Maggie Givens

Student Spotlight | Facing the future as a Pre-Med student

Pre-Health Professions
How the Honors College can help you succeed
Setting Future in Motion

Enrollment for the Certificate Program starts Fall 2012
Introductory Seminar offered Spring 2013

MU Global Connect combines many of the courses already on a student’s plan into a certificate that will enhance scholarship opportunities and graduate school admittance, upgrade a résumé, and engage prospective employers.

It is designed to prepare students from any discipline for our new global reality, and equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in today’s highly competitive global job market.

Please visit our website:
http://globalconnect.missouri.edu
globalconnect@missouri.edu

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

All MU undergraduate students in any discipline are eligible.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

The certificate will help you:

- Document academic, professional, and extra-curricular international involvement to enhance future scholarship opportunities, employment options, and graduate school applications.
- Become a culturally and globally conscious and responsible citizen of the world.
- Collaborate more effectively with people from cultures different from your own.
- Develop the necessary skills to enter a workforce that is diverse and multicultural.
- Understand a world increasingly defined by rapid communications, direct interactions and growing global connectedness and interdependency.

THE MU GLOBAL CONNECT EXPERIENCE

- Core Introductory Seminar – JOUR 3510 / GER 3510: Fundamentals of Globalization and Digital Technology (3 cr.)
- Two Elective Courses (3 cr. each)
- Experiential Learning – a “hands-on” learning experience connected to a professional development project (3 cr.)
- Core Concluding Seminar - TAM 4820: Case Studies in an Inter/Multicultural World (3 cr.)

The two core courses serve as the framework for the certificate, as well as provide a common basis for students from various disciplines.

Electives must be selected from a list of approved course options, representing two different disciplines emphasizing global and digital components respectively.

Elective and experiential learning credits can be incorporated into the academic plan for many majors.

The “hands-on” experiential learning component varies depending on the student’s field of study and interest. But an emphasis is required on either global relations and cultural awareness or media and technology.

Students focus on the relationships between:

- cultural diversity
- Globalization
- digital information
- communication technologies.
Preface

get connected

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The Honors College Newsletter
Editor | Rachel Koehn
Photographer | Katy Mersmann
Faculty Advisor | Dr. Gregory Triplett

Cover photo by Katy Mersmann.
Announcements

“What Every Pre-Dental Student Should Know”

Presentation with the Pre-Dental Club

Join the Pre-Dental Club for a presentation from Kristina Wright; Chief Health Professions Advisor at MU. She will talk about what MU has to offer Pre-Dental Students and how to best prepare oneself for dental school.

**When:** Wednesday, March 20th  
**Time:** 6pm  
**Where:** Agriculture Building, Room 2-6

Mock Medical School Interview

What is a medical school interview really like? See firsthand when Susan Geisert and Kristina Wright, Pre-Health Professions Advisors in the Honors College, “interview” Pre-med Society president Stephanie Myer during a mock interview presentation at the Pre-Med Society April meeting. The advisors will also share advice about preparing for the interview process.

**When:** Tuesday, April 9th  
**Time:** 5:30pm  
**Where:** Tate Hall, Room 22

Congratulations to Andrew Allee!

Congratulations to Andrew Allee, one of our Discovery Fellows, who has been chosen as a research intern through the DAAD Research Internships in Science and Engineering (RISE) program. DAAD, the German Academic Exchange Service, is a publicly-funded independent organization of higher education institutions in Germany that provides information and financial support to highly-qualified students for international research and study. Andrew will receive a research stipend while interning at the Kaiserslautern University of Technology this upcoming summer. He will be working with a graduate student there on the single-step conversion of lignocellulosic biomass to ethanol for use in biofuels.

Andrew interned last semester with Drs. Heidi Appel and Steve Keller on the Honors College Science Sequence. “Andrew was a creative addition to our planning team and identified great online resources to use in the new Energy course,” said Associate Director Heidi Appel. Biochemistry Professor Bill Folk was Allen’s mentor.

