

PharmCAS Essay Cheat Sheet

To help make the process a little easier, we're sharing some guidance to help you navigate the essay questions in your pharmacy school application.

One of the biggest things to keep in mind is that there is no correct answer to these questions. We just want to better get to know you. This is your chance to tell your story and let your personality shine.

What's the difference between a personal essay and professional goals statement?

The **personal essay** (4,500 characters maximum) is part of the supporting information portion of your PharmCAS application. It asks why you chose pharmacy and how a PharmD will help you achieve your goals (what do you want to do after graduation and long-term). If you're having trouble with this question, think about:

- What first got you interested in pharmacy?
- Was there anyone who influenced your decision?
- What do you want to do immediately after graduating with your doctor of pharmacy degree?
- What is your dream job and how does a PharmD help you get there?

The **professional goals statement** is a series of six questions specific to the WSU College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences in the program materials portion of your PharmCAS application (100 words max. each).

Program Specific Questions (Professional Goals Statement)

These are the questions you will be answering as well as tips to help get you started.

- 1. Describe examples of your leadership experience and share how you have significantly influenced others, helped resolve disputes, or contributed to group efforts over time. Consider responsibilities you have taken for initiatives in or out of school.**

Think about times you have worked in groups, taken the lead on a project, been entrusted with important tasks, or been involved in student organizations. In general, we want to understand how you work and communicate with others.

- 2. Describe any of your special interests and how you have developed knowledge in these areas. Give examples of your creativity: the ability to see alternatives; take diverse perspectives; come up with many, varied, or original ideas; or willingness to try new things.**

Tell us about your hobbies and interests. What do you enjoy doing in your free time? This gives us a glimpse into who you are as a human, and helps us get to know you better!

- 3. Describe the most significant challenge you have faced and the steps you have taken to address this challenge. Include whether you turned to anyone in facing that challenge, the role that person played, and what you learned about yourself.**

This can be any challenge in your personal, school, or professional life. It can be a specific situation or something that is/was a long-term or ongoing part of your experience. What about your path was different and how did you overcome that?

- 4. Explain what you have done to make your community a better place to live. Give examples of specific projects in which you have been involved over time.**

Any volunteer work or community involvement would be great to highlight here. This can be as simple as how you help neighbors, or stepped up to support your family during the pandemic. We know that several years under pandemic restrictions have put community service activities on hold. In general we just want to hear big and small ways you aspire to make your community a better place.

- 5. Why do you want to attend the WSU College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences?**

What is it about our program that sets it apart from others (in your opinion)? Maybe you were impressed by how welcomed you felt by faculty/staff/students, or you're interested in some of the research or dual degree options we have, or it's closer to home. Whatever your reason, we want to know what moves you.

- 6. Why are you interested in attending the Spokane/Yakima campus?**

Is there something about living in one city or the other that appeals to you? Would one campus be better for your circumstances (for example if it's closer to family or a job opportunity)? Did one campus stand out over the other? Is there something about the campus, faculty, or classes that made an impression on you?

Quick Tip: You can submit your PharmCAS application and program materials even if PharmCAS has not yet received your evaluations (letters of recommendation) or transcripts, or if your paid transcript entry isn't yet completed. We'll work with you to make sure everything arrives.



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