

APPROVED JAN 22 2014  
*as amended. M.M.*

TO: Lawrence Williams, Chair  
 Undergraduate Committee

FROM: Richard Scamell  
 Academic Policies and Procedures Committee

SUBJECT: UC 12369 13F: Proposed Changes to the College of Pharmacy Grade Point Average Policy

DATE: November 26, 2013

The Academic Policies and Procedures Committee met on Wednesday, November 20 to consider a proposal to modify the College of Pharmacy grade point average policy for Pre-Pharmacy students. Participating in consideration of this proposal were committee members Ognjen Miljanic, William Munson, Richard Scamell, Shishir Shah, Lesley Sisk, and Stephen Soutullo. Barbara Lewis and Paige Pitman attended the meeting as guests.

The purpose of UC 12369 13F is to create a stronger and more qualified pool of Pre-Pharmacy students that can form a more qualified pool of candidates for admission into the Pharmacy Doctorate (Pharm.D.) Professional Pharmacy degree program. The three elements of the proposal are discussed in this report.

**Minimum Grade Point Average Requirement To Remain a Pre-Pharmacy Student**

Pre-Pharmacy encompasses the prerequisite coursework required to apply for entry into the Pharm.D. degree program. Pre-Pharmacy involves at least two years of undergraduate coursework that includes

- 12 hours of coursework in Biology
- 18 hours of coursework in Chemistry (up through Organic Chemistry I and II)
- 3 hours of coursework in Physics
- 7 hours of coursework in Mathematics
- 6 hours of coursework in English
- 12 hours of coursework in United States History and Political Science
- 15 hours of coursework in communications, social science, visual/performing arts, humanities, and writing in the disciplines.

The purpose of UC 12369 13F is to increase the minimum cumulative grade point average requirement for students to remain a Pre-Pharmacy student. The current requirements are shown with a double strikethrough while the proposed requirements are shaded.

|   |                 |      |
|---|-----------------|------|
| Freshman (First Semester)                           | <del>2.50</del> | 2.75 |
| Freshman (Second Semester)                          | <del>2.75</del> | 3.00 |
| Sophomore ( <del>Second Semester</del> )            | <del>3.00</del> | 3.20 |
| Junior (Sixth Semester) <i>→ Fourth (amend # 1)</i> | <del>3.20</del> | 3.40 |

Pre-Pharmacy students not meeting these requirements will have a hold placed on their academic record until they either (a) meet with a Pre-Pharmacy advisor for academic success intervention which may include advising/counseling, contract implementation, and referral to university resources in order to aid the student in meeting the grade point average thresholds, or (b) change their major. It should be noted that the Pre-Pharmacy student is required to apply for admission into the Pharm.D. degree program no later than by the end of their sophomore year. In addition, it is also important to note that these minimum grade point average requirements do not imply that a Pre-Pharmacy student meeting these guidelines is guaranteed admission to the Pharm.D. degree program as completion of the required Pre-Pharmacy coursework is just one of the five basic admission requirements for the Pharm.D. degree program. Other requirements include: (a) taking the Pharmacy College Admissions Test (PCAT), (b) obtaining three letters of reference from a licensed pharmacist; an academic advisor or professor; and either a second

professor, pharmacist, or supervisor/employer (c) participating in volunteer/community service and (d) a personal interview. In recent years the average Pre-Pharmacy grade point average of students admitted into the Pharm.D. degree program has ranged from 3.20 to 3.60.

## **Changing From One Major to a Pre-Pharmacy Major Program** (amend #2)

In addition to changing the minimum grade point average requirement for students to remain in a Pre-Pharmacy student, UC 12369 13F includes a proposal to **not allow** students with 30 or more hours of Pre-Pharmacy prerequisites to change their major to Pre-Pharmacy. Any student with an interest in pharmacy, regardless of major, may receive advising directly from University of Houston College of Pharmacy. After a student has completed 30 hours of prerequisites, the student should be applying to the College of Pharmacy and/or putting their back up plan in place in the event that they are denied admission to the College of Pharmacy. UC 12369 13F encourages students to focus on a back-up major; the College of Pharmacy does not wish for any student to become "stuck" in a non-degreed major due to their inability to change to another major. Due to the PharmCAS (centralized application service) which includes an Early Decision process to the applicant's first choice school, the competitive University of Houston applicant could be applying directly to the college at this point and a change in major would not be necessary.

## **Minimum Grade Point Average Requirement for Incoming Transfer Students**

UC 12369 13F calls for the grade point average requirement for incoming transfer students from other four-year institutions and community colleges to be increased from 2.75 to 3.00 for both the overall grade point average and the grade point average in all required Pre-Pharmacy math and science coursework attempted. In addition, in order for a transfer student to be admitted as a Pre-Pharmacy student, the following courses or their equivalent must be completed: CHEM 1331: Fundamentals of Chemistry I; BIOL 1361: Introduction to Biological Science I or BIOL 1362: Introduction to Biological Science II; and MATH 1431: Calculus I. Once admitted these students would be required to meet the minimum grade point averages outlined above in order to remain a Pre-Pharmacy student.

## **Recommendation**

After reviewing UC 12369 13F and speaking with Barbara Lewis and Paige Pitman, the Committee is able to offer a strong endorsement to the proposal and the manner in which applicants to the Pharm.D degree program are evaluated. The application process in its entirety gives the College an opportunity to consider the applicant's motivation to care for their fellow human beings and their welfare. Each applicant must have established a relationship with one or two faculty members along with a professional in the field who can write a letter of recommendation. Finally, the proposed changes to the College of Pharmacy grade point average policy will help ensure that incoming students to the Pharm.D. Program have an even better mastery of basic science requirements and a broad and successful exposure to the humanities and social sciences.