

PRE-PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

Texas A&M University-*Texarkana* offers students the opportunity to prepare for careers in professional programs such as medical school or law school. The pre-medicine, pre-dentistry, pre-veterinary, pre-health sciences, and pre-law programs provide experienced guidance and the right combination of skills, knowledge, and experience that the student will need for future professional studies and careers. Competition for admission to professional schools is intense. Having a Pre-Medical, Pre-Health Sciences, or Pre-Law concentration with the degree, coupled with the advice and guidance from a Pre-Professional Advisory Committee of professors and professionals, ensures that the student has the opportunity to meet all the requirements for application to medical, other health-sciences professional, or law schools. Additionally, the university encourages students in the pre-professional studies programs to work with professors on undergraduate research programs, at medical facilities in the region, or as interns in government offices to provide the students with opportunities and experience that can give the student an added competitive edge.

Pre-Law Program of Study

An undergraduate degree in any Liberal Arts discipline may prepare a student for post-graduate work in law school. Students heading for law school have found that the political science program helps them prepare for law school. Recent graduates have been accepted to prestigious law schools.

Preparing for Law School at Texas A&M University-*Texarkana*

You are encouraged to major in whatever discipline you find most interesting and take law-related political science courses. In order to prepare for law school, you should focus on developing good writing, communication, and critical thinking skills. Take courses and participate in activities that enhance these skills.

You should excel academically, because admission to law school is competitive. You should take courses that require written assignments. Along with political science, taking courses in criminal justice, English, history, math, and science will help you acquire valuable communication, problem solving, logical reasoning, and writing skills.

In addition to pursuing a rigorous course of study, taking law-related courses, participating in law-related internships, becoming involved in extracurricular activities—including the Political Science Club—and participating in LSAT practice sessions can help to ensure a competitive edge for admission to law school.

Law-Related Courses in Political Science

The Political Science program regularly offers several law-related courses, including:

Code	Title	Hours
GOVT 2301	American Government I: Federal & Texas Constitutions	3
GOVT 2302	American Government II: Federal & Texas Political Behavior	3
PSCI 300	Introduction to Political Theory	3
PSCI 320	Introduction to Constitutional Law	3
PSCI 410	American Political Theory	3
PSCI 426	Civil Rights and Civil Liberties	3
PSCI 427	Public Law (EL)	3
PSCI 490	Political Science Internship (EL) ¹	3-6

¹ By becoming involved in an internship, you can learn valuable life skills that will prepare you for law school and provide contacts that will support and mentor you through recommendations, advisement, and letters of reference.

Political Science Club

Your participation in A&M-*Texarkana*'s Political Science Club will also help you prepare for law school. Students in the club coordinate attorney-led LSAT preparation seminars, visit law schools, meet new friends, and have fun. The Political Science Club also hosts public talks and round-table discussions by legal professionals, and shows films related to the legal practice.

The LSAT

Your LSAT score is an important part of your successful admission to law school. The Law School Admissions Test (LSAT) is a standardized test administered by the Law School Admissions Council (LSAC). The Law School Admissions Council administers the LSAT four times a year. Students typically take the LSAT toward the end of their junior year of college or during the summer before their senior year. The exam lasts half a day and is comprised of multiple-choice questions covering critical reading, analytical reasoning, and logic. Scores range from 120–180. The A&M-*Texarkana* political science department provides LSAT test preparation assistance.

Applying for Law School

You should check with specific law schools for application deadlines and required application materials. Most law schools require that applicants use the Law School Admissions Council's Credential Assembly Service (CAS). Before applying to law school, you should open an account with the

Credential Assembly Service. You will submit your university transcripts and LSAT scores to the CAS. You will ask your recommenders to write letters and to send them to LSAC or to the law schools to which you will apply, as specified by each institution. CAS provides a “Letter of Recommendation Form” that you should give to your recommenders to fill out.

Pre-Health

Pre-Medical, Pre-Pharmacy, Pre-Dental, Pre-Veterinary and Pre-Health Sciences Studies at A&M-Texarkana

Competition for admission to medical school or any professional health sciences school is high. Having a pre-health concentration with your major program of study, coupled with the advice and guidance from a pre-health advisory committee of professors and medical practitioners, ensures that you have the opportunity to meet all the requirements for application to medical, pharmacy, dental, PA, PT, veterinary, and other health sciences professional schools. In addition, A&M-Texarkana’s academic majors; pre-health science courses in the College of Arts, Sciences, and Education (CASE); and the prospect of working with professors on undergraduate research programs or at medical facilities in the region can give you that added competitive edge.

Program Details

This program provides experienced guidance and the right combination of skills and knowledge—experience that you will need for future professional studies and careers in the health sciences.

A&M-Texarkana offers all the prerequisite courses for medical, pharmacy, dental, physician assistant, and physical therapy schools. Need-based prerequisite courses for veterinary schools are also offered. If you major in one of the disciplines within CASE, you can fit these courses into your normal degree and major requirements. If you are interested in majoring in engineering, business, or the social sciences, you can still complete these admission requirements by careful selection of your elective courses. In fact, most medical schools encourage students interested in a medical career to pursue a broad undergraduate study in the humanities and social sciences as well as the sciences. And as new areas in technology emerge, a functional understanding of engineering and technology is becoming a more important component of the background you can get at A&M – Texarkana.

