

# Pathway to Physician (D.O.)

## What is a Physician? What's the job outlook?

Physicians diagnose and treat injuries and illnesses; they take medical histories, prescribe medications, and order, perform, and interpret diagnostic tests. They also counsel on diet and preventative healthcare. There are two kinds of physicians; M.D. (Medical Doctor) and D.O. (Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine). Both use the same methods of treatment, but D.O.s are trained to use osteopathic manipulative treatment to help diagnose injury and illness, to alleviate pain, and to promote well-being. D.O.s place an emphasis on wellness and preventative medicine. For more information on how osteopathic medicine differs from allopathic (M.D.) medicine, refer to the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) website at [www.aacom.org](http://www.aacom.org).



Employment for physicians is expected to grow 3 percent from 2020 to 2030. Most job growth is expected to result from the need to replace those who transfer to different occupations and/or retire. The growing and aging population is also expected to drive overall growth. As rates of chronic illness rise, consumers will seek high levels of care that use the latest technologies and therapies. As new technologies become more widely used, however, physician assistants and nurse practitioners may be used to reduce cost at hospitals and doctor's offices. The annual mean wage for a physician depends on their specialty and where they practice, but for a general internal medicine physician in the Denver Metro area it is \$224,360.\*

\*U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, Pharmacists, on the Internet at <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/physicians-and-surgeons.htm#tab-7>

## How do I become a Physician?

Physicians must have either a Medical Doctor (M.D.) or Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.). No specific undergraduate degree is required to apply for medical school, but a bachelor's degree is required. Medical schools are highly competitive. In Colorado there is one D.O. program, Rocky Vista University College of Osteopathic Medicine (RVUCOM). There are two RVUCOM campuses, one in Colorado and one in Utah.

Applicants to RVUCOM must submit transcripts, scores from the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT), and letters of recommendation. Applicants meeting the GPA minimum requirements, will then be reviewed for their first campus choice. The admissions committee will then select which applicants they wish to interview. Once a candidate is invited to interview at a specified campus, that is the only campus they are considered for.

Medical school is 4 years of study, after which graduates will enter a residency program based on their specialty of interest. Residencies can last anywhere from 3-7 years, depending on the specialty. Sub-specialization would include additional training in a fellowship of 1-3 years.

All states require that physicians be licensed; requirements vary by state. To qualify for a license, candidates must graduate from an accredited medical school and complete residency training in their specialty. RVUCOM requires student doctors to pass comprehensive osteopathic medical licensing exams.

**Biology Faculty Advisors who can guide you for this path are:**

**Dr. Clare Hays**

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Prerequisites for entry into medical school vary. Since medicine is a mixture of science and contact with people, courses in social and behavioral sciences, arts and humanities are of great value. Of course, you must demonstrate competence in the required science courses as well.

To check on the specific required courses for admission to osteopathic medical schools around the country you can consult the AACOM website, [www.aacom.org](http://www.aacom.org).

For further detail on admissions requirements at RVUCOM, you can visit their website, <https://www.rvu.edu/admissions/do/>.

The following is a list of course requirements for admission to RVUCOM.

- **General Biology with lab** – BIO 1080/1090 and BIO 1081/1091; 2 semesters
- **General Chemistry with lab** – CHE 1800/1801 and CHE 1810/1811; 2 semesters
- **Organic Chemistry with lab** – CHE 3100/3120 and CHE 3110/3130; 2 semesters
- **Biochemistry** – CHE 4310; 1 semester
- **Math** – MTH 1110 and MTH 1120 (prerequisites for CHE & PHY); 2 semesters
- **College Physics** – PHY 2010/2030 and 2020/2040; 2 semesters
- **English Composition** – ENG 1010 and ENG 1020; 2 semesters
- **Behavioral/Social Sciences** – 6 credits
- **Additional Semester of Biology**

The following are highly recommended courses, although not required.

- **BIO 2310 & 2320** – Anatomy & Physiology I & II; 2 semesters
- **BIO 2400** – General Microbiology; 1 semester
- **BIO 3050** – Cell Biology; 1 semester
- **BIO 3350** – Immunology; 1 semester
- **BIO 3600 or BIO 3610** – General Genetics or Genetics: Principles and Analysis; 1 semester
- **MTH 1210** – Statistics
- **Psychology, Sociology, and Ethics**

**\*\* Applicants should plan on completing the required courses by the end of junior year so that you will be prepared to take the MCAT in the spring of your junior year. The MCAT must be taken during or before September in the year of application. \*\***

**REQUIREMENTS FOR A MAJOR IN BIOLOGY**  
**for 2020-2021 or future catalogs ONLY**

A grade of "C-" or better is required for each BIO prefix course to count towards the major

