

PRE-PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

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PROGRAMS THAT LEAD TO PROFESSIONAL STUDY

- Dentistry
- Medicine
- Optometry
- Osteopathic & Allopathic Therapy
- Pharmacy
- Physical Therapy
- Podiatry
- Veterinary Medicine
(agriculture and biology options)

PROGRAMS THAT REQUIRE TRANSFER

- Chiropractic
- Dental Hygiene
- Engineering
- Forestry
- Law
- Mortuary Science
- Nursing
- Occupational Therapy
- Radiology
- Respiratory Therapy
- Speech Pathology

THE PROGRAM

Many exciting professional careers require a strong science background. That's why Northwest can give you an advantage. The University is known for its small classes and its personalized approach, and this couldn't be more true when it comes to pre-professional study. The small size of the University and the relatively small number of pre-professional students allows professors and advisors to take a personal interest in their students' progress while being able to supervise their career paths.

All first-year students at Northwest are enrolled according to major in a one-hour class called Freshman Seminar. As a pre-professional student, you will meet weekly with other pre-professional students and a professor who understands your specialized needs.

Although many students don't realize it, no college has an official Pre-med, Pre-optometry or Pre-physical therapy major. In effect, students follow a recommended course of study, often in an area of biology, chemistry or both, and then apply for admission into the professional program of their choice.

Pre-professional programs at Northwest fall into two categories. Some lead the student to earn a bachelor's degree, then continue in graduate study. Others give the student on average approximately two years of training before they are eligible to transfer to another college or university to obtain a bachelor's degree in their field.

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HEALTH SCIENCES

For the career paths listed above, Northwest advisors recommend the Pre-Professional Zoology major. This major is designed to provide students with the knowledge they need for careers in health care and veterinary medicine. Classes include organic chemistry, comparative anatomy, genetics and immunology. For students who successfully complete a degree at Northwest, placement in the schools of medicine and health-related professions is about 90 percent.

PRE-VETERINARY MEDICINE

For the student aimed toward veterinary medicine, Northwest offers two options. One is the pre-professional zoology major, offered through the Department of Biological Sciences where students take more courses focused on Biology. The other is the animal science major with the pre-veterinary option offered through the Department of Agriculture, which focuses on more agricultural coursework.

The number of students accepted into colleges of veterinary medicine is quite limited. Therefore, pre-veterinary students are advised to have alternate career plans. Northwest has an excellent record of acceptance with the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine among students who have an impressive pre-professional record.

PROGRAMS THAT REQUIRE TRANSFERRING TO ANOTHER INSTITUTION

PRE-SPEECH PATHOLOGY

Students may attend Northwest for two years before transferring to a speech pathology program. Prerequisite courses will vary slightly depending on the university to which the student will be transferring. The majority of students continue their education and obtain master's degrees in communication disorders.

PRE-CHIROPRACTIC

Courses taken depend upon the chiropractic school a student plans to attend. Courses required include general and organic chemistry, physics, biology, English, psychology, social sciences and humanities. A student usually needs to complete a minimum of 60 hours of academic credit as a prerequisite for admission to a professional program.

PRE-ENGINEERING

Students interested in pursuing a bachelor's degree in engineering usually attend Northwest for four or five trimesters and then transfer to an engineering program for four or five more. The average amount of time it takes to earn a bachelor's degree in engineering is 4.8 years. Northwest works closely with the University of Missouri–Rolla and the University of Missouri–Columbia, though students are not restricted to these universities.

PRE-FORESTRY

Students generally attend Northwest for two years before transferring to a forestry program. Most students resume their coursework at the University of Missouri–Columbia, Iowa State University, University of Nebraska or Kansas State University. Most forestry programs require a total of four years of classes and at least one summer of field work.

PRE-NURSING

No specific major is required. Students take a variety of prerequisites in which courses in chemistry and biology are emphasized. Students attend Northwest for two years, then apply to the nursing school of their choice. Most students continue their education in nursing programs and obtain a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

PRE-OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Although no specific major is required, most occupational therapy schools require at least 60-64 hours of prerequisites. Northwest students usually complete these requirements in two years and then apply to an occupational therapy school. Most programs require an entrance exam and an interview. Observation hours of working occupational therapists and volunteer work in the field are critical to admission.

PRE-PHYSICAL THERAPY

It usually takes 4-8 years to become a physical therapist. While some programs offer a bachelor's degree, most begin at the master's level, requiring a bachelor's degree before admission. Regardless of the path they take, students major in pre-professional zoology or biology/psychology while at Northwest, then apply for admission to the programs of their choice. Competition for placement in physical therapy programs is fierce. Volunteer work and observation of working physical therapists is critical.

TRANSFER SCHOOLS

Here are some of the schools previous Northwest students have transferred to:

- Iowa State University
- Kansas State University
- University of Iowa
- University of Kansas
- University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine
- University of Missouri–Columbia
- University of Missouri–Kansas City
- University of Missouri–Rolla
- University of Nebraska
- Osteopathic schools in Kansas City, Des Moines and Kirksville, Mo.

If you need any more information about the Pre-Professional Studies programs, please contact the Admissions office or one of the departments below.

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