



Podiatrists provide medical and surgical care for people suffering foot, ankle, and lower leg problems. They diagnose illnesses, treat injuries, and perform surgery. For example, podiatrists treat calluses, ingrown toenails, heel spurs, and arch problems. They also treat foot and leg problems associated with diabetes and other diseases; they may set fractures. Podiatrists typically do the following:

- Listen to a patient’s concerns about their feet, ankles, or lower legs
- Diagnose foot, ankle, and lower-leg problems, through physical exams, x rays, medical laboratory tests, and other methods
- Provide treatment for foot, ankle, and lower-leg ailments, such as prescribing special shoe inserts (orthotics) to improve a patient’s mobility
- Perform foot and ankle surgeries, such as removing bone spurs
- Offer advice and instruction on foot and ankle care
- Prescribe medications
- Refer patients to physicians or specialists if they detect larger health problems, such as diabetes
- Read journals and attend conferences to keep up with advances in podiatric medicine

Podiatrists who own their practice may also spend time on business related activities, such as hiring employees and managing inventory. (*Occupational Outlook Handbook*)

A minimum of 90 semester hours are required for admission at most podiatry schools. However, the majority of students entering podiatry school have a baccalaureate degree. Therefore, students pursuing a pre-podiatry curriculum are expected to choose a major so that they can be working towards a baccalaureate degree concurrently with the pre-podiatry program. This requires a major/minor combination or a comprehensive major as well as completion of the UNK general studies requirements and other degree requirements as set forth in the college catalog. Podiatry schools do not specify which major a student should pursue in conjunction with his/her pre-podiatry studies. **Gaining acceptance into a podiatry school is a very competitive process. Completion of the pre-requisite courses does not automatically guarantee admission.**

The following curriculum will fulfill the admission requirements at most podiatry schools. Students should check with the specific school(s) to which they intend to apply to ensure that all requirements are met.

1. Required courses:

Take 8 credit hours from the following:

|          |                    |   |
|----------|--------------------|---|
| BIOL 103 | General Biology    | 4 |
| BIOL 105 | Biology I          | 4 |
| BIOL 106 | Biology II         | 4 |
| BIOL 211 | Human Microbiology | 4 |

Take one of the following options:

|          |                  |   |
|----------|------------------|---|
| BIOL 215 | Human Physiology | 4 |
|----------|------------------|---|

OR take these 2 courses:

|          |                        |   |
|----------|------------------------|---|
| BIOL 225 | Anatomy and Physiology | 4 |
| BIOL 226 | Anatomy and Physiology | 4 |

Take all of the following:

|          |                                  |   |
|----------|----------------------------------|---|
| CHEM 160 | General Chemistry                | 4 |
| CHEM 161 | General Chemistry                | 4 |
| CHEM 360 | Organic Chemistry                | 5 |
| CHEM 361 | Organic Chemistry                | 5 |
| ENG 101  | Introduction to Academic Writing | 3 |
| ENG 102  | Academic Writing and Research    | 3 |
| PHYS 205 | General Physics                  | 5 |
| PHYS 206 | General Physics                  | 5 |

2. Electives

Recommended electives to assist in preparing for the Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT)

|                                |                           |       |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-------|
| Humanities and Social Sciences |                           | 12-16 |
| BIOL 360                       | Genetics                  | 4     |
| CHEM 351                       | Biochemistry              | 3     |
| STAT 241                       | Elementary Statistics     | 3     |
| PSY 203                        | General Psychology        | 3     |
| PSY 440                        | Health Psychology         | 3     |
| SOC 100                        | Introduction to Sociology | 3     |
| SOC 275                        | Social Psychology         | 3     |

Academic Guidelines

A minimum cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.50 in the required prerequisite courses and the required 90 semester hours is required. However, a higher GPA is preferred and will result in the student being a more competitive applicant. Each required course must be passed with a grade of “C” or better. A grade of “C-” will not be accepted. Students searching for electives outside their major requirements should consider courses from the following areas: biology, chemistry, mathematics, sociology, psychology, business administration, healthcare management, and healthcare economics. See your advisor for suggestions. Students should be aware of prerequisites on all courses and plan their coursework accordingly.

