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Explore UWM's Pre-Chiropractic Program

UWM offers all of the prerequisite coursework necessary for students to apply to chiropractic programs throughout the country. There are only 15 accredited chiropractic programs in the United States, none in Wisconsin. The closest program is at National University of Health Sciences in Lombard, Illinois.

Prior to attending schools of chiropractic medicine, students must earn a minimum of 90 credits (senior status) at least 30 of which must be upper-level classes. Increasingly, chiropractic schools are starting to require a bachelor's degree, and the State of Wisconsin requires chiropractors to have completed the bachelor's degree if they plan to practice in Wisconsin. Therefore, students should seriously consider completing the bachelor's degree before starting a chiropractic program.

Majors for Pre-Chiropractic Students

It is important to note that "pre-chiropractic" is not a major. While no specific academic major is preferred by chiropractic schools, the vast majority of pre-chiropractic students tend to major in either Biological Sciences (found in the College of Letters & Science) or Kinesiology (found in the College of Health Sciences). Regardless of the major, students will need specific science courses to be a competitive applicant to chiropractic school.

In addition to seeking students who excel in math and science, chiropractic programs are looking for students who possess

good communication skills, exceptional hand-eye coordination and dexterity, the ability to work with diverse audiences, and empathy.

Advising

Students who identify themselves as pre-chiropractic will be assigned to a dedicated pre-professional advisor with specialized experience helping students make long-term plans for a professional health care program following undergraduate studies. Because many science courses have prerequisites and follow a very structured order, it is important that students plan their course schedule very carefully in consultation with their advisor. Getting off track as early as freshman year can delay graduation.

Research Opportunities

UWM students are encouraged to enhance their preparation for chiropractic school by participating in research projects with faculty members and graduate students. The Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) provides access to research experiences and helps match students with projects that align with their chosen field of study.

After Undergraduate Studies

Chiropractic programs lead to the Doctor of Chiropractic degree (D.C.). Most D.C. programs operate on the trimester system and are 10 trimesters long (about 3 1/3 years). Students first complete classroom work in anatomy, physiology, biology, and related subjects before moving on to clinical experience in spinal manipulation and diagnosis. Following graduation from the D.C. program, some students complete residencies for specialty training. All states require successful completion of written and practical exams to receive a license to practice and continued education to maintain that license.

Quick Facts:

- » October is National Chiropractic Month
- » There are more than 60,000 active chiropractic licenses in the United States and more than 80,000 practitioners worldwide
- » Chiropractic was founded in 1895 by Daniel David (D.D.) Palmer in Davenport, Iowa
- » Chiropractic treatment is a covered benefit in most insurance policies
- » The word 'Chiropractic' comes from the Greek words cheir (meaning 'hand') and praktos (meaning 'done'), i.e. Done by Hand

Career Outlook

Chiropractors diagnose and treat patients with health problems related to the body's muscular, nervous, and skeletal system, particularly the spine. They view their patients as an integrated being and do not use drugs or surgery. The chiropractic theory states that there are many factors that affect our health, including heredity, type of exercise, environmental surroundings, dietary habits, and rest.

Common tasks for a chiropractor include patient examination, analysis of posture and spine position, spinal and joint adjustments, application of heat and ice treatments, and patient lifestyle counseling. Some chiropractors use acupuncture, massage therapy, and ultrasound if they have received such training.

Many chiropractors work in solo or group practices and have additional business-related responsibilities such as marketing, billing, and office management. A smaller number work in hospitals and medical clinics, teach, or conduct research.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects an above-average increase in employment opportunities for chiropractors. As alternative medicine becomes more acceptable and the population ages, it is expected that the profession will grow by 12 percent from 2016 to 2026.

Salaries for chiropractors vary greatly between \$40,000 and \$180,000, depending on the years of experience and area of the country in which you live. Chiropractors tend to earn significantly less early in their careers and then earn more as they build a client base and become owners or partners in a practice.

Partner Schools

UWM partners closely with three chiropractic colleges: Palmer College of Chiropractic in Davenport, Iowa; Cleveland Chiropractic College in Overland Park, Kansas; and Northwestern Health Sciences University in Bloomington, Minnesota. UWM students who meet certain academic standards may qualify for guaranteed admission at these institutions. Students are encouraged to work closely with the pre-chiropractic advisor in order to plan early for this transition and to understand the specific requirements of these schools.

Suggested Pre-Chiropractic Courses

One year of General Biology with lab (Bio Sci 150/152) and/or one year of Anatomy & Physiology with Lab (Bio Sci 202/203). Biology requirement may vary by chiropractic school.
One year of Physics with lab (Physics 120/121 & 122/123). Physics requirement may vary by chiropractic school.
Three semesters of General Chemistry with lab (Chem 100, 102, 104), one year of Organic Chemistry with lab (Chem 343, 344 & 345), and one semester of biochemistry (Chem 501)
6 credits of English, including composition
Introduction to Psychology (Psych 101)
Courses in the humanities and social sciences, including history, sociology, anthropology, and ethics
Electives in kinesiology, anatomy, physiology, or biochemistry
Statistics (Mth Stat 215 or BioSci 465)

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