

COMPREHENSIVE PRE-PROFESSIONAL Q/A:

PRE-PHARMACY

TIMELINE IF TAKING PCAT IN JULY:

December: Purchase the Kaplan 2016-2017 book and begin review. If you can get through the entire book at least once during winter break, you'll be in good shape. Do NOT just read the book, make sure you take notes. I filled 3-4 notebooks with notes from the book and it was super helpful to look over what you wrote instead of re-reading what the book has to offer. It also helps you to retain the information if you write it.

→ Do not freak out about how much material the entire Kaplan book covers, especially for biology. Just skim over it and if there are any topics that you are particularly uncomfortable with, make a note of it and move on. There are some obscure topics that never made it on the PCAT.

→ If you decide to take a practice test from Kaplan, do not panic over how hard it is. The PCAT will not be as hard. The Kaplan people make things much harder to prepare you.

January – May: Keep reviewing the Kaplan book. You should also purchase the Dr. Collins exam packet during this time and begin looking at the material portion of the packets. The part of the packet with all the questions per section should be saved for when you start getting super close to the PCAT. You will also be able to make an account through PharmCAS and Pearson. You'll be able to sign up for your PCAT during this time.

→ Don't worry about getting a spot for the PCAT. There is not as much competition for a spot for the PCAT as there is with the MCAT. When you go on the Pearson website (it is a bit confusing), you'll be able to see when the sign ups start for the PCAT date that you want.

MAJOR TIP: All the PCAT times given are Eastern, so they are 3 hours ahead. Be sure you remember this when signing up for things. I was really panicked when I found out that sign ups had already began because I thought I wouldn't get a spot. So when they say midnight, it's actually 9:00PM that you should start signing up.

→ Make sure you have an idea of what schools you want to go to before signing up for the PCAT, because when you sign up and pay for this expensive exam, you'll be able to send your scores to that school for no extra fee. Make sure you select **PharmCAS code 104**, as most of the schools that you'll end up applying to will be under this generalized code. I didn't know this and only selected 3 schools, when code 104 would have covered almost all the pharmacy schools.

→ In terms of what time of day you should take the PCAT, that is up to your own preferences. They offer it at two times: 8:00AM and 12:00PM. I took it in the morning, and was happy I signed up for it at that time. I had the rest of the day to relax (or panic).

→ Make sure you put your name exactly how it appears on your ID. I had some trouble with my middle name, so be careful.

June-July: This is the time when you should have reviewed all the material and are now doing a ton of practice problems. I wish I had done more practice during this time. This is what really prepares you, as you find out what you need to study more or less of. You should have purchased the exams given by the PCAT company (Pearson). These were excellent, and I strongly suggest you purchase them. The essay practice given by this company was also pretty good. Definitely finish up all of the Dr. Collin's practice questions, and the 2 exams given by Kaplan and then the 3 (I think it's 3...) exams from Pearson.

→ Do not forget to bring at least 3-4 types of ID on test day. The PCAT company is good about telling you what needs to be done and brought, so don't worry too much about this.

After PCAT: Begin working on your application through PharmCAS! It takes quite a while to get all the information (transcripts, etc...) rounded up and sent/entered into this application. You should definitely work on your personal statement during this time as well. Specific information regarding how long your personal statement should be will be on PharmCAS. You should submit your application by September and you'll be hearing back from schools pretty soon after that, mostly about supplemental applications and/or interviews. It is an exciting and scary time!

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

What is the structure of the PCAT? As of July 2016, there is an essay and 4 sections (biology, chemistry, reading, math). All of it is done on a computer. You start off with an essay that you get 30 minutes to respond to. For the biology and chemistry sections, you have approximately 45 minutes to answer 20-24 multiple choice questions. Approximately half of the questions are passage-based, which I found to be difficult. The reading section is obviously entirely passage-based, and there were 6 passages and you had 50 minutes to answer 8 multiple choice questions per passage. The math section was the most difficult for me, mostly because it is the last section (you are drained at this point) and because it's math. You have 48 questions and 45 minutes to answer them. And then you are done and you get your preliminary score (score minus the essay) as soon as you are done.

QUESTION: As a pre-pharmacy student, what did you do to build up your CV?

ANSWER: The very first thing I did was get involved in shadowing, because it is very important to first understand what it is that a pharmacist does. That being said, there are different specific jobs that a pharmacist can be involved in, such as: retail pharmacist, hospital pharmacist, compounding pharmacist, etc... I ended up shadowing and eventually working for a privately-owned retail pharmacist. Ultimately, it is a bit difficult to just shadow a pharmacist as there is nothing you can actually do. I was offered employment at the pharmacy as a pharmacy technician-in training and I was able to get a ton of hands-on experience with medication and patient interaction. After building a relationship with the pharmacist and pharmacy technicians, I would advise you to ask for your letter of recommendation with enough time for the pharmacist to actually write the letter. If you know you are applying to pharmacy school in August, give the pharmacist a heads up about it in May (at least 3-4 months prior). That was just one thing I did for my CV. Another couple of things on my CV that are not necessarily pharmacy-specific are: undergraduate research assistant, undergraduate teaching assistant, humanitarian coordinator of APHP, current president of APHP, etc... Regardless of what I did, it is incredibly important to obtain some type of leadership experience and research experience. The earlier you can get exposed to both types of experiences, the better it will be for you.

