



PRE-PROFESSIONAL NEWSLETTER

MSU College of Natural Science

School Spotlight: Wayne State University—Physician Assistant Studies Program



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

School Spotlight	1
Career Corner	2
Student Spotlight	3
Studying for the MCAT	4
Faculty Spotlight	5
Student Organization Spotlight	6
Course Spotlight	6
Academic Advisor Spotlight	7

Wayne State University's Physician Assistant (PA) Studies program within the Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences in Detroit, MI. They offer a Masters of Physician

Assistant Studies in two full years, starting in May of the matriculation year. There is one full year of didactic courses, or classroom studies, and another year of rotations throughout different specialties. Because of Wayne State University's connections with St. Johns, Detroit Medical Center, and Henry Ford Hospitals, students get a wide variety of rotation opportunities. Due to its location in the heart of a big city, this school puts focus on practicing in underserved areas and takes pride in the community service opportunities provided for students. Students have the opportunity to work in various free clinics as

well. For admission, students must complete the CASPA application, as well as a general graduate application to WSU itself, and take the GRE. CASPA applications for the 2018 cycle open April 27th, 2018, and must be submitted by September 1st, 2018 and verified by CASPA by September 15th, 2018. The averages for the class of 2019 include a GPA of 3.79, a GRE score of 303, and 3,307 health care hours. The program is currently trying to implement more credit hours for the PA program, increasing from 54 to 72.

Upcoming Events

- Marathon of Majors—03/14
- Walk-ins Begin—03/14
- Enrollment for Summer Begins—3/02
- Open Enrollment for Fall/Spring Begins—03/30
- Strike Out MD—04/07
- Classes End—4/27
- Final Exams—4/30-5/4
- Commencement—5/4-5/6
- Grades Posted by—05/09

Career Corner with Brian Telfor

Here is a short list of upcoming events! Be sure to also check out Handshake for more career fairs, internships, and job opportunities.

You can schedule an appointment with Brian Telfor concerning internship and career resources through Handshake! <https://msu.joinhandshake.com/>

Care Provider**Code: 862854**

This is a paid internship at Helping Hands Respite Care in East Lansing, MI. It combines both academic and clinical experience. Care providers have the responsibility of providing hands on care for children, and adults with disabilities, chronic illness, emotional/behavior concerns or age related conditions. Interns must have a reliable car in order to fulfill this internship.

Deadline: December 31st, 2018 at 10:00 am**Clinical Research Position****Code: 1262850**

This is a paid research position in Orthopedic Surgery and Sports Medicine at Hinsdale Orthopaedics in Westmont, IL. As a clinical research assistant, you will be responsible for maintaining an extensive surgical database as well as assisting with the formulation and writing of research studies. This position offers the opportunity to be a co-author on a number of peer-reviewed journal publications. It also offers exposure to a successful clinical practice and the field of sports medicine through the work environment as well as shadowing opportunities.

Deadline: June 30th, 2018 at 1:00 pm**Health Corps Member****Code: 1222321**

This is a paid position as a Health Corps Member with the Washington AIDS Partnership. Members are placed at different agencies in the nation's capital, and provide important health services related to HIV, sexually transmitted infections or STIs, health education, and so much more. Duties and responsibilities vary by placement but can include: HIV and STI testing, health education for schools and community groups, and quality of life/care services such as case management, transportation, and food delivery to persons living with HIV.

Deadline: May 31st, 2018 at 5:00 pm**Camp Counselor, Specialist, or Supervisor****Code: 1127888**

This is a paid position with Sunrise Day Camp. Sunrise Day Camp is the only dedicated full summer day camp in the world for children with cancer and their siblings. They are looking for individuals who are mature, responsible, energetic, and excited to make a tremendous impact in the lives of the children. Staff positions commonly involve being with children for the full length of the camp day, from camper arrival at 9:30 in the morning until 3:45 in the afternoon. The camp runs for seven weeks.

Deadline: August 1st, 2018 at 12:00 am**Research Assistant****Code: 1255483**

This is a paid full-time research assistant position at Michigan Spine and Brain Surgeons, PLLC in Southfield, MI. Research Assistants will conduct research in the form of patient interviews in order to collect pre- and post-surgical outcomes. Research assistants will also be responsible for performing day to day management of the clinical research databases.

Deadline: December 20th, 2018 at 6:00 pm**Medical Scribe****Code: 1342735**

This is a paid full-time position for ScribeAmerica in Jackson, Michigan. The central role of the Medical Scribe is to relieve the physician of clerical or secretarial duties; thus allowing the physician to focus more directly on clinical care. They also observe the physician during patient encounters and perform documentation on the physician's behalf.

