Timeline for Pre-Med students
(prepared by the SLU Health Careers Committee (HCC))

**Freshman Year**

1. Focus on academics- This is the time to establish strong study skills and habits that will enable you to excel in upper level courses. 

   #PRE-MED LEARNING

2. Start shadowing- Get into the clinic or hospital and begin to shadow MDs or DOs. Use this opportunity to become sure that MD/DO is the career for you. Check out other health careers as well (RN, NP, PA, OT, PT, RDN, etc). Medical schools want to know that you have a clear idea of the career you’re getting into- start gaining this understanding early and often.

   #CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

3. Choose activities wisely- Medical schools want to see that you care about people. Get involved in organizations and activities that get you out into the community. It doesn’t have to be a health-specific activity, just something that shows a drive to help others. Start an activity now and carry it through the next four years. 

   #SHOW YOU CARE

4. Meet with a pre-health advisor in the spring semester- Even if this person is not your major advisor, it’s good to establish a connection with someone who will help guide your academic and extracurricular decisions as you aim for medical school. You should routinely evaluate your academics and activities, and an advisor helps you think realistically and objectively before making big decisions. 

   #PRE-HEALTH ADVICE

5. Consider study abroad opportunities- Pre-med students can fit in study abroad (typically during junior year) with careful planning and guidance from their advisors. Most pre-med students choose the programs in Denmark, Kenya, New Zealand, and Australia, though other programs are certainly an option. Even if you decide not to go abroad for a semester, consider these summer opportunities: Health Care Delivery (Kenya), Extreme Physiology (Africa), Neuroscience of Fear (Denmark), Learn Spanish in Nicaragua (Health Careers Language and Internship) (Nicaragua).

   #EXPERIENCE THE WORLD

6. As the year is ending, consider applying to be a TA for next year- As a TA or tutor, you will be tasked with communicating with and supporting students in their learning. This is an excellent way to keep your knowledge of a particular topic fresh in your mind and will challenge you to communicate information in creative ways to help others understand. And not to mention the great letter of recommendation you’ll get from the profs you work with….

   #BE KNOWN

7. Sign up for the SLU Health Careers Listserv to get all of the latest information. Follow the instructions at: http://www.stlawu.edu/biology/health-careers-listserv-information

   #BE IN THE KNOW
**Sophomore Year**

1. Stay focused academically- You will encounter tough courses this year, so draw upon the skills you developed as a freshman and learn new ways to study as you move into upper level courses. **#PRE-MED STUDY**

2. Keep up with shadowing… and more?- You should continue to periodically shadow MDs or DOs to demonstrate sustained interest in the field AND to observe different sub-specialties. Clinical experience as a part-time job is also great- consider completing training as an EMT, a phlebotomist or certified nursing assistant in order to work during summers/vacations in one of these areas. **#MORE SHADOWING**

3. Keep up with extracurriculars- Be sure to make some time for the people-focused activities you started last year. **#CONTINUED CARE**

4. Consider research- An increasing number of students who get accepted to medical school have research experience. This doesn't necessarily have to be research in biology or chemistry, but can also include projects in psychology and sociology. Talk to a professor whose course you liked or approach faculty whose projects sound interesting to you (read up on the department websites!) to find out what opportunities might be available to you. Even if you don't get involved as a sophomore, you can make plans to apply for a SLU Fellowship or external summer research programs. Involvement in research shows that you're interested in new ideas and continuing to learn. **#ASK QUESTIONS**

5. Consider applying for SLU Health Coaches- This is an excellent opportunity to get patient experience. In the fall semester, you will learn the foundational concepts for working with patients to achieve change, and in the spring semester, you will meet with your patient and help them follow their care plan. **Apply during the spring semester** for the course next fall. **#SLU HEALTH COACHES**

6. Meet with your pre-health advisor again in the spring- Be sure you're still **#ON PRE-MED TRACK**.

7. Use your summer- This is a great time to do more shadowing or work/volunteer within the health care environment. Even if you have another non-health related job, reserve some time to work on the clinical experience portion of your **#PRE-MED PREP**.

**Junior Year**

1. Academics, shadowing, extracurriculars- You get it by now, maintain your **#PRE-MED FOCUS**.
2. Study for the MCAT- You should begin studying during the fall. Consider the MCAT prep course provided at SLU (Foundations of Medicine I) or perhaps choose another online prep course. Regardless, start now. #MCAT PREP

3. Before Thanksgiving break, attend the HCC informational meeting- Learn about how to prepare for your HCC interview in the spring semester. Sign and turn in your waiver form now to allow faculty members plenty of time to complete your recommendation in a non-hurried manner. #HCC INTERVIEW PREP

4. Over winter break, complete your HCC Interview paperwork- In order to best represent yourself, you will need to complete these requirements in a thoughtful manner. Waiting to work on this until when you get back to campus for the spring semester is not the best idea, since you’ll be busy with new classes. Spend time on your personal statement and experience descriptions in particular. #SELF-REFLECTION

5. Complete a HCC Interview in February- Be prepared to discuss your submitted interview materials. You will meet with one of the HCC co-chairs after your interview to gain feedback. #HCC FEEDBACK

6. Consider applying for a SLU Fellowship to perform summer research with a faculty mentor. Start planning this in the fall. #SLU SCHOLAR

7. Take the MCAT in April, or May- You will not receive your MCAT score until one month after you’ve taken the test, so taking the exam earlier will enable you to submit your AMCAS application earlier. #MCAT DONE

8. Start filling out the AMCAS (MD) or AACOMAS (DO) application as soon as it opens in May- There are multiple parts of the application, and you want to make sure each is complete, accurate, and grammatically correct. So, begin to work on this in chunks, taking time to proofread as you complete each portion. After you submit your application to AMCAS, it takes at least 4 weeks for them to verify it before it can be distributed to schools. The earlier you complete the application, the earlier it can get to prospective schools. #MEDSCHOOL APP

9. Submit your application as soon as possible in the summer- Some med schools start printing and evaluating applications in July. As time passes, med schools fill more and more slots, so get your application in the mix while the odds are most stacked in your favor. If the application deadline is October 1, for example, don’t take your time in getting your application in- the med school has probably already filled the majority of its slots by the official deadline. Schools send out secondary applications two weeks after your application is complete. If you submit by June, you can start your secondary application essays before the semester starts. #SUMMER SUBMISSION
**Senior Year**

1. Don’t slow down before reaching the finish line- Continue to challenge yourself academically and don’t ease up on your dedication to courses. *#LIMIT SENIORITIS*

2. Stick to the plan that’s gotten you here- Don’t give up your people-focused community activities. Taking time to help others helps to keep your life in perspective. *#MAKE A DIFFERENCE*

3. Finish your secondary applications- Research the schools you’ve applied to and make your responses as genuine and specific as possible. Why is that school your number one choice? *#BE CONVINCING*

4. Go to interviews- Research the schools at which you will be interviewing- become familiar with their curriculum and the unique aspects of their program. Have specific questions to ask if given the opportunity. Review your application and practice MMI interview questions and keep up with current topics/controversies/issues in the field of medicine. *#MED SCHOOL OPTIONS*