

## UW-HOSA 2<sup>nd</sup> General Meeting

Tuesday October 11<sup>th</sup>

2103 Chamberlin Hall

Welcome

Announcements

- Member of the Meeting!
  - o Emily Foecke! Congratulations
- General member/Executive Board Pairings
  - o Will be getting emails from them by this weekend
- Happy Homecoming Week! Sign up online for events
  - o Blood Drive
    - Thursday 10:30 am or 3:15pm
  - o Bucky Games
    - Thursday 7:30pm
  - o Homecoming Parade
    - Decorate or participate
    - Friday 3:45pm
- Dues \$25/Semester or \$35/year
  - o Turn in by next general Meeting, October 25<sup>th</sup> → includes your HOSA t-shirt, you can pay your co-chair or give to any board member
- Special Events – stick around in 2103 after the meetings
- Winners of the Amazing Race, Photos from Sunday's Social; send them to [cterpstra@wisc.edu](mailto:cterpstra@wisc.edu)
- Next social – gameday tailgate for badgers @ Michigan state October 22

Introduction of Students

- Pre-Med
- PA
- Dentistry
- PT
- Nursing
- OT
- Speech
- Pharmacy

Disperse into different break out rooms!

## PA Break Out Room Minutes

Q: I have an interview, what do I do to get prepared?

A: Read a book! Andrew Rodican wrote a good one (on getting into PA school). Interviews are mostly informal but each is different. Some didn't have agendas because they want to see how you react. Some interviews were group style while some were individual. There were also some essays and IQ tests because they are trying to figure out what kind of person you are and if you really want to be in this profession. One of the girls talked to someone on admission board and was told that being genuine is important. You need to tell them that you really care. A good thing to do is to think back to most memorable thing you have done with patients. It is also best to draw on examples.

Q: What is your typical day of class like?

A: During the Summer – 4 hours of day in anatomy lab with lecture with some other courses. At the time, this seemed hard but then Fall came and hit like a brick. They are in class for 3 to 6 hours a day but have to study all day. There are hour long classes that typically start at 8:50. They have many specialists come in, such as orthopedics that let them know what the most up to date information is. They had a few labs for first semester and the next semester they will work with patients at VA hospital. They really try to ease you into the program. Days get long because you study when you aren't in class. Right now, they have 8 different classes and although it consumes your life, it is still manageable. There is a transition from undergraduate to graduate – you just need to pass. You don't need to get 100% to do well. It isn't about grades, but about how you can learn and grow and apply to your practice

Q: What are your classes?

A: Anatomy, physiology, pharmacology, diagnostic methods, women's health, professional health, ethics, law, population health, community health, immunology, microbiology. They have it set up in modules – when you get a chest x-ray and what you are looking for, this overlaps with classes to see what the comprehensive outlook is. You see the drug, the test, the diagnostic tools, etc.

Q: What were your majors?

A: Pre-dental, Ganser fellowship program where you shadow a bunch of people and surgery, switched to biology. Neurobiology and biology. But there are many others such as a violin performance major. Your major doesn't matter, you just need to get the prerequisites and do well.

Q: What was your GPA for getting in?

A: When they are looking over a student profile, they score you and GPA is most weighted thing. Then they decide who gets an interview and GPA is out the window. They can only see what is on paper and need to make a decision. The average GPA is 3.5 but there are 3.0 students. Some schools heavily weigh experiences rather than GPA as well as trends in GPA and if you took tough courses as well as where you went to school. They also look for commitments such as being a parent. But, every school is different. Some schools only care about GPA, while others care about experience.

Q: Where is a good place to get shadowing and patient experience?

A: Most providers like to have shadowers, especially in smaller towns. Typically, it seems like everyone is a CNA and wants a CNA position. Just having a certification like that and going towards that goal is good. Home health care was helpful in order to get a foot in the door of having a profession in CNA. You need to get a lot of experience. You can be an aid for kids with epilepsy or autism. It is still patient care, and you don't need a degree. You need to get creative. It should be patient care orientated rather than just working in the hospital. You need to know how to work with patients. Just call up PAs and ask them if they want you to shadow. Be aggressive and google names and call them to see what you need to do. EMT, CNA, anything like that is looked on highly.

Q: Who is our advisor?

A: PA school advisor: Erin McCarthy

Q: What is the typical age of PA student?

A: Most people are older with the average age at UW-Madison being 27. Some schools require two years or a certain amount of months of experience but it depends on the program and changes from year to year. They are looking for maturity but not necessarily age. It takes a lot to figure out that people want to go into the profession so there are a lot of people that are older.

Q: Did you look at being a NP?

A: Most people didn't. One reason was just because of educational pathway. Others had already discovered the PA profession when they were a sophomore, and were already ready to go. One of the main differences is that once you have a doctorate degree, you stay there, but if you are PA, you can change your career later. There is also a different approach to education. Some individuals worked as nurse and knew, from that, that they didn't want to be an NP.

Q: What is the difference between year one and two?

A: Every program is different but the first year is didactic and the second year is clinical. You come back and take an exam and then are sent away for a rotation.

Q: Do you need a car for the rotations?

A: You most likely need a car because you will be commuting, but it depends on where you go to school and where your clinical sites are.

Q: Where do you go for clinical sites?