Deadline: May 12th, 2018 at 11:00 pm

Brian Telfor, College of Natural Science Career Services Consultant

Student Spotlight: Samantha Mandel (Human Biology and Pre-Dental)**Q: What made you pick dentistry?**

As a little girl, I used to absolutely love going to the dentist's office for teeth cleanings or even to get a cavity filled; this is not normal, I know. I always knew growing up that I wanted to have a career in healthcare, but never knew what path I wanted to pursue until my senior year of high school. I was enrolled in Health Occupations, which was a course that provided a broad overview of several careers, medical terminology, anatomy and biological concepts. When we had a dentist and hygienist come in to speak, I thought to myself, "Huh, I would like to do that, I think I could do that." I started shadowing, and eventually assisting my own general dentist and quickly realized there was a special patient/provider relationship that dentistry provided.

Q: What are your major and minor?

I will be graduating this May with my degree in Human Biology and a minor in Health Promotion.

Q: What has been your favorite class at MSU?

I took BLD204—Mechanisms of Disease during my sophomore year which I really enjoyed, and it provided a solid foundation for taking BLD434—Clinical Immunology (another one of my favorites!). I loved ANTR350—Gross Anatomy and found that class really clicked for me. Last one- Although rather difficult, IBIO408—Histology was awesome and helped me to understand structure/function on a cellular level.

Q: What is an interesting fact about you?

I am such a homebody naturally, despite the fact that I studied abroad for a freshman seminar here at MSU which took me to Italy for ~2 weeks. I had such an incredible experience that I went on another trip with the same professor (shout-out to Dr. Strong!) during my senior year to Australia for the month of July 2017.

Q: How are you involved both at MSU and in the community?

At Michigan State I have been a member of various student organizations like the UAB Arts and Crafts club, Pre-dental club, SCLA and NSCS. I was a Pre-Professional Peer Advisor for the College of Natural Science which was such a rewarding, fun job that connected me with several students and faculty members across campus. I have been a volunteer at Mott Children's Hospital since 2012.

Q: What advice do you have for other pre-dental students?

My advice would be to keep on top of your stuff. Try to see your advisor, and know what is expected of you during your undergrad journey if you are planning to go to dental school! It can all seem so overwhelming but don't forget to enjoy the ride along the way. Another piece of advice I would give is to shadow. If you are trying to decide between two entirely different career paths it can be the distinguishing factor. For example, I briefly considered dermatology (as a P.A.), and wanted to squish any what-if thoughts so I decided to shadow. Thank goodness I did because it was not what I had expected and found myself wishing I was in a dental office instead.

Q: What are your plans after graduation?

After graduation I will be applying to dental school in June of this year, and working in the meantime.



Studying for the MCAT

Let's break down how to prepare for the MCAT.

1. For the MCAT, registration is almost full for test dates through June, and currently open for test dates from July- September. You can register for a test date and location at [the AAMC website](#). Try to register as soon as you can, because spots fill up fast.
2. Become familiar with what happens on test day, and what you are required to do. For the MCAT, I really like using the MCAT Essentials on the [About the MCAT Exam](#) tab of AAMC. This booklet is free to download, and really useful. It will tell you everything you need to know to be ready.
3. Buy test prep materials, and also get as many practice tests as possible to be fully prepared. We recommend that you purchase at least some of your test prep material through [AAMC](#), as they are the ones who develop the actual MCAT. I recognize that it may be challenging to get all of these materials if you are economically disadvantaged. Consider applying for the [Fee Assistance Program](#) that AAMC offers. The package includes a discount on the MCAT, free test prep material, and other things involving the application.
4. Figure out how long you want to be studying for, and how many hours per day. Consistent studying is key for admissions tests, so you don't want to begin studying too close to your date or study one day out of the week. In terms of the MCAT, we recommend that you study 3-6 months in advance of your test date. Be sure to check out [AAMC's How I Prepared for the MCAT](#) series and their [Guide to Creating Your Own MCAT Study Plan](#).
5. Now that you have a test date, prep materials, and an idea of how you want to schedule time in for studying for the MCAT, create a schedule for yourself and stick to it. I use Google Calendar so I can easily block out times for the MCAT or change something if there is a conflict in my schedule.
6. Before you begin your studying, take a sample exam to figure out where you are starting and how well you relatively know the information for each of the four sections. Use the results of this sample test to set a goal for what kind of MCAT score you would like. Alter your schedule depending on your strong points and weak points.
7. Start off slow (maybe 1-2 hours a day) and build up your hours as you get closer to your test date. Take advantage of weekends and breaks to really get into the mindset of nailing the MCAT.
8. Take as many practice exams as you can in the weeks leading up to your exam. Try to take one a week, and be sure to take them seriously. These practice exams will determine whether or not you are above your goal, below it, and what you still need to work on. Be sure to mimic the timeframes and setting of your practice exams, so as to better prepare yourself for the real MCAT.
9. If you get a practice problem incorrect, go back and look through it, and figure out why you got it wrong.
10. Plan out study breaks so you don't burn out in the middle of studying.
11. Eat healthy snacks, drink plenty of water, and stand up to stretch every once in a while during your study sessions to keep yourself from feeling groggy.
12. Keep your phone out of sight, and consider using site blockers for Facebook, Twitter, etc, so all of your focus is on the material in front of you.
13. If you have done absolutely everything you could for the MCAT and there is a small gap between you finishing prep material and your test date, consider taking a break from studying so your mind is not burnt out during your actual MCAT.

