The Pritzker School of Medicine

Mission

At the University of Chicago, in an atmosphere of interdisciplinary scholarship and discovery, the Pritzker School of Medicine is dedicated to inspiring diverse students of exceptional promise to become leaders and innovators in science and medicine for the betterment of humanity.

Overview

The University of Chicago matriculated its first class of medical students in 1927 and today is a national leader in training physicians and physician-scientists. In recognition of the generous support extended to the medical school from the Pritzker family of Chicago, the medical school was renamed the Pritzker School of Medicine in 1968. The great traditions which underlie the school’s history include the presence of a full-time teaching faculty devoted to working with students, a strong emphasis on research and discovery, and a commitment to translating the most recent advances in biomedical science to the bedside.

The Pritzker School of Medicine is unique among medical schools in that it is a part of the academic Division of the Biological Sciences. This situation offers medical students a wide array of opportunities for interdisciplinary research, learning and collaboration between the basic and clinical sciences. Surveys conducted by the Association of American Medical Colleges over the last several years consistently show the University of Chicago among the top schools in the nation as a producer of faculty members at academic medical centers.

In 2009, the Pritzker School of Medicine began rolling out a reorganized curriculum, known as the Pritzker Initiative. The new curriculum emphasizes active learning, integration among the clinical and basic sciences, and scholarship and discovery. The Pritzker curriculum begins with the introduction to the Human Body, which runs from early August through October and includes lectures from nearly 30 University of Chicago faculty members. Beginning in late September, first years students are introduced to the Scientific Foundation of Medicine series. This series spans the first two years of study guiding students through such themes as Response to Injury, Neurobiology, and Clinical Pathophysiology and Therapeutics. Students also begin seeing patients during their first quarter as part of the longitudinal Physician-Patient-Society-Systems (P2S2) course. This course includes modules on Health Care Disparities and the Social Context of Medicine. Students have access to a state-of-the-art clinical performance center which uses standardized patients and videotaped performance to educate students in taking a history, performing a physical examination, and clinical decision making. By the time students enter their clerkship rotations during the end of their second year of studies they are considered part of the health care team. During their clinical years, students participate in eight clinical clerkships, a subinternship and a series of
elective experiences at the nationally ranked University of Chicago Medical Center and NorthShore University HealthSystem.

Building on Pritzker’s legacy of producing research scholars, the revamped curriculum also includes a Scholarship and Discovery thread which requires the completion of a mentored scholarly project. Students have the option to engage in scholarship in medical education, quality improvement, community health, global health, and scientific investigation. During the pre-clinical years, students acquire core skills in research methodology and biostatistics and return to their designated scholarly area during their fourth year. The Pritzker School of Medicine’s curriculum culminates with the Transitions to Internship Capstone course which provides graduating fourth year students with the practical skills they need to transition seamlessly into graduate medical education.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO MEDICAL CENTER

The University of Chicago Medical Center, which includes the new $700 million Center for Care and Discovery, plus Comer Children’s Hospital, Bernard A. Mitchell Hospital and the Duchossois Center for Advanced Medicine, serves as the teaching facility for the Pritzker School of Medicine.

The medical center is a leader in research and treatment of disorders such as cancer, gastrointestinal disease, diabetes, lung disease, heart disease, neurological disorders, musculoskeletal disorders and others. It houses more than 100 specialty clinics and provides medical care during more than 500,000 in-hospital, outpatient and emergency room visits a year.

The Medical Center and Biological Sciences Division encompass almost 5 million gross square feet of space in more than 30 buildings devoted to research, teaching and patient care.

In early 2013, the 10-story Center for Care and Discovery opened, adding 1.2 million square feet of patient and clinical space. The state-of-the-art facility, designed by renowned architect Rafael Vinoly, is nestled in the heart of the medical campus, steps away from the 10-story Knapp Center for Biomedical Discovery, which opened in 2009, the Gordon Center for Integrative Science and Pritzker School of Medicine. Its prime location emphasizes our commitment to integrating research, education, and clinical excellence to improve patient care.

The Medical Center currently has more than 800 physicians and 1,600 nurses, as well as more than 900 residents and fellows (physicians working in advanced specialty training in medical science, leading to specialty board certification). Faculty members associated with the Medical Center and BSD ranked fifth nationally in National Institutes of Health (NIH) research funding per faculty member in 2013.

