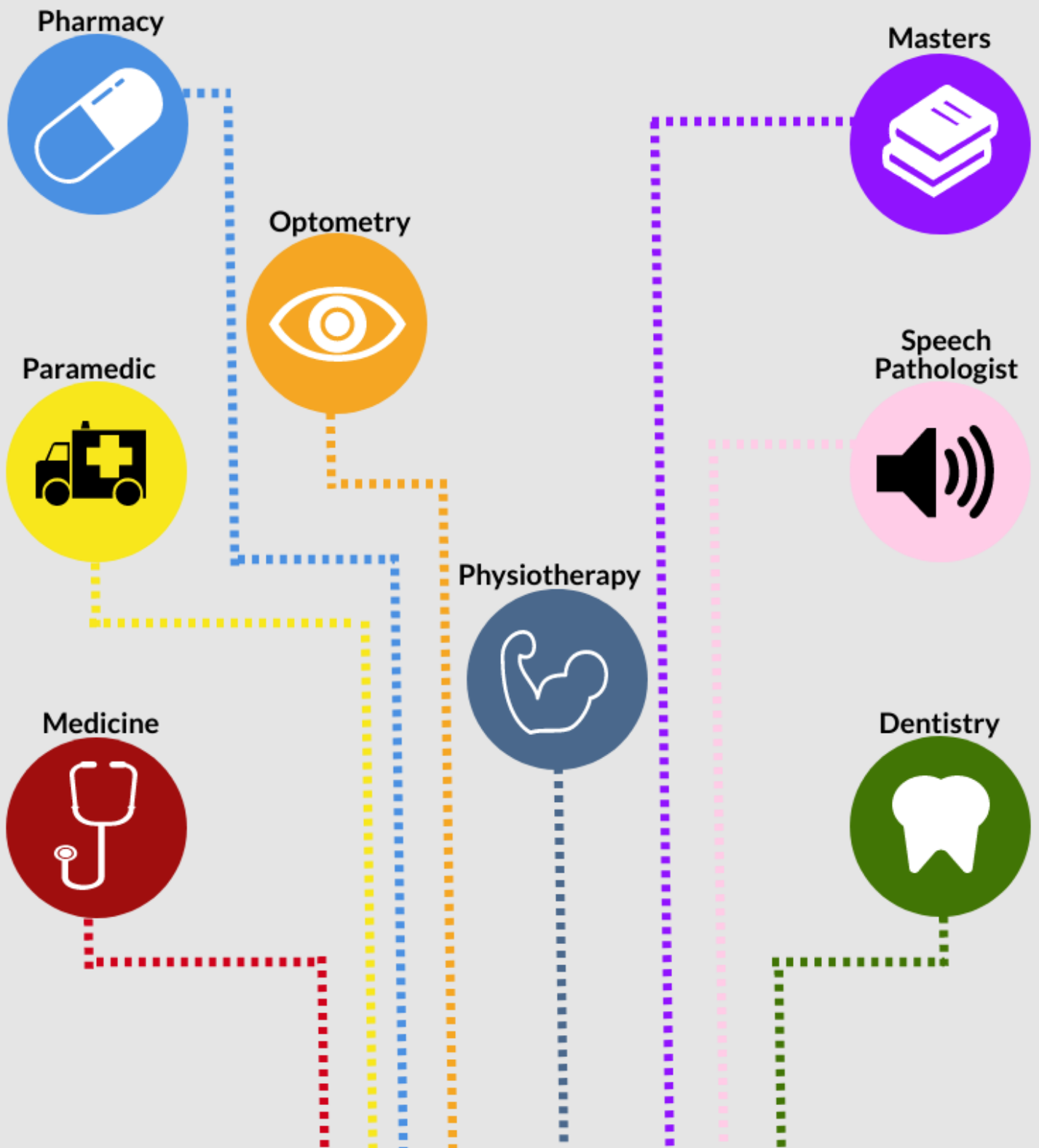


Professional & Graduate School Guide



McMaster
biochemistry & biomedical
sciences society



Choose the right path for you

Table of Contents

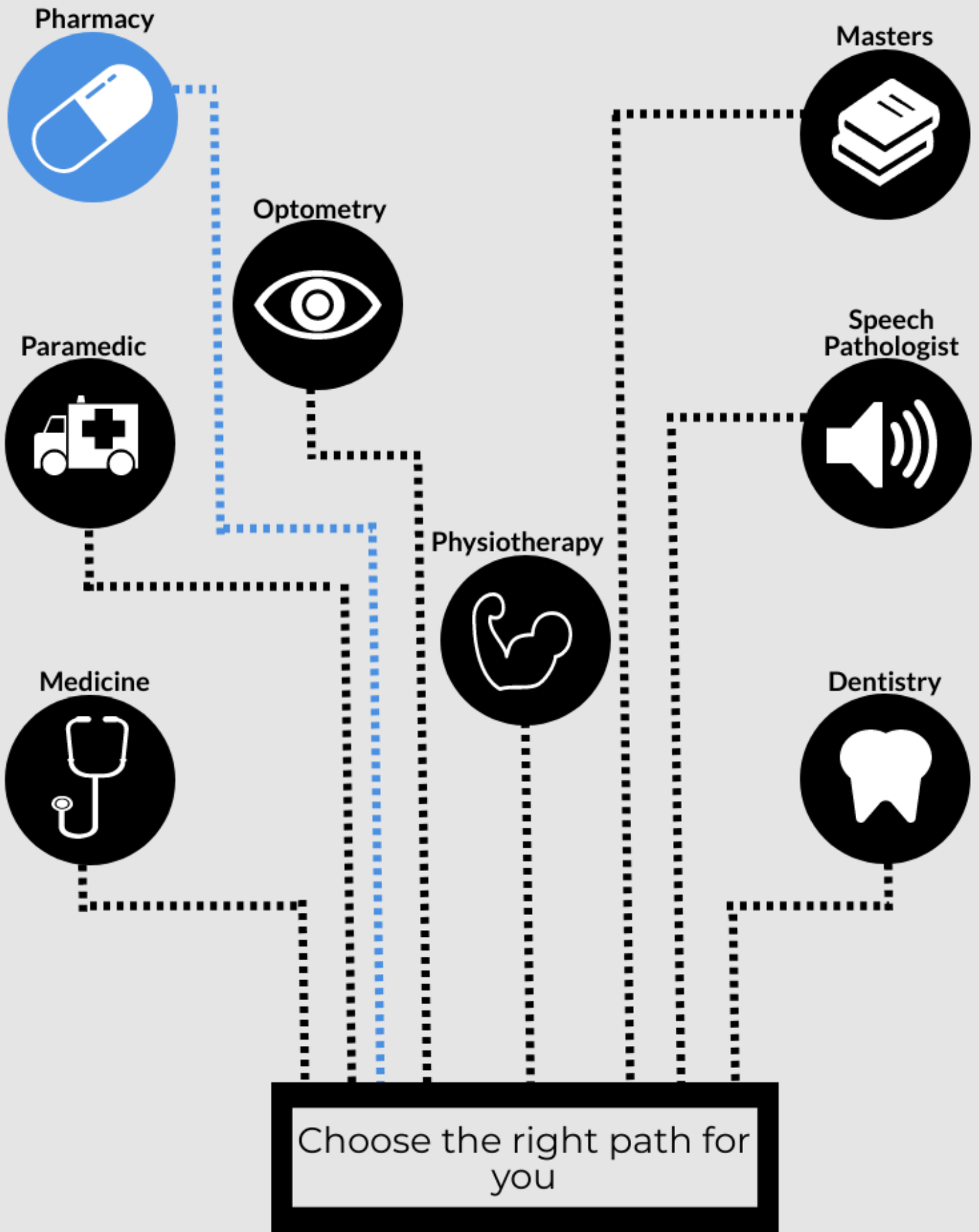
1. Introduction.....	3
2. Pharmacy.....	4-9
3. Paramedic School.....	10-14
4. Speech Language Pathologist.....	15-19
5. Physiotherapy.....	20-24
6. Masters in Medical Sciences.....	25-27
7. Optometry.....	28-31
8. Medicine.....	32-35
9. Dentistry.....	36-39
10. Conclusion.....	40

Introduction

Welcome to the Professional/Graduate School Guide where we dive into different possible paths that students can take following their undergraduate degree. We tried to make this guide as comprehensive as possible, but there are infinite possible paths to take and so, we tried to include the most common ones. This guide includes journeys that venture into medical school, graduate school, optometry school and more! We hope this helps you get started on your plans and allows you to see some of the many doors that the Biochemistry and BDC programs open.

