

**ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR THE
PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM IN PHARMACY LEADING TO THE DOCTOR
OF PHARMACY DEGREE
ADOPTED: JANUARY 15, 2006**

STANDARDS FOR STUDENTS

The purpose of the standards in this section is to ensure that the college or school has adequate resources, fair and equitable policies and procedures, and capabilities to support student admission, progression, personal and professional development, and input into programmatic quality improvement.

Standard No. 16: Organization of Student Services

Standard No. 17: Admission Criteria, Policies, and Procedures

Standard No. 18: Transfer of Credits and Waiver of Requisites for Admission with Advanced Standing

Standard No. 19: Progression of Students

Standard No. 20: Student Complaints Policy

Standard No. 21: Program Information

Standard No. 22: Student Representation and Perspectives

Standard No. 23: Professional Behavior and Harmonious Relationships

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Standard No. 16: Organization of Student Services

The college or school must have an organizational element(s) devoted to student services. The administrative officer responsible for this organizational element must oversee and coordinate the student services of the college or school.

Guideline 16.1

The college or school should ensure that the organizational element devoted to student services, in general:

- has adequate personnel and resources to undertake its responsibilities
- links with university student services
- is responsible for student recruitment programs and administration of the admissions and progression processes
- is responsible for the orientation of prospective and new students, which should include a presentation of the mission, goals, values, and educational philosophy of the college or school
- provides orientation, training, and remediation to help students become proficient in the use of the program's technology and educational methodologies
- provides informational materials (printed or electronic), such as a student handbook, with relevant policies, procedures, and codes, and a bulletin describing the college or school and the pharmacy degree program
- administers student scholarships and awards (achievement and need-based) and loans
- provides academic advising and career-pathway counseling adequate to the needs of students, including those in alternate curricular pathways, where applicable
- coordinates the availability of personal counseling for students through university resources or by other arrangements
- identifies the professional technical standards¹⁷ required as part of the admissions and progression procedures
- plans and participates in activities that support the development of students as professionals
- provides or otherwise makes available training for advisors, tutors, counselors, and others involved in providing student services
- provides support to faculty in effectively and efficiently teaching students with an acknowledged disability
- verifies completion of degree requirements

¹⁷ Professional technical standards are established by the university, college, or school based on the physical and mental attributes required of students to be able to function competently as a pharmacist upon graduation.

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Guideline 16.2

The college or school must have an ordered, accurate, and secure system of student records. Student records must be confidential and maintained in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Student services personnel must be knowledgeable regarding FERPA law and its practices.

Guideline 16.3

The college or school must provide students with financial aid information and guidance.

Guideline 16.4

The college or school must offer access to adequate health and counseling services for students. Appropriate immunization standards must be established, along with the means to ensure that such standards are satisfied. The college or school should have policies in place so that students who have off-campus classes or pharmacy practice experiences fully understand their insurance coverage and where and how to access health and counseling services.

Guideline 16.5

The college or school must establish and implement a policy on student services, including admissions and progression, that ensures nondiscrimination as defined by state and federal laws and regulations, such as on the basis of race, religion, gender, lifestyle, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability.

Standard No. 17: Admission Criteria, Policies, and Procedures

The college or school must produce and make available to students and prospective students criteria, policies, and procedures for admission to the professional degree program. Admission materials must clearly state academic expectations, required communication skills, types of personal history disclosures that may be required, and professional standards for graduation. As a component of its evaluation plan, the college or school must regularly assess the criteria, policies, and procedures to ensure the selection of students who have the potential for academic success in the professional degree program and the ability to achieve the professional competencies and to practice in culturally diverse environments.

Student enrollment must be managed in alignment with available physical, financial, faculty, staff, practice site, preceptor, and administrative resources. The dean and a duly constituted committee of the college or school must share the final responsibility for enrollment and selection of students.

