

General FAQ's for Pharmacy Admissions

Accreditation-related questions

What does "precandidate or candidate" status mean?

The Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) provides the following definition of terms:

Precandidate. A new program that has no students enrolled but that meets the eligibility criteria for accreditation may be granted Precandidate accreditation status. The granting of Precandidate status indicates that a college or school's planning for the Doctor of Pharmacy program has taken into account ACPE standards and guidelines and suggests reasonable assurances of moving to the next step, that of Candidate status. Note that granting of Precandidate status brings no rights or privileges of accreditation but is one of the necessary steps to achieve accreditation.

Candidate. Once students have enrolled in a new program, but the program has not had a graduating class, the program may be granted Candidate status. The granting of Candidate status denotes a developmental program, which is expected to mature in accord with stated plans and within a defined time period. Reasonable assurances are expected to be provided that the program may become accredited as programmatic experiences are gained, generally, by the time the first class has graduated. Graduates of a class designated as having Candidate status have the same rights and privileges as graduates of an accredited program.

PCOM has applied for precandidate status with ACPE. Pending ACPE approval, it is anticipated that the first class will be admitted for the fall 2010 semester. Once precandidate status is awarded to a school, the school can proceed to apply for candidate status. Full accreditation cannot be sought until the school has progressed through the precandidate and candidate steps and has graduated its first class.

What is the current accreditation status of the School of Pharmacy?

PCOM has secured approvals from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, and the Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission of Georgia. **In order to open as scheduled, the school must also attain precandidate status from the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education.**

PCOM's Doctor of Pharmacy program has applied for precandidate accreditation status by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education, 20 North Clark Street, Suite 2500, Chicago, IL 60670-5109, 312-644-3575; fax 312-664-4652, Web site <http://www.acpe-accredit.org>. For an explanation of ACPE accreditation process, consult the Office of the Dean (678) 407-7340 or ACPE at <http://www.acpe-accredit.org>.

Why should I consider applying to a school that is still seeking accreditation?

There are certainly pros/cons to consider when applying to any school of pharmacy. Every school of pharmacy in the U.S. needs to be accredited in order for its students to be able to seek licensure. New schools of pharmacy must go through the accreditation process, and established schools of pharmacy must continually improve or maintain their standards to be able to maintain their accreditation. One obvious limitation of a new school is that accreditation is not guaranteed and students are encouraged to evaluate any new program carefully before making this important decision. But keep in mind that a “new” program can still produce high-quality students, and each school needs to be evaluated on its merits and limitations. One of the real benefits of joining a new school is that the students will be able to help shape the program and really feel that they are an integral part of the school. Student input is a critical part of any new developing program. Additionally, PCOM PharmD students will share the campus with the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine students and some aspects of the curriculum will allow the students to blend together in certain courses which will give each other a better appreciation of the roles of physicians and pharmacists and the potential for collaborative health care to improve the quality of care for the patient. There is only one inaugural class for any school of pharmacy, and those with a pioneering spirit and a desire to be part of something new are invited to join PCOM’s charter class!

Admissions-related questions

What is the tuition for the School of Pharmacy?

For the 2010 academic year, tuition has been set at \$29,900/year. Like most other universities/colleges, it is estimated that the tuition would likely increase 3-5% each subsequent year. This tuition is competitive with many different private schools of pharmacy.

How do I apply for financial aid?

Information regarding federally-based financial aid for students is available at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>. All questions regarding financial aid should be referred to the Financial Aid office of the Georgia Campus at (678) 225-7533.

When will the first class be admitted?

PCOM has applied for precandidate status with ACPE. Pending ACPE approval, it is anticipated that the first class will be admitted for the fall 2010 semester.

How many students are accepted every year? How many students apply each year?

For the inaugural class, 75 students will be accepted. Pending accreditation approval from ACPE, this number will increase over subsequent years. The number of students applying in the inaugural year is unknown. In general, many schools of pharmacy will ultimately have about a 5:1 to 10:1 ratio of applicants to matriculants.

How can I find out if the classes I have taken meet the prerequisites?

The PCOM School of Pharmacy will accept classes from accredited institutions. Please refer to the school's website to help you determine what types of classes will fulfill the requirements. It is also suggested that you meet with an academic advisor from your home institution and provide them with this information; they will be able to make educated suggestions. When you submit your completed application with the prerequisite checklist, the Admissions Committee will review your courses. If you are missing a prerequisite you will be notified by the Admissions Committee. If you have taken a course which may meet one of these requirements but you are unsure whether the course will satisfy admissions requirements, send an email request to pharmacy@pcom.edu which includes: course description, name of the institution from which the course is being taught, course syllabus and the number of credits. The Associate Dean for Academics & Assessment and the Admissions Committee will make such decisions.

