

## THE PHARMACEUTICAL PROFESSION

Pharmacists are primarily responsible for monitoring and distributing drug therapy, health promotion, and patient counseling. Pharmacists may also be involved in basic and clinical research, working in collaboration with other researchers, physicians, and pharmacists. They apply scientific and technical knowledge to evaluate drug therapy for each individual patient. Pharmacists use personal relations skills when working with patients and other health professionals.

## UNDERGRADUATE PREPARATION

Pharmacy schools vary in their credit requirement for admission to the program, yet most prefer applicants who already hold a bachelor's degree. Typically, any major is acceptable so long as the pre-requisite courses required for the program are completed. The most common undergraduate majors among pre-pharmacy students include biology, chemistry, biochemistry and molecular biology, and psychology. In selecting a college major, consider how you will satisfactorily complete the pre-requisite courses for your desired program, in addition to graduation requirements at Nebraska Wesleyan University.

## REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED COURSES

Although there is no required undergraduate major for entering the field of pharmacy, each institution will have a required list of pre-requisite coursework that must be completed. Some programs accept AP/CLEP/other transfer credits, while other programs do not. To the right is a list of general courses and credits for pharmacy school based on UNMC requirements. Students should contact their desired graduate school directly for specific pre-requisite requirements, transfer equivalencies, or other questions.

Courses	Credits
Chemistry	16
Physics	4
Biological Sciences	12
Mathematics	7
General Education	21

## BEYOND ACADEMICS

Pre-Pharmacy students are encouraged to participate in experiences, such as leadership activities, volunteer opportunities, research, and shadowing of professionals, which will help prepare them for graduate school and the pharmacy profession. Activities beyond the classroom play a significant role in a student's application to a professional school program. Such experiences demonstrate a commitment to and knowledge of the profession. In particular, shadowing pharmacists will help students learn more about the daily activities of the profession.

At Nebraska Wesleyan, student organizations that may be interesting or useful to students looking into the pharmaceutical field include Pre-Health Club, Biology Club, Health and Human Performance Club, and Psychology Club. As well, consider Beta Beta Beta (Biology Honorary) and Psi Chi (Psychology Honorary).

## PHARMACEUTICAL EDUCATION

There are over 140 accredited pharmacy schools in the United States that offer the Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm. D.) degree. Schools in Nebraska offering such programs include Creighton University and the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC). The total number of credit hours required for degree completion may vary from school to school. Some institutions may also offer joint degrees.

## APPLICATION & ADMISSION

1. Applications to Creighton, UNMC, and many other pharmacy schools are made through PharmCAS. This standardized application permits a student to apply to multiple schools and colleges with one application and distribution of transcripts. Applicants select the specific schools they would like to apply to, and send the application directly through the site. The PharmCAS application includes the applicant's personal statement, course summary, and listing of extracurricular activities. PharmCAS.org has information on other participating schools in the centralized application service.
2. While some programs are no longer requiring the Pharmacy College Admission Test (PCAT), it still required for entry into most programs. The PCAT is a specialized exam that helps identify qualified pharmacy school applicants by measuring their general academic ability and scientific knowledge determined necessary for a pharmacy education. Consider taking the PCAT 12-15 months before you intend to start Pharmacy school. Registration information is available at the PCAT web site, [pcatweb.info](http://pcatweb.info). Also, consider taking a free practice test of the PCAT at [portal.mometrixlibrary.com](http://portal.mometrixlibrary.com).
3. Note that many schools require letters of recommendation, a personal statement, and interviews for admission. Some schools that accept applications through PharmCAS may also require a supplemental or secondary application.

Regional Schools	Credit Requirement	Avg. PCAT Score	Avg. GPA	Length of Program	Degree Offered
UNMC	60 hours	Not required	3.5	4 years	Pharm. D.
Creighton University	63 hours	Not required	3.3	4 years	Pharm. D.
Drake University	64 hours	Not required	3.0 min.	4 years	Pharm. D.
University of Iowa	66 hours	Optional; 70 <sup>th</sup> percentile	3.4	4 years	Pharm. D.
University of Wisconsin - Madison	68 hours	Optional; 71 <sup>st</sup> percentile	3.44	4 years	Pharm. D.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- <http://explorehealthcareers.org> (Explore Health Careers)  
<http://aacp.org> (American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy)  
<http://pharmacist.com> (American Pharmacists Association)  
<http://www.pharmacas.org> (Pharmacy College Application Service)  
<http://www.pcatweb.info> (Pharmacy College Admission Test)

### How do I connect with NWU alumni in the pharmacy profession?

Visit [career.nebrwesleyan.edu](http://career.nebrwesleyan.edu) and scroll down to "Career Assistance Network". Use this database to find alumni in this profession and see their current position titles and employers. Feel free to reach out!