A: You can be shipped anywhere in Wisconsin, along with some sites in Chicago, twin cities, or Iowa. Most schools take your personal situation into account. For example, if you have dependents (children) you are likely to stay closer by. But you say where you have family and friends and where you could stay in the beginning so that you can go there on clinical sites. Special point: when you go on rotations, you need to think that these are potential employers.

Q: For specialty PA, pediatrics, etc. do you need to go beyond the two years?

A: They have post graduate residency programs, but you don't have to do these. It depends on the competition. Residencies are a year and they pay you so they are decent. They are good to get you in the door.

Q: Were you between PA and pre-med?

A: Yes. One student applied to med school and got wait listed. She started out as pre-PA and then freaked out and applied for med school. When she re-applied, she decided med school wasn't for her for a couple reasons. It was longer, plus residency, and being a female, it is hard to have a family while you are completing your medical degree. She also wanted to do family medicine, and it has been suggested that you should pursue PA school for that. You also have a lot of responsibility and aren't working as close with physician. On individual thought being an MD was the prestigious of being a doctor. But flexibility, going from field to field, and doing so much as a PA where you write prescriptions, work in surgery and other things outweighed the prestige. As an MD you would have to pick one thing and stick with it. You still get paid really well as a PA, it is shorter, you have different interactions with patients, and doctors have more legal and research things. PAs have never said they wish they could go back and change their career choice, but MDs have. You can also have more of a life, a more comfortable lifestyle.

Q: If you graduated from undergraduate school in May, when do you start PA school?

A: May 22<sup>nd</sup>

Q: Do you have breaks?

A: Yes. There is a 3 week break in summer, two weeks in Christmas, and one in May.

Q: Where are your classes?

A: Each class is together in the same location. You don't really move, and a more like a family.

Q: Do you compete with each other?

A: No, you just need to pass. However, MMI is curved because undergraduates can take the course. Med schools are competitive and some PA schools are as well (Iowa).

Q: Do you study together a lot?

A: Yes

Q: Do schools look at your grades for general requirements for your major or graduating?

A: Some schools look into those but every school is different. Through CASPA, they calculate everything.

Q: What schools did you apply to and have interviews at?

A: One girl applied to 7 schools, had a couple potential interviews. She interviewed at New England, but decided on Madison. However, going back she suggested that you should think about if you can afford to take a plane there for an interview. It is better to have something close and cheap. One student applied to Madison, La Crosse and Rosalind Franklin; interviewed both here and La Crosse and got

accepted at both. The last individual applied to 9 schools, but got interviews at 3 schools including on in Philadelphia, Madison, and Phoenix. Interviews change your mind a lot about schools. You get a good feel for the program when you go to the interview as you will be working closely with faculty that interview you.

Q: How many letters of recommendation do you suggest?

A: CASPA requires 3, and it is good to have a range. They suggest one academic, one about clinical skills working with patients, but must have a good range between academic and clinical. One solid academic would be good, but don't need that as much as other things that have to do with your clinical experience. One individual had a professor, employer and EMT instructor. Another had an employer, academic advisor, and one from the fellowship program. Titles don't matter in these recommendations; it is the content of letter instead.

Q: What if you miss a class?

A: Attendance is recommended and required, but you will not be penalized here for missing class. However, it is extremely hard to catch up. In other schools, you can only miss 3 days. In Madison, because of distance learning, all things are videotaped so you can watch them later.

Q: What was your backup plan if you didn't get in?

A: Keep working until you got in! Keep reapplying! One individual worked in a different place and liked it, so she may have stayed there if she didn't get in. Another thought about taking some time off to travel and then reapplying.

Q: Were all of you CNAs?

A: No. One was an EMT, and then working at a smoking cessation place. One was a CNA, a medical assistant, worked at a psych hospital, and did home health care. Another was a CNA, but would get the EMT instead because it applies more to PA school.

Q: Do you work?

A: One girl in the course works once a month or so, but it would be hard to work. One of the girls does still volunteer 6-8 hours a week, but couldn't work. They have very scheduled, strict lives.

Q: What time does your day end?

A: Typically it ends between 3 and 5 but some programs are different.

## Physical Therapy Students Panel

- Why Madison?
  - Danielle: I LOVE it! The Program is awesome (2<sup>nd</sup> year Madison)
  - Katherine: Meet the program Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup> (1<sup>st</sup> year Madison)
    - Felt very welcome
    - Top 50 school, research is big, feels that the faculty is behind me 100%
- What's the hardest thing about PT school?
  - Super different, stressful in a different way, having to learn information without a multiple choice test
  - Cool because its super applicable
  - UW is nice because it has a field experience in the first year which is good application
  - Must take boards after your third year so you have to remember the information from your first year
    - Professors don't push you to do the reading so it is about what time you want to put into it
    - But it is practical
- Majors?
  - Kines: Exercise and Movement Science
  - Biology
  - ½ to 2/3 Science Majors in class
  - Pre-requisites get you pretty prepared if you aren't science
- What do you suggest for getting involved during undergrad?
  - D: Fit in shadowing over the summers, get as many hours as possible! Class average was around 95 hours of shadowing.
  - E: In Madison you have to apply to volunteer in the hospital and it does take a while to get into the system so plan for that
    - Did a clinic on the West side: Sport and Spine, just contacted the person and then went and observed
    - But do as many different settings as you can!
  - Look online for the department head of where you want to shadow and contact them
  - Most schools need at least 20 hours of shadowing per setting
  - Part of it is seeing the therapists and seeing how they interact with patients
    - Also see the style of therapy they do which helps you decide what kind of therapist you want to be
- Does it matter when I start my hours?
  - Look at the individual schools to see their requirements
  - Some schools need them to be more recent hours
- Did you take any classes beyond the basics?
  - Some schools require different classes
    - Ex: Sociology, Medical Terminology
  - Make sure that you send transcripts from other schools (like summer schools or study abroad) when you apply even if they weren't requirements
- Have you done a clinical yet?
  - Outpatient orthopedic
    - Therapist pushed her to think about the things that they were talking about in class

