

Western University of Health Sciences

College of Pharmacy

**Doctor of Philosophy in Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical
Sciences (PhD-BPS)
2026/2027 Catalog**

Conditions of Accuracy

The information within is accurate at the time of publication and reflects standard operating conditions for the academic year. Students are responsible for informing themselves of and satisfactorily meeting all requirements pertinent to their relationship with the University. Students and others who use this catalog should be aware that the information changes from time to time at the sole discretion of Western University of Health Sciences (WesternU) and that these changes might alter information contained in this publication. More current and complete information may be obtained in the appropriate department, school, or administrative offices. Some changes can also be found on the Western University of Health Sciences website. Western University of Health Sciences reserves the right at any time, without advance notice, to change any part of the catalog; no vested rights shall run or be created by the catalog, including the right to notice of any modification, novation, amendment, supplementation, or other change of any term, provision, or content of the catalog; such right of Western University of Health Sciences to enact changes shall include but not be limited to (a) attendance or curriculum requirements; (b) changes to tuition and fees; (c) changes in the academic calendar; (d) changes in admission and registration requirements; (e) changes in the regulations and requirements governing instruction in and graduation from Western University of Health Sciences; (f) changes of instructors and faculty; (g) changes of rules and regulations governing the students and student body organizations; (h) changes of on-campus facilities; (i) changes of extra-curricular student activities, programs, and offerings; (j) conduct or academic standing; and (k) changes of any other program or regulation affecting students or other interested parties. Western University of Health Sciences further reserves the right to make such changes should economic conditions, health conditions, changes in law, government orders, or a local, state, or national emergency make it necessary to do so. Such changes may supplement and supersede any inconsistent provisions found in this Catalog, and will be published using typical communication channels, including mail, email, publication to the university web site, press releases, and other channels as deemed appropriate. This catalog does not constitute a contract, or terms or conditions of contract between the student, staff, and/or faculty and Western University of Health Sciences.

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College of Pharmacy

Doctor of Philosophy in Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical Sciences (PhD-BPS)

The College catalog serves as a supplement to the University catalog. The College faculty, staff, and students must abide by the content of the University catalog in addition to the College catalog. The 2026-2027 catalogs supersede previous versions, and all students are held responsible for the information contained in both the University and the College 2026-2027 catalogs.

Accreditation

Western University of Health Sciences is accredited by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC). WSCUC's statement of accreditation status can be found at <https://www.wscuc.org/institutions/western-university-of-health-sciences/>. You may contact WSCUC at 1080 Marina Village Parkway, Suite 500, Alameda, CA 94501. Phone: (510) 748-9001, Fax: (510) 748-9797, or by visiting <https://www.wscuc.org/contact/>. WSCUC is a non-profit organization that evaluates the quality and educational effectiveness of schools, colleges, and universities. WSCUC is one of six regional accreditation agencies in the United States. While it is not officially regulated by the government, it is regularly reviewed by the US Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

Complaints Regarding WSCUC Accreditation Standards

Western University of Health Sciences is committed to meeting and exceeding the standards for accreditation of colleges and universities as described by the Accrediting Commission for WASC Senior College & University Commission (WSCUC). It is the policy of Western University of Health Sciences that a student, employee, or other constituent of the University that believes that the University may not be in compliance with the standards of accreditation has a right to file a complaint. The complaint submission process can be accessed through the following link: <https://www.wscuc.org/resources/comments/>.

General Information

Program Mission & Goals

The mission of the PhD-BPS program is to produce biotechnologists and pharmaceutical scientists who discover and advance scientific knowledge that leads to improved human health and quality of life.

The following are the programmatic goals:

- To build a quality student body
- To deliver a unique and innovative curriculum consisting of focused coursework and advanced research training that prepare students for careers in biotechnology and pharmaceutical sciences
- To contribute to the advancement of science and the understanding, prevention, and treatment of disease

Program Overview

A minimum of 73 semester credit hours is required for completion of the PhD-BPS program. This includes 25 credit hours of didactic study and 48 hours of research credits, leading to a dissertation. The program emphasizes research in biotechnology and pharmaceutical sciences.

Program Faculty

Program faculty are members of the Department of Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical Sciences in the College of Pharmacy. Their areas of research emphasis include pharmacology, physiology, pharmaceuticals, pharmacokinetics, drug delivery, pharmacogenomics, molecular immunology, cancer immunology, immunotherapy, virology, antimicrobial agents, cancer therapy, neuroscience, neuropharmacology, pharmaceutical formulation and drug design.

Personal Competencies for Admission and Matriculation

A candidate for admission to the PhD-BPS program must possess, or be able to achieve through a reasonable accommodation, certain intellectual, social, behavioral, and physical abilities, that would enable the individual to acquire the knowledge and technical skills needed to complete program curriculum and formulate a culminating dissertation within their specific field of study. Upon matriculation to the program, the student must continue to possess, or be able to achieve through a reasonable accommodation, the personal competencies outlined below throughout their progression in the program. Graduates of the program are eligible for a myriad of possible futures including postdoctoral training, working in the pharmaceutical and biotech sectors, working in academia, or pursue a professional degree. As a result, it is expected that students have the intellectual ability to learn, integrate, analyze, and synthesize numerical, visual, and textual information within the field of biotechnology and pharmaceutical sciences. They should also be able to effectively and accurately integrate this information and communicate it via oral and written means.

The PhD-BPS program requires the performance of specific essential functions that fall into the broad skill categories, which include but are not limited to the areas below.

For candidates or students who require a reasonable accommodation to meet the competencies outlined below, please contact the Harris Family Center for Disability and Health Policy (^{HF}CDHP) at [Disability Accommodations \(e-mail\)](#) or (909) 469-5441 or visit the [^{HF}CDHP web site](#). Accommodations must be approved by ^{HF}CDHP and are not provided retroactively (if approved after the start of the program/semester). Reasonable accommodation is determined on an individualized basis and may not result in an undue administrative or financial burden. A fundamental alteration of a course or program is not considered a reasonable accommodation.

Under all circumstances, a candidate or student must have the capacity to manage their lives and anticipate their own needs and should be able to perform the following in a reasonably independent manner, with or without a reasonable accommodation.

Intellectual and Cognitive Abilities

A candidate or student is expected to demonstrate abilities in measurement, reasoning, analysis, and synthesis of acquired data and knowledge.

Communication

A candidate or student is expected to demonstrate oral and written communication skills, which include generating clear articulations of their research and formulating scientific arguments.

Collaboration

A candidate or student is expected to demonstrate the ability to participate in an inclusive learning community such as working within a team amongst other students and laboratory staff.

Laboratory and Research Experience

A candidate or student is preferred to have prior hands-on laboratory experience.

Ethical Standards

A candidate or student is expected to demonstrate the ability to reason through ethically questionable situations.

Admissions Policies and Procedures

Notice of Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity

In accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, Western University of Health Sciences (WesternU) is committed to ensuring a campus community free from unlawful discrimination. WesternU strictly prohibits unlawful discrimination in all its programs, activities, admissions, and employment. WesternU prohibits discrimination based on the following characteristics:

- Race (including traits associated with race, such as hair texture and protective hairstyles)
- Ethnicity, Color, and National Origin
- Immigration Status and Ancestry
- Sex, Gender, Gender Identity, and Gender Expression
- Sexual Orientation
- Physical or Mental Disability
- Age
- Religion (including religious dress and grooming practices)
- Medical Condition and Genetic Information
- Marital Status
- Pregnancy (including childbirth, breastfeeding, or related medical conditions)
- Military or Veteran Status
- Perceived Characteristics - Discrimination is prohibited if an individual is perceived to have any of the above characteristics.
- Association with Protected Groups – Discrimination based on association with a person or group with one or more protected characteristics is also prohibited.
- Other Legally Protected Classes – WesternU complies with all federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and ordinances regarding discrimination.

