GUIDE TO PHARMACY SCHOOL
2019-2020
WHAT THIS GUIDE COVERS

1. Timeline for Pharmacy School Applications (p.3)
2. Red Flags, Grade Point Averages, Extracurricular Activities (p.3)
3. Pharmacy College Admission Test (PCAT) (p.4)
4. Pharmacy College Application Service (PharmCAS) (p.5)
5. Resources (p.6)

Center for Career Development and Experiential Learning

Mr. Peter Ostrander
Assistant Director of Career Development
School of Science and Health Professions

Office: Baron-Forness Library
Learning Commons, room 245
Email: postrander@edinboro.edu
Phone (814) 732-1235
INTRODUCTION
Pharmacy is a field that is wide and diverse beyond retail. Pharmacists work in a variety of settings including hospitals, nursing homes, and even at pharmaceutical companies. Pharmacists can work a variety of shifts depending on work with Oncology Pharmacists usually working nights in order to ensure proper timely delivery of patient medications due to radiological half lives.

Pharmacists can expect an average growth between now and 2026 with 5-9% employment growth. There are projected to be 15,300 job openings in the United States in the field. Pharmacists in Pennsylvania can expect to work on average for entry level $65,000 with a median salary of $118,750. Specialty will influence demand and pay.

Pharmacy school takes approximately four years to complete.

1. Timeline for Pharmacy School Applications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summer of Senior Year</th>
<th>• Take PCAT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August of Senior Year</td>
<td>• Prepare for interviews using BigInterview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Get Letters of Recommendation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Get Transcripts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Enter Materials into PharmCAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September of Senior Year</td>
<td>• PCAT Scores are matriculated into PharmCAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Start applying to schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November of Senior Year</td>
<td>• Start interviewing with schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Important Notes
- Do not underestimate the amount of time it will take to fill out applications. Anticipate to spend on average 30-45 minutes per application.
- Do not underestimate the expense of application. Start a savings account day one of college
- Do not estimate the difficulty of the PCAT – Prepare.
- Have other people go over your application with you. More eyes on your application increase your success.
- Ask about articulation agreement, even if you are not in the “pre-health” track
- A background check will be run on you. See “Red Flags”

2. Red Flags, Grade Point Average, Extracurricular Activities

Potential Red Flags on an Application
Red flags are issues that could hinder your chances of a successful application to Pharmacy school.
Some red flags are:
- Felony Convictions
- Negative Social Media Posts
- Negative Press
  o A juvenile offense that was published in the paper
- DUI’s or other drug/alcohol related offenses
- Institutional affairs actions
- Poor GPA / Too Many Withdrawals
• Poor grammar in applications
• Bad Letters of Recommendation

Sometimes people make mistakes, and the offense and wording will depend on whether or not your application passes to the interview phase.

**Grade Point Average (GPA)**

GPA of a matriculated Pharmacy school student remains competitive. GPA reflects ability to handle the intensity of Pharmacy School of which the tempo at some will be from 8-5. GPA will be weighted in Pharmacy school strongly. GPA and PCAT scores will be evaluated first on your application before other activities.

- Average GPA: 3.5
- Science GPA: 3.5

Strong grades in the sciences and math are favored in the admissions process over other courses.

Minimum GPA’s

- **Duquesne: 2.5**
  - 3.0 to be considered competitive
- **LECOM: 2.7**

**Extracurricular Activities**

Pharmacy school will focus more on academics than other factors. Bearing that in mind however, one should not enter the profession without extracurricular activities and some concept of the profession.

- Pharmacy Technician – Preferred by admissions
- Medical Assistant
- Nursing Home Experience
- Hospital Volunteer Experience
- Greek Life
- Student Worker

### 3. Pharmacy College Admission Test (PCAT)

- **Cost:** $210
- **Duration:** 3.25 hours

**Test Breakdown – 192 multiple choice items and 1 writing prompt**

1. Writing – 30 Minutes
2. Biological Processes – 48 items (45 minutes)
   a. General Biology
   b. Microbiology
   c. Human Anatomy and Physiology
3. Chemical Processes – 48 items (45 minutes)
   a. General Chemistry
   b. Organic Chemistry
   c. Basic Biochemistry Processes
4. Optional Break
5. Critical Reading – 48 items (50 minutes)
   a. Comprehension
   b. Analysis
   c. Evaluation

6. Quantitative Reasoning – 48 items (50 minutes)
   a. Basic Math
   b. Algebra
   c. Probability & Statistics
   d. Pre-Calculus
   e. Calculus

4. Pharmacy College Application Service (PharmCAS)

PharmCAS has many layers to it.

- PCAT Scores
- Personal Information
  - This section will detail name and general information about you
  - Citizenship information
- Transcripts (Academic History)
  - High school Information
  - College information – From ALL Colleges/Universities attended
  - Transcript entry
  - Standardized tests
- Supporting Information
  - Letters of Recommendation
  - Experiences
    - Experiences in Pharmacy
    - Employment
    - Extracurricular Activities
    - Healthcare Experience
- License and Certifications
- Personal Statement
- Payment

Helpful Hints

Consider the cost of your school. Pharmacy school can be an expensive venture. Even with a high expected salary post school exit, accruing extraordinary amounts of student loan debt is still inadvisable.

Programs exist, though highly competitive, where you can earn a Pharm.D. and an M.D. at the same time. Potential career paths for this combination of degree is a Psychopharmacology, Neuropsychopharmacology, or Clinical Pharmacology. Alternatively, this degree allows someone the flexibility to practice medicine and pharmacy.

Study Materials

Orgoman PCAT Destroyer

Paid resource for studying for the PCAT
Kaplan PCAT Prep Book
Preparation book to assist in PCAT

Pearson Practice PCAT Exam
Practice exam for the PCAT including multiple choice and writing component

5. Resources

Deadlines for PCAT Registration

Duquesne University Pharmacy School Admission Requirements

LECOM School of Pharmacy Admission Requirements