QUESTION: What classes were/are the most beneficial for pre-pharmacy?

ANSWER: I am currently working on a psychology and neuroscience minor, and I found that psychopharmacology (PSY 422) was an excellent class to take as a pre-pharmacy

student. I learned a whole lot about specific medications and I found myself recognizing them at the pharmacy that I worked at. Another awesome class was immunology (BIOL 453), where I learned the processes behind infections and inflammation, and also allergies. You can relate what you learned in immunology to the medications that you'll start recognizing when you volunteer/work at a pharmacy. Another class is biochemistry II (CHEM 475), where I was able to understand the mechanism for statins and a wealth of other medications. Also, you'll be able to do more than recognize medications with these classes, you'll be able to understand what that specific medication does enzymatically to counteract the patient's symptoms.

What classes should I have taken before the PCAT? CHEM 121, CHEM 122, CHEM 241, CHEM 242, CHEM 474, BIO 196, BIO 197, BIO 223, BIO 351 (microbiology), BIO 304 (genetics), BIO 445 (cell physiology), BIO 453 (immunology), MATH 126, MATH 127, MATH 181, ENG 101/102

→ It seems like a lot of classes, but you should be taking them anyways for either your major or as prerequisites for pharmacy school.

QUESTION: What interview tips can you give?

ANSWER: I think the most important tip I can give to you is to be confident. Obviously not over-confident or rude, but just have the confidence to answer all the questions without getting thrown off by how important this whole process might seem. You've gotten this far, and you'll continue to go far. Don't let your nerves or panic screw up your answers, you are obviously qualified, they just want to see that you are.

→ How long were my interviews? Approximately 15-30 minutes

→ How many people interviewed me? It depends on your school, but I had 2 people interview me for the most part: one faculty member and one student (usually in their second year of pharmacy school).

→ What did they ask me? You better have an answer for **WHY** you want to be a pharmacist and why you didn't choose to become a doctor. They asked me in multiple ways why I wanted to do this, and you need a sturdy answer not only to support yourself in the interview, but also in the written assessments you'll be doing either before or after the interview. These aren't too challenging, but you definitely need something irrefutable.

- What are some of your biggest strengths and biggest weaknesses?

- What would say is something wrong with pharmacy as a profession today?
- What was your favorite class? Why?
- What was your least favorite class? Why?
- What is something creative that you've done or implemented?
- What would you do if a team member was slacking off?
- What would you do if a team member was cheating off you?

PRE-DENTAL

QUESTION: As a pre-dental student, what did you do to build up your CV?

ANSWER: I joined both the pre-dental society and APHP and interviewed for a leadership position when given the opportunity. I also joined a lab as an undergraduate research assistant and made sure to show interest in performing my own experiments. I also worked part time consistently throughout undergrad and started shadowing my family dentist to gain some insight into the profession.

ANSWER: I started by shadowing my family dentist who just so happens to be my inspiration for choosing this career. I would go a few times a month to gain experience and knowledge. I joined APHP my Junior year and I was inspired to really be engaged and learn about the local community. I have volunteered my time to the Las Vegas and Henderson community since I was a sophomore in High School.

ANSWER: I've had medical and dental experience since high school because I attended a magnet school that allowed me opportunities to get internships at hospitals and dental clinics. But in college, I started shadowing a dentist my freshmen year. I would go once a month or every two weeks just to get experience little by little. I stopped shadowing my junior year but I didn't shadow much during the summers. I also worked a couple hours during my undergrad overall. I joined APHP and Dental Prospects my junior year as well, which was a mistake because I should've started earlier in my sophomore year. Both clubs give great opportunities to get volunteer hours and to help the community. I got a leadership position in APHP my senior year.

QUESTION: Would hospital volunteering be beneficial for a pre-dental student?

ANSWER: I have heard mixed reviews about this question. I know a student who is a scribe at a hospital to build up his CV because the dentist he shadowed told him the dental schools like to see it but I have also heard that it doesn't give you any advantage either. In my opinion, it would be nice to do it if you have time because you're competing with other students to get accepted and the better you look on paper the better your application will look compared to others. I don't think this is an acceptance determinant type of experience to have though.

QUESTION: What would you do differently if given the opportunity?

ANSWER: If given the opportunity to go back a few years, I would have made sure to make a list and timeline of all of the "extras" I was expected to participate in in order to be seen as a competitive candidate by dental schools. It's definitely terrifying to start your junior year and have fellow students ask which lab you're doing your research in and which doctors you are shadowing, having no idea that these were things that you were supposed to do.

ANSWER: Unfortunately there are some things in life that you can't control and it's always going to be a difficult journey. I wish I could have started even earlier to prepare for whatever hardships that would come. I wish I could have learned to manage time a lot better to maximize how well I could do in classes.

