practitioners on the selection, dosages, interactions, and side-effects of medications. They monitor the health and progress of patients in response to drug therapy to ensure safe and effective use of medication. They must understand the use, clinical effects, and composition of drugs, including their chemical, biological, and physical properties.

Physical Therapist: helps improve the strength and mobility of patients, relieve pain, and prevent or limit permanent physical disabilities through various treatment plans. They take a personal and direct approach to meeting an individual’s health goals, working closely with the patient and other health care professionals.

Physician: takes medical histories and examines patients to diagnose illness and prescribe and administer treatment. Orders, performs, and interprets diagnostic test. They counsel patients on diet, hygiene, and preventative healthcare.

Physician Assistant: academically and clinically prepared to practice medicine under the direction and supervision of a licensed physician. Within the physician-PA relationship, PAs make clinical decisions and provide a broad range of diagnostic, therapeutic, preventive, and health maintenance services.

Podiatrist: treats ankle and food injuries, deformities, and infections, as well as foot issues associated with diseases such as diabetes. To treat these problems, podiatrists prescribe drugs, order physical therapy, set fractures, and perform surgery. They also fit corrective inserts (called orthotics), design plaster casts and strappings to correct deformities, and design custom-made shoes.

Public Health Specialist: educates the public through organized, interdisciplinary efforts to address the physical, mental, and environmental health concerns of communities and populations at risk for disease and injury. This is achieved through the application of health promotion and disease prevention technologies and interventions designed to improve and enhance quality of life.

Recreational Therapist: provides treatment services and recreation activities to individuals with disabilities or illnesses. Using different techniques, including: arts and crafts, animals, sports, games, dance and movement, drama, music, and community outings, they treat and maintain the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of their clients. They help individuals reduce depression, stress, and anxiety, recover basic motor functioning and reasoning abilities, build confidence, and socialize effectively so they can enjoy greater independence and better quality of life.
**Speech-Language Pathologist:** diagnose and treat communication and swallowing disorders in patients. They provide a wide range of services, mainly on an individual basis. Speech services begin with initial screening for communication and swallowing disorders and continue with assessment and diagnosis, consultation for the provision of advice regarding management, intervention and treatment, and provision counseling and other follow up services for these disorders.

**Sports Medicine:** focuses on the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and injuries related to sports, and injury/disease prevention management. The goal is to assist the athlete in achieving both optimal health and peak performance. It involves a comprehensive team of health care professionals trained in a variety of backgrounds such as athletic training, biomechanics, exercise physiology, physical therapy, sport psychology, and nutrition.

**Toxicologist:** there are six types of toxicologist specialists: forensics, mechanistic, industrial, clinical, environmental, and regulatory. A toxicologist’s main role is to investigate chemicals and analyze and interpret data to uncover the mysteries that surround the component of the chemical. They often explain the risks and benefits of chemicals.

**Veterinarian:** provides healthcare to pets, livestock, zoo, and laboratory animals. They diagnose, treat, and research medical conditions and diseases in animals. Some use their skills to protect humans against diseases carried by animals, and conduct clinical research on human and animal health problems. Others work in basic research to broaden the scope of fundamental theoretical knowledge and develop new ways to use knowledge in applied research.
Fastest Growing Health-Professions in North Carolina

Of the fastest growing occupations in North Carolina, many are in healthcare fields. Below is a list of growth projections in healthcare professions for 2018.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Employment 2012</th>
<th>Employment 2022</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Personal Care Aides</td>
<td>14,710</td>
<td>25,150</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Dental Hygienists</td>
<td>6,160</td>
<td>9,590</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Psychiatric Aides</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>1,240</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Diagnostic Medical Sonographers</td>
<td>1,770</td>
<td>2,640</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Biomedical Engineers</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Dental Assistants</td>
<td>8,820</td>
<td>12,740</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Physician Assistants</td>
<td>4,150</td>
<td>5,930</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Home Health Aides</td>
<td>47,100</td>
<td>66,590</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Audiologists</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Mental Health Counselors</td>
<td>4,080</td>
<td>5,590</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Hearing Aid Specialists</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Nurse Practitioners</td>
<td>3,380</td>
<td>4,620</td>
<td>37%</td>
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<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Medical Secretaries</td>
<td>11,100</td>
<td>15,100</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Occupational Therapy Assistants</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>1,180</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Veterinary Tech</td>
<td>3,170</td>
<td>4,290</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Orthodontists</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Dentists, General</td>
<td>3,590</td>
<td>4,810</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Physical Therapy Assistants</td>
<td>2,090</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>Medical/Clinical Lab Specialists</td>
<td>7,420</td>
<td>9,850</td>
<td>33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Surgical Technologists</td>
<td>3,120</td>
<td>4,130</td>
<td>33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>Genetic Counselors</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>32%</td>
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<td>67</td>
<td>Cardiovascular Technicians</td>
<td>1,310</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>32%</td>
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<td>69</td>
<td>Substance Abuse Counselors</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>1,970</td>
<td>32%</td>
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<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>Medical Assistants</td>
<td>14,240</td>
<td>18,780</td>
<td>32%</td>
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<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>Physical Therapist Aides</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>1,140</td>
<td>32%</td>
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<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>Surgeons</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>2,100</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76</td>
<td>Occupational Therapy Aides</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77</td>
<td>Phlebotomists</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>Anesthesiologists</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>1,070</td>
<td>31%</td>
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<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>Rehabilitation Counselors</td>
<td>3,670</td>
<td>4,760</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88</td>
<td>Physical Therapists</td>
<td>5,260</td>
<td>6,760</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>Medical Scientists</td>
<td>3,760</td>
<td>4,820</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92</td>
<td>Nurse Midwives</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td>Healthcare Social Workers</td>
<td>3,600</td>
<td>4,560</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>Nursing Assistants</td>
<td>54,380</td>
<td>68,840</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tr>
<td>103</td>
<td>Psychiatrists</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>Medical and Health Services Managers</td>
<td>7,670</td>
<td>9,700</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>2019 Employment</td>
<td>2023 Employment</td>
<td>Increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>Biochemists/Biophysicists</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112</td>
<td>Medical Equipment Preparers</td>
<td>1,670</td>
<td>2,100</td>
<td>430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121</td>
<td>Ophthalmic Medical Tech</td>
<td>1,660</td>
<td>2,070</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126</td>
<td>Occupational Therapists</td>
<td>2,630</td>
<td>3,280</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>133</td>
<td>Radiologic Technologists</td>
<td>6,650</td>
<td>8,250</td>
<td>1,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>141</td>
<td>Nurse Anesthetists</td>
<td>2,150</td>
<td>2,640</td>
<td>490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>147</td>
<td>Medical Records/Health Information Tech</td>
<td>5,220</td>
<td>6,390</td>
<td>1,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>149</td>
<td>EMT/Paramedics</td>
<td>9,770</td>
<td>11,920</td>
<td>2,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150</td>
<td>Radiation Therapists</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>152</td>
<td>Orthotists/Prosthetists</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>159</td>
<td>Obstetricians/Gynecologists</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>990</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>161</td>
<td>Speech Language Pathologists</td>
<td>3,840</td>
<td>4,650</td>
<td>810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>166</td>
<td>Opticians</td>
<td>1,690</td>
<td>2,040</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>168</td>
<td>Registered Nurses</td>
<td>87,850</td>
<td>105,730</td>
<td>17,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>176</td>
<td>Respiratory Therapy Tech</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>70</td>
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<tr>
<td>179</td>
<td>Pediatricians</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>780</td>
<td>130</td>
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<tr>
<td>180</td>
<td>Dieticians/Nutritionists</td>
<td>1,680</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>320</td>
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<tr>
<td>183</td>
<td>Respiratory Therapists</td>
<td>3,550</td>
<td>4,240</td>
<td>690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>202</td>
<td>Family and General Practitioners</td>
<td>4,210</td>
<td>4,970</td>
<td>760</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Employment Security Commission of North Carolina Labor Market Information

*For more information about these careers, visit: www.acinet.org*
## North Carolina Salary Ranges for Health Care Professions