We encourage you to look even further into the specific schools you intend on applying to as there are some nuances between them. Additionally, some requirements may change due to COVID-19, so we strongly encourage that you consistently check the admission websites to ensure that you know if any changes happen to occur.

Furthermore, we would like to acknowledge the great amount of work that Stephanie Scott & Lina Yacoub [VP-Academics 2019-2020] did to make this guide a reality.



Pharmacy

The doctorate of pharmacy is a 4 year professional school program offered at 10 universities in Canada. It allows students to be certified pharmacists who can work in clinical and pharmaceutical settings.



Process of Application

Most pharmacy schools in Canada require a minimum of two years of undergraduate education in order to fulfill program prerequisite requirements. Depending on the institution, the minimum average ranges between 65% - 75%, However competitive applicants have a cumulative average of about 80%. Additionally, a pharmacy admissions test known as the PCAT is required as part of the application process for most schools in Canada. Certain schools also require the completion of a computer Based Assessment for Sampling Personal Characteristics (CASper test). The interview can vary between schools as some conduct a MMI style while others perform a panel style interview.

Below is the list of Pharmacy schools in Canada along with links to their websites to provide more specific information regarding the required prerequisite courses.

1. University of Toronto:
<http://www.pharmacy.utoronto.ca/pharmd/admissions/academic-requirements>
2. University of Waterloo: <https://uwaterloo.ca/pharmacy/future-students>
3. University of British Columbia:
<https://pharmsci.ubc.ca/programs/entry-practice-pharmd-degree/admissions-and-finances/admission-requirements>
4. University of Alberta:
<https://www.ualberta.ca/pharmacy/programs/undergraduate-bsc-in-pharmacy/prospective-student/admission-requirements>
5. University of Saskatchewan: <https://pharmacy-nutrition.usask.ca/students/prospective-students/admissions-information.php#GeneralInformation>
6. Université de Montreal: <http://pharm.umontreal.ca/etudes/premier-cycle/doctorat-de-premier-cycle-en-pharmacie-pharm-d/>
7. Université Laval: <https://www.ulaval.ca/en/admissions/admission-requirements.html>
8. Dalhousie University:
<https://www.dal.ca/faculty/health/pharmacy/programs/undergraduate-program/application-process.html>
9. University of Manitoba:
http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/health_sciences/pharmacy/programs/DrPharm.html
10. University of Newfoundland:
<http://www.mun.ca/pharmacy/programs/pharmd/admissions/>

Q&A

Steven Huynh
First Year PharmD
University of Waterloo
Undergraduate Program: McMaster Biochemistry -
Biomedical Research Spec. Co-op
Email: Steven_huynh1998@hotmail.com



1. Why did you choose this program?

I decided to commit to pharmacy because I feel like it is a profession that becomes an expert in content that is very relevant to everyday life. I can have a conversation and be a resource to almost anybody about a pharmacy related topic, such as recommending natural health products/over the counter medications for minor ailments (such as dry skin), what supplements to use during pregnancy, how to quit smoking or the mechanisms behind common street drugs (eg cocaine, heroin, meth). I chose the University of Waterloo specifically because they provide a lot of opportunities for experiential learning. The 11 semester degree is broken up into approximately 6 school terms, 3 co-op terms and 2 terms of "clinical rotations" (unpaid work). We start our program off with 3 straight school terms, so after the first year, I'll be halfway done my school terms and will get to experience what it's like to practice as a pharmacy student.

2. What is the best/ worst part of your program?

The best part of the program is the small classroom size. This year, we have 122 students that make up the class of 2023. During the first week of school, we had frosh events for just our class which was a great way to meet friends because I knew that everybody I met, I would most likely see on a daily basis in class. This is a huge contrast from undergraduate frosh where sometimes you connect with someone really well but your paths don't conveniently cross for the rest of the year. Another benefit that is somewhat related to the small classroom size is the class schedule. Everybody in my year essentially has the same schedule (lab sections may vary) which may seem a little weird because you see the same people in the same classroom everyday, but come midterm and exam time, I find the professors spread out our assessments really well because they're aware of other assessments that are going on during that time.

The worst part of the program is probably the number of memorization-heavy courses. I find that there is A LOT of content for each of my courses during my first semester, meaning I have to time-manage really well if I want to go through information more than one time before writing a test. Get used to memorization techniques that work for you such as using mnemonics or acronyms, it'll definitely help a lot!

3. What is a typical day like in the life of a pharmacy student?

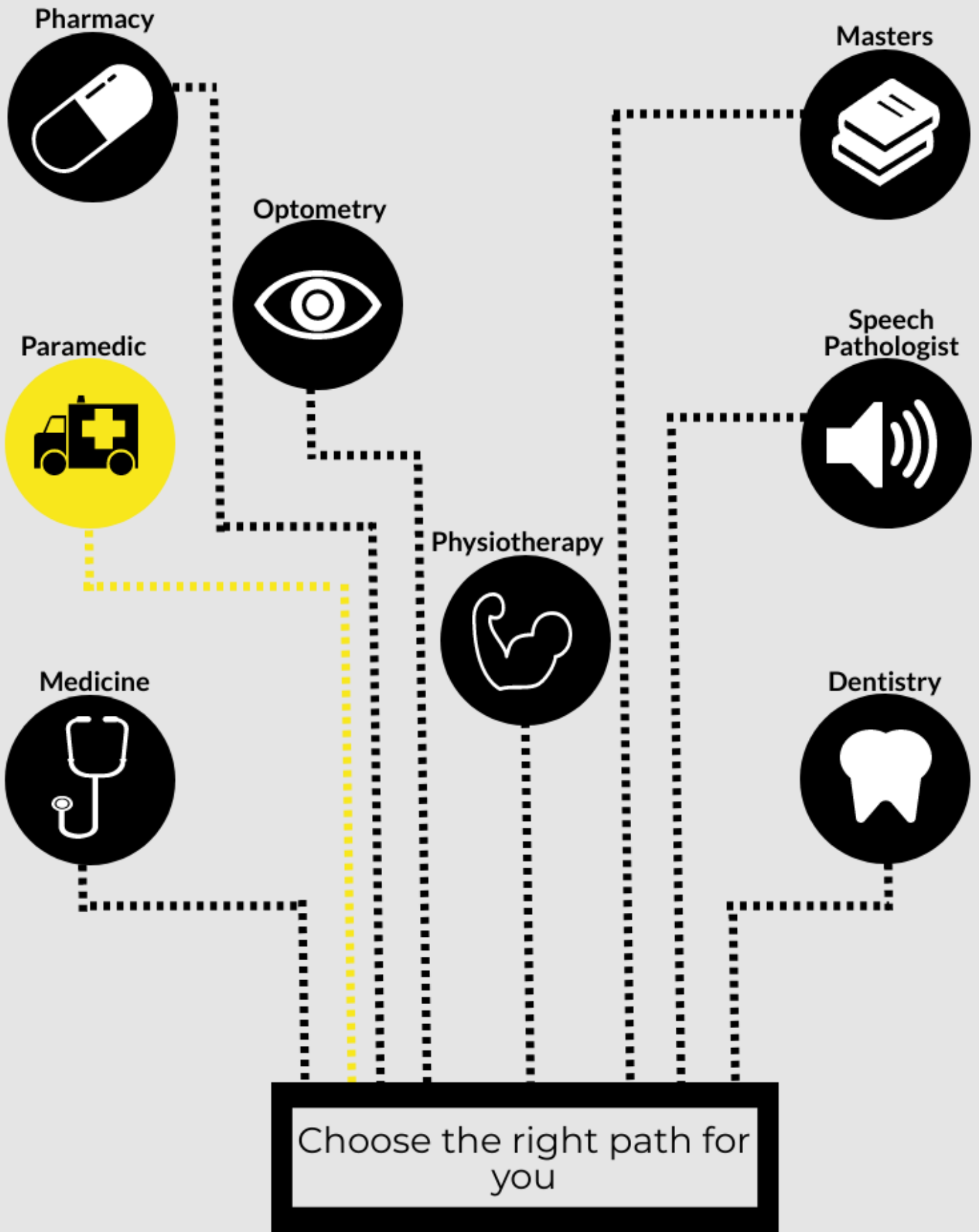
A typical day may differ from person to person, but a typical day for me would be going to class (a lot of early classes) and then studying for the rest of the evening. I try to keep things interesting by playing on intramural teams, going to the gym and getting involved in pharmacy-related clubs at school, but essentially all my free time goes towards studying if I don't have any other commitments. I feel like this was the same as when I was doing Biochemistry at McMaster so there's not really too much of a contrast in my day-to-day lifestyle from then and now.