WesternU has designated the Associate Vice President for the [Office of Title IX and Equal Opportunity Compliance Initiatives \(OTIXEO\)](#) to coordinate WesternU's compliance with federal and state civil rights laws regarding protected characteristics. Inquiries about WesternU's prohibitions against discrimination, harassment, and retaliation can be directed to Associate Vice President (AVP) for the Office of Title IX and Equal Opportunity Compliance Initiatives (OTIXEO) or to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

Reasonable Accommodations during the Admissions Process

Candidates seeking accommodations during the admissions process, including Interview Day, must contact the Office of Admissions with sufficient advance notice for ^{HF}CDHP to evaluate the request and arrange any approved accommodations. Certain accommodations, however, require scheduling through external vendors and cannot be arranged on short notice or the day of the event. Requests submitted without sufficient advance notice may limit WesternU's ability to provide some accommodations for that activity; although ^{HF}CDHP and Admissions will continue to explore reasonable alternatives whenever possible. The Office of Admissions coordinates accommodation requests with ^{HF}CDHP. Admissions does

not evaluate disability status or review medical documentation; its role is limited to referring applicants to HFCDHP and implementing HFCDHP approved accommodations for specific admissions activities. All requests for accommodations will be handled in a manner that is consistent with the university's policies and in full compliance with the ADA, ADAAA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and applicable state laws. For additional information regarding HFCDHP's registration process, please refer to <https://www.westernu.edu/cdhp/registration-process/>, or review the *Student Disability Accommodation Process* section.

Application Requirements

Graduates with a Bachelor of Science or Arts degree in chemistry, biology, pharmacy, or a related scientific area are eligible for application.

Minimum criteria to receive consideration for admission are as follows. Meeting these criteria, however, does not guarantee admission into the program. All admissions decisions are considered final and not subject to appeal.

- A completed WesternU Graduate Application form (including all supplemental information for international applicants).
- Official transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate coursework. Applicants who attended universities outside the US must have their transcripts evaluated by an approved evaluation agency and the evaluation submitted to the university
- Cumulative GPA of 3.00 or greater on a 4-point scale.
- Personal Statement (500 words or less) describing (1) their educational background, (2) their areas of interest in biotechnology and pharmaceutical sciences, and (3) additional information that would strengthen the application, such as achievements or overcoming adversity.
- Three letters of reference from individuals who are familiar with the applicant's scholarship and research potential.

Application Deadline

Applications must be received (including all supporting application materials) no later than December 1 for the fall semester start of the program.

Applicants with Foreign Coursework

Applicants who wish to use coursework completed outside the United States must submit their transcripts for evaluation to a [WesternU Approved Service](#) at the candidate's expense. A course-by-course evaluation is required, and all coursework must be designated as undergraduate, graduate or professional. WesternU only honors evaluations from an approved service. The official evaluation must be included with the supplemental application packet.

International Students

International students and any other applicants who are not U.S. citizens and who are living in the U.S. must provide proof of legal U.S. residency upon matriculation. The PHDBPS program cannot sponsor international applicants who require an F-1 student visa to study in the U.S. For detailed information, please visit our web page at <http://www.westernu.edu/international>.

Transfer of Credits

Graduate level credits in which the student has earned a “B” or higher grade from an equivalent program from another accredited U.S. university may be honored on a case-by-case basis for students transferring into WesternU. Applicants that have earned the MSBPS degree from WesternU may receive credit for most, if not all coursework. The Director, Graduate Education and the Graduate Program Committee (GPC) must approve all transfer of credits. The decision of the Program is final.

Transferability of Courses Taken at WesternU

Whether WesternU course credits transfer to another institution is at the complete discretion of the institution to which you may seek to transfer. Acceptance of the degree or certificate you earn at WesternU is also at the complete discretion of the institution to which you may seek to transfer. Further information regarding the transferability of courses taken at WesternU can be found in the University catalog.

Admission Deferment

Applicants who have been admitted to the PhD-BPS program and have not matriculated may defer their admission status for one year (to the next admission cycle), subject to approval from their respective dissertation advisor. They are required to reapply if the one-year mark has passed.

Registration

All WesternU students are required to register by the registration deadlines specified by the University Registrar. Registration dates are posted on the [Registrar's Office](#) website. Failure to register by the deadline may be grounds for administrative withdrawal. All students registering after the posted deadline will be assessed a \$30.00 per business day late fee.

Full tuition and fees and all prior debts must be paid in full on or by posted deadlines each academic year. Matriculation is subject to the satisfactory completion of all academic requirements and payment of all outstanding debts to the University. The receipt of the final transcript(s) from all colleges/universities attended and a physical examination with documentation of required immunizations (if applicable) prior to registration are additional requirements for incoming students.

Registration Late Fee Appeals

If you are assessed late fees for a registration period, you may submit an appeal to the Registrar. For additional information on the appeal process, please see the [Registration Late Fees](#) page on the Registrar's Office website.

Student Health Insurance Requirement

All full-time students at WesternU are required to have active health insurance while enrolled. All students are automatically assessed half of the entire year's insurance premium and will be enrolled in the student health insurance plan until they submit proof of coverage that meets the University's requirements. For additional information on student health insurance requirements and/or waiving out of the student health insurance plan, please see the [Student Health Insurance page](#) on the Registrar's Office website.

New Student Orientation/Welcome Week

There is a New Student Orientation/Welcome Week at the beginning of the fall term. New students must be on campus for the first day of the orientation unless prior approval by the GPC is granted due to extenuating circumstances.

Continuous Registration

Students are required to maintain continuous registration until all requirements for the degree have been met, including defense and publication of their dissertation.

Student Initiated Changes in Enrollment Status

Course Drop/Withdrawal

Students may voluntarily drop a class by working with the program director and completing the necessary paperwork. Course drops are processed as follows:

0-20% of Course Completed (Based on Course Start/End Dates)	Course is removed from student's registration and will not appear on student's academic transcript.
20-99% of Course Completed (Based on Course Start/End Dates)	Course is assigned a grade of 'W' to indicate the student withdrew from the course. 'W' grades will appear on the student's academic transcript, but will not be included in the student's GPA calculation.

100% of Course Completed (Based on Course Start/End Dates)	Course is assigned the grade earned.
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Voluntary Leave of Absence

A student may request a Voluntary Leave of Absence (LOA) with the occurrence of a medical emergency or illness, personal issues, financial hardship, military service, or pursuit of academic research opportunity. For additional information on requesting a Voluntary Leave of Absence, please see ‘Student Initiated Changes in Enrollment Status’ in the University Catalog, General Academic Policies and Procedures section.

Voluntary Withdrawal

A student may request to fully separate from WesternU at any time by submitting a Voluntary Withdrawal form. Students interested in initiating the Voluntary Withdrawal process must begin by contacting their College Dean, or designee. The College will submit the signed Voluntary Withdrawal form to the Registrar’s Office for processing and distribution. Please note that once processed, WesternU email address, MyPortal access, and all other online services are inactivated immediately following withdrawal from the University. For additional information on the Voluntary Withdrawal process, please see ‘Student Initiated Changes in Enrollment Status’ in the University Catalog, General Academic Policies and Procedures section.

Full-Time/Half-Time Status

All students enrolled in at least four credit hours of coursework are considered full-time students in the PhD-BPS program. Students enrolled in 0.5 – 3.99 credit hours of coursework are considered half-time students in the PhD-BPS program. The PhD-BPS is a full-time program and requires full-time continuous registration. Intention for part-time registration can be made to the program director at least 30 days prior to the registration deadline for consideration. Permission for half-time registration is not guaranteed and is handled on a case-by-case basis.

Time Limits

The requirements for the degree must be fulfilled within seven (7) years from the date of matriculation to the program. Students wishing to extend their stay into the seventh year must be in good academic standing as described in the Standards of Academic Progress section and have demonstrated satisfactory engagement and progression in their dissertation project. Approval to remain in the program for the seventh year is not guaranteed.

For the seventh year, students must agree to a graduation plan with the program. The plan is designed to set clear expectations, define tasks to be completed, and set deadlines for program completion and graduation by the end of the seventh year. The plan must be approved by the faculty advisor, the Dissertation Committee, and the program director no later than 45 days before the start of the seventh year in the program. Failure to meet agreed-upon expectations, tasks, and deadlines will be considered a violation of academic standards, and the student will be referred to the Graduate Student Performance Committee (GSPC, see Section ‘Ad-Hoc Graduate Student Performance Committee’ below) for appropriate administrative action, up to and including dismissal from the program.