Based on 2015 Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Estimated Employment</th>
<th>Estimated Starting Salary</th>
<th>Estimated Average Salary</th>
<th>Estimated Upper Salary</th>
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<tr>
<td>Anesthesiologists</td>
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<td>&gt;$187,200</td>
<td>&gt;$187,200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Audiologists</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>$50,770</td>
<td>$71,880</td>
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<td>1,090</td>
<td>$64,690</td>
<td>$93,140</td>
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<td>Dentists, All Other Specialists</td>
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<td>$82,650</td>
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<td>Internists, General</td>
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<td>$152,720</td>
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<td>Respiratory Therapists</td>
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<tr>
<td>Veterinarians</td>
<td>2,420</td>
<td>$46,810</td>
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## HEALTH RELATED UNDERGRADUATE MAJORS TO CONSIDER AT ECU

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Athletic Training</strong>&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; graduates can work as athletic trainers for amateur and professional teams, in schools, universities and industry. Graduates are eligible for the Board of Certification Exam. The program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/Hlth">www.ecu.edu/Hlth</a></td>
<td>252-328-4645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Biology</strong>&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; for students seeking careers in health related, industrial, business, academic, research and professional fields. Students study topics in ecology, evolution, and organismal biology, and cellular and molecular biology.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/biology">www.ecu.edu/biology</a></td>
<td>252-737-4454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Biochemistry</strong>&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; for students seeking careers in variety of health fields: medical fields, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, and research. Curriculum is strong in chemistry, physics, calculus, and biology. Additional course work in molecular and cellular disciplines.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/biochemistry">www.ecu.edu/biochemistry</a></td>
<td>252-737-4454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chemistry</strong>&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; provides students with a broad education in chemistry for further study in wide range of fields such as business, medicine, pharmacy, and law, and careers depended on basic knowledge in chemistry.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/chem">www.ecu.edu/chem</a></td>
<td>252-737-4454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child Life</strong>&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; seriously ill and hospitalized children and adolescents and their families have special needs beyond ordinary family concerns. The child life program prepares students to work with these children and their families to promote optimum development and minimize psychological trauma. The child life curriculum meets the guidelines set by the Child Life Certifying Commission of the Child Life Council.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/che/cdfr">www.ecu.edu/che/cdfr</a></td>
<td>252-328-2521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clinical Laboratory Science</strong>&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; prepares students to become clinical laboratory scientists also known as medical technologists, to perform lab tests on patient samples in all major medical labs. Course work in management, research and science.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/clsc">www.ecu.edu/clsc</a></td>
<td>252-328-6001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environmental Health</strong>&lt;sup&gt;-&lt;/sup&gt; graduates can begin work as entry-level environmental health specialists or industrial hygienists in industry, academic institutions, consulting firms, and health regulatory agencies at local, state, or federal level. Employment opportunities include areas as air pollution, food protection, water quality, toxicology, environmental epidemiology, waste treatment, control of disease transmitting insects and counterterrorism.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/Hlth">www.ecu.edu/Hlth</a></td>
<td>252-328-4645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Website</td>
</tr>
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<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise Physiology</td>
<td>graduates are prepared for careers in applied or clinical exercise physiology and industrial, academic or postgraduate work in exercise physiology, medicine, physical therapy or other allied health fields. The degree covers the study of exercise and its role in health maintenance and disease prevention.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/kine">www.ecu.edu/kine</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family &amp; Community Services</td>
<td>prepares students to work in a variety of community agencies and organizations to provide services and education to children and their families, such as juvenile services, family life education programs, domestic violence programs, programs for unwed mothers, mediation centers, substance abuse and other human service programs. Family and community services specialists work with child welfare, advocacy agencies, mental health centers, group homes, adoption agencies, day care centers and preschools, etc. The program has two tracks: family studies and child development. The programs provide the required coursework to pursue the Certified Family Life Educator (family studies option) and the Infant Toddler Program Certificate (child development).</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/che/cdfr">www.ecu.edu/che/cdfr</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forensic Science</td>
<td>provides students with all of the necessary skills to pursue advanced study and/or a professional career in Forensics. This is a rigorous curriculum comprised of Biology, Chemistry, Criminal Justice, and Anthropology courses. Graduates of this program will be qualified for employment in private, state, and federal labs.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/chem/old/Forensics.cfm">www.ecu.edu/chem/old/Forensics.cfm</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Fitness Specialist</td>
<td>students are prepared for careers in the health and fitness industry, including employment in corporate and commercial fitness centers, community settings, clinical and rehabilitative settings and personal training.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/kine">www.ecu.edu/kine</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services Management</td>
<td>provides students with skills to function as supervisors and midlevel managers in health care. Graduates are prepared for entrance to graduate programs in allied health. In major, students study health care delivery and reimbursement; health care quality management; ethics and law; budgeting and personnel supervision. Employment sites include hospitals, nursing homes, pharmaceutical, medical equipment, insurance companies and physician group practice.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/cs-dhs/hsim/hsm.cfm">www.ecu.edu/cs-dhs/hsim/hsm.cfm</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroscience</td>
<td>study of nervous system, brain and spinal cord. Understanding of thought, emotion, behavior, and neurological disorders. Strong background in science and research. Prepares students desiring to pursue careers in neuroscience research as well as students seeking career in medicine or health professions.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/neuroscience">www.ecu.edu/neuroscience</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>prepares students for licensure as registered nurses. Students complete two years of science and foundation curriculum courses prior to admission to the clinical major. Graduates are prepared for beginning positions as nurse generalists and able to function in a wide variety of acute care or community health settings.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nursing.ecu.edu">www.nursing.ecu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Nutrition Science** - Dietitians and nutritionists are professionals who translate the science of nutrition into information and practices people can use to enhance their health and wellbeing in their everyday lives. The demand for dietitians continues to increase, as the role of nutrition in prevention and treatment of chronic disease and health maintenance increases. The mission of the didactic program in dietetics (DPD) is to provide students with general education and in-depth course work in nutrition, foods and food-service systems management. The DPD program provides students with a foundation for supervised practice as entry-level dietitians and other allied health professions. There are two tracks available: one for those who wish to become registered dietitians, and one for those pursuing health professions.  

[www.ecu.edu/che/nutr](http://www.ecu.edu/che/nutr)  

**Physics** - for students pursuing a career in physics or engineering. Curriculum includes courses that will prepare students to continue studies at a graduate level.  

[www.ecu.edu/physics](http://www.ecu.edu/physics)  

**Psychology** - provides students with a broad education in psychology, research techniques, can benefit students in the job market as well as continuing graduate study. Employment opportunities are available in residential counseling, social services case management, child care, sales, human resources and market research.  

[www.ecu.edu/psyc](http://www.ecu.edu/psyc)  

**Public Health Studies** -  

**Pre Health Concentration:** graduates are prepared for advanced study in professional health-care fields such as medicine, physician assistant, dentistry and pharmacy. It provides a comprehensive background in biological and social sciences and health education to prepare students for graduate study and practice.  

**Community Health Concentration:** graduates are prepared for work in community health, public health and health care. Students develop skills in community organizations, needs assessment, and educational strategies for individuals and organizations. Graduates help communities draw on their problem solving abilities, identify needs and mobilize resources to strive for improved health.  

**Worksite Health Concentration:** graduates are prepared for employment in business, industry, and health care. They perform employee health screenings, plan health enhancement programs ranging from fitness and nutrition to stress management, implement health fairs, and work with others to promote employees’ health and productivity.  