- 4weeks in part women’s health, part orthopedic
    - Go to APTA website to look at the different specialties
    - For 4 weeks the therapist was 60%-70% Women’s Health patients
- How does clinical placement work?
  - If you have a dependant (child etc.) then you can claim that to get 2 local clinical settings, less than a 2 hours drive
  - Otherwise you can go anywhere in the 50 states and Puerto Rico
  - Have to find your own housing (usually)
  - You can rank your preferences for where you want to go- 100s of placements
- Do you know where you are going next?
  - Yes select placements about a year in advance
  - So you do have time to set up housing
  - Plymouth, Madison, Milwaukee
  - There is also a Service Learning component at Madison
    - They did a 4 week service learning in Uganda
- In your first year, what is your average week like?
  - Exams early on, usually all in the same week with 3 weeks in between exams
  - Classes: Clinical Decision Making, Lab learning how to measure bone angles , Tissue Mechanics, Neuroanatomy, Seminar, adds up to 17 credits
    - They say that its about 60 hours of work per week
    - However it doesn’t feel like a ton different than undergrad in terms of work load, but it is different
  - More block classes, some classes are 3 hours, you are in the building all day 7:45- 3 or 4 with some breaks
- Do you have time for a part time job
  - Yes, many classmates have a job
    - Find it manageable 10-15 hours
  - Many classmates have athletic training jobs that have more hours
- Do you have time for a social life?
  - Sort of- depends on the test load because there are hands on tests as well as written exams
  - But we socialize and become friends with our whole class- 41 people in a class and you get to be really close
- What do you do for living?
  - House with undergrads
  - Apartment off campus
  - Easy to live off campus because with block schedule you don’t go home between classes
- What did you write in your personal statement
  - Why interested in PT
  - Experiences that really have shaped who you are!
    - Do you speak another language?
    - What makes you different?
    - The relatable factor: What makes you memorable and stand out!
- Did you use any resources on campus to help with applications?
  - Use the writing center
  - Parents! Family
- Did you take a year off?

- No, sometimes I wish I would have but sometimes not
- A few classmates have taken a year off, some classmates it is a second career which brings a good outside perspective
- Not frowned upon, you get to learn about yourself
- If you feel like you don't have enough experience or if you are doubting PT at all then take time off and explore
- But not feeling burned out going straight into school
- Interviews?
  - Not for Madison or LaCrosse but some other schools do
  - So if there is not an interview plan your personal statement out a lot because that is one of the most important parts
    - You want time to make it good
- What time did you start the application process?
  - D: Took GRE Sept of Senior year in Undergrad then applied after that, so it got processed in Jan
  - E: Took GRE in Summer and then did early application which was due in early November
  - Give yourself time to prep for the GRE and time to take it again if you don't do as well as you want
- Is there anything that surprised you about the program?
  - PT legislation day: Organized by Wisconsin Physical Therapy Association
    - Giving info to legislators about PT issues
  - Never though that having to know about the legislation was that important and that there are so many laws that go into PT
  - Look into the laws of the state you want to practice in
    - DPT is preferred over MPT
    - Also direct access is the goal of the APTA
      - Patients can go to PT's without the referral of doctors
- What kind of PT do you want to do?
  - No idea! Haven't seen enough
  - You will be in Hospital, Orthopedic and Neurology setting and then 4<sup>th</sup> clinical is your decision
  - If you graduate from Madison you have a Generalist Degree- you can do any kind of PT you want with that
    - If you want to specialize you just have to take some continuing ed classes
    - The Professors in Madison are all different specialties so you can also shadow them to get a better idea of the different specialties
- Did you have a back-up plan?
  - Not personally, but many students who took time off worked as a Physical Therapy Aid
  - Just get as much experience as you can
  - If you don't get in the first time its not the end of the world!
  - Average age in class is 25-26
- Are most people right out of undergrad?
  - Only 10-15 right out of undergrad, everyone else had a year or more off
  - Some people get Master's Degree

## Pre-Dental Panel Minutes

Speakers: Sam Albiero - [salbiero@wisc.edu](mailto:salbiero@wisc.edu) and Laura Battaglia

Sam (Senior, Currently Applying to Dental School)

When can students begin filling out applications?

- Applications start in June

When is the application deadline?

- Applications due October – December
- There is one website that has application that most dental schools accept
- Pick schools, then fill out one big application (\$150 per school on average)
- Supplementary applications accompany universal application
- Personal information applications also sometimes required
- Quicker you get applications in the quicker you get accepted
- Takes 3-4 weeks to even process applications

When should I start studying for the Dental Admission Test (DAT)?

