PharmD/MD Dual Degree Program

The Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy (EMSOP) offers an innovative PharmD/MD dual degree option, developed jointly with the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (RWJMS). To be eligible to apply for the program, you must be a current PharmD student at the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy.

This unique and highly selective program at Rutgers University is designed to create an elite cadre of interdisciplinary practitioners, highly skilled in the disciplines of both pharmacy and medicine, and poised to provide leadership in collaborative clinical practice, academic research, public policy, and the pharmaceutical industry. This program is directed by dual degree program committees in the School of Pharmacy and the Medical School. Successful applicants will matriculate into RWJMS upon their completion of the PharmD program and will not be required to take the MCAT exam.

Application Eligibility and Process

Interested students are urged to make an appointment with one of the members of the School of Pharmacy PharmD/MD dual degree committee. Students may apply in the fall semester of the third professional (P3) year. P2 students may also apply, but they may be urged to wait until the P3 year to strengthen their qualifications.

Application materials are available online: https://pharmacy.rutgers.edu/wp-content/uploads/PharmD-MD-Application2020-21.pdf

Calendar for Application Process

- **Fall semester**
  - Submission of application, essay delineating interest, letters of recommendation; applications due first week of January
- **January - February**
  - EMSOP’s PharmD/MD committee reviews written materials: letter describing interest, application form, and three letters of recommendation [see application form for full details]
  - EMSOP evaluates applications and sets schedule for interviews
  - EMSOP dual degree committee interviews selected candidates
  - EMSOP dual degree committee evaluates interviewees and forwards names of recommended candidates to the Admissions Committee of Robert Wood Johnson Medical School
- **February – May**
  - Robert Wood Johnson Medical School Admissions Committee evaluates candidates, schedules interviews, and notifies students about their status.
  - Once admitted into the dual degree program, students complete the pharmacy program, including their APPE rotations. They are strongly encouraged to choose experiential sites and participate in interprofessional and extracurricular activities that provide opportunities to work with students in other health professions, particularly in medicine.
  - Dual degree students complete the PharmD degree in May of the P4 year and are strongly
encouraged to sit for the NAPLEX and MPJE exams over the summer. Students typically begin their training at RWJMS in August, about 3 months after their pharmacy graduation.

Qualifications and Selection Criteria

To be considered, the applicant must have an excellent academic record, typically with a cumulative professional program GPA of 3.5 or better when applying and must maintain academic excellence for the remainder of the PharmD program. Excellence in academic achievement is important, but clinical and/or research experience, service, and leadership are also essential. Prospective students should pursue opportunities to engage in clinical settings, participate in interprofessional programs, and work with student organizations to provide community service in health-related fields.

As part of the process, applicants submit a letter to the School of Pharmacy dual degree committee. The letter should convey the following information:

- Reasons for applying – how this program will meet your long-term career goals and aspirations
- Clinical experience, especially employment or volunteer experience in pharmacies
- Research experience and accomplishments, e.g., engagement in the research honors program, lab experience, publications, etc.
- Service to society, e.g., work in soup kitchens, tutoring underprivileged children, service in developing countries, etc.
- Relevant extracurricular activities, including pharmacy active participation in pharmacy organization.
- Competitive internships
- Special educational achievements and honors, e.g., competitive scholarships
- Bachelor’s or graduate degree

If the applicant’s GPA is less than 3.5, he/she should submit evidence of extraordinary achievement in clinical experience, service to society, research, extracurricular activities, and other mitigating factors that indicate strong potential for the program.

The Pharmacy committee will invite selected applicants for interviews.

Admitted Students

After the Pharmacy interviews, the School’s dual degree committee selects applicants to recommend to the RWJMS Admissions Committee. The Medical School decision is based on all application materials, including the recommendations of the EMSOP committee and a series of “mini-interviews” with RWJMS faculty. The decision of the RWJMS committee is final.

Applicants will be notified about admission in the spring semester. Dual degree students are strongly encouraged to take a leadership role in interprofessional education programs as they complete the PharmD and begin the MD program.

Once students begin the RWJMS curriculum, specialized enrichment options may be available that will provide opportunities to take advantage of the students’ extensive knowledge of pharmacology, pharmacotherapy, and pharmacy practice. Dual degree students can play an important role in strengthening
the program by building opportunities for medical students and pharmacy students to work together, inside of and outside of the classroom.

Questions?

If you are interested in pursuing this opportunity and have any questions, please arrange to meet with Senior Associate Dean Goldin or any of the other members of the EMSOP committee.

EMSOP PharmD/MD Dual Degree Committee Members

John Colaizzi, Professor and Dean Emeritus (Chair)
Carol Goldin, Senior Associate Dean (Co-Chair)
Joseph Barone, Dean and Professor II
Luigi Brunetti, Associate Professor
Suzie Chen, Associate Professor and Chair of Dept of Chemical Biology
Deepali Dixit, Clinical Associate Professor
Donna Feudo, Assistant Dean and Director of Experiential Education
Grace Guo, Associate Professor
Arash Hatefi, Associate Professor
Debra Laskin, Distinguished Professor and Chair of Dept of Pharmacology and Toxicology
Megan Maroney, Clinical Associate Professor
Yekaterina Opsha, Clinical Associate Professor
Mary Wagner, Associate Professor

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