What is the deadline for applications?

For the 2010 academic year, no deadline for applications has been set. Students with excellent credentials will be offered an interview and may be offered a seat in the program, and that the remainder of qualified students will be placed on an alternate list. Keep in mind that PCOM and most schools utilize a rolling admissions process and that once the target number of students is reached, no further students will be offered a seat. In the event that a student decides not to participate in the program after accepting an offer, then the Admissions Committee will make an offer to the next best qualified student on the alternate list. All 75 spots in the inaugural class may be taken if students apply too late in the process so it is in the students' best interest to apply to the program as early as possible.

What are the pharmacy pre-requisite courses?

The prerequisite courses are listed below:

Semester Hrs	Course
8	General Chemistry I and II with laboratory
8	Organic Chemistry I and II with laboratory
8	General Biology I and II with Laboratory (Zoology, cellular or molecular biology are also acceptable)
4	Physics with laboratory
3	Calculus
6	English Composition (may include 3 credits of English Literature)
3	Speech
3	Economics
3	Statistics
3	Social/Behavioral Sciences (History, psychology, government, or sociology are acceptable)
3	Humanities/Fine Arts (Art, foreign language, literature, music, philosophy, religion, theatre are acceptable)
8	Electives

Total = 60 semester credit hours

What does the rolling application process mean?

The rolling application process means that we review applications on an on-going basis from the beginning of the application year until all seats in the class are full. Once we receive completed applications, they are reviewed by the Admissions Committee and interviews are offered throughout the year to qualified students. It is to your advantage to turn your application in as early as possible because of this process. Once the seats in the class are filled, qualified applicants will be placed on a waiting list. As seats open up, students on this list will be offered seats in our program.

Can I transfer into the program before completing my Bachelor's degree?

Qualified students may be admitted into the program prior to attainment of the Bachelor's degree. Students must fulfill all prerequisite courses before matriculating to the School of Pharmacy. Note that the Admissions Committee gives preference to those students with a Bachelors degree.

Can I count one class for more than one prerequisite?

No, courses may not be counted for more than one prerequisite requirement. In other words, one course may be used to apply for only one requirement.

Will PCOM accept Pass/Fail classes for prerequisites?

We will not accept pass/fail classes for science prerequisites.

Where can I complete my pre-professional courses?

Students may complete their pre-professional course requirements at regionally accredited college or university in the U.S.

How do I convert quarter hours to semester hours?

In general, to convert from semester hours to quarter hours multiply the quarter hours by 2/3. Please use the following conversion chart as a guide.

Quarter Hours	Semester Hours
1=	0.67
2=	1.33
3=	2.00
4=	2.67
5=	3.33
6=	4.00
7=	4.67
8=	5.33

What if I have taken classes on the quarter system and after conversion I am short?

PCOM will round up the hours / credits when converting from quarter to semester hours. If the number of credit hours is insufficient after rounding, additional courses must be taken to fulfill the admissions requirements

How is GPA calculated and what is the minimum?

GPA as determined by PharmCAS:

To calculate a grade-point-average (GPA), PharmCAS determines your total number of quality points by multiplying semester credit hours attempted by the value of the verified PharmCAS grade. Quarter hours and units are converted to semester hours (quarter hours are multiplied by .667). The quality points are divided by the total number of hours for completed courses. PharmCAS will report your standardized GPA in semester-based 4.0 grading scale.

Please visit <http://www.pharmcas.org/applicants/gpa.htm> for specific information regarding GPA. The minimum GPA for consideration of admission to the School of is 2.5. PharmCAS calculates GPA by the following table:

PharmCAS Weight	4	3.7	3.5	3.3	3	2.7	2.5	2.3	2	1.7	1.5	1.3	1	0.7	0.5	0
PharmCAS Grade	A/A+	A-	A B	B+	B	B-	BC	C+	C	C-	C D	D +	D	D-	D E	F

As a hypothetical example, assume a student has the following information based on a semester system:

Course	Grade	PharmCAS weight	Semester Credits
Biology	B	3.0	3
Chemistry	C+	2.3	3
Physics	B	3.0	3
Psychology	A	4.0	2

The total number of quality points (QP) in this example would be:

Biology	$3 \times 3 = 9.0$ QP	
Chemistry	$2.3 \times 3 = 6.9$ QP	
Physics	$3 \times 3 = 9.0$ QP	
Psychology	$4 \times 2 = 8.0$ QP	
Total QP	$= 32.9$	Total # credits = $3 + 3 + 3 + 2 = 11$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{GPA} &= \text{Total QP} / \text{Number of credits} \\ &= 32.9 / 11 \\ &= 2.99 \end{aligned}$$

The minimum GPA required for admission is 2.5, but it is expected that the average GPA of students that matriculate will be > 3.0 .

