



# Welcome to PreMed 101

Fall 2012 | Wednesdays 6:00 – 7:30pm

Location: 141 McCone | 1 Unit Pass/Fail

Head Facilitators: Frank (Yang) Lu & Julia Truong

Course Website: <http://www.premed101.org>

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. David Presti, Department of Molecular and Cell Biology

\*\*Please do not contact Dr. Presti, MCB personnel, or the DeCal board regarding enrollment.\*\*

## *PreMed 101 Facilitators*

### *Fall 2012*

For homework grading and support throughout the course, all students will be assigned to a Facilitator based on their year and last name.

Your Facilitator is here to help and support you.

We welcome all questions, comments, and concerns.

Year	Last Name	Assigned Facilitator	Email Address
Freshmen	TBD	Kirstyn	Kirstyn@premed101.org
Freshmen	TBD	Emily	Emily@premed101.org
Freshmen	TBD	Pamela	Pamela@premed101.org
Sophomores	TBD	Julia	Julia@premed101.org
Sophomores	TBD	Courtney	Courtney@premed101.org
Juniors	TBD	Matthew	Matthew@premed101.org
Seniors & Above	TBD	Frank	Frank@premed101.org

### **Course Description**

This course is designed to help students interested in becoming medical doctors navigate the complex world of medical school applications. We will also address issues related to the field of medicine including alternatives, ethics, and financial concerns. The scope of this course can be expanded to fit student needs and interests.

“An inquiring, analytical mind; an unquenchable thirst for new knowledge; and a heartfelt compassion for the ailing—these are prominent traits among the committed clinicians who have preserved the passion for medicine.”

- Lois DeBaKey, M.D.

### Recommended Texts & Materials (but NOT required):

1. MSAR: The Medical School Admission Requirements 2012-2013. Price: \$20.00 (Online edition). Visit <http://www.aamc.org/students/applying/requirements/msar/> for more information.
2. "Med School Rx: Getting In, Getting Through, and Getting On With Doctoring" by Dr. Walter Hartwig from Touro University

## PreMed 101 Course Policies

### Attendance

- Class participation is a major component of your grade. As a result, attendance is mandatory.
- Conflicts with midterm exam times will be excused. Review sessions and meetings are unexcused.
- **Please be on time.** Being late is disrespectful to the guest speakers and to your fellow students.
- Chronic tardiness is not acceptable and will result in the equivalence of an absence.
  - (i.e. 2 tardies = 1 absence).
- **More than two unexcused absences or four tardies will result in a No Pass grade.**
- Excused absences include illness, doctor's appointment, and other emergencies with documentation.
  - You must notify your assigned facilitator in the event that you will be missing class.
- The last class of the semester is **REQUIRED** in order to receive a passing grade. We will be filling out course evaluations. Plus, you won't want to miss the BEST guest speaker we have planned for that day!

### Assignments

- In this class, we will explore necessary skills to be successful during the application process for medical school. The assignments are a practical application of those skills.
- The Facilitators reserve the right to request a redo of any assignment.
- All students must complete **4 out of the 6** homework assignments in order to pass.
- **One of the 4 completed assignments must be "Plan B" or "Personal Statement."**

### Plagiarism

- Plagiarism is considered academic dishonesty and any plagiarism on assignments in this class will result in a NO PASS grade, as well as possible disciplinary action from the University Office of Student Conduct.

### Grading

- Grading is based on your attendance record and completion of homework assignments.
- Assignments will be graded based on the following:

Check ✓	Satisfactory
Check minus ✓-	Unsatisfactory, please redo

### Assistance

We want this class to be a great learning experience for you. It is our pleasure to assist you in any way we can. If you have questions about an assignment, concerns unrelated to this course, or if you need help please notify a Facilitator. If you have health, family, or work situations that interfere

with your ability to study or attend class—let a Facilitator know right away so we can discuss how best to resolve it.

