

# Pre-Pharmacy Advising at St. Olaf



## Getting Started

In the United States, a PharmD, or Doctorate in Pharmacology, is required to practice as a pharmacist. The American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy ([www.AACP.org](http://www.AACP.org)) is an excellent resource to assist you in deciding whether or not pharmacy school is for you, and if so, guiding you through the application process and beyond. There are about 100 PharmD programs located throughout the nation, most of which are four years in length and many of which have characteristic pre-requisites and recommended undergraduate coursework which vary between different pharmacy schools. If you are entertaining the option of attending pharmacy school, then it is important to survey the requirements for each school and account for them in your academic planning. In general, four years of undergraduate study with a BA degree is preferred by admissions committees.

## Recommended Undergraduate Coursework

Below is a list of the recommended St. Olaf courses for students planning on a career in pharmacy. This list comes from the Registrar's Academic Catalog: [www.stolaf.edu/catalog/specialprograms/pre-prof-plan.html](http://www.stolaf.edu/catalog/specialprograms/pre-prof-plan.html)

Course Name	St. Olaf Catalog Equivalent	Required/Recommended
General Biology	Bio 125 with Lab	Required by all/nearly all
General Chemistry	Chem 125 (or 121/123) and 126 with Lab	Required by all/nearly all
Organic Chemistry	Chem 247 and 248 with Lab	Required by all/nearly all
Microbiology	Bio 231 with Lab	Required by all/nearly all
Human Anatomy	Bio 243 with Lab	Required by all/nearly all
Physics	Physics 124 and 125 with Lab	Required by all/nearly all
Calculus	Math 120	Required by all/nearly all
Economics	Economics 121	Required by all/nearly all
Public Speaking	Theatre 120 or other ORC credit	Required by all/nearly all
English Composition	GE 111 and WRI credit	Required by all/nearly all
Psychology	Psych 125 or others	Required by some
Biochemistry	Chem 379	Required by some
Sociology	Soan 121, 128 or others	Required by some
Statistics	Stat 110, 212 or others	Required by some
Government	Psci 111 or others	Required by some
Ethics	Phil 250 or others	Required by some
General Biology II	Bio 126 with Lab	Required by some
Microeconomics	Econ 262	Required by some
Analytical Chemistry	Chem 255 with Lab	Required by some
Computer Science	Csci 121 or others	Required by some
Business	Mgmt or Accounting classes	Recommended by some
Foreign Language	Usually fulfilled with FOL requirement	Recommended by some

### For more information about the Pre-Pharmacy track at St. Olaf and joining St. Olaf's Pre-Pharm Club, contact:

Douglas Beussman, Chemistry Department, Pre-pharmacy Advisor

NOTE: Ted Johnson, Biology Professor and Director of the Biomedical Studies Concentration and other members of the Health Professions Committee will also be of assistance. See: [www.stolaf.edu/depts/biomed/formsto\\_be\\_used\\_by\\_students\\_and\\_faculty/](http://www.stolaf.edu/depts/biomed/formsto_be_used_by_students_and_faculty/)

For more information about course schedule planning, contact:

Cheryl LaCroix, Coordinator of Academic Advising, [lacroix@stolaf.edu](mailto:lacroix@stolaf.edu)

**Doug Beussman, Associate Professor of Chemistry, Pre-Pharmacy Advisor**  [beussmad@stolaf.edu](mailto:beussmad@stolaf.edu)  
Center for Experiential Learning  Career Exploration, Internships, Civic Engagement, Entrepreneurship  [www.stolaf.edu/services/cel/](http://www.stolaf.edu/services/cel/)

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## *The Center for Experiential Learning (CEL)*

In preparation for Pharmacy school, exposure to the field is critical. This can be obtained through:

- informational interviews with professionals in the field
- job shadowing
- internships
- employment
- volunteer opportunities

More information on any of these options can be found through the Center for Experiential Learning ([www.stolaf.edu/services/cel](http://www.stolaf.edu/services/cel)). The CEL offers workshops and one-on-one meetings that assist students with career exploration, resume and cover letter development, graduate school search and preparation, internship search resources, and much more! Check out the information at the CEL's student website. You can also stop by the CEL anytime Monday through Friday, 9am to 5pm for assistance from a knowledgeable Peer Advisor. CEL staff members are here to help you put your best foot forward as you explore and prepare for your career in pharmacy.

To help you get started, we have included below a list of local pharmacies which may offer opportunities for you to gain exposure to the field. Keep in mind that you can also seek opportunities in your home town during breaks or over summer. Additionally, many students use interim as an opportunity to gain experience and get credit, completing an academic internship. You can find more information about academic internships at the CEL's student website: [www.stolaf.edu/services/cel/students/](http://www.stolaf.edu/services/cel/students/). Be sure to talk with a CEL staff member as you prepare to contact any of the sites listed.

