

**BIOL 280/480 – Pre-medical Seminar
Fall 2008**

Instructor: Jacob M. Hornby, Ph.D.

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Office hours: TBA

Lecture:

T 12:00-1:00 pm

Additional meeting times to be determined for individual and small group needs

Course objectives:

1. To help students explore the various professional programs and institutions for graduate medical education; including medical, therapy, and pharmacy programs.
2. To help students assess the strength of their credentials, provide guidance for self evaluation, and develop strategies for applying to graduate medical programs.
3. To assist students in completion of applications and preparation for personal interviews.
4. To discuss current issues in health care
5. To provide experiences to help students improve reading and writing abilities and provide information related to standardized tests; including MCAT, DAT, PCAT, OAT, and GRE.

Student responsibilities:

1. You are responsible for regular participation during the scheduled lecture time, as well as assignments and appointments requested during additional times. Group work will be conducted during the regularly scheduled lecture hour; however individuals and small groups with common goals will meet on occasion outside of normal class hours. These times will be arranged to be convenient for the instructor and the students involved.
2. This seminar is designed to provide you guidance in your preparation for graduate medical education as well as activities to enhance your background and knowledge. There will be regular assignments and you will not earn points if completed after the due dates. This class will not be a traditional lecture course, but you will be graded on your effort and participation during this course.
3. As this course is a participation-based course, attendance is mandatory. You will be required to meet with the instructor and your peers on a regular basis and will be graded accordingly.

Activities:

1. Health articles: You will be asked to identify an issue that is facing health care and acquire articles (from popular media and professional journals) to share with the class. We will discuss these at the beginning of most class meetings. You will be encouraged to continue researching these topics so that you gain a solid understanding of these issues.
2. Profession presentations: You will be asked to explore a particular profession in health care and share this information with the group. It is important, regardless of your career goal, to understand the roles and responsibilities of the various professions in health care to understand how they work together as a health care team.
3. Institution previews: You will be asked to research background information and admissions practices from a school that you are interested in attending. I will give you more information about this in a separate handout.

4. Writing samples: We will practice writing samples per the guidelines of the Medical College Admission Test (two 30-minute timed essays). The essays will be reviewed for grammar and content and will be discussed at a later date. Most health profession programs require an essay at some point in the application process; whether during the standardized test (e.g. MCAT) or during the interview (e.g. Pharmacy and Physician Assistant). Furthermore, being able to articulate an organized discussion under such conditions will be helpful during interviews and can help with your personal statements.
5. Personal journals: You will be asked to begin keeping a journal focused on your interests and experiences in health care. When it comes to writing a personal statement, it is often difficult for students to articulate their interests in health care and why they will make a good candidate. This is meant to serve as a source for this information and self-reflection.
6. Personal statements: Nearly all health care programs require a personal statement as part of the application. You will be asked to create an outline with the intention of planning the discussion of your statement. By the end of the semester, you will be asked to draft a personal statement. By no means is this intended to be your final submitted piece, but instead a first attempt at what is usually a lengthy and important project.
7. Attendance and participation: You will be required to be active in this course including events such as the Health Professions Day. Additional information will provided at a later date.

Evaluation:

Attendance/participation	100 points
Writing samples (2)	50 points
Personal statement outline	50 points
Personal statement draft	75 points
Institutional profile presentation	75 points
Health profession presentation	75 points
Health news presentation	75 points
Total:	500 points

Final grades will be determined as follows:

A = 92-100%	C+ = 77-79.9%	F = below 60%
A- = 90-91.9%	C = 72-76.9%	
B+ = 87-89.9%	C- = 70-71.9%	
B = 82-86.9%	D+ = 67-69.9%	
B- = 80-81.9%	D = 60-66.9%	

Schedule:

Week	Topic	Activities
Aug. 26	Course introduction/syllabus	Begin journals/Intro. health article research
Sept. 2	What makes a strong candidate?	Intro. school/program research
Sept. 9	From classroom to standardized test	Academic plans, test prep materials
Sept. 16	Standardized tests (continued)	
Sept. 23	Writing samples	Two 30-minute writing samples
Sept. 30	Health Professions Day	Organize for event
Oct. 7	The application	Personal statement outline
Oct. 14	Interview day	
Oct. 21	Understanding health care teams	Health professions presentations
Oct. 28	Health care teams (continued)	Health professions presentations
Nov. 4	Writing samples	Two 30-minute writing samples
Nov. 11	Institution previews	Student presentations
Nov. 18	Institution previews	Student presentations
Nov. 25	NO CLASS - Thanksgiving	
Dec. 2	Personal statements	Write personal statement draft
Dec. 9	Discussion	