Students who are unable to meet the 7-year time limit for the PhD-BPS program and/or who are not approved to remain in the program for the seventh year may be referred to the GSPC for appropriate

action, up to and including administrative withdrawal. For further information related to the GSPC, including the review process, see Evaluation of Student Academic Performance (Academic Hearing Process) section.

Administrative Withdrawal

Please see 'Administrative Withdrawal from University/Program' section in the University Catalog.

Tuition and Fees

In estimating costs for one academic year of study in the PhD-BPS program, you should include tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, and other miscellaneous expenses. By action of the Board of Trustees, PhD-BPS tuition and fees for the 2026-2027 academic year (subject to change) are as follows:

Institutional Fees

\$969.00	Per Credit Hour
\$40.00	Student Body Fee
\$978.00	Student Service Fee (All Students)
\$565.00	Lab Fee (All Students)
\$475.00	Graduation Fee

Non-institutional Fees

\$30.00	Registration Late Fee (Per Business Day)
\$50.00	Late Payment Fee (Per Month)
\$235.00	Annual Parking Permit (Automobile)
\$118.00	Annual Parking Permit (Motorcycle)
\$40.00	Locker Key Replacement Fee
\$10.00	Student ID Replacement Fee
\$TBD	Breakage Fee (Replacement Cost)

Financial Support

Financial support, which includes a stipend in the form of a teaching assistantship and full payment of tuition (tuition waiver), is available to qualified applicants on a limited and competitive basis. Support is for 12 months (including summers) and is limited to six years for any student. Please note that accepting this financial support may affect your eligibility for other forms of aid. Students may also receive a travel stipend, which can be used toward travel to a national meeting, and funds for a student research project. Given the program's requirement for full-time commitment as described in the Attendance and Absence section, students must not hold other paid positions during times they are expected to be engaged and/or available for the program and teaching assistantship duties to receive the tuition waiver and stipend. Students will be subject to revocation of their financial support by the program should they hold a paid position during the expected times of attendance and availability as described in the Attendance and Absence section.

Computer Requirement

All students enrolled in the PhD-BPS program are required to have a laptop computer for academic and research activities. Laptop specifications can be found here: [Laptop Requirements](#).

General Academic Policies and Procedures

Student Disability Accommodation Process

The Harris Family Center for Disability and Health Policy (^{HF}CDHP) values the uniqueness of each student as an integral member of our diverse WesternU community and is the designated office responsible for determining and approving reasonable academic modifications or accommodations. WesternU does not discriminate on the basis of disability and complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and applicable state laws.

^{HF}CDHP's role in the accommodation process is to engage in an interactive process and to provide students with disabilities with the legally mandated and necessary support to afford equal access to the University's programs and activities. Only accommodations approved through ^{HF}CDHP constitute official reasonable accommodations under the ADA and Section 504. Instructional personnel may, at their discretion, provide temporary or informal academic flexibility; however, such measures do not replace or supersede the formal accommodation review and approval process administered by ^{HF}CDHP.

A student's disclosure of a disability or health-related condition alerts the University to a potential need for accommodation; however, students must complete the ^{HF}CDHP registration process for accommodations to be formally reviewed, approved, and implemented. Disclosure of a disability or the submission of documentation in response to a process or procedure established by their respective college or program, does not, by itself, constitute a formal request for accommodations.

Students must be able to perform all the essential functions of the program with or without reasonable accommodation. Essential functions are defined in the program's published personal competencies and are assessed on an individualized basis through the interactive process.

The University will provide reasonable accommodations but is not required to make modifications that would fundamentally alter the nature of essential requirements of a program, result in an undue burden, or pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others.

A fundamental alteration of a course or program are not considered reasonable accommodations. Students must adhere to the enrollment and documentation procedures set forth by ^{HF}CDHP to formally request accommodation. In the event a student discloses a disability to instructional personnel or administrators outside of ^{HF}CDHP, the student will be referred to ^{HF}CDHP for guidance on the accommodation request process. Requests for academic consideration related to circumstances other than the student's own disability (e.g., family bereavement or common illness) are not considered requests for reasonable accommodation under the ^{HF}CDHP Provision of Academic Accommodation(s) Policy and Procedure, the ADA, or Section 504 and are governed by separate institutional or program policies.

Accommodation determinations for clinical, laboratory, and experiential education are made on an individualized basis and may involve coordination with clinical training sites. Approved accommodations must be consistent with program requirements, personal competencies, and patient safety obligations. The availability and implementation of accommodations in clinical settings may vary by site and setting. Requests are reviewed on an individual basis in accordance with applicable law. Accommodations are implemented prospectively following approval by ^{HF}CDHP.

Students may file a grievance with ^{HF}CDHP regarding the denial or implementation of disability accommodations or concerns about access or discrimination. Grievances should be submitted promptly, no later than 30 calendar days from the decision or activity being appealed. Filing a grievance will not result in retaliation. Information, including the right to file with the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, is available at <https://www.westernu.edu/cdhp/grievance-procedures/>.

To request accommodations and initiate the interactive process at WesternU, students are encouraged to visit <https://www.westernu.edu/cdhp/> to learn more about the registration process, requirements for disability documentation, and to complete the Student Intake Form. ^{HF}CDHP will promptly engage with students in the interactive process to review and implement accommodation requests. All inquiries are handled confidentially, and students may obtain general information without registering.

To schedule an appointment with ^{HF}CDHP, please email disabilityaccommodations@westernu.edu. For the Pomona campus, students may call (909) 469-5441, or visit in person at 309 E. Second Street, Building 390, Pomona CA, 91766. Center hours are Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 pm. For more information, please visit <https://www.westernu.edu/cdhp/>.

Videotaping, Audiotaping, Still Photography and Digitized Note Taking in Laboratories and Lecture Halls, or Associated Academic Activities

Videotaping, audiotaping, still photography and digital note taking are not permitted in the University laboratories, lecture halls, or clinical sites without the expressed permission of the involved instructor or through approved accommodations from the ^{HF}CDHP office. For further details, please refer to this policy in the University Catalog.

Protocol for Input on Matters of Student Concern

When an issue or dispute arises between students, the issue/dispute resolution process starts with communication among the involved students. If a satisfactory resolution is not arrived at that level, the matter should then be addressed with the faculty advisor. If the problem is not resolved at the faculty advisor/course director level, the matter should be brought to the appropriate college's Student Affairs personnel, then the College Dean, or Dean's designee. If the matter has not been resolved at those levels, the final arbiter is the Provost.

When an incident arises involving a student and faculty member, the first step in the issue/dispute resolution process is discussion with the faculty member. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved at that level, then the matter should be referred to the program director and department chair, then Dean, or Dean's designee, in that order. The final arbiter is the Provost. Please note that grade appeals cannot be handled under this protocol.

When an incident arises involving a student and staff member, the dispute resolution process begins with the Supervisor/Department Chair followed by the Dean, or Dean's designee. The Office of Human Resources is the final arbiter.

Failure to follow this sequence of steps will only serve to delay the appropriate resolution of the issue or dispute as the matter will only be referred back to the correct level in this chain of responsibility.

This protocol does not apply to concerns involving discrimination, harassment or retaliation. For information related to complaints involving discrimination, harassment and retaliation, including

community resources, emergency and on-going assistance; mental health services; reporting options and other available support are as follows and can be located on the [University's Title IX resource website](#).

Attendance and Absences

The PhD-BPS program is a full-time, in-person program requiring students to be present and available to fulfill their academic responsibilities including coursework, research, and other tasks assigned by their advisor, the program, or the College of Pharmacy. Students must refrain from engaging in outside activities that may lead to their absence from or reduced availability in the program and/or other college assigned duties. Students are required to be full-time students and register, attend, and complete the required coursework as determined by their advisor and the program (as per plan of study). Attendance is required at all scheduled instructional periods and for satisfying research expectations. Absence from instructional periods for any reason does not relieve the student from responsibility for the material covered during the periods missed. Students are expected to arrive by 8:00 am and depart at 5:00 pm or later, Monday-Friday, where students will participate in laboratory research, coursework, and other assigned duties. Moreover, participation in laboratory research may be required on weekends and holidays, as determined by their advisor. Students are required to be engaged as a student continuously while in the program, including summers. Although the program does not offer coursework during summer months, students are required to be present and engage in laboratory research. Students do not have summers off.