ANSWER: If I could go back and start everything I needed earlier, such as pre-dental and pre-professional clubs, my life would be less stressful right now. I would talk to students more to see their opinions on classes as well instead of just listening to advisors. I would go to office hours of my favorite professors so they could get to know me better instead of rushing to get letters from professors last minute.

ANSWER: Definitely take a lighter load while studying for the DAT.

QUESTION: What classes were/are the most beneficial generally or for the DAT?

ANSWER: Biol 223 and 224 are by far the most beneficial and interesting classes you will take in undergrad in my opinion. I also think immunology is another great course.

ANSWER: BIO 196, BIO 197, CHEM 121, CHEM 122, CHEM 241, CHEM 242, CHEM 474, BIO 223. BIO 224

QUESTION: What DAT tips can you give?

ANSWER: Start. Early. Do not wait last minute to start studying. The DAT is a marathon, not a sprint. If you're going to study for the DAT during the semester then you need to make sure your classes aren't the most difficult biology and chemistry courses you need. If workload is a problem then study in the summer and don't take classes over summer. Pay attention in General Chemistry, Organic Chemistry and Biol 196 the most because those will come back to haunt you if you don't know the material well.

ANSWER: I suggest you take the DAT around February, so you have enough time to retake it if necessary. You have to wait 3 months before you can take it. It's a good idea to register to take the DAT around November to take it in February. This way you have all of winter break and some of the semester to study for it. The subjects covered on the DAT include: general biology, general chemistry, organic chemistry, reading comprehension, quantitative, and perceptual ability. The most difficult section for me was general chemistry. I used Kaplan, Princeton Review, and the DAT Destroyer.

PRE-MEDICINE

QUESTION: As a pre-med student, what did you do to build up your CV? In addition, add your interest/what you want to specialize in? (eg. orthopedic surgeon, pediatrics, family doctor, emergency medicine, etc...)

ANSWER: Building your CV is important in general, but you should not choose activities just to build your CV. Take opportunities that are long term and do them because you believe you will enjoy them. I joined APHP because they actively volunteer in the community and gained leadership roles through the organization. I joined a research lab during my sophomore year where I could actively be engaged in my own research project and presented at the undergraduate research forums. I volunteered at a clinic for the children with autism and other neurodevelopmental disorders. I shadowed a pulmonologist and an internist from for long periods of time to get a strong understand of the best way to interact with patients of different backgrounds. Currently, I am interested in Emergency Medicine or Rheumatology.

ANSWER: Like many of my fellow officers I joined APHP as a way to boost my CV, it allows you to gain humanitarian work as well as leadership experience if you decide to

become an officer. Joining a research lab is also a good way to improve your application as it allows you to show your ability to work in an environment different than the classroom. I wish I had started volunteering at a hospital sooner, but I plan on joining one over winter break. I'd like to work in a hospital diagnosing mysterious illnesses.

ANSWER: Like many of the officers here, I have been a member of APHP for a few years, and I decided to boost my CV by assuming a leadership position as an officer in this organization. As a prospective physician, I expect that I'll be learning and teaching my patients for my entire career, so I decided to focus some of my efforts in this direction. I've been an undergraduate teaching assistant for microbiology labs for a few semesters, and I'm a substitute teacher for CCSD. I think teaching is a unique way of keeping up with material, and I've learned to communicate with many age groups because of my experiences in subbing.

ANSWER: I began building my CV during the second half of my undergrad. I have not gotten my feet wet in doing research or volunteering/shadowing at hospitals but it is something that will be done in the near future. The volunteering I have done stems from being in APHP. There are lots of opportunities here for me to help the community. I also wanted to strive for more of what APHP could offer me and I did that by stepping into the treasurer role. I felt that this would give me the leadership, efficiency, and structure that so many of our hospitals are built upon. As for my taste in our melting pot of specialties, I found myself always fascinated by microbiology, immunology, and bacterial pathogenesis. These three aspects, for the most part, encompass what I want to specialize in, and that is infectious diseases.

ANSWER: I did not know how to build up my CV before. I obtained my CNA and Medical Assisting certificates at Southeast Career Technical Academy. From there, I went to College of Southern Nevada (CSN) to obtain my Associates of Science before I came to UNLV and joined APHP during my junior year. Now I am an active officer of APHP as secretary. I am also volunteering at a non-profit organization called Operation H.O.P.E with Dr. Elliot Shin for over a year now. I aspire to become a pediatrician and I currently UTA for a microbiology lab.

ANSWER: I joined APHP, which allowed me to become more involved in the community, meet people who are following the same career path as me, and become more educated in different health fields. Since I enjoyed APHP, I decided to take up a leadership position as a secretary. I decided to apply for secretary since I have some experience in a business administration environment doing paper work for a care home

that deals with clients with mental disorders. It gave me some insight on how our state approaches mental health, which I believe there should be more awareness and funding. I have also volunteered at a hospital in the pediatrics department and was able to have lots of patient interaction. There's more information about my hospital experience in the upcoming question. As of right now, I'm still exploring what I want to specialize in since I've always been changing my mind.

