

Timeline for Pharmacy Admissions

The following timeline is meant as a general guide to help pre-pharmacy students prepare to apply for admission to pharmacy school. It is based off a typical 4-year plan for graduating with a Bachelors degree from UTC. Plans may differ, based on any transfer credit, AP/duel enrollment/prior credit or major change. Check in with UTC's Pre-Health Professions Advisor, Theresa Blackman about your progress regularly and to develop an individualized plan that works for you.

First Year

- Adjust to college coursework and build a good foundation of grades and knowledge. Begin meeting with Pre-Health Professions Advisor to determine if you plan on completing your degree before applying to pharmacy school, or plan to apply at 90+ hours
- Begin working on required courses for pharmacy school. If not able to enroll in required math work with academic advisor to become math ready.
- Shadow, volunteer, or interview a pharmacist to confirm this career field is a good fit for you.

Second Year

- Assess your academic performance. Most successful pharmacy applicants have a 3.0 overall GPA or higher. A strong applicant would have a 3.5 GPA or higher. How do your grades look so far? What changes do you need to make in order to
- Continue working towards completing required courses for pharmacy school. Begin identifying specific schools you are interested in.
- Gain experiences through volunteering, working, undergraduate research, study abroad, etc. Have you referred to UTC's Pre-Health Website for shadowing and other hand on opportunities or met with the Pre-Health Professions Advisor or your Academic Advisor for ideas on how you can gain experience?

Third Year - Fall Semester

Look at your academic progress. When will you graduate? When will you apply to pharmacy school?

Think about the final experiences you want to list on your application; and make an action plan to complete them. In general, try to have:

- a. An experience in a health care setting
- b. An experience working with different people of different ages, socioeconomic status, etc
- c. An experience shadowing or working directly in the pharmacy field
- d. At least one experience that lasted at least a year, to show your ability to commit long term.

Check in with the Pre-Health Advisor for feedback and assistance putting your action plan into play.

Start thinking about who you will ask to write your reference letters for your PharmCAS application.

** Typically, you need between two and four letters. At least one letter should be an academic reference (ex. a professor) and one should be a professional reference (ex. a health care professional)

When Should I apply?

The application cycle for pharmacy school begins in the summer, when PharmCAS opens and ends the following fall when new students are entering the PharmD programs. The earliest that students can apply is the summer before the year that they will finish the prerequisites for the PharmD program(s) they are planning to apply to. Most students, on a typical four year plan, apply the summer before starting their senior year. In this timeline they complete their prerequisites senior year, graduate in the spring, and ideally start pharmacy school in the fall. This is the typical timeline, but that does not mean that it is right for you. Be sure to consider when you want to start pharmacy school, whether you have grades and experiences that are competitive, and whether you feel ready to apply. Set up a meeting with the Pre Health Advisor, if you have any questions

Don't forget about your grades! Remember, your grades this year are the last grades that pharmacy schools will see on your transcripts.

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Third Year - Winter

	Start researching pharmacy schools. Good resources for this are the PharmCAS School Directory and pharmacy school websites.	<p style="text-align: center;">Should I consider a gap year?</p> <p>One advantage to taking a gap year is that pharmacy schools will have access to your full academic record, including your senior year, when looking at your application. Strong grades in the challenging science courses taken senior year, can increase the competitiveness of your application. Many students work in a health care setting during the gap year, which gives them more experience, the chance to save money, and/or the chance to gain residence status before enrolling in a program. One challenge is that students need to be intentional about staying in touch with their professors, in order to gain a strong letter of recommendation.</p>
	<p>Make sure you understand the application process. Use PharmCAS preparing to apply articles and school websites to learn. Make a timeline.</p> <p>Keep in mind, for most students this is a two part process that involves submitting your general application to PharmCAS and a supplemental application to the individual programs.</p>	
	The PCAT. Do your first choice programs require the PCAT? Will you take the PCAT? When? If you are taking the PCAT, schedule your exam and register now. Typically, registration opens in early March.	

