



4-Year Plan for Extracurricular Activities (Pre-Meds)



Wondering what health-related extracurricular activities are available to Pre-Med Undergraduate students? Look no further! Ariel is a recent pre-med graduate of UH Manoa. Here are his insights and experiences as an undergraduate student participating in extracurricular activities. (Please note that this is a sample plan written from one person's experiences, and is meant as a guide, not a prescription.)



Hi! My full name is Ariel Moses Finberg. I was born and raised on the small island of Maui and first became interested in science during my middle school biology class. I graduated from UH Manoa December 2015 with my BS in Microbiology at the age of 21 and am hoping to become an Infectious Disease Specialist or Oncologist. I spend most of my time outdoors hiking, diving or really anything else that results in a sunburn.



Freshman Year



Fall Semester

Ariel says:

Freshman year is the year that students have the most time and easiest course load. However, adjusting to the college lifestyle may take some time in the first semester. In my opinion, research and activities that take a lot of time should be done during this year with a small amount of time in a clinical setting.

Students (if they are non-Hawaii residents) may not have a car, and that should be taken into consideration.

Medical Student Mentorship Program (MSMP) : Student-run organization that pairs current medical students from the John A. Burns School of Medicine with undergraduate students interested in pursuing a career in medicine.

Pre-Health Career Corps (PHCC): Provides students with mentorship, research, volunteer, career shadowing opportunities. Activities to increase awareness of health careers, campus tours and more.

Student Clubs and Organizations: College is an exciting chapter in a teenager's life and it is important to build a strong group of friends to go through it with. Biology, Chemistry, and Pre-Med clubs are a great place to meet other pre-med students. Other clubs outside of the sciences are a great way to develop a passion and become well rounded.

Spring Semester

Ariel says: By this time, you will be well adjusted and realize that being pre-med is not an easy path. You will have gone through the first semester of gen chem, biology, and maybe trig/calc.

Lab Research: Students now have a grasp of how to balance their time and how much free time they have. They can start by doing basic bench work and learning how research works and if they enjoy it.

Hospital volunteer: Volunteering at a hospital provides a more general view of medicine and allows the student to reflect on his or her ability to work in a hospital for the rest of their life. Most hospitals have ongoing volunteer programs.

MSMP / Pre-Health Career Corps / Student Organizations

Summer

Ariel says: There are so many opportunities that are only available to college students on their summer break. This includes research projects, medical volunteer work, and language travel programs. I feel that it should be heavily stressed that we encourage our students and let them know how many options are out there.

I studied abroad in Mexico; I've had friends who have done international research in Thailand or Cameroon, and national research in states such as Maine. The opportunities are countless and these are so much more than just résumé builders, but can be life changing experiences and a great way to see the world.

Not all of these programs stretch through the whole summer; students can also fill their time with a summer class. If you are behind in any of your coursework, I highly recommend that you catch up here. Many of the classes starting sophomore year are only offered one semester of the year and being behind in one class can result in graduating late.



Sophomore Year



Fall Semester

Ariel says: In my opinion, it is this year that completely separates those that are serious about medicine, and those that are not. Students will juggle Organic Chemistry, Molecular Biology, Physics, an Upper Level Language, and labs.

Lab Research and Internships: Programs like INBRE (IDeA Network for Biomedical Research Excellence) Student Research Experience and the Hawaii Pacific Health Summer Internship Program provide students with valuable opportunities outside the classroom.

Shadowing: Career shadowing provides the opportunity to interact with health professionals and see what they do on a day-to-day basis.

Student Clubs and Organizations: Being active in sports, clubs and other student organizations makes you a well-rounded person

MSMP / Pre-Health Career Corps

Spring Semester

Ariel says: This was personally the most mentally taxing semester I had, and is usually the hardest for many.

Community outreach: Volunteer and give back to the community. Clubs like Circle K, Golden Key, Relay for Life, and Mortar Board provide excellent opportunities to do so.

Alternatively, you can volunteer on your own at shelters, schools, museums, etc.

Spring Break Trip: [Atherton YMCA's Alternative Spring Break: Medical Mission](#), [VIDA Volunteer](#) & be sure to check with your school for additional Spring Break opportunities!

Shadowing, Research, Internship Experiences

MSMP / Pre-Health Career Corps / Student Organizations

Summer

Ariel says: You have now gone through the most difficult of the pre-med classes. Take advantage of the summer and countless opportunities and explore a field in which you have the most interest. This can be shadowing, scribing, hospital work, teaching, internships, research, study abroad. Use this summer and the summers from here on out to benefit you and fill any gaps that are present in your résumé. You can take summer courses if you need to, but I would highly recommend using your time for something else.