What standardized test scores are required for admission? What is the minimum score needed to apply?

In order to qualify for an interview and be granted admissions in the School, students are required to take the Pharmacy College Admission Test (PCAT). Information regarding the PCAT can be found at:

<http://psychcorp.pearsonassessments.com/haiweb/Cultures/en-US/site/Community/PostSecondary/Products/pcat/pcathome.htm>

The PCAT examination is given 4 times per year in January, June, August and October. Although no minimum PCAT score is required, students with composite scores $< 50\%$ or individual subscores $< 25\%$ are not likely to be competitive for admission.

Will January PCAT scores be accepted?

Yes, but keep in mind that students with complete applications will be invited for interviews first. Early applications have an increased chance of an offer for interview and acceptance into the school. Your application is not complete until the PCAT score is received along with all other admission requirements. If the PCAT examination is taken in January, the School may not receive the student's score until March and interviews will not be scheduled until the School has received the student's PCAT score.

If I have taken the PCAT multiple times, which PCAT score will the Admissions Committee use as they review my application?

The Admissions Committee will take in consideration the highest composite PCAT score (regardless of whether this is the most recent score or not).

Do all prerequisite courses have to be completed before submitting an application?

No, the courses do not have to be completed in order to submit an application. However, all courses must have been successfully completed (with a grade of "C" or higher) before matriculation in the program is allowed.

Does the PCOM School of Pharmacy participate in the PharmCAS application service?

At this time, PharmCAS does not allow a school to participate in this process until they either have an ACPE site visit planned or have achieved at least precandidate status. Thus PCOM will not be participating in PharmCAS for the 2010 admission year but plans to participate in the 2011 admission year.

**Will I be required to interview at the College before I will be considered for admissions?
When are interviews scheduled?**

All students are required to complete an on-site interview prior to admissions to the Pharm.D. program. Complete dates/times/locations of the interviews will be provided to those students invited for an interview. Interviews typically begin around November and continue until the class is filled and a sufficient alternate list is created. This typically occurs sometime mid-late spring.

If I'm granted an interview, who will interview me? What is the proper dress attire for the interview?

Interviewers will consist mostly of faculty and staff of the school. As the school grows, the interview team will likely include current students, pharmacy preceptors and school alumni as well. Professional attire is required for the interview.

What information is required to be granted an interview?

Qualified students with a complete application file will be offered an interview. A completed application file is one where all of the following materials have been received by PCOM:

Completed application form

All school transcripts from undergraduate / graduate schools

3 letters of recommendation

PCAT score

What factors are considered for admission?

Students will be evaluated according to the information on their application, academic history (GPA), PCAT score, previous degrees, previous work experience and their performance during the interview.

Are there requirements for previous pharmacy work experience, volunteering, shadowing, etc.? How do I document this experience?

Previous pharmacy-related work experience is not required for admissions, however students with such work experience are given greater consideration in the admissions process. On the application for admission, you will be able to provide a history of your related work experience and be required to sign your name acknowledging the accuracy of the information provided.

Who may write the letter of recommendation for me?

We do not accept letters of recommendation from friends or family members. We recommend that you seek out reference letters from individuals who have had direct experience of you in an educational and/or professional setting that can attest to your work ethic, character and skills. Ideally this would include faculty members familiar with your academic abilities, pharmacists whom you have worked with in the past, previous work supervisors, or advisors from experiences you may have had in education, research, patient exposure, community service and/or employment.

Can I apply for a transfer from another PharmD program to PCOM?

The School of Pharmacy may accept transfer students from other ACPE accredited pharmacy schools depending on available space in the class as long as these students are in good academic standing and have legitimate reasons for seeking a transfer. All requests for transfer information should be referred to the Dean of the School of Pharmacy at PCOM. To be considered for transfer, a student must meet the School's general requirements for admission and must also submit the following:

1. A letter to the Chair of the Admissions Committee indicating why he/she wishes to transfer and explaining any academic difficulties encountered at his/her current institution
2. Official transcripts from all schools attended—undergraduate, graduate, and professional
3. A catalog and a detailed pharmacy syllabus for any courses for which advanced standing consideration is requested
4. A letter from the dean of the pharmacy college in which the student is enrolled. The letter must indicate the student's current academic status and/or terms of withdrawal/dismissal
5. Additional documents or letters of recommendation as determined necessary by the Chair of the Admissions Committee or Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Assessment.