4. What's an advice you would give to someone entering the program

Waterloo Pharmacy in particular looks for well-rounded individuals. By understanding the application and interview process, hopefully it will help you decide what to focus on to improve your future application.

During the application process, they ask you to fill out an Admission Information Form (AIF), take the CASPER test and provide a letter of reference from a pharmacist. The AIF is an outline of your extracurricular activities (the same one as they use for certain program admissions for undergraduate programs). I would recommend getting involved at school, seeking out volunteer/work opportunities during the summer and potentially enrolling in a co-op program to find ways to stand out from other applicants based on the AIF. The CASPER test is an online, situational judgement test that presents test-takers with a series of realistic, hypothetical scenarios and asks what you would do in the situation. From my experience, the most challenging aspect of the CASPER is limited time allotted to each question. There isn't really any preparation that goes into the CASPER besides doing practice questions that can be found online. For the letter of reference, the challenge is knowing a pharmacist and being comfortable asking them for a reference letter. Thus, it is important to seek out volunteer/work opportunities in pharmacy prior to the application.

The interview day can be broken down into three components: the fundamental skills assessment, a 10-minute presentation and the interview. The fundamental skills assessment is a 1.5 hour test that consists of writing, reading and math questions. The challenging part is the reading section, where they ask you to read a scientific article and answer comprehension-based questions. I recommend getting used to reading scientific articles quickly on your free time. All scientific articles have very similar formats, so understanding where to find certain information quickly will help you with the time-crunch of the fundamental skills assessment. The interview starts with the 10-min presentation about any topic that you want to talk about. After the presentation, a standard interview is conducted where 3-4 interviewers asks the applicant questions. I would recommend being comfortable speaking in a small room with a group of 3-4 interviewers and knowing how to confidently answer standard interview questions.



Paramedic



Paramedic education is one of the most growing professions in Canada. Various colleges across Canada offer paramedic education which can vary from 1 year to 4 years in length. Completing an education in paramedics allows you to be an emergency responder. With further education one can specialize to become a flight paramedic, ambulance paramedic and many other specialized roles.

Process of Application

Entry into Paramedic School can be achieved directly after graduating high school. Every province has its own regulations. In Ontario, a minimum of a C average is required for admission. Additionally, a focus on sciences such as biology and chemistry is encouraged. Other requirements to entry include, CPR and first aid training, a valid class "F" driver's license and the ability to meet minimum physical fitness standards.

There are 3 main levels of paramedics in Canada:

1

Primary Care Paramedic:

Entry level of the Paramedic profession. Responsibilities include: Basic medical care such as the administration of oxygen, administering IV, cardiac monitoring, semi-automated external defibrillation, administering medications such as aspirin, epinephrine, nitroglycerine, as well as performing trauma immobilization.

2

Advanced Care Paramedic:

Most provinces, except Quebec and New Brunswick, have Advanced Care Paramedics This advanced certification allows Paramedics to perform intubation, intravenous therapy, place external jugular IV lines, perform needle thoracotomy, obstetrical assessment, and administer pain relief.

3

Critical Care Paramedic:

This level of Paramedic education is focused on the critical and intensive care unit level care, stabilizing and transporting patients in hospitals with limited resources to programs that can provide a higher, and in many cases, life-saving, level of care. Here paramedics are able to provide care that would otherwise be administered by a physician or nurse.

Q&A

1. Why did you choose this program?

After working as a lifeguard for several years and having the opportunity to interact with paramedics through the job, I found that it was something that interested me. I liked the idea of having the opportunity to help people who needed it most. I also chose this program because I knew it would lead me to a job that has an ever changing work environment. I didn't like the thought of doing the same thing everyday.

2. What is the best and worst parts of the program?

Best aspects of the program:

- Prepares you for the job / how to get through hiring
- Instructors were very knowledgeable
- A lot of hands on experience
- Fun!

Worst aspects of the program:

- Very time consuming - I spent many 12+ hour days at school between classes, studying and practicing as well as fitting in clinicals and ride outs
- Very competitive to get into
- Need to maintain a set average in each class as well as pass all practical and physical testing in order to continue to each semester

3. What is a typical day like in the life of a paramedic student?

I would say this depends very much on which semester you're in:

1st and 2nd semester is mainly in class, with practical labs each week. In 2nd semester, in my program they added clinical experience for 12hrs once a week in a hospital or long term care setting on top of the full course load.

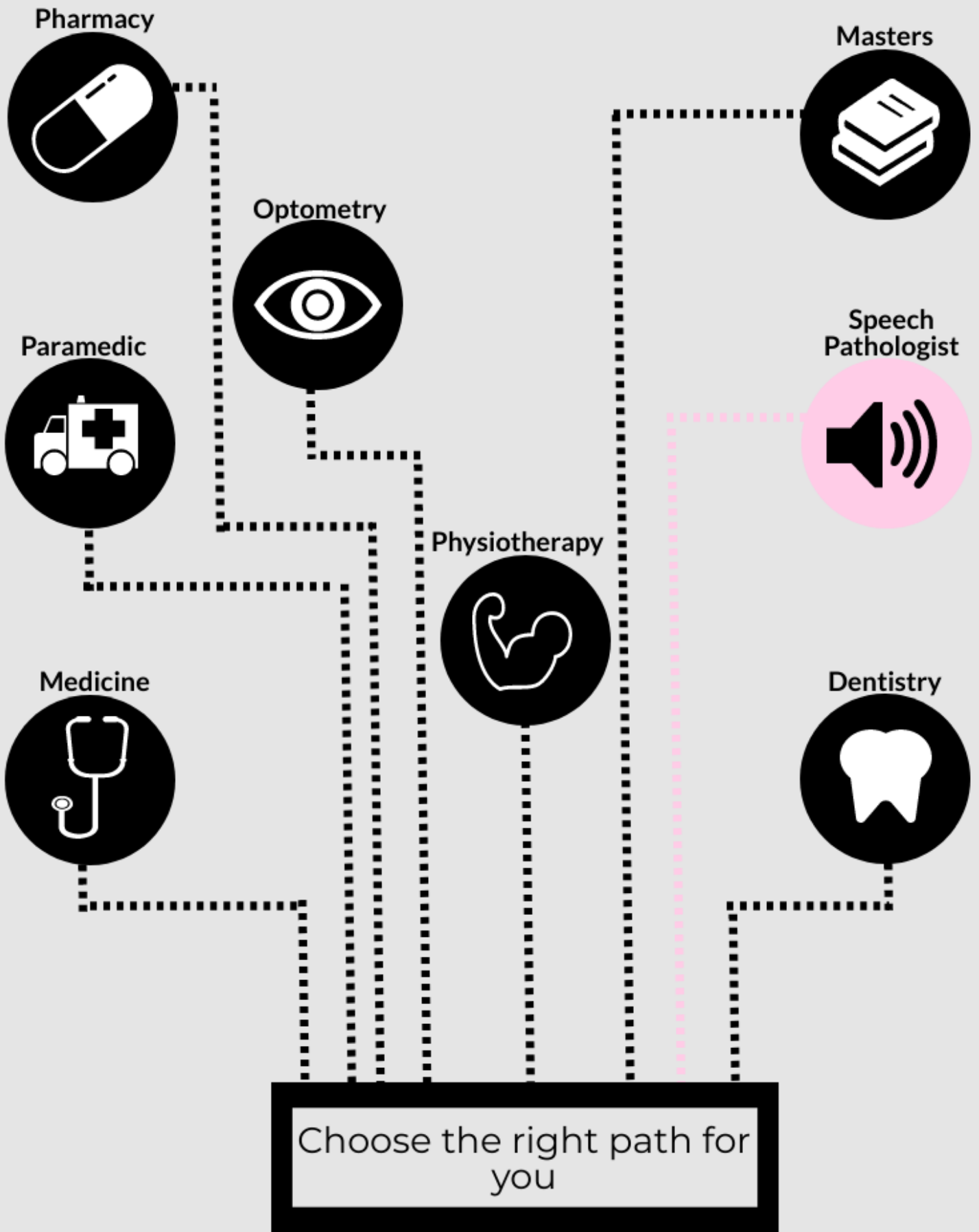
3rd semester you again have a full course load but are also going to be getting on the road experience. You ride out with a working paramedic crew on their full time schedule. That being 12 hr night and day shifts while fitting in time to study for the classes you're going through.