ANSWER: The first thing I did is speak with an advisor to complete the prerequisites on target on time on budget. I also got involved with volunteering at Sunrise Hospital to make sure the career path I have in mind is suitable for me and get a feel for the field of patient care in general. I have also started shadowing doctors to understand what their day-to-day work looks like and gain the experience and knowledge from their long years of experience. I also joined APHP to keep in touch with like minded students and get involved in the community as well as participate in a leadership role. I would want to be a family doctor. Although neurology is my ultimate goal.

The first thing I did is speak with an advisor to complete the prerequisites on target on time on budget. I also got involved with volunteering at Sunrise Hospital to make sure the career path I have in mind is suitable for me and get a feel for the field of patient care in general. I have also started shadowing doctors to understand what their day-to-day work looks like and gain the experience and knowledge from their long years of experience. I also joined APHP to keep in touch with like minded students and get involved in the community as well as participate in a leadership role. I would want to be a family doctor. Although neurology is my ultimate goal.

ANSWER: In order to build my CV, I did join AMSA my first semester in college. I didn't join APHP until my 2nd year. I found that it fit my interests more because it provided several community service opportunities for me. I loved it so much that it pushed me to apply as a humanitarian chair. This position has allowed me to gain a leadership role and gain my leadership experience. I also got accepted into the UMC Emergency Medicine Research Program this semester. Just the interview itself was a great experience because it was a Multiple Mini Interview (MMI), which is a common form of interview format this is used for Med School interviews. I'm still fairly new to this program, but so far I love it. Besides getting research experience I am also getting clinical experience because I am constantly being exposed to physicians and patients. I am currently interested in going into Family Medicine and still plan to shadow a family doctor in the future.

ANSWER: To build up my CV I joined APHP during my second semester in college and have been an active member ever since. For me, I'm really grateful I joined APHP because it not only provided information about various health fields but it also helped me open up and become more social because I used to have pretty bad social anxiety that used to really hold me back from pursuing and trying out new things. After joining APHP I realized that I really love volunteering and humanitarian work, so I decided to pursue a leadership position as a humanitarian officer in APHP which involves coordinating the various volunteer work that we provide members. This sort of work really helped to fine tune communication, planning and scheduling, as well as time management skills. I have also been volunteering at St. Rose for about a year and half, twice a week, and I absolutely love it. I've made a lot of great friends through volunteering, both with APHP and at the hospital, and volunteering is something I truly enjoy and encourage others to develop a passion for. Currently, I'm looking at going to pediatrics, but this could change in the future as you sometimes don't really know what you want to do until you see it hands on. Over winter break I'm planning on shadowing a General Practitioner at an Urgent Care clinic.

ANSWER: In order to build my CV, I needed to join a health organization. I decided to join APHP and become an officer. Since I joined APHP, I gained more community service hours and gained connections to hospitals to build my CV. I enjoy being apart of APHP because of the opportunity it offers. I am pursuing medical to become a plastic surgeon. I find interest in it because it involves more hand to hand activities.

ANSWER: I joined APHP to add community service to my CV. I also began volunteering in hospitals in order to gain hospital experience. To gain leadership experience I became an APHP officer. I am interested in family medicine and wish to become a ringside physician for boxing and the UFC on the side.

ANSWER: In order to build my CV, I began by joining APHP in order to participate in community service which is needed in order to be a competitive applicant. Within APHP I became an officer in order to gain the leadership experience I needed to continue branching my pre-med roles. Shadowing is a huge CV builder and I began shadowing a OB/GYN and Plastic Surgeon in order to learn what it really means to be a doctor. After that I started volunteering at Sunrise hospital to get more experience in the medical field and boost my application. Working at Sunrise I met an ER doctor that allowed me to shadow him along with an Orthopedic Surgeon, which I am currently shadowing. This semester I joined a research lab to gain even more experience in my field and have hopes to have my own project next semester.

NEW QUESTION: What should I include in the objective portion of my CV to show my interest in engaging myself in undergraduate studies?

Yassine:

Be honest about what makes you tick and what you want to achieve in life.

QUESTION: If you have done research, which lab did you join and how far into your undergrad career did you join? What research did you do? How long? Did you enjoy your time and would you recommend it to other students?

ANSWER: I joined the UMC Emergency Medicine Research team this semester. I'm currently a junior, but would highly recommend students to join a research lab as early as they can. One of the studies I am doing is regarding ultrasound guided intrajugular vein IVs. There are always other studies on going and I am part of the team constantly collecting data throughout the emergency department at UMC. I've enjoyed it so far and would recommend it to other students.

ANSWER: I joined Dr. Schiller's research lab halfway through my sophomore year. My research focused on the new field of personalized medicine with Henry Santos (cool dude), and we developed a nutrigenetic database. Nutrigenetics is the study of how the food we eat can interact with our genes to increase/decrease our risk of disease. This is an ongoing bioinformatics project. I also joined Dr. Schiller's wet lab during the summer of my junior year where I worked with another student on the motifs within the C-terminome of proteins. These motifs play crucial roles in interacting with other proteins via phosphorylation, acetylation, etc. and they could play a large role in creating new drug treatments.

ANSWER: I joined Dr. Jaeger's research lab this semester, fall of my senior year (this is pretty late to do though).