RISE is a summer internship program for undergraduate students in the fields of biology, chemistry, physics, earth sciences and engineering. It offers unique opportunities for undergraduate students to work with research groups at universities and top research institutions across Germany for a period of two to three months during the summer. RISE interns are matched with doctoral students whom they assist and who serve as their mentors. The working language is English. All scholarship holders receive stipends from the DAAD to help cover living expenses, while partner universities and research institutes provide housing assistance. In 2012, about 323 candidates (out of 1,800 applicants) were awarded an internship. See https://www.daad.de/rise/en/ for more about RISE. The RISE reader, “Young Scientists Go German,” offers manifold insights into our RISE participants’ personal and professional experiences during their internship and after their academic stay in Germany.
EUROPEUM Summer School Program

Let me inform you that EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy - a think-tank that undertakes program, project, publishing and training activities related to the European integration process - is organizing the 11th year of a summer school program for university students in July 2013.

In session July 13-25, 2013, the summer school program entitled “United States of Europe - Federalization of Europe as a Response to EU Crisis?” will take place in Prague.

You can find further details on our homepage www.europeum.org/ess2013 or you can see the promotion leaflet at http://www.europeum.org/ess2013/doc/poster2013.pdf.

Study Abroad Italy: Food Security

AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS & SOCIAL SCIENCE/PUBLIC POLICY

Program Dates
May 21 – June 1, 2013

Bologna is the center of the new thrust on reducing food waste, and Rome serves as a worldwide hub for food security agencies. These locations will allow participants to interact with key players who are directly involved in global food security programs.

Participants will gain knowledge on the causes, measurement, and consequences of food insecurity in the world in addition to remedies proposed and actions taken to end hunger. Students will also learn about the issues, research, involvement of key international agencies and their differing roles, as well as US official roles in these efforts.

Academic Credit
3 credits Ag Econ 4301 (UG)
3 credits Ag Econ 7301 (Graduate)

Estimated Costs

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*Non-Missouri resident students will also be billed non-resident fees, but 50% of the non-resident fees will be returned to the student.

Additional meals & misc. estimate: $500 – $700

Funding
CAFNR scholarships and loans are available for CAFNR undergraduate students on this program. Students may also use financial aid and university scholarships.

Application Deadline
Extended to March 15, 2013!

Additional Information
cafnr.missouri.edu/study-abroad

Visit the EU Food Safety Agency in Parma
Meet w/FAO Leaders
See Rome, Florence & Bologna
What is Pre-Health Advising?

The Honors College offers a comprehensive Pre-Health Professions Advising Program to guide students through the academic and application processes necessary to achieve their health careers goal. The Pre-Health Advisors are available to assist students contemplating careers in:

- Allopathic or Osteopathic Medicine
- Dentistry
- Optometry
- Podiatry

Pre-Health Professions Advisors are able to provide advice on course selection, information on professional school admissions tests, guidance in making application to professional schools, guidance about letters of recommendation, and information about research, healthcare and shadowing opportunities. The advisors are available by appointment to assist students on an individual basis and also communicate with students via a weekly newsletter and Blackboard site. To make an appointment to meet with your pre-health advisor, call 573-882-3893.

Pre-Health Professions Advisors:

Kristina Wright  
Email: WrightKr@missouri.edu  
Phone: 573-882-4112

Susan Geisert  
Email: GeisertS@missouri.edu  
Phone: 573-882-6224

1. What services are available to pre-health students at MU?

The Pre-Health Professions Advisors work with all students on campus who are considering a career in medicine, dentistry, optometry and podiatry. They meet with students individually and provide group workshops. Your Pre-Health Advisor can help you learn about health careers, develop a plan for becoming a competitive applicant, and assist you with your application to professional programs. To schedule an appointment to meet with an advisor, please call 882-3893.

2. What should I major in?

In short, the best major is whichever subject interests you most! Professional schools place little if any emphasis on what your major was. There is no “correct” or “best” major. The Medical School Admissions Requirement book (published by the Association of American Medical Colleges) states this clearly, “The medical profession needs individuals from diverse educational backgrounds who will bring to the profession a variety of talents and interests.”

