



# The Georgetown University PostBaccalaureate Pre-Medical Certificate Program Handbook

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## Why Choose a PostBaccalaureate Pre-Medical Program?

*Not all PostBac programs are the same. Be sure to choose the right one for you.*

In recent years, interest in applying to medical schools in the United States has been very high, resulting in extreme competition for admission throughout the country. Consequently, the serious applicant needs to plan carefully and arrange the appropriate requirements for the application.

The principal items that each applicant needs are the preparatory mathematics and science courses, the Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT), letters of recommendation and sufficient personal experience related to medicine to assure the applicant and the admissions committees that the applicant has chosen this career wisely. Most U.S. medical schools require courses in Biology, General Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics, and English Composition. While many students complete these courses during their undergraduate degree, some students decide to pursue a career in medicine either during or after their undergraduate education and opt to complete their medical school requirements in a postbaccalaureate program. This path provides students the opportunity to enroll in their pre-medical coursework and gain personal experience in a focused environment with like-minded peers.

The **Georgetown PostBaccalaureate Pre-Medical (PBPM) Certificate Program** offers all of the undergraduate two semester Pre-Medical courses, Biology, General Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, Physics, Probability and Statistics, and Calculus to qualified students who will have completed a bachelor's degree prior to beginning the PBPM program. Advanced biology courses are also available to students who have met the required pre-requisite courses.

## The Georgetown PBPM Certificate Program provides:

- Rigorous training in math and lab sciences
- Co-matriculation with undergraduate pre-medical students.
- The opportunity to be evaluated and receive a recommendation letter from the Pre-Medical Recommendation Committee (upon completion of appropriate coursework)
- Medical school interview seminars and mock interviews
- One-on-one advising, tutoring, and other academic support
- A coordinated volunteer program at Georgetown University Hospital
- Commercial MCAT preparation courses offered on campus and in the metropolitan area (cost not covered by tuition)
- Information sessions presented by Medical School admission representatives and others in the health care
- Financial aid advice and eligibility for federal Stafford loan and selected private loans if registered for 6 or more credit hours



### Did you Know?

Founded in 1789, the same year the U.S. Constitution took effect, Georgetown University is the nation's oldest Catholic and Jesuit university. Today, Georgetown is a major international research university that embodies its founding principles in the diversity of our students, faculty, and staff, our commitment to justice and the common good, our intellectual openness, and our international character.

# Applying to the Georgetown PBPM Program

## Who Should Apply to this Program?

The **GU PostBaccalaureate Pre-Medical Certificate Program** is intended for those who require all, or most of the basic pre-med courses. Participants may also apply to enroll in appropriate advanced biology courses as part of their PBPM program. The program is not appropriate for those who have completed the basic Pre-Med courses and wish to enroll only in advanced coursework. Students in the latter category should consider the Special Masters Program offered by the Department of Physiology and Biophysics ([www.gumc.georgetown.edu/departments/physiology](http://www.gumc.georgetown.edu/departments/physiology)) or the GEMS program ([gems.georgetown.edu](http://gems.georgetown.edu)) offered by the Georgetown University School of Medicine. The PBPM certificate program is also not intended for those who want to improve their GPA by repeating basic Pre-Med courses that they have recently completed. Note: Pre-Med coursework completed more than 5 years prior to medical school application may not be accepted by medical schools and may require re-enrollment. Applicants in the latter category will be considered for admission to the PBPM certificate program.

## Application Requirements

Applicants for the PostBaccalaureate Pre-Med Certificate Program must have completed a four year undergraduate degree with a GPA of at least **3.2**, and evidenced ability to succeed in college-level science courses. Applicants who have not completed one year of college math, consisting of either Calculus I and II, or Calculus I and a Statistics course, will be expected to complete these courses within the certificate program. Accepted applicants are admitted into Georgetown College as non-degree certificate students, and must maintain at least a B average to remain in the program. Students must maintain at least half-time status (six credits per semester) to retain government loans.