4th semester things started to slow down, we had 2 classes and a practical lab so we were only in school twice a week. We were also required to spend the rest of our days off doing ride outs. A total of approx. 450 hrs on the road experience is required for graduation.

I spent a lot of extra time at the school once classes were done for the day doing practical scenarios with a group of people.

4. What Advice would you give someone entering into the program?

The advice I would give someone entering into the program is be prepared to put in the effort when it comes to studying and practicing. This is a very tough program, I found it harder than my time at university. Don't give up, this program is meant to challenge you in many different ways but it will prepare you for a job in the end.



Speech Pathologist



Speech language pathology is a masters program which allows graduates to practice helping patients with communication and speech difficulties such as stuttering and difficulty swallowing. Most masters in speech language pathology are 2 years in length.

Process of Application

While there are some differences between different universities, most require 4 years of undergraduate education. Depending on the university, some schools require a minimum of a 3.0 GPA in the last 2 years of study, and others require a cumulative GPA of 3.0 for all 4 years of study. Most universities require 4-6 prerequisites in areas such as Child development, linguistics phonetics, human physiology, social science and psychology. The Interview process varies according to each university, some conduct a MMI style while others perform a panel style interview.

Below is a list of Universities in Canada which offer Speech Language Pathology programs along with links to their websites to provide more specific information regarding each program

1. McMaster University: <https://srs-mcmaster.ca/slp-program-information/>
2. Université d'Ottawa: <https://catalogue.uottawa.ca/en/graduate/master-health-sciences-speechlanguage-pathology/>
3. University of Toronto: <https://slp.utoronto.ca/>
4. Western University: <https://www.uwo.ca/fhs/csd/>

Q&A

1. Why did you choose this program?

I chose the SLP program because I wanted to work in healthcare but was not interested in the more well-known paths such as medicine, pharmacy or dentistry. Working with and helping other people is very rewarding to me. This combined with my interest in the complexities of speech and language were the primary factors that drove me towards the SLP graduate program. Also I chose the SLP program because of my interest in languages as well as my interest in a field of healthcare where I can work towards a goal with a client. I have always been drawn to helping people directly and communication is in my opinion one of the most valuable and essential needs we have as human beings.

2. What is the best/ worst part of your program?

The best part of our program is the intimate classroom setting and hands on learning experience. There are also many opportunities to learn from guest lectures in a wide array of areas within our profession. We consistently have practicing SLP's come in and do discussion panels so that support within the profession is very special considering we are still relatively small as a field in healthcare. Another great thing is the amount of clinical experience we get before graduating. These experiences help consolidate our knowledge and make us feel more competent as students. The worst part is probably how there is a greater student to professor ratio, which makes learning in a classroom setting a bit more challenging since the instructor cannot always give direct feedback on your performance. But it can be argued that clinical placement fills in those gaps. Also there are a lot of group projects which can be difficult to manage and coordinate, especially when some students commute.

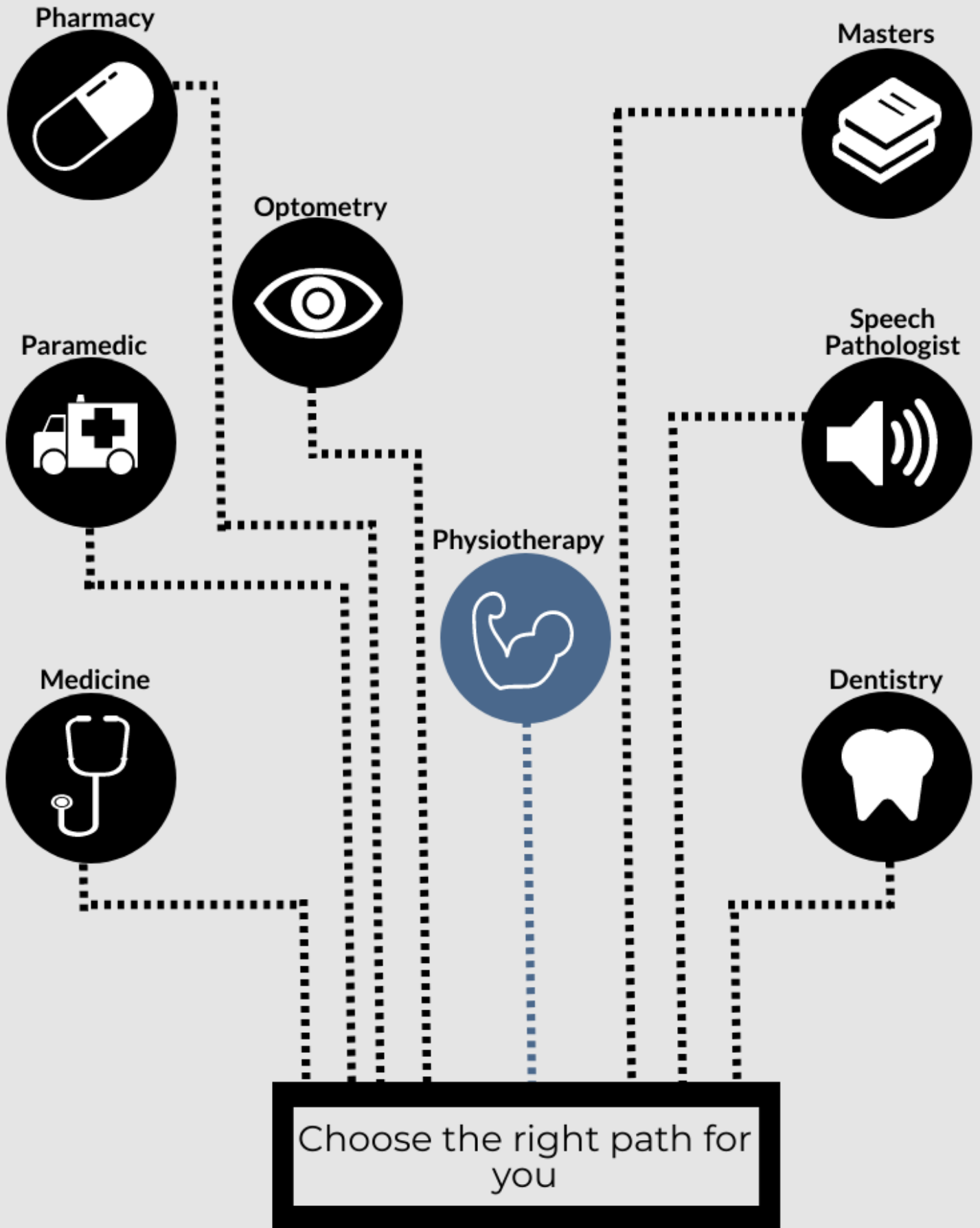
3. What is a typical day like in the life of a Speech Language Pathology student?