[www.ecu.edu/Hlth](http://www.ecu.edu/Hlth)  

**Contact**  

252-328-6001  

252-328-6314  

252-737-4454  

252-328-4645
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recreational Therapy</td>
<td>Graduates provide treatment services to individuals with illness and disabilities in rehabilitation, psychiatric, long-term care, and other facilities. Graduates are eligible to apply for NC state licensure as recreational therapists and national certification as therapeutic recreation specialists.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/rcls">http://www.ecu.edu/rcls</a></td>
<td>252-328-4645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation Services</td>
<td>Prepares students to work with individuals receiving rehabilitation and related services through public and private organizations. Graduates may work as case managers, placement specialists, case workers, and in other similar roles. Working successfully with individuals who may have physical, mental or substance abuse problems requires good communication skills, a strong interest in working with others and a willingness to participate in the rehabilitation process as a team member.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/rehb">www.ecu.edu/rehb</a></td>
<td>252-328-6001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Health Education</td>
<td>Graduates are trained to be public school teachers. Graduates teach K-12 in the public schools, community college, university, and community health positions. Graduates promote, deliver disease prevention and health promotion content aimed at developing positive health behaviors and evaluate school health programming.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/Hlth">www.ecu.edu/Hlth</a></td>
<td>252-328-4645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work</td>
<td>Is a profession that provides service to individuals, families, and communities in a variety of settings. The majority of social workers work directly with individuals and families, providing counseling services and case management. The School of Social Work offers Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees both of which are accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. The programs creatively engage, challenge, and empower students in an educational process which prepares them for professional practice and leadership roles in the social work profession. The required field/internship placements often lead to permanent employment in clinical and administrative positions in public and private health and mental health settings, schools, state and federal government structures (including armed forces), child and family agencies, substance abuse clinics, and agencies serving aging populations.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/che/socw">www.ecu.edu/che/socw</a></td>
<td>252-328-2521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>The study of social life and social change in a variety of settings. Sociologists explore the structure of groups, organizations, and societies, and people’s interactions in these contexts. The subject matter of Sociology includes, but is not limited to, families, work settings, sports, the law and criminal justice system, medicine, economics, politics, and the dimensions of race, gender, sexuality, social class, and aging.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/soci">www.ecu.edu/soci</a></td>
<td>252-328-4214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech and Hearing Sciences</td>
<td>Emphasizes normal processes of speech, hearing and language and prepares students for graduate studies. Students will take pre-professional courses that are prerequisites for application to most graduate programs in communication sciences and disorders.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecu.edu/cs-dhs/csd">www.ecu.edu/cs-dhs/csd</a></td>
<td>252-328-6001</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
# Health Professions Websites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Association/College/University</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allied Health Professions</td>
<td>Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions</td>
<td><a href="http://www.asahp.org">www.asahp.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allopathic Medicine</td>
<td>Association of American Medical Colleges</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aamc.org">www.aamc.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anesthesiologist Assistant</td>
<td>American Academic of Anesthesiologist Assistants</td>
<td><a href="http://www.anesthetist.org">www.anesthetist.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiology</td>
<td>Audiology Foundation of America</td>
<td><a href="http://www.audfound.org">www.audfound.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chiropractic</td>
<td>Association of Chiropractic Colleges</td>
<td><a href="http://www.chirocolleges.org">www.chirocolleges.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dental Medicine</td>
<td>American Dental Association</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ada.org">www.ada.org</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>American Dental Education Association</td>
<td><a href="http://www.adea.org">www.adea.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Genetic Counseling</td>
<td>Genetics Society of America</td>
<td><a href="http://www.genetics-gsa.org">www.genetics-gsa.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Administration</td>
<td>Association of University Programs in Health Administration</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aupha.org">www.aupha.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Naturopathic Medicine</td>
<td>American Association of Naturopathic Medical Colleges</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aanmc.org">www.aanmc.org</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>American Association of Naturopathic Physicians</td>
<td><a href="http://www.naturopathic.org">www.naturopathic.org</a></td>
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<td>Nursing</td>
<td>National League for Nursing</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nln.org">www.nln.org</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>American Association of Colleges of Nursing</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aacn.nche.edu">www.aacn.nche.edu</a></td>
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<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>The American Society for Nutritional Sciences</td>
<td><a href="http://www.asns.org">www.asns.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupational Therapy</td>
<td>American Occupational Therapy Association</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aota.org">www.aota.org</a></td>
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<td>American Occupational Therapy Foundation</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aotf.org">www.aotf.org</a></td>
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<td>Optometry</td>
<td>American Optometric Association</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aoa.org">www.aoa.org</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry</td>
<td><a href="http://www.opted.org">www.opted.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Field</td>
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<td>Website</td>
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<td>Osteopathic Medicine</td>
<td>American Osteopathic Association</td>
<td><a href="http://www.osteopathic.org">www.osteopathic.org</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aacom.org">www.aacom.org</a></td>
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<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aacp.org">www.aacp.org</a></td>
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<td>Physical Therapy</td>
<td>American Physical Therapy Association</td>
<td><a href="http://www.apta.org">www.apta.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physician</td>
<td>American Medical Association</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ama-assn.org">www.ama-assn.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physician Assistant</td>
<td>American Academy of Physician Assistants Association of Physician Assistant Programs</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aapa.org">www.aapa.org</a> <a href="http://www.paeaonline.org">www.paeaonline.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podiatric Medicine</td>
<td>Careers in Podiatric Medicine Schools of Podiatric Medicine</td>
<td><a href="http://www.apma.org">www.apma.org</a> <a href="http://www.aacpm.org">www.aacpm.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Health</td>
<td>American Public Health Association Association of Schools of Public Health</td>
<td><a href="http://www.apha.org">www.apha.org</a> <a href="http://www.asph.org">www.asph.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation Studies</td>
<td>Council on Rehabilitation Education</td>
<td><a href="http://www.core-rehab.org">www.core-rehab.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterinary Medicine</td>
<td>American Veterinary Medical Association Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges</td>
<td><a href="http://www.avma.org">www.avma.org</a> <a href="http://www.aavmc.org">www.aavmc.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thinking of Applying to Graduate School?  
STEP by STEP Guide to Help You Get Started

**STEP 1: Determine which program interests you.**

You know you are interested in a health profession but aren’t sure if Physician Assistant School or Physical Therapy is the right choice for you. Get help by going to the Career Center- they can help with career exploration through a wide variety of assessments: visit [www.ecu.edu/career](http://www.ecu.edu/career) for more info.

**STEP 2: Become familiar with program requirements. Be sure to consider the requirements for each school that interests you.**

Most programs have similar admission requirements: the test you have to take, the info you must provide, pre-requisite courses, etc. However, some schools have unique requirements like a specific class or minimum volunteer requirement. Go to the national professional association website to find accredited schools and their requirements. For example, if interested in Occupational Therapy, look at American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) and check out the different schools and their websites to help you determine requirements by school.

**STEP 3: Volunteer and shadow in the field.**

Gain volunteer hours through the Volunteer and Service Learning Center at ECU [www.ecu.edu/vslc](http://www.ecu.edu/vslc) or shadowing opportunities through the Pre-Professional Advising Center (PPAC) [www.ecu.edu/ppac](http://www.ecu.edu/ppac). The more experiences the better, especially if your school requires a minimum amount of hours. Look for future leadership opportunities during that time.

**STEP 4: Select your top 3-5 institutions.**

Consider location, admission requirements, competitiveness, philosophy/mission of school, cost of tuition and availability of financial aid, and professional credentialing upon graduation.

**STEP 5: Take practice test.**

Look at prep classes, study groups, online resources, etc. KAPLAN will offer free practice tests for GRE, MCAT, PCAT, and DAT.

**STEP 6: Study, study, and study some more for entrance exam!**

Look for prep classes in your area, create a study group, find a book, use an online tool, or other study method that works for you.
**STEP 7:** Take test.

See section regarding type of test to take for each area of study. Make sure pre-requisite courses are completed prior to exam if applicable (MCAT, DAT, OAT, and PCAT). Students typically take their exam by end of Junior Year.

**STEP 8:** Acquire letters of recommendation (LORs).

Look at school requirements if specific person/committee is required. Students should ask science professors, supervisors, mentor or someone who interacts with them on a regular base to speak on their behalf and attest to their skills and abilities.

**STEP 9:** Write your Personal Statement.

Begin writing why you desire a career in your chosen profession, and the experiences you have that have prepared you and make you a good candidate. Go to ECU University Writing Center www.ecu.edu/writing or Career Center www.ecu.edu/career for help.

**STEP 10:** Apply to schools.

Use a chart or spreadsheet to help you stay organized and track what you have done. Be aware of deadlines and if centralized application process/supplemental application is necessary. See Application Ins and Outs section to help you see which schools use a Centralized Application Service.

**STEP 11:** Interview process.

If asked for interview with school admissions board, prepare by visiting the Career Center www.ecu.edu/career for a mock interview (be sure to schedule an appointment in advance).

**STEP 12:** Wait for decision.

What is your next move if you get in? Where will you live? Do you need financial aid? What is your next move/alternate option if you do not get in? If you are not admitted, ask for a meeting with someone in admissions to find out how you can improve your application in the future. Meet with your pre-professional advisor to devise a plan if you need additional help.

**STEP 13:** Make decision.

Whether you choose a school or your Plan B, start process of preparing to go towards new path.
Timeline for Application/Admission to Medical School

Use this general guide to help prepare for the medical school application and admission process. Be sure to talk to your pre-health advisor to create a schedule that works best for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COLLEGE YEAR 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Talk with an academic advisor about selecting fall semester courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Make an appointment with a pre-health advisor to introduce yourself, discuss the best way to sequence your classes and get acquainted with campus resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Attend pre-health meetings on campus and make sure you are on email lists to get relevant updates and information</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Seek opportunities to volunteer, shadow a doctor, and, if interested, identify research opportunities on your campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop relationships with faculty, advisors, and mentors on your campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Explore the AAMC’s Considering a Medical Career resources (<a href="http://www.aamc.org/students/considering">www.aamc.org/students/considering</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify summer volunteer, paid research and leadership opportunities related to medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Apply to summer enrichment programs (<a href="http://services.aamc.org/summerprograms">http://services.aamc.org/summerprograms</a>) or research programs (<a href="http://www.aamc.org/members/great8to5/great_summerlinx.html">www.aamc.org/members/great8to5/great_summerlinx.html</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Complete first year prematical coursework and other school-specific degree requirements</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUMMER FOLLOWING COLLEGE YEAR 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Work or volunteer for a position in the medical field; consider internships, research and leadership opportunities on campus or in your local community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If you’re eligible, participate in summer enrichment or research programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Take summer courses through a university if desired or necessary</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>COLLEGE YEAR 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Check-in with your pre-health advising office; attend all pre-health meetings, and make sure you’re still on email lists to receive information and updates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pursue meaningful clinical experience, medically-related activities, volunteer work research and/or leadership roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Continue to develop relationships with faculty, advisors, and mentors on your campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Apply for summer research, internship, or enrichment programs such as the Summer Medical and Dental Education Program (<a href="http://www.SMDEP.org">www.SMDEP.org</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consider returning to your previous summer position, or apply for a new summer volunteer, paid or research position related to medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Complete second year prematical coursework and other school-specific degree requirements</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUMMER FOLLOWING COLLEGE YEAR 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Work or volunteer in the medical field; consider internships, research opportunities and leadership positions on campus or in your local community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Participate in summer enrichment, research, or internship programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Take summer courses through a university if desired or necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Investigate:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o The medical school application process (<a href="http://www.aamc.org/students/applying">www.aamc.org/students/applying</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Medical College Admission Test (MCAT®) (<a href="http://www.aamc.org/mcat">www.aamc.org/mcat</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Federal Assistance Program (FAP) (<a href="http://www.aamc.org/fap">www.aamc.org/fap</a>)</td>
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<tr>
<th>COLLEGE YEAR 3</th>
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<tr>
<td>• By this time, you should have a well-established relationship with a pre-health advisor and should be actively participating in pre-health activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify and pursue leadership opportunities within the pre-health organizations on your campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consider which faculty, advisors and mentors on your campus, with whom you’ve developed relationships, you’ll approach to write letters of recommendation for your applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Continue your participation in meaningful clinical experiences, other medically related activities, volunteer work, research and/or leadership roles on campus; if possible, consider taking on a more substantial role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Investigate:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Medical schools in the U.S. and Canada (<a href="https://services.aamc.org/30msar">https://services.aamc.org/30msar</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Minorities in Medicine to get information on groups underrepresented in medicine (<a href="http://www.aamc.org/students/minorities">www.aamc.org/students/minorities</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Meet with your pre-health advisor to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Strategize about your application timeline, whether it be for immediately following graduation or after one or more gap years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Discuss your schedule for completing remaining prematical coursework and other school-specific degree requirements</td>
</tr>
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...continued on next page
### College Year 3 (continued)
- Identify the best time for you to take the MCAT exam; visit the MCAT website to find the best options for test dates and locations ([www.aamc.org/mcat](http://www.aamc.org/mcat)).
- Discuss letters of recommendation and committee premedical evaluation (if available).
- Review your medical education options.
- If you're prepared and ready, register for and take the MCAT exam in spring.
- If you are considering a gap/bridge year, investigate a meaningful paid or volunteer medically-related experience to complete during that time.
- Familiarize yourself with medical school application services:
  - American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS) ([www.aamc.org/medicalSchoolApplying/applyamcas](http://www.aamc.org/medicalSchoolApplying/applyamcas)).
  - Texas Medical and Dental Schools Application Service (TMDSAS) ([www.tmyesystem.edu](http://www.tmyesystem.edu)).
- Research medical school curricula and joint, dual, and combined-degree programs.
- Complete third year premedical coursework and other school-specific degree requirements.

### Summer Following College Year 3
- Continue your involvement with meaningful paid, volunteer, internship, medically related, research and leadership experiences.
- If applying to begin medical school following your senior year:
  - Complete AMCAS application.
  - Work on secondary applications.
  - Ask instructors, mentors, and advisors to write letters of recommendation for you.
- When you're prepared and ready, if you haven't taken the MCAT exam yet, or if you want to take the exam again, sign up to take the MCAT exam in the summer.

### College Year 4
- You should be regularly consulting with your pre-health advisor to:
  - Discuss letters of recommendation and committee premedical evaluation (if available).
  - Review your medical education options, such as a post baccalaureate premedical program ([http://services.aamc.org/postbac/](http://services.aamc.org/postbac)).
- Discuss the status of your applications and the admission process for schools to which you've applied.
- If applying for enrollment immediately following senior year:
  - Complete supplementary application materials for schools to which you've applied.
  - Prepare for your interviews and campus visits at medical schools.
  - Become familiar with Recommendations Concerning Medical School Acceptance Procedures for First-Year Entering Students ([www.aamc.org/medicalSchoolApplying/recommendations/62830/policies_applicants.html](http://www.aamc.org/medicalSchoolApplying/recommendations/62830/policies_applicants.html)).
  - Become familiar with Applicant Responsibilities ([www.aamc.org/medicalSchoolApplying/policies](http://www.aamc.org/medicalSchoolApplying/policies)).
- Continue with your meaningful clinical experience, other medically related activities, volunteer work, research and/or leadership experiences.
- When you're prepared and ready, if you have not previously taken the MCAT exam or want to retake the exam, sign up to take the MCAT exam in the spring.
- If applying for enrollment immediately following senior year:
  - Receive acceptance.
  - Make interim and final decisions about your medical school choice.
  - Notify medical schools that you will not be attending on or before the deadline given.
  - Ensure that all IRS and financial aid forms are completed and submitted as early as possible.
  - Complete degree requirements and graduate.

### Summer Following Graduation
- If enrolling immediately following senior year:
  - Purchase books and equipment and make appropriate living arrangements.
  - Attend orientation programs and matriculate into medical school.
- If applying for enrollment following a gap/bridge year(s):
  - Complete AMCAS application.
  - Work on secondary applications.
  - Ask instructors, mentors, and advisors to write letters of recommendation for you.

### Gap/Bridge Year(s)
- Seek meaningful employment, education and/or experience.
- Pay down credit card and/or undergraduate debt as much as possible.
- Continue to consult regularly with your pre-health advisor throughout the process.
- Complete supplementary application materials for schools to which you've applied.
- Interview and take campus tours at medical schools.
- Become familiar with Recommendations Concerning Medical School Acceptance Procedures for First-Year Entering Students ([www.aamc.org/medicalSchoolApplying/recommendations/62826/policies_applicants.html](http://www.aamc.org/medicalSchoolApplying/recommendations/62826/policies_applicants.html)).
- Become familiar with Applicant Responsibilities ([www.aamc.org/medicalSchoolApplying/policies](http://www.aamc.org/medicalSchoolApplying/policies)).

### Once Accepted into Medical School
- Make interim and final decisions about medical school choice.
- Notify medical schools that you will not be attending on or before the deadline given.
- Ensure that all IRS and financial aid forms are completed and submitted as early as possible.
- Purchase books and equipment and make appropriate living arrangements.
- Attend orientation programs and matriculate into medical school.

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**Timeline for Application/Admission to Medical School**
Health profession programs use standardized test scores to evaluate your readiness for advanced study in your field of interest. Some of these standardized tests, such as the MCAT and DAT, require completion of certain college-level courses before you take the test. Check with your advisor to determine the best time for you to take the standardized test for your program of interest.

