Admission to pharmacy school is highly competitive. Some pharmacy schools will accept students upon the completion of a minimum of 60 semester units of pre-pharmacy coursework. However, a bachelor’s degree is preferred at many institutions.

A solid understanding of fundamental sciences is essential to study pharmaceutical and biochemical sciences. A pharmacy degree requires four academic years of study. The first two years usually cover the basic sciences and the last two years, pharmacy theory and practice. At the completion of the curriculum, students are awarded a PharmD degree (Doctor of Pharmacy). Some pharmacy programs offer joint degrees: PharmD/PhD, PharmD/MBA, and PharmD/MS.

## Lower Division Subjects Required by Most U.S. Pharmacy Schools

| **Subject** | **Required Coursework** |
| --- | --- |
| One year of English | English 101 & English 102, 103 or Philosophy 5 |
| One year of Biology | Biology 6 & 7 |
| One year of Inorganic (General) Chemistry | Chemistry 101 & 102 |
| One year of Organic Chemistry | Chemistry 211 & 212 |
| One year of Biochemistry | Chemistry 221 |
| One year of Physics | Physics 6 & 7 or Physics 66 & 67 or Physics 101 &102. Your undergraduate major may also determine your choice of Physics requirements. |
| One semester of Anatomy | Anatomy 1 |
| One semester of Physiology | Physiology 1 |
| One semester of Microbiology | Microbiology 1 or 20 |
| One semester of Public Speaking/Speech | Speech 101 |
| One semester of Psychology | Psychology 1 |
| One semester of Economics | Economics 1 or 2 |
| Math | Most schools require one semester or one year of Calculus. Some schools require one year of calculus while others require statistics and calculus. Your undergraduate major may also determine your choice of Math requirements. |

Note: All courses should be taken for a letter grade, not Credit/No Credit. Most pharmacy schools prefer that prerequisites be taken at a university versus a community college. Pharmacy school requirements vary, check with the individual campus for their specific requirements.

## Choosing an Undergraduate Major

“Pre-pharmacy” is not a major at universities. You should give careful consideration to your choice of major and select an area of study that interests you. A discipline in natural science is often a popular major selected. However, students should select an appropriate major that could lead to an alternative career, if necessary. Some colleges, such as UC Davis, UC Irvine, UC San Diego and UC Santa Barbara have baccalaureate degrees in Pharmaceutical Sciences, Pharmaceutical Chemistry or Pharmacology that include the common pre-pharmacy coursework requirements. Visit [assist.org/](http://www.assist.org/web-assist/welcome.html%20) for more information.

Students applying to pharmacy school need to plan carefully and complete not only the pharmacy schools’ requirements, but also the requirements for their undergraduate major and the general education required by the undergraduate transfer institution.

## Pharmacy School Selection Criteria

## GPA in terms of overall college grades or pre-pharmacy coursework grades, depending on the school. Admissions committees look for trends in academic ability. Indication of improvement in your last two years of college work is highly noted. To be a competitive pharmacy applicant, keep your overall GPA above a 3.3.

## Some schools may require admissions tests such as the Pharmacy College Admissions Test (PCAT) or the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) is an admissions requirement. Check with the pharmacy schools you plan to apply to for information.

## Pharmacy schools expect applicants to have experience in community service. Evidence of community service demonstrates your interest in serving and helping people, your willingness to learn from others, and your development of interpersonal communication skills.

## Pharmacy schools select students who will become leaders in the profession. Leadership skills can be gained by serving as an officer in a student organization or fraternity/sorority, taking a leading role in a public service agency, or participating in competitive sports.

## To determine oral and written communication skills, pharmacy applicants are required to participate in pharmacy interviews and can be asked to submit a writing sample at the interview.

## Admissions committees expect that you have knowledge of the pharmacy profession and that you know some of the issues pharmacists currently face. Additionally, the admissions committee will want to know specifically why you are pursuing a career in the pharmacy profession.

## Pharmacy experience gained through volunteering, interning, or taking a summer job in a pharmacy or health care setting.

## Salary Information

The median wage in 2021 in California was $149,034 annually ([labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/](https://labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/data/oes-employment-and-wages.html#OES)). The median is the point at which half of the workers earn more and half earn less.

## Recommended Websites

| **Website** | **Website address** |
| --- | --- |
| American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy | [aacp.org/](https://www.aacp.org/) |
| American Council of Pharmaceutical Education | [acpe-accredit.org/](https://www.acpe-accredit.org/) |
| American Pharmacists Association | [pharmacist.com/](https://www.pharmacist.com/) |
| Pharmacy Choice | [pharmacychoice.com/education/pharmacy\_schools.cfm](https://www.pharmacychoice.com/education/pharmacy_schools.cfm) |

## Select Pharmacy School Websites

| **Website** | **Website address** |
| --- | --- |
| Loma Linda University | [pharmacy.llu.edu/](https://pharmacy.llu.edu/) |
| UC San Diego | [pharmacy.ucsd.edu/](http://pharmacy.ucsd.edu/) |
| UC San Francisco | [pharmacy.ucsf.edu/](https://pharmacy.ucsf.edu/) |
| University of Pacific | [pacific.edu/academics/schools-and-colleges/thomas-j-long-school-of-pharmacy-and-health-sciences/academics/doctor-of-pharmacy.html](https://www.pacific.edu/academics/schools-and-colleges/thomas-j-long-school-of-pharmacy-and-health-sciences/academics/doctor-of-pharmacy.html) |
| University of Southern California | [pharmacyschool.usc.edu/](https://pharmacyschool.usc.edu/) |
| Western Health Sciences | [westernu.edu/pharmacy/](https://www.westernu.edu/pharmacy/) |

## Clinical Experience

| **Website** | **Website address** |
| --- | --- |
| International Service Learning | [islonline.org/programs/program\_pharmacy/pharmacy/](https://islonline.org/programs/program_pharmacy/pharmacy/) |

Note: Information is subject to change without notice. Check with the individual campus for the most up-to-date information. *Web site links are provided as a convenience and for informational purposes only; they do not constitute an endorsement or an approval by the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) and/or Los Angeles Pierce College (LAPC) of any of the products, services or opinions of the corporation or organization or individual. The Los Angeles Community College District and/or Los Angeles Pierce College bears no responsibility for the accuracy, legality or content of the external site or for that of subsequent links. Contact the external site for answers to questions regarding its content.*