We typically have all of our classes together. Our schedule is quite consistent, running about 9-3pm with an hour lunch. After class is over we will typically be meeting with our group for an upcoming assignment or heading to a lab to practice assessment and treatment. There are readings and tests to study for, similar to undergrad and the workload is manageable. Since the program is smaller than most undergrad programs, students get more of a say in their learning and testing experience which is refreshing. What we learn in class is almost always directly applicable to the work we will be doing in the field and so it is easy to remain focused and motivated.

4. What advice would you give to a student applying to SLP?

I would advise future students to get volunteer experience in a wide array of SLP settings because it really helps give you some background knowledge on different concepts you will later learn in class. Not to mention this looks great on your application. Overall, I'd say to truly reflect on your time spent shadowing an SLP to assess if the profession is right for you.

I would also advise applicants to SLP to remember the value of a unique application. Just because you don't have work, research and volunteering experience that is directly related to SLP does not mean it is less valuable than someone else's credentials and it does not mean you have a lesser chance of getting in. As long as the experiences you've had have taught you life skills that apply to a profession in therapy, then that is of most value. There is no such thing as the perfect applicant, because every therapist is so different and so every applicant should be as well. This profession values different skill sets and academic backgrounds considering it spans so many different specialities, populations and work settings



Physiotherapy

The physiotherapy program in Canada is a two year professional Master's program. Once they complete their training, graduates must complete a Physiotherapy competency Examination (PCE) which is a requirement in most provinces. The physiotherapy program allows graduates to be practicing professionals in helping patients gain and restore their mobility, function, and well-being.



Process of Application

Most universities require an undergraduate degree before applying. Most schools require an average GPA of a B and usually look at the top two years of study. However, the requirements to apply are specific to each school and may change. Please see the list of 9 english universities in Canada to view their detailed application process.

Below is a list of Universities in Canada which offer Physiotherapy programs along with links to their websites to provide more specific information regarding each program

1. University of Victoria:
<https://www.uvic.ca/services/advising/choose-plan/program-outlines/pt.php>
2. Queen's University:<https://rehab.queensu.ca/academic-programs/mscpt>
3. Dalhousie University :<https://www.dal.ca/faculty/health/school-of-physiotherapy/Admissions.html>
4. University of Saskatchewan: https://members.physio-pedia.com/learn/?gclid=CjwKCAjwguzzBRBiEiwAgU0FT9zb2kMMZAAkXTMhAljfEStCY64Qyh5_oMfQ0TuQTAGn6LkQ5dRBNxoCXaUQAvD_BwE
5. Western University:
<https://www.uwo.ca/fhs/pt/programs/mpt/admission.html>
6. University of Alberta:<https://www.ualberta.ca/physical-therapy>.
7. McMaster University: <https://srs-mcmaster.ca/pt-program-information/>
8. University of British Columbia: <https://physicaltherapy.med.ubc.ca/>
9. University of Toronto: <https://www.physicaltherapy.utoronto.ca/>

Q&A

1. Why did you choose your program?

I chose the McMaster MSc. Physiotherapy program because I knew that it would challenge me. This program values problem-based learning which can be difficult; however, I knew that it would make me a better problem-solver in the long run, which is important when trying to diagnose various conditions and when creating treatment plans. I also loved the incorporation of group work because in acute care and rehabilitation settings, collaboration between Physicians, Nurses, Occupational Therapists, and Physiotherapists is essential to optimize your patient's care. Lastly, McMaster is known as a research-based institution which was important to me because I want to be educated in using the most effective types of treatment so that I have the best opportunity to improve the quality and quantity of life of my future patients

2. What is the best/worst part of your program?

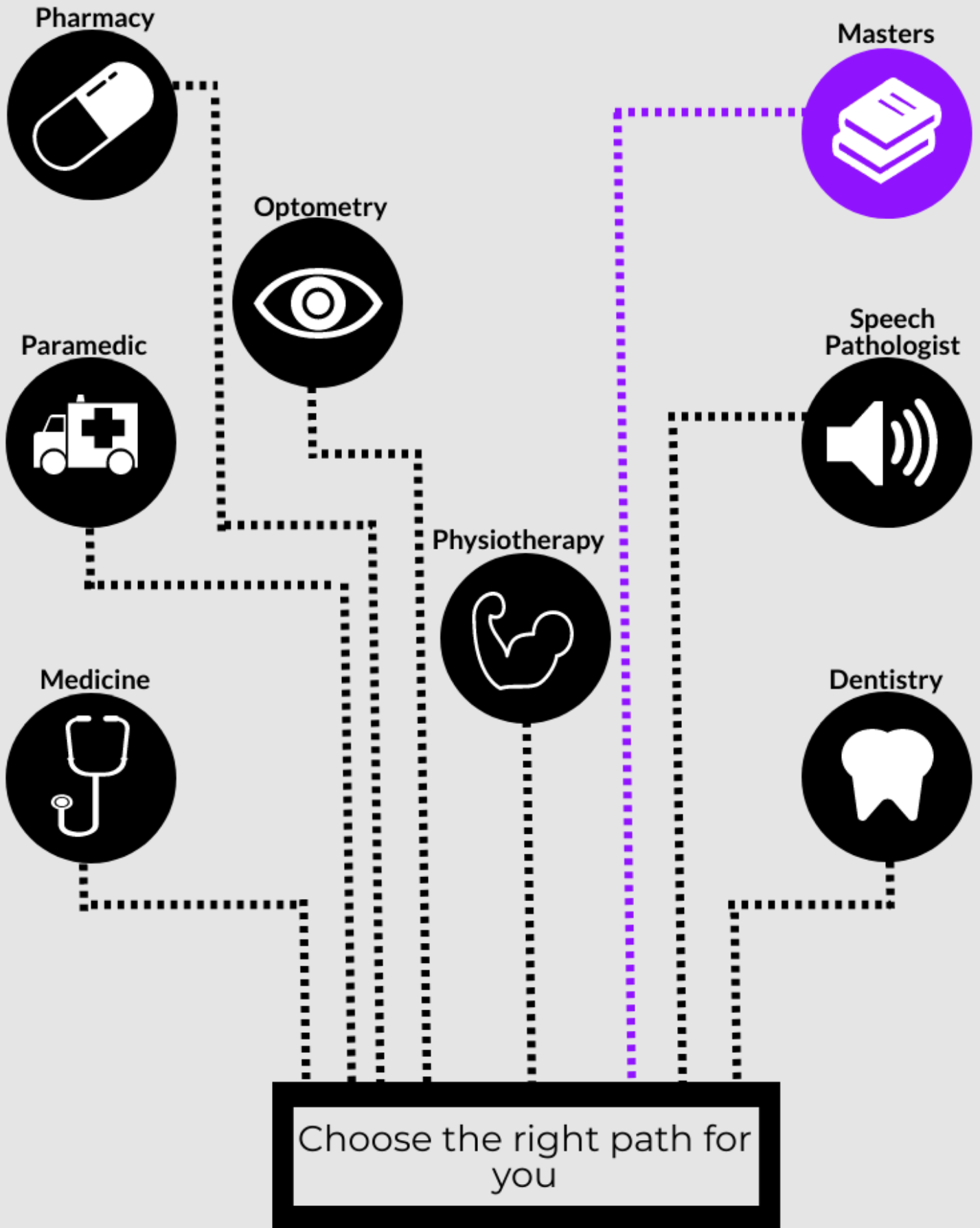
I would say that the best thing about the McMaster MSc. Physiotherapy program are the professors. They are all extremely successful in the world of physiotherapy, treat you as their equals, and genuinely want you to succeed. They truly go the extra mile to ensure that you have all of the resources you need to do well and enjoy your experience as a PT student. I have nothing bad to say about the program! It is amazing in every realm.

3. What is a typical day in the life of a PT student?

Our days are usually about 7 hours long and consist of classes such as Clinical Lab (2/week), Research and Evidence Based Learning (1/week), Professional Practice (1/week), Anatomy and Physiology (1 lecture and 1 lab/week, and Problem-Based Tutorials (2/week). Every other Wednesday we have a day off or "PPENDERS" which is a quiz on the Pathophysiology, Prognosis, Epidemiology, Natural History, Differential Diagnosis, Etiology, Risk Factors, and Signs/Symptoms of a set of diseases or conditions.