The medical center is a major provider of health care for the immediate neighborhood of more than 700,000 people, and has engaged in a long-term effort to construct a more rational collaborative system of doctors’ offices, clinics, community hospitals and academic centers to provide care for all the people who live on the South Side of Chicago. Community-based training opportunities include relationships with nearby physicians and hospitals, and an academic affiliation with
the NorthShore University Health System, which includes three suburban hospitals. It has regional burn and perinatal units.

Patients with particularly complex or obscure medical problems travel from all over the world for treatment at the University of Chicago Medicine. The medical center includes the National Cancer Institute-designated University of Chicago Medicine Comprehensive Cancer Center; a Howard Hughes Medical Institute; a National Diabetes Research and Training Center; a National Clinical Nutrition Research Unit; the Special Center for Research in Arteriosclerosis; the MacLean Center for Clinical Medical Ethics; the Bucksbaum Institute for Clinical Excellence; the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research Center; the Center for Health and the Social Sciences; and the Clinical Pharmacology Center.

It is also the site of two additional national clinical research units and has widely recognized research programs on digestive diseases, anti-cancer medications, cell biology of cardiac and skeletal muscle, transplantation biology, lipoprotein-cell surface interactions, nuclear medicine and imaging, and receptors and response proteins in reproductive tissue.

The medical center is supported by its critical care transport helicopter team, UCAN, which celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2013. It was the first dedicated medical helicopter program in the Chicago area when it began in 1983, and is the only area program to fly with a flight physician.

Requests for an application and other inquiries should be addressed to the Admissions Department, The University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine, 924 E. 57th Street, BSLC 104, Chicago, IL 60637. Email: pritzkeradmissions@bsd.uchicago.edu

**NORTHSHORE UNIVERSITY HEALTH SYSTEM**

Headquartered in Evanston, Ill., NorthShore University HealthSystem (NorthShore) is a comprehensive, fully integrated, healthcare delivery system that serves the greater North Shore and northern Illinois communities. The system includes four Hospitals – Evanston Hospital, Glenbrook Hospital, Highland Park Hospital and Skokie Hospital. In addition, the health system has more than 2,400 affiliated physicians, including a 600-physician, multispecialty physician group practice with over 70 office locations - NorthShore University HealthSystem Medical Group. Further, NorthShore is committed to excellence in its academic mission and supports teaching and research as the principal teaching affiliate for the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine.

The NorthShore University HealthSystem Research Institute focuses on clinical and translational research, including leadership in outcomes research and clinical trials.

The HealthSystem has significant capabilities in a wide spectrum of clinical programs, including neurosciences, cancer, heart, orthopaedics, high-risk maternity and pediatrics. NorthShore is a national leader in the implementation of innovative technologies, including electronic medical records, (EMR). In 2003, the HealthSystem was among the first in the country to successfully launch a system
wide EMR with demonstrable benefits in quality, safety and service to patients. NorthShore has been recognized by multiple national organizations for this notable achievement.

**COMBINED MD/PHD PROGRAMS IN THE DIVISION OF THE BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES AND PRITZKER SCHOOL OF MEDICINE**

The University of Chicago’s Pritzker School of Medicine has an exceptionally rich tradition of interdisciplinary scholarship. Each year, typically 15 to 20 percent of the graduating medical school class also graduates with a PhD. In the spirit of this tradition, the Pritzker School of Medicine offers a wide selection of joint degree programs for individuals interested in the critical interface of medicine, biological sciences, and society.

Students interested in combining clinical and biomedical research can combine their MD training with education toward a PhD in one of the degree granting units (see section on Basic Sciences) within the Biological Sciences Division. The Pritzker School of Medicine is also home to several highly competitive and award winning NIH funded MD/PhD training programs including the Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP) and the Growth and Development Training Program (GDTP). Students interested in pursuing a PhD degree in the Humanities or Social Sciences can do so as part of a unique MD-PhD program in Medicine, Social Sciences and Humanities (MESH). Students may also graduate with additional master degrees in business, law or policy.