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QUESTION: Have you volunteered in a hospital? If so, where and how was your experience like?

PASCAL: No but I have been a patient in a hospital before. It was not fun.

ANSWER: Yes I have volunteered in a hospital. I volunteered at St. Rose Hospital for about 6 months. I enjoyed it a lot, mostly because you realize how important every position is in a hospital in order to function efficiently. Also I think it's a good opportunity to have real face to face interactions with patients. It's the only time wear I ever felt actually part of the entire process of helping a patient, compared to just shadowing a doctor.

ANSWER: I haven't volunteered at a hospital, but I have been volunteering at Volunteers in Medicine of Southern Nevada (VMSN) since last year. The clinic is run by volunteers, and even the doctors themselves are volunteers. It's been a wonderful experience because you get to see what it's like from different perspectives in a clinic, starting from the front desk, to the back desk of the clinic, to shadowing and scribing for the doctors. Front desk experience at VMSN gives you receptionist and organizational experience, and you become familiarized with HIPAA disclosure forms. With back desk experience, you recognize forms and codes that doctors use regularly. Shadowing and scribing here allows you see how the doctors interact with their patients, and you get familiar medical terminology.

ANSWER: I volunteered at Sunrise Children's Hospital for about a year catering to the needs of patients and just making their stay at the hospital a bit manageable. I was able to work with the child life specialists and assist the nurses in making sure the patients are comfortable and not bored. It definitely was an engaging experience because I got to interact with the patients and their families. As a volunteer, I was able to become close to some of the families and patients and was able to learn their stories. Through these experiences, you learn how to become more compassionate and caring of others. Sometimes, patients and their families are a bit intimidated by the doctors or nurses, so they feel comforted when a volunteer is there. At the end of the shifts, I always feel rewarded for being able to serve others.

ANSWER: I have been volunteering at Sunrise Hospital since October 2015 and it has been such an amazing experience meeting so many patients from different walks of life. I have connected with many at a even spiritual level. Volunteering at the hospital made me realize that caring for the sick is what I am meant to do with my life. I plan to continue volunteering my time now and in the future.

ANSWER: Yes, I'm currently a volunteer at one of the campuses of the St. Rose Dominican Hospitals. I've been volunteering there for about a year and a half, about a year ago I picked up an additional shift; so I volunteer there twice a week. I really enjoy volunteering there! Like I said before, volunteering has really helped me overcome a lot (but not all) of my social anxieties, and for me personally, I'm really proud of how far I've come since I started out. For others they might seem like small or insignificant accomplishments, but for someone who used to have literal panic attacks at just the mention of having to do a presentation to being able to talk in front of everyone at the meeting (albeit pretty awkwardly); it's a major improvement. Volunteering is not only great for your CV, but it's also a great way to understand how the internal processes within the hospital work; therefore, understanding how the hospital functions as a whole. You also have the opportunity to interact with the patients, which helps with your social skills, but it also gives you the chance to help make their day a little better by providing cheerful conversation or encouragement. I would encourage others to start volunteering at a hospital if they have the time for it because it really gives you a deeper understanding of the roles of every individual in the hospital, and gives you the experience to see what actually happens in a hospital rather than just an idea of what you think happens there.

ANSWER: I am currently volunteering at Spring Valley hospital. I am stationed in the ER and I love it. I experience some cool stuff but most of the time I end up restocking equipment.

ANSWER: I volunteer at Spring Valley Hospital. I work mainly in the ER and IMC, most of the time I restock gloves and other equipment.

ANSWER: Yes at Sunrise hospital. My experience was amazing, I volunteered in the ER and also the NICU. In the ER I pushed around a cart full of random goodies that I would take to each room and ask the patient if they needed anything. This was a lot of fun because I got to interact with a lot of patients and listen to what they wish were different and what they enjoyed about their stay. However, the NICU is my all time favorite place to volunteer because I was able to hold, feed and change the diapers of the babies. In the NICU you have more contact with the staff because many of the babies families do not come to see them.

QUESTION: What would you do differently if given the opportunity?

ANSWER: I would start by getting clinical experience starting as a sophomore. I don't mean clinical experience where you are standing around in a hospital or even re-stocking rooms. I would get clinical experience that has actual patient interactions. I would realize earlier on that the people who get amazing grades are not "smarter" than me, they are just people who study harder and longer. In a sense, studying longer is a smart thing to do though. I would have chosen one of the many non-profit organizations in Las Vegas and dedicated myself to them for a long period of time (1-2 years). I would try to worry about myself rather than about what everybody else was doing.

ANSWER: I would start managing my time better earlier. I realized during my junior year that school is much easier if you make just make time for what's important and have a plan of attack. It's not about doing less, but rather just doing everything efficiently. Also just really making time for the stuff you care about. We all have a dream, but don't let life pass you by while chasing it.

ANSWER: The beginning of your college career is when the A's come easy. Don't squander them! Attend class religiously and focus on your grades early on. Also become more involved, the sooner the better with things like organizations and research labs. Put aside time to volunteer in a hospital setting to try and get an appreciation for what is actually done.