- **Dental School** – DAT (Dental Admissions Test): [www.ada.org/dat.aspx](http://www.ada.org/dat.aspx)
  Tests in Natural Sciences, Perceptual Ability, Reading Comprehension, and Quantitative Reasoning

- **Health Care Administration** – GRE Graduate Record Exam: [www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org)
  Tests in Analytical Writing, Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning

- **Medical School** – MCAT (Medical College Admissions Test): [www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/](http://www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/)
  Tests in Behavioral Sciences, Biological Science, Physical Science, and Verbal Reasoning

- **Occupational Therapy** – GRE (Graduate Record Exam): [www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org)
  Tests in Analytical Writing, Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning

- **Optometry** – OAT (Optometry Admissions Test): [www.opted.org](http://www.opted.org)
  Tests in Natural Sciences, Physics, Reading Comprehension, Quantitative Reasoning

- **Pharmacy** – PCAT (Pharmacy College Admissions Test): [pcatweb.info](http://pcatweb.info) Tests in Verbal Reasoning, Natural Sciences, Reading Comprehension, Quantitative Reasoning, Analytical Writing

- **Physical Therapy** – GRE (Graduate Record Exam): [www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org)
  Tests in Analytical Writing, Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning

- **Physician Assistant Studies** – GRE (Graduate Record Exam): [www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org)
  Tests in Analytical Writing, Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning

- **Public Health** – GRE (Graduate Record Exam): [www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org)
  Tests in Analytical Writing, Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning

- **Rehabilitation Studies** – GRE Graduate Record Exam: [www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org) Tests in Analytical Writing, Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning or MAT (Millers Analogies Test):
  [www.milleranalogies.com](http://www.milleranalogies.com)

- **Speech Therapy** – GRE (Graduate Record Exam): [www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org)
  Tests in Analytical Writing, Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning

- **Veterinary Medicine** – GRE Graduate Record Exam: [www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org) Tests in Analytical Writing, Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning. Some schools will accept the MCAT in lieu of the GRE.
Application Process: Ins and Outs

Tips to Start:

- Be aware of applications deadlines and requirements.
- Research how to apply (application portal versus school specific application)
- Start your applications early! Give yourself plenty of time to complete process.
- Make a list of all of your work, volunteer, and shadowing experience, as well as any awards/honors you received.
- Write your personal statement.
- Submit your application as early as you can. This maximizes your chances of acceptance.
- Request transcripts from all the schools you have attended
- Plan for extra time for materials to be mailed

Centralized Application Services:

A number of graduate and professional schools now have a centralized application services that is sponsored through the national association. Those websites are listed below (note: not all universities use the centralized application service. Be sure to verify how you need to apply for EACH school):

- **Dental School**: Associated American Dental Schools Application Services
  https://portal.aadasasweb.org/

- **Medical School (Allopathic)**: American Medical College Application Service
  http://www.aamc.org/students/applying/amcas/

- **Medical School (Osteopathic)**: American Association of College of Osteopathic Medicine
  https://aacomas.liaisoncas.com

- **Occupational Therapy**: Centralized Application Service for Occupational Therapy
  https://portal.otcas.org/

- **Optometry School**: Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry
  www.optomcas.org

- **Physician Assistant**: Central Application Service for Physician Assistants
  https://portal.caspaonline.org/

- **Pharmacy School**: Pharmacy College Application Service
  www.pharmcas.org

- **Physical Therapy**: Physical Therapy Centralized Application Service
  http://www.ptcas.org/home.aspx

- **Veterinary Medicine**: Veterinary Medical College Application Service
  https://portal.vmcas.org/
Letters of Recommendation

Letters of recommendation (LORs) (also referred to as letters of evaluation) are an important piece of the admission process into health professions school. Schools have various requirements regarding these letters, but they all require them in one form or another. Many medical and dental schools require, or strongly recommend, a Health Professions Committee letter. This is something that is available at ECU through the Center for Pre-Professional Advising (see page 35 for details). Other letters of recommendation/evaluation, typically should come from faculty (usually science or math), a health care professional who has been a mentor and/or provided you with shadowing and/or research experiences, an employer, or any other individual with whom you have worked with closely who can attest to your character, work ethic, and ability to succeed in your intended profession. It is important that you review the websites of the schools in which you are interested to learn of their specific requirements.

Health professions schools want references from individuals who are in a position to judge your ability to be successful in medical school, as well as be an effective health care provider. While these individuals are largely in the academic arena, those outside of the classroom may also be helpful (if allowed). The supervisor under whom you have performed significant volunteer work would be an excellent person to attest to your personality traits, communication and organizational skills, time management, and work ethic – all of which are important qualities for a health care practitioner. Letters should always be from those who know you well and will speak enthusiastically about your abilities, dedication, and unique traits. Seek out recommendations from those whose opinions will be highly valued (professors, department chairs, physicians, not friends, relatives, or teaching assistants). Some students will seek recommendations from politicians. This is only appropriate if you worked/volunteer for him/her.

**It is important that you establish good relationships with your professors as a freshman and continue doing so through your undergraduate education,** as these will be key individuals to write letters of recommendation for you. It is equally important that you maintain these relationships after your letters are submitted – you may need an updated letter in the future. Be sure to keep your professors informed of what you are doing, and how to reach them. You can submit letters of recommendation to ECU’s Center for Pre-Professional Advising and they will hold them for you until you are ready to apply.

- Inform your faculty of your intentions to apply to a health professions school.
- Ask them if they have any advice on how you can make yourself a more successful applicant.
- Attend every class, if possible, and be sure to be actively engaged in class discussions.
- Visit your professors’ offices during office hours if you need further clarification on anything discussed in class.
- Ask if he/she offers undergraduate research opportunities or undergraduate teaching assistantships.
Requirements for each institution

- Be aware of deadlines. Ask your reference well in advance for a letter.
- Be aware of the required format.
  - Is a letter, evaluation form, or both required?
  - Does the letter need to be mailed or submitted online?
  - If a special form needs to accompany the letter, be sure to provide your recommender with it.
  - Are letters submitted through a letter collection service or directly to the school?
- Who should write the letters? Faculty, employers, mentors, etc?
- Who is best suited to write this particular recommendation?
- Faculty can speak to your academic abilities – writing, speaking, technical laboratory skills, meeting deadlines, and critical thinking.
- Employers can speak to your conscientiousness, attention to detail, work ethic, ability to work with people, communication skills, and ability to work independently or as a team member.
- Mentors may be able to address all of the above qualities as well as moral character and personality traits.

Who to ask? Begin keeping a list.

List 4-5 people you could ask to serve as a reference, with 3 being academic, 1 health care professional, and one other (mentor, supervisor, etc).

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.
How to ask?

- Make an appointment to ask in person.
- Ask well in advance of when you need the letter (at least a month in advance).
- Be sure to have a conversation about why you are pursuing this field and how you think you are prepared with your education and experiences to succeed.
- Don’t be shy about asking questions.
  - “Do you feel comfortable recommending me for this?”
  - “What do you think are my strong points?”
  - “Are there areas that I could improve upon and what steps should I take to do so?”
- Ask the individual how they prefer their name, title, full address, phone number, and e-mail address to appear on your reference list.
- Provide a current copy of your résumé and personal statement (if complete).
- Provide your recommender with any necessary forms that must accompany the letter, and/or a stamped envelope if it is to be mailed.
- Don’t be upset if he/she says “no.”

Follow-up

- Send a thank-you note.
- Let the recommender know if you are accepted.
- If you may need an updated recommendation later, be sure to notify him/her.

Other tips

- Keep your current contact information for your recommenders.
- Provide your current contact information to your recommenders and schools to which you are applying.
- Have a clear idea of your goals. Effectively communicate them with your recommenders.
- Be professional and kind to everyone. You never know who may provide insight about their encounter with you to someone of importance.
- Be sure to follow all requirements and deadlines.
Health Professions Committee

The ECU Health Professions Committee is comprised of faculty from the sciences, mathematics, public health, the Career Center, the Honors College, and Pre-Professional Advising. The purpose of the committee is to review application materials, and interview prospective applicants to dental and medical school to provide them with a letter of recommendation from the institution. Many dental and medical schools require this process, while others strongly recommend it.

