XAVIER Ochsner College of Medicine

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Historic milestone: America's next historically Black medical school earns preliminary accreditation

Xavier Ochsner College of Medicine, the only HBCU college of medicine in the Gulf South, will start recruiting inaugural class of 2027

NEW ORLEANS – A pioneering chapter in medical education begins today for the Xavier Ochsner College of Medicine, which has received preliminary accreditation from the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME), the accrediting body for U.S. programs granting medical doctorate degrees. With this milestone, the College of Medicine will begin recruiting students in coming weeks for its inaugural class of 2027, advancing the vision for America's next historically Black college of medicine.

The only HBCU college of medicine in the Gulf South, the College of Medicine brings together two trusted New Orleans institutions: Xavier University of Louisiana and Ochsner Health. It builds on decades of collaboration in education, research, and healthcare, reflected in initiatives such as the Ochsner-Xavier Institute for Health Equity and Research, Xavier's Physician Assistant Program, and its Genetic Counseling Program. Xavier contributes a century-long legacy of excellence in STEM education, was named a top HBCU by Forbes and is a leading institution in sending African American students on to medical school. Ochsner is a leading academic health system that brings more than 80 years of experience in caring for the communities it serves, with more than 60 years of training residents and fellows and 17 years of excellence in medical student education. Ochsner was named no. 1 hospital in Louisiana by U.S. News and World Report for 15 consecutive years. Together, Xavier and Ochsner have created a model that connects rigorous academic preparation with real-world training and a shared commitment to improving health outcomes for all.

"This is a historic moment for Xavier University of Louisiana, for New Orleans and for the future of medicine in this nation," said Reynold Verret, Ph.D., president of Xavier University of Louisiana. "For a century, Xavier has demonstrated what is possible when academic excellence is joined with a profound commitment to human dignity and service. The Xavier Ochsner College of Medicine is a bold extension of that legacy. We are not simply opening the doors of a new medical school; we are expanding who will have the opportunity to become a physician, strengthening the communities those physicians will serve and helping to shape the future of healthcare for generations to come. Preliminary accreditation brings us to a moment envisioned through years of work, partnership and resolve, and it affirms Xavier's enduring belief that education can transform not only individual lives, but the health and well-being of our nation."

Addressing national physician workforce challenges

The opening of the Xavier Ochsner College of Medicine brings an HBCU medical school to a region facing significant healthcare workforce challenges. The National Health Resources and Services Administration projects the United States could face a shortage of more than 141,000 physicians by 2038.

Louisiana is among the states most affected, with 60 of Louisiana's 64 parishes federally designated as Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs). Graduates from HBCU medical schools, which train nearly 70% of the nation's Black physicians, are more likely to serve communities with the greatest healthcare needs.

Preliminary accreditation follows years of planning and collaboration. The College of Medicine was formed through a partnership between Xavier and Ochsner in 2024, earned candidate status in October 2025 and hosted an LCME survey visit in June 2026. Following its review, the LCME determined the College of Medicine had met the requirements for preliminary accreditation, allowing it to start recruiting students for its inaugural class in summer 2027. Applications will be available through the American Medical College Application Service® (AMCAS®) in the coming weeks.

"Together, we have created a transformational college of medicine where future physician leaders will be prepared to pursue excellence with purpose, embrace innovation, and respond to the evolving needs of patients and our communities," said Leonardo Seoane, M.D., FACP, president and founding dean of the Xavier Ochsner College of Medicine. "This milestone builds on Xavier University of Louisiana's incredible legacy of preparing leaders who serve and a history of academic and clinical excellence at Ochsner Health. By bringing together the strengths of two mission-driven institutions, we are creating opportunities for future physicians to make a lasting difference across Louisiana and beyond."

Investing in New Orleans and the Gulf South

Students will be taught the science and practice of medicine while gaining a deep understanding of health in the context of a person's life and community. Through interdisciplinary learning, compassionate patient care, and direct experience with experienced clinical teams, they will develop the practical skills, leadership abilities, and understanding needed to serve communities in New Orleans, the Gulf South, and beyond.

"Our partnership with Xavier University of Louisiana is grounded in a shared belief that education, opportunity, and service can transform lives and provide our communities stellar healthcare for generations to come," said Pete November, president and CEO of Ochsner Health. "Today, we celebrate far more than the opening of a college of medicine. Together, we are investing in our communities to drive economic development and create a model of excellence that translates world-class medical education into better health outcomes, greater opportunity, and a lasting legacy of impact for the people and communities we serve."

Located in New Orleans' growing BioDistrict, the College of Medicine is expected to generate significant economic impact locally and statewide. By 2040, its operations are projected to contribute $152.5 million in economic impact across Louisiana, including $122 million in New Orleans, while supporting more than 1,185 jobs statewide. Physicians trained by the College are projected to contribute an additional $2.9 billion to the U.S. economy by 2040.

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About the Xavier Ochsner College of Medicine

The Xavier Ochsner College of Medicine was formed in 2024 through a partnership between Xavier University of Louisiana, one of the nation's top HBCUs, and Ochsner Health, a leading academic medical center in the Gulf South. The College of Medicine combines Xavier's academic excellence and century-long legacy in STEM and health sciences with a demonstrated commitment by Ochsner to patient care, research and physician training. Located in the New Orleans BioDistrict, the College of Medicine will prepare physician leaders through rigorous education, real-world training and a commitment to improving health outcomes for all. Learn more at xula.edu/xocom.