Professional programs are looking for well-rounded students with broad academic interests. They want people who are interested in learning. When considering a major, it is important that you find one that you enjoy. Generally if you enjoy what you study, you will do better than if you choose a major that you think the professional schools want to see.

Part of your choice of major may include thinking about
a back-up plan in case you do not gain acceptance in your chosen professional field. Your advisor can help you think about alternate careers that might be available to you.

3. What courses do I need to prepare me for professional school?

Most professional schools have required prerequisite courses you must take and are fairly standard in what you will need for that field. Regardless of which profession you choose, you will likely need a strong background in the sciences including biology, chemistry, physics, and math. Professional schools, however, often expect courses in psychology and other social sciences as well as English. They recognize the benefit of social science and humanities courses in developing your reading, thinking, and writing skills.

- Biology (with laboratory)—8 semester credit hours
- Introductory Chemistry (with laboratory)—8 semester credit hours
- Organic Chemistry (with laboratory)—8 semester credit hours
- Physics (with laboratory)—8 semester credit hours
- English Composition—6 semester credit hours
- Mathematics (required by some schools, recommended by most)
- Biochemistry (required by some schools, recommended by most)
- Anatomy and Physiology (required by some dental schools)

4. What do professional school admissions offices look for?

First of all, there is no magical formula for gaining entry into a professional school program. Most programs have a lot of applicants and often look for students with credentials well above the established minimums. Making it into a healthcare field will generally take a good deal of hard work. Most programs are looking for well-rounded students with academic interests within and outside their majors, they want students who are interested in learning and who will be life-long learners. You should have good communication and interpersonal skills, a record of community service and leadership, a variety of extracurricular activities, and experience shadowing a professional in your chosen field.

5. How competitive is the application process?

Of the 43,548 people who applied for admission into Allopathic medical schools (MD programs) in 2012, a reported 19,735 of them matriculated at a U.S. medical school. This means that nationwide, 45.3% of all applicants gained entrance into an MD granting program. For this group the average science GPA was a 3.63, and the average overall was 3.68. Average MCAT scores were above the national average at 31.2.

Osteopathic medical schools are similarly competitive. The 2012 entering class saw 14,945 applicants and 5,464 matriculants. For this group the average science GPA was a 3.37 and the average overall was 3.49. Average MCAT scores were 26.85.

Dental schools have seen an increasing number of applications in recent years. Generally the overall GPA of enrollees is around a 3.5 with a science GPA of 3.4. The academic average on the DAT of dental school enrollees is a 19 with a 19. Nationally, about 41% of applicants are admitted.

Optometry entering classes typically have students with an overall GPA of 3.4 and an OAT of 322. About 72% of applicants are admitted.

(Continued on next page)
Podiatry entering classes typically have students with an overall GPA of 3.3 and an average MCAT score of 20.7. About 71% of applicants are admitted.

6. Why is shadowing important?

Professional schools want to make sure that applicants are making an informed decision before they spend their time and money to apply to and attend school. One of the most valuable ways to learn about a profession is through shadowing. By observing health professionals at work, applicants can see how doctors deliver bad news or deal with difficult patients. Shadowing is an opportunity for students to witness firsthand what they are getting into. Though the experience is not explicitly required by most medical schools (a select few, particularly D.O. schools and some dental schools do require this experience), it is strongly advised to have some experience shadowing a practicing physician before applying to a professional school.

7. What are MD-PhD programs?

MD-PhD programs provide training in both medicine and research. According to the Association of American Medical Colleges, MD-PhD programs “are specifically designed for those who want to become research physicians, also known as physician-investigators or physician-scientists. Graduates of MD-PhD programs often go on to become faculty members at medical schools, universities and research institutes. Regardless of where they eventually work, MD-PhD candidates are being prepared for careers in which they will spend most of their time doing research, in addition to caring for patients. The MD-PhD dual career is busy, challenging, rewarding, and offers opportunities to do good for many people by advancing knowledge, developing new treatments for diseases, and pushing back the boundaries of the unknown.”

