INFORMATION ON APPLYING TO CHIROPRACTIC SCHOOL

Great PDF About Chiropractic School Application and Accreditation:  

* Please note that although most programs state that only 2 years of undergraduate education are required – many states will not license a doctor to practice without a bachelor’s degree!!

What is Chiropractic Medicine?

According to the American Chiropractic Association, www.amerchiro.org, Chiropractic is a branch of the healing arts which is concerned with human health and disease processes. Doctors of Chiropractic are physicians who consider man as an integrated being and give special attention to the physiological and biochemical aspects including structural, spinal, musculoskeletal, neurological, vascular, nutritional, emotional and environmental relationships.

The practice and procedures which may be employed by Doctors of Chiropractic are based on the academic and clinical training received in and through accredited chiropractic colleges and include, but are not limited to, the use of current diagnostic and therapeutic procedures. Such procedures specifically include the adjustment and manipulation of the articulations and adjacent tissues of the human body, particularly of the spinal column. Included is the treatment of intersegmental aberrations for alleviation of related functional disorders. Chiropractic is a drug-free, non-surgical science and, as such, does not include pharmaceuticals or incisive surgery.

Choosing a Major/Minor

Your undergraduate academic program should include courses that give you a solid foundation in the sciences. Most students interpret that as requiring a major in the sciences, but you should actually choose a major that interests you and in which you have some talent. Although most students do major in the biological or physical sciences, there is no one major that will guarantee acceptance into Chiropractic College. Regardless of your major, you will need to take a substantial amount of biology, physics, chemistry and math, with good grades.

Minimum requirements for all chiropractic colleges are one year of biology, two years of chemistry, and one year of physics. Two semesters of biology is not sufficient for good performance in the first two years of academic study in a chiropractic program. A minimum of four semesters, possibly five, of biology will prepare a student for the rigors of chiropractic school. Your biology courses should give you a sound basis in general biology, zoology, genetics, cell biology, physiology, and biochemistry. In addition to the sciences, you need to have a well-rounded education in the humanities and social sciences; don't neglect these fields. Courses in computer science applications, writing, business and statistics are also valuable. A major in science accompanied by a minor in some non-science field provides evidence of a broad background and interest.

Chiropractic College Applications

Students should plan to apply to chiropractic schools at least 6 months to one year prior to desired admission. Many chiropractic programs will have multiple starting classes each year, so plan accordingly. Each chiropractic college has their own application form and the student should contact each institution individually.

Letters of Evaluation
Each chiropractic college establishes their own rules in the application process regarding letters of evaluation. Many schools will require three letters of evaluation along with a letter of recommendation from a licensed Doctor of Chiropractic. The prospective applicant should contact each school individually to obtain specific requirements.

Interview

Many chiropractic colleges will require an interview held on their campus. These interviews are usually informal, but the student should prepare for the encounter. Some items to consider for this interview are below:

Preparation for the Interview

- Get to know yourself well--think about your motivation, personal characteristics, values, opinions, and goals. Are you honest, empathetic, compassionate, curious, analytical?
- Motivation: Consider your life experiences and how they relate to chiropractic medicine. How have your experiences, your relationships with people, your accomplishments motivated you toward chiropractic? You should be able to talk about such things in a conversation without sounding self-centered or arrogant.
- Consider your strengths and weaknesses. Are you a planner, well-organized and reliable? What are your talents? What do they contribute to making you a good candidate for medical school? What are your shortcomings? Don't try to hide them, but think about them, and how you have dealt with them to be a successful student, etc. Don't blame others for your problems or shortcomings--if it is necessary to talk about them, explain them and how you compensate for them. Don't try to turn a weakness into a strength.
- Maturity: What major decisions have you made on your own? How have you dealt with disappointments? How do you handle stress and anxiety?
- Intellectual curiosity: Are you a well-read person? What do you read? Are you aware of current controversies in the chiropractic field? How do you spend your free time? Have you taught yourself some special skill? Are you interested in some topic beyond what is required of you in classes?
- Leadership: Have you taken advantage of the opportunities available to you on campus to become involved in a community or people-oriented activity? Have you taken a leadership role in such an activity? How involved were you? How has it helped you and the organization in which you participated?
- Interpersonal communication skills: Evaluate yours, and do what you can to improve them. Practice listening, as well as talking, to others.
- Values and opinions: Have opinions regarding current social/political/medical issues. Be able to discuss your opinions logically and back up your opinions clearly, but be open to other ideas.
- Goals: What do you see yourself doing in 5 or 10 years? Will you be doing research, be a primary care physician, be teaching in a chiropractic institution, be in family practice?
- Get to know the school at which you are interviewing before you go there--look at its web page (or other sources) and know as much as you can about its philosophy, history, curriculum (required and elective courses), research, clinical facilities, socioeconomic characteristics of its setting. Look at its catalog, if possible--have some questions to ask about the particular school at which you are interviewing. Be sure to call if you need to cancel an appointment.