The minimum academic requirements for participation in the ECU Health Professions Committee are:

- Minimum overall 3.0 GPA, and minimum 3.0 science GPA
- Minimum score of 22 on the MCAT (on MCAT prior to 2015)
- Minimum score of 16 on the DAT (Academic Average and Total Science)

If a student is told not to apply to a professional school by his/her advisor, he/she will not be granted an interview with the committee.

All documents required for participation must be submitted to the Pre-Professional Advising Center by October 15th. This is to ensure that letters will be completed before medical school deadlines.

In order to participate in the Health Professions Committee interview, students must submit the following documents to the Pre-Professional Advising Center:

- Applicant Profile Form
- Statement of Understanding
- 3 Faculty Evaluations and letters of recommendation (two of which must come from science faculty with whom the student had a class or did research. Letters from “lab only” instructors will not be accepted).
- Copy of the professional school application
- Standardized Test Scores (MCAT, DAT, PCAT, etc)

The above forms can be found on the Pre-Professional Advising website (http://www.ecu.edu/ppac) under “Committee Letter.”

Interviews are conducted in the summer (May/June/July) and fall (September/October). Once all documents are received for an applicant, he/she will be contacted to schedule an interview. Interviews last approximately 30 minutes. All students are asked the same questions to maintain a level of equality. After the interview, the committee will collectively write the letter and it will be uploaded or mailed appropriately. The student will then be contacted by a committee interview for a follow-up meeting.
Shadowing and Volunteering

Shadowing and volunteering are two critical components of preparation for application to a health professions program. Admissions committees want to know that you have a sincere interest in medicine, a passion for helping others, and a basic understanding of your intended profession. You can demonstrate these qualities through your shadowing and volunteer experiences.

Shadowing and volunteering are very different activities, though at times there is some cross-over between the two. Shadowing is the observation of someone else in a professional setting—in this case, observation of a physician, dentist, physical therapist, etc. Shadowing requires permission from the health care provider and the patient for you to be present. Shadowing provides you the opportunity to see what a professional does on a day-to-day basis and gain some basic knowledge of the field. Shadowing is a time for you to learn and determine whether or not the field will be a good fit for you.

Volunteering is to help or provide a service to others for no charge. Volunteerism is important in preparation for a health profession because most admissions committees are looking for applicants who have a heart for service. Medicine is not as glamorous as it is portrayed in the media. Medicine can be messy, tedious, and frustrating. It is important that applicants demonstrate that they are not afraid to get dirty, that they possess patience, compassion, an eagerness to serve, flexibility, and a willingness to step out of their comfort zone. Applicants with these qualities are likely to be personable and have the potential for good bedside manner and to be caring physicians. You can demonstrate that you possess these qualities through various volunteer experiences. Your volunteering does not have to be health-related, but should show your compassion for others and willingness to make a difference. There are times when volunteering that you may also be shadowing. For example, if you are volunteering at the Missions of Mercy Dental Clinic, you may have the opportunity to observe a dentist practicing on a patient while you are assisting. This experience should still be recorded as volunteer work because that is your primary purpose for that experience.

When preparing for application to a health professions program, it is important for you to know if there are minimum requirements for shadowing and/or volunteering. ECU’s Physical Therapy program requires a minimum of 100 hours of shadowing and/or volunteering under at least two different licensed physical therapists. Our Physician Assistant program requires 1000 hours of clinical experience. It is recommended that 250 hours of that experience be shadowing. NC States College of Veterinary Medicine requires a minimum of 400 hours of volunteer experience with animals. It is essential for you to research programs that interest you so that you are aware of what is required. Some programs, like the Brody School of Medicine and the ECU School of Dental Medicine, strongly encourage shadowing and volunteering, but do not have a minimum requirement. Shadowing and volunteering are things you should want to do because of your passion for the field. They should not be something you in which you participate just to check them off a list.
Pre-Professional Advising sponsors a Primary Care Physician Shadowing program, operating three sessions each semester, allowing 60 students to shadowing each year. Eligible students must have sophomore class standing, have completed an introductory course and lab in Biology (Biol 1100/1101, 1150/1151, or 1200/1201), have a minimum 3.3 grade point average at ECU, and be a full-time student at ECU. Additionally, students must complete all required paperwork and immunizations to participate, and have one afternoon from 1 – 5pm free from any other obligations. Visit the PPAC website for more information and the application: http://www.ecu.edu/ppac under “Shadowing.”

The ECU College of Nursing sponsors a shadowing program for freshmen and sophomores who are interested in the field but have not had any exposure to it. Eligible applicants must be full-time, intended Nursing majors at ECU, who have completed at least one semester at ECU and have a minimum 2.75 grade point average. Additionally, students must be able to pass a criminal background check, drug screening, and be up-to-date on all immunizations. For more information and an application, contact your Nursing advisor.

The Volunteer and Service Learning Center at ECU is an excellent resource for finding volunteer opportunities on campus and in the community. A complete list of opportunities is posted on their website: http://www.ecu.edu/vslc.

When applying to a health professions program, you may be asked to report your shadowing and volunteering experience. It is recommended that you keep a log of your experiences as you complete them. You can create your own document to record your hours and have the professional you shadowed, or supervisor of your volunteer experience, sign it. Additionally, it is a good idea to keep a journal of your experiences. This will help you remember what you did or observed and how it made you feel. When the time comes to write your personal statement and/or interview for a health professions program, you may be able to draw from these experiences to illustrate your desire to work in that field.
Personal Statement

Your personal statement is one of the most important pieces of your application for admission into a health professions school. Admissions officers want to know more about you than just your academic record. They want to know you are a more personal level – what makes you “you” and what qualities do you posses that make you a good candidate for their program. That is why personal statements, essays, and letters of recommendation are integral components of your application. This is your opportunity to describe your passion for your chosen field, discuss the experiences you have had that have prepared you, and make connections between your strengths and qualities schools are looking for in successful applicants. This is the time to tell your story and distinguish yourself from the other applicants.

The maximum length of personal statements varies. AMCAS, the application portal for United States medical schools, will accept personal statements in length of up to 5,300 characters (approximately one page). AADSAS, the application portal for United States dental schools, limits personal statements to a maximum of 4,500 characters. It is important to be aware of these limitations when planning your personal statement. Some application formats will allow you to upload your personal statement as a PDF or a word document, others will require you to type (or copy and paste) into a text box.

Your personal statement carries much weight in your admission decision – some schools report that the personal statement and interview make up as much as 60% of your admissions score. It is imperative that you take the time to prepare a well-written and compelling statement to support your application.

Tips for writing your personal statement

- Prepare your personal statement early (before the application portal opens).
- Tell a story. Why do you want to be a doctor, dentist, PT, etc? Did you have one life defining moment that made you come to that decision? Or, did you have several less significant experiences that gradually led you to that choice? Imagine your life is a novel, or a movie. Select an event, theme, or memory and begin writing there. Your personal statement needs to grab the reader’s attention and keep them interested enough to finish it. Make sure you resolve the story at the end.
- Intertwine your experiences into the story about yourself to demonstrate why you are a strong candidate. Don’t just list your activities (you already did that in your application), but make relationships between the things you have done and how those activities and/or experiences have impacted your life and goals and shaped you into the person you are.
- Show, don’t tell. Avoid declarative statements (“I have always wanted to be a doctor). Instead, illustrate your point by referring to your personal experiences. (“My interest in medicine began when I was six years old and received the ‘Operation’ board game for my birthday).
- Focus on one or two of your most meaningful experiences and describe them in detail, rather than providing your whole life story.
• Use action verbs and avoid passive voice. Passive voice employs a form of the word “to be,” such as was or were. Example, “The patient was operated on by the surgeon.” Instead, use this, “The surgeon operated on the patient.”
• Vary your sentence length and use effective transitions. Longer sentences can be used when building a specific image, while shorter sentences can draw attention to important ideas.
• Avoid clichés. “I want to be a doctor because I like to help people.” That is a generic statement. Help the reader to really get to know you and how compassionate you are. Instead, describe a specific volunteer experience that demonstrates your passion for helping others.
• Your personal statement should clearly establish your qualifications and motivation for your intended career.
• Focus on the positive. Your personal statement is your opportunity to sell yourself to the admissions committee. Focus on your strengths. Do not draw attention to the negative (unless in doing so you illustrate how you overcame an obstacle). Do not make excuses for poor grades, or dwell on discrepancies in your academic record or test scores. If you are able to submit an addendum to your application, or are provided a field on the application for other comments, use that to discuss those issues.
• Only include topics you feel comfortable discussing in an interview.
• Follow a formula for writing an essay to stay focused. Have strong opening paragraph to set the scene. Use a strong closing paragraph as your conclusion. Use 3-4 paragraphs in the middle to highlight your unique qualities, abilities, and experiences.
• Allow your personality to shine through.
• Be concise but keep it interesting.
• Your application highlights your academic record. Your personal statement can emphasize your academic record as well, but it should also stress your soft skills such as motivation, empathy, maturity, compassion, communication, and team work.
• Have multiple people (with strong writing skills) proofread your personal statement. Three readers is suggested: one for content, one for organization, and one for grammar and writing mechanics – in that order (tackle the big stuff first and then fine tune).