How/when will I be informed of my admissions decision?

Students with a complete application file will be invited to interview with the school. Once the interview is completed, the student's application file will be reviewed by the Admissions Committee, and the best-qualified applicants will be selected (typically within a few weeks after the interview). These students will be informed via phone, mail or email of their admission to the school, and will be provided a packet of information necessary for matriculation. Students who interview but are not immediately selected for admission will be placed on an alternate list. A student on the alternate list may be accepted into the program if one of the previously accepted students fails to complete their prerequisite coursework or asks to be removed from the accepted list for any reason. Students that apply to the program that are not granted an interview will be placed on a waiting list if they meet the minimum qualifications but are not as competitive as other students. Such students may receive an interview at a later date. Students not meeting the minimum qualifications will be notified in writing. Applicants will not be informed of their position on the alternate or waiting lists, so please do not call to inquire.

PharmD program-related questions

What degree will I obtain from the School of Pharmacy?

The School of Pharmacy will offer the Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) as its single professional degree.

How long is the Pharm.D. Program?

The Pharm.D. Program is a 4-year professional program. Students may apply for the program after completing at least three years of pre-professional courses and successfully completing all of the prerequisite courses.

Can the PharmD program be taken on a part-time basis?

At this time the answer is no. Unlike undergraduate education where a student may progress at their desired speed, the PharmD program is a professional program where the curriculum is pre-determined by the school and the curriculum is scheduled to be completed in 4 years.

What are the total number of credits in the PharmD program?

At the current time, the total number of credits is 143 for the 4 years of the program.

Where is the curriculum for the program posted?

The Pharm.D. Program is a 4-year professional program. In any program, the curriculum is always subject to change, but the most recent version can be found at http://www.pcom.edu/Academic_Programs/aca_pharmd/pharmd_curriculum.html

When do classes begin and when do they end?

Pending successful precandidate accreditation approval, the School of Pharmacy is set to start in August 2010. For the first 3 years, each academic year is composed of three semesters, each 12 weeks long (plus a final exam week). The academic year begins in August and ends the following May. After the second year of instruction, students will also be required to participate in experiential clinical rotations during the months of May or June. These experiences will last about 2 weeks. In the final year of the program, students will begin advanced experiential rotations beginning in May and continue until the following May. Students are required to complete 8 experiential rotations but may have one rotation break somewhere throughout the final year. The time of the break is determined by lottery. For the first academic year in 2010, the terms begin as follows:

Fall term begins 8/16/10 and ends 11/12/10

Winter term begins 11/15/10 and ends 2/18/11

Spring term begins 2/21/11 and ends 5/20/11

Is a laptop computer required/recommended for this program?

A laptop computer is required. The School of Pharmacy will utilize state-of-the-art technology in the program, and thus access to email and the internet are critical. Communication with students is often done via email, and you will receive a PCOM email account before orientation. Curricular coursework is posted online via Blackboard educational software, and students may be taking some of their examinations online as well. The specifications of the laptop will be provided and it is the students' responsibility to insure that their laptop meet the specifications. Depending on the models, both PCs and Macintosh computers can be utilized.

Where will I complete my clinical experiences?

The Pharm.D. program will have clinical experiences throughout all four years of the curriculum as mandated by ACPE. The first, second and third year Introductory Pharmacy Practice Experiences (IPPE) will be completed in various pharmacies and health care facilities in the greater Atlanta area. The fourth year Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experiences (APPE) will be completed mostly in the greater Atlanta area but some rotations will be offered throughout the state of Georgia and in surrounding states as well.

Will I be required to find my own clinical sites or will the College locate these for me?

Students are not required to find their own clinical sites. The College will identify appropriate rotations sites for you, train the preceptors at each site and conduct quality assurance measures to insure that you will train at a quality site. Preceptors are either full-time faculty members of the School of Pharmacy or licensed pharmacists who function as adjunct faculty members.

For an out-of-state student, if they wanted to move back home during the final year of the program, are they allowed to find their own rotation sites?

