

## Pharmacy School Timeline

### 1<sup>st</sup> Year

- Register for the Pre-Health Program.
- Attend the informational meetings for the Pre-Health Program.
- Make an appointment with the pre-health advisor to discuss how to sequence classes, experiences that will help you prepare for pharmacy school, and the different resources on campus.
- Investigate career information to identify what it means to be a pharmacist and the admission requirements for pharmacy.
- Start taking the core courses that need to be completed before taking the PCAT entrance exam required by the pharmacy schools. Focus on academic coursework and how to be a successful college student.
- Look for meaningful opportunities to become involved in research, job shadowing, volunteering, clubs, and mentoring.
- Start to develop relationships with faculty, staff advisors and faculty mentors at DePaul
- **SUMMER: Work, volunteer, research, or intern in the health field.**
- **SUMMER: Take summer courses if desired or necessary.**

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Year

- Attend the informational meetings for the Pre-Health Program.
- Meet with the pre-health advisor to make sure you're progressing through your requirements.
- Continue taking the core courses that need to be completed before taking the PCAT entrance exam required by the pharmacy programs. Focus on coursework and achieving a high GPA.
- Continue to investigate the career information to identify the admission requirements for pharmacy school.
- Look for opportunities to be involved in meaningful activities (volunteering, research, etc.) that will strengthen your application.
- Attend local graduate school fairs and open houses.
- Apply for research opportunities that you can participate in over the school year or summer.
- **SUMMER: Work or volunteer in the health field.**
- **SUMMER: Participate in summer enrichment, research, or internship program.**
- **SUMMER: Learn more about the PCAT and research PCAT prep courses opportunities.**
- **SUMMER: Familiarize yourself with the Pharmacy Centralized Application Service (PharmCAS).**

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Year (or the year prior to applying)

- Meet with pre-health advisor and PAC faculty mentor to make sure all coursework is on track.
- Begin compiling a list of specific pharmacy programs that will meet your professional objectives.
- Complete pre-pharmacy coursework that will be covered on the PCAT.
- Make sure you have established well maintained relationships with your staff advisors, professors, PAC faculty mentor, and healthcare professionals. Start to consider from whom you can receive letters of recommendations.
- Look for opportunities to continue to be involved (volunteering, shadowing, etc.) that will strengthen your application.
- Attend a personal statement writing workshop and begin writing your statement early. Be prepared to make multiple drafts as this statement is critical in the review of your application.
- If you are prepared and ready, register EARLY for the Pharmacy College Admission Test (PCAT).
- Take the Pharmacy College Admission Test (PCAT).
- Prepare a "plan b" if you are not admitted to the schools of your choice.
- **SUMMER: If you are intending to start your chosen program immediately following graduation, you should begin the application process, including requesting letters of recommendation from your professors. The PharmCAS will open up early June.**
- **SUMMER: Double check dates and deadlines and review, edit, and submit PharmCAS application early.**
- **SUMMER: Submit transcripts, complete supplemental applications, and contact those who will be submitting LORs for you to check on progress.**

### 4<sup>th</sup> Year

- Prepare for interviews by participating in a mock interview
- Meet with your PAC faculty mentor to discuss status of your application.
- Continue to maintain a strong GPA
- If admitted, make final decisions about your choice of school and notify schools you will not be attending.
- If admitted to a pharmacy program, apply for financial aid (FAFSA) by March 1<sup>st</sup>
- If admitted, pay seat deposit for the institution of your choice
- Let the pre-health advisor know what schools you were admitted to and which school you will matriculate.

### Pharmacy School Checklist

\_\_\_ **1. RESEARCH** the Pharmacy schools you are interested in. The first step in preparing for Pharmacy school is finding out programs you are interested in. A good place to start is the Pharmacy College Application Service (PharmCAS). PharmCAS provides you with information about several pharmacy programs requirements and their timelines. <http://www.pharmcas.org/collegesschools/schoolpages.htm>

\_\_\_ **2. PREREQUISITES:** each school has different timelines and prerequisites. Research each school carefully to make sure you have met all the requirements for the application.

REQUIRED		HIGHLY RECOMMENDED
English (9 quarter hours)	Physics (12 quarter hours)	Psychology (4-8 quarter hours)
General Biology (12 quarter hours)	Calculus (4 quarter hours)	Microbiology (4 quarter hours)
Human Anatomy (4 quarter hours)	Speech (4 quarter hours)	
General Chemistry (12 quarter hours)	Economics (4 quarter hours)	
Organic Chemistry (12 quarter hours)	Statistics (4 quarter hours)	
Social/Behavioral/Humanities (16 quarter hours)		

**\*This is a typical example of what a Pharmacy school may require – make sure you check each school for their specific requirements.**

\_\_\_ **3. REGISTER** for the Pre-Health Program, once you have completed the General Chemistry/General Biology sequence and are ready to apply to pharmacy school, inform the pre-health advisor and you will be enrolled in the PAC. This will allow you to have a faculty mentor that helps you in your junior/senior year prepare for the PharmCAS application.

\_\_\_ **4. GPA:** The higher the GPA, the more competitive you will be. Plan on applying to at least 6-8 programs at minimum. The average GPA for Illinois programs is 3.4. The higher your GPA the better chance of being admitted to a pharmacy school.

\_\_\_ **5. KNOW** the applications start date and deadlines along with all prerequisites needed for each school you are interested in. The PharmCAS application opens as early as May.

\_\_\_ **6. EXPERIENCE:** Most pharmacy schools say experience is recommended but not required. However, it is vital that you get experience in the pharmacy and health care field. Start early and get as much experience in pharmacy, research, and health care as you can.

\_\_\_ **7. BE INVOLVED:** The more well-rounded your academic career the more competitive you will be. Be involved in activities such as research, community service, work, and extracurricular that are meaningful and unique.

\_\_\_ **8. RECOMMENDATIONS:** Some pharmacy schools will require a committee letter along with 2 or 3 other letters of recommendations. Therefore, line up 3-4 recommendations early on. The PharmCAS will tell you which types of recommendations they require and accept. If unsure contact the schools you are applying to directly to determine what types of references they prefer. Recommendations through PharmCAS are electronic.

\_\_\_ **9. PCAT:** Register for the PCAT early. Registration typically opens early March and the PCAT is only offered a couple times throughout the year. Seats and dates for taking the PCAT are first come, first serve. Once you register for the PCAT the test center location will be within 50 miles of the registration city. The actual location will be stated on your admission ticket. Keep in mind it will take approximately 5 weeks to receive your exam results online. The average Illinois Pharmacy student received an average composite score in the mid-70<sup>th</sup> percentile. However, the higher the PCAT composite score the better chances of being accepted into pharmacy school.

\_\_\_ **10. COMPOSE:** Start to write your personal essay prior to the application in a word document. Each specific school may have a supplemental essay as well. Once you have completed your essay make sure you edit it carefully and have others edit it as well.

\_\_\_ **11. REQUEST** official transcripts to be sent to you to aid you in filling out the coursework one month prior to your application open date.

\_\_\_ **12. APPLY/DOUBLE CHECK/SUBMIT:** A lot of Pharmacy schools are on the PharmCAS but not all of them. The earlier you apply the better. Some schools have rolling admissions. Get all your application material ready a month prior to the application open date, fill out the application, double/triple check for errors, and then submit.