The University Writing Center and Career Center at ECU are excellent resources for assistance with personal statements.
Preparing for the Medical / Dental School Interview

Purpose of the interview

The purpose of the medical school interview is to assist admissions officers in assessing qualities and factors beyond an applicant’s academic performance. Admissions officers use the interview as a time to examine whether candidates possess interpersonal and effective communication skills that are necessary to pursue a challenging health care profession. Additionally, the interview is utilized to determine whether or not students are prepared for the psychological, ethical, and emotional demands of the profession. Medical and dental schools also use the interview as an opportunity to examine whether prospective students are truly interested in the field, and their particular school.

As an applicant, it is up to you to convey your potential as a student and your willingness to receive appropriate guidance, while concurrently exhibiting your potential for moving forth in the field as a health care professional. Prospective students should be mindful that entry into medical or dental school is extremely competitive and requires a lot of time and preparation. Therefore, you must plan and prepare properly for this critical element of the admissions process, regardless of how strong your credentials are.

What are admission officers looking for and how will they make their decision?

- Successful completion of required prerequisite courses
- Grade point average (both overall and math and science)
- Performance on required standardized test (MCAT or DAT)
- Letters of Recommendation (LOR) from the Health Professions Committee, faculty members with whom you have taken classes or performed research, health care providers who have provided you with mentoring and/or shadowing opportunities, and community leaders or other individuals who have employed you or supervised your volunteer experiences.
- Personal statement
- Extracurricular activities, especially those reflecting health-related service, volunteer work, and other evidence of your passion for the field and dedication to helping others.
- Interviews with admissions committees. Typically, interviews with medical and dental schools occur towards the end of the application process. As schools narrow their candidate selection they will invite the most promising applications to interview.
Interview format

Interviews for medical and dental schools are by invitation only, and are performed in a variety of formats. Most interviews will be conducted between September and April. Some institutions perform their interviews on their campus, while others hold regional interviews in a metropolitan area. Typically, students will pay for all of their travel expenses related to the interview.

Interview formats vary from school to school. Some schools conduct separate, one-on-one interviews. Some conduct individual interviews with a panel of faculty members and student affairs representatives, while some schools will interview a group of candidates together. In some instances, students may have a variety of interview experiences in the same day (i.e., a one-on-one interview, a group interview, a group task, and lunch with faculty and/or current students). Additionally, some interviewers may be “blind”, meaning that they are conducting the interview without having seen the applicant’s application package. This is done in an effort to eliminate any preconceived ideas regarding an applicant.

Multiple Mini Interviews (MMI) are gaining popularity as a format with some institutions. MMI is an interview format that uses many short independent assessments, typically in a timed circuit, to evaluate and score each candidate’s soft skills. Students rotate through multiple stations within a given timeframe (i.e., one medical school has students participate in a 2 hour circuit with 10 stations). Students will spend just a few minutes in each room (station) with 1-3 interviewers. Interviewers have just a few minutes to evaluate students on their communication, empathy, ethical decision making, and critical thinking skills.

Standardized Patient Encounters (SP) are also being utilized in admission interviews at some institutions. This experience provides a venue to evaluate student’s potential “bedside manner.” Actors are given an illness/scenario to act out and/or describe to the interviewee. The sessions are captured through audio/video equipment to be evaluated later. Interviewees are judged not on their diagnosis, but on their humanistic characteristics, communication, and critical thinking skills.

Interview preparation

Prior to the interview, clarify with admission officials whether the interview is a final step in the selection process, or the beginning process of screening prospective students. This will help you preparing accordingly.

- Prior to the interview, make a list of strengths, accomplishments, shadowing and volunteer experiences, and awards received. Be sure to review your application materials such as your personal statement, academic transcript, and extracurricular involvement. Some interviewers will be participating “blindly” and will not have seen your application package. You want to reiterate all qualities and experiences that make you a successful applicant, whether you already discussed them in your application or not.
• Know your audience. If possible, find out who will be interviewing you (faculty, administrators, students, health care professionals, etc). You can use this information to better prepare yourself.
• Research the school’s philosophy, curriculum, program, and faculty prior to the interview. Making references to this information during your interview illustrates your genuine interest in the school.
• Develop a clear picture and responses to how you see yourself fitting into their program. Discuss how your philosophy of medicine or dentistry matches with the institution’s (if true). Describe how you will be an asset to their institution.
• Find a list of typical interview questions.
• Take time to develop responses to the questions. Practice giving your answers. However, it is important that you do not appear to be “rehearsed”.
• Practice answering questions with a career coach from the ECU Career Center, a family member, or friend. The Career Center provides students with the opportunity to do mock interviews and receive feedback. Be sure to make an appointment with the Career Center well in advance of your school interview (we recommend beginning mock interviews in your junior year).

Selling yourself in the interview

• Visualize yourself being successful in the interview. A positive mindset goes a long way.
• Ideally, create a discussion environment rather than a cross-examination environment. Be comfortable and conversational, yet professional. Questions will typically be open-ended. Provide thorough answers without rambling.
• Have a game plan. What do you want the interviewer to know about you when you leave? How do you want to be remembered?
• Arrive 10-15 minutes early. This provides you with time to deal with any last minute changes and compose yourself. If you are able, you may want to find the interview location a day before your interview so you know where you are going and what types of parking/traffic situations to expect.
• Dress conservatively in professional business attire. Appropriate attire for women may include professional dresses (not something you would wear to a cocktail party) or suits with a jacket (pants or skirt are fine. If you wear a skirt, wear hose). Appropriate attire for men may include suits with a jacket and tie. Excessive jewelry, make-up, and piercings should be avoided. Tattoos should be covered.
• Maintain a professional decorum at all times in and out of the interview room. Treat everyone you encounter with the utmost respect, this includes other applications, receptionists, custodial workers, and hospitality servers.
• Introduce yourself to the interviewers and shake hands with them.
• Maintain proper non-verbal communication during the interview. Be sure to relax but avoid slouching or fidgeting. Maintain appropriate and good eye contact with the interviewer. If there is more than one interviewer, maintain an unbiased eye contact and concentrate on the person who asked the question.
• Listen to the complete question before responding. Do not interrupt the interviewer.
• Try avoiding word fillers such as “uh”, “like,” and “you know” in your answers. It is better to take a moment to collect your thoughts than to sound uneducated.
• Monitor the volume of your voice. Make sure you speak at an appropriate volume to be heard by your interviewers. Change voice inflection to indicate emphasis. Do not speak in a monotone.
• Monitor the pace of your answers to questions. More than likely, you will be a bit nervous and will tend to talk more quickly than usual. Keep an even, steady pace. The utilization of appropriate pauses between the question and your answer allows you to slow down and formulate your response ahead of time.

Sample interview questions

Interview questions are formulated to examine the prospective student’s knowledge and interest of the profession, intellectual and analytical skills, as well as capability of expressing and defending thoughts on strong issues. You are encouraged to do your own research to find additional sample questions.