This is possible, but not guaranteed. In order to become a preceptor for one of our clinical sites, the Director of Experiential Education or one of the Clinical Coordinators would have to visit the site, discuss the types of learning opportunities available at the site and determine the outcome objectives, provide training to the preceptors, discuss issues such as grading, etc. Not all sites will qualify as a rotation site. It would be unlikely that all of this would be done to accommodate a single student because of the resources required, but if multiple students were interested in the site then development of the site could be possible.

Is there University housing available for pharmacy students?

PCOM has no on-site housing for students at the Georgia Campus. However, Student Services will assist students in finding housing close to the campus. For students choosing to do 4th year rotations at distant sites, the School of Pharmacy will assist students in finding temporary housing at such sites.

Will PCOM provide transportation to/from rotation sites?

PCOM does not provide transportation for students. It is strongly suggested that students have their own car during all 4 years of the program.

Can I work while attending pharmacy school?

Only each individual student can answer that question. Pharmacy school can be quite rigorous and significantly different from your undergraduate experience. However, many students are able to maintain a balance between school, part-time work and an active social life. It is important that each student be able to manage their time effectively.

The School of Pharmacy is based in Suwanee GA. What is living in Suwanee like?

Suwanee is a suburb of Atlanta GA and offers an outstanding quality-of-life. Suwanee is approximately 30 miles northeast of Atlanta and offers close proximity to a large metropolitan environment with world-class shopping, restaurants, points-of-interest like the Georgia Aquarium, sporting events, indoor and outdoor concert arenas, theme parks like Six Flags, and yet is still close enough to great outdoor sporting areas like Lake Lanier and natural environments for hunting, hiking and fishing. For more information about Suwanee, please visit <http://www.suwanee.com/aboutsuwanee.php>

What type of immunizations are required for the PharmD program?

Students will be exposed to a number of different health care environments and will be in contact with many patients. In order to protect yourself and to minimize the possibility of transmitting diseases to other patients, certain immunizations are required. Students accepted into the program

All documentation must be printed and include a health provider's signature or stamp. All students will be required to maintain health insurance during their enrollment in the PharmD program. Please note that a failure to provide adequate documentation of these requirements may result in your invitation for admission to be withdrawn.

What are the pharmacy intern requirements?

The license requirements for pharmacists and pharmacy interns vary by state and it is recommended that applicants inquire with the board of pharmacy in the state where they intend to practice if they have any questions. In general, in order to take the pharmacist licensure examination, boards of pharmacy will require successful completion of the requirements for the Doctor of Pharmacy degree from an accredited institution and complete a certain number of hours as a pharmacy intern. In Georgia, applicants for pharmacist licensure must be at least 18 years of age, have graduated from an approved school of pharmacy and have completed 1,500 hours of internship under the supervision of a registered pharmacist. Schools of pharmacy in Georgia allow students to claim credit for 1,000 internship hours obtained during experiential rotations and the student is required to obtain 500 additional hours on their own as a licensed pharmacy intern. An applicant may register with the Georgia Board of Pharmacy as a pharmacy intern if they are registered in an accredited school/college of pharmacy. All students at the PCOM School of Pharmacy - Georgia Campus will be required to obtain their Georgia intern license during the first semester and the school will assist with the application process. Any applicant with a history of substance abuse, have a previous felony conviction or other issue that would be revealed in a criminal background check are advised to consult with the state board of pharmacy in Georgia prior to matriculation in the school (Georgia State Board of Pharmacy phone number = (478) 207-2440). Any changes resulting from criminal or civil actions should also be disclosed to the state board of pharmacy. Students wishing to gain intern experience outside of the state of Georgia are advised to contact the board of pharmacy in that state to determine the requirements for intern/pharmacist licensure. PCOM School of Pharmacy - Georgia Campus has no authority to determine eligibility of licensure for any intern or pharmacist in any state.

International Student Questions

Will you accept my course work taken in a foreign university?

Students with international transcripts must have their transcripts analyzed by a foreign transcript service. These foreign transcript evaluation reports are submitted to PharmCAS. PharmCAS will send PCOM this information. PCOM will accept evaluations from WES, ECE or Josef Silny & Associates. Please visit the PharmCAS website <http://www.pharmcas.org/applicants/transcripts.htm> for more information on this process and to view the contact list of Foreign Transcript Evaluation Services.

As an international applicant do I need to take the TOFEL exam?

International applicants are not required to take the TOFEL exam. However, international applicants must complete a minimum of 30 semester hours of coursework in the United States at any regionally-accredited college or university. Of the 30 required semester hours, 15 semester hours must be allocated to non-remedial science courses. A personal interview is required for all international students wishing to enroll in the program.