

Academic Preparation for Podiatry School

Minimum Required Coursework for Podiatry School. Most podiatric medical schools in the U.S. require a minimum of one year of English composition (usually satisfied by INT 101 & 201 or GBK 101 & 202), one year of general chemistry (CHM 111 & 112), at least one semester of organic chemistry (CHM 221), one year of general biology (BIO 171 & 172), and one year of physics (PHY 141 & 142 or 161 & 162), all of the sciences with lab components.

Because the admission requirements for the different podiatry schools in the U.S. vary, students on the pre-podiatry track must investigate the different podiatry schools available and make themselves aware of the specific requirements for the programs in which they are interested. See the website of the American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine for specific information: <https://aacpm.org/becoming-a-podiatric-physician/>.

Because most podiatric medical schools want applicants to submit a score for the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) as part of the application, students should also take organic chemistry II (CHM 321), biochemistry (BMB 465, lab not required), introductory psychology (PSY 101) and introductory sociology (SOC 101), as these topics are on that exam (see the document, *Preparing for the MCAT*, on the Track Page).

Online Science Coursework. Most professional schools do not accept online coursework for the core science requirements. Many professional schools relaxed the requirement for “in-person” science courses for students at institutions that did not offer students a choice due to the pandemic, but most schools have returned to requiring “in person” lab coursework.

Pass/Fail, AP, CLEP, and Audit Credit. Students should consult the websites and admissions personnel of the individual podiatry programs they are interested in for their policies regarding AP credit, CLEP credit, audited courses, and courses graded on a pass/fail basis.

Majors and Minors for Pre-Podiatry Students. Most podiatry schools in the U.S. prefer applicants who complete a bachelor’s degree before they matriculate, but many do not express a preference for any particular academic major when reviewing applications. Although a pre-podiatry student may major in any discipline s/he chooses, s/he must also complete the required courses for admission to their preferred podiatry programs. Before officially declaring a major, therefore, a student should create a personalized 4-year plan (4YP) that includes all required coursework to see how well the two programs fit together. Students need to be aware that extra semesters might be required for degree programs that do not fit well with the pre-podiatry classes. Students are encouraged to use the 4-Year Plan tab in the *Pre-Podiatry Action Plan (Track Spreadsheet)* on the Pre-Podiatry Track Page in GPS to create their own plan.

Minors in Chemistry & Biology. Pre-podiatry students who select a non-science major are encouraged to at least minor in both Chemistry and Biology to obtain a firm foundation in the sciences.

Chemistry Minor: Students who complete 18 credit hours of chemistry (CHM 111, 112, 221, and 321), with 6 hr or more in courses numbered 200 or higher taken in residence at Mercer, fulfill the Mercer University College of Liberal Arts & Sciences requirements for a minor in chemistry.

Biology Minor: Students who complete 18 credit hours in biology, with 6 hr or more in courses numbered 300 or higher in residence at Mercer fulfill the CLAS’ requirements for a minor in biology.

Minors in Business: Many pre-podiatry students see the value of a business education, as such training can further their professional goals as podiatrists operating their own clinics. Options can be found in the University Catalog.

Podiatry School Matriculation Without a Degree. Some podiatric medical schools do not require a bachelor’s degree for admission; such schools usually require completion of a minimum of 90 credit hours of pre-podiatry coursework instead. Students interested in this option must plan carefully, as they would need to take the MCAT and apply to podiatry school at the end of their second year of undergraduate study (see the document, *Preparing for the MCAT*, on the Pre-podiatry Track page) rather than at the end of their third year. Students should realize that it is unusual for a student to be able to build a strong enough application portfolio to compete for admission in this short time frame, and that 97% of students who matriculate to podiatry school hold a bachelor’s degree (<https://aacpm.org/colleges/>).