4. What advice can you give to someone who is applying to PT?

I would definitely focus on your interviewing skills. As long as you have the cut-off GPA then you will be considered for the interview which is more highly weighted than your GPA. The interview is an opportunity for you to show the evaluators who you are and why you are a great candidate for the program. It is intimidating at first but once you find your groove then the interview becomes a great experience. Smile, have fun, and be yourself!



Masters in Medical Science

Masters in Medical sciences is usually a two year intensive research program. It's usually engineered towards undergraduate students with honours degrees in Biochemistry, Biology, Medicine, Microbiology, Molecular Biology, Health Sciences, Pharmacology and Physiology, Arts and Science, Integrated Sciences, Chemistry, Chemical Biology, Life Sciences as well as Kinesiology. To successfully complete the program, students must take 2 graduate level courses and maintain an average of a B- in both as well as present and defend a thesis regarding their research.

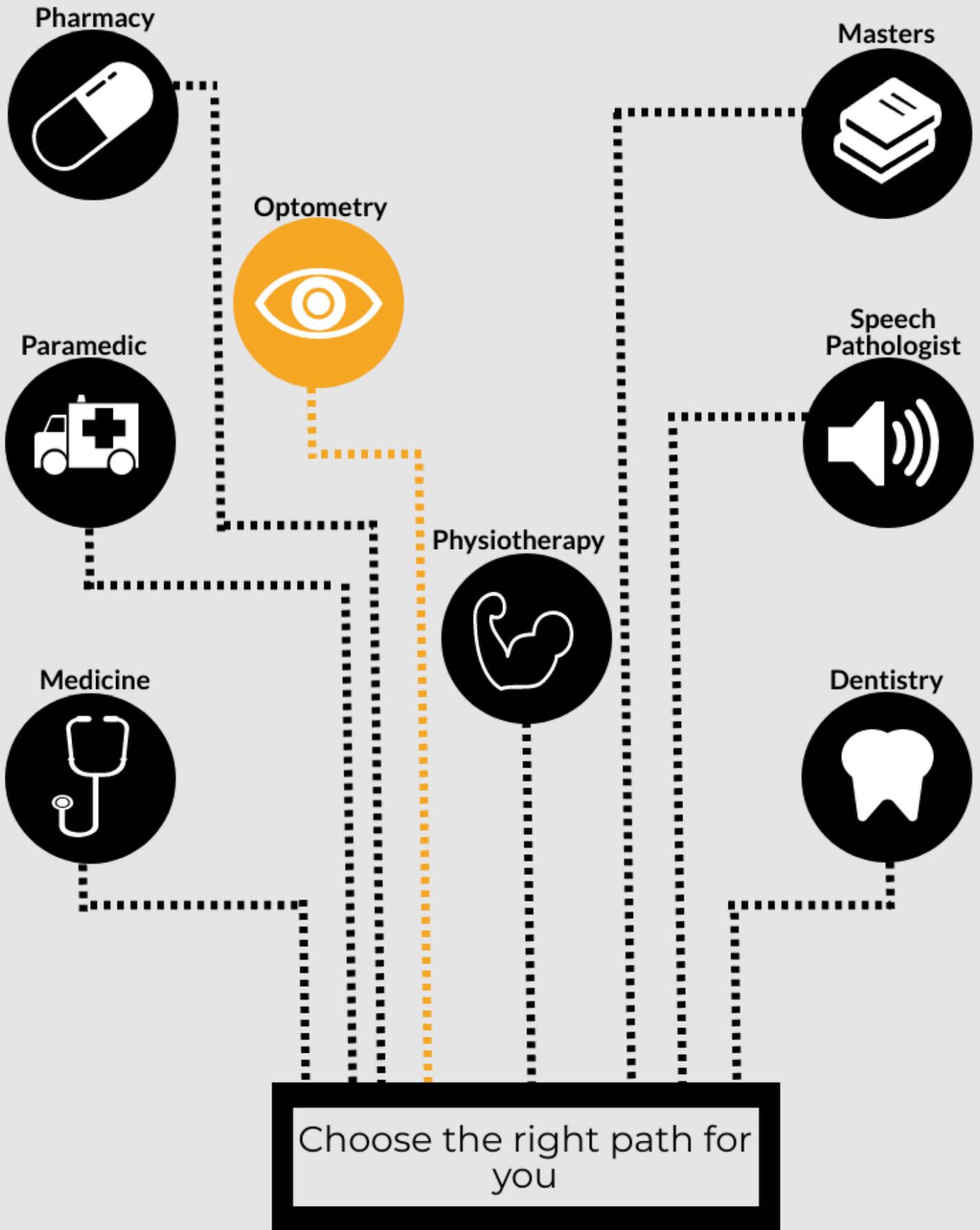


Process of Application

Students must obtain an honours degree (at least 4 years of undergraduate courses). The required GPA for admission is a B+ in 30 units of the student's undergraduate degree. Although depending on the pool of applicant GPA average may be higher. Applications usually open in December and close early June.

The Master program is offered at multiple schools across Canada. Please see the following list for specific admission details:

1. McMaster University:
https://fhs.mcmaster.ca/medsci/how_to_apply.html
2. University of Toronto:
<https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/programs/medical-science/>
3. Queens University: <https://www.queensu.ca/sgs/programs-degrees/medical-sciences>
4. University of Alberta:
<https://www.ualberta.ca/medicine/programs/graduatestudies/msgp>
5. University of Calgary: <https://grad.ucalgary.ca/future-students/explore-programs/medical-science-msc-thesis>



Optometry

The doctorate of optometry is a 4-year professional school program offered at 2 universities in Canada. It allows students to be certified optometrists to work in their own or existing practise as licensed eye doctors.



Process of Application

Optometry schools require a minimum of three years of undergraduate education in order to be considered for application. In terms of academic requirements, most schools in the United States and Canada require the applicant to write the Optometry Admissions Test (OAT) for consideration. There are different prerequisite course requirements depending on the school, which can include ethics, microbiology, anatomy and more. Students must have at least 75% average at the time of application but averages of admitted students typically range from 79-92%. Some schools, including Waterloo, require the completion of the CASPer test.

1. University of Waterloo: <https://uwaterloo.ca/optometry-vision-science/future-optometry-students/admission-requirements>

2. University of Montreal: <http://www.opto.umontreal.ca>

Q&A

Amanda Atallah
Practising Optometrist
Nova Southeastern University Alumni
Undergraduate Program: Western Biochemistry
and Cell Biology



1. Why did you choose this program?

Similar to many students in the science field, I wanted to choose a career where I was making a difference in people's lives. As I began shadowing and volunteering in different fields, the main thing that attracted me to optometry was how vital the gift of sight is to everyday life. I felt how strongly people wanted to preserve their vision, and felt I can make a huge difference with Optometry.

2. What is the best/worst part of the program?

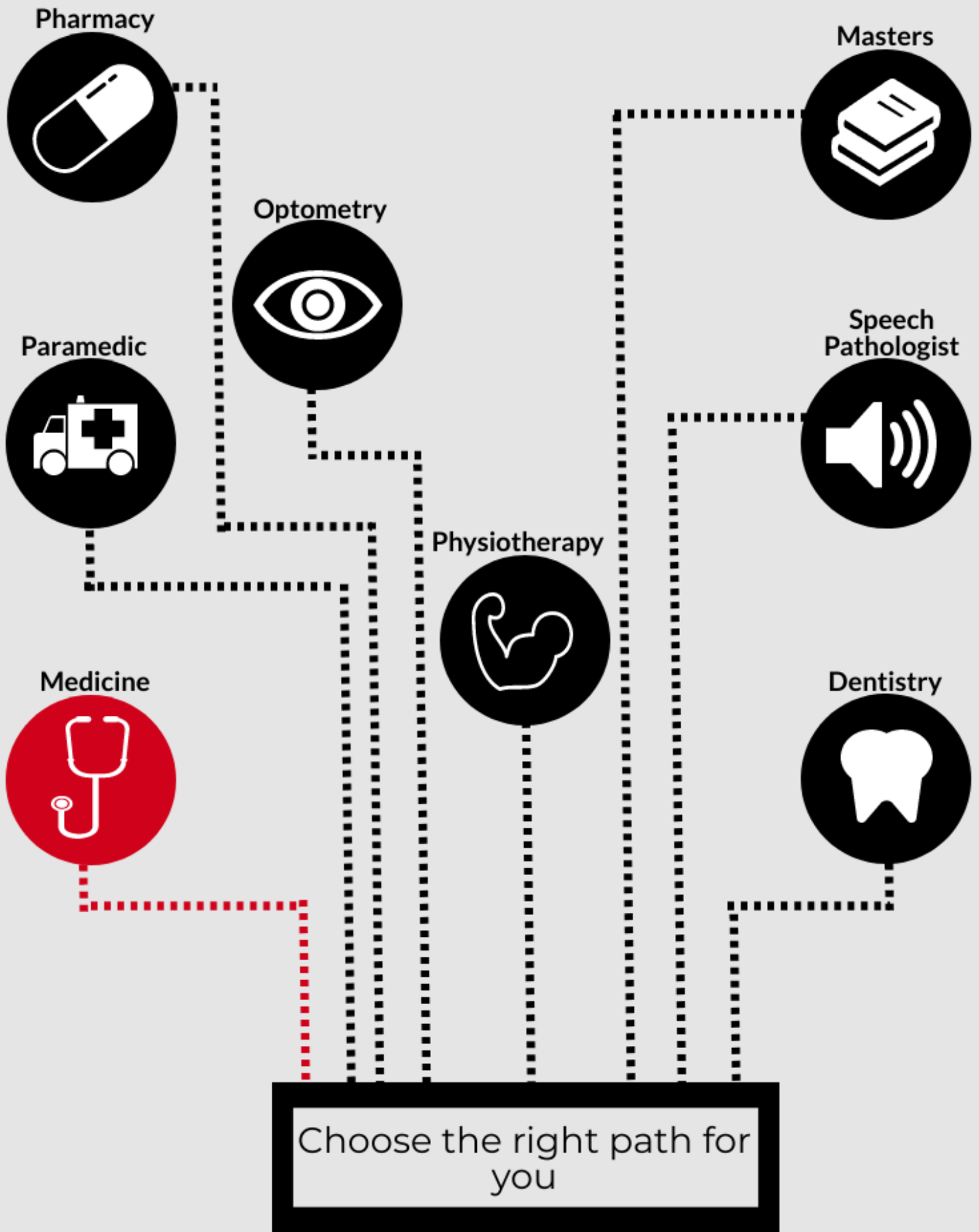
I loved that right at the beginning of the program we were learning clinical skills, I felt like I was moving towards my goal very quickly, and after completing four years of school for my undergraduate degree, it was nice to see the end goal in sight. The worst part, I would say, is staying motivated through another four years of school. I saw a lot of friends getting engaged, married, working and travelling but my personal life and travel goals were all on hold. However, it all gets better after graduation!

3. What is a typical day like in the life of an optometry student?

I wish I could say it is very exciting, but truthfully most days are around 6 to 8 hours of class/lab, especially in your first two years, followed by studying and practicing clinical skills. However, there were rarely any exams on weekends so at least you had some downtime to hang out with friends, relax, or go to the gym. After you get to third year more days include clinic, where you spend the day in the clinic seeing patients. That's when it really does get exciting because you are doing the testing and coming up with the diagnosis and treatment. You will have a supervisor to discuss any uncertainties with and to go over your assessment and plan of the patients.

4. What advice would you give to students applying to Optometry?

Optometry school will be different from undergraduate classes, due to class sizes being smaller as well as an increased number of courses per semester (usually around 8-10 courses a semester). However, everyone is in the same boat and it definitely does help to surround yourself with people in your class to go over material and practice skills together. Optometry school will fly by, make sure to enjoy the journey because it is preparing you for a wonderful, life changing career ahead! Especially on those days when you are really exhausted, just remember why you want to graduate as an eye doctor and you will be set for a wonderful beginning to your career life.



Medicine



Ontario Medical Schools:
Western, Queens, University of Ottawa,
University of Toronto, McMaster,
Northern Ontario School of Medicine
<https://www.ouac.on.ca/guide/omsas-guide/>

In Canada, a medical school is a faculty or school of a university that trains future medical doctors and usually offers a three- to five-year Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) or Doctor of Medicine and Master of Surgery (M.D., C.M.) degree. Although presently students enter medicine having previously earned another degree, the M.D. is technically considered an undergraduate degree in Canada. After completing the medical degree, students will have to complete a residency of varied length depending on the specialized area of practise.

Process of Application

Medical schools require a minimum of three years of undergraduate education in order to be considered for application, with the exception of some schools requiring 4 years. In terms of academic requirements, most schools in the United States and Canada require the applicant to write the Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) for consideration. There are different prerequisite course requirements depending on the school, which can include humanities, social sciences, chemistry, statistics, biology and more. The requirements vary depending on the school, with some schools requiring supplemental essays, the CASPer test or other additional documents. Applications for Ontario medical schools are due on October 1 and submitted through OMSAS. Invitations for interviews are typically released in January but this is dependent on the school. Additionally, there are different interview styles used by medical schools such as multiple mini interview (MMI), panel and modified personal interview (MPI).

Q&A

Christopher McChesney
First Year Medicine
University of Toronto
Undergraduate Program: McMaster Chemical
Biology Co-op

1. Why did you choose this program?

Going into medicine was not something I took lightly. It took hard thought and reflection over whether this was something I could dedicate my entire life to. It could not just be about having good grades and wanting to help people. There are plenty of ways to do that without dedicating the majority of your prime years to intense study and immense pressure. In the end, for me, it was the ability to blend a variety of roles and passions that lead me to medicine. I could still work in research which was something I was passionate about while at the same time still impacting people directly in the role of a physician. It also came with the position in society to enact real change in communities through a variety of roles like health policy advocacy and patient education. No matter which role I wanted to play in medicine it was reassuring to know I could always use my knowledge and training to have a direct impact on people's lives even in times where other endeavors may not seem so impactful.

2. What is the best/worst part of your program?

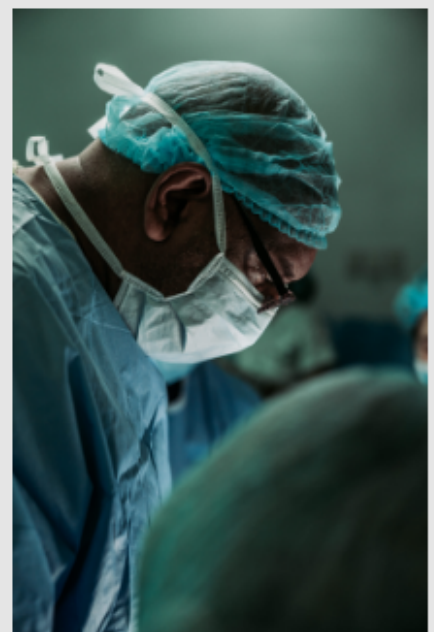
The best part of my program is the various opportunities to get involved clinically even early on allowing you to match practical experience with what you are learning in the classroom. The worst part is having to prioritize and cut back on some activities and social outings that you used to love.

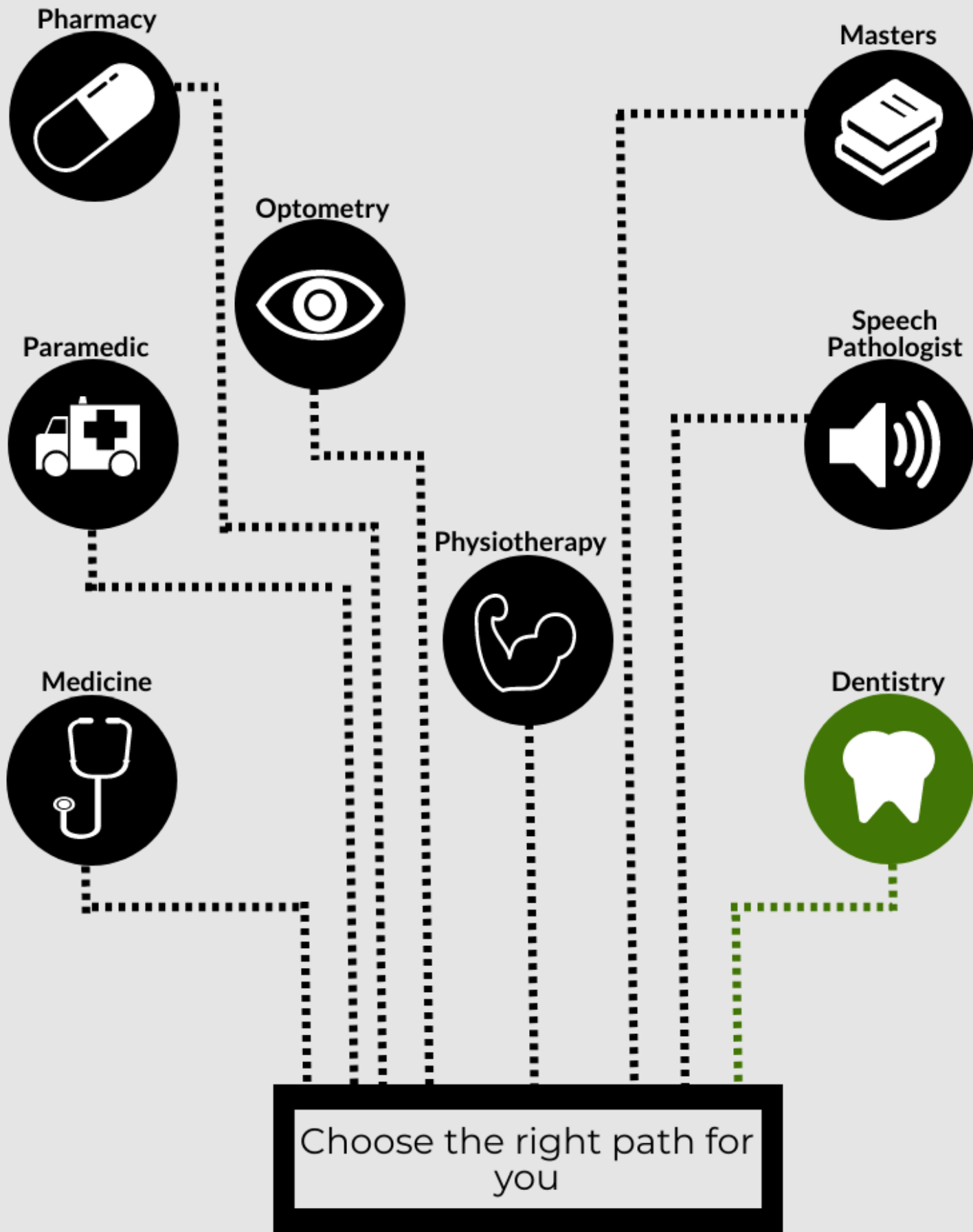
3. What is a typical day like in the life of a medicine student?

Every day is a bit different and many days in the schedule are often flexible in Toronto. Typically, there would be a few hours of some sort of class and then smaller group activities. There are also self-study days where you are expected to do self-learning modules and can also work on extracurriculars or shadow.

4. What advice would you give to students applying to medicine?

Do not get caught up in reading the forums, comparing to others, or thinking about how you did not take advantage of every one of the literal thousands of resources available to assist you. Put in your best effort and put forward your best self. Also, do not be afraid to take some time to reflect on why you are doing this. It goes without saying that medicine is a huge commitment and you want to know that there will be no regrets so you can put everything you have into this.





Dentistry

The dentistry program is a four year program after which students will receive a doctor of dental surgery (DDS). After the completion of licensing exams, the student can then be considered a dentist.



Process of Application

In order to be considered for admissions, students must complete the dentistry aptitude test (DAT). There are various prerequisites required such as microbiology, biochemistry, anatomy and social sciences courses. Typically, students require a GPA of 3.85 to be considered for an interview. There may also be additional requirements such as the CASPer test and supplemental essays.

Canadian Dentistry Programs:

University of Toronto: <https://www.dentistry.utoronto.ca/how-to-apply>
Western: <https://www.schulich.uwo.ca/dentistry/>

Q&A

Emily Nguyen
First Year Dentistry
University of Toronto
Undergrad: McMaster Biochemistry

1. Why did you choose this program?

I've always been interested in dentistry from a young age after getting braces. After shadowing a dentist one summer, I liked the routine of the job and also that you could do new things everyday with your patients. I chose UofT because of its location and reputation for being the top dental schools in Canada and internationally. I also had a friend attending UofT and hearing her experience at the school comforted me in choosing this as a right program for me.

2. What is the best/worst part of your program?

The best part about my program is how quickly we get accustomed to practicing clinical dentistry. Within the first months of school, we're already in clinics practicing using instruments on our lab partners which was very exciting. I love that we get to rotate between clinics and specialty departments such as Oral Surgery because you get to see if these fields spark your interest. It also is a great chance for you to talk with upper year students and have them share their knowledge and tips with you for the future! Our restorative class is also a fun class that has its highs and lows. But overall, I would say restorative is one of my favourite parts of dental school so far because it's about learning a whole new set of skills and trying to improve them day by day. The worst part of my program is that we have super long hours of class every day, which can feel very draining and tiring some days. Especially when you're not used to it coming from undergrad where I had only one class a day sometimes and a day off in the week. It takes some getting used to, but it's nice because you're doing it with the same group of people in your class every day.

3. What is a typical day like in the life of a dentistry student?

A typical day in the life of a first-year dental student at UofT would be class from 8 or 9am to 5pm, Monday through Friday. These classes include gross anatomy, restorative, biomaterials, preventative dentistry, histology, oral biology, public health, etc. In one semester, we have about 8 courses with labs as well. These days also include spending a lot of time in labs and clinics where you get to assist upper years in their appointments. You spend the whole day with the same small group of 96 students in your class (so you better like them!!) Some days, you might want to stay for extra optional restorative sessions to practice your hand motor skills more, which can run from 5-9pm. After class ends at 5pm though, you're basically free to do whatever you want! Some days, this means hanging out downtown with your friends. On busy weeks, it's studying at the library until late for the test the next day.

4. What advice would you give to students applying to Dentistry?

I would definitely say shadow a dentist first for a summer before you apply to see if you like what the job entails. This means looking at the day-to-day work schedule, the environment of the office, the interactions between the employees, etc. If after you've done this and you want to apply to Dentistry, then the next step is to do well on your DAT! I'd recommend studying months in advance for your DAT so you don't stress yourself out last minute. I personally used the online resource called DAT bootcamp to study for my DAT and it was really helpful, especially for the PAT section. As for advice in the interview, I practiced looking at different ethical scenarios that were commonly asked in past years for dentistry/medicine/pharmacy programs. I timed myself when answering because you'll only be allotted a certain amount of time per question. But besides from all of this nitty-gritty stuff, big points you want to keep in mind for an interview is that the interviewers are trying to understand what type of person you are. Try your best to be yourself, be confident and show your most memorable attributes! This could even start with wearing something bold, but also professional, on your interview day. Even if your grades aren't the best, the interview is definitely a chance for you to shine and get accepted so don't neglect it!

Conclusion

We hope you enjoyed exploring the different paths and that we provided a bit of insight into how to pursue your dream profession. Wherever you go, we know that you will succeed! Keep working hard, you're almost there!

Lastly, we would like to highlight the fact that Lina Yacoub & Stephanie Scott [VP-Academic 2019-2020] did the majority of the work of this guide and it truly could not have been completed without them.

We are glad that we were able to add the finishing touches and to have completed a guide we hope will be very useful.

Sincerely,
Anna Katyukhina & Neeloufar Grami [VP-Academic 2020-2021]