What is the study of Pre-Chiropractic?

Eighteen national and three world-wide institution affiliated with the Association of Chiropractic Colleges offer the Doctor of Chiropractic (DC) credential. Selective admission includes evaluation of academic content and GPA, exposure to the profession, letters of recommendation (typically from one chiropractor and one or two professors), extracurricular and community activities, direct patient care experience, legal and social records, and in some cases GRE test scores. While three undergraduate academic years (135 quarter credits) are minimally required, chiropractic schools are increasingly recommending or requiring a Bachelor’s degree. Many states require chiropractors to have a Bachelor’s degree in order to practice.

Admission requirements are variable with many schools allowing for completion of set quarter hours accumulated across the life and physical sciences disciplines rather than mandating specific courses to complete. Research schools of your choice to confirm all requirements are met. Common requirements include courses with related lab work in biology, chemistry (inorganic and organic), and physics, along with a breadth of Humanities and Social Science (GUR) studies. There is no Pre-Chiropractic major offered at Western. Science-based majors are popular, but you should choose any major that reflects your interest and in which you will excel and enjoy. Use your college experience to explore academic fields, to develop basic skills and knowledge, and to demonstrate expertise and experience in a field of study (major) of your choice. Western pre-healthcare students have majored in a diverse range of academic disciplines including Anthropology, Behavioral Neuroscience, Biology, Chemistry, Community Health, Psychology, History, Philosophy, Communication Studies, Spanish, and French as well as Fairhaven self-designed programs. Some pursue combined majors such as Anthropology/Biology, Biochemistry, and Cellular & Molecular Biology.

Program Checkpoints:

**Freshman year:**
- Take Math 114 (for Chemistry), Math 115 (for Physics); continue into sophomore year.
- Begin General Chemistry series: CHEM 121, 122, 123.
- Begin General Biology series: BIOL 204, 205; continue into sophomore year.
- Work on GUR courses, including ENG 101 and PSY 101.
- Begin prerequisite and co-requisite courses for possible major.
- Meet with Pre-Healthcare Advisors (OM 280) to develop a plan of study.

**Sophomore year:**
- Research Chiropractic programs and requirements.
- Take Statistics: Math 240 or major equivalent if needed (or do junior year).
- Begin Organic Chemistry series: CHEM 351, 352, 353 with labs 354 and 355 (or 356); or take CHEM 251.
- Continue work on GUR courses; select HUM and SSC courses based on Chiropractic program requirements.
- Declare or apply for major.
- Begin shadowing Chiropractors sophomore and/or junior year.

**Junior year:**
- Take Physics 114, 115.
- Take CHEM 375 (if CHEM 251 was completed).
- Prepare for the Graduate Record Exam (GRE), if needed, to be taken the summer after junior year.
- Draft personal statement.
- Request letters of recommendation from professors and professionals (or do senior year).
- Begin primary application to the Chiropractic Central Application Service (ChiroCAS).

**Senior year:**
- Complete major, GUR, WP, other graduation requirements, and remaining chiropractic requirements.
- Two quarters before graduation, meet with declared major advisor and apply for graduation.
- Prepare for possible professional school interview with a mock interview (or do spring of junior year).

**Additionally:**

NOTE: Advanced Placement may not be recognized by professional schools as college-earned credit. Check with each school.
Core Courses

Academic course requirements for Chiropractic schools vary but, regardless of your major, certain prerequisites are expected by many schools and include:

- Five quarter hours General Chemistry with lab: CHEM 121 \(^1\) (5 credits), [continue on to 122, 123 (5, 4) for most science majors and to proceed to an Organic Chemistry series]
- Nine quarter hours Organic Chemistry and/or Biochemistry with corresponding labs: CHEM 251 (5) and 375 (4)
  - or for some majors: CHEM 351, 352, 353, 354, and 355 or 356 (4, 4, 3, 3, 3 or 2) and 471 (4)
- Two quarters General Biology\(^2\) w/labs: BIOL 204\(^3\), 205 (4, 5)
- Nine quarter hours Physics\(^2\) w/labs: PHYS 114 (5)\(^4\), 115 (5)
- Statistics: MATH 240 (5) or a major equivalent
- Nine quarter hours English Composition, English Literature and/or Communication: ENG 101 (5) + another COM GUR
- PSY 101 (5)
- Twenty-four quarter credits of Humanities and Social Sciences: WWU GUR comprises 12 credits HUM and 12 credits SSC

\(^1\) CHEM 121 requires completion of MATH 114 or Math Placement into MATH 115 or higher.

\(^2\) Complete the series (third course) for some majors.

\(^3\) CHEM 121 is a prerequisite to BIOL 204.

\(^4\) PHYS 114 requires completion of MATH 115 or a suitable Math Placement Score.

NOTE: Students should begin chemistry as early in their program as possible.

DECLARING A MAJOR*: Refer to the department of your chosen major for prerequisites and GPA requirements for declaring.

*NOTE: To major in Biology requires a grade point average of 2.9 or better for CHEM 121, 122, 123, and BIOL 204, 205, and 206 in order to advance to Phase II of the Biology major and take upper division Biology classes.

To major in Biochemistry requires a 3.0 grade average in CHEM 121, 122, 123, 351, 352 and BIOL 205 in order to move on to a Phase II Biochemistry major.

To major in Chemistry (BS) requires a grade point average of 3.0 in CHEM 121, 122, 123, 351, 352 and MATH 124 and 125 in order to move on to a Phase II Chemistry major.

ACCESS TO CLASSES: Due to high student demand for many upper-division courses, especially in the sciences, many departments must give enrollment priority to students for whom these courses are required for their major over those who want to take them for electives. Registration details for these and other heavily impacted programs are posted at department websites:

Biology: https://cse.wwu.edu/biology/registration
Chemistry: https://cse.wwu.edu/chemistry/registration

REPEATING COURSES: is not viewed favorably by professional schools. An isolated case may be acceptable but may also require an explanation in application. Discuss your options first with a Pre-Healthcare Advisor.

The courses listed below apply to WWU GUR and may also be used for some of the pre-Chiropractic requirements of many schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACOM:</th>
<th>ENG 101</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BCOM:</td>
<td>COMM 101, 224, 235; ENG 202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCOM:</td>
<td>ENG 201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSC:</td>
<td>PSY 101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSR:</td>
<td>MATH 114, 240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSCI:</td>
<td>BIOL 204, 205; CHEM 121, 122; PHYS 115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCI:</td>
<td>PHYS 114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Resources

Join the advisors’ Pre-Chiropractic Listserv by sending an e-mail to Renee.Murray@wwu.edu with this information: Subject: pre-Chiropractic listserv, Last name, First name, student number, and major and concentration (if declared).

WWU Pre-health Pinterest: www.pinterest.com/wwuprehealth/

Join WWU Associated Students Clubs at http://as.wwu.edu/clubs/

Council on Chiropractic Education: http://cce-usa.org
Association of Chiropractic Colleges: www.chirocolleges.org
American Chiropractic Association: www.acatoday.org
Graduate Record Examination: http://www.ets.org/gre/
Explore Health Careers: www.explorehealthcareers.org

This document has been created for advising purposes only. Please contact Advising for Pre-Healthcare Professions for updates and changes.