## Application Procedures and Deadlines

The PBPM program admits students for summer or fall start dates and for spring semester in certain instances. Students who need to take a math class or who have the first semester of the required lab courses may request a spring semester start date. Submit the application form together with a set of original transcripts of all college level work that you have completed. Applications should include a 1-page essay describing your interest in pursuing a career in medicine and relevant information about your undergraduate education and work experience. Please also submit a 1-page resume and one letter of recommendation. Additional materials, such as SAT, ACT or GRE test results may be included with your application. All materials should be collected by the applicant and **sent in one package**, with an application fee of \$65.00 directly to:

PostBaccalaureate Pre-Med Program  
Office of the College Dean, 108 WGR  
Georgetown University  
3700 O Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20057-1003

**Make your check or money order payable to Georgetown University (No Cash).**

**Applications are reviewed twice a month and admissions are made on a rolling basis.** Applicants are urged to submit their application and transcripts as early as possible, as spaces available in the program are limited.

## Certificate Requirements

Requirements for completing the PBPM Certificate Program are completion of 24 credits of pre-med science and mathematics courses listed in the table below. A year of college Math (Calculus I and II, or Calculus I and an approved statistics course) is required, either prior to or during the program. One semester of AP Math may be used with one college semester to meet the year-long Math requirement. One semester of Calculus should be completed before taking calculus-based Principles of Physics. PBPM students can enroll in upper-division science and math coursework if they have the required pre-requisites.

Students wishing to apply for a recommendation from the Pre-Medical Recommendation Committee should also have accrued sufficient experience in medical settings and demonstrated leadership skills to allow the Committee and medical school admissions committees to assess your commitment to the medical field. Our program advisors support students by discussing these requirements.

## Required Pre-Medical Coursework

One of your goals as a pre-medical student will be to acquire the necessary academic background to assure success in medical or dental school. Besides the general academic skills in which you will be expected to show high proficiency, you will also have to demonstrate good results in a basic core of math and science courses.

### Required Courses

One year each of the following courses are required by most medical and dental schools:

- Math (with some Calculus)
- Biology (two lab courses, BIOL I & BIOL II or a second biology course)
- Physics I & II (not always required by dental schools)
- General Chemistry I & II
- Organic Chemistry I & II

These are the minimum requirements, although a student should consider bolstering his or her background in an area by taking additional courses. The Pre-Med advisors can help with this decision.



Libraries

Georgetown librarians blend traditional library services with advances in information technology in support of the learning and teaching needs of our students and faculty. Email and live chat help services are provided, and all libraries maintain robust reference and instructional programs to assist students and faculty in their learning and research. Georgetown libraries include: Blommer Science Library, Dahlgren Memorial Library (medical library), Lauinger Memorial Library, and the National Reference Center for Bioethics Literature

## Program Schedule

The time required to complete the certificate program ranges from fifteen to twenty-four months, depending on the preparation of the incoming student. The core Pre-Med program consists of 44 credit hours. At least 24 credit hours in math/science must be completed at Georgetown to qualify for a Pre-Med Recommendation Committee review.

The program is flexibly designed to meet the student's needs and background. Examples of schedules for completing the core pre-med requirements are outlined in the tables below. One should examine the specific admission requirements of medical schools of interest to determine if courses other than the basic pre-med courses are required. Some medical schools, for example, require or strongly recommend one semester of biochemistry or genetics.

There are several options with regard to taking classes and students should consider the advantages and disadvantages of each option carefully. The fundamental considerations are as follows:

1. **Course load** – Students may elect to take one, two, or three science courses (including labs) during the academic term. Taking three science courses per semester is a heavy load, and therefore these schedules should be considered carefully by those with little or no exposure to rigorous college level science and/or math courses. In addition, students with little or no volunteer experience in a medical setting will need to allow time for that activity. Further, allowing time to prepare for the MCAT exam is an important consideration.
2. **Submitting the application** – Medical school applications are accepted beginning in June of each year and run through October. Students completing their coursework in May of a given year should plan to submit their applications as early as possible. Those completing their coursework in the summer (i.e., finishing in August) can either apply in late summer (usually in September) or wait and submit their application in June of the following year. Students should be aware that applying late in the year does reduce the chance of medical school admission because of rolling admissions policies.
3. **Extracurricular activities** – As mentioned above, students should plan to begin or continue pre-medical volunteer activities while enrolled in the program. These opportunities are available through the postbac program and occur at Georgetown University Hospital. Only in cases where students have extensive health care experience (e.g., previous background in nursing or in emergency medicine) can students afford to reduce commitment to these activities during their postbac studies.
4. **Elective courses** – We encourage students to consider a program that would allow them to take one or two elective courses, some of which are required by some medical schools. These courses include genetics, biochemistry, microbiology, comparative anatomy, virology, and others. Unless a student has already taken introductory biology, these courses would usually be taken in the second year.
5. **Pace** – In our experience, most postbac students are eager to complete the required courses and apply to medical school as soon as possible. It is important to recognize, however, that this strategy does not always result in the strongest possible application. Opting for a slightly longer program provides additional time for volunteer experience, studying for the MCAT