By: Anna Risukhina

Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Kathleen Hoag (BLD 434: Clinical Immunology)**Q: What is one of your favorite things about MSU?**

I have to pick one? I don't know if I can, because so many things come to mind and I don't know that I can prioritize them. One thing for sure is the people I work with. The faculty and staff in the BLD Program are just top notch! They really care about students, have an amazing work ethic, and are some of the most genuinely nice people you'd ever meet. Another thing I really love about MSU is the vast diversity of the student and faculty population. We are the true U.S. "melting pot", and it is just so interesting to learn about all the different countries and cultures our MSU community comes from. A third favorite thing is the campus. It truly is one of the most beautiful places to work, especially in the spring when all the flowers and trees are in bloom!

**Q: Can you give a brief description of BLD 434 and why students should take this course?**

BLD 434 is an introductory immunology course with a clinical diagnostic focus. We cover all of the cells and tissues of the immune system, how they interact with each other and the outside world, how they sense and respond to various infectious agents, and the various ways in which immune function can go wrong. We focus most of our time on the adaptive immune cells (B and T lymphocytes) because they are the most powerful and most protective. The course incorporates patient case studies to give students practice with seeing and interpreting patient laboratory results, and to critically apply the basic knowledge we cover in lecture topics.

Q: What has been your most memorable experience while teaching at MSU?

Yikes! This question is hard to answer. What is memorable keeps changing all the time. I guess maybe serendipity which happens while teaching is the basis of most memorable experiences. You discover something that has a much bigger impact on student learning than you ever thought it would. The first time I used the Giant Microbes stuffed antibody to demonstrate the structural and functional components of antibody I was frankly surprised by how many students told me it was so neat and so helpful to them. So, I bought two more and now I use them every semester in class.

Q: A lot of preprofessional students take your class. What is one piece of advice you would give to them?

Talk to your team the very first class period and every one after that, and put your \$#&@ cell phones away in class! You will learn so much more in depth and remember it all so much better when you discuss the topics with your team. Take advantage of all the other talented students in the class and make the best use of the team time together. Don't try to memorize the answers, LEARN the material instead. There is a big difference!

Q: What inspired you to study immunology, and then pass the knowledge along to your students?

I discovered at the end of my bachelor's degree in Medical Technology that I wanted to teach. I had started tutoring a fellow student and I just got such a kick out of teaching! But, I still also truly loved Medical Technology content and didn't want to turn my back on it, so I decided I wanted to teach Medical Technology (now called Medical Laboratory Science) in college. To do so at an institution like MSU, I needed a PhD. I looked at the main disciplines within Medical Technology, Chemistry, Microbiology, Immunology and Hematology, and I frankly found Immunology the most fascinating. Not the easiest, mind you, but the most fascinating. I got a B in my first undergraduate Immunology course! In addition to being fascinating, I also had a personal connection with Immunology. My father had been diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) when I was in high school, and I wanted to be able to understand how his immune system could turn against him and harm him so much. I also wanted to be able to read the scientific literature on MS and be able to help him in treatment decisions.

Q: Lastly, what do you enjoy most about BLD 434?

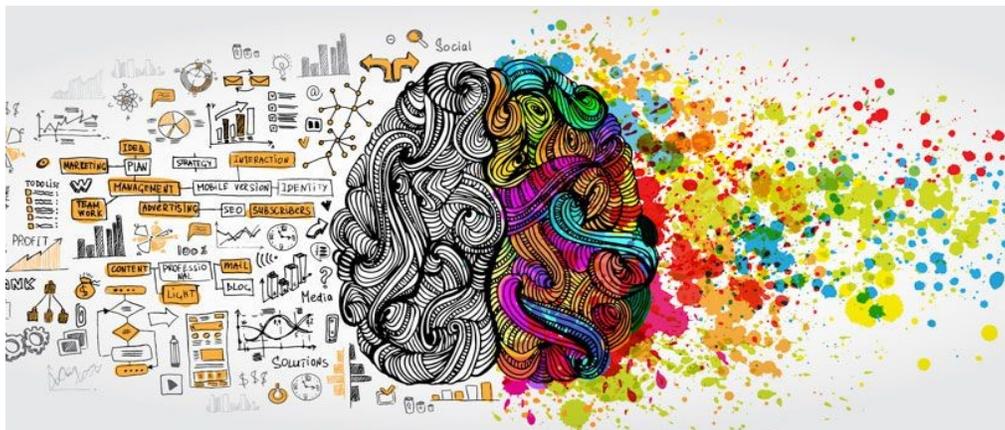
I get a real kick out of "Aha moments". This means that I really try to find ways to reach students so they can uncover a misconception, realize it is a misconception, and then fix the content error in their knowledge. It's fun because you can really SEE the moment this "Aha" occurs to them. Their eyes get big, they get this sly smile, and they get excited and physically start jumping in their seat because they finally get it! That is cool.

