Academic Preparation for Medical School

This document is to help advisors and students at UNC prepare for medical school by being aware of the requirements at UNC School of Medicine (UNC SOM) as they relate to the courses students should take to meet general medical school requirements.

I. General Requirements: From the AAMC website; Some schools require applicants to complete a certain list of premedical course requirements while others have moved to a competency-based admissions. At a minimum, students will likely complete the following types of courses: One year of biology One year of physics, One year of English, Two years of chemistry (through organic chemistry)

In order to be well prepared for the MCAT exam consult the MCAT topics here:
https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/whats-mcat-exam/

Because of the range of topics on the MCAT, knowledge is required in statistics and biochemistry as well as in psychology and sociology. Some schools specify some courses they want students to have completed in order to do well in medical school and on the MCAT (UNC, ECU-Brody) and some schools (Duke, Wake Forest, Pritzker, for instance) do not specify prerequisites in order to allow students to learn the necessary material in any way that works for their life situation.

II. The UNC SOM requirements beginning in 2021:
Statistics 1 course. No AP (Advance Placement) accepted
Chemistry UNC SOM requires 3 courses including biochem, 2 with lab. No AP.
Biology 3 biology courses. 2 advanced and one with lab. No AP
Humanities 3 courses, 2 with writing component. No AP
Social and Behavioral Sciences 3 courses No AP
At least 30 hours of science courses needed and NO online courses accepted.
https://www.med.unc.edu/admit/requirements/academic-requirements/

III. Meeting general requirements: It is imperative that students not think that meeting these requirements will prepare them for admission to most medical schools. Looking at these requirements more closely:

Statistics: There are a number of departments/majors that have their own statistics courses that likely meet this requirement. UNC students who come in with credit for AP Stat will need to take an additional stat course.

Chemistry:
+ Because Chem 101 and 102 are not specifically listed by UNC SOM, if a student has AP credit for those courses, they can go forward to meet the chemistry requirement. Those students would need to take Chem 241 (quantitative) with lab (in order to get one of the two required labs), Chem 261 (orgo 1), Chem 262 (orgo 2) with lab and Chem 430 (biochem).
+ Students who take Chem 101 and 102 with lab would need no more labs, so they could take Chem 261, Chem 262 and Chem 430 (Biochem) without labs, HOWEVER, it is imperative to note that this would not meet the requirement of two organic labs which many schools require (Brody, for instance). For this reason, it would not likely be wise to skip 241 with lab and 262 lab.
Because Chem 101 and 102 are not listed by UNC SOM, that means they are not subject to the requirement that the prerequisite coursework must be satisfactorily completed within five (5) years prior to submitting an application. This gives students more time for gap years and reapplications.

**Biology:** Note that an additional, 3rd course is part of these new UNC SOM requirements. – 3 biology courses. 2 advanced and one with lab. No AP. If a student has AP credit for Biology 101, that means they may go forward to take 3 advanced courses which will afford them additional preparation for the MCAT exam. Retaking Biology 101 and lab is not recommended for students with a 4 or 5 on the Biology AP exam. They should go forward, carefully, allowing time when they take their first advanced biology course to do any background learning necessary.

**Humanities** 3 courses, 2 with writing component. No AP

**Social and Behavioral Sciences** 3 courses  No AP

**Physics:** Note that UNC SOM does not list 2 semesters of physics as a requirement. Nevertheless, two semesters of physics is a general medical school requirement and is needed for the MCAT. Since it is not a listed prerequisite at UNC SOM, students may learn the material through AP courses or online courses if those are accepted by other schools to which a student wishes to apply.

*JSD 2/12/2019*