Guideline 17.1

The preprofessional educational requirements for admission to the professional degree program (not less than two academic years or the equivalent of college-level course work

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prior to the four academic years required by these standards) should provide basic sciences, such as general chemistry, organic chemistry, biological sciences (with a focus on human processes and diseases), mathematics, information and communication technologies, and physical sciences. Moreover, sufficient general education, defined as humanities, behavioral sciences, social sciences, and communication skills, should be provided in the preprofessional requirements to encourage the broadening of intellectual powers and interests and to facilitate the development of professional practitioners capable of understanding a culturally diverse society and their role in it as health care providers. Elements of general education also may be attained concurrently or integrated with the curriculum for the professional degree program.

Guideline 17.2

Students may be admitted to the professional degree program under an early assurance program. In such an admissions arrangement, a formal and published agreement should exist between the college or school and the associated institution(s), if any, or directly with the student. The early assurance student should be admitted to the professional degree program contingent upon successful completion of entrance requirements and application procedures.

Early assurance students entering the first professional year of the curriculum should be as well qualified as students accepted for direct entry into the first professional year.

Guideline 17.3

Admissions criteria, policies, and procedures should take into account necessary scholastic accomplishments, as well as other desirable qualities (such as intellectual curiosity, leadership, emotional maturity, empathy, ethical behavior, motivation, industriousness, and communication capabilities) that support the student's potential to become a self-directed lifelong learner and an effective professional. The admission process should foster diversity in the selection of students while ensuring that legal parameters are followed.

In-person standardized interviews of applicants, including evaluation of verbal communication skills, understanding of the pharmacy profession, and commitment to patient care, must be part of the admission process.¹⁸ Such interviews should be conducted by faculty, preceptors, or staff, and should be held either on campus, in an off-site location, or using videoconferencing technology. To foster inter-rater reliability, interviewers should receive training in the method that the college or school has chosen

¹⁸ In the case of 0-6 or 1-5 programs, progression into the first professional year (as defined by ACPE) can occur without the required interview only if formative and summative assessments in courses or activities (overseen by pharmacy faculty) are used to assess eligibility for progression based on the student's verbal and written communication skills, understanding of the pharmacy profession, and commitment to patient care. Transfer students into the first professional year of the curriculum for 0-6 or 1-5 programs must be interviewed.

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for standardization of the interview process. Written communication skills also must be assessed in a standardized manner. Factors beyond the grade point average should be considered to determine which candidates qualify for interviews.

Guideline 17.4

Criminal and other activities that may restrict the student's ability to access experiential sites or potentially affect the student's eligibility for future licensure, by reason of state statutes or regulations, should be identified. Policies and procedures in accord with those of the university should be in place and available, under which students will be advised of the types of disclosures they may be required to make prior to admission and during the professional degree program, what background checks they may be subject to prior to admission and during the professional degree program, and the potential adverse consequences resulting from these disclosures or background checks.

Guideline 17.5

The college or school must develop and employ admission criteria that set performance expectations for admission tests, evaluations, and interviews used in selecting students who have the potential for success in the professional degree program and the profession.

Guideline 17.6

A recruitment program should be established to provide a pool of well-qualified and diverse applicants for the available positions. Admission criteria, policies, and procedures must not be compromised regardless of the size and quality of the applicant pool.

Guideline 17.7

As a component of its evaluation program, the college or school should undertake studies to correlate admissions criteria, policies, and procedures with student achievement in the professional degree program and performance in professional practice.

Guideline 17.8*

Colleges and schools should assess through admissions counseling procedures whether a student who will be learning at a distance has the self-motivation, commitment, skills, and competencies to benefit from and succeed in a distance-learning environment. Information gained should be used to update future admission and recruitment policies and decisions. All students admitted into distance-learning programs or pathways should possess the basic technological knowledge and skills to use the equipment utilized in the program. Where the effectiveness of new program initiatives has not yet been determined, initial course, pathway, or program enrollments should be limited and increased gradually until the effectiveness of the initiative is established. Consultation with ACPE must occur at least six months before recruiting students into new pathways or programs.