- Start studying and deciding to apply by beginning of junior year
- Schools won't look at application until DAT score is received
- Sam took test in March
- DAT is offered any day of week, 5-6 hr test, computerized
- Make sure to schedule test 2 or 3 months ahead of time, it fills up fast
- Taking a test-prep class is never a bad idea

What subjects are on the DAT:

- Math (quantitative reasoning)
- Biology
- Gen and organic Chemistry
- Perceptual Ability (Visualizing questions) unique to DAT

Laura (Currently Pediatric Resident, Attended UW-Madison Undergrad and Graduated from University of Pennsylvania Dental School in May)

What are you doing as a resident?

- See patients everyday in clinic with group of assistants
- A lot like private practice, makes clinical decisions on own (Different than that of medical residents)
- Give lots of sedations to children, goes into OR (for special needs children or for children that require so much dental work that they need to be put to sleep)

What other branches of Dentistry are there?

- General Dentistry

- Oral Surgery (4 or 6 year program; 6 year program includes MD)
- Endodontics (Root Canals)
- Orthodontics
- Periodontics (Study of supporting structures of teeth; implants, working on gums of smokers, etc.)
- Oral Pathology
- Dental Medicine

When and how did you decide on pediatrics?

- Always interested in pediatrics although general dentistry is good because then you get to do everything

How different are the first years of dental school and undergraduate study?

- Structure is very different in dental school (4 classes a day in 2 hour blocks, i.e. lots of class)
- Work piles up quicker in dental school
- Different socially; same students all day everyday, spend most of time with same people all time

When did you begin participating in actual hands-on work?

- Hands-on work started right away on simulations and manikins
- Didn't start real patient care until 3<sup>rd</sup> year dental school

How did you decide on dentistry?

- Didn't consider anything else
- In Laura's opinion, medicine encompasses too many areas of body
- Dentistry is very specialized
- You are a licensed dentist directly after dental school
- Such freedom and responsibility comes later for medical students
- Dentists are not on call
- Great hours
- Can have your own business
- Get to talk to people
- Get to work with hands
- Specifically in pediatrics, Laura gets to entertain kids all day

What do you recommend students do in their undergraduate years to make it into dental school?

- Get involved in a lot of different organizations
- Volunteer a lot
- Shadow a dentist; this is somewhat hard to do, but is highly recommended
- Finding ways to expose yourself to dentistry shows commitment
- As an undergraduate, follow your interests
- Join the Pre-Dental Society

When do most residents secure jobs?

- Residency usually is 3 years long
- By second year most residents have a job lined up

## Sam and Laura

What classes should I take?

- Basic science pre-requisites
- Nothing out of the ordinary is necessary
- Upper level courses like anatomy and physiology, biochemistry, cellular biology, etc. will help prepare you for those same classes in dental school (kind of like taking AP classes to prepare you for college except you don't get extra credits in dental school)

Should I take DAT early if I've taken all the required courses?

- It's better if material is fresh in your head when you take the DAT
- Try to take it in the fall; you then have a chance to retake it in spring
- Your score is good for 1-2 years
- DAT is scored from 1 – 30
- 20 and better is good

What gets you into dental school?

- GPA, Coursework, and DAT get you the interview
- Then it's a matter of just being a good fit as determined by interviews
- **Apply early**; the earlier you apply, the earlier you will be accepted

Tips for interviews:

- During interviews smile a lot, be personable
- Studentdoctor.net is great resource to find practice interview questions
- Have someone ask you questions to practice
- Dentistry is all about connecting with patients
- You must demonstrate the ability to explain yourself clearly
- Be prepared to defend grades and blemishes on application; anything you write is fair game
- Be prepared to talk about what you write
- Be a real person, be yourself

Oh and one last thing, does my major matter?

- Major doesn't matter as long as you take the pre-requisite courses for dental school
- Majoring in something other than a life science helps you stand out more, but not necessary
- Major in whatever you are interested in

## Pharmacy School:

**Andy Bognar** abognar@wisc.edu

**Luke Brown** ljbrown4@wisc.edu

**Justin DeFlorian** deflorian@wisc.edu

Why did you be a Pharmacist and what type of Pharm?

Know this question when you're applying- it's key all your apps require you know this  
Institution pharmacy, Community pharmacy, Family complications with Meds led him in  
the direction of Pharm

What were you thinking of before

Pre-Med in High school

Chemistry or Biology- Lab volunteering led him to Pharm

Neurobiology, Athletic

Interviews

It's a conversation – they stress that

Director of Admissions gave him a form of related questions

Random Questions- don't answer right away, wait a little bit, make sure you don't spit out an  
answer right away

Make sure you're yourself

Know you're application very well

Make sure you have questions for them

It's more about communication

They expect that you're going to be nervous

The interviews are 15 min max

Shake Hands

How many schools did you apply to?

4- went through all the states he wanted to be in  
looked at prerequisites, and admission standards

When did you start the application Process?