The basic requirements for most medical, pharmacy, dental, and physical therapy schools as well as other health sciences professional schools are:

- General Biology with laboratory (2 semesters, 8 semester credit hours, should be taken in college)
- General Chemistry with laboratory (2 semesters, 8 semester credit hours, should be taken in college)
- Organic Chemistry with laboratory (2 semesters, 8 semester credit hours)
- College/University Physics with laboratory (2 semesters, 8 semester credit hours)
- Calculus (2 semesters, 6 – 8 semester credit hours)
- English, Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences (at least 24 semester credit hours, with a minimum of 6 semester credit hours in English)

However, a number of medical, pharmacy, dental, physical therapy, and veterinary schools may also require a semester of biochemistry, human anatomy and/physiology, and microbiology, cell and molecular biology, and/or advanced vertebrate biology. To expect to be competitive for admission to many medical/health sciences schools you should expect to maintain a “B” or better average in all these core courses. Some pharmacy schools require one semester of economics (micro/macro) and/or accounting.

Medical

The national standardized Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) is required by almost all medical schools. This test emphasizes facility in scientific problem solving, critical analysis and reasoning skills, and a strong mastery of basic biology, chemistry, and physics concepts.

Recent accepted applicants to Texas medical schools had an average GPA of 3.78/4.00 and MCAT score of 29.9/45 (old MCAT) and 507.2/528 (new MCAT). Nationally the acceptance rate has been around 44% of all applicants, with 26% of those as re-applicants.

Since spring 2015, a new section, physiological and social behavior, was added to the MCAT test.

Dental

The general requirements for dental schools admission are similar to those for medical schools except that they require the Dental Admissions Test (DAT) and the Perceptual Ability Test (PAT). Recent accepted applicants to Texas dental schools had average GPAs of 3.51-3.74/4.0; an average DAT score of 19.5/30; and an average PAT score of 17.8.

Veterinary

Veterinary schools look at a number of different criteria in considering an applicant. A strong and focused GPA and competitive scores on the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) are important factors for admissions. However, it is essential to demonstrate a genuine familiarity and interest in the profession as confirmed through documented exposure to practice, research, or other areas of veterinary medicine. Acceptance rate is generally about one-half that for medical schools

Physical and Occupational Therapy

Physical and occupational therapy schools offer a wide variety of professional training and career opportunities. For example, athletic training, physical therapy, occupational therapy, molecular pathology, communication science and disorders, rehabilitation counseling, rehabilitation sciences,

audiology, clinical laboratory science, clinical practice management, speech-language pathology, and physician assistant represent some of the many careers available to those interested in the health sciences. Admission requirements are similar to those for medical schools, but require the GRE, rather than the MCAT, and often require additional coursework in anatomy & physiology, psychology and/or statistics. Recent successful applicants to Texas schools had an average GPA between 3.0 – 3.6/4.0 and an average GRE score of 1162(527 verbal). Acceptance rates vary depending on programs, but most are similar to those for medical schools.

Volunteer/Work Experience

In addition to demonstrating a high level of scholastic achievement and intellectual potential, all health profession schools look for significant and documented participation in volunteer or employment in health care activities, letters of recommendation from the institution's pre-health sciences advisory committee and individuals with whom the candidate has had course work, experience in research, medical profession involvement, etc., as well as, information on extracurricular activities, and a strong personal statement supporting their interest in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, etc..

It should be noted that most medical schools will not accept College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) credits based on "life" experience to fulfill any of the premedical course requirements. Preparation at foreign universities, in most cases, must be supplemented by at least a year or more of course work at an accredited institution in the United States, and candidates must be proficient in both spoken and written English. Specific entrance requirements for medical schools are listed in Medical School Admission Requirements: United States and Canada.

Pre-Health Contact

If you have any further questions about our Pre-Health Program, please contact Dr. Nurul Alam, Professor of Biology in the College of Arts, Sciences, and Education (CASE); Office: SCIT 318E; Tel: 903-334-6671, E-mail-nurul.alam@tamut.edu.

JAMP at Texas A&M University-Texarkana

The Joint Admission Medical Program (JAMP) is a special program created in 2003 by the Texas Legislature to support and encourage highly qualified, economically disadvantaged Texas resident students pursuing a medical education. Funded through the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, JAMP is a unique partnership between all nine Texas medical schools and sixty-seven public and private four-year undergraduate institutions in Texas. The current Legislature set aside 10% of the medical schools' entering class for the JAMP students. In 2013, A&M-Texarkana signed an agreement with the JAMP council and accepting students for the program. As of fall 2017, two A&M-Texarkana students have been selected for the program.

Benefits

- Guaranteed admission to a Texas medical school if all program requirements are met.
- Financial support through undergraduate and graduate scholarships and summer stipends.
- Supplemental tutoring, mentoring, and computer support.
- Mentoring and personal assistance to prepare for medical school.
- Hands-on experience through summer internships.

Qualifications

- Graduate from high school or home-schooled program.
- Take the SAT or ACT and earn a score not less than the mean of the state of Texas.
- Enter to an institution of higher education not later than the first fall semester following graduation from high school or a home-schooled program.
- Complete 27 semester hours in the first year of college after graduation from high school at an institution of higher education.
- Be enrolled full-time at Texas A&M-Texarkana (or any other participating university) at the time of application to the program.
- Provide documentation and history as an economically disadvantaged applicant.
- Be an American citizen or US permanent resident.
- Be a Texas resident for the purpose of tuition under subchapter B, Chapter 54 of the Texas Education Code.

JAMP Contact

If you have any further questions about the JAMP program, please contact Dr. Nurul Alam, Professor of Biology in the College of Arts, Sciences, and Education (CASE); Office: SCIT 318E; Tel: 903-334-6671; E-mail-nurul.alam@tamut.edu