

PODIATRIC MEDICINE (D.P.M.) ACADEMIC AND CAREER INFORMATION

NATURE OF THE WORK, EARNINGS, AND OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK

Doctors of Podiatric Medicine (DPM), also known as Podiatrists, are podiatric physicians or surgeons who prevent, diagnose, and treat conditions affecting the foot, ankle, and related structures of the leg. DPMs often detect serious health problems because a number of diseases manifest first through symptoms of the lower extremities (i.e., diabetes, arthritis, heart disease, or kidney disease). Students interested in pursuing a DPM should consider a number of factors including the lifestyle offered by a career in podiatric medicine. A podiatrist can also enjoy a flexible lifestyle. Podiatry offers more options in practice structure compared to other medical specialties.

Earnings and Job Outlook: In 2018, podiatrists earned a median net income of \$129,550. Podiatrists in partnerships tended to earn more than their colleagues in solo practice. Employment of podiatrists is expected to increase by 6% from 2018 to 2028 (Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2018).

TRAINING

There are nine colleges of podiatric medicine in the United States (2 in CA) that are accredited by the Council on Podiatric Medical Education. All of the colleges grant the degree of Doctor of Podiatric Medicine (DPM). DPMs receive medical education and training comparable to medical doctors, which usually require four years of graduate coursework. The first two years are devoted largely to classroom instruction and laboratory work in the basic medical sciences, such as anatomy, physiology, microbiology, biochemistry, pharmacology, and pathology. During the third and fourth years, students concentrate on courses in clinical sciences, gaining experience in the college clinics, community clinics, and accredited hospitals. Clinical courses include but are not limited to general diagnosis, dermatology, general medicine, podiatric surgery, trauma, and biomechanics. After four years of study and receiving the DPM degree, doctors can begin a postdoctoral residency program to further strengthen and refine the practitioner's area of specialty. Residency programs usually last two or more years and are based in accredited hospitals. Practitioners can focus on many different specialty areas within the field of podiatry, including surgery, sports medicine, biomechanics, geriatrics, pediatrics, orthopedics, or primary care.

ACADEMIC PREPARATION

Any major is appropriate for podiatric medical school preparation. While a natural science major requires many of the same basic prerequisites, selecting a natural science major is not required for admission to any podiatric medical school. Students are advised to select a major they find interesting and to work at developing a broad-based, interdisciplinary foundation of knowledge and skills from which they can build upon.

All schools require two years of chemistry (one year of general, one year of organic), along with a year of biology, physics, and English. Some schools may require courses in social sciences, biochemistry, etc.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

CSULB courses which fulfill admission requirements for most U.S. programs:
Students maintain responsibility for verifying course selection with individual programs.

Coursework	CSULB Courses
One year of General Chemistry with Lab	Chemistry 111A & 111B
One year of Organic Chemistry with Lab	Chemistry 220A & 220B + 320L (Chem./Biochem. majors) OR 220A w/ 223A & 220B w/ 223B (Biology and other majors)
One year of General Biology with Lab	Biology 211 & 212 & 213
One year of General Physics with Lab	Physics 100A & 100B OR 151 & 152 & 254
One (or more) course in Biochemistry (MCAT)	Chemistry 441A and/or 441B or 448
Microbiology	Biology 311
One semester to one year of Calculus	Math 119A OR 122 & 123
One year of English	English 100 AND another course from the English department such as: 102, 180, 300
Social and Behavioral Sciences (MCAT)	Sociology 100 and Psychology 100 (MCAT 2015)

IMPORTANT FACTORS CONSIDERED FOR SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

STANDARDIZED TEST: Students must take the [Medical College Admission Test \(MCAT\)](#) for admissions.

CLINICAL EXPOSURE: Direct exposure to podiatry, either volunteer or paid, shadowing, leadership, service to others, and research, are all recommended experiences to become competitive for podiatry school.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION: Many programs require at least 1-3 letters of recommendation, although more may be recommended as part of the admissions process. Many schools require at least 1 letter from a podiatrist the applicant has shadowed as well as letters from science faculty.

ADMISSIONS: The [American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine Application Service \(AACPMAS\)](#) is used for applications to podiatry school.

ADMISSIONS STATISTICS: The national average GPA for the Fall 2018 entering class was **3.30 (Total)** and **3.20 (Science)**. The average overall MCAT score was **494.1**.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [American Podiatric Medical Association \(APMA\)](#)
- [American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine \(AACPM\)](#)
 - [AACPM: Student Brochure \(pdf\)](#)
- [The Nine Colleges of Podiatric Medicine](#)

See your HPAO advisor for more information on Podiatric Medicine, the application process and a list of upcoming workshops and events.