Non-Academic Guidelines

There is no magic formula for acceptance in to professional school. Admission is based on GPA, test scores, shadowing and medical experiences, community involvement and volunteerism, leadership qualities, the interview, the essay, and letters of recommendation. Shadowing and medical experiences are of utmost importance. Students should plan to shadow a minimum of 40 hours in their selected profession. Health Sciences offers opportunities to meet these non-academic guidelines through the Shadowing Program, the Health Science Club, and volunteer experiences. Research experience is not required, but will be looked upon favorably. Students should plan to be involved in these types of activities and experiences throughout their undergraduate career. Other important non-academic factors include good moral character, excellent interpersonal skills, a deep commitment to healthcare, evidence of leadership potential and service to others.

The Application Process

Students will make application to podiatry schools through AACPMAS (American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine Application Service). The centralized application service allows students to fill out one application to apply to multiple schools. The application and a full list of participating institutions, go to <http://www.e-aacpmas.org/>. The application becomes open for students in summer. Early application is strongly encouraged. Students should make application in the summer or early fall of the calendar year proceeding the year in which they hope to enroll in professional school. Applicants need not wait for MCAT scores, transcripts, or other application materials before applying through AACPMAS. Check with the schools to which you are applying to verify their policies and procedures regarding supplemental applications.

Entrance Examination Requirement: (MCAT, DAT or GRE)

All podiatry schools require applicants to take the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT). It is preferred that the MCAT is taken no later than August of the calendar year preceding the year in which the applicant wishes to enroll in a podiatry program. Students register online at [www.aamc.org](http://www.aamc.org) in the section for

Students. The MCAT is a computerized examination that tests for mastery of basic concepts in biology, general and organic chemistry, physics, psychology, and sociology. It also assesses problem solving, critical thinking and analytical abilities.

The MCAT has recently undergone significant changes. Students should plan to add the psychology and sociology classes recommended above. A full year of general biology, at a minimum, will also be critical to success on the MCAT. Courses in anatomy, physiology, microbiology and cell biology are recommended as well. These courses will be in addition to the current chemistry, physics, and biology courses listed in this Pre-Podiatry Guide. For more information about the MCAT, please refer to the following website: <https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/> To aid in MCAT preparation, Health Sciences offers a Test Prep Review Program every spring semester. For more information, please contact Health Sciences.

**Letters of Evaluation/Recommendation**

Letters of evaluation will be required of applicants. Letters from a faculty member, podiatrist, academic advisor, or employer would be appropriate. Information about the non-academic character of a student would be most useful as academic information is already in the application.

**Interviews**

Most schools screen applicants with some form of personal interview. The format of the interview may vary depending on the schools to which students are applying.

**Criminal Background Checks**

Prerequisite for enrollment into any health science professional program is consent for an external background check. This check includes, but is not limited to, past criminal offenses and registry information. If there is evidence of arrest for a crime(s), conviction for a crime(s), presence on an abuse registry, or other information which reasonably suggests that patient safety might be compromised, the student will be asked to provide additional information.

**Citizenship/International Students**

Professional schools in the health sciences vary as to whether they accept non-U.S. citizens. Some schools that do accept non-citizens require a substantial financial commitment up front. Since not all schools accept non-citizens and since the financial commitment of those that do may be substantial, students should thoroughly research and carefully consider such a decision and discuss it with their pre-health advisors early in their undergraduate years.

**Websites**

American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine  
UNK Health Sciences

<http://www.aacpm.org/>  
[www.unk.edu/healthsciences](http://www.unk.edu/healthsciences)

**Suggested Sequence of Key Courses**

|        | Fall   | Spring                             |
|--------|--|------------------------------------|
| Year 1 | CHEM 160<br>MATH: See advisor for appropriate placement.<br>Biology: See advisor for recommendations | CHEM 161                           |
| Year 2 | CHEM 360<br>BIOL 225 (recommended)   | CHEM 361<br>BIOL 226 (recommended) |
| Year 3 | PHYS 205   | PHYS 206                           |
| Year 4 | Complete final major courses.  | Complete final major courses.      |

- A MATH ACT score of 22 or prior completion of College Algebra (MATH 102) or higher is a pre-requisite for CHEM 160.
- A minimum MATH ACT score of 20 or prior completion of College Algebra (MATH 102) (Grade of B+ or better) or higher is required for entry into PHYS 205.
- Sophomore standing is a pre-requisite for BIOL 225.
- It is not recommended to take any of the above courses during a summer session.

**Students who are accepted into podiatry school prior to completing a baccalaureate degree at UNK may be eligible to receive a Bachelor of Science degree in Applied Health Sciences if they have completed all general studies requirements and other graduation requirements as set forth in the UNK catalog and have at least 85 semester hours completed in pre-podiatry studies.**