exam, taking elective courses, and applying early in the application window. These are important considerations that should be discussed with your advisor. Remember, the goal is to apply *and be admitted* to medical school. A strong application is important.

Following are a few example programs for students enrolling in the postbac program at Georgetown University. There are other options and students should work with their advisor to determine their best path.

### SUMMER START

**Example Program 1** (assumes the math requirement is completed)

Summer	Fall	Spring	Summer
General Chemistry I & II	Introductory Biology	2 <sup>nd</sup> Biology	MCAT (May/June)
	Organic Chemistry I	Organic Chemistry II	
	Physics I	Physics II	

**Example Program 2** (assumes math requirement is completed)

Summer	Fall	Spring	Summer
Gen Chem I & II	Introductory Biology	2 <sup>nd</sup> Biology	Physics I & II
	Organic Chemistry I	Organic Chemistry II	MCAT (Aug-Jan)

With Example 2, students take the MCAT exam in their second summer (August) and apply for medical school in September or October to begin the following fall. Alternatively students take the MCAT later (September thru January) and apply the following June.

### FALL START

**Example Program 3**

Fall	Spring	Summer
Intro Biology I	Intro Biology II	Organic Chemistry I
General Chemistry	General Chemistry	Organic Chemistry II
Physics	Physics	MCAT (Aug-Jan)

**Example Program 4 – two academic years**

Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
Intro Biology I	Intro Biology II	Organic Chemistry	Organic Chemistry
General Chemistry	General Chemistry	Physics	Physics

**Example Program 5 – two academic years**

Fall	Spring	Summer
Intro Biology I	Intro Biology II	Physics I & II
General Chemistry	General Chemistry	
Fall	Spring	Summer
Organic Chemistry	Organic Chemistry	MCAT (May/June)
Elective Course	Elective Course	

## Extracurricular Activities

You will also need to schedule time for volunteering at a hospital or clinic, doing an internship, tutoring underprivileged children, or other activities that show a commitment to helping others. Attending lectures, labs, studying and volunteering, will consume much of your time. **Students should therefore carefully consider the demands of the PostBac program before seeking employment.** In general, we recommend that those taking three courses per semester not commit to outside employment. We recommend that those taking two courses per semester and who have not previously taken rigorous science courses forego employment during the first semester so that they can evaluate the demands of the curriculum.

The Georgetown University PBPM program offers a volunteer program at the Georgetown University Hospital. Students volunteer 4+ hours per week with various responsibilities. Georgetown's Center for Social Justice also offers several opportunities for students to engage in volunteer activities to work with the underserved DC community in several capacities.

## Academic Resources

Postbac students have full access to all of Georgetown University's academic resources including the libraries, computer labs, and the Academic Resource Center (ARC). The ARC offers tutors to postbac students in the basic pre-med courses.

## Financial Aid

PBPM students taking 6 or more credits per semester during the fall and spring, are eligible to apply for financial aid through the Stafford Federal loan program, and additional funds from private loans for those who qualify. If you have been accepted into the PBPM program and wish to apply for federal or private loans, fill out and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the Georgetown University Graduate Supplement form, which you can find at <http://finaid.georgetown.edu/gradsupp.htm>.

If you are starting the PBPM program in the summer, and want to apply for loans for the summer, you should fill out the FAFSA application for the previous academic year. To apply for loans for the fall, fill out the FAFSA application for that academic year. Please note: Applicants will not be awarded financial aid until they are accepted into the Certificate Program and registered in the courses. However, applicants may begin the financial aid application (FAFSA) process while waiting for acceptance into the PBPM program. For further information, consult the Office of Student Financial Services <http://finaid.georgetown.edu>.