**MEDICAL SCIENTIST TRAINING PROGRAM**

The University of Chicago Medical Scientist Training Program is a challenging interdisciplinary training program in biomedical sciences which leads to an MD from the Pritzker School of Medicine and to a PhD in the Interdisciplinary Scientist Training Program (ISTP). Our trainees graduate prepared to assume successful leadership roles in the evolving world of 21st century academic biomedicine. Being one of the earliest programs to obtain federal funding in 1967, the MSTP at the University of Chicago is currently one of the longest running in the country.

The MD is awarded through the Pritzker School of Medicine, one of the top 10 graduate schools in the nation. With the introduction of the Pritzker Initiative in Autumn 2009, students will be educated in smaller classes with more individual attention from faculty, with an emphasis on active learning and scholarship, will be integrated among disciplines when possible, and in an atmosphere that highlights the relationship between basic and clinical sciences.

For their graduate work, trainees will be part of the ISTP, the degree-granting arm of the MSTP. This program is a novel, adaptable mechanism for students to obtain highly-integrated, interdisciplinary training. Trainees will be part of a flexible PhD program that offers superb educational opportunities and rigorous training in the highly integrated environment of Chicago Biomedicine at The University of Chicago. The ISTP also provides a programmatic identity that fosters a seamless
progression of our students through the medical and graduate phases of their training.

The program is designed for students who seek broad careers in biomedical related research and a desire to apply both clinical and research expertise to solve the most pressing problems in medical science. Typically students begin their full-time PhD research after completion of their first year of medical studies and return to medical school after they have successfully defended their PhD thesis. On average, MSTP trainees complete both degrees in 8 years.

**GROWTH, DEVELOPMENT AND DISABILITIES TRAINING PROGRAM**

The Growth, Development and Disabilities Training Program (GDDTP) is a unique opportunity available to University of Chicago medical students who decide to pursue an advanced PhD degree after they have started medical school. The program began over 40 years ago and in 2003 received the first NICHD Mentor Award for Excellence in Research Training.

Entry into the program is available for students who have completed two years (occasionally one year) of medical studies. Students wishing to be considered for the program generally acquire relevant laboratory experience, fulfill at least some graduate courses requirements and seek out a research sponsor and graduate degree unit during their first two years of medical studies, in anticipation of their application to the program.

The program is unique in that it offers medical students the opportunity to pursue a PhD degree after they have started medical school. This represents a major opportunity for students at the Pritzker School of Medicine, who frequently become so enthusiastic about research during their first or second year of medical school that they decide to take a leave from medical studies to pursue a PhD degree. A wide variety of PhD degree granting units is available to trainees, most often in the Biological Sciences Division.

Students interested in the program may submit formal applications in the winter quarter of their first or second year of medical studies. When all necessary supporting material, including transcripts and letters of recommendation, is received, the students undergo two formal interviews. Decisions are announced in the spring, with appointment to the grant in July. Demonstrated interest and commitment to basic research, as evidenced by prior experience and accomplishment, as well as strong academic record, are major criteria for selection.

Trainees in the program receive a maximum of five years of support which generally includes three years of support during the PhD phase and the remainder of the MD training (the two clinical years). Financial aid covers full tuition, fees and a stipend supplemented to national competitive levels to support living expenses.

For further information about this program, please visit: [http://pritzker.uchicago.edu/jointdegrees/gdtp/](http://pritzker.uchicago.edu/jointdegrees/gdtp/)
MD-PHD PROGRAM IN MEDICINE, SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES (MESH)

The program is based on the premise that physicians should acquire special competence in another area of scholarship in order to address the overlapping social, economic, scientific, ethical, legal and humanistic problems which medicine as an enterprise, and as a profession, faces today.

Doctoral studies may be pursued in any of the departments within the social sciences (including Anthropology, Economics, History, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology or Sociology) or humanities, in the Committee on Social Thought or the Conceptual and Historical Studies of Science Division, or the schools of divinity or public policy. Research may also be conducted through the Center for Health and the Social Sciences, the Morris Fishbein Center for the Study of the History and Science of Medicine, or the MacLean Center for Clinical Medical Ethics. Following completion of their doctoral studies, students in the program are expected to return to medical school to resume work toward the MD degree.

For further information about this program, please visit: http://pritzker.uchicago.edu/jointdegrees/mesh/