

PHYSICIAN (M.D.)

ACADEMIC AND CAREER INFORMATION

NATURE OF THE WORK, EARNINGS, AND OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK

Physicians are dedicated to serving the health care needs of society through diagnosing and treating illness, injury, and disease. A third of physicians work in primary care providing comprehensive health care to patients and families. When necessary, primary care physicians refer patients to medical specialists and surgeons for further expertise. Most physicians work in small offices, clinics or in group medical practices where they see patients. Physicians often work long, irregular hours, and rotate shifts for emergency calls, as well as travel between the office and hospital to care for patients.

Earnings and Job Outlook: The median annual income of physicians in 2018 was \$217,000 for general practice and \$329,000 for specialists. Job growth is expected to grow at 7 percent between 2018-2028 (Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2018).

TRAINING

There are 145 accredited **allopathic** medical schools in the U.S that award the degree of Medical Doctor (M.D.). Medical school usually requires 4 academic years. Studies begin with 2 years of classroom instruction in the basic sciences. The following two years involve a series of clinical rotations throughout inpatient and outpatient settings where students work with patients under the supervision of attending physicians and medical residents. During the clinical years, students also have an opportunity to take elective rotations. During the last year of medical school, students make decisions about medical specialty and apply for internship or residency programs in their desired area of expertise (The Official Guide to Medical School Admissions, 2014).

Following medical school, graduates begin their medical residency, which is paid, on-the-job training in a specialty. The training required varies from 3 to 8 years or more depending on the specialty selected. Students may do a preliminary or transitional year prior to beginning their residency, with some advanced specialties requiring preliminary years before beginning the official residency. Some specialties also offer advanced training in a subspecialty usually requiring an additional 1 to 3 years of fellowship following residency. [Find more on the length of residencies by specialty.](#)

ACADEMIC PREPARATION

No particular major is required or preferred for medical school admissions. Thus students are advised to select a major they find interesting and in which they can excel. Whichever major a student declares, their course of study must incorporate the required pre-medical requirements. Regardless of the major choice, medical schools prefer that students have a well-rounded liberal arts education.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

CSULB Courses which fulfill admission requirements for the [UC Riverside School of Medicine](#):

Students maintain responsibility for verifying course selection with individual programs.

Coursework	CSULB Courses
One year of English (Recommended)	ENGL 100 OR ASAM 100 OR AFRS 100 OR CHLS 104 AND ENGL 102 OR 300, CWL 315
One year of Mathematics (to include calculus and statistics)	MATH 119A OR 122 AND STATS 108 OR BIOL 260, other statistic courses may be applicable
One year of General Chemistry with lab	CHEM 111A & 111B
One year of Organic Chemistry with lab	CHEM 220A & 220B + 320L (Chemistry/ Biochemistry majors) OR 220A w/223A & 220B w/223B (Biology & Other majors)
One year of General Biology with lab	BIOL 211, 212 & 213
One year of General Physics with lab	PHYS 100A & 100B OR 151 & 152
Biochemistry	CHEM 441A OR 448
Spanish, Humanities/Social Sciences	Recommended

IMPORTANT FACTORS CONSIDERED FOR SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

STANDARDIZED TEST: Students must take the [Medical College Admission Test \(MCAT\)](#) for admissions.

CLINICAL EXPOSURE: Volunteering in a healthcare-related setting will enhance medical school applications, but more importantly it is a chance for students to see if they enjoy working in a medical field. Shadowing a doctor is also a great way to find out if a career in medicine might be right.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION: Many programs require at least 3 letters of recommendation, although more may be recommended or required, as part of the admissions process. 2 of the letters must come from science faculty and 1 from a non-science recommender. Students must verify with programs whether letters from social science, kinesiology, or other faculty count as science faculty.

RESEARCH: Working in a research setting can help make students competitive medical school applicants.

ADMISSIONS: The [American Medical College Application Service \(AMCAS\)](#) is used for applications for allopathic medical schools.

ADMISSIONS STATISTICS: The national average GPA for the fall 2019 entering class was **3.81 (Total)** and **3.66 (Science)**. The average overall MCAT score was **511.6**.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Medical School Admissions Requirements \(MSAR\)](#)
- [Medical College Admission Test \(MCAT\)](#)
- [American Medical College Application Service \(AMCAS\)](#)

For more information about Allopathic Medicine, visit www.aamc.org/students and see your HPAO advisor for further information on the application process, application assistance, and a list of upcoming workshops and events.