Apply a year ahead of time

Opens in August- Madison is due in Nov usually

Make sure you plan it out when you want to go to school so you can take your PCAT

Early Enrollment

Biggest Challenge Going from undergrad to Pharmacy School

Have to study almost every night

It's not that much different from going to Madison

Make sure you stay on top of everything

Take Physiology 335 before Pharm school so it can take 5 credits off your first semester (highly  
recommended)

Take Biochem 501 or 503

Must do Volunteer work (it's a class)  
Out of class stuff you have to stay on top of  
They get you working with Pharmacy related things right away

What kind of activities were you involved in  
HPS, Pre-Pharmacy club, Intramural, Volunteering at a stem cell research lab,  
GPA is not what they base it on, they mainly look at Pharmacy experience  
Research in Pharm school, clinic volunteering, working in Hospital pharmacy  
Shadowing or volunteering is looked highly upon

How to prepare for the PCAT?  
If I would look back on it that's part of his app he would strengthen more  
Go over the PCAT  
Classes at Madison help  
Kaplan classes you can take but a book is just as beneficial  
PCAT is 6-7 hours long  
Be very mentally strong about it- long exam  
Suggest taking it twice- so you know the format  
Youtube videos of what you're learning in a book  
Take practice exams- timing and what sections as which

How would you strengthen your application?  
I would strengthen contacts for letters of rec, never met with professors  
Get to know the director of Admissions- he can put a name to a face  
More pharm experience

Email schools and say you're waiting on other schools, they might be leant

None of them had a degree

## Nursing

**Sarah Youngbauer:** 5<sup>th</sup> year senior, also getting Spanish major; went abroad, in nursing school while working on Spanish major, also interested in Public Health, has a job lined up already for when she graduates

**Annie Kahle:** Doesn't know exactly what she'll be going into after she is done with her nursing degree; did externship over the summer in Critical Care unit at Meriter; advice: "you don't need to come into nursing school knowing what you want to do"

**Janel Draxler:** Started nursing program during her senior year; interested in Public health, getting here MPH, is a student advisor on the HOSA Board

**Did you apply and get rejected to the nursing program (Sarah and Janel) or did you just wait to apply until you were a junior?**

**Sarah:** I applied and was accepted to LAX, but turned it down because I didn't want to go there and then had to reapply. If Madison is your choice do NOT check LAX. If you say you want to go to LAX, you will most likely end up going there if you're accepted. LAX is a distance learning program, they listen to all the lectures from Madison via TV. Applying to LAX does not increase your chances of getting in.

**Janel:** I didn't apply until my junior year.

**When do you apply for jobs?**

Sarah has an internship through the military. She will dedicate twice the time that they are paying her now to work for them after she graduates.

The nursing school just had a meeting last week about applying for a residency program here at UW for nurses. That application is due this winter, typically you don't have to apply until the spring. A lot of people actually find their jobs through their clinical rotations.

**How is the work load in nursing school?**

It's a lot less stressful than before you applied. Before you're competing and now everyone is really supportive, you work together. You still have a lot of work, the atmosphere just changes. When you get in they tell you it's going to be really hard. The pre-requisites are definitely challenging but now it's more time management with clinicals and classes, etc. You have to be really good with time management. They also block your classes so you're at the HSLC for a certain time each week, like we're there 8-4 MWF, so it feels like you're there forever but it's really not that bad when you think of what classes were like before nursing school. On top of that we do like 16-24 hours of clinical per week. And that's a 2<sup>nd</sup> year thing. The 1<sup>st</sup> year everyone has very structured clinicals, but the 2<sup>nd</sup> year everyone kind of picks their own based on your interests.

**Were any of you Nursing Assistants before you applied and did you think that helped?**

Annie was. She got her CNA and started working at Meriter her sophomore year. She said it's not necessarily important, but it does help. The first 6 weeks of lab in nursing school is learning how to do CNA type things. So if you have your CNA it's like a repeat/refresher so that's really nice. The instructors even let you leave early because they know you know what to do. Personally, I would recommend doing it. It's not make or break on your application but any experience is great. It helps you know if this is really what you want to do. You get a lot of one-on-one time with nurses.

Sarah is on the undergrad programs committee and there has been talk of making it a requirement. It looks good on an application because it shows you're committed and dedicated.

Janelle knew she wanted to do healthcare but not necessarily nursing so getting her CNA definitely helped.

### **Recommendations on Bachelors vs. Masters in nursing?**

If you love nursing and you want to be a nurse, then why not just do the bachelors degree? If you're really passionate about another major I think going the master's route would be fine. They all thought of it more as a back-up plan to go the master's route. They also considered doing an accelerated program or doctorate rather than a master's program. Madison actually doesn't have a master's program anymore. They're transitioning more into a DNP program, which you need to have your bachelor's degree for. Nurse practitioner is not the only advanced degree in nursing either. There's midwifery, etc.

### **Where did you get your CNA's?**

Sarah and Annie did an MATC summer program. They had online courses and had clinicals on certain days in summer.

Janelle did hers over Christmas break at a technical school back home. She did all of her clinicals and everything over Christmas break. A lot of students did intensive programs and it is very possible to get it done in a short time period.

Marina Feldick ([mfeldick@wisc.edu](mailto:mfeldick@wisc.edu)) is also on the HOSA board and completed her CNA over winter break last winter here in Madison. Feel free to contact her if you have any questions.

### **Did you have volunteer projects that you did, long term wise before applying?**

Sarah did 3 years of volunteering with UW Hospital. She never kept the same position, she always changed positions, but it was a very consistent volunteer opportunity. Also, she did tons of volunteering with HOSA.

