The Doctor of Pharmacy/Doctor of Philosophy (PharmD/PhD) Combined Degree Option in the College of Pharmacy

Summary

The College of Pharmacy offers a combined-degree program in which a student already enrolled in the Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) professional program at Purdue University can begin to accrue credits toward a PhD degree in one of the three departments in the college before earning the PharmD. Key elements of the program are:

1. No additional time will be required for a student to complete the requirements for the PharmD degree.
2. Through a judicious choice of electives and research rotations, a student can begin graduate coursework and research while still enrolled as a PharmD student, thus saving on the amount of time required for completing both programs separately.
3. Students will be eligible for admission into the Graduate School following satisfactory completion of four years of study (either a Bachelor of Science degree or two years of pre-pharmacy courses and two years of professional courses).
4. No curricular compromises in either program are necessary.
5. The student who successfully completes the combined-degree program will receive the PharmD degree followed by the PhD degree.

Departments Involved

All three departments in the College of Pharmacy offer this combined degree option. The departments are:

1. The Department of Industrial and Molecular Pharmacology (IMPH)
2. The Borch Department of Medicinal Chemistry and Molecular Pharmacology (MCMP)
3. The Department of Pharmacy Practice (PHPR).

The program will be administered by the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs of the College of Pharmacy in cooperation with the Associate Dean for Professional Programs and the departmental graduate chairs.

Rationale for the PharmD/PhD

This option meets the needs of PharmD students interested in a career in research or academia where a PhD degree is required. Students currently face a six-year commitment for the PharmD and, on average, an additional 5 years for the PhD. Add to this a 2−3-year postdoctoral experience and the time to employment can be prohibitive. The goal of this program is to help students meet these goals in a more timely manner.

Program Structure

A student who successfully completes this program will have progressed through four phases:

1. ***Preparation for Admission*** - A student interested in the PharmD/PhD program can request to be assigned to a graduate faculty member in the PhD-granting department of choice, who will advise the potential student as to appropriate elective courses and on the likelihood of

admission to the graduate program. This assignment may be made as early as the student wishes or as late as one year prior to the proposed date of admission. It is strongly advised that students gain laboratory research experience to strengthen their applications. The GRE general exam is a required part of the application process.

2. ***Application for Admission*** - Applications for admission are submitted to the Graduate School using the on-line application process. It is recommended that the application be submitted during the 2nd professional year in the PharmD program, preferably during the Fall semester, but certainly no later than February. *The academic department to which application is made will apply its usual criteria for graduate admission to each applicant.*

Formal admission to the graduate program can occur any time following completion of two full years of the PharmD program. Students who enter the PharmD program with a prior BS degree are eligible for admission to the PharmD/PhD program concurrently or to the PhD program at any time following admission to the PharmD program.

3. From Admission to the Combined-Degree Program until Awarding of the PharmD Degree. Enrollment in the PharmD/PhD program will not incur additional tuition liability to the student over and above the usual Purdue tuition. The PharmD tuition increment will still apply. The student will be considered to be both a PharmD student and a PhD student. Registration credit for the PhD will accrue from the point of admission. The PharmD/PhD student will be able to take elective courses that simultaneously satisfy the requirements of both the PharmD electives and the PhD program of choice. *Up to nine elective credits required for the PharmD also can be counted toward the credits required for the PhD (courses with 50000 and 60000 numbers).* Note, however, that no credit for PhD research (699 courses) will be allowed prior to formal admission into the combined-degree program.

In addition, the PharmD student may elect to carry increased academic loads (up to the maximum allowed by Purdue) to further their PhD coursework objectives. The Graduate School allows a maximum of 30 credits from a professional doctoral degree (courses with 50000 and 60000 numbers) to be counted toward the PhD.

The PharmD/PhD student may elect to use their *last three* rotations in the fourth professional year (APPE) to begin their PhD research project. These rotations (four weeks each, four credits each) plus a month's break normally incorporated into the usual rotation sequence can be consolidated sequentially into a full semester of research, and can thus allow the PharmD student to get a "jump-start" on their PhD research. Departments also have the option of allowing the student to begin their PhD projects in the summers between semesters or on a part-time basis during the academic year. Although the academic-year research option will not typically be viable because of constraints on the student's time, summer research experiences can provide students with the opportunity to learn the research techniques necessary to begin their PhD research projects.

The PharmD student will receive the PharmD degree and can sit for the licensure examination on schedule (assuming satisfactory progress) and will thus not suffer any academic or financial penalty should they decide not to continue in the PhD program.

4. From Awarding of the PharmD Degree to Awarding of the PhD Degree. Once awarded the PharmD degree, the student continues as a regular graduate student until completion of the requirements for the PhD. A department that accepts a PharmD/PhD student will be obligated to

provide its usual graduate-student support package (20 hr fellowship, or assistantship) to a student in this phase of the program according to the rules established for other graduate students. A department may require the PharmD/PhD student to make a formal response to such an offer of support by April 15 of the year in which the PharmD is to be awarded so that the department can plan its support budget.

Should a student withdraw from the Ph.D. program with an MS degree, the departmental and Graduate School requirements for an MS will apply. In particular, the use of up to 30 hours of PharmD coursework as credit for the MS degree is not an option.