Chiropractic Prerequisites

For admission to the Doctor of Chiropractic program, all students must furnish proof of having earned a minimum of 90 semester hours applicable to the award of a baccalaureate degree at an institution or institutions accredited by a nationally recognized agency. Included in these credits must be a minimum of 48 semester hours in the course areas listed below.
In addition all students must have earned a cumulative and prerequisite grade point average of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale for those required courses listed below and for the required 90 semester hours. In situations in which one or more courses have been repeated with equivalent courses, the most recent grade(s) may be used for grade point average computation and the earlier grades(s) may be disregarded.

- Biological Science - Minimum 6 semester hours with associated labs
- Chemistry - Minimum of 12 semester hours of chemistry
  - At least 3 semester hours must be general/inorganic chemistry
  - At least 6 semester hours must be organic chemistry and/or biochemistry
  - At least 6 semester hours of chemistry must include pertinent related laboratories
- Physics - Minimum of 6 semester hours of physics and related studies
  - At least 3 semester hours of physics with pertinent related laboratory
  - At least 3 semester hours of additional physics, biomechanics, kinesiology, statistics or exercise physiology (no lab required)
- Psychology - Minimum of 3 semester hours
- Social Science/Humanities - Minimum of 15 semester hours
  - Social Science areas include anthropology, economics, geography, history, management, marketing, political science, psychology and sociology
  - Humanity areas include art, foreign language, literature, music, philosophy and religion
- Language/Communications - Minimum of 6 semester hours
  - Language / Communications include any college level courses in the English Department and/or speech, literature and mass communications

**Links to Sites of Interest to Pre-Chiropractic Students**

- [List of Accredited Chiropractic colleges](#)
- [Logan College of Chiropractic](#)
- [Palmer College of Chiropractic](#)

**The Chiropractic Education**

Upon successful completion of the undergraduate studies, those students who are accepted to a chiropractic college enter a 4-5 year academic program, which is similar in content to medical school. Course work includes an in-depth study of anatomy, physiology, pathology, neurology, radiology, biomechanics, spinal adjustive techniques, including a variety of other health-related areas.

The primary focus of the chiropractic education is to teach the student how to recognize and effectively treat a wide variety of soft tissue disorders in order to reduce pain and discomfort, allow for effective and proper healing, restore normal body biomechanics and improve overall health. In order to treat such conditions, students are taught a number of different techniques and methods including chiropractic spinal adjustive techniques. Through chiropractic spinal adjustments, the students are taught how they can positively influence the body through the nervous system using specific spinal adjustive techniques. An emphasis is also placed on other aspects of health including diet, exercise, nutrition and wellness. Moreover, students receive thorough training aimed at identifying those conditions which are beyond the chiropractor's scope of practice and which require outside medical referral.