Annie did the Big 10 Leadership network and that was a great opportunity to hear speakers talk about motivation and it was fun and leadership. She was also in the Kinesiology club, so she did blood drives and things like that, and she was also a major of the Aspiring Nurse's Association.

Janel did mainly HOSA volunteering events. She volunteered for 2 semesters at UW, but otherwise just did HOSA, which was very beneficial.

### **In your opinion, or based on other student's perspective, did you think that work experience was something good to have on your application?**

They like to see you committed to something. One of Annie's friends was really into horseback riding and she found a group that worked with autistic kids and horseback riding and she put that on her application. That wasn't CNA work but it was a commitment to something that made a difference. If you've held any type of job (waitress, etc) for any length of time, definitely put that. They want to know what makes you unique and what you can bring to the program. Someone wrote an essay on how waitressing has made them better prepared for nursing.

### **What would you say was the strongest part of your application, GPA, activities, etc?**

Janel said she did not have a high GPA, she studied abroad and did a lot of research that she thinks that set her apart. She had a 3.2 or 3.3 and was accepted.

Annie thinks her essay was her strong point. She also fell below the 3.5 average. The majority of students are very well rounded. Annie pulled a lot of work experience into her essay. She originally wanted to do PT and working in a PT office is what attracted her to nursing. Whatever experiences you've had that pull you towards nursing is what you should talk about. Even if it's CNA work, just talk about something that sets you apart.

Sarah doesn't really have one aspect she believes that was overly strong. It was more well-roundedness that made her stand out. It's what sets you apart. The thing about nursing is it's not all the typical young college students, a lot of older people are coming back. I think a lot of them come in as seniors too and do a 5 year program than the 4 year plan. So if you don't get in your first time, don't get discouraged.

### **What was your most difficult undergrad class and how did you find success in that?**

Janel: Microbiology. She almost dropped it in the middle and almost threw away her application. She got a BC but got through it. She met with the professor every week and asked questions, I don't know if that helped but I got through it. Just don't give up.

Annie: Physiology. I walked in and thought it wasn't going to be that bad and got a D on my first test. So I joined a PLT group. Join them! They are amazing. I learned so much. It's a 2 or 3 hour commitment once a week. My person was very hands-on and it really helped. That was the biggest help, and it was really just waking up being like you can't just slide by. If you get one bad grade, just figure out what you need to do, like if there's another way you can study. I also had a study group with 2 other nursing students in class and we would meet at least once a week to sit down and talk things about. Try to make a lighter semester load with taking phys.

### **Would you recommend taking Anatomy and Phys together?**

Most said no. Anatomy seemed to be the recommended to take first. And go to the Anatomy lab when it's open. However, someone else took them together and they kind of liked it. Talk to a Kinesiology students, they're required to take them together so they might have a different opinion.

Annie took them together and she personally liked it. She thought they complemented each other well. Annie also wanted to free up her schedule in the spring to take Pathology which is a requirement for nursing that you can take early. So if you can take Pharm and Pathology early, they're really nice to get out of the way. Also, Phys if you take it in the spring when you're applying they don't see your grade.

### **How did you prepare for the chance that you wouldn't get in?**

Sarah's back up was dietetics. She had gone through doing pre-reqs for both. When she didn't get in, she ended up getting a Spanish major.

Annie planned on studying abroad and taking Pharm and Pathology if she didn't get in. She would have done a Quant B and things like that as well. She would have just re-applied the next year.

Janel: I started as Com Dis and since I didn't apply until my Junior Year I would just have done accelerated nursing and finished my Com Dis major rather than re-apply.

**Would you recommend the accelerated over the regular if you're an older, non-traditional student?**

Janel has a friend that applied 3 years in a row and finally got in her senior year. She would look into the accelerated program and see if it's something for you. Edgewood has a program but UW does not have one. I've heard they're pretty intense. It's only a year and half, with no breaks. I don't think either one is better, its whatever works for you. You come out at the end with the same title.

**How did you guys cope with anxiety about getting in or not getting in?**

Janel: It was kind of awful. From February to April, the closer it got to finding out the worse it got. Once you hit submit you can't change anything. You just have to try and not think about it.

Annie: wasn't too stressed I guess. I had friends who were very confident and I wasn't, but I just didn't think about it.

Sarah: I was probably way too nonchalant about it. I would say that I was not that stressed. You just kind of forget and then you hit April and you check your mail every day. And everyone is constantly talking about it and when they're sending the letters out. Then when everyone gets their letters its really awkward too. If you don't get in, seriously it is not the end of the world. So many people don't get in.

**If you're a sophomore and not completely confident with where you're at grade wise, application wise, etc would you recommend applying anyway? Will they look at it and be like oh she got better and improved?**

Yes, apply. They definitely take a look at the fact if you've applied before and they'll see what changes you've made. What did she do in this last year that will make her a better nurse? But definitely still put a lot of effort in. Who knows? It's really dependent on who else is applying with you. And if you don't get in it's not because you have a bad application it's because they don't have the teachers to support that many students.

**What are the numbers that apply, and specific attendance/class requirements?**

400 apply and there are 154 spots, but some of them go to LAX. They heard they may be adding more spots this year too. They're trying to increase their admissions by 30% by 2014. Lectures are also recorded so if you miss a lecture you can watch it online and in time and a half speed! This year a lot of our classes require attendance, it's a lot of projects and group work in the second year

**If you could have done one thing differently what would you have done?**

Janel wouldn't have changed anything. She enjoys being here for her fifth year, she's glad she really decided it's what she wanted to do. She got to study abroad and have other great experiences.