General open-ended questions

• Tell me about yourself. (Not as innocent as it may seem. Prepare a 30-second “power greeting” that stresses what you want them to know about you. Be prepared without it sounded “canned”. This is a time to provide a “highlight reel” of your life and experience, not your entire life story.
• What are your strengths? What is a weakness or area that needs improvement? (turn weaknesses into strengths, be sure to end on a positive note).
• Have you always done the best work of which you were capable?
• What will be the most difficult aspect of medical education for you?
• Tell me about a major accomplishment and how you achieved it.
• Tell me about a time you assumed a leadership role.
• What characteristics does a good leader need to possess?
• Tell me about a situation in which you showed initiative.
• Tell me about a time you failed. What did it teach you about yourself?
• Tell me about a group in which you were involved. How did you contribute to help this group achieve a goal?
• How will you handle the demands of medical / dental school?
• What life experiences have you had that have made you a better person?
• Who was the best teacher you have had and why?
• What is the difference between sympathy and empathy?
• How well do you feel you function under pressure? Give a personal example.
• Tell me about something creative you have done.
• What about you would make your patients want to see you and no one else?
• What do you do to relax?

**Interest and Knowledge of Profession**

• Why are you interested in this field?
• How do you see yourself contributing to this field?
• What volunteer experiences, internships, and research projects have helped you solidify your desire to enter this field?
• In what kind of setting would you like to work?
• What percentage of your time do you anticipate devoting to basic research and clinical medicine?
• What qualities do you look for in a doctor?
• Tell me about the patient from whom you learned the most.
• What do you think is the hardest thing about being a doctor / dentist?
• What can you contribute to this field?
• Did you have the opportunity to do undergraduate research? If so, describe your experience.
• How do you feel your undergraduate education has prepared you for a career in medicine / dentistry?
• What are your thoughts on the relationship between physicians / dentists and medical / dental staff?
• What concerns you about becoming a doctor / dentist?
• If you do not get accepted into medical / dental school, what will you do?

**Professional Ethics**

There are a variety of important and controversial issues that may be brought up in the interview. These ethical questions will typically fall into the following categories: determinations of death, the right to die, care of the elderly, patient privacy, children and parental rights, care of the mentally handicapped, rights of the mentally handicapped, rights of the physically handicapped, rights of the terminally ill, rights of defective newborns, abortion rights, religious rights to reject certain medical procedures, experimental treatments, and more. You should consider your positions and stance on these issues prior to interviewing.

• Describe an ethical dilemma you have faced.
• Describe a time when you stood up for yourself, someone else, or an issue. What were the consequences?
• What ethical standards will you promote in your work as a physician / dentist?
• You observe a fellow medical student cheating on an exam. What would you do?
Knowledge of current medical policies and issues

- List three issues that confront medicine today. Of the three, which is the most important and why?
- What is the difference between an HMO and a PPO? Which system do you prefer and why?
- What are your feelings regarding the current Healthcare Reform? How do you feel it will affect you as a physician/dentist?
- How do you feel about the HIPPA regulations?
- What role do you think physicians/dentists should play in the implementation of health care development?
- What strategies would you implement to improve access to health care in this country?
- What are your views on the latest changes to the Medicare program?
- Which country do you think has the best health care system and why?
- Do physicians have the right to deny care to patients on Medicaid?
- What are your views on alternative medicine?
- What do you think should be done to control health care costs in this country?
- Where do you see healthcare in 20 years?

Questions applicants might ask an interviewer

The interview is also an opportunity for prospective students to convey their interest and inquire regarding the institution. Be sure to ask questions when appropriate because it illustrates your keen interest in the school and profession.

- What characteristics distinguish this program from others?
- Outside of academic record, what criteria are used for choosing candidates?
- What is the selection timeline?
- Where are recent alumni employed?
- What is the employment rate of recent alumni who passed the boards on the first attempt?
- What types of financial assistance is offered? Are there scholarships or fellowships available?
- How do I apply?
- Do most students publish an article/conduct research prior to graduation?
- I’ve read articles written by ________ and __________. To what extent are students involved in assisting these faculty members with related research projects?
Interview Follow-up

- Prepare a thank-you card/letter or e-mail after the interview.
- Be prepared to follow-up with the interviewer using various methods – letter, e-mail, phone call.
- Use the interview as an experience and preparation for future interviews.
- Evaluate your responses to questions and make adjustments for other interviews.
- If you are on a “hold” list, you may be able to send additional information to strengthen your application and admission. For instance, if you have recent awards or significant experience that did not appear on your original application you can develop a brief (less than one page) addendum and send it directly to the school. However, be sure to use discretion. Do not bombard the school with extraneous information such as additional letters of recommendation.
- Relax and remain optimistic

Monitoring your application Status

Typically, prospective students are notified of their application status within two to four weeks of the interview. An increasingly popular trend (especially on the east coast) is the practice of waiting until February or March on a specified date to notify students on their application status.
Pre-Health Assessment Worksheet
(Bring to each appointment with your advisor)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dental</th>
<th>Medical</th>
<th>Optometry</th>
<th>OT</th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>Pharmacy</th>
<th>PT</th>
<th>Vet</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
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</table>

(Please print)

Name: ___________________________________________ Banner ID: _______________________
ECU E-mail: ___________________________________________________ Hours completed: ________
Major(s): ___________________________________________ Minor(s): _______________________

Academic History

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
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<td>Biol 2110/2111</td>
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<td>Other Anth/Psyc/Soci</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Animal Nutrition</td>
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<td>Biol 4880</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chem 2770</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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### GPA Information

(Reminder: the average cumulative and BCPM-gpas for successful applicants is 3.5)

(BCPM = Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Math).

Formula: Class hours $\times$ Quality Points per Grade ($A=4$, $B=3$, $C=2$, $D=1$, etc) = total quality points

Total quality points divided by total BCPM hours = BCPM gpa

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
<th>GPA</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>BCPM Hours</th>
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Did you use grade replacements?

Did you use a raise grade?

Do you plan to retake any prerequisites?

When do you plan to take them?

Do you get tutoring from the PTC or elsewhere?

### Workshops Attended (record date of attendance)

- Health Professions Orientation___________
- Prescription for Success____________________
- So You Want to be a ....______________ (fill in doctor, dentist, pa, etc)
- Health Professions Committee Process___________
- Navigation the Medical & Dental School Application Process___________
- Applying to Graduate School________________________
- Preparing your Personal Statement____________________
- Preparing for your interview____________________
- Health Professions Expo____________________
- Graduate & Professional School Fair____________________
- Other___________________________________________________________________
**Participation in selective programs** (record dates of participation)
Primary Care Physician Shadowing Program____________________
Heart Institute Research Program______________________________
Pirate Tutor_________________________________________________
Summer Program (where and when)______________________________
ECU Honors College__________________________________________
Other_________________________________________________________________

**Have you received any scholarships and/or awards?** (list name and date awarded)

---

**Standardized Tests**

SAT (verbal)_______ (math)__________  ACT (verbal)_______ (math)__________

What standardized test is required for admission to the program you are pursuing?_________________

Have you taken (circle one):  MCAT  DAT  OAT  PCAT  GRE  When?_________________

If yes, list your scores:______________________________________________________________

If not, when do you plan to take the test?_______________________________________________

Have you taken a practice test? ______ Practice test scores________________________________

Have you taken, or do you plan to take, a prep class?__________  When?_________________
Non-Academic Activities

1. List Medical/Dental/Animal related experiences (not research) that were paid or unpaid.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>With whom/where</th>
<th>Doing what</th>
<th>Estimated hours</th>
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Total Estimated Hours______

2. List Community Service (non-health related) experiences.

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<th>Date</th>
<th>With whom/where</th>
<th>Doing what</th>
<th>Estimated hours</th>
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Total Estimated Hours______

3. List Research experiences.

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<th>Date</th>
<th>With whom/where</th>
<th>Doing what</th>
<th>Estimated hours</th>
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Total Estimated Hours______
4. List **Shadowing** experiences.

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<th>Doing what</th>
<th>Estimated hours</th>
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Total Estimated Hours_______

5. List **Leadership** experiences.

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<th>With whom/where</th>
<th>Doing what</th>
<th>Estimated hours</th>
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Total Estimated Hours_______

6. List memberships in any **Student Organizations**.

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<th>Date</th>
<th>With whom/where</th>
<th>Doing what</th>
<th>Estimated hours</th>
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Total Estimated Hours_______
7. List any other **Extracurricular** activities.

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<th>Date</th>
<th>With whom/where</th>
<th>Doing what</th>
<th>Estimated hours</th>
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Total Estimated Hours_____

8. List all Employment.

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<th>Doing what</th>
<th>Estimated hours</th>
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Total Estimated Hours_____