ANSWER: If I could, I would have jumped at research opportunities earlier in my undergrad career. If you can find an opportunity to get involved in research when you're a freshman or sophomore, don't shy away from it! What I didn't know about research was that many labs require you to participate for at least one year with 10 hours per week.

Another thing is that I switched my majors a few times to find out what was right for me, and I don't regret it at all. If I could do something differently, though, I would tell myself that it is ok to make mistakes, but you have to grow and improve from them. I had this misconception that you had to be perfect with perfect grades to be a doctor--which isn't true. Because of this, I thought I wasn't good enough to chase after something like this for the longest time.

ANSWER: I wish I could have joined APHP about a year or two earlier, be more organized in my study habits and time management. I also realized that having a morning routine, breakfast and an agenda is just as crucial as sleeping early the night before an exam. I would tell my younger self that preparation is key and that the tools for success have been my back pockets the entire time. It was not apparent to me and other freshman at the time of how different college life really is. I've always wondered

how different college life would have been for me if I had an older sibling to give me guidance. I am an optimist, so when the time comes around for my younger sisters to go to college, I'll be there to give them any and everything they need to succeed.

ANSWER: I would have looked for research opportunities sooner. I did not know when I should start my research experience and I wished that someone told me where I could start and I had to ask around. You have to make sure that you can handle being in a research lab because it requires a lot of time and that you have to be committed for about a year or two.

ANSWER: If I could do something differently, I would have joined APHP earlier because I've gathered so much information that could have been useful when I started this pre-med journey. I've missed some great opportunities because I didn't feel that I was confident enough or didn't feel that it was beneficial at the time. When I joined APHP, I was able to gain that confidence in myself after meeting so many great people. I actually started off with a different major, so when I changed to Biology, I did not get all the helpful information to help steer me in the right direction right away. That's why it's so important to research what you need to do as soon as you can so you will have an idea of what you should try to do before getting into professional school. I don't have any regrets because I did learn a lot from my previous major, which can be useful in the health care.

ANSWER: My big advice to anyone is just do what is best for yourself and stay focused. Don't compare yourself to others, and don't listen to those who try to put you down. Just surround yourself with positive people who motivate you.

ANSWER: I would have gone for this career path earlier in my life although the opportunity did not present itself ten years ago. No regrets though, working in the field of technology has provided me with an invaluable sense of responsibility, work ethics, organization and team work.

ANSWER: I would have done everything I'm doing now earlier! Your junior and senior years in college get tough because your upper division biology classes are all being taken at the same time and your schedule gets really hectic. I would have chosen to start volunteering from the start. I also wish I had a mentor very very early on that told you information regarding professors, classes- pretty much everything no one else will tell you about.

ANSWER: I already joined APHP pretty early on in my college years, but I definitely wish I pursued a leadership position a lot sooner. After undertaking the role of an officer I've noticed my communication skills have improved a lot and I'm definitely a lot more comfortable putting myself in social situations that used to make me super anxious. I also wished I figured out my study strategies and worked on my time management a lot earlier on, because there was a period of time where I really struggled to keep up with everything and so my grades suffered quite a bit. However, if I figured those skills out sooner, then I would be in a much better position than I am in now. It's really important to reach out to someone if you're struggling, whether it be an advisor, mentor, close friend, or family member, it's really important to speak up about where and how you're struggling in your studies because your stress will keep building on itself; and it's not healthy for you, and it's something I personally wished I did a lot sooner. It's completely okay to have a hard time, but it's really hard to admit it to yourself and to others, so my advice would be just go at your own pace and to not constantly compare yourself to your peers because that just creates an environment where you put yourself down. So just do what you feel is better for yourself, not what everyone else is doing, if the pace is too fast or if the course load is too much, it's okay to take it easy. Stay focused on your goals and your aspirations, and you'll do just fine. Make friends who are true friends, who support you and motivate you, not put you down when you have a hard time.

ANSWER: If I had the chance to change anything it would have to be changing my time management skills. It took me a while to develop it but I wish I pushed myself harder.

ANSWER: Make as many friends as possible, sometimes you can score old exams for classes through networking.

ANSWER: I would have joined a research lab in my sophomore year rather than now. I would have buckled down and studied harder from the beginning because my first year I was too involved with everything but school.

QUESTION: What classes were/are the most beneficial?

ANSWER: I believe the most beneficial classes are the ones that cover a large variety of topics and they connect the topics well. These classes are Cell Phy, Biochem I & II, PSY 303, PSY 424, Mamm Phys, and Immunology. I believe that these classes were very useful to take before the MCAT (but I took Biochem II and Immuno afterwards). Cell Physiology teaches you the complex inner workings of the cell and has a fun interactive professor. BC I explains enzyme reactions, glycolysis, TCA cycle and II

teaches you about lipids, nucleotides, pentose phosphate pathway and more. I found that PSY 303 (Foundations) was very useful in learning about the brain, neurons, and diseases. PSY 424 (Neuro) was helpful in understanding research experiments and what these experiments tell us about learning and memory in humans. Mammalian physiology is a great class to learn all about the systems of the body and how they interact together. Immunology is useful because it teaches you about the complexities of the inflammatory processes, antibodies and other useful information that no other class will cover.