PCAT Dates : July - September - October/November - January * Some schools do not consider January Scores

Third Year - Spring Semester

	Attend on-campus events geared toward pharmacy applicants. Watch the listserv for events.	<p style="text-align: center;">How many schools should I select?</p> <p>It's a good idea to select at least 3-5 pharmacy schools, where you match or exceed the listed statistics of the previous first year class. Look at your GPA, average PCAT score, and experiences. It is ok for one of the schools you are applying to- to be a bit of a stretch where your application may not be the most competitive; but your application should be competitive in most of the schools you select. Program statistics will be listed on the programs website. Also make sure you are researching the programs' curriculum, missions, practical experiences, dual degrees, and all other opportunities - to make sure that the school is a good fit. You should only apply to schools that you would actually attend.</p>
	Make a timeline for yourself and the application process for each program you want to apply to. Be sure to include the PharmCAS and supplemental application deadlines, PCAT date, and your goal dates for completing each piece of the application. Also make a decision on which Pharmacy schools you will apply to.	
	Create a budget for the application process. Be sure to include both PharmCAS and supplemental application fees, PCAT fees, travel costs for interviews, interview attire, tuition deposits, etc	

	Look closely at all the prerequisite courses for each PharmD program you are applying to. Do you have the required courses? Will you complete all of the required courses in time? Contact program representatives if you have any questions/doubts. Most programs will do a prerequisite review if you send them your unofficial transcript -so be sure!
	Meet with your academic advisor and pre-health advisor to review your plan for your senior year. Remember, that you will need to list these classes on your PharmCAS application.
	Decide how you are going to study for the PCAT. The recommendation is to start studying 2-3 months before your exam date. There are study guide books, official practice tests, and test prep courses available to help you. Remember to only use current resources for your actual test year, and not old editions.

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Application Summer

	Start your PharmCAS application as soon as it opens; which is usually mid-July	<p style="text-align: center;">Should I apply via Early Decision</p> <p>Early Decision is a good option for students who have a strong first choice program. Students can only apply to one school using Early Decision and agree to enroll if they are accepted. It is a good way to secure your spot in the program early in the application cycle if you have a school you prefer above all others. Using Early Decision tells the pharmacy school that they are your first choice program. As a result some schools will give special or priority consideration to Early Decision applicants. Not all schools participate in Early Decision, so if your first choice school does not use Early Decision, then applying as an early decision applicant is not advisable.</p>
	<p>First work on the most time intensive parts of the application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Personal statement b. activities c. entering coursework <p>Questions? First check the PharmCAS help center, then email PharmCAS if needed. Also, check with the Pre-Health Advisor.</p>	
	Send your official transcripts to PharmCAS from all the colleges/universities you attended. Make sure you make arrangements to have the PharmCAS transcript request form included with each transcript.	
	Who are you going to ask to write your letters of recommendation? Contact them and request their letters. All reference letters should be electronically submitted through PharmCAS. You should ask for reference letters in advance, no less than one month prior to the deadline for your first application. Remember to provide your letter	
	If you qualify for PharmCAS fee waiver, make sure to apply for it. Waivers are distributed on a first come first serve basis	
	If you are planning to apply for Early Decision, go ahead and submit your PharmCAS application. The deadline is usually early September	

Fourth Year

	<p>Submit your PharmCAS application (regular deadlines – November through March). Apply early! Schools that use rolling admissions will have more interview spots available early in the application cycle than later. Submit supplemental applications (deadlines and processes vary by school).</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">What if I don't get accepted?</p> <p>This question is on nearly every student's mind during their application year. Minimize your stress by making a secondary (aka. back-up) plan. If you plan to reapply to pharmacy school, identify the weaknesses in your application and consider how you can improve (i.e. improve grades, gain more experience, etc.). If you do not plan to reapply, consider why you wanted to pursue pharmacy and explore other career paths that involve those same elements.</p>
	Complete the PharmCAS Fall Update after fall term grades post and send updated transcripts (December).	
	Prepare for pharmacy school interviews. Mock interviews are available from the UTC Center for Career and Leadership Development. Some pharmacy schools use a Multiple Mini-Interview (MMI) format while others use a traditional format. Learn about what these mean.	
	Consider your secondary plan. What will you do next year if not admitted in this application cycle?	
	Interview at pharmacy schools (usually November – April).	
	Assess your status at each school. Consider adding one or more additional pharmacy schools if you have not received interview offers by this point (February – March).	
	Accept admission and pay deposit at pharmacy school of your choice. Or take steps toward pursuing your secondary plan if not accepted.	