Requesting Religious Accommodation

In keeping with the University's commitment to humanism, WesternU recognizes and supports the provision of academic reasonable accommodation based on a person's sincerely held religious belief. A reasonable accommodation is one that can be implemented without materially interfering with the University's legitimate educational or operational objectives. The most common request for academic religious accommodation concerns class attendance during the observance of major religious holy days and celebrations.

Students wishing to be excused from class attendance for religious observances must submit a written request to the official WesternU email address of the instructor prior to their absence and receive a written response from the instructor acknowledging receipt prior to any absence as stated in the policy above. Alternative request methods, including but not limited to verbal communication, text messages, hard copy letters, notes, phone calls, and voicemail, will not be accepted. Students are responsible for satisfying all academic requirements for a course as defined by the instructor.

It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor(s) about requests for excused absences within the first two weeks of the class each semester after reviewing course syllabi for potential scheduling conflicts. If such conflicts occur during the first two weeks of classes in the semester, the student must notify the instructor(s), in writing at least three calendar days (72 hours) before the date that they will be absent.

The faculty of WesternU shall accommodate students wishing to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from any curricular activities. It is the responsibility of the instructor(s) to make every reasonable effort to honor the student request without penalty, and of the student to make up the work missed due to the absence.

Religious accommodation requests are not limited to holiday observances and may arise from a wide range of faith-based practices and commitments, including but not limited to scheduled prayer, dietary restrictions, fasting periods, religiously mandated dress or grooming, ritual purification practices, and deeply held theological or philosophical beliefs. Because the nature and scope of such requests vary considerably, each will be evaluated individually based on its particular circumstances. In such instances, students should contact the Office of Graduate Education to discuss such religious accommodation requests. The Office of Humanism is available as a resource throughout this process and may be engaged as circumstances warrant.

Retaliation is Prohibited. The University prohibits retaliation against students who request a religious accommodation or who participate in an approved accommodation. An employee who violates this anti-retaliation provision may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

Grievance Procedure: In the event that agreement cannot be reached regarding an academic religious accommodation, the student should bring the issue to the relevant college dean and to the Office of Student Success and Student Life via email studentlife@westernu.edu for review and resolution as applicable. If advice in resolving the issue is needed, the Office of Humanism will be consulted, as appropriate.

Time off and Emergencies

Under special circumstances, a student may arrange a brief 1-3 days off at the discretion of the program director and their faculty advisor in advance. It is the program director's and faculty advisor's prerogative whether to grant the time off and it is not guaranteed. All decisions related to time-off requests, under this policy, are final and not subject to appeal. Students must submit a time off request at least 3 weeks prior to their time off dates. The form must be approved by the program director, their faculty advisor, any course instructors, and the Student Services Coordinator.

Emergencies, including health conditions or serious personal/family issues, which result in less than 15 academic days (three calendar weeks) away from campus, may be granted upon approval by a student's faculty advisor and the program director. Documentation demonstrating the emergency is required and must be provided to the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs and Faculty Advisor no later than the day of return to the program. Any missed course material is the responsibility of the student, and students may be required to complete alternative assignments, at the discretion of the course faculty.

Students whose time-off requests result in more than 15 academic days (three calendar weeks) away from campus should apply in writing for a voluntary LOA to the appropriate College Dean or their designee. Please see the University Catalog's "Student Initiated Changes in Enrollment Status" for more specific information on a LOA.

Failure to meet attendance requirements in courses where attendance is graded or required as a threshold criterion may constitute a failure to meet Standards of Academic Progress and may result in referral to the Graduate Student Performance Committee under the Evaluation of Student Performance (Academic Hearing Process). Non-compliance with attendance requirements which reflect a pattern of unexcused absences may result in the student being referred to the Graduate Student Performance Committee for appropriate action which may include disciplinary action including failure of a course, repeating a course, or dismissal from the program.

If a medical condition or disability requires accommodations, such as more than the allowed absences per academic year, the student should complete the HFCDHP registration process as soon as possible. HFCDHP is the authorized entity at WesternU to approve reasonable accommodations under the ADA and Section 504. Registration includes the interactive process, which may include implementation of appropriate accommodations. The time off process does not constitute an authorization of reasonable accommodations and cannot serve as a substitute for the HFCDHP registration process.

Qualifying Exam

Students are required to pass the qualifying exam in order to advance to candidacy and proceed with completing their dissertation and remaining degree requirements. To be eligible to participate in the qualifying exam, students must have successfully completed their required pre-candidacy coursework (PHSC 5001-5500, four credits of PHSC 6000, and at least fifteen credits of PHSC 7999 or an equivalent research-based course) and be in good academic standing as described in the Standards of Academic Progress section below. Thus, in most cases, the qualifying exam will take place in the summer between the second and third years in the program). Requests for delaying the qualifying exam can be submitted by the student to the Director, Graduate Education, and the decision will be made by the Director, Graduate Education and the GPC on a case-by-case basis. The qualifying exam will consist of two components: a knowledge component assessing the material covered in the required coursework, and a research grant component. The research grant component requires students to write a small grant application (preliminary data optional), perform an oral presentation, and defend the project. The research component will be evaluated by the Dissertation Committee. To pass the qualifying exam, students must pass the knowledge component and the written, oral presentation, and defense component of the grant application.

Students entering the program with a master's degree will be required to take the qualifying exam at the first possible opportunity upon completing all required pre-candidacy coursework but no earlier than six months after entering the program (to allow sufficient time to write the grant application).

If the qualifying exam is not passed, students will have an opportunity to remediate the failed component(s) by retaking a knowledge test or a second attempt at the research component within four months from the initial date of the qualifying exam. Failure to pass the remediation of the qualifying exam will lead the student to receive a terminal Master of Arts in Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical Sciences degree and depart the program without the opportunity to continue in the PhD-BPS program.

Dissertation

The dissertation will be based on a research project that the student will undertake in the PhD-BPS program. The Faculty Advisor will help the student select a topic and mentor the student in their progress. Completion of the dissertation will require a dissertation proposal presentation (oral presentation) to the Dissertation Committee mid-way through the dissertation process (third year in the program or within one year of advancing to candidacy). The dissertation proposal will require preliminary data, hypotheses, and aims for the completion of the dissertation. Subsequent dissertation reviews by the Dissertation Committee are optional and may be initiated/requested by the student or the Faculty Advisor. The dissertation defense will occur upon completion of the dissertation project. The defense will consist of an oral presentation of the completed project followed by a defense of the project to the Dissertation Committee.

Students are allowed two opportunities to defend their dissertation. In case of an unsatisfactory initial dissertation defense, the Dissertation Committee will provide a detailed list of areas needing improvement/remedy within ten (10) working days from the date of the initial dissertation defense. The student is expected to work with their Faculty Advisor to prepare for the remediation. The defense remediation must occur no later than one year from the date of the initial defense, so long as the maximum duration of stay in the program is not breached. The student will be referred to the GSPC for review and may be subject to dismissal from the program if satisfactory completion is not achieved during the second dissertation defense.

The dissertation must be completed and approved by the Dissertation Committee. If published figures are incorporated into a dissertation, students need to obtain permission from the published sources and cite the figures appropriately within the figure legends. Students are required to provide an electronic PDF file of the dissertation and the dissertation signature page signed by all members of the Dissertation Committee, along with the signed WesternU Publishing Agreement form to the graduate program's Student Services Coordinator. A copy of the dissertation and supporting documents will then be submitted to WesternU's library depository CONTENTdm, the Dean, or Dean's Designee, and all members of the Dissertation Committee.

Faculty Advisor and Dissertation Committee

Each student will be assigned a Faculty Advisor prior to admission to the program and must remain with that advisor for the duration of the degree program. The Faculty Advisor serves as the Chair of the student's Dissertation Committee and helps the student in their choice of electives and research projects/dissertation topic. Further, the Faculty Advisor may also assist the student in obtaining a research assistantship if funds are available. The Faculty Advisor is responsible for the satisfactory academic progress of the student and may hold committee meetings with the student on a regular basis.

