



# PRE-PHARMACY FACT SHEET

## BECOMING A COMPETITIVE APPLICANT

Applicants to pharmacy programs must complete a minimum of 63 credit hours (two years) of college coursework that includes pre-pharmacy prerequisites. Some students choose to complete a bachelor's degree prior to entering a pharmacy program. Competitive applicants for admission have solid academic records, well-rounded profiles of co-curricular experiences, supportive letters of recommendation, and can clearly articulate their reasons for pursuing pharmacy as a profession.

## SELECTING A MAJOR

Although a bachelor's degree is not required for admission to pharmacy school, students should always be on track towards a degree. Ideally, a major should be based on student interests and should support an alternate career. Pharmacy schools look for students who demonstrate the ability to handle a rigorous course load.

## GRADES & GPA

C is an honorable grade. However, grades below B, especially within the two academic years leading up to pharmacy school application, could interfere with admission. Faced with a likely grade below C, some students should withdraw (W) and later try for a higher grade. Students should consult with advisors as they decide. More than two W's could indicate a lack of judgment or an inability to handle challenges in pharmacy school.

GPA's calculated on pharmacy school applications include coursework done at all colleges attended and all attempts at a course.

**Aim for GPA's of 3.0 or above.**

## CREIGHTON PRE-HEALTH RESOURCES

Pre-Health Advisors in the Center for Advising Resources & Support are available to meet with students individually about their pre-health goals and path.

The Pre-Professional Communities assist students in exploring the pharmacy profession, gaining experience in healthcare, and preparing for the application process. Students should participate in PRX 100 in their freshman year and PRX 200 in their sophomore year (depending on the student's application timeline).

## PREREQUISITE & RECOMMENDED COURSES

Pre-pharmacy students should research schools carefully to be aware of all prerequisite courses and other admissions policies, as prerequisites vary among pharmacy programs. Students should meet with a Pre-Health Advisor in their freshman year to develop their timeline for application to pharmacy school.

### PREREQUISITES FOR PHARMACY SCHOOL

The following courses are commonly required by pharmacy schools:

- General Biology I & II w/ Labs - 8 hours - BIO 201/205 & BIO 202/206
- General Chemistry I & II w/ Labs - 8 hours - CHM 203/204 & CHM 205/206
- Organic Chemistry I & II w/ Labs - 8 hours - CHM 321/322 & CHM 323/324
- Anatomy - 3 hours - EXS 331 or PHA 310
- Calculus - 3-4 hours - MTH 231, MTH 245 or MTH 141
- Statistics - 3 hours - Many options
- Psychology - 3 hours - PSY 201
- Economics - 3 hours - ECO 203
- English - 6 hours - ENG 15X and ENG 22x
- Speech - 3 hours - COM 101 & Magis Critical Issues in Human Inquiry

### ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS & NOTES

- Creighton's pharmacy program requires students to have 6 hours of Theology (often completed via the Magis core Christian Tradition and Biblical Tradition).
- Although not required by Creighton School of Pharmacy, a number of schools do require courses in Biochemistry, Physics, Statistics, and/or Physiology.
- Some schools may not regard credit earned through examinations (AP/CLEP/IB) as being equivalent to completing required courses, but they may accept higher-level college courses as substitutes. Research individual schools for their policies regarding AP/CLEP/IB credits for prerequisite courses.

## CO-CURRICULAR EXPECTATIONS

### SHADOWING

Students must gain knowledge of the profession by shadowing current professionals in their field. Students should shadow pharmacists in a variety of settings, if possible. Students can also interact with pharmacists by gaining employment as Pharmacy Technicians.

### BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Pharmacists are called on to connect with and help people different from themselves and to make their patients feel comfortable during treatment. Seek out experiences that help you build interpersonal relationships and interact with people from many walks of life.

### VOLUNTEER & SERVICE

It is important to demonstrate sustained commitment over time. Students should have service experiences in healthcare and non-healthcare settings. Check out the Schlegel Center for Service and Justice for opportunities: [blogs.creighton.edu/ccsj](https://blogs.creighton.edu/ccsj)

### LEADERSHIP & TEAMWORK

Students must demonstrate leadership and interpersonal skills. Consider initiating group projects, serving as an officer in a student organization, or working as a teaching assistant. Students must also demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively.

