

# Summer Opportunities for Pre-Health Students

Tips from Princeton HPA

## Questions to Consider

1. What are you looking for?
2. Where do you want to be?
3. How much time do you have and when?
4. What's your backup plan?

**Getting organized** → Spreadsheets, bookmarks, folder on your computer

- Save links for applications in future years!

## Types of opportunities

- Research: clinical, bench/basic science, translational, literature review...
- Volunteering: where you have duties and responsibilities and gain skills and perspective while you participate
- Shadowing: where you watch others work and learn from their example
- Employment vs internship vs volunteer – the experience is more important than the title!
- Academic enrichment

## Where to look

@ Princeton:

- Undergrad Research website: <http://undergraduateresearch.princeton.edu/>
- PICS (December 7 deadline): <http://pics.princeton.edu/>
- IIP (December 5 deadline): <https://www.princeton.edu/oip/iip/>
- Center for Health & Wellbeing Health Grand Challenge Internships (December and March deadlines): <http://chw.princeton.edu/internships-funding/health-grand-challenge-internships-and-thesis-research-grants>
- PIIRS Global Seminars – (February deadline): Tanzania, Germany, China, Cuba, Greece, India, Namibia, Russia <http://www.princeton.edu/oip/sap/programs/>
- Language Programs – French, Portuguese, Italian, German, Japanese, Russian (deadlines vary): <http://www.princeton.edu/oip/sap/programs/>
- Dale Summer Sophomore Awards: <https://odoc.princeton.edu/support/martin-dale-53-summer-awards>
- Community-Based Learning Initiatives (Feb deadline): <http://www.princeton.edu/cbli/internships-1/>
- Undergraduate fellowships (Boren for science study; critical language scholarship; Fulbright UK, Gilman) - <http://www.princeton.edu/oip/fellowships/undergraduate/>
- Career Services: <https://careerservices.princeton.edu/undergraduate-students/internship-job-search>
- peer advisers / mentors ; faculty advisers; residential college directors of studies
- HPA
  - Vitals
  - Opportunities Webpages:
    - Clinical: <http://hpa.princeton.edu/pre-health-prep/clinical-experience/summer-opportunities>

- Research: <http://hpa.princeton.edu/pre-health-prep/research>

#### @ home:

- Volunteer opportunities on hospital websites
- Local college pre-health advising websites and career services offices
- Local health professions schools' offices of diversity affairs and websites
  - Medical and other health professions schools often have an office dedicated to working with students from underrepresented backgrounds, and many schools have 'pipeline' opportunities for pre-health students that help them connect with the school. Start by seeking out this office via the school's website. Writing a detailed, professional email introducing yourself and your interests to the office inquiring about opportunities can also be appropriate.

#### Online:

- Google terms: Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF); Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP); Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU)
- Link lists and search engines:
  - [https://www.aamc.org/members/great/61052/great\\_summerlinks.html](https://www.aamc.org/members/great/61052/great_summerlinks.html)
  - <https://www.aamc.org/members/great/169782/mdphdsummerprograms.html>
  - <https://services.aamc.org/summerprograms/>
  - <http://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/index.jsp>
  - <http://cirrus.chem.plu.edu/>
  - <http://undergraduateresearch.princeton.edu/programs/summer-programs>
  - [http://casadvising.syr.edu/pre\\_health/resource\\_sp.html](http://casadvising.syr.edu/pre_health/resource_sp.html)
  - <http://people.rit.edu/gtfsbi/Symp/premed.htm>
  - <http://www.naahp.org/Diversity/SummerOpportunities.aspx>
  - [http://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/prepro/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/2015/06/Summer-Programs.JUMP\\_2014.pdf](http://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/prepro/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/2015/06/Summer-Programs.JUMP_2014.pdf)
  - Public Health: <https://students-residents.aamc.org/attending-medical-school/article/public-health-pathways-2/>

#### Networking / Cold Emailing

- Who to ask?
  - Family connections – personal physicians, family friends and relatives, high school mentors
  - Alumni through the Tigernet or LinkedIn, activities, sports...
    - <https://tigernet.princeton.edu/olc/membersonly/PRU/networking/>
  - Faculty researchers at local colleges, universities and medical schools
- Shadowing can be the easiest opportunity to find in this way. Be specific when you reach out to health professionals about your interest, how much time you'd like to spend, and your availability.
  - See: <http://hpa.princeton.edu/faqs/activities-faq/internships-and-volunteering> for tips on how to find shadowing opportunities
  - See <http://www.kevinmd.com/blog/2010/06/tips-students-shadow-doctors.html> and <https://www.aamc.org/download/356316/data/shadowingguidelines2013.pdf> for information on how to shadow effectively.

- If you're interested in a research or other type of internship experience, write a template email that you can customize to each individual you contact.
  - Do as much background information gathering as possible so that you can demonstrate your knowledge of their work in your initial correspondence.
  - Provide information about your academic background, past experience (even from classes), and availability.
  - Use a professional, but enthusiastic tone in your initial email. Thank them in advance for their consideration and offer to continue the conversation by email or phone (or in person if you'll be in the area at any point).
  - It can be hard to secure a paid position through this route. It's a good approach for an opportunity where you can commute from home and perhaps work on the side if you need to earn money over the summer.