The Dissertation Committee consists of four or more members, at least half of which are full-time faculty members of the Department of Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical Sciences. The Faculty Advisor serves as the Dissertation Committee Chair. A minimum of half of the committee members must be experts in the dissertation topic(s).

Drugs and Alcohol on Campus Policy

The Drugs and Alcohol on Campus Policy can be found in the University Catalog. Students will be required to complete a drug screening along with a background check on an annual basis to be permitted to begin any clinical practice experiences. This is in addition to what is outlined in the University or College Catalog. Students are expected to be aware of, and abide by, both University and applicable College policies. For further information related to Drug Screening, please review the [Drugs and Alcohol Policy](#) and the Student Health and Safety section in the University Catalog.

Student Injuries and Illnesses in Non-Clinical Settings

In the event of a student injury or illness (e.g., needle stick, puncture wound, slip/fall, etc.) during a non-clinical setting (e.g., classrooms, lecture halls, academic spaces) the following should be followed:

- Students are to immediately notify the faculty and/or college staff of the incident. For medical emergencies, Campus Security is to be notified immediately. As soon as possible, students are to submit an Incident Report (https://webapp.westernu.edu/incident_report).

- Obtain medical treatment for medical emergencies (e.g., fainting, bodily injury). It is the student's choice where they obtain medical treatment. They can do so at an Urgent Care, local hospital or from their primary care provider.

Follow-up care should be continued at the contracted facility (e.g., hospital, primary care provider) as needed. Expenses incurred are to be submitted to the student's personal insurance as the primary coverage and to the university as the secondary insurance, for the reported incident only. The Incident Report Form can be found on the university website and must be completed by the student and/or faculty and submitted electronically. There may also be a requirement to fill out a more detailed report within the student's program of study (please refer to specific program handbook).

Service Animals on Campus

In accordance with university policy and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals with disabilities are permitted to bring service animals, as defined under the ADA. Emotional support animals and pets are generally prohibited on campus and at clinical rotation sites. Students seeking further information should consult the Animals on University Property Policy, available at <https://www.westernu.edu/cdhp/service-emotional-support-animals/>, or contact the ^HFCDHP for additional guidance at disabilityaccommodations@westernu.edu.

Standards of Academic Integrity, Professionalism, and Student Conduct ("Standards of Student Conduct")

The Standards of Student Conduct encompass three components: the Standards of Academic Integrity, the Standards of Professionalism, and the Standards of Student Conduct. Collectively, these three components are referred to as the Standards of Student Conduct and are located in the [University Catalog](#). Students are expected to make themselves aware of and abide by the expectations contained in the Standards of Student Conduct and related policy statements. Ignorance is not a justification for violating the Standards of Student Conduct.

Because of the professional nature of a graduate degree program, WesternU expects a higher standard of student conduct. The Standards of Student Conduct articulates violations that are most common and/or readily identifiable. Conduct violating the Standards of Student Conduct that are not specifically mentioned may still be subject to disciplinary action. Any questions regarding interpretation of the Standards of Student Conduct defined in the University Catalog should be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Professionalism.

Professionalism Concerns and Non-Disciplinary Interventions

The College of Pharmacy recognizes that professional behavior is a core competency of graduate education. Accordingly, the College may evaluate reports that raises professionalism concerns, including but not limited to *professional demeanor, accountability, respect, effective interpersonal skills, and ethical behavior*. Upon identifying such concerns, the College retains discretion to determine the appropriate response and course of action, provided that resulting action constitutes a non-disciplinary measures, which may include but is not limited to mentoring, coaching, a written advisement, a Professional Behavior Improvement Plan, or other non-disciplinary approaches. These measures are educational in nature and are intended to serve as constructive interventions and/or advisements designed to support the student's professional development. Non-disciplinary measures do not constitute, and shall not be construed as, formal sanctions as defined under the Standards of Student Conduct set forth in the University Catalog.

Students are expected to engage in good faith with any non-disciplinary measures implemented by the College. A student's failure or refusal to comply with such measures may result in a referral to the Office of Student Conduct and Professionalism for further review pursuant to the applicable University student conduct process.

Reporting Violations to the Office of Student Conduct and Professionalism

Western University of Health Sciences has centralized the student conduct process under the **Office of Student Conduct and Professionalism**. Previously, student conduct matters were managed at the college level; all such matters are now handled centrally by the Office of Student Conduct and Professionalism to ensure a consistent, fair, and transparent process across all colleges and programs.

All student conduct reports, including concerns related to alleged violations of the Standards of Academic Integrity, Professionalism or Student Conduct, contained in this College Catalog and the University Catalog should be submitted directly to the Office of Student Conduct and Professionalism using the [WesternU Student Conduct and Professionalism Incident Report Form](#). The Office of Student Conduct and Professionalism will review each report and determine the appropriate course of action in accordance with University policies and procedures.

Students, faculty, staff, and administrators are encouraged to direct any questions about the conduct process to the Office of Student Conduct and Professionalism. Additional information regarding the Office of Student Conduct and Professionalism and the Student Conduct Process is available in the University Catalog.

Standards of Academic Progress

Only grades in WesternU courses approved for graduate credit will be used in determining the overall grade point average (GPA) for continuation in the PhD-BPS program. If, at the end of any semester, the cumulative GPA falls below 3.00, the student will be placed on academic probation, and financial support may be discontinued. A 2.00 (“C”) grade earned in any class may be applied toward graduation only if the cumulative GPA at the time of application for graduation continues at a minimum 3.00 (“B”). Any grade below a 2.00 (“C”) may not be applied toward graduation. Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher and have successfully completed non-graded (CR/NCR) courses to be in good academic standing.

Graduation

A student will be recommended for the PhD-BPS degree provided they:

1. Are not on probation and have completed all prescribed academic requirements with a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or above and have no outstanding grade of “I”, “NCR,” or “U”. A 2.00 (C) grade earned in any class may be applied toward graduation only if the overall GPA at the time of application for graduation continues at a minimum 3.00 (B) cumulative GPA.
2. Have satisfactorily completed and orally defended a written dissertation.
3. Have completed the HSRT-N Assessment.
4. Has demonstrated no serious deficiencies in ethical, professional or personal conduct, as defined in the Standards of Student Conduct, which would make it inappropriate to award the the PhD-BPS degree.
5. Have complied with all the legal and financial requirements of the University as stated in the University Catalog.
6. Have attended in person and participated in the Commencement ceremony at which time the PhD-BPS degree is conferred. Unless special permission has been granted by the Dean, or their designee, each student must participate in their respective commencement ceremony. Requests for excusal will only be granted for extenuating circumstances, such as a prior military commitment.

Students may participate in commencement activities provided they will complete all requirements of the program by December 31 of that calendar year. No student will receive their degree until the student has completed all requirements for graduation. Degrees will be dated as appropriate to completion date.

Ad-Hoc Graduate Student Performance Committee

The GSPC is an ad-hoc committee that can be activated by the GPC to: (1) recommend policies and standards for students' academic performance; (2) review student academic performance matters and advise, as appropriate; (3) review all cases involving grade appeals ; (4) receive reports from the Office of Student Conduct & Professionalism of students whose conduct is deemed unsatisfactory as determined through the student conduct process outlined in the University Catalog. Appropriate student conduct is defined by the University's and College's Standards of Student Conduct standards and handled in alignment with the Student Conduct Procedures in the University Catalog.

All policy recommendations from the GSPC are forwarded to the GPC and reported to the Department Committee; all recommendations concerning a student's academic status are forwarded to the Dean or Dean's Designee.

The GSPC is not authorized to evaluate medical conditions or disabilities through its review process. Evaluating medical information and disability-related claims is designated exclusively to the ^{HF}CDHP office, not the SPC. If you have a medical condition or disability that you believe is relevant to your academic situation, you should complete the **^{HF}CDHP Student Intake Form** as soon as possible. Submitting this form initiates the interactive process with ^{HF}CDHP and, if appropriate, the implementation of reasonable accommodations (which are not retroactive). The ^{HF}CDHP accommodation process is separate from and independent of the SPC review process.