## LECTURE SCHEDULE

*This schedule is tentative and subject to change.  
Please check bSpace and the course website, as well as come to class to receive updates.*

August 29th	<b>An Introduction to the Pre-Med Experience at UC Berkeley</b> <i>Course Overview and Student Expectations</i>	
September 5th	<b>An Overview of the Medical School Application Process</b> <i>Frank Lu and Julia Truong PreMed 101 DeCal Head Facilitators</i>	<b>HW #1 Due</b>
September 12th	<b>Everything You Need to Know about the MCAT</b> <i>Dale Schmidt from The Berkeley Review MCAT Prep Program</i>	
September 19th	<b>Applying to Medical School - What It's Actually Like</b> <i>A panel of applicants currently going through the application cycle</i>	<b>HW #2 Due</b>
----- <b>Add/Drop Deadline for all classes: Friday, September 21st</b> -----		
September 26th	<b>Life According to the Medical School Students</b> <i>2nd Year Medical Students at UCSF</i>	<b>HW #3 Due</b>
October 3rd	<b>PBL: Problem Based Learning</b> <i>Maxwell Jen, MD 1st Year Emergency Medicine Resident at UC Irvine and PreMed 101 Alumnus</i>	
October 10th	<b>Osteopathic Medicine</b> <i>Janet Burns, DO Professor of Osteopathic Medicine at Touro University</i>	
October 17th	<b>Internship Year - Orthopedic Surgery</b> <i>Laurence Cook, MD Intern in Orthopedic Surgery at UC Davis and PreMed 101 Alumnus</i>	<b>HW #4 Due</b>
October 24th	<b>Private Practice</b> <i>Robert Napoles, MD Primary Care Physician at Sutter Medical Group</i>	<b>HW #5 Due</b>
October 31st	<b>Medicine and Serving Your Community</b> <i>Joyce Vilorio, MD</i>	

*UCSF Post-Baccalaureate Program Alumna and Internal Medicine Resident at SFGH*

- November 7th      **Teaching and Medicine**  
*Prasanna Jagannathan, MD*  
*Teach for America Alumnus and Chief Internal Medicine Resident at SFGH*
- November 14th      **Alternative to the MD: Physician's Assistant**      **HW #6 Due**  
*Connie Melcher, PA*  
*Emergency Medicine Physician's Assistant at Doctors Medical Center*
- November 21st      **NO CLASS -- THANKSGIVING BREAK**
- November 28th      **Life in the E.R.**  
*Desmond Carson, MD*  
*Emergency Medicine Physician at Doctors Medical Center*  
**(ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY FOR COURSE EVALUATIONS)**

-----END OF CLASSES-----

## **HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS**

All homework assignments must be turned in at **the end of class on the assigned due date**. Email submissions will not be accepted. Hardcopies only. To be considered a complete homework assignment, please follow these criteria:

- All assignments must be typed, double spaced, and 12 point Times New Roman font.
- The pages must have 1-inch margins.
- The **minimum** amount to be written is 1.5 pages. The maximum amount is 2 pages.
- In cases of plagiarism, you will receive a NO PASS grade and will be reported to University Officials.
- Assignments will be graded based on the following:
  - Did the student meet all of the above format criteria?
  - Did the student plagiarize?
  - Did the student answer **all** of the assigned questions?

### **Homework #1: Personal Reflection and Semester Goals**

Part 1: Please reflect on the following questions: Why do you want to be a doctor? What experiences in your life have shaped your desire to be a doctor? If you are not sure that being a doctor is the right path for you right now, please reflect on why you do or do not want to be a doctor.

Part 2: What are your goals for this semester? What will you do to ensure that you reach your goals? What do you do to de-stress? What do you hope to accomplish by December 14th, 2012? Please write about your academic, pre-med, and personal goals.

This assignment will only be graded on length. Feel free to be as honest as you feel is necessary. You will be given a chance to review this particular assignment at the end of the semester to see your progress.

### **Homework #2: Writing About Your Activities for Your AMCAS**

For many pre-med students, little is known about the AMCAS until they are finally ready to apply. In an effort to avoid any “surprises,” we’d like to help you prepare the activities, awards, and work section of the AMCAS. When you end up applying to medical school, you will have 15 opportunities to write about your activities, awards, and work experience. However, for this assignment, please write one paragraph each about THREE of your favorite extracurricular activities or jobs. Remember, you want to impress the medical school admissions committees, so do your best to make yourself shine!

