Pondering Medicine, Dentistry or Physical Therapy?

The NHS mission—to improve the health and well-being of all people—is demonstrated in our undergraduate majors that focus on health promotion and disease prevention. Our health programs focus on the human, which is unique among the undergraduate programs at Georgetown. This may lead to career choices in public health, physical therapy, occupational therapy, medicine, dentistry, advanced practice nursing, or osteopathy, or many other careers. Students are able to take the pre-health professional requirements as part of any of the four NHS majors.

At Georgetown, there is not a “pre-med” major; instead, it is a concentration of classes. This means that all students planning to go on to medical or dental school take the same prerequisite classes together, regardless of their chosen major.

Each student in NHS has two advisors during all four years: an Academic Advisor and a Faculty Advisor. Designated faculty with many years of pre-health advisement experience provide students with knowledge necessary to navigate the application process for graduate education.

Georgetown University has an Early Assurance Program agreement with Georgetown University School of Medicine. Interested students apply at the end of their sophomore year and successful candidates are assured of admission to the medical school upon satisfactory completion of their junior and senior years.

There are many opportunities for students in NHS to get involved outside of the classroom in activities related to graduate school. For example, there is a Pre-Med Society made up of current students who share an interest in a medical career. They organize service-related activities at hospitals, sponsor mock interviews, and host guest speakers.

Each year, NHS hosts the Georgetown University Undergraduate Research Conference. This conference is an opportunity for any undergraduate Georgetown student to present their individual research efforts. The regional conference brings together student investigators, faculty researchers, and keynote speakers to highlight the individual research efforts of undergraduate students. The conference focuses on medical and health-related research, inviting applicants from all relevant disciplines—the health and natural sciences, psychology, health administration, and health policy.

Also, NHS students publish a peer-reviewed undergraduate online research journal, the Georgetown Undergraduate Journal of Health Sciences. This journal helps students communicate the latest health-related research and provides a medium for publishing scholarly undergraduate papers related to the field. The journal is completely driven by undergraduate students and blends basic science and human health with submissions from students in all four programs within NHS.
NHS offers students a number of ways to prepare for graduate school in medicine, physical therapy, public health, etc. The undergraduate programs in NHS offer a strong academic foundation and present many opportunities for undergraduate research.

Pre-Med Requirements
The following are the courses required by most American medical schools. If you intend to go directly to medical school after graduation, these courses should be taken at Georgetown and completed by the end of your junior year. However, each student is unique and will receive guidance from their Academic Advisor to maximize their undergraduate academic performance.

- **1 Year of Biology**
  Human Biology (human anatomy and physiology) is usually taken during the first year.

- **1 Year of General Chemistry**
  This course sequence is usually taken during the first year with Human Biology.

- **1 Year of Mathematics**
  These courses (usually one semester of Calculus and one semester of Statistics) may be taken during any semester. It is recommended that all students take one semester of Calculus at Georgetown despite AP credit. Some medical schools do not accept AP scores in place of courses taken at a university.

- **1 Year of Organic Chemistry**
  This course sequence is usually taken during the sophomore year. General Chemistry is a prerequisite.

- **1 Year of Physics**
  This course sequence is usually taken during the junior year. Calculus is a prerequisite.

Courses that Complement the Pre-Med Requirements
- Biochemistry
- Psychology
- Sociology

Applying to Medical Schools
Students usually plan to take the MCAT in the Spring of their junior year. Also during this semester, students take an MCAT review class.

Between their junior and senior years, students should plan to conduct research or work in the medical/research field to gain practical experience.

For general information related to applying to medical school, please visit the website of the Association of American Medical Colleges: www.aamc.org/students and the website of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine: www.aacom.org.

Graduates of NHS go on to medical school, dental school, and graduate school for physical therapy, public health, epidemiology, and many other fields.