8. What is the MU Pre-Health Professions Committee Letter?

The Pre-Health Professions Committee Letter is a concise, individualized presentation of a medical or dental candidate’s attributes. These letters aim to provide evidence of the academic and personal competencies applicants have cultivated throughout their time at MU; institutional letters are seen by admissions committees as an essential element in an application, as they can provide a holistic overview of an applicant’s qualifications. To be eligible for a committee interview, applicants must be currently enrolled MU students who are first-time applicants to medical and dental school and who complete the application requirements. The committee letter is written by the Pre-Health Professions Committee, a group of faculty and senior staff with a range of interdisciplinary expertise.

9. How much shadowing and healthcare experience do I need?

While shadowing and healthcare experiences are an important part to any candidacy, medical schools do not require a set number of hours for either. Medical schools are far more interested in quality experiences rather than quantity. Basically you want to ask yourself, “What did I learn from this experience?” Dental schools, however, do require that students shadow a minimum of 80 hours with a minimum of five different dentists.

10. Is research experience required to get into a professional program?

Research experience is not a requirement to get into pro-
fessional school; however, working in a research laboratory can be an enriching experience and does add a strong component to a candidate's resume. Working in a research laboratory helps students to develop critical thinking skills, fosters creative thinking, and teaches patience and perseverance among other things. Research experience can also be a benefit when students need to put their parallel plan into action. For students interested in pursuing an MD/PhD, extensive research is a must.

11. When is the best time to apply to medical/dental school?

The best time to apply to professional school is when you have put together a competitive candidacy. It is important to have good grades, competitive admission exam scores, adequate exposure to medicine, service and leadership, and have completed all of the required coursework. You do not have to follow the traditional 4-year path to professional school. This is not the RIGHT timeline for everyone. It is okay to follow your own timeline. You should apply when you feel you are the most competitive candidate that you can be.

12. What is a parallel plan and why is it important to have one?

Getting into professional school is competitive and not everyone gets in on the first try. Many people never get admitted. Therefore, it is important to plan accordingly. A parallel plan provides you with an alternative career path. Choosing a major that is right for you is key to developing a parallel plan. Also important, is being involved in a number of different activities.

Jessica Phillips
Texas Tech Paul L Foster School of Medicine, M.D. candidate, Class of 2016
University of Missouri Class of 2012

1. What was the best book that you read as an undergraduate?

Any of Atul Gawande’s books are awesome and have good lessons to learn (Better, Complications, The Checklist Manifesto).

2. In a few words, how would you describe your first year of medical school?

The first year of medical school is different for everyone, but be prepared to study more than you did in undergrad. It is not as overwhelming or impossible as I imagined. I still have free time and hang out with my classmates—it’s definitely doable! Honestly, coming from Mizzou I feel that I had a strong science background in undergrad and find myself having to study less than some of my peers, you just have to realize your weaknesses and focus on improving those.

3. What advice/tips would you give a junior who is going through the application process this year?

Don’t stress about the process too much, if you want it bad enough you will eventually get there. (My class ranges from 19-45yrs) You won’t be left out if you don’t get in the first year. Don’t underestimate the importance of your undergrad classes, doing well in them will only make medical school easier. (Thank your professors too!)

Jacob Blount
University of South Florida Morsani College of Medicine SELECT Class of 2016
University of Missouri Class of 2012

1. What was the best book that you read as an undergraduate?

The best book I read as an undergraduate was Uncommon Wisdom: True Tales of What Our Lives as Doctors Have Taught Us About Love, Faith and Healing by John Castaldo and Lawrence Levitt. The book is great to make students who are interested in medicine take a step back from all the science and knowledge they are trying to gain in order to become a physician, and realize and remember that the patients they will one day treating will be real people. With the narratives presented the authors make the reader realize the compassion and empathy and the things we learn as future physicians from the patients we will encounter every day.

2. What advice/tips would you give a junior who is going through the application process this year?

The most important thing is to truly know one’s self at whatever stage one is in. This will help in all aspects of the application process from preparing for the MCAT, the interview with the Honors College committee, to knowing what schools to apply for, and most importantly the interviews one receives. If one truly knows one’s self and projects the confidence of that knowledge throughout the admissions process there will be far less stress and the confidence in one’s application will be much greater and will make them an overall stronger candidate throughout the process.
**RK:** What made you decide to pursue medicine?

