



Even before enrolling in their first class at Swarthmore, students interested in a health-related career can find a home in the Health Sciences Office.

The relationship extends throughout students' time here and beyond, as the office guides both students and alumni through the process of qualifying and applying for graduate training in medicine, dentistry, and various other health fields.

Advisor Gigi Simeone's is among the first faces students see when they reach campus, and she maintains an open door for any and all guidance—forever, and for free. The office publishes a yearly guide to help students schedule courses and answer frequently fretted-over questions. Simeone is here to support students through what can be a dizzying process of applying for graduate programs.

Swarthmore students don't follow rigid pre-med or pre-dental tracks. Instead, they immerse themselves in an exceptionally strong science program with first-hand lab and research experience and close faculty/student collaboration—the training ground of four Nobel laureates and many National Science Foundation awardees. Our academic excellence also translates to high acceptance rates to top medical schools, including Harvard, Yale, and Stanford, and leading dental schools like the University of Pennsylvania.



Deondre Jordan '19
Honors Chemistry graduate

"I appreciate Gigi's extensive experience and wisdom. She always provides a multitude of solutions to a problem, which gives me the flexibility and freedom to continue along the pre-med track in the way best-suited for me."

WHAT SETS SWARTHMORE APART?

- Holistic support abounds in the form of tutors, biology and chemistry clinics, writing associates, student academic mentors, study skills workshops, faculty office hours, and more.
- Our interdisciplinary spirit encourages students to major in French or economics and still get into medical school and, with a little planning, be able to study abroad during their time at Swarthmore.
- A robust externship program enables students to spend a week shadowing alumni in an array of health sciences settings, such as an ophthalmology practice and at Cooper University Hospital.



A HELPING HAND

The confusion over which courses to take and how to apply can be the greatest roadblock to a career in the health sciences, but the Health Sciences Office is here to help. Our alumni look back on their time here grateful for the academic, career, and emotional support they got from the office and the campus partners with which it works closely. Knowledgeable and friendly people like Gigi Simeone who help keep students on task are invaluable, they learn.

“Meeting with Gigi has been crucial to my success as a student here at Swarthmore,” says Twan Sia ’21, an honors biology major from Myanmar. “Not only does she help students find opportunities for career exploration and advancement, but she has the connections and resources, both on campus and off, to help you in whatever endeavors you choose to pursue.” Adds Sajal Medha Akkipeddi ’20, a biology major from Framingham, Mass.: “I’ve always appreciated how easy it is to schedule a meeting with Gigi to talk about anything, from occasional check-ins to final edits on medical school essays. She has an extraordinary amount of knowledge about the process.”

A PARTNERSHIP WITH THOMAS JEFFERSON UNIVERSITY

Medical schools recognize the increased value of doctors trained in the liberal arts. We have partnered with Thomas Jefferson University on an early acceptance program for Swarthmore students interested in becoming physicians with expertise in health policy, population health, and community engagement. The program—and its combination of medical education, community engagement, and policy for the public good—offers Swarthmore students the chance to work alongside Jefferson faculty on a variety of local and global health issues. They receive a mentored summer experience in a field of their interest between junior and senior year. When they matriculate at Jefferson’s Sidney Kimmel Medical College, they continue their scholarly work in health policy and population health, and do a mentored relevant capstone project.



WORLD-CLASS OPPORTUNITIES

Through Swarthmore’s externship program run by the Career Services office, students shadow alumni in an array of health sciences fields, including, in recent years:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, Ga.

As students, Christina Labows ’18 and Jason Manning ’18 shadowed health scientist Amy Lansky ’87 for a week, absorbing a broad overview of the CDC by meeting with eight alums working in various roles and parts of the agency. The alumni also describe their career paths as “unexpected.” There is a balance among the “drive to make a difference in the world, academic interests, and personal life,” says Lansky.

Cooper University Hospital in Camden, N.J

As students, Mishel Figueroa ’18 and Nick Schmidt ’17 were among the many students to shadow physicians and staff through various rotations at Cooper in recent years. They even got real-time, eye-opening lessons in the operating room. “I was in awe the whole time,” says Figueroa, “learning and observing everything I could. It helped me decide to commit fully and enthusiastically to a career in medicine.”

