

# Alternative Options for Pharmacy School Applicants

Each year, some students are not successful in their application to pharmacy school(s). There are several routes these students can take to continue pursuing pharmacy and/or to find other related and satisfying careers. It is highly recommended that students utilize a combination of strategies. Students should note that:

- 1) When admissions committees review re-applicants, they want to see that the applicant has done **significant work** to improve his/her application since the previous application.
- 2) Even if re-applying, it is extremely important to have a **well-developed alternate plan**. Admissions committees may even ask about this in interviews.

## Increase application competitiveness and re-apply.

Consider: What were the weaknesses in your application? What areas could you improve?

Application components for self-evaluation include:

- Grades and GPAs
- Prerequisites completed
- Additional upper level coursework
- Bachelor's degree completion
- Pharmacy & other health care experience
- Leadership experience
- Community service experience
- Professionalism & maturity
- Quality of written components
- Quality of reference letters
- Knowledge of the pharmacy profession

Possible Strategies:

1. Strategically repeat courses for better grades as an undergraduate at OSU
2. Complete a different science major at OSU (Microbiology and Biology are the most common)
3. Apply to a structured Post-Baccalaureate programs at another university
  - a. Examples: Inter-professional Health Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Program (UCSF) or Pharmacy Post Baccalaureate Program (LECOM)
4. Apply to a Master's Degree program designed to enhance applicant's academic profile
  - a. Examples: M.S. in Medical Sciences (Western University) or M.S. in Biomedical Sciences (Regis University)
5. Gain additional experience (pharmacy technician, other work in health care, shadowing, internships, research, community service, etc.)
6. Thoroughly research pharmacy schools and their admissions statistics and criteria. Apply to a different or expanded range of pharmacy schools where your qualifications closely match those of previously admitted students.

## Explore other career interests and establish an alternate plan.

Consider: What about pharmacy most interests you? What are other careers that have those elements?

Possible Strategies:

1. See "Related Careers and Majors for Pre-Pharmacy Students" advising document
2. Use online resources\* to research potential careers
3. Take career assessments (such as SIGI<sup>3</sup>, which is free and online through Career Services\*)
4. Meet with a career advisor in Career Services\*
5. Use informational interviewing\* and job shadowing to learn more about a career

\*Get started at the Career Development Center website: <http://career.oregonstate.edu/>