THE ROAD TO BECOMING A HEALTHCARE PRACTITIONER

Tips and suggestions for enhancing your skills, meeting pre-requisites and becoming a competitive applicant.

EXPLORING YOUR OPTIONS

- There are many career options if you have an interest in helping people through becoming a healthcare practitioner. Some examples include:
  - Physical Therapist
  - Occupational Therapist
  - Physician Assistant
  - Medical Doctor
  - Other – Chiropractor, Dentist, Pharmacist etc.

WHICH IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

- One of the best ways you can learn which profession is right for you is to shadow someone in the field. Most professional programs will require volunteer/shadowing experience for admission.
- Local resources:
  - Carle Hospital 217/383-6701
  - Provena Covenant Medical Center 217/337-2378
  - Carle Therapy Services 217/383-3400
  - Champion Fitness & Physical Therapy 217/387-4560
  - Disability Resources and Educational Services 217/333-4608
  - Mettler Center 217/356-6543
  - Provena Covenant Rehabilitation Center 217/337-2109
  - Clark-Lindsey Village 217/344-2144

TAKING THE RIGHT COURSES

- All professional programs will have a set of pre-requisites that will vary by profession and by program. It is critical to review the information provided on program websites to determine admission criteria including pre-requisites.
- Many programs will have *recommended* coursework in addition to required coursework.
- Most programs require a grade of C or higher in all pre-requisite coursework.
- Resources for finding accredited programs:
  - Physical Therapy – www.apta.org
  - Occupational Therapy – www.aota.org
  - Physician Assistant – www.aapa.org
  - Medical Doctor – www.aamc.org
- Program Rankings
  - US News and World Report
    - http://www.usnews.com/sections/rankings/index.html

EXAMPLES OF PRE-REQUISITES

- Physical Therapy
  - IB 104 and IB 150/151
  - CHEM 102/103 and 104/105
  - PHYS 101 and 102
  - MCB 244/245 and 246/247
  - PSYC 100, 216 and 238
  - STAT 100 and Calculus 1
- Occupational Therapy
  - MCB 244/245 and 246/247
  - PSYC 100, 216 and 238
  - SOC 100
  - CLCV 102
  - HDFS 105
- Physician Assistant
  - IB 104
  - MCB 100/101
  - CHEM 102/103, 104/105, 233/233 and MCB 450
  - MCB 244/245 and 246/247
  - STAT 100
  - CLCV 102
- Medical Doctor
  - MCB 150/151 and 250
  - IB 150/151
  - CHEM 102/103, 104/105, 233/233, MCB 450 and/or CHEM 332
  - PHYS 101 and 102

SAMPLE PROGRAM WEBSITES

- Physical Therapy
  - Iowa - http://www.healthcare.uiowa.edu/physicaltherapy/degrees/dpt_admissions.html
  - Northwestern - http://www.feinberg.northwestern.edu/nupthms/admissions/requirments/prerequisites.html
  - UIC - http://www.ahs.uic.edu/pt/programs/dpt_apply_prereqs.php
- Occupational Therapy
  - Midwestern - http://www.midwestern.edu/Programs_and_Admission/IL_Occupational_Therapy.html
  - Washington University - http://www.ot.wustl.edu/ot/otweb.nsf/
  - Governors State - http://www.govst.edu/chhs/dot/mot/default.aspx?id=5940
- Physician Assistant
  - Midwestern - http://www.midwestern.edu/Programs_and_Admission/IL_Physician_Assistant_Studies.html
  - Northwestern - http://www.familymedicine.northwestern.edu/pa_program/
  - Southern Illinois - http://paprogram.siuc.edu/faq10-08.html
- Medical Doctor
  - UIC - http://www.medicine.uic.edu/
  - Medical College of Wisconsin - http://www.mcw.edu/display/router.aspx

ENHANCING YOUR COMPETITIVENESS

- Solid GPA
- Valuable shadowing and/or volunteering experience
- Leadership experience
- Involvement
- Study abroad and/or fluency in another language
- Competitive GRE/MCAT scores
- Knowledge about current issues in profession
- Strong letters of recommendation
- Excellent personal statement

CAMPUS RESOURCES

- Tutoring, TA/Instructor office hours, supplemental instruction, learning centers, etc.
- Office of Volunteer Programs
  - http://union.illinois.edu/ovp/index.html
- Illinois Leadership Center
  - www.illinoisleadership.illinois.edu
- Registered Student Organizations
  - http://union.illinois.edu/involvement/rso/a-z_list.aspx
  - Pre-PT Club, Pre-OT Club, Pre-PA Club, Multiple pre-med organizations
- Study Abroad Office
  - www.studyabroad.illinois.edu
- GRE/MCAT Prep Courses
  - http://www.kaptest.com/
- Professional Organization Websites
  - www.apta.org, www.aota.org, www.aapa.org, www.aamc.org
- Writer's Workshop
  - http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop/
- Career Center Workshops
  - www.careercenter.illinois.edu

TIMELINE

- Begin taking pre-requisites as early as freshman year.
- Begin shadowing/volunteering as early as freshman year.
- Continue involvement throughout college doing as much as you can through junior year.
- Take admissions test during spring of junior year or summer after junior year.
- Apply summer after junior year, into fall of senior year.
  - Some programs will utilize a centralized application service, i.e. AMCAS, CASPA, PTCAS, whereas others will require separate program applications.

A REWARDING FUTURE!

- Physical Therapy Brings Motion to Life (APTA)…just one example of how you can make a difference!
  - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCKuRIBCDuQ