

My GPA is lower than it should be. What are my options?

If you have *not applied yet*, but *will apply in the future*...

1. **There is still time.** First, use the **GPA Estimator** on myUCF (under Academic Resources) to find out how much you will be able to increase your GPA by the time you apply. However, keep in mind that the more credit hours you have, the more time/credits needed to raise your GPA. In other words, your GPA will increase more slowly with the more credits you complete. **Ask yourself: Is this realistic and worth the increased time, money/debt, risk, etc.?**
2. **Ask for help.** Take advantage of ALL the resources offered at UCF.
 - a. **Professors' office hours:** Your professor is required to offer office hours outside of class time. Use this time to ask them to help you with any material you are struggling with. This is a great opportunity to get to know your professors well enough to ask them for a letter of evaluation when the time comes too.
 - b. **Teaching Assistants (TAs):** TAs have most likely taken the same class you are in now and have done well. Talk to them and use their knowledge to your advantage.
 - c. **Student Academic Resource Center (SARC):** SARC provides **Tutoring** for many subjects, especially math and science-related courses. Their tutors are available Monday through Friday at varying times, so go to the SARC website for more details. Also offered through SARC are **Supplemental Instruction (SI)** sessions which are study sessions led by previous students who took the same course as you and received an "A." These sessions vary, just like tutoring, and are listed on the SARC website. If you find yourself struggling with more general issues (test-taking strategies, study skills, time-management, etc.), SARC also offers **Learning Skills Consultations**. These sessions are one-on-one and you will create a personalized plan to help you develop and revise your study skills. For more information regarding SARC's services, please visit: sarc.sdes.ucf.edu/services.
3. **Find a balance; maybe add a non-science minor or double major.** Often, majoring in a science (ex. Biomedical Sciences, Biology, Chemistry, etc.) can become overwhelming for students since the majority of courses will be sciences or maths. If you struggle with this type of course load, you can balance the science courses by adding a minor, a double major, or even switching majors. There are over 100 majors and minors to choose from at UCF. All majors and minors are in the UCF Undergraduate Catalog (<http://catalog.ucf.edu/>).
4. **Remember, if you need to significantly raise your GPA...**

B's will anchor you down; earn A's so you don't frown!



If you *already applied*, but *were rejected*...

