

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF PHARMACY AND PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES
DOCTOR OF PHARMACY HONORS PROGRAM

Revised, October 2018

MISSION

The Doctor of Pharmacy Honors Program provides research opportunities in the College of Pharmacy to students enrolled in the professional Doctor of Pharmacy program. Qualified students who are academically strong and who are motivated to pursue educational opportunities outside of the classroom will work with faculty research mentors to develop research projects and explore areas of interest that complement and enhance their experiences in the Doctor of Pharmacy program.

Students in the first year of the professional program are eligible to apply to the Honors Program. Admission of students early in the program will enable the students to develop strong relationships with faculty research mentors and well-designed research projects. Students who successfully complete research projects and the requirements as set forth by the Honors Committee will graduate with honors distinction.

Student Benefits. Students admitted to the Doctor of Pharmacy Honors Program will:

- Learn about basic, clinical, outcomes research, or other scholarly activities related to health sciences
- Develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills to formulate and test hypotheses, discuss disease interventions, or improve patient care
- Work one-on-one with an accomplished faculty mentor
- Interact with research faculty members and staff, PhD students, and other Honors students
- Attend seminars including those presented by outside guest speakers and research experts
- Develop communication skills through oral and poster presentations of research work
- Build a strong curriculum vitae to be more competitive in the job market or as an applicant to residency/graduate school
- Work with faculty members who can provide letters of recommendation in support of career advancement
- Expand career opportunities
- Build lifelong professional relationships

Students who are interested in the joint Pharm.D/PhD program can receive valuable research experience for the PhD program

ADMISSION

Eligibility. Doctor of Pharmacy students interested in pursuing research opportunities offered by the Honors Program must be in the first year of the professional program and be in good academic standing as determined by the College's Student Progress Committee. Good academic standing is defined as having successfully passed all courses with no decisions by the Student Progress Committee to put a student on probation or decertify a student from the PharmD Program.

Step 1: Preparation (Fall PY1)

Interested students need to identify a mentor so that they can sign up for 499 (Special Problems) or 599 (Special Projects) for Spring PY1. The purpose of this experience is to determine whether the student is able to commit time to research, and whether the mentor assignment is a suitable match. Course enrollment can be in either Pharmacy 499 (for mentors in Pharmacotherapy) or PharDSci 499 (for mentors in PharmSci). Students can register for 1-4 credits in a 499 course, based on discussions with their mentor and the time commitment involved.

To identify a mentor, it is suggested that students review the research interests of the faculty, and then arrange to meet with individual faculty members to discuss their mutual interests and the potential availability of a project in the mentor's group. This will be done at the initiative of the student, although the Associate Dean for Faculty and Student Development is available for advice during the process. The mentor must approve enrollment of the student in a 499 or 599 course.

Step 2: Participation in 499/599 project

Students will work with the faculty mentor during the Spring PY1 semester. The time commitment is variable, but must be sufficient for the student to gain sufficient experience, and for the mentor to evaluate the student's research potential, by the middle of the Spring PY1 semester. Upon request, and with the written support of both faculty members involved, it is possible for students to switch mentors during or after the semester.

Step 3: Application.

Students will complete an application to the Honors Program. Further details will be provided in Spring PY1. Completed applications must be submitted to the Doctor of Pharmacy Honors Committee to Ms. Linda Kildew (lkildew@wsu.edu), by 5 p.m. on Friday, March 1, 2019. The application will consist of the following components:

1. Current curriculum vitae or resume
2. An essay (1-2 pages) that addresses:
 - a) Why the student is interested in pursuing research, including future career goals
 - b) What topic/research question the student is interested in studying
 - c) The proposed faculty mentor, and why this is a good match
 - d) Research-related experience the student has had, including in the mentor's group
 - e) Personal background (including extracurricular activities, community service, leadership activities, and work and volunteer experiences).
3. Letter of support from the mentor

This letter will be submitted directly to the office of the Associate Dean for Faculty and Student Development.

Acceptance. Admission to the Honors Program is competitive and depends on the number of research opportunities available each year as well as the number of qualified applicants. Application to the program therefore does not guarantee acceptance to the program. Applicants will be notified by the College of Pharmacy Honors Committee of their acceptance into the Doctor of Pharmacy Honors Program.

PROGRESS AND RETENTION

Academic Standing. Students admitted into the Doctor of Pharmacy Honors Program must be in good academic standing as determined at the end of each semester by the College's Student Progress Committee.

Research Project. Students admitted into the Doctor of Pharmacy Honors Program must complete an Honors research project. Each research project must be developed through discussions with the faculty research mentor. Students are expected to meet regularly with faculty mentors, and to submit an annual progress report at the end of PY2 and PY3 (see below). Research projects must be completed during Spring PY3, prior to advancing to the fourth professional year advanced pharmacy practice experiences.

Enrollment in Upper Division or Graduate Level Courses. Students admitted into the Doctor of Pharmacy Honors Program are required to enroll in PharmSci 577 (Responsible Conduct in Biomedical Research; 3 credits) in Fall PY2. This course will be available to students on both the Spokane and Yakima campuses, and can be used to fulfill the elective requirements for the PharmD curriculum.

Presentation of Research in PY2. Students admitted into the Doctor of Pharmacy Honors Program must give a presentation that includes background, rationale, and process/design of the project at Honors Research Day in Spring PY2. The primary purpose of the presentation is for the student to gain presentation experience, and to obtain helpful feedback regarding the project. Students will state their preference for an oral presentation, or a poster. Since there will be space and time limitations for both types of presentations, the Honors Committee will make the final decision regarding the assignment.

Presentation of Research in PY3. Students will submit a draft manuscript, describing the results of their project, in Spring PY3 (date TBA). It is not required that the manuscript actually be submitted for publication, but the draft must be in a style and format consistent with a journal in the field (journal title must be provided with the draft). The draft manuscript will be reviewed by members of the Honors Program Committee to determine whether the work merits the honors distinction.

Progress Reports. Students enrolled in the Honors Program are required to submit annual progress reports at the end of PY2 and PY3. Both the student and the mentor will contribute to the report. The purpose is to ensure that students have made satisfactory progress (PY2) and have fulfilled the requirements of the program (PY3). The PY3 report will include a "completion form", to be signed by the mentor, indicating that the students have completed the program.

Consequences for Failure to Meet Requirements as Established by the Honors Committee. Once admitted, students who fail to meet the requirements of the Honors Program, as described above, may be dismissed from the program or put on probation until the requirements can be met. In the event a student believes that a decision of the Honors Committee is unfair or unjustified, the student is entitled to appeal the decision to the Student Progress Committee. Students whose appeals are successful will be reinstated into the Honors Program; students whose appeals are not successful will be permanently dismissed from the Honors Program. Any student who is dismissed from the Honors Program may continue to do research with the faculty mentor but may not graduate with an honors distinction upon graduation.

GRADUATION

Students wishing to graduate with honors distinction from the Honors Program must:

- Be in good standing (no delay in progression by the College's Student Progress Committee)
- Give a poster presentation by the end of PY2 Spring semester
- Present a draft manuscript on their research to the Honors Committee in Spring PY3
- Submit a signed "completion form" at the end of Spring PY3, or at the beginning of PY4 if an extension request is submitted and approved

Students who successfully complete all requirements described above will graduate with an honors distinction, to be recognized during the commencement ceremony and noted on their transcript.