Evaluation of Student Academic Performance (Academic Hearing Process)

An issue related to student academic performance can be brought forward by faculty, a student, or staff and reported to the Director, Graduate Education. Upon receipt of the report and supporting material, the Director, Graduate Education will review the issue and forward the case to the GPC. The GPC will consider the report and determine whether the case warrants activation of the GSPC, according to GSPC roles and responsibilities as described in this catalog. If the case/issue involves the Director, Graduate Education, they will be recused, and the Department Chair will serve in place of the Director, Graduate Education.

The GSPC will review the report and the supporting material provided and may require further fact-finding of additional material as needed from all parties involved. In the event fact-finding is needed, the student will be provided an opportunity to submit a written response pertaining to the matter.

Upon the referral of a matter to the GSPC, the GSPC will provide the student with an opportunity to present their perspective on the academic performance issue. The GSPC, as part of their review of a student matter, may call, individually and separately, at their discretion, other relevant parties as part of their review process.

All recommendations of the GSPC will be made in writing to the Director, Graduate Education (or Department Chair when needed due to recusal of the Director, Graduate Education) and shared with the GPC. In consultation with the GPC, the Director, Graduate Education will decide on the matter. If the decision involves administrative withdrawal or dismissal from the program, the Director, Graduate Education will forward a recommendation to the Dean of the College of Pharmacy, or their Designee, who will make a decision and inform the student in writing, typically within five working days of receipt of recommendations. The Dean, or their Designee, may schedule a meeting with the student before making a final decision. All efforts must be made to consider the case in a reasonable timeline, not to exceed twenty working days from the beginning to the final decision, whenever possible.

Adverse Actions

Academic Probation

The program director on behalf of the College Dean, or Dean's designee, may place students on academic probation for the following reasons (these are in addition to the reasons listed in the Satisfactory Academic Progress section of the University Catalog):

1. Inadequate academic progress as determined by the GPC or the GSPC. This includes, but is not limited to, receiving a "U" grade in any course or system.
2. Failure to meet attendance requirements and/or policies
3. A cumulative GPA below 3.00.

A student on academic probation for receiving a grade of "U" or for a cumulative GPA less than 3.00 will be removed from academic probation after one semester provided, they have regained a cumulative GPA of at least 3.00 and/or have remediated the failed course. Students on academic probation must remove themselves from all leadership roles in co-curricular activities associated with the University and/or with professional associations. Decisions related to the imposition of academic probation and any associated terms/conditions of such probation, or administrative withdrawal are considered final and not appealable to the Provost (See University Catalog, Student Appeal Process).

Conduct Probation

Conduct Probation is defined as a period, specified by the Office of Student Conduct and Professionalism, during which the student's conduct will be closely monitored due to a violation of the Standards of Student Conduct.

The terms of conduct probation will be specified at the time the student is placed on conduct probation. When a student is placed on conduct probation, they will be notified in writing and the notification will be sent electronically to the student's WesternU email address. Copies of the letter will be placed in the student's educational record and distributed to the Chair of the Student Performance Committee, the College Dean, and the student's Faculty Advisor. The Office of Student Conduct and Professionalism will consider when the terms of the conduct probation have been satisfied and recommend rescission of the conduct probation. A student on conduct probation may not serve as an officer of any official University or College club or organization and should not engage in time-consuming extracurricular activities.

Course Remediation

A student who has taken all course assessments but has received a grade of "U" for a course, will be permitted to remediate by way of taking a cumulative exam at a date determined by the GPC. The remediation exam must be taken within six (6) months from the date of the official grade submission of the course to the Registrar's Office. The remediation exam must be passed ($\geq 70\%$) for the "U" grade to be replaced by a "C" grade. Failure to pass the remediation exam will make a student eligible for dismissal from the Program. In such cases, a failure to pass the remediation exam will result in a referral to the GSPC for appropriate review and action.

Financial Aid Warning Policy (Title IV and Title VII)

Academic Probation Policy. If a student is not making Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), they will be placed on "Financial Aid Warning" status for the next payment period and continue to receive financial aid for that period. Financial Aid is any financial assistance offered to the student for paying for their

education, such as loans, scholarships, Federal Work-Study, Grants and stipends (based on the criteria of the stipend). Students who fail to make SAP by the end of that payment period lose financial aid eligibility.

It is the policy of the Financial Aid Office (FAO) that once a student has been placed on academic probation for not meeting SAP standards as defined by the College, the Financial Aid Office will automatically place the student in a Financial Aid Warning status. During the next academic term if the student does not meet SAP standards and the College places the student on academic suspension, the student will no longer be eligible for financial aid. If the student appeals the academic suspension and the appeal is approved, financial aid will be reinstated. If the student is directed to audit courses, those courses will not be charged tuition for the audited courses. Students that are required to repeat coursework are encouraged to meet with a financial aid counselor with respect to their financial aid eligibility.

Repeat Coursework and Federal Financial Aid Eligibility. Federal regulations governing repeat coursework apply to all students undergraduate, graduate, and professional under the definition of a full-time student in 34 CFR 668.2(b). For term-based programs (not subscription-based), a student's full-time workload may include repeating previously passed coursework, but only one repetition of a previously passed course may be counted toward enrollment status and paid with Title IV aid.

For financial aid purposes, a course is considered "passed" if the student earns a grade of D or better, regardless of the institution's academic standards. For example, while many graduate programs require a B or better to meet academic requirements, the Department of Education (ED) considers a D passing for Title IV eligibility. In addition to letter grades, the non-letter grades Credit (CR) and Pass (P) are also considered passing by ED for Title IV purposes.

Non-letter grades such as Unsatisfactory (U), Incomplete (I), No Pass (NP), No Credit (NCR), In Progress (IP), and Withdrawal (W) are not considered passing by ED and therefore do not count as successful completion for Title IV eligibility.

Once a course is considered passed, it may be repeated only once with federal aid. This policy does not require institutions to change their academic grading standards, but it does limit how many times a previously passed course may be included in enrollment status for financial aid purposes.

Students who are considering repeating a course should consult with the Financial Aid Office to understand how this may affect their aid eligibility and ensure compliance with federal guidelines.

Tutorial Assistance Program

A Tutorial Assistance Program (TAP) has been established to assist students experiencing academic difficulty or desiring content support. It is free to all students. Students can be recommended for this program by any faculty member or may self-identify to TAP to receive assistance. Tutors are experienced students who are in good academic standing and are identified through an on-line application process as well as faculty/staff recommendation. Group tutoring is the methodology most used by the TAP. [TAP support is contingent upon availability of tutors and the support of the college program.](#) To receive TAP services during a semester, students first must have a LEAD counseling appointment during the semester. For more information on academic counseling and the TAP program, contact the Department of Learning Enhancement and Academic Development (LEAD).

Academic Suspension

Students who are deemed unable to continue in the curriculum due to inadequate performance and are required to repeat a given academic year or portion thereof will be placed on academic suspension through such time as they can resume their studies by starting the courses the student is required to repeat. Throughout the time the student is academically suspended, they are also on academic probation, and remains on academic probation until all coursework has been satisfactorily remediated. A student may not receive financial aid during any time of a suspension. Students on Academic Suspension are not registered as active matriculates and should use this time to remediate for the deficiency for which the Academic Suspension was levied.

Conduct Suspension

A conduct suspension is a period of time when a student is barred from enrollment in an academic program because of a violation of applicable University or College conduct policies. The duration of the conduct suspension will be communicated to the student at the time the suspension is imposed, either as a specified period of time or until the student has satisfactorily completed all the terms and conditions imposed to remedy the violation. A student may not receive financial aid during any time of suspension.

Summary Suspension

Actions that threaten or endanger, in any way, the personal safety and/or well-being of self or others, or that disrupt or interfere with the orderly operation of the College or University are cause for immediate disciplinary action. Either the University President, SVP/Provost, or Dean, or Dean's Designee, has the authority to summarily suspend a student when the student admits to guilt or when, in the opinion of these entities, such action is appropriate to protect the health or safety of any individual, or to preserve the orderly operation of the University. Further details regarding the summary suspension action can be found in the University Catalog.