## Getting your applications out

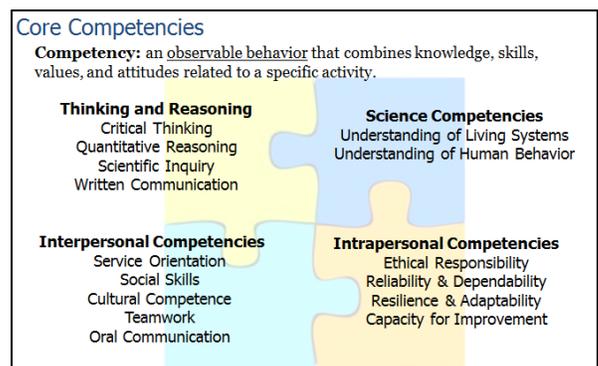
- Prepare a general resume and then tweak to specific opportunities if needed – Career Services provides tips and samples: <https://careerservices.princeton.edu/undergraduate-students/resumes-letters-online-profiles/resumes>
- Determine your eligibility – if you aren't sure whether you're eligible, consult with HPA or with the program staff directly
- Make sure the timing works with our academic calendar: Spring finals end Saturday, May 27 and Fall semester begins Wednesday, September 13
- Work ahead of deadlines, especially for programs with rolling admissions
- Ask for letters of recommendation at least 3-4 weeks in advance → provide letter writers with your resume, application essays, information about where to send their letters, deadlines.

## Summer Science classes?

- **Pros:** allows flexibility in Princeton schedule, opportunity to focus on one subject, often smaller classes may allow more personal attention
- **Cons:** expensive, fast paced, less academic support/resources, may raise red flags to admissions committees, give up time that could be spent on other aspects of candidacy
- **If you do take a summer class:** consult with HPA, choose a four-year school, get preapproval to transfer credits back, do well, take additional courses to support your performance in the sciences at Princeton.

## Does it have to be health related?

- If you're interested in more than one career path, don't feel that you must do a medical internship. Many students explore multiple career options during summers. But, doing some short-term shadowing or gaining a bit of exposure to health care alongside an internship in another area never hurts!
- Anything that you do, activities-wise, can help you build the kinds of skills you'll need as a health professional and demonstrate the competencies that schools seek in their students.



## Keep in mind...

- Our summer break is about 15 weeks long. You may be able to fit more than one longer-term activity.
- You'll have more hours available during the week than you do when you're in classes. Many students maintain a 40 hour per week internship and do some volunteering and/or shadowing and/or paid work on the weekends or in the evenings.
- Volunteering at a hospital often includes a lengthy application and orientation process. Begin researching this possibility early (e.g., over spring break) for your home hospitals.
- Don't be afraid to talk with program staff who work with summer opportunities (especially at Princeton!) – sometimes you can learn more in a quick in-person meeting or info session than you can from websites.
- Keep a journal over the summer and reflect on what you're learning as you go.
- This search can take a lot of time and attention to detail! Don't be frustrated if things don't work out as planned this year – use it as a learning experience moving forward.

## Other programs popular with Princeton students:

- Leadership Alliance Summer Programs (one application for up to 3 research sites): <http://www.theleadershipalliance.org/Programs/SummerResearch/ProgramStructure/tabid/242/Default.aspx>
- Amgen Scholars: <http://amgenscholars.com/us-program>
- Summer Health Professions Education Program: <http://shpep.org/>
- Project Healthcare Internship at Bellevue Hospital (New York): <http://www.med.nyu.edu/emergency/education/undergraduates/project-healthcare>
- Gateways to the Laboratory Tri-Institutional MD/PhD Summer program: <http://weill.cornell.edu/mdphd/summerprogram/application.html?name1=Application&type1=2Active>
- Research/academic enrichment at academic medical centers (med school + hospital) e.g.,
  - Pritzker PSOMER: <https://pritzker.uchicago.edu/page/pipeline-programs>
  - CRISP @ U Penn: <http://www.research.chop.edu/programs/crissp/>
  - Case Western: <https://case.edu/medicine/admissions/research/summer-research-programs/>
  - Vanderbilt: <https://my.vanderbilt.edu/vusrp/>
- Summer camps for kids with medical needs, including:
  - <http://www.campholidaytrails.org/> (Virginia)
  - <http://thepaintedturtle.org/> (California)
  - <http://www.campqualityusa.org/> (various locations)
  - <http://www.diabetes.org/in-my-community/diabetes-camp> (various locations)
  - <https://www.seriousfunnetwork.org/get-involved/volunteer> (various locations)
- Gaining EMT Certification
- Tufts Adventures in Veterinary Medicine: <http://vetsites.tufts.edu/avm/programs/college-program/>
- Rutgers Gateway to Dentistry: <http://sdm.rutgers.edu/pipline/gateway/gateway.htm>
- Tutoring, assisting at local clinics, volunteering at hospitals near home

Updated Nov. 2016



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