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Standard No. 18: Transfer of Credits and Waiver of Requisites for Admission with Advanced Standing

The college or school must produce and make available to students and prospective students transfer credit and course-waiver policies, based on rational procedures and defensible assessments.

Guideline 18.1

The college or school must implement policies and procedures for the evaluation of the equivalency of educational courses (preprofessional or professional) prior to admission or transfer to the professional degree program.

Guideline 18.2

Credits toward completion of the professional program in pharmacy may be transferred from one ACPE-accredited professional degree program to another.

Guideline 18.3*

For colleges or schools with nontraditional curricular pathways, for example, pathways for graduates of an ACPE-accredited baccalaureate in pharmacy program or for students in multiple professional degree program pathways, admission criteria and transfer credits should be customized in accordance with the results of a candidate's individualized assessments.

Requisites may only be waived based upon an educationally sound assessment of the professional competencies (as set forth in Standard 12) that may have been achieved through continuing pharmacy education, other postgraduate education and training, and previous pharmacy practice experience.

Guideline 18.4*

Colleges and schools offering multiple professional degree program pathways must establish and implement policies and procedures for students who request to transfer credits or who wish to change from one program pathway to another.

Standard No. 19: Progression of Students

The college or school must produce and make available to students and prospective students criteria, policies, and procedures for academic progression, academic probation, remediation, missed course work or credit, dismissal, readmission, rights to due process, and appeal mechanisms.

Guideline 19.1

The college or school should develop admission criteria, policies and procedures, student services, curricular evaluation and revision, and formative and summative assessment of

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competencies that collectively maximize the likelihood of successful student completion of the professional degree program in the expected timeframe.

Guideline 19.2

The college or school's system of monitoring student performance based on formative assessments of learning outcomes must provide for the early detection of academic difficulty. The college or school should provide individualized student services, such as tutorial support and faculty advising.

Guideline 19.3

The college or school should have progression policies that take into consideration assessments of professional behavior and academic integrity.

Guideline 19.4

The college or school should have records of student retention and attrition for purposes of identifying and analyzing trends and making programmatic adjustments as appropriate.

Guideline 19.5*

The college or school offering multiple professional degree program pathways must ensure that all students have a comparable system of access of individualized student services.

Standard No. 20: Student Complaints Policy

The college or school must produce and make available to students a complaints policy that includes procedures to be followed in the event of a written complaint related to one of the accreditation standards, student rights to due process, and appeal mechanisms. Students must receive information on how they can submit a complaint to ACPE for unresolved issues on a complaint related to the accreditation standards.¹⁹

Guideline 20.1

The college or school must include information about the complaint policy during student orientation and should reinforce its availability periodically during the professional degree program.

Guideline 20.2

The college or school must maintain a chronological record of student complaints related to matters covered by the accreditation standards and allow inspection of the records during on-site evaluation visits by ACPE.

¹⁹ Refer also to ACPE Complaints Policy at <http://www.acpe-accredit.org/complaints/default.asp>

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Guideline 20.3

The college or school must inform ACPE during an on-site evaluation if any of the student complaints related to the accreditation standards have led to legal proceedings, and the outcomes of such proceedings.

Standard No. 21: Program Information

The college or school must produce and make available to students and prospective students a complete and accurate description of the professional degree program, including its current accreditation status.