Dismissal

If the cumulative GPA remains below a 3.00 in the subsequent term after being placed on academic probation, the student will be dismissed from the program. A student may also be dismissed from a program for a violation of the University and/or College student conduct standards, policies, or procedures, in alignment with the University's Student Conduct Procedures (See University Catalog). The PhD-BPS program is a research- and dissertation-based program that places heavy emphasis and importance on student research training, aptitude, and progression. Thus, students who receive a No-Credit (NCR) grade for the PHSC 7999 (Research and Dissertation) course will be dismissed regardless of GPA or academic standing in the program. Unsatisfactory completion of the dissertation defense on the second trial as described under **Dissertation** results in dismissal.

Appeal Process

Students may appeal decisions regarding suspension, student conduct, academic progression/promotion, and graduation according to the regulations listed in the Student Appeal Process section of the University Catalog. Decisions related to the imposition of academic probation and any associated terms/conditions of such probation, or administrative withdrawal are considered final and not appealable to the Provost (See University Catalog, Student Appeal Process).

Evaluation and Grading

Program Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of basic concepts and research in biotechnology and pharmaceutical sciences.
 - PhD-BPS graduates will demonstrate knowledge of the interdisciplinary field of Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical Sciences including drug target discovery, design of new drugs, drug delivery, pharmacodynamics, and pharmacokinetics.
2. Critically evaluate research methodology and findings of studies within biotechnology and pharmaceutical sciences.
 - PhD-BPS graduates will evaluate evidence through proper interpretation of data and by making logical and appropriate inferences.
3. Apply biotechnology and pharmaceutical science research methodology and advance research within a self-selected area of expertise in their own research projects.
 - PhD-BPS graduates will demonstrate research skills specific to their field of study.
4. Communicate biotechnological and pharmaceutical science concepts and research findings through oral and written presentations.
 - PhD-BPS graduates will demonstrate oral and written communication skills, which includes public speaking, generating clear presentations, and writing their research dissertation and manuscripts.
5. Demonstrate effective teamwork.
 - PhD-BPS graduates will work within a team as demonstrated through course work and working with their advisor on their dissertation project.
6. Conduct research adhering to standards for ethical and responsible research and reason through ethically challenging situations.
 - PhD-BPS graduates will demonstrate ethical conduct and reason through ethically questionable situations related to their scientific field.

Grading Scale

Final course grades are given based upon the traditional 4-point letter system, as follows:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Equivalent</u>	<u>GPA Points</u>
A	Excellent	4.00
B	Good	3.00
C	Satisfactory	2.00
U	Unsatisfactory	0.00
CR	Credit	N/A
NCR	No Credit	N/A

ADMINISTRATIVE GRADES

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Equivalent</u>	<u>GPA Points</u>
AU	Audit	N/A
I	Incomplete	N/A
W	Withdrawal	N/A
M	Missing	N/A

Audit

An “AU” (Audit) is assigned to a student who is enrolled in a course, attends class activities but does not complete examinations and does not receive course credit. However, under certain circumstances, at the discretion of the College Dean, or Dean’s Designee, a student who is repeating or undergoing remediation may be required to complete course examinations and/or other required work products while auditing the course for no grade. In some cases, students may be charged to audit a course. For more information, please refer to the University Catalog.

Missing Grades

A grade of “M” (Missing) will be assigned by the Registrar’s Office if a student’s grade is not available by the deadline for grade submission. An “M” grade is not included in the GPA calculation and will be replaced by the grade earned in the course once submitted by the course director/instructor. If the grade earned is not reported within six calendar months of the course end date, the grade of “M” will be converted to an unsatisfactory/no credit grade, contingent upon the course’s grading scale. “M” grades should not be used by the program in place of an Incomplete (“I”) grade.

Incomplete

An “I” grade will only be assigned to students whose professional commitments and/or personal responsibilities prevent them from completing the requirements of the course. A student may remove an “I” grade by completing course requirements within the following six calendar months or the final grade will be permanently recorded as a “U”. This rule applies regardless of the student’s enrollment status. A student not enrolled during the following six months must still successfully remove the “I” grade. The instructor must certify any grade changes.

Grade Reports

Official grades are turned in to the Registrar from the Departmental Office, at which time the online student records system, Self-Service, is updated. Official grade reports and unofficial transcripts will be available on the Self-Service student records system throughout the academic year.

Appealing a Course Grade

Within five (5) working days from the receipt of the course grade, the student may appeal the grade in writing to the Dean of the College of Pharmacy, or Dean's designee. The Dean or Dean's designee, has the authority to make a decision regarding the appeal. The Dean, or Dean's designee, may request input from appropriate sources related to the course grade, including course facilitator, instructor(s), faculty, and/or appropriate committees. The Dean, or Dean's designee, will inform the student of their decision in writing within ten (10) working days from the time the appeal was submitted to the Dean, or Dean's Designee. Dean's, or Dean's Designee's, decisions related to grades are considered final and not appealable to the Provost (See University Catalog, Student Appeal Process).

Credit Hour Calculation

The PhD-BPS program awards one credit hour for every 15 hours of lecture or 30 hours of workshop/discussion/laboratory work.

Curriculum Organization

To graduate, students are required to complete a minimum of 73 credit hours, which includes PHSC 6000 Graduate Seminar each semester (see the list of required courses listed below).

Required Courses

Subject/Course #	Course Title	Credit Hours
PHSC 5001	Principles of Biomedical Ethics	1.00
PHSC 5002	Scientific Writing	1.00
PHSC 5201	Pharmacodynamics, Pharmacokinetics, & Pharmacogenomics	3.00
PHSC 5202	Pharmaceutics & Nanotechnology	3.00
PHSC 5203	Biotechnology	3.00
PHSC 5500	Biostatistics	2.00
PHSC 6000	Graduate Seminar (every semester)	≥8 x 1.00
Various Course #s	Electives	≥ 4.00
PHSC 7999	Research & Dissertation	≥48.00
Total Required Credit Hours:		73.00

Elective Courses

Subject/Course #	Course Title	Credit Hours
PHSC 7100	Biomedical Sciences	2.00
PHSC 7101	Advanced Pharmacokinetics	2.00
PHSC 7102	Biomolecular Simulation and Drug Design	2.00
PHSC 7103	Neuropharmacology	2.00
PHSC 7104	Immunology	2.00
PHSC 7105	Drug Targets	2.00
PHSC 7106	Product Development	2.00
PHSC 7107	Statistical Analysis and Inference	2.00
PHSC 7500	Special Topics in Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical Sciences	1.00 - 4.00

Continuous Registration

Subject/Course #	Course Title	Credit Hours
PHSC 7999A	Research & Dissertation Continuation	0.50

Course Descriptions

All courses are awarded letter grades, except when indicated otherwise.

PHSC 5001 Principles of Biomedical Ethics (1 credit hour)

This course consists of three topics within modern biomedical ethics. First, the course will survey the various moral philosophies that are used in society as well as the biomedical enterprise. Second, the course will utilize a small group format to discuss medical scenarios to tease apart ethical approaches and the conflict between various ethical theories. Lastly, the course will continue in the small group format to discuss research ethics and use real cases to examine the role that ethics and ethical theories play in laboratory science. Students are also expected to explore their own ethical philosophy and articulate this philosophy in line with the traditional philosophies that will be discussed in class. *Prerequisite: None*

PHSC 5002 Scientific Writing (1 credit hour)

Having the ability to communicate your research effectively and clearly through written prose is an essential skill for all scientific researchers. This course is designed to teach students the fundamentals of the writing process as well as the ability to successfully construct a thesis/dissertation, grant application, or manuscript. The course is a combination of lectured content, including discussion of the main key components of these various documents, such as introduction/background, methods, results, and discussion, as well as written assignments that will be graded by peers as well as the course facilitator. *Prerequisite: None*

PHSC 5201 Pharmacodynamics, Pharmacokinetics, & Pharmacogenomics (3 credit hours)

This course exposes students to fundamental principles underlying pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics, and pharmacogenomics. Specifically, students will learn about drug absorption, distribution, metabolism, and excretion (ADME), also known as “what the body does to a drug”. As well as generic mechanisms of drug action (dynamics), also known as “what the drug does to the body”. Lastly, the course will explore how ADME and dynamics are altered by the genomics of a patient. The topics in this course are to prepare students for advanced study in the field of biotechnology and pharmaceutical sciences. *Prerequisite: None*