**MG:** As far as medicine goes, I’m from a medical background, both my parents — my dad’s a doctor and my mom’s a nurse anesthetist. So, it’s always been in the family, but I didn’t do it just because they did it. I came up with it on my own. I always knew I’d go into the healthcare field in some way, shape, or form. It was always just what I grew up with, and I know all the benefits, but as far as going Pre-Med goes, I wasn’t a hundred percent committed when I came into school. I wanted to see how it went and try my best, and my best has been good enough so far.

**RK:** Do you know what kind of medicine you want to pursue specifically?

**MG:** I do not. I like all of it. I’ve shadowed a lot of different things and, I don’t know, I really would just like to get in to medical school. That’s my first step.

**RK:** What’s the most interesting class you’ve taken?

**MG:** Well, my favorite class that I’ve taken was Animal Physiology last semester. It was just more applicable information to what I’ve been studying, whereas a lot of the classes I’ve been taking have been like Organic Chemistry — stuff that is very relevant to what I’m studying, but at the same time, I can’t apply it to everyday life. So, this class that I took last semester was really interesting and kind of dealt more with the human body and all its processes, so it was kind of like real life, and I liked it.

**RK:** As a Pre-Med student, what are the biggest advantages of being in the Honors College?

**MG:** I like it because there’s a lot of different resources that you can use, like Kristina, who’s my advisor. I feel like we have a really good Pre-Med program to set us up for success and help us kind of know what we’re doing, because none of us really have any clue whatsoever. So, it’s a really good system that helps us stay on track and keeps us accountable for the process that we’re going through.

**RK:** What activities are you involved in on campus?

**MG:** I do track — I’m a pole vaulter — and I’m also involved in Mizzou FCA, Global Medical Brigades, Student Health Advisory Council, and Delta Epsilon Mu, which is a health fraternity.

**RK:** How do you balance that with your schoolwork?

**MG:** It’s really hard sometimes, but my family and my lifestyle’s always been go, go, go. So, it’s almost unnatural for me to not have a million things that I’m supposed to do. I need to get better at scheduling some things sometimes, but I just kind of play it by ear. I know which ones are my priorities, like school and then track, and then everything else, if it fits, it fits. It’s really about managing your time and being able to get the most out of the free time that you have,
Maggie Givens is a junior Pre-Med student from Branson, Missouri. Givens is majoring in Psychology and minoring in Biology, and she competes for the Mizzou track team.

which sometimes is hard. It’s worked out really well, but it’s definitely a challenge.

**RK:** What accomplishment here at Mizzou are you most proud of?

**MG:** Well, I guess it depends on what category. I would say, as far as classes go, when I got a 4.0 last spring. It was one of my hardest [semesters], and I’d worked really hard, and I wasn’t sure how it was going to go, so I was really excited. Then, as far as track goes, I’d say hitting my personal best this season. That was awesome.

**RK:** What’s the biggest challenge you’ve faced in college?

**MG:** I’d say it’s hard because you’re accountable for yourself and no one’s there to bail you out, and it’s just overall kind of a shock. It’s like you’re in to the adult world, and what you do with this time here will determine the rest of your life and how it goes. So, I think that’s been a big shock – just accepting that and moving on and being responsible for yourself and realizing how important this stage of your life is.

**RK:** What are your plans for the future? Do you have a specific medical school that you’re looking into?

**MG:** I would love to go here more than anything. That would be a dream come true. So, you know, I’m just going to apply. I think we start the application process this summer, and so I’ll apply this summer and take my entrance exam and do all that stuff and just kind of hope for the best. If I don’t get in here, I’m hopeful I’ll get in somewhere else, so it’ll be my new favorite school.

**RK:** What’s one piece of advice that you would give to younger Pre-Med students?

**MG:** I would say don’t underestimate yourself. Even if you have one bad test or maybe two sometimes or a critical bad test that’s like a midterm or something, you can always bounce back, it’s not the end of the world. Just, you know, keep going, because I’ve had to prove that to myself many times. You just can’t underestimate yourself. If you think you can do it, then you can.

