



Optometry Pre-Professional Program

Overview of the Health Pre-Professional Program

The Health Pre-Professional Advising Committee (HPAC) would like to emphasize to prospective students our attempts to give Carson-Newman students a competitive edge in the admissions process to professional school. Over the past several years, the number of applicants to health professional schools has dramatically increased, thus making it more difficult to gain admission. Historically, C-N students have been relatively successful in gaining admission to professional schools. However, raw numbers and statistics related to acceptances can be deceiving and subject to misinterpretation. In most cases, success depends upon the determination of individual students, their dedication to their future career, and their willingness to utilize resources at their disposal. Outlined below are our efforts related to advising, experience in the career area, the interview process, the letter of recommendation, and practice on national exams.

Advising: The HPAC is composed of a director, a secretary, and 10 faculty advisors. All HP students are advised by a specified HP faculty advisor who is knowledgeable with their individual career area.

Planning: All HP students must take a one-hour course, ID 208, before their HP interview. This course introduces new HP students to the C-N HP process and focuses on various aspects of career planning such as the interview, the GPA, the personal statement, and the curriculum.

Career Experience: The HPAC feels that before a student can make an educated decision on a career in the health professions, the student should have significant direct exposure to the specific area of interest. All HP students must have career experience before coming for the HP interview. This exposure can be gained by obtaining a job, by volunteering, or by taking our Hospital Externship Course (CHEM 308).

Interview: All HP students come before the HPAC for an interview prior to application to professional school. The interview is videotaped and critiqued by a member of our committee. We try to provide a realistic practice session and polish for C-N students before the professional school interview. We attempt to have at least one practicing health professional at each of the interview sessions. A workshop on the short interview is conducted each fall for our HP students.

Letter of Recommendation: A Committee composite letter of recommendation is constructed for each HP student following the interview process. It is sent out at the request of the HP student to the schools to which they are applying.

Graduate Programs in Optometry

A list of graduate programs in optometry throughout the United States can be found at <http://www.gradschools.com/programs/optometry.html>. Because the admission requirements vary from school to school, students are advised to become familiar with the prerequisites of schools to which they may apply as soon as possible. Although the requirements vary for each school, the following science, math, and psychology courses are often required:

<u>Requirement</u>	<u>Semesters Required</u>	<u>Carson-Newman Equivalent</u>
Calculus	1	MATH 111
Statistics	1	MATH 201
Psychology	1	PSY 101 or 102
General Biology	2	BIOL 105 and 106
Microbiology	1	BIOL 316
General Chemistry	2	CHEM 103 and 104
Organic Chemistry	1	CHEM 301
Biochemistry	1	CHEM 303/313
General Physics	2	PHYS 103 and 104

In addition to the required coursework, all schools and colleges of optometry require applicants to take the Optometry Admission Test (OAT). Additional information regarding this exam can be found at http://www.opted.org/info_oat.cfm.

Additional Information

Information regarding medical professions or optometry can be found at the web sites listed below.

American Academy of Optometry

<http://www.aaopt.org/>

Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry

<http://www.opted.org/>

Association of American Medical Colleges

<http://www.aamc.org/>

For further information regarding the Health Pre-Professional Program at Carson-Newman College, please contact the director of the program, Dr. Steve Karr, by phone or e-mail at 865-471-3252 or stkarr@cn.edu.