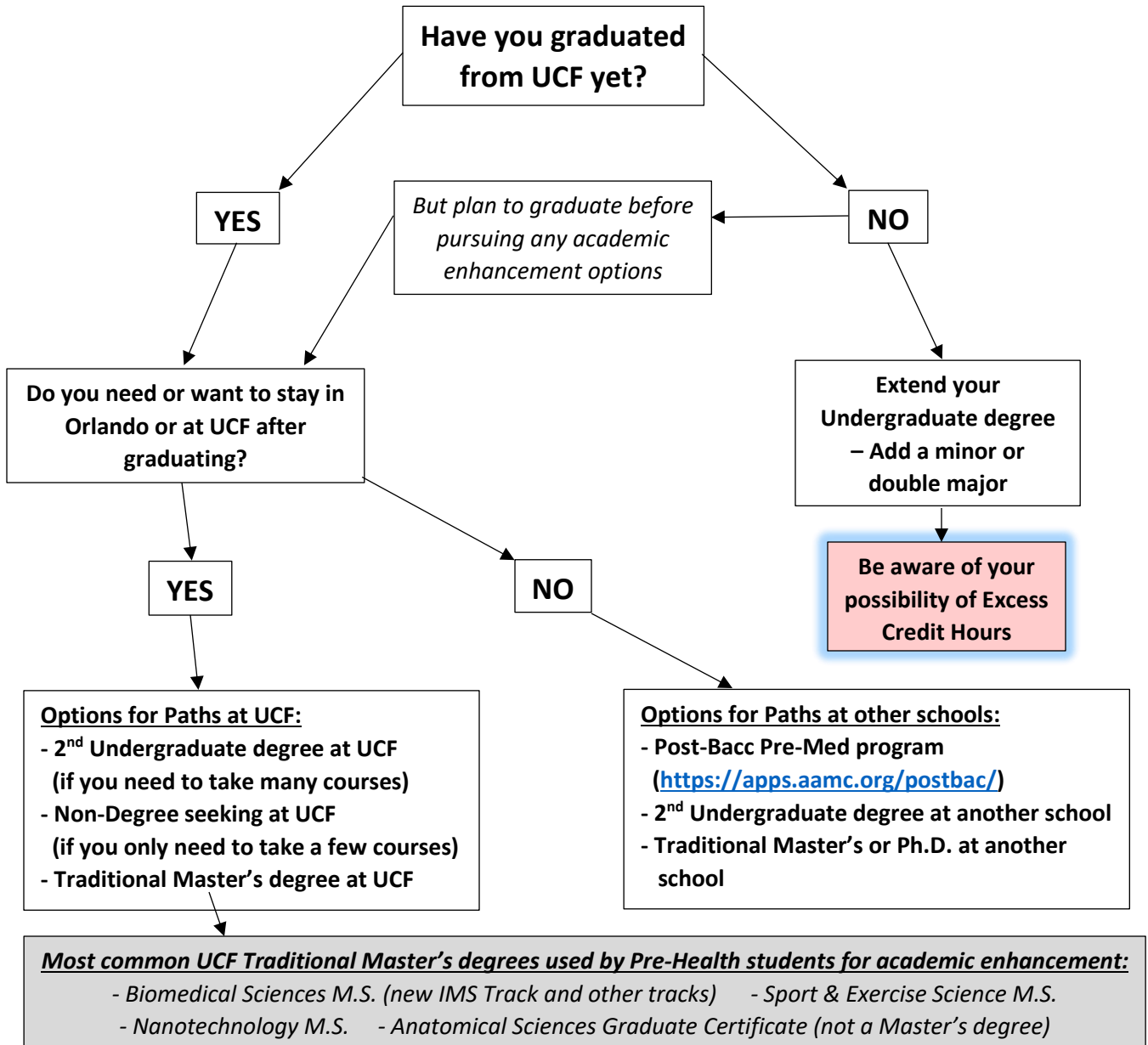
- RE-APPLY:** You may choose to re-apply during the following or a subsequent admission cycle. However, if you choose to do this, please keep in mind the schools will be looking for an **improved application**, meaning increased GPA, increased admission test score (i.e., MCAT, DAT, GRE, etc.), and enhanced extracurricular activities. This increase may not happen right away, especially for your GPA if you have a large number of credit hours. If you choose to re-apply, be prepared to work hard and be patient; it may take you more than one admission cycle to earn a more competitive GPA and application.
- *RE-EDUCATE and/or Parallel Plan:** If you have **already graduated**, you have a few options to continue improving your GPA.
 - Option #1:** Apply for a **Traditional Master's or Ph.D. degree** at UCF or another institution. These programs could be science-related to increase your science GPA, or could be a degree program you would enjoy and turn into a career if your original career plan is unattainable.
 - Option #2:** RE-ADMIT to UCF as a **2nd undergraduate degree-seeking or non-degree seeking student**. For a **2nd undergraduate degree**, you would apply through the UCF Registrar's Office (if your 1st degree is from UCF) or UCF Undergraduate Admissions (if your 1st degree is from another school). You would declare a different major than your 1st undergraduate degree and complete courses within the new major.

As a **non-degree seeking** student, you will apply through UCF College of Graduate Studies (http://www.admissions.graduate.ucf.edu/nondegree_applicants/). With this option, you would typically only need to take a few classes. If you only need to increase your GPA slightly or retake a few classes, then non-degree seeking would be the better option, but if you need to take a large number of courses or significantly increase your GPA, we recommend the 2nd undergraduate degree-seeking option.
 - Option #3: Post-baccalaureate (post-bacc) pre-medical program**, sometimes called a **Special Master's Program (SMP)**. You can find a list of post-bacc pre-med programs through the Association of American Medical College's website: <https://services.aamc.org/postbac/>. UCF does not have a post-bacc pre-med program. There are typically two options with post-bacc pre-med programs: career-changer or academic enhancer. If you *have not* taken many of the prerequisite courses for your health professional school, then you'd choose the career-changer option. If you *have* taken the prerequisites and you need to increase your GPA, the academic enhancer would be better and may result in receiving a Master's degree. These programs are specifically geared more towards getting into a health professional school rather than a traditional Master's degree after your undergraduate degree.