Student Organization Spotlight: StudentsCare

StudentsCare is a registered nonprofit organization that aims to brighten the hospital experience for children and their families by matching long-term pediatric patients with college student volunteers who provide fun, friendship, and support throughout extended hospital stays. The MSU chapter of this organization has many fun resources for students. They do things such as volunteering at Haven House to play with kids for two hours and cooking dinner for families of pediatric cancer patients at Ronald McDonald House. They also have professionals come in, such as Child Care Specialists, to educate students about different allied health careers. One of their main attractions is the Hospital Buddy Program. Through this program children at Sparrow Hospital battling long-term illnesses, such as cancer, are matched with college student “buddies.” Buddies visit on a weekly basis and engage children in hospital playrooms and at bedside in arts and crafts, reading, games and more! The meetings for this organization are biweekly on Thursdays. This is a great organization to be a part of and if you want more information, check out the general website [StudentsCare](#), or the MSU Chapter’s Facebook [MSU StudentsCare](#).



Course Spotlight: PSY 320—Health Psychology



Health psychology is taught by one of my favorite professors at MSU. Dr. Kaston Anderson-Carpenter teaches this course phenomenally. PSY 320 is a 3 credit course concerning social, psychological, and biological factors affecting health, illness, and use of health services. The course also covers stress and coping processes, lifestyles, and illness management. PSY 320 is a great starting point for studying the psychology section of the MCAT, and is also helpful for preprofessional students interested in other professional programs. One interesting topic the course discusses is how health insurance works. All preprofessional students should have a basic understanding of how health insurance works in the United States. This course is unique in the way that it teaches preprofessional students. It does go over various illnesses, but it also provides a social component of the illnesses. The course goes over how different illnesses are viewed by the general public, and media. It gives students another point-of-view about modern medicine.

This course has one prerequisite, which is PSY 101 or Introductory Psychology. PSY 320 is lecture based with a supplement online discussion forum. The lectures are twice a week for one hour and twenty minutes. Dr. Anderson-Carpenter likes to promote discussion in class and out of class. Every week students are asked to reflect on what was discussed in class and write a short one to two paragraphs about what the students found most interesting during the discussion.

Academic Advisor Spotlight: Gerica Lee—Lyman Briggs Human Biology Advisor**Q: Where did you attend school and what did you study?**

For my undergraduate degree I attended Smith College studying Political and Environmental Science. For my Master's Degree I attended Western Michigan University studying Higher Education and Student Affairs.

Q: What kinds of things do you help students with?

With my role being half recruitment and half academic advisor for Lyman Briggs College I am able to help students in a variety of ways. I am able to help prospective students and their families decide if MSU and Lyman Briggs is the right fit for them. As an academic advisor I can guide student down the best path that suits them. My job really allows me to see a student's journey from the beginning.

Q: What is an interesting fact about yourself that your students might not know?

I have four dogs.

Q: What is your favorite part about being an advisor?

Being able to help students with diverse backgrounds. No two students are the same and it is a rewarding experience to learn about them and assist in guiding their futures.

Q: What is one piece of advice you have for pre-professional students?

Don't limit yourself. There are lots of paths to get to your end goal. You never know what you might find.

Q: What is one of your favorite things about MSU?

The students that I have the privilege of working with...and the Dairy Store (specifically Buckeye Blitz flavor).

**Check Us Out on the Web!****Facebook, Twitter and Blogs:****NatSci4U Blog**

<https://natsci.msu.edu/students/blog/>

MSU PreHealth Facebook

<http://facebook.com/MSUPreHealth>

NatSci Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/MSUCNS>

Twitter for MSU Pre-professional Students

http://twitter.com/msu_preprof

Twitter for NatSci Students

http://twitter.com/msu_natsci

Additional Resources:**Pre-professional Student Website**

<https://natsci.msu.edu/students/preprofessional/>

Undergraduate Student Resources

<https://natsci.msu.edu/academics/undergraduate/degree-programs/>

Career Exploration

<https://natsci.msu.edu/current-students/college-career-services/>

Study Abroad

<https://natsci.msu.edu/academics/undergraduate/study-abroad/>