### HEALTHCARE EXPERIENCE

Students should seek opportunities for hands-on, direct patient care experience. Although this may be gained through volunteering, students can also gain this kind of experience through employment as a Pharmacy Technician, PT/OT Tech, Certified Nurse Assistant, EMT with Basic certification, rehabilitation aide, among others.

### RESEARCH

Research experience is not required for admission to pharmacy school, but may add an extra layer to an application if students have a particular interest in research. See the Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship for opportunities: [www.creighton.edu/curas](http://www.creighton.edu/curas).

## COURSE SCHEDULING CONSIDERATIONS

Freshmen and sophomores usually take only two natural science or math subjects each semester.

**Chemistry:** General Chemistry I (CHM 203/204) and General Chemistry II (CHM 205/206) are typical choices for freshman fall and spring. To be eligible to take General Chemistry in the freshman year, students must achieve a sufficient score on the Quantitative Assessment for New Students (QANS). Students who do not achieve a sufficient QANS score will need to complete an introductory chemistry course, CHM 105, with a grade of "C" or better to progress to CHM 203.

**Biology:** General Biology I (BIO 201/205) and General Biology II (BIO 202/206) are typical choices for freshman fall and spring. Completion of either General Chemistry I (CHM 203) with a grade of "C" or better or Introductory Chemistry (CHM 105) with a grade of "B" or better is required in order to take General Biology II.

**Math:** Pre-pharmacy students are required to complete a calculus course. MTH 231 or MTH 245 will fulfill this requirement. Additionally, MTH 141 is acceptable for pre-pharmacy students pursuing business degrees. Math, physics, and chemistry majors will need more than one semester of calculus and should take MTH 245.

**Summer:** Science courses may be taken in the summer, but only when there are good reasons for doing so (not just a vague desire to "catch up") and not at community colleges. Speak with a Pre-Health Advisor about timelines.

### Sample First Semester Schedule

\*Course sequencing may vary depending on a student's readiness\*

- General Biology I w/ Lab (4 hours)
- General Chemistry I w/ Lab (4 hours)
- Magis Core Class (3 or 4 hours) - ENG or Critical Issues & COM 101
- Magis Core Class (3 hours) - PHL or THL
- Maybe another Magis Core Class (3 hours) - PSY, SOC or Foreign Language
- RSP Class (.5 hours)

## PHARMACY SCHOOL APPLICATION PROCESS

### ADMISSION TESTS

Some pharmacy programs require the Pharmacy College Admission Test (PCAT), a national, standardized, computer-based test. The PCAT is typically taken 12-15 months before starting pharmacy school. To do well on this exam, students need to complete certain science courses and allow sufficient time to study and prepare for the exam. The PCAT is not required for Creighton School of Pharmacy.

### PHARMACY CENTRALIZED APPLICATION SERVICE (PharmCAS)

Students apply to pharmacy programs using PharmCAS. Students submit information that is transmitted to all schools they are applying to, as well as program-specific materials that goes to individual programs. PharmCAS opens annually in mid-July for the new application cycle.

### LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Pharmacy programs often require between two and four letters of recommendation. Many pharmacy schools require at least one letter from a professor. Some schools may require a letter from a practicing pharmacist. Research individual schools for letter requirements.

### INTERVIEWS

Many pharmacy programs interview promising applicants. The John P. Fahey Career Center offers interview preparation assistance, including mock interviews.

## PRE-PHARMACY GROUPS & RESOURCES

### PRE-PHARMACY CLUB

All pre-pharmacy students should participate in the Pre-Pharmacy Club. This student organization provides leadership opportunities to further explore and gain experience in the pharmacy profession. Learn more on CU Involved: <https://cuinvolved.creighton.edu/organization/prepharmacyclub>

### CU SCHOOL OF PHARMACY AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Make an appointment with SPAHP admissions office personnel in the spring of the year applying to personalize the application process.

### CREIGHTON PREFERENCE

The Creighton Doctor of Pharmacy Program gives preferential admission consideration to Creighton undergraduate students who complete all prerequisite coursework at Creighton. Students who have participated in PRX 100 and PRX 200 and who have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 are guaranteed an interview.

### HELPFUL LINKS

- CU SPAHP | [creighton.edu/pharmacy-ot-pt](https://creighton.edu/pharmacy-ot-pt)
- Pharmacy is Right for Me | [pharmacyforme.org](https://pharmacyforme.org)
- Pharmacy Centralized Application Service | [pharmcas.org](https://pharmcas.org)