**Please contact a PHPL Advisor to discuss if these options are right for you.*
- RE-ROUTE:** This may be the time to start thinking about **alternate career plans**. Although your original plan might be your ideal career, it also may not be realistic for you due to your lack of competitiveness for admission. If you would like to stay within the medical field, the Explore Health Careers website (<http://explorehealthcareers.org>) lists several additional medical careers, including information on the path to take to achieve this alternate career. You can contact UCF's Career Services for help with finding other careers of interest/fit for you too.

Academic Enhancement Decision-Making Selection Chart

This chart can guide you in deciding which path is best for you to enhance your GPA in order to become a more competitive applicant to health professional schools.



Other Considerations:

Time & Money: More Courses = More Time = More Money/Debt

Risk: There is no guarantee you will get accepted after completing your academic enhancement path

See Reverse Side for **PROS** and **CONS** of each path

Having a difficult time deciding which path to take to raise your GPA?

Review some **PROS** and **CONS** of each option:

Option	PROS	CONS
Extending your 1st Undergrad Degree (Adding a Minor or a Double Major)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -You will have the ability to balance your science-heavy course load. -You can explore alternate career plans through another major or minor. -Medicine is starting to lean towards the Social Sciences, as evidenced by the new Social Sciences section on the MCAT. If you're Pre-Med, it might be wise to take courses within this subject, or declare a minor or major. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Excess credit hours could inhibit your ability to finance more classes. For more information on this policy, please visit: http://registrar.ucf.edu/excess-hours -It may take longer to graduate, which could push back your application date and start date to your desired health professional school.
2nd Undergrad Degree- Seeking (After Graduating with your 1st Degree)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -You can experience further science courses and raise your GPA before moving onto your health professional program. -Can complete an entire second degree or just enough courses to raise your GPA. -You will not need to seek overrides for courses as your prior transcript will be on record. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Excess credit hours could inhibit your ability to finance more classes. For more information on this policy, please visit: http://registrar.ucf.edu/excess-hours -You would need to re-apply to UCF and incur the application fee.
Non-Degree Seeking (After Graduating with your 1st Degree)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Choosing this route would mean that you only need to complete a few additional courses and/or enhance your GPA slightly. -Could be inexpensive as you would only be taking a few classes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -There is NO financial aid offered for this option. -Your time to register for courses will be after Freshman, so the classes you need could already be full by the time you can register. -Oftentimes, you will have to contact the college or department offering your desired courses to seek an override to get enrolled.
Traditional Master's or Ph.D. Degree (Typically with a strong science curriculum)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -UCF offers Master's and Ph.D. programs. -Graduate programs will help you: 1) start a new graduate program GPA, 2) maybe add research experience through a thesis or dissertation, and 3) diversify your learning experiences. -The smaller class sizes within these programs will allow you to build rapport with faculty members. -Graduate programs can sometimes be paid for and may offer opportunities to teach at the collegiate level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Many programs require a minimum GPA just to apply, typically a 3.0. To be competitive, you may need a higher GPA. -Graduate program GPA does not raise your undergraduate GPA; it just adds a new graduate GPA. -Will delay your application to health professional school by up to a few years. -If you need financial aid for a graduate program, it will add more debt before even beginning health professional school.
Post-Bacc Pre-Med Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Specific programs created for academic enhancement for health professional schools. -Some Post-Bacc programs use the same classes, faculty, and lectures in the Post-Bacc programs that they use for medical school. -Some Post-Bacc programs include admission test prep components or extracurricular enhancement components. -A few Post-Bacc programs have linkage agreements to health professional schools, meaning that IF you perform at a certain level or above, you will gain acceptance to that linked health professional school after completing the Post-Bacc program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -UCF does not offer Post-Bacc Pre-Med programs. -Many programs require a minimum GPA just to apply, typically a 3.0. To be competitive, you may need a higher GPA. -Post-Bacc program GPA does not raise your undergraduate GPA; it just adds a new post-bacc or graduate GPA. -If you need financial aid for a post-bacc program, it will add more debt before even beginning health professional school. -“Last bullet in the chamber” – if you don't gain admission to a health professional school after completing a Post-Bacc program, you have exhausted your academic enhancement options.