Many pharmacists work in hospital or institutional settings either in a central pharmacy or by working directly with nursing staff to improve patient care. Institutional specialties include emergency care, intensive care, oncology, and long-term care for the elderly. Pharmacists who work for the government or in the pharmaceutical industry help to ensure that a reliable supply of medicines are provided to the public.

What do pharmacists earn?
According the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average salary for a pharmacist was $111,570 in 2010. Pharmacy was also selected by U.S. News and World Report as the third best job in the magazine’s “Top 100 Jobs of 2012” list (source: www.bls.gov/ooh).

What is the employment outlook for this career?
According to the Occupational Outlook Handbook, the pharmacy field is expected to grow by 25 percent over the years 2010-2020, which is faster than the average for all occupations. With an increase in the number of pharmacy schools over the last twenty years, students should be aware that they may have to relocate to find employment (source: www.bls.gov/ooh).

What do students need to know before applying to pharmacy school?
Students should understand that competitive admission means that they must strive to earn good grades and learn as much as possible in the classroom. Program faculty recommend that students find part-time work in a pharmacy or ‘shadow’ a pharmacist on the job to make sure they want to pursue this career. Students are required to take an admission exam (PCAT—Pharmacy College Admission Test) prior to applying for pharmacy school, usually after the first year of classes are completed, and must complete the prerequisites required for the school to which they’re transferring. Information on specific school prerequisites for the school to which they're transferring. Students will be required to learn the specific course requirements for the schools they wish to attend. Specific school requirements can be found through the Pharmacy College Application Service at www.pharmcas.org/collegeschools/start.htm.

A.S. Degree

Option in Pre-Pharmacy
The pre-pharmacy option is designed for students interested in attending pharmacy school at a graduate institution. This program provides the general education and science course work necessary for acceptance to pharmacy school upon receiving adequate Pharmacy College Admission Test (PCAT) scores. Students will be required to learn the specific course requirements for the schools they wish to attend. Specific school requirements can be found through the Pharmacy College Application Service at www.pharmcas.org/collegeschools/start.htm.

General Education Requirements 33 credits
Arts/Humanities
Select two courses in different disciplines from approved General Education course list......................... 6
Behavioral/Social Sciences
Select two courses in different disciplines from approved General Education course list......................... 6
Biological/Physical Science
CHM 103 General Chemistry I ....................... 4
CHM 104 General Chemistry II ......................... 4
Diversity
Select one course from the approved General Education course list................................. 3
(Recommended elective—HUM 214 World Religions)

English
ENG 101 English Composition ....................... 3
ENG 102 Composition and Literature ................ 3

Mathematics
MAT 203 Calculus I .................................. 4

Program Requirements 16 credits
BIO 205 Microbiology .................................. 4
CHM 203 Organic Chemistry I ....................... 4
CHM 204 Organic Chemistry II ......................... 4
PHY 201 General Physics I .................................. 4

What is the Pre-Pharmacy Program?
The Pre-Pharmacy Program is a 60-credit associate’s degree program designed to fulfill the major requirements at most pharmacy schools. Students can customize their program to take specific requirements needed at their chosen pharmacy school and move directly from the community college to a graduate pharmacy school, earning a doctorate in as little as five years. Pharmacy school typically takes three to four years to complete and pre-pharmacy courses take two to three years.

Pre-pharmacy students must be prepared to take on an academically rigorous program of study that includes challenging coursework in biology, chemistry, and mathematics. Acceptance into pharmacy school is highly competitive. Grades and admission test scores play a large role in determining whether students are admitted to a pharmacy school program.

What types of jobs do pharmacists do?
Pharmacists work in a variety of organizations including hospitals, retail pharmacies, and government organizations. A large number of pharmacists work in retail pharmacy providing direct pharmaceutical care to retail patients. This care can include filling prescriptions, but can also include providing vaccinations and counseling on how to properly use medications.

Many pharmacists work in hospital or institutional settings either in a central pharmacy or by working directly with nursing staff to improve patient care. Institutional specialties include emergency care, intensive care, oncology, and long-term care for the elderly. Pharmacists who work for the government or in the pharmaceutical industry help to ensure that a reliable supply of medicines are provided to the public.

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Recommended Two-Year Program Completion Plan

Please note that many students will require three years to complete the program requirements for their chosen school of pharmacy. Learning the background material and earning high grades is important to assure success on the Pharmacy College Admission Test (PCAT) exam and to gain acceptance to pharmacy school. More information about the requirements for specific pharmacy schools can be found at www.pharmcas.org.

Semester I—Fall

CHM 103 General Chemistry I ......................... 4
BIO 101 General Biology I ................................ 4
MAT 203 Calculus ............................................ 4

Free elective
Choose an elective course from the Humanities, Social Sciences, or English disciplines .................................. (3)

Semester II—Spring

CHM 104 General Chemistry II ...................... 4
BIO 205 Microbiology ......................................... 4
OR
BIO 103 Human Anatomy and Physiology I ....... 4
MAT 109 Introduction to Statistics ................... 4

Free elective
Choose an elective course from the Humanities, Social Sciences, or English disciplines .................................. (3)

Summer I

Students who plan to attend pharmacy school following their second year of study should begin the process of preparing to take the PCAT after completing their first year of study (summer or fall). More information about the PCAT can be found at www.pcatweb.info. The approximate cost of the exam is $199, and students must sign up in advance of the exam date.

During their first summer of study, students should also begin choosing a pharmacy school and prepare to submit an application. Applications must typically be made in the fall one year prior to when the student hopes to attend. Most pharmacy school applications are done through Pharmcas, a universal pharmacy college application available online at www.pharmcas.org.

Students should review the specific guidelines for pharmacy schools they hope to attend. Many students will find that they need to take one or two additional courses to meet the requirements of the schools of their choice.

Semester III—Fall

CHM 203 Organic Chemistry I ............................ 4
PHY 201 General Physics I ................................. 4

Biology
Take one of the following three courses:
BIO 103 Anatomy and Physiology I ............... (4)
BIO 104 Anatomy and Physiology II .............. (4)
BIO 205 Microbiology ...................................... (4)

Free elective
Choose an elective course from the Humanities, Social Sciences, or English disciplines .................................. (3)

Semester IV—Spring

CHM 204 Organic Chemistry II ....................... 4

Biology
Take one of the following four courses:
BIO 103 Anatomy and Physiology I ............... (4)
BIO 104 Anatomy and Physiology II ............... (4)
BIO 201 Cell Biology and Genetics ................. (4)
BIO 205 Microbiology ...................................... (4)