ANSWER: For the MCAT: Immunology, Mammalian Physiology, CELL PHYS!!!, Biochem obviously, Evolution, Principles of Genetics, CELL PHYS!!!, Anatomy.

ANSWER: The classes that helped me the most were microbiology, virology, immunology, bacterial pathogenesis, biochemistry, and organic chemistry.

ANSWER: Some courses I thought were helpful were general chemistry and biology courses, cell physiology, mammalian physiology, immunology, biochemistry, and some psychology courses if you declare a psychology minor.

ANSWER: All the science classes I have taken are so fascinating and eye opening about the world of being. Those that provide information that can be applied to life directly have proven to be especially beneficial immediately such as Nutrition.

ANSWER: Some classes that I felt were really helpful were microbiology, cell physiology, immunology, biochemistry, and the general biology and chemistry courses. I also feel that some of the upper division psychology classes because I felt like it ties some of the information you learn in biology classes into a real life context, as in you can see it and apply it to real life examples.

ANSWER: I enjoyed taking ochem. It challenged me intellectually as a student and pushed me to succeed.

QUESTION: What MCAT tips do you have?

ANSWER: The MCAT is more about applying your concepts than studying. Seriously! Study a lot, but use practice problems to test your knowledge very frequently. Utilize (bother) friends who are studying for the MCAT. Take it seriously and study consistently

i.e. not once a week. Talk to people who have already taken the exam. Lots of practice exams, practice questions, and don't get burned out! Rest days are important.

ANSWER: The biggest thing I can say is have a plan and stick to it. Half the battle with the MCAT is just the endurance and persistence. That's very vague, but everyone will learn what works for them as you study for it. Also find people you can study and discuss topics with!

ANSWER: One tip I have for anyone who needs to take an admissions exam is to know ahead of time which subjects will be on your exam. By "ahead of time," I'm talking about the moment you start taking any biology or science courses related to the exam, which might seem extreme if you just decided to become a bio major. If you can get your hands on a set of prep books, even if they are a little bit older, you can see what kind of topics you will be tested on before you even take those classes. The prep books will broadly cover those topics in the exams, and while you're taking those related courses, you're bound to cover these MCAT topics. As you take each class, you can annotate these prep books, and it'll be easier to revisit material when it's time to start studying for the MCAT.

QUESTION: What interview tips do you have?

ANSWER: More cliches! Practice makes perfect. I practiced answering several questions for a week straight with a bunch of different people to gain feedback. Also just stay informed. Be a decent human being and be informed.

ANSWER: Be prepared. Shadowing, volunteering, and community work should help be prepared for it as well. Be yourself and you will do well.

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

QUESTION: As a pre-PA student, what did you do to build up your CV? In addition, please add your interest/what you want to specialize in.

ANSWER: To build up my CV, I shadowed a PA for about 6 months and still have her as a mentor to talk to. I think it's important to find someone in the field that you're

interested in working in that is willing to still guide you even after you are done shadowing. The cool thing about being a PA is that you don't have to pick one specialty. You can work in one specialty for a few years and then change it up to a completely different specialty. That's what I'm excited about.

QUESTION: Have you volunteered in a hospital? If so, where and how was your experience like?

ANSWER: I volunteer in the NICU at Sunrise Hospital which gives me great insight into the specialty I hope to be apart of. I especially love to watch the teamwork that all the staff uses. No one goes in noticed and everyone is appreciated; even the volunteers.

QUESTION: What would you do differently if given the opportunity?

ANSWER: I would have decided to become a PA much sooner. Family is very important to me and the fact that I will have more time for that has alleviated lots of stress.

QUESTION: What classes were/are the most beneficial?

ANSWER: Histology is very useful to go to PA school. The schooling is half that of medical school so it is important to take the classes that are going to benefit you the most in that small amount of time. I am also taking medical terminology which has come in handy within the last few months

QUESTION: What tips can you give about taking the GRE?

ANSWER: To get into PA school you must take the GRE. I have not taken it yet so I don't have any advice except to brush up on your math (that's what I have heard).

RADIOGRAPHY

QUESTION: As a pre-rad student, what did you do to build up your CV?

ANSWER: In order to get into the program, you have to write a letter. That's your basis and basically what gives your application personality. The board comprises of rad

professors (Chad Hensley & Dr. George Pales). They review each letter on a case to case basis, so it is essential that you get to know the rad board members and that they can associate an application to a face. Get involved in STARS and leadership roles.

QUESTION: Have you volunteered in a hospital? If so, where and how was your experience like?

ANSWER: [from RAD student]

QUESTION: What would you do differently if given the opportunity?

ANSWER: If I had the opportunity to do something different, I would volunteer at hospitals sooner and go in order of radiography classes. I started off with RAD 102, 100, and then 117. By the way those classes, in my opinion, should have been taken in this order → RAD 117, RAD 100, then RAD 102.

QUESTION: What classes were/are the most beneficial?

ANSWER: RAD 100 & RAD 117 -- RAD 100 is an introduction to medical imaging class whereas RAD 117 is a patient care in medical imaging class. RAD 100 is mostly terminology based, whereas RAD 117 is interactive (practice venipuncture, get CPR certified, and etc).