**Required Biology Courses for both the B.A. or the B.S. Degree**

BIO 1080-3 General Biology I.....	3
BIO 1090-1 General Biology Lab I.....	1
BIO 1081-3 General Biology II.....	3
BIO 1091-1 General Biology Lab II.....	1
 BIO 3520-3 General Ecology .....	 3

***Take ONE of these Genetics options:***

- BIO 3600-4** General Genetics (no lab) ..... 4  
 OR  
 **BIO 3610-4** Genetics: Principles & Analysis (has lab)..... 4

***Pick ONE of these options:***

- Option 1:** **BIO 2100-5** General Botany  
 OR  
 **Option 2:** **BIO 2400-5** General Microbiology  
 OR  
 **Option 3:** **Both BIO 2310-4 and BIO 2320-4** (Anatomy & Physiology I & II)  
 (You must take both semesters to get credit for this option)  
 OR  
 **Option 4:** **Either BIO 3200-4** Invertebrate Zoology or **BIO 3260-4** Vertebrate Zoology  
 (If you wish to take both zoology courses, the other will count as an upper division elective)

**Students are required to take a Senior Experience course:**

Fulfills Senior Experience Requirement	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>BIO 4050-3</b> Advanced Cell & Molecular Biology	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>BIO 4510-4</b> Microbial Ecology
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>BIO 4230-3</b> Issues in Conservation Biology	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>BIO 4540-4</b> Plant Ecology
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>BIO 4300-3</b> Neurobiology	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>BIO 4550-4</b> Animal Ecology
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>BIO 4820-4</b> Developmental Biology	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>BIO 4850-3</b> Evolution	

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**Elective Biology courses:** Biology courses from 2000, 3000, and 4000 must be completed to bring the total of biology courses approved for the major to 40 credits. *At least 21 of these Biology credits must be from the 3000 or 4000 courses of the Department of Biology.*

Recommended Elective Courses from which to Choose:

- BIO 3050 – Cell Biology
- BIO 3350 - Immunology
- BIO 4820 – Developmental Biology
- CHE 4310 – Biochemistry

Total Credit Hours in Biology (minimum of 40) \_\_\_\_\_

Upper Division Biology Credit Hours (minimum of 21) \_\_\_\_\_

## **B.S. Non-Bio Course Requirements:**

CHE 1800-4 Gen Chemistry I \_\_\_\_\_

CHE 1801-1 Gen Chemistry I Lab \_\_\_\_\_

CHE 1810-4 Gen Chemistry II \_\_\_\_\_

CHE 1811-1 Gen Chemistry II Lab \_\_\_\_\_

## **CHOOSE YOUR PATH:**

CHE 3100-4 Organic Chemistry I \_\_\_\_\_

CHE 3120-1 Organic Chemistry I Lab \_\_\_\_\_

AND

CHE 3110- 3 Organic Chemistry II \_\_\_\_\_

~OR~

ºCHE 3090- 4 Survey of Organic Chem \_\_\_\_\_

CHE 3120-1 Organic Chemistry I Lab \_\_\_\_\_

AND

ºCHE 4310-4 Biochemistry \_\_\_\_\_

º Note on CHE 3090 – Survey of Organic Chemistry - this class is no longer being offered

º Note on CHE 4310 – Biochemistry – requires completion of both Organic Chemistry I and II

## **Math Requirement:**

Two Semesters of Math: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Choose from the following math courses:

MTH 1108-1109 (Stretch College Algebra)\*, MTH 1111 and MTH 1101 (College Algebra with lab), MTH 1110 (College Algebra), MTH 1112 (College Algebra through Modeling), MTH 1120 (Trigonometry), MTH 1115 and MTH 1116 (College Algebra through Modeling with lab), MTH 1210 (Intro to Statistics), MTH 1410 (Calculus I)\*\*

\*MTH 1108-1109 is a Stretch Course and only counts as ONE of the required math courses for the BIO BS.\*

\*\*Students planning to take Calculus must take MTH 1108-1109, MTH 1110, or MTH 1111\*\*

Physics Requirement (Specific to Medical School)

**College Physics I/II with lab\***— PHY 2010/2030 or PHY 2020/2040

**OR**

**General Physics I/II with lab\*\*** —PHY 2311/2321 or PHY 2331/2341

\*Prerequisites for PHY 2010/2030 includes MTH 1120- College Trigonometry

\*\*Prerequisites for PHY 2311/2321 includes MTH 1410 – Calculus I

**General Studies Requirements (33 cr. total)**, please visit

<http://www.msudenver.edu/advising/facultystaff/generalstudiesrequirements/>

Total Credits (Minimum 120) \_\_\_\_\_

Total Upper Division Credits (Minimum 40 TOTAL) \_\_\_\_\_

What is your Minor? (required) \_\_\_\_\_

\*Given the requirements for medical school, students on this track will be close to achieving a Chemistry minor, should they choose. This is not required for medical school, just an option for students to be aware of.