PHSC 5202 Pharmaceutics & Nanotechnology (3 credit hours)

Pharmaceutics and Nanotechnology will cover topics in physical pharmacy, pre-formulation, formulation of basic and advanced drug delivery system designs. Specific topics such as thermodynamics, drug stability and solubility, protein, peptide formulations, liposomal and polymer-based nanotechnology products development will be covered extensively. *Prerequisite: None*

PHSC 5203 Biotechnology (3 credit hours)

This course will emphasize the principles and applications of modern biotechnology. The first half will focus on fundamental concepts, including the structures of DNA, RNA, proteins, and cells, and the mechanisms of transcription, translation, and protein expression and purification. The second half will concentrate on the applications of biotechnology in pharmaceutics, such as monoclonal antibody therapeutics, nucleotide therapeutics, gene editing and delivery, mRNA vaccines, immune cell engineering, and cancer immunotherapies. Upon completing this course, students should have developed

a solid understanding of the fundamentals and applications of biotechnology, particularly in research and the development of pharmaceutical and medical therapies. *Prerequisite: None*

PHSC 5500 Biostatistics (2 credit hours)

This course is designed to provide fundamental principles of experimental design suitable for students in the biotechnological and pharmaceutical sciences. The fundamentals of experimental design consist of formulating a testable hypothesis, developing various measurement strategies, ethical treatment of research subjects, validity, experimental and correlational research strategies, decision making in data collection and data interpretation. *Prerequisite: None*

PHSC 6000 Graduate Seminar (1 credit hour, CR/NCR)

Students enrolled in Graduate Seminar will present a journal article of their or their advisor's choosing to the department once during the semester. The presentation follows the format of a one-hour plenary session at scientific meetings. To get credit for the course the students must also evaluate each presentation. Students are expected to read the articles and be prepared to ask questions of the presenter. *Prerequisite: None*

PHSC 7100 Biomedical Sciences (2 credit hours)

This course provides an introduction to Biomedical Sciences by focusing on the foundations of genetics, cell biology and organ system biology that are part of modern biomedical research. In addition, the course introduces different aspects of the pathology of diseases by exploring how diseases develop within a human. *Prerequisite: PHSC 5203*

PHSC 7101 Advanced Pharmacokinetics (2 credit hours)

This course introduces the student to the kinetic processes by which drugs are absorbed, distributed, and eliminated from the body, and to the mathematical methods of describing and quantitating these processes. These concepts will be used for the understanding of the factors which can influence the utilization profile of a drug. The design and implementation of pharmacokinetic studies and the analysis and interpretation of the data obtained will be emphasized. *Prerequisite: PHSC 5201.*

PHSC 7102 Biomolecular Simulations and Drug Design (2 credit hours)

Contemporary drug design and discovery draw upon many disciplines, requiring students to possess knowledge of chemistry, physics, molecular biology, pharmacology, and computer science. This course is tailored for graduate students majoring in biotechnology and pharmaceutical sciences, aiming to consolidate concepts and strategies in computational drug design. While addressing the thermodynamics principles underlying various methods, the course will emphasize practical aspects of molecular dynamics simulations, employing enhanced sampling algorithms and machine learning strategies. The hands-on training sections on molecular dynamics simulations and python notebook will be particularly beneficial for students seeking to leverage computer-based methods to boost their research productivity or to develop skills applicable to pharmaceutical industry R&D. *Prerequisite: None.*

PHSC 7103 Neuropharmacology (2 credit hours)

This course is designed to enable students to understand how drugs alter neuronal communication and how these events lead to a change in behavior or alter the physiological state. Students in particular will

learn about the role of different neurotransmitter/neuropeptide systems, their receptor types, drugs interacting with the neurotransmitter/neuropeptide systems, receptor/drug-mediated signal transduction, and the effects of drugs in addiction and other neuropsychiatric disorders. *Prerequisite: PHSC 5201.*

PHSC 7104 Immunology (2 credit hours)

This course is designed to enable the student to understand basic principles of immunology and apply this knowledge to better immunotherapy development and the importance of immunology in biotechnology and pharmaceutical sciences. *Prerequisite: None.*

PHSC 7105 Drug Targets (2 credit hours)

This elective course is focused on the different types of drug targets that can be found within the human body, their signaling mechanisms, and how they regulate physiological processes. In addition, the control of their function by currently prescribed medications and how they are used to treat disease will be discussed. Scientific literature will be incorporated within the course to highlight potential new receptors that can be targeted in the future to more effectively a variety of pathophysiological conditions. *Prerequisite: PHSC 5201.*

PHSC 7106 Product Development (2 credit hours)

Pharmaceutical products range from conventional dosage forms such as tablets and capsules to more novel dosage forms such as nanoformulations and personalized formulations. Students in this didactic and laboratory-based course will engage with the teaching faculty to understand basic principles of product development and optimization (Design of Experiment, Quality by design etc.) and identify a product to be developed within the Pharmaceutics labs. Thereafter, students will conduct feasibility and optimization studies and develop a pharmaceutical product. The course will culminate with the writing of a product development paper in the manuscript style of a peer reviewed journal (TBD) and an oral presentation of findings. *Prerequisite: PHSC 5202.*

PHSC 7107 Statistical Analysis and Inference (2 credit hours)

This course focuses on the principles of statistical analysis and inference as applied to experimental research in the biotechnological and pharmaceutical sciences. Students develop skills in formulating testable hypotheses, selecting appropriate measurement and data collection strategies, and applying analytical frameworks to evaluate research outcomes. Emphasis is placed on the integration of statistical reasoning with study design, including formulation of testable hypotheses, selection of appropriate measurement and data collection strategies, ethical considerations in research involving human and animal subjects, and evaluation of validity. Students will apply statistical frameworks to experimental and correlational research designs to support rigorous data interpretation, evidence-based decision making, and critical evaluation of scientific findings. The course highlights data-driven decision-making and the use of inferential approaches to draw scientifically meaningful conclusions from empirical data.

Prerequisite: PHSC 5500

PHSC 7500 Special Topics in Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical Sciences (1-4 credit hours)

This course is designed to enable the students to understand advanced principles of their topic area through reading, analyzing and presenting research literature. *Prerequisite: as determined by course facilitator.*

PHSC 7999 Research & Dissertation (1-9 credit hours, CR/NCR)

In this course, students are expected to conduct mentor-guided research based on a conceptualized project. The mentor meets with the student on a regular basis to assess the progress of the laboratory research experiments and help guide the project. The student is expected to conduct literature searches and evaluations based on their experimental work. Students will use the experimental findings to write a complete dissertation. The course is a pass/fail course. Final assessment occurs when the student presents their dissertation. *Prerequisite: None*

PHSC 7999A Research & Dissertation Continuation (0.5 credit hour, CR/NCR)

PHSC 7999A Research & Dissertation Continuation is a bridge between PHSC 7999 Research & Dissertation and completion of the PhD-BPS program. Students will take this course to satisfy enrollment requirements while completing their dissertation work after the sixth year in the program. *Prerequisite: PHSC 7999 Research & Dissertation.*

Honors and Awards

The following award is considered for presentation to PhD-BPS students annually:

Dean's List

Academic Calendar

Fall 2026	
August 3, 2026	First Day of PhD-BPS Orientation Week
August 10, 2026	Fall Classes Begin
September 7, 2026	Labor Day – No Classes
October 12, 2026	Indigenous Peoples’ Day – No Classes
November 11, 2026	Veterans Day Observed – No Classes
November 25, 2026	Thanksgiving Recess Begins @ 5:00 p.m.
November 30, 2026	Fall Classes Resume
December 18, 2026	Fall Classes End
December 21, 2026	Winter Recess Begins
Spring 2027	
January 4, 2027	Spring Classes Begin
January 18, 2027	Martin Luther King Jr. Day – No Classes
February 15, 2027	Presidents’ Day – No Classes
March 15, 2027	Spring Break Begins
March 22, 2027	Spring Classes Resume
May 21, 2027	Spring Classes End