NURSING

QUESTION: As a pre-nursing student, what did you do to build up your CV?

ANSWER: At least with the UNLV Bachelor Nursing program, they do not care about your resume. They admit people solely based on their own point system, in which you get point based on the grade you get in certain classes (mainly your science classes). So the only, and best, way to build up your "CV" is to get good grades in your prereqs.

QUESTION: Have you volunteered in a hospital? If so, where and how was your experience like?

ANSWER: I personally have not volunteered at a hospital. A lot of people in the program have. A lot of people have not, and that's totally fine. You learn everything and experience it all in nursing school, and they do prepare you. One thing you have to remember is that if you volunteer, it'll be solely for your own experience as the school of nursing admissions office does not care how many hours you volunteered. That being said, keep in mind the quality of your volunteering. Practice makes permanent. Since you're not there in order to "collect hours", a desk job will not do you any good. Hands on experience will be a lot more beneficial.

QUESTION: What would you do differently if given the opportunity?

ANSWER: Register for classes earlier. (I am an outlier for this one because my prereqs were stupid easy to me.)

QUESTION: What classes were/are the most beneficial?

ANSWER: Anatomy and physiology. In nursing school, the info you learn in this course will be your new ABCs. If you do not know anatomy and physiology, you will struggle throughout the entirety of nursing school. You need this prior information to understand all of the disease processes and drug mechanics.

QUESTION: What board exam tips do you have?

ANSWER: The HESI is easy. Study the night before like I did and get an A on it. Just kidding. It's much like the SAT with the inclusion of A&P. Do practice questions. Review anatomy and physiology if you have time. Pay attention in A&P class.

KINESIOLOGY

QUESTION: As a pre-kinesiology student, what did you do to build up your CV?

ANSWER: Knowing that kinesiology is a well sought out major for many, I made sure that I came out with some extracurricular activities under my belt to stand out in applications during school. I contacted professors in the PT department to help aid in research since schools tend to ask for research experiences. I also asked professors in my major that taught labs if I may become a teaching assistant to spice up my CV a little

more. I was a member of the pre-physical therapy club for two years and did some community services. After doing community services, I reached out to complete quite a bit of outpatient physical therapy observation/working hours to get my foot in the door.

QUESTION: Have you volunteered in a hospital? If so, where and how was your experience like?

ANSWER: I volunteered at Spring Valley Hospital in the rehabilitation floor where patients stay for about a week or two to do physical and occupational therapy. The initiation process to become a volunteer was time consuming and my tip would be to get started on the application as soon as possible as you have to meet certain dates. Sometimes the location you want to volunteer at, such as the rehabilitation floor, will be full and you will be designated somewhere else until it becomes open. During my volunteer hours, I was lucky to be following a clinical instructor for physical therapy students so I got to learn how to manage contraindications for injuries on spot. Most of the time, I am in charge of pushing the wheel chair behind the patients when they go for walks with the therapists. On some good days, I was able to help run some patients through exercises or use equipment to help with transfers.

QUESTION: What would you do differently if given the opportunity?

ANSWER: I definitely would study a lot sooner and take everything about school more serious. Not maintaining a high GPA was another thing I regret the most and it haunts me during applications. I would sit down and consider the potentials of this major before as well and consider other options if things do not work out. Luckily, I enjoy what my field is about but I recommend shadowing as soon as possible in the field to get a taste before embarking deeper in the major.

QUESTION: What classes were/are the most beneficial?

ANSWER: There are two routes for the Kinesiology major: comprehensive and allied health. Without a doubt, allied health is the way to go. Allied health has prepared me over the top on everything in the physical therapy setting. I began shadowing/working in an outpatient setting and I had my book smarts to support me every step of the way. I learned all the modalities and how to use them, special tests that physical therapist use, therapeutic exercises, and all kinds of treatment methods. If I went the comprehensive route, I would literally know nothing about anything. The upper division classes such as: upper/lower extremities, therapeutic modalities, pharmacology, and therapeutic exercise

are the most applicable classes to prepare you for physical therapy school to give you an edge over other students.

QUESTION: What GRE tips do you have?

ANSWER: I tried two methods for the GRE, studying on how to approach the question and practicing questions. The first method, studying on how to approach the question, benefitted on answering questions I would typically overthink of and do excess work to approach a wrong answer. It was great and all but those books took more time and money to do less than good in terms of time efficiency. The second method is all you really need to do. Doing practice problems left and right will achieve the same goal as the first method and you grow to understand the types of questions that will be asked during the exam.

QUESTION: What interview tips can you give?

ANSWER: I have not done interviews yet for any schools, but I have asked quite a number of physical therapists on their interview experiences. They referred me to googling 'student doctor network' to get a perspective on the kinds of questions they will be asking and I can prepare for it. Interview styles are different for all schools; some do group interviews, some do one on one interview, and some do both interviews. I was told that when schools do interviews, they want to know you for who you are and to not hear the typical student-type response on everything to look good in front of them. Answer the questions to what represents you as an individual the best.