During the academic 4-5 year program, students must successfully complete a number of national board examinations which are required for licensure. In addition, students must spend several hundred hours of internship in which they treat patients suffering from true health ailments while under professional supervision. Some schools actually begin introducing and training students to the clinical setting in just their second year of studies. This ensures that the graduating doctors of chiropractic will have all the necessary education, skills and clinical experience to provide exceptionally safe and effective chiropractic health care. Many colleges have
additionally employed externship programs in which student interns assist field doctors in their private practices prior to graduation.

**Licensure**

Upon graduation and the passing of all national board exams, students undergo state board examination for the state which they wish to practice in. If successful, the new doctor of chiropractic will receive his or her license for the practice of chiropractic in that state.

**Continuing Education**

Once licensed, most states require the doctor of chiropractic to attend annual seminars in order to maintain a high level of competency and keep technical skills sharp and as current as possible. Failure to do so will result in the revocation of the doctor's license.

**Postgraduate Studies**

Many doctors further their knowledge and skills by completing additional studies after graduation. These one to three year programs provide the information to place the doctors at the top of the health care field in specific areas. Some of the areas of study include orthopedics, neurology, radiology, sports, rehabilitation, nutrition, pediatrics and research.

**Subject Hours Comparison Between DC's and MD's**

You may be surprised to learn that chiropractic doctors receive more class and study time in many important subjects compared with their medical counterparts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Class Hours Chiropractic Students</th>
<th>Class Hours Medical Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anatomy</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnosis</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microbiology</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>115</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neurology</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obstetrics</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthopedics</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathology</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physiology</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>325</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychiatry</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiology</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HOURS</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,065</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,710</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ADDITIONALLY REQUIRED STUDIES**

- Spinal Manipulation
- Nutrition
- Physiotherapy
- Advanced Radiology
- Pharmacology
- Immunology
- General Surgery
Chiropractic Colleges

There are 15 chiropractic colleges accredited by the Council on Chiropractic Education (CCE). All but a few chiropractic licensing boards require that their applicants be a graduate of a college with CCE status. Fully accredited chiropractic colleges are strategically located across the United States and are equipped with extensive libraries, laboratories and public clinics. The Council on Chiropractic Education and its Commission on Accreditation are recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as the sole authority on training offered by chiropractic colleges. In addition to teaching, the colleges are actively involved in research and in the life of the communities in which they are located. Chiropractic colleges are currently engaged in cooperative research, teaching, graduate and residency training agreements with state universities across the country.

The colleges also offer postgraduate and continuing education programs in fields ranging from sports injuries and occupational health to orthopedics and neurology, allowing doctors of chiropractic to specialize or to meet state relicensure requirements.

Curriculum in Chiropractic School

The purpose of the curriculum is to give a student a thorough understanding of the structure and function of the human organism in health and disease. A well-balanced presentation gives the student an understanding of the essential features of the life processes: digestion, excretion, physical and mental growth, nutrition, metabolism, energy, nervous control, the significance of development defects, behavior, and other elements fundamental to the understanding of pathological conditions. An understanding of structure and function makes it possible for students to identify deviations from the normal and provides the essential facts required later for the diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment of disease.

The first two years of professional study emphasize life sciences, health sciences and clinical disciplines. The remaining two to three years stress practical or clinical studies dealing with diagnosis and treatment of human disorders with about half the time spent at outpatient clinics. Courses include differential diagnosis, anatomy, biochemistry, physiology, microbiology, pathology, gynecology, pediatrics, geriatrics, radiology, spinal analysis, and a host of other subjects.

A minimum of four academic years of study at a chiropractic college, including practice in a teaching clinic, is required for the doctor of chiropractic degree. In the teaching clinics of the colleges, the advanced student obtains experience in diagnosis, treatment or referral, that represents the culmination of the academic learning experience and the transition from student to chiropractic physician.

Links to Chiropractic Medicine Resources

Becoming a Doctor of Chiropractic Medicine

The American Chiropractic Association Online (the ACA home page with links to various resources)

List of Chiropractic Schools: http://www.chiropracticschools.com/