



UGA College of Pharmacy, Augusta University partner to benefit pharmacy students

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AUGUSTA, Ga. (Athens, Ga.) – Undergraduate chemistry students at Augusta University interested in a career in pharmacy now have a streamlined approach for admission into the University of Georgia’s Doctor of Pharmacy program.

In a formal ceremony held today at the UGA College of Pharmacy campus at Augusta University, officials from the two University System of Georgia colleges signed an articulation agreement that provides AU undergraduate students majoring in chemistry with a guided pathway into UGA’s four-year pharmacy curriculum. The agreement will allow participants an earlier start to a career in the critical health care field.

“Augusta University students have benefited from our partnership with the University of Georgia College of Pharmacy for the past 50 years, and we’re excited to expand those opportunities with this new articulation agreement,” said Augusta University President [Brooks A. Keel](#), PhD. “This ‘3+4’ program will provide a pathway for AU students to more quickly and easily matriculate into UGA’s Doctor of Pharmacy program. Putting well-trained pharmacists to work throughout the state is just another way we’re fulfilling our mission to improve the health of all Georgians.”

AU students in their junior year who maintain certain academic criteria and successfully fulfill all admissions requirements will receive a guaranteed admission interview at UGA. Those admitted then can complete their bachelor’s degree with transferred credits earned through the Pharm.D. program. Further, aspiring pharmacists will be eligible to receive structured guidance directly from UGA faculty, staff, and current Pharm.D. student mentors as early as their first undergraduate year at AU.

“As the COVID-19 pandemic has shown, the importance of pharmacists in helping people address their health care challenges is more important than ever.”

According to Kelly Smith, dean of the UGA College of Pharmacy, the role of pharmacists is expanding.

“With a population increasing in numbers, age and diversity, the role of pharmacists is more important than ever before – especially in hospitals and clinics in which Doctors of Pharmacy are increasingly expected to provide direct patient care through comprehensive medication management,” Smith said. “In addition, the pandemic has been a significant indicator of the value of pharmacists in helping people address their health care concerns. Our unique

curriculum is well-suited to prepare an aspiring pharmacist for such challenges.”

Pharmacists are the fourth-highest paid professionals in the U.S., making a degree in pharmacy a sound investment, according to [Glassdoor](#), one of the world’s largest job and recruiting sites. In addition, the UGA College of Pharmacy is ranked 24th in the nation by U.S. News and World Report, and the pass rate for the North American Pharmacists Licensure Examination is 93%, which is 5% above the national average.

“As the state's only public academic health center, it's crucial that Augusta University has a strong relationship with UGA, which houses Georgia's only public school of pharmacy,” said Dr. [Neil MacKinnon](#), Augusta University provost and executive vice president for academic affairs. “We are always looking for new ways to serve and support our students as they pursue their dreams, and this is a prime example of that effort. As a pharmacist myself, I can't wait to congratulate the first graduates of this program and watch them begin their careers one year earlier, thanks to this partnership.”

While the program seeks to expand pharmacy education, several former AU students have made the UGA transition.

“I attended Augusta University in 2012, and I was grateful to be part of the AU programs, as they introduced me to pharmacy’s umbrella of careers,” said Seth Hernandez, a current third-year UGA pharmacy student who will do his rotations starting this fall at Fort Gordon, Augusta University Medical Center and University Hospital. “The introduction I had at AU led me to the University of Georgia and allowed me to be open-minded about the impact a pharmacist can have in so many arenas, such as retail pharmacy, on hospital rounds with other health care professionals, or researching new upcoming drugs for rare diseases. I am very thankful for the connection that Augusta University has made with the University of Georgia.”

Hernandez added that he hopes to shine more light in his chosen field of oncology pharmacy and nuclear medicine.

Augusta University students interested in attending UGA’s Pharm.D. program may contact [Tom Crute](#), PhD, AU Professor of Chemistry/Department Chair, for more information.

DOWNLOAD: [Photos](#) from the articulation agreement signing.

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Augusta University is Georgia’s innovation center for education and health care, training the next generation of innovators, leaders and healthcare providers in classrooms and clinics on four campuses in Augusta and locations across the state. More than 9,000 students choose Augusta for educational opportunities at the center of Georgia’s new cybersecurity hub, and experiential learning that blends arts and application, humanities and the health sciences. Augusta is home to Georgia's only public academic health center, where groundbreaking research is creating a healthier, more prosperous Georgia and world-class clinicians are bringing the medicine of tomorrow to patient care today.

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University of Georgia College of Pharmacy: Founded in 1903, the University of Georgia College of Pharmacy delivers high quality education, research opportunities, experiential programs, and service learning in order to advance the pharmacy profession, as well as pharmaceutical and biomedical sciences. As the largest and only public pharmacy school in the State of Georgia, the College offers a Doctor of Pharmacy degree (Pharm.D.), along with several graduate and certificate programs, along with one undergraduate degree.

UGA College of Pharmacy