

# Pharmacy School Preparation Guidelines

This guide is intended for students planning to start a pharmacy program after two years of undergraduate studies. Many students complete a third year or an undergraduate degree before starting pharmacy school. Pre-Health Advisors are available to assist students with planning a timeline to apply.

## Every Semester you should plan to:

1. Successfully complete pre-professional coursework
2. Maintain excellent grades (3.0 and above to be competitive); math and science coursework is especially critical
3. Keep your legal and student behavior records clean! These records can impact both admissions and professional licensure
4. Explore and participate in meaningful activities and experiences
5. Get to know your faculty and instructors and meet with a Pre-Health Advisor

## Freshman Year – Fall Semester

- Participate in PRX 100 Pre-Pharmacy Seminar (enroll during summer registration)
- Focus on your academics and transition to college – seek assistance early if needed!
- Start a resume - track activities and experiences; journal observations
- Be active - go to fairs and events and join the Pre-Pharmacy Club student organization
- Explore a service opportunity and begin participation
- Explore employment as a pharmacy technician (or other healthcare employment) to confirm fit for pharmacy profession and gain experience
- Shadow Pharmacists in a variety of settings to learn all that Pharmacists can do
- Research pharmacy [schools](#) for pre-requisite courses, requirement to take the Pharmacy College Admissions Test (PCAT), GPA ranges, admissions selection factors, etc.
- Begin considering who you will ask for Letters of Recommendation for your application - it is recommended to have at least one academic reference
- Begin brainstorming your personal statement; write a rough draft by Spring

**TIP: Pharmacy experience and participation in service are important in your Freshman year!**

Note: Early Assurance students for Creighton's PharmD program should follow guidelines from the School of Pharmacy Admissions Office

## Freshman Year – Spring Semester

- Assess your academic and co-curricular readiness to apply by meeting with a Pre-Health Advisor or School of Pharmacy and Health Professions (SPAHP) admissions staff
- Continue meaningful service and experiential activities
- If a PCAT is required for schools you are considering, make a study plan and decide when you will take the exam (PCAT is not required by Creighton School of Pharmacy)
- Participate in shadowing and mentoring opportunities with current Creighton pharmacy students
- Shadow Pharmacists in a variety of settings
- Research pharmacy schools for pre-requisite courses, PCAT requirements, GPA ranges, admissions selection factors, letters required, etc.
- Before end of semester, contact letter writers and get confirmation they will write a strongly supportive letter for your application
- Continue working on personal statement
- If applying to more than one pharmacy program, review the sections of the PharmCAS application to begin preparing to apply
- Enroll in PRX 200 for Sophomore year (Spring)

**TIP: Pharmacy experience and service are important in your Freshman year!**

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### Summer after Freshman year

- Continue or begin employment or volunteer work in pharmacy or healthcare setting; continue shadowing pharmacists
- Continue study for PCAT and take exam (if required by a school you are applying to - Creighton does not require the PCAT)
- Begin work to prepare for PharmCAS application in July: order a student copy of official transcript, begin writing about activities and experiences, finalize personal statement, prepare to order official transcripts, confirm letters of recommendation, etc.
- For early consideration, apply by September 1<sup>st</sup>
- If eligible, apply for PharmCAS Fee Assistance Program before submitting application
- After PharmCAS submitted, check to see if transcripts received, letters submitted, etc., and complete any supplemental application materials required by individual schools in a timely manner (late Summer / early Fall)
- Confirm with schools your file is complete (early Fall)
- Make a plan in advance for the possibility of not being offered an acceptance
- Note: Early Assurance students will not be required to do PharmCAS unless applying to schools other than Creighton

### Sophomore Year

- Continue to follow up on your application status to ensure your file is complete; submit any supplemental applications required at individual schools
- Participate in PRX 200 Pre-Pharmacy seminar
- Continue meaningful service and experiential activities
- Continue to focus on getting good grades
- Once you are scheduled for an interview at any school, set up a practice interview with the Career Center
- Interview at pharmacy schools November – April
- Follow guidelines for admissions acceptances and pay appropriate deposits
- After fall grades are posted, submit PharmCAS Fall Academic Update and send updated transcripts (December)
- Explore your options for financing your pharmacy school tuition and expenses – use resources in PRX 200
- Continue to explore your options and prepare for an alternative plan if you do not receive an acceptance

Note: Early Assurance students will:

- Submit a completed Early Assurance Information Form by November 1st
- Complete a progression interview; you can schedule a practice interview with the Career Center once this is scheduled

### Junior Year – If not accepted to a pharmacy program

- Identify any weaknesses in your application and make a plan to strengthen those areas before applying again
- Identify appropriate science courses to take to enhance your readiness for pharmacy school and/or strengthen your GPA for an application
  - Some courses you might consider are Biochemistry, Physiology, Physics, Statistics, Microbiology, Cell Biology
- Participate as a Guest in PRX 200 to stay connected to resources, information, and support
- Consider whether or not you will apply after Junior year or opt to complete an undergraduate degree
- If you decide to complete a degree, select a major and plan courses to meet all Magis Core and major requirements – work with your primary academic advisor and/or faculty in the department of your major
- Continue to get good grades
- Continue participation in meaningful service, pharmacy/healthcare experience, leadership, pharmacy student mentoring, and shadowing of pharmacists – well-rounded applicants are competitive applicants!