

Pre-Pharmacy

The University of Arkansas - Monticello offers courses that provide a basic education in the physical and biological sciences and in the humanities that will prepare students for the specialized professional and clinical education in a college of pharmacy. The pre-pharmacy advisors at UAM work closely with colleges of pharmacy in the region in order to provide students the best basic education possible to give students the greatest opportunity for success upon entering the professional program. Although most students think about a retail pharmacy position when considering a career in pharmacy, there are many more options to be considered. It is recommended that you talk with a staff member from a college of pharmacy in order to get more information.

Before choosing a career in pharmacy, you must first realize that pharmacy school, and the pre-requisites taken prior to pharmacy school, are heavy in math and sciences. A typical pre-pharmacy student typically takes 24-28 hours of chemistry, 16-20 hours of biology, possibly Calculus I, and several other courses that often fall into the general education category. The required coursework most closely fits the [Biology/Biochemistry double major](#); however, you can choose any major that you wish. A large percentage of successful applicants complete their degree at a four-year college prior to attending pharmacy school; however, some are admitted after their second or third year of college. Those students often transfer hours back to UAM to complete a Bachelor of Science degree. Overall GPA is the strongest predictor of success in pharmacy school. With the pharmacy curriculum based strongly on molecular properties, a student's performance in Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry often relates closely to their performance in pharmacy school.

Most of the UAM pre-pharmacy majors attend either the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) or Harding University; however, over the past several years UAM students have also been accepted at UT-Memphis, University of Louisiana-Monroe and several other schools across the nation. Since each program requires slightly different prerequisite courses, we can design your curriculum to fit the courses needed for application to the desired programs. It is important that you visit the website for each institution that you wish to apply to get the most up to date prerequisite course list.

The most common question that students have is, "What does it take to get into pharmacy school?" There is not a specific answer to this question. Each pharmacy school will evaluate students using their own criteria. Based on prior statistics, to have a good chance of admission to a pharmacy program, a minimum of 50 on the PCAT and a 3.50 GPA on all pre-pharmacy required and selective courses is needed. Changes in the PCAT have caused scores to fluctuate, so that number certainly is not a cut-off. We have had students that are lower on both PCAT and GPA still be accepted and be very successful in pharmacy school.

It is also very important that the applicant have either worked in a pharmacy, or at least shadowed a pharmacist for a reasonable amount of time. Pharmacists on admissions boards have told me that they are reluctant to accept any student into a pharmacy program that has not spent a reasonable amount of time shadowing or working in a pharmacy.

Links to Pharmacy programs in the region:

[University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences \(UAMS\) College of Pharmacy](#)

[Harding University College of Pharmacy](#)

[University of Louisiana-Monroe College of Pharmacy](#)

[University of Tennessee-Memphis College of Pharmacy](#)

Other Useful Links:

[Pharmacy College Admissions Test \(PCAT\)](#)

[Pharmacy College Application Service \(PharmCAS\)](#)