If you do not have three activities that you are currently involved in, please research three extracurricular activities or student organizations that you are interested in. Write one paragraph each describing (1) what the organization does, (2) how to join, (3) the requirements to join, (4) how frequently they meet, (5) and what you hope to get out of the experience by joining that particular group/organization. We hope that through this homework assignment, you will be able to get a better feel for what student groups at Cal can offer you.

### **Homework #3: Map Out Your Undergraduate Career**

For this assignment you will get the chance to map out how you would like to see your undergraduate career unfold. Though it is impossible to predict exactly how your years at Cal will play out, it is important to have a timeline that will help keep the entire experience organized. The AAMC provides a basic timeline, which you can use as an example, and we would like you to consider the information presented and personalize your experience with your activities, interests, and ambitions. The timeline can be found at this website:

[http://www.aamc.org/students/considering/gettingin/62796/considering\\_timeline.html](http://www.aamc.org/students/considering/gettingin/62796/considering_timeline.html)

As a side, please use this as an opportunity to familiarize yourself with the AAMC website. There is a wealth of information about the application process and it is worth your time to take advantage of it.

Note: Please write this in essay format (no bullet points). Also, if you are not a freshman or sophomore, focus on your final years at Cal and highlight what you would like to do to enhance and/or prepare for your application.

### **Homework #4: Research a Medical Specialty of Your Choice**

For this assignment, your task is to describe a medical specialty that you may be interested in pursuing as an M.D. or D.O. (i.e. dermatology, pediatrics, neurosurgery, etc). Think about the tasks/commitments demanded by this particular specialty and choose ONE to discuss in your paper. You should include the following:

- 1) Reasons you are interested in this field (personal or otherwise)
- 2) Any significant development in that area in the last few years (new treatments, research, “breakthroughs”)
- 3) Any schools, hospitals, or centers in the world that are known for their work in that area.

**Homework #5: Plan B**

Though we may not enjoy considering the possibility, many students realize that they cannot handle the workload of a premed or medical student, decide that medicine is not the right career for them, or are rejected by medical schools (>50% of medical school applicants every year are rejected). In the event of any of those occurrences, it would be wise to have a *realistic* Plan B.

Please write about what you would do if you could never go to medical school (for this assignment, applying again is not an option). Include a description of the alternative studies or careers you might pursue, the requirements, why you have chosen that as your alternative, and how you intend to achieve that aim (e.g. pursuing another degree, seeking an internship, etc.). This assignment is not intended to discourage you in any way since you have a high likelihood of reaching your goals (more than 50% of UC Berkeley medical school applicants are accepted into a medical school). However, just in case you don't, you will never be caught in the situation of not knowing what to do with your life since you have a well thought out alternative.

**Homework #6: Your Personal Statement**

The personal statement is one of the most critical elements of any medical school application. Therefore, we hope that this assignment will give you an idea of the type of composition that medical schools will be looking for. Please answer this question: "Why do you want to be a doctor?"

We understand that this will be a rough draft and are more interested in ideas, themes, and overall organization as well as the feel of the essay rather than in grammar, spelling, or character count (though be aware that medical schools will heavily scrutinize spelling and grammatical errors and will not allow you to surpass the character limit).

PLEASE NOTE: for your benefit, your Facilitator will edit your essay. Therefore, please only include information that you are comfortable sharing.

ADVICE: Medical school admissions officers will often emphasize that they don't care what you choose to write about in your essay. They stress this because most writers try too hard to meet the expectations of their imagined readers, discarding all of their own personality in the process. If you try to impress everyone, you will end up impressing no one. In addition to the challenge of crafting a fresh take on standard ideas, you face the difficulty of integrating multiple, sophisticated themes into a single coherent piece. The themes can be grouped into two basic categories: those that speak to your motivation for becoming a doctor and those that demonstrate the characteristics and abilities that qualify you for the profession.