Chiropractors, also known as doctors of chiropractic or chiropractic physicians, diagnose and treat patients with health problems of the musculoskeletal system and treat the effects of those problems on the nervous system and on general health. Many chiropractic treatments deal specifically with the spine and the manipulation of the spine.

The chiropractic approach to healthcare focuses on the patient’s overall health. Chiropractors provide natural, drugless, nonsurgical health treatments, relying on the body’s inherent recuperative abilities. They also recognize that many factors affect health, including exercise, diet, rest, environment, and heredity. Chiropractors recommend changes in lifestyle that affect those factors. In some situations, chiropractors refer patients to consult with other medical professionals.

The University of Iowa does not offer a graduate program in chiropractic medicine. As Pre-Chiropractic advisors, we strive to guide you to the best of our abilities, but it is important to know that requirements for chiropractic programs are not standardized. Students should research programs and their prerequisite course work. One chiropractic program might require Organic Chemistry Lab, whereas another might not require Organic Chemistry at all. Your advisor is happy to discuss specific program requirements as they relate to University of Iowa coursework.

Sample Pre-Chiropractic Four-Year Academic Plans

Plan A: Starting with General Chemistry

Year 1:
CHEM:1070 General Chemistry I
CHEM:1110 Principles of Chemistry I
MATH based on UI placement
MATH related to major*
PSY:1001 Elementary Psychology

Year 2:
CHEM:1120 Principles of Chemistry II
CHEM:2210 Organic Chemistry I
BIOL:1411 Foundations of Biology **
BIOL:1412 Div. of Form and Function**

Year 3:
CHEM:2220 Organic Chemistry II
CHEM:2410 Organic Chemistry Lab
PHYS:1511 College Physics I
PHYS:1512 College Physics II***
Anatomy Course****
Human Physiology Course****

Year 4:
Courses to complete major
Courses to complete major
Plan B: Starting with Principles of Chemistry

Year 1:
CHEM:1110 Principles of Chemistry I  CHEM:1120 Principles of Chemistry II
MATH related to major*  BIOL:1411 Foundations of Biology
PSY:1001 Elementary Psychology

Year 2:
CHEM:2210 Organic Chemistry I (CHEM:2210)  CHEM:2220 Organic Chemistry II
BIOL:1412 Diversity of Form/Function**  CHEM:2410 Organic Chemistry Lab

Year 3:
PHYS:1511 College Physics I  PHYS:1512 College Physics II***
Anatomy Course****  Human Physiology Course****

Year 4:
Courses to complete major  Courses to complete major

*Calculus is not required for the chiropractic program but is required for most science majors. The major will determine which math class is taken.
**Must have two biological sciences with labs. Some programs will accept BIOL:1141 Animal Biology or BIOL:1140 Human Biology.
***Approved biomechanics, kinesiology, statistics, or exercise physiology may also be used.
****These are recommended courses (and required at some schools; see school websites for details).

The Application Process

Applications are considered for each academic term. It is recommended the application be submitted one year prior to enrollment. Check specific programs for their application process and deadlines. Complete the prerequisite courses required by schools that interest you. Applicants will be required to submit transcripts and a personal statement that expresses their motivation for choosing the chiropractic profession.

Letters of Evaluation/Recommendation

At least one letter of reference is required from a licensed practicing Doctor of Chiropractic. Other reference and evaluation requirements may vary by program. These may be in the form of confidential evaluations, character reference forms, or additional letters of reference.

Interviews

Some programs conduct informal interviews with each applicant. These interviews generally take place in conjunction with a campus visit and can be arranged through the school’s admissions office.

Criminal Background Checks

Applicants should be prepared to disclose and explain any felony or misdemeanor convictions. They may be required to provide signed consent for conducting an External Criminal Background Investigation. Applicants should also be aware that some clinical education sites will require drug screening for students performing clinical rotations.
Pre-Chiropractic Curriculum

Most chiropractic programs require that applicants have at least three years of undergraduate education, and many require a bachelor’s degree. Students must complete a prescribed number of prerequisite courses as defined by the field’s accrediting body, the Council on Chiropractic Education. The curricula are designed to qualify graduates for state licensure examinations. Certain states may require undergraduate degrees or special courses at the pre-professional or postgraduate level to qualify the applicant for examination. Current entrance requirements for the Doctor of Chiropractic degree program are as follows:

- Completed the equivalent of three academic years of undergraduate study (90 semester hours) at an institution(s) accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or an equivalent foreign agency with a GPA for these 90 hours of not less than 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.
- The 90 hours will include a minimum of 24 semester hours in life and physical science courses. These science courses will provide an adequate background for success in the DCP, and at least half of these courses will have a substantive laboratory component.
- The student’s undergraduate preparation also includes a well-rounded general education program in the humanities and social sciences and other coursework deemed relevant by the DCP for students to successfully complete the DCP curriculum.

General Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Language Skills</td>
<td>6 semester hours (or 9 quarter hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>3 semester hours (or 4.5 quarter hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences or Humanities</td>
<td>15 semester hours (or 22.5 quarter hours)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Biological /Physical Sciences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biological Sciences (with labs)</td>
<td>6 semester hours (or 9 quarter hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>12 semester hours (or 18 quarter hours)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chemistry requirement may be met with at least one general or inorganic chemistry and at least two organic chemistry/biochemistry courses with unduplicated content. At least two of the courses must include related laboratory experiences. Be sure to check each Chiropractic School to confirm you have met all prerequisites for individual programs.

Physics & Related Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physics &amp; Related Studies</td>
<td>6 semester hours (or 9 quarter hours)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The physics requirement may be met with either one or more physics courses with unduplicated content (of which one must include a related laboratory), or one physics course with laboratory and one course in biomechanics, kinesiology, statistics, or exercise physiology.

Citizenship/International Students

Most chiropractic colleges admit international students. Applicants should research admission requirements specific to international students and allow additional time for application processing.
Diversity in Chiropractic

Factors considered in admissions committee evaluations include life experiences, work experiences, professional goals, geographical background (rural, urban or suburban), cultural background, and disadvantaged status. Qualified applicants who possess characteristics that are underrepresented in the profession contribute to the overall diversity of the class.

Websites

The Association of Chiropractic Colleges:  www.chirocolleges.org/
American Chiropractic Association:  www.acatoday.org
Council on Chiropractic Education:  www.cce-usa.org/

Pre-Chiropractic Coursework Checklist*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHEM:1110 Prin of Chemistry I</td>
<td>4 sh</td>
<td>English Language Skills: 6 sh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEM:1120 Prin of Chemistry II</td>
<td>4 sh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEM:2210 Organic Chemistry I</td>
<td>3 sh</td>
<td>Human Anatomy Course*** 3 sh</td>
<td>**Must have two biological sciences with labs. With prior approval, some programs will accept BIOL:1141 Animal Biology or BIOL:1140 Human Biology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEM:2220 Organic Chemistry II</td>
<td>3 sh</td>
<td>Human Physiology Course*** 3 sh</td>
<td>**Approved biomechanics, statistics, or exercise physiology may also be used. Consult individual schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEM:2410 Organic Chemistry Lab</td>
<td>3 sh</td>
<td>PSY:1001 Psychology Course 3 sh</td>
<td>**These are recommended courses (and required at some schools; see school websites for details).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEM:2410 Organic Chemistry Lab</td>
<td>3 sh</td>
<td>PSY:1001 Psychology Course 3 sh</td>
<td>**These are recommended courses (and required at some schools; see school websites for details).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL:1411 Foundations of Biology</td>
<td>4 sh</td>
<td>Humanities or Social Sciences:+ 15 sh</td>
<td>+ These 15 s.h. can include any University of Iowa General Education courses except for math or science courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL:1412 Div. of Form/Function**</td>
<td>4 sh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHYS:1511 College Physics I</td>
<td>4 sh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHYS:1512 College Physics II***</td>
<td>4 sh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Students should consult specific chiropractic programs directly for various interpretations of these requirements. A few programs encourage students to pursue a well-rounded education with coursework that includes 24 science credits (half with labs) instead of specific requirements. These credits may include biology (human anatomy and physiology, embryology, genetics, microbiology, immunology, cellular biology, exercise physiology, and kinesiology); chemistry (general, organic or, analytical); biochemistry, toxicology/pharmacology, nutrition, nuclear medicine, and physical sciences (physics, biomechanics, and statistics).

**Must have two biological sciences with labs. With prior approval, some programs will accept BIOL:1141 Animal Biology or BIOL:1140 Human Biology.

***Approved biomechanics, statistics, or exercise physiology may also be used. Consult individual schools.

****These are recommended courses (and required at some schools; see school websites for details).

+ These 15 s.h. can include any University of Iowa General Education courses except for math or science courses.