Annie would have changed some of her pre-reqs She took Chem 108 and its very specific to nursing and she's now at the point and looking to nurse anesthetist which she needs a different chemistry class for. She was very nursing heavy on her classes, and if she would have changed anything she would have done a more general "health" pre-req schedule rather than just the nursing-focused classes.

Sarah wished she wouldn't have spent so much time on getting her pre-reqs for dietetics and nursing both at the same time. I wish I would have laid more of a foundation for biological and chemistry rather than laying pre-reqs for an alternate major.

## What They Wish They Knew Med School Panel

- What do you wish you did more of while you were an undergrad?
  - Doing more volunteering or getting involved in clubs
  - Find a faculty mentor to walk you through process, good for asking questions, letters of recommendation. Could be a professor from class or someone in a pre health setting
- Did you do undergrad research?
  - Important but not necessary. Things like clinical psych aren't as applicable. Doing research can show alternative sides to you and can be a plus if you are going to a large academic med schools. They appreciate research experience, but it isn't absolutely necessary for admissions or interviews. Beneficial a talking point or if you plan on going further into research
- Best way on campus to get into research?
  - Through biology class-encourage you to do a small project (bio 152), search on UW sites, contact a PI of a lab
  - PI's are very receptive toward students usually, so take the initiative to research them and contact them
- Favorite class during med school?
  - Gross anatomy, learning about pathology behind systems, 'bugs and drugs' type classes-learning about diseases and how to treat them
- Compare/contrast med school and undergrad
  - First semester is a nice transition at UW-similar to undergrad but at an accelerated pace
  - Need new study methods because of the amount of material presented
  - Need to change how you acted in undergrad-study more, need to be more organized
  - Don't do what others do, use study methods that work better for you
  - Make sure you don't get too caught up in school, enjoy what you are still doing. Need to keep your friends and hobbies to stay healthy and happy.
  - Great challenge is learning how to balance everything
  - Don't take too many days off after tests-study a little everyday
- Any tips for applications or personal statements?
  - Need to keep in mind letters of recommendations-keep track of classes you did well in, which professors you met. Approach professors early and let them know you may want a letter in the future
  - Keep lists of what you participate in every year and the hours that you did them for
  - Personal statement-pick out unique points of yourself. Ex-clinical experiences, jobs
    - May not have an impact on if you get it, but it can be used as a spark of interest, don't write anything too crazy. Don't spend too much time on it
- Did you take a year off before med school?
  - Do something more fun if you take time off (travel) or graduate early
  - Taking time off can give you good work experience

- Taking a break from school may make it difficult to get motivated to get back into school
  - Gaining more experience before med school may give you more confidence while in school
- Did you get into multiple schools, and if so, how did you choose? Were there any questions that you wished you asked?
  - Schedule your interviews so you have your top choices first. That way, if you get into your school of choice, you don't need to do more interviews
  - Ask what tracks your program may take
  - Usually a 2-4 week window between interviews and getting accepted
  - Ask about curriculum of med school, consider how it may impact you
  - If you have specific interests, ask how those may be supported in the next four years
  - Ask about programs to support different methods of learning, different learning environments, find a school related to your learning style
  - Some programs have research opportunities and clinical
    - See how clinical structure is laid out-Madison has clinical all around Wi
  - Think about cities and patient populations that you want to work in
- What made you want to be a doctor?
  - Think about what you are passionate about
  - What do you like to talk about or study
  - Think about what you can be happy with everyday
  - Clinical years are very fun and are like having a job, no more exams, more enjoyable than the first two years of book work in medical school
- What are some skills that you've used/developed in/before med school
  - Balance, studying styles, effective communication-very important to being a doctor, being assertive-helps because med school is all exams, finding niche during clinical years while working with attending and patients, finding confidence in clinical
  - Studying in groups help keep you going
- Taking a science major vs non science
  - Classes line up well if you are science major
  - History, business majors etc still do very well, shows that you have other interests besides science
  - Foreign language experience can open new doors
  - Need to make sure you have pre reqs done
  - Take different classes in undergrad before you are in medicine for the rest of your life
- How did you handle relationships-were they on the same medical track as you?
  - Dating someone outside medicine is nice to provide balance, take breaks with
  - There are a lot of couples between med students
  - Dating can be challenging with studying, especially if you are living apart because of going to different schools. It's possible to adjust and to make everything work even though it's tough

- Can be nice to date someone in medicine so you have someone to vent and relate to, gives you more support
  - Very rewarding if you can make it work
- Did you study abroad?
  - Regret not going abroad
  - Makes you more passionate and well rounded
  - Moving out of comfort zone
  - Intertwine healthcare in new ways
  - Would have been worth it, even if it puts you a semester behind
  - There are still chances to go away during med school- summers, 4<sup>th</sup> year
    - Can still do research or travel
- What are strategies to do well on the MCAT
  - Take a course if you need more structure to keep you on task
  - Use books if you can motivate yourself
  - Take a lot of practice tests
  - Be diligent about studying
- Did you have a job during undergrad
  - During summers, but not during school year
  - Research is like a job

**Occupational Therapy- help people across the lifespan participate in the things they want and need to do through the therapeutic use of everyday activities (occupations)**

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Katie- [katbartling@gmail.com](mailto:katbartling@gmail.com)

**What inspired you to pursue OT over other health care pathways?**

It is an occupation where you get a lot of patient contact, usually 30-45 minutes with each patient. It is much more intimate than a PA where so many patients are in and out.

