Spring 2014 Information Sheet for New Students Interested in the Health Professions

Online information for premeds, pre-vets, pre-pharmacy students, and pre-dentistry students:

*My website, located at http://wmpeople.wm.edu/site/page/btsher, has handouts on course selection, our early acceptance programs with EVMS and VCU (to which qualified sophomores apply at the beginning of the spring semester), and other important topics. It also explains how to sign up for the Health Professions Advising listserv, through which I relay information on topics of interest to my advisees, such as campus events, summer opportunities, and recommended reading.

Advising:

*For students interested in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, veterinary medicine: contact Dr. Beverly Sher, btsher@wm.edu
*For students interested in the allied health professions, including PT, OT, nursing: contact Dr. Ray McCoy, rwmcco@wm.edu

Academics:

*Major selection: there is no single “best” premed major! Choose by interest. That said, the three most popular premed majors at the College are Neuroscience, Biology, and Chemistry. In addition, the Kinesiology and Physics Departments both have “premed” tracks. Also, the new public health track in Kinesiology has attracted a great deal of interest from my premedical advisees.
*For other health professions, major choice may not be as flexible, due to recommended/required courses that should be completed by the time you apply. Check the websites of the schools that interest you for details. Dental schools are particularly demanding.
*Science courses required by many medical schools/covered by the MCAT must be completed before you take the MCAT (usually by the end of June after the junior year.) They are:
  - BIOL 220/221 and BIOL 225/226 (you need credit for two semesters of intro bio plus lab, so if you elect to use your AP or IB exemptions for these courses, you must replace them with other acceptable “introductory” courses; see the course selection handout on my website for details)
  - CHEM 103/103L, 206/206L, 307/353, and 308/354 (Students with AP credit for general chemistry should consider taking CHEM 335 in the fall of the freshman year)
  - PHYS 101/101L and PHYS 102/102L or PHYS 107/107L and PHYS108/108L (Chemistry and Physics majors must take PHYS 101/101L and PHYS 102/102L)
  - Biochemistry
  - Psychology as a Social Science (PSYC 202)
  - Principles of Sociology (SOCL 250)
*Many medical schools also require math and English. I recommend taking two semesters of calculus plus a statistics course. A “W” freshman seminar takes care of half of the med school English requirement.
*Some medical schools recommend (or even require) additional courses. See the AAMC publication Medical School Admissions Requirements (the MSAR) for details; also see my detailed course selection handout for premeds, available in the Handouts section of my website, http://wmpeople.wm.edu/site/page/btsher
*AP/IB credit can be used at most, but not all, medical schools.
*GPA (overall, science) is important; still, you should challenge yourself! See www.aamc.org/facts for details.

Extracurriculars:

*Clinical experience is mandatory: categories include shadowing (essential), hospital/clinic volunteer work, EMT, scribing. Students interested in other health professions should also obtain appropriate clinical experience. See the handout on Williamsburg-area clinical opportunities on my website for some options.
*Other extracurricular activities (leadership, service, teamwork)
*Research is NOT required, but is a selection factor for some medical schools. Many of my premedical advisees get involved in research as early as freshman year.