Pharmacy	Phone	Address	City, Zip
Walgreens	507-645-9658	401 W 5th St	Northfield
Village Drug	507-645-4455	700 Division St.	Northfield
Northfield Pharmacy	507-663-0344	601 S Water St	Northfield
Econofoods	507-645-4489	601 Division St	Northfield
CUB Foods	507-664-9029	2423 Hwy 3 S	Northfield
CUB Foods Corporate	952-294-6900	19011 Lake Drive East	Chanhassen, 55317
Kmart Pharmacy	507-645-5855	404 Schilling Drive S	Northfield
Wal-Mart Supercenter Store	507-332-0232	150 Western Ave	Faribault
Hy-Vee	507-334-1555	1920 Grant Street NW	Faribault
Boyes Pharmacy	507-334-7451	301 Central Ave N	Faribault
Snyders Drug	507-334-3937	720 NW 4th Street	Faribault
Rice County District One Hospital	507-332-4797	631 First St SE	Faribault
Econofoods Pharmacy	651-460-6160	115 Elm St	Farmington, 55024
CVS Pharmacy	651-463-3693	19605 Pilot Knob Rd	Farmington, 55024
SuperTarget	952-892-5400	18275 Kenrick Ave	Lakeville, 55044
CVS Pharmacy	952-432-8770	17578 Dodd Boulevard	Lakeville, 55044
SuperTarget	952-891-5500	15150 Cedar Ave	Apple Valley, 55124
CVS Pharmacy	952-432-3535	15051 Galaxie Ave	Apple Valley, 55124
CVS Pharmacy	952-423-3200	15115 Dove Trail	Apple Valley, 55124
CVS Corporate Office	866-222-9438	1250 Northland Suite #100	Mendota, 55120
SuperTarget	952-236-3003	810 County Rd 42 W	Burnsville, 55337

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## *Preparing for Pharmacy School*

Once you have decided that you are committed to pursuing a PharmD, the application process is the next step. In addition to completing some general application materials, admission to any graduate school usually requires taking a standardized test, writing your Curriculum Vitae, requesting letters of recommendation from professors and/or supervisors, and composing a personal statement or answering several essay questions. Pharmacy school is no different.

The entrance exam for pharmacy school is the PCAT ([www.PCATweb.info](http://www.PCATweb.info)), which consists of 240 multiple-choice items in five sections (Verbal Ability; Quantitative Ability; Biology, Chemistry and Reading Comprehension) and two Writing topics. Candidates are given four hours to complete the test, plus administrative time for instructions and time for a short rest break about halfway through the test. Each year, the test is offered four times, once each in January, June, August, and October. Score reports are available within six weeks of the test date. Be sure to register early, since seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. Online and paper registration is available. Preparation for this test is a must; practice tests are available online, both in online and paper formats. More information is available through the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy ([www.aacp.org](http://www.aacp.org)).

The general application is available through the AACP, and can be found online ([www.pharmcas.org](http://www.pharmcas.org)). This application compiles a broad range of your personal information, and processes your transcripts, letters of recommendation, and PCAT scores. This primary application can then be submitted to multiple schools. Be aware that there is a fee attached to this process, and that some programs require a Supplemental Application in addition to the PharmCAS primary application. Apply as early as possible, since some schools have a rolling admission policy and will be reviewing applications and accepting students long before the final application deadline arrives. For schools with rolling admission, the earlier you apply, the better chance you may have of being accepted. You should therefore try to take the PCAT exam in June or August before your senior year (or if prepared during January of your junior year).

## *Additional resources* (adapted from the U of MN's College of Pharmacy)

St. Olaf Professor Ted Johnson's *Finding Your Way to a Career in the Health Professions*, located at the Biomedical Studies Concentration website: [www.stolaf.edu/depts/biomed/](http://www.stolaf.edu/depts/biomed/)

### *Admission to colleges and schools of pharmacy*

- Pharmacy College Application Service (PharmCAS) [www.pharmcas.org](http://www.pharmcas.org)
- Pharmacy College Admission Test (PCAT) [www.pcatweb.info](http://www.pcatweb.info)
- The Health Career Center at the U of MN Twin Cities [www.healthcareers.umn.edu](http://www.healthcareers.umn.edu)
- The Pharmacy Program resource at UCLA [www.career.ucla.edu/GraduateSchool&PreProfessionalServices/Pharmacy.asp](http://www.career.ucla.edu/GraduateSchool&PreProfessionalServices/Pharmacy.asp)

### *Professional Associations, Pharmacy Organizations*

- American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy [www.aacp.org](http://www.aacp.org) (click on "For students and applicants")
- The American Pharmacists Association [www.pharmacyandyou.org](http://www.pharmacyandyou.org)
- American Society of Health-System Pharmacists [www.ashp.org](http://www.ashp.org)
- American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists [www.aapspharmaceutica.com](http://www.aapspharmaceutica.com) (click on "Career Network")
- American College of Clinical Pharmacy [www.accp.com](http://www.accp.com)
- The Minnesota Pharmacists Association [www.mpha.org](http://www.mpha.org)
- Minnesota Society of Health-System Pharmacists [www.mnshp.org](http://www.mnshp.org)