**How did you find out about OT?**

Pamphlets, presentation, majors fair

**Where should you volunteer?**

Rural areas because it provides an opportunity to see patients across the lifespan and isn't as specialized as some of the urban setting might be. It is great for resume building to say you volunteered with a variety of patients. Also, they suggested that if you have a volunteering position in your hometown, they said to keep that position (assuming you like it of course) because you get more privileges the longer you are at a place, and it will also be helpful for letters of recommendation when your supervisors have known you for an extended period of time. Madison is a great place to volunteer, but if you have a position in a "less well-known city" it is not going to mean anything less.

**Who would you like to work with?**

Katie- anyone, as long as it is fast paced, loves the more behavioral aspect

Alex- upper extremity, neuro rehab... really likes it because patients are often in a very severe situation and it is very rewarding to be able to work with them. He would really like to work in the hospital or clinic.

Emily- really likes to work with kids, but with that being said, she had the opportunity to work with older adults and found it fascinating.

K/A/E all stressed to not go into OT school with a closed mind, even if you really think you know what you want to do. They all shared personal experiences suggesting that what they thought at first would not be interesting to them ended up being extremely interested to them. This is also another reason why they stressed volunteering in a place where you can get a variety of patients.

**Where did you apply to, why?**

Alex- Washington University, USC, UW, all top programs

Katie- looked at programs that emphasized research, really liked Madison for that reason. She also said to really consider applying to programs that are doing research because that is where the field seems to be going. She picked Madison because it was the cheapest option, and Madison is one of the only schools that she found that has a 4:1 faculty to student ratio but is still ranked very high.

**Take time off?**

K/E/A if you know you want to be in OT, there really isn't a reason to take a year off, unless you need more volunteering/shadowing hours.

**How is your field work going?**

K/E were first years in OT and in the Madison program you don't start field work until your second year. Alex had some great experiences working at a hospital with kids and then later in a more intense setting working with patients that were in a very tough situation. He said overall it was a really great

experience. Also, the Madison program is very “on your own” . There is not much class, but the workload outside of class is substantial. Nothing to be worried about, but its just something to keep in mind that you will need to keep yourself motivated.

**Any specific classes to take?**

Social work 644- Katie took it, contact is Don Anderson, its an all online class and you learn a lot, don't take it until your senior year.

**Where can you volunteer?**

Cornucopia, mental health place in Madison, check out their website

Attic Angel, memory care unit, assistant living

Mendota Health

Admissions for OT at Madison has a wonderful list of volunteering opportunities, should definitely check it out.

Badger Care Child Network

Three gates

Adaptive Kayaking at UW

Easter Seals Respite Camp, in Wisconsin Dells, get to hang out with children on the weekend! Some weekends are tailored to specific illnesses, a great opportunity to get a lot of hours in.

## Communicative Disorders/Speech

1. Where did you start out? How did you end up at UW-Madison in Speech-Path?

Carly: Started her undergraduate at UW-Madison in biology, planning to do optometry. She changed to speech language pathology. She graduated with a Communicative Disorders major with honors in the major, applied to four schools and decided on UW-Madison.

Kelsey: Started her undergraduate at the University of St. Thomas as undecided. Her friend originally told her about communicative disorders. St. Thomas did not have the degree so she transferred to UW-Madison. Kelsey also had honors in the major.

2. What are honors in the major?

Take 2-3 classes for honors. They are regular courses you have to take and then you have to do an extra project or presentation. Honors are strongly suggested if you want to go to graduate school. Honors are a great way to get to know your professors and develop a relationship. A lot of times you end up working in a lab after doing honors. Apply to honors as early as you can!

3. What are some tips to working in a lab?

Talk to your communicative disorders advisor about lab opportunities. You can also check at [comdis@wisc.edu](mailto:comdis@wisc.edu), and check out research professors are doing currently. You can contact a professor about any research that sparks your interest and if they have room they will take you on.

4. What are you doing now in Graduate School?

First year is at UW in Speech and Hearing Clinics. Second Year is divided into being at clinics.

1st semester you are at either a hospital or school. 2nd semester you do the one that you haven't done yet.

5. Hardest classes in the major?

318- Stuttering. Hardest gateway-CD 201.

6. Would you suggest any other classes at UW?

Ed Psych classes 301,320. Rehab Psych 300. African American Music 136.

7. What is the applying process like?

GRE- suggested taking a class or at the least buying a book! Can take it once a month, get started early, possibly summer. A lot of Grad schools look at last 60 credits- so do well! You also need letters of recommendation for application.

8. What is the timeline after graduate school?

Last year you take a Clinical Competency exam. After you graduate you have to do a 9 month fellowship. There you are supervised, and can be paid low. After your fellowship ASHA will supervise you.

9. What experiences do you suggest as far as volunteering or working during your undergrad?

Working/volunteering at Waisman Center in the Early Childhood Program. Wisconsin Early Autism Program (WEAP).

10. What are your email addresses so we can contact you?

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