**What’s Your Story?**

Do you have a story that deserves to be in the spotlight? If you or someone you know has a story you would like to see in the Honors College Newsletter’s Student Spotlight, let us know.

Send your story idea and contact information to Rnk7cd@mail.missouri.edu.
As I sit in my office, I hear the greetings, snatches of conversation, and laughter that come from the advising offices close by me. I also hear the appreciation and relief in a student’s voice when a seemingly insurmountable problem has been solved for him. And daily, I’m struck by the integral role our advisors play in the lives of MU’s honors students.

A good advisor listens constructively as she tries to understand all facets of a student’s expressed problem or situation. She knows university policy like the back of her hand, fiercely upholding her responsibility to provide accurate and usable information to her students. And as she attempts to solve the immediate problems of scheduling conflicts or fulfilling graduation requirements, she always takes into account the long-term goals of the student who sits before her.

Speaking more philosophically, a good advisor inspires students to discover the right path for themselves. She may tell them what they need to do to pursue a career in medicine or graduate with a double major, but she does so in a way that respects their individuality and freedom. She advises quietly, patiently. “Advice is like snow;” writes Coleridge; “the softer it falls, the longer it dwells upon, and the deeper it sinks into the mind.”

The Honors College is fortunate to have three advisors who are deeply committed to student success and personal growth. They are Megan Boyer, Susan Geisert, and Kristina Wright, all of whom have been advising in the College for close to ten years. Susan and Kristina specialize in pre-health advising, which is serving an ever-increasing pool of students on our campus, while Megan focuses on general advising. All three of them possess an intricate knowledge of the university, good judgment, wisdom, and a wonderful sense of humor.

I encourage you to visit them regularly, to make use of the tremendous service they provide you. “It takes nearly as much ability to know how to profit by good advice as to know how to act for one’s self,” observed one writer many years ago. Written as both an observation and a challenge, this statement suggests that knowing how to take advice is itself a skill and form of wisdom. The advisors in the Honors College are here for you; I challenge you to seek them out, listen to what they have to say, and then see how you might best profit from them.
Dear Honors College students:

The College of Arts and Science teaches the core courses for almost every undergraduate student on campus, and our degrees, particularly those in the sciences—biology, chemistry, geology, and physics—are the basis for many students who go on to earn a professional or graduate degree in the health professions. As dean of the core college on the MU campus, I am extremely pleased to help highlight the advising services that the Honors College provides for students interested in health careers. You’ll find the office is an excellent resource for students from any major who want to learn more about medicine, dentistry, podiatry, and optometry.

The Pre-Health Professional Advising Office will help you decide if healthcare is the right profession for you and assist you with the process for applying to a particular school or program. The office works in conjunction with academic advisors in departments across campus to ensure you receive a well-rounded education and meaningful experiences while at Mizzou.

If you’re interested in learning more about the health professions, I hope you’ll check out what the Honors College Pre-Health Professions Advising office has to offer. The advisers are among the most friendly people I have ever met, and I know you’ll enjoy working with them throughout your career at Mizzou. Their greatest reward is to see you achieve great things. That’s my greatest reward too. I wish you the best as you experience everything the Honors College has to offer.

Michael J. O’Brien
Dean, College of Arts and Science

The U.S. Fulbright Programs offers a terrific opportunity for many students to receive Fulbright research/study grants in virtually any field and in about 140 nations worldwide; Fulbright English Teaching Assistantships place American college graduates in a classroom abroad to provide assistance to teachers of English to non-native English speakers and to serve as cultural ambassadors for the United States (ETAs do not have to have been education majors).

The application period for awards tenable during the 2014-2015 academic year will open during the summer, and the MU campus deadline for applications will be August 30, 2013, with final submissions due in October. U.S. citizenship at the time of application is required, and students must have earned a baccalaureate degree prior to starting the grant itself.

Contact the Fellowship Office for more information:
Fellowships Office
M128 Student Success Center
573-884-4661

Take a look at the Fulbright website: http://us.fulbrightonline.org/