Guideline 21.1

A current description (electronic or printed), such as a college or school catalog, a student handbook, or related college or university documents should be available that, in general, include the following:

- the mission, goals, objectives, and educational philosophy of the professional degree program
- the curricular plan, courses, and credit hours
- resources available to support the curriculum
- criteria, policies, and procedures related to admissions, progression, and access to student records
- the types of disclosures students may be required to make prior to admission or during the professional degree program, what background checks they may be subject to prior to admission or during the professional degree program, and the potential adverse consequences resulting from the disclosures or background checks
- college or school grading policy, grade scheme, and GPA calculation policy
- student code documents, such as ethics, conduct, and professional behavior
- off-campus curricular requirements, such as practice experiences in other geographic locations
- graduation requirements
- tuition and fees, including refund policies
- financial aid guidance
- statement of nondiscrimination
- provision for on and off-campus housing, including availability during off-campus practice experiences
- graduation and placement rates
- current accreditation status of the program and contact information for ACPE
- recent pass rates of graduates taking the standardized licensure examinations for the first time
- expectations for attitudes, values, traits, and ethics required in the profession

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- a description of policies regarding student life, such as accommodations for disabilities, harassment, antiviolence, and others
- immunization and other health or practice site requirements

Guideline 21.2*

Admissions policies, procedures, and practices must fully and clearly represent the conditions and requirements related to distance learning, including full disclosure of any requirements that cannot be completed at a distance. Colleges and schools offering multiple program pathways should assess appropriate tuition and fees for facilities and services rendered. An explanation of tuition and fee differences between pathways or differences in facilities and services between pathways should be available upon request.

Standard No. 22: Student Representation and Perspectives

The college or school must consider student perspectives and include student representation, where appropriate, on committees, in policy-development bodies, and in assessment and evaluation activities.

Guideline 22.1

The college or school should have a student government as well as suitable committees, such as a student/faculty relations committee, to develop student leadership and professionalism, to ensure a forum for student dialogue, and to ensure adequate communication of student opinions and perspectives.

Guideline 22.2

The college or school must involve student representatives on appropriate program committees, as well as in accreditation self-studies and strategic planning activities.

Guideline 22.3

Instruments and techniques, such as course evaluations, focus groups, meetings with the dean or other administrative leaders, exit interviews, and nationally standardized surveys (e.g., those available through the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy), should be systematically employed to obtain student perspectives on faculty, curriculum, student services, and other aspects of the professional degree program. The assessment data so obtained should be systematically analyzed and used to improve all aspects of the program and to allow for longitudinal and cross-program evaluation. The college or school should share with students the aggregate results of their participation in the systematic process of program evaluation and improvement.

Guideline 22.4*

Students should be provided with equitable representation regardless of the program pathway in which an individual student may be enrolled.

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Standard No. 23: Professional Behavior and Harmonious Relationships

The college or school must provide an environment and culture that promotes professional behavior and harmonious relationships among students, faculty, administrators, preceptors, and staff. Faculty, administrators, preceptors, and staff must be committed to developing professionalism and fostering leadership in students and to serving as mentors and positive role models for students.

Guideline 23.1

The college or school must develop, via a broadly based process, a policy consistent with university policies on student, faculty, preceptor, and staff professionalism that defines expected behaviors and consequences for deviation from the policy, as well as due process for appeals.

Guideline 23.2

The college or school should foster and support opportunities for students to participate in student self-government.

Guideline 23.3

The college or school should support students, faculty, administrators, preceptors, and staff participation in, as appropriate, local, state, and national pharmacy, scientific, and other professional organizations.

Guideline 23.4

The college or school should implement strategies and programs to broaden the professional horizons of students in areas such as scientific inquiry, scholarly concern for the profession, the relevance and value of research, and postgraduate education and training through guest lecturers, participation in curricular and extracurricular activities, service learning, and other beneficial activities, such as White Coat Ceremonies that welcome students into the profession of pharmacy.

Guideline 23.5

The college or school should evaluate, through the results of surveys, focus groups or other means, whether relationships among students, faculty, administrators, preceptors, and staff are harmonious.

Guideline 23.6

Student interactions with faculty, administrators, preceptors, and staff should be facilitated through formal and informal activities. To foster harmonious relationships and positive role models, the college or school should encourage faculty guidance for student committees and attendance by faculty, administrators, preceptors, and staff at student functions, both professional and social. Student interactions with residents and fellows, and informal mentoring of students by residents or fellows, should be maximized whenever possible.