Junior Year



Fall Semester

Ariel says: This year begins the emphasis of major-specific courses, and shifts away from general education based classes. Students will also be probably working on their Writing Intensive, Oral, Ethics, and Research Credits. For me, the load was more manageable.

This was when I began Public Health research. I personally benefitted so much from working with Dr. Withy at the Area Health Education Center and seeing another side of medicine. I learned of how great the need for doctors in the state is and I personally loved that it could be done on my own time from anywhere with an internet connection. I highly recommend students do this type of research.

MCAT Prep: Whether through a course, or through individual study, it is important to set aside time for this exam

Shadowing: Continue the shadowing cycles. If prior shadowing experiences have been in Primary Care, switch to Specialty Care and vice versa.

Research: The student can continue any research they have done or work towards getting department approval credit “repayment” for their research. Non-laboratory research opportunities are also available, such as at JABSOM’s Area Health Education Center.

MSMP / Pre-Health Career Corps / Student Organizations

Spring

Ariel says: For my Spring Break trip, I went on a humanitarian medical trip to Costa Rica with VIDA Volunteer. This organization also offers a trip for pre-dental students. This was an incredibly fun and amazing way to travel internationally and also gain valuable medical skills.

Sign up for the MCAT

Personal Statement: Now is the time to begin working on your personal statement if you haven’t already.

Spring Break Trip: [Atherton YMCA's Alternative Spring Break: Medical Mission](#), [VIDA Volunteer](#)

Letters of Recommendation: Start collecting letters of recommendation or thinking about whom you would like to ask. Shoot for 4 letters with at least 2 being from professors.

Summer

Take the **MCAT**

Pursue any other summer opportunities that interests you.



Senior Year



Fall Semester

Ariel says: In their senior year, the student should have an idea of the type of field they want to enter; pharm, MD, PA, APRN, Research. The student will be filling their schedule with the MCAT, AMCAS, Personal Statement, and practice interviews. Extracurriculars done here should fill any gaps in the student's application and satisfy any interests.

Take the MCAT

Apply to Medical Schools (AMCAS)

Work on Personal Statement

Do Practice Interviews

Spring Semester

Secondary applications

Practice Interviews

Interviews

Summer

This may be the last summer you have before medical school. Take this time to learn a new skill, develop a new hobby, travel, or work in a new city. Do what you deem valuable in these last few months.



Subsequent Years



(Time off, 5th or 6th Year Graduate, etc)

If you are taking time off because you were unable to get into medical school the first time, take into consideration the reasons for denial of your application and work on improving those. Some people work as medical scribes, pursue a Master's degree, do research, volunteer with the Peace Corps, or work for a Medical company.

If you are purposely taking time off before medical school, make the most use of this time and do not waste it. What this means is completely subjective you, and you should be the one to determine how to best use it.

Overview: 4-Year Plan for Extracurricular Activities (Pre-Meds)

Year	Fall Semester	Spring Semester	Summer
Freshman	<i>Join Medical Student Mentorship Program (MSMP)</i> <i>Join Pre-Health Career Corps (PHCC)</i> <i>Join Student Organizations</i>	Lab Research Hospital Volunteer Continue Fall Semester Activities	<i>Summer work, volunteer or research opportunities</i> <i>Summer Coursework</i>
Sophomore	Lab Research Internships Career Shadowing Continue with MSMP / PHCC / Student Organizations	<i>Community Outreach</i> Continue with MSMP / PHCC / Student Organizations	<i>Summer work, volunteer or research opportunities</i>
Junior	MCAT Prep Career Shadowing Research Continue with MSMP / PHCC / Student Organizations	<i>Personal Statement</i> <i>Spring Break Trip</i> <i>Letters of Recommendation</i> <i>Take the MCAT</i> Continue with MSMP / PHCC / Student Organizations	<i>Take the MCAT</i> <i>Apply for Early Acceptance Medical Schools</i> <i>Summer work, volunteer or research opportunities</i>
Senior	Take the MCAT Apply to Medical Schools (AMCAS) Work on Personal Statement Do Practice Interviews Continue with MSMP / PHCC / Student Organizations	Secondary applications Practice Interviews Interviews Continue with MSMP / PHCC / Student Organizations	