



Pharmacy School Admissions Guide

WHAT IS PHARMACY (PHARM)?

Pharmacy is the branch of health sciences that deals with the preparation, dispensing, and proper utilization of drugs. A pharmacist is a health care professional who is licensed to prepare and sell or dispose of drugs and compounds and can make up prescriptions. The following is a brief guide to PHARM requirements while here at UA

PRE-REQUISITES:

Most pharmacy schools do not require you to complete an undergraduate major, though you may be more competitive for admission with a degree. Each school varies in its expectations of successful applicants, so the best places to check for the latest information are the websites of the schools in which you are most interested, and the admissions officers at those schools. The UA Health Professions Advising Office can assist you as well.

Course Requirements: It is critical to be aware of the pharmacy school admission requirements early on in college so that you can arrange your coursework appropriately. **Unlike many other health professional schools, each pharmacy school varies considerably in what courses it expects of its applicants.** The undergraduate requirements at the two Alabama pharmacy schools, The Harrison School of Pharmacy at Auburn University and the McWhorter School of Pharmacy at Samford University, for example:

<u>Prerequisite Courses</u>	
Course	Semester Hours
Principles of Biology with Lab.....	4
English Composition	6
General Chemistry with Lab	8
Organic Chemistry with Lab	8
Calculus	4
Physics (<i>Calculus or Trigonometry based</i>).....	4
Anatomy and Physiology.....	8
Core Social Sciences	6
Statistics (<i>Math or Biostat emphasis</i>).....	3
Core History	6
Core Fine Arts	3
Core Literature	6
Ethics.....	3
Genetics or Genomic Biology.....	4
Biochemistry	3
Microbiology with Lab	4
Immunology.....	3
Mammalian, Human or Vertebrate Physiology	4-6

AUBURN

<u>Prerequisite Courses</u>	
Course	Semester Hours
English Composition	6
General Chemistry	8
Organic Chemistry	8
Anatomy and Physiology.....	8
Microbiology	4
Calculus I	3
Elementary Statistics.....	3
Literature	3
Public Speaking.....	3
World History or Western Civilization	3
Sociology or Psychology	3
Physical Education Activity	2
Survey of Old Testament or New Testament* ..	3
Additional Liberal Arts Electives.....	9

SAMFORD

***All prerequisite courses must be completed with a grade of “C” or higher. Check the websites of the schools in which you are most interested to obtain a current list of prerequisites.**

EXAM AND GPA:

The Pharmacy College Admission Test (PCAT) is a standardized examination that consists of 240 multiple choice items and two writing topics that measures general academic ability and scientific knowledge necessary for the entrance into a Pharmacy program. It is required by all of the American Pharmacy schools. Typically, students take the PCAT about one calendar year prior to their intended date of matriculation to professional school. A PCAT score is good for three years at most schools, so taking the test in the spring of junior year does not necessarily mean that you must enter Pharmacy school right after college graduation. For purposes of admission, most Pharmacy schools will look at your percentile rank.

>40—Not looked on favorably

<60—Looked on favorably

Grade Point Average (GPA): Minimum GPA requirements vary from program to program, but MOST programs have a minimum 3.0 GPA requirement but competitive GPA's are closer to a 3.3. In addition, most programs require that all prerequisite courses must be passed with a “C” or better.

TIMELINE:

Freshman Year:

- Connect with the Health Professions Advising Office
- Start taking basic sciences (See chart above)
- Think about possible majors (Study what you love)
- Begin getting involved with volunteer opportunities (campus and community)
- Start medical experience (Pharmacy Tech, CNA, Shadowing)
- Join some student organizations (Pre-Pharmacy Society)

Sophomore Year:

- Continue with next sequence of courses
- Stay involved in extracurricular activities (Medical, volunteer, etc)
- Begin to think about becoming an officer in your organizations
- Visit Health Professions Office to begin to assess competitiveness
- Start deciding if you will be pursuing a Bachelor's Degree
- Look at which Pharmacy programs to apply to
- Take PCAT if applying without undergraduate degree

Junior Year:

- Apply to Pharmacy programs if not getting undergraduate degree
- Talk to Health Professions Advising Office about competitiveness
- Register for PCAT if completing undergraduate degree
- Study for PCAT and take PCAT (Spring Semester)
- Identify 3 individuals to write letters of recommendation (Spring Semester)
- Complete Application (PHARMCAS)

Senior Year:

- Submit Application (PHARMCAS) if you haven't already (Fall semester)
- Wait to be contacted for interview
- Finish degree requirements
- Continue with activities

- Talk with HPAO about Plan B if necessary
- Graduate

RESOURCES:

The American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP): www.aacp.org

AACP Admissions Guide: <http://www.aacp.org/resources/studentaffairspersonnel/admissionsguidelines/Pages/default.aspx>

PCAT Information/Dates: www.pcatweb.info

The Alabama Board of Pharmacy (ALBOP): www.albop.com (apply for AL Pharm Tech License)

UA Health Professions Website: www.prehealth.ua.edu