

University at Buffalo School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences



Scholars Program Student Handbook 2025-2026

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See also: <http://pharmacy.buffalo.edu/academics/pharmd/micro-credential-programs/scholars-program.html>

General Overview

The Scholars Program of the University at Buffalo School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (UB SPPS) is designed to identify Doctor of Pharmacy Students with demonstrated excellence in academic achievement having an interest in postgraduate residency training. This program provides mentoring to third and fourth professional year students in the areas of clinical practice, scholarship, and teaching to mold the future leaders of our profession. In addition to the traditional PharmD program requirements, the Scholars Program student will participate in the following activities during their third and/or fourth professional year: (1) mentoring program, (2) modified coursework encompassing clinical practice, research, teaching, and leadership, (3) modified experiential education activities, (4) teaching activities, (5) scholarship, and (6) professional presentations.

Scholars Program Micro-Credential

The Scholars Program is an approved micro-credential through the University at Buffalo. A micro-credential is a program, smaller than a degree or advanced certificate, which allows the learner to gain relevant skills. Upon completion, students will receive a digital badge, which serves as a symbol of your accomplishments. The digital badge contains metadata and links to information about the requirements of the Scholars Program. Digital badges are owned by the learner who earned it and can be used however they wish, such as displayed on social media sites, in e-mail signatures, or on digital resumes. More information about micro-credentials can be found here: <https://www.buffalo.edu/micro-credentials.html>.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for the UB SPPS Scholars Program, students must not have any unsatisfactory grades in required courses. Students will be preferentially selected if they are on the Dean's List or Faculty Academic Merit List. Students should have a documented history of professional organization involvement.

Application and Interview Process

Students must formally apply to the Scholars Program to be considered. To apply, students must complete the UB SPPS Scholars Program application and upload their CV as directed by December 31st of their second professional (P2) year (unless otherwise specified). Applications are not accepted at any other time. Applications are reviewed by the UB SPPS Scholars Program committee and selected students will be offered an interview via email no later than January 31st. Interviews will be held during the Spring semester. Interviews will consist of a 10-20 minute interview with members of the UB SPPS Scholars Program committee.

Enrollment Process

Following interviews, students will be invited into the Scholars Program by email no later than March 15th. Only students deemed to be outstanding candidates will be accepted into this program. Students must complete and return appendices A and B no later than March 31st.

Mentoring

Students enrolled in the UB SPPS Scholars Program will be given the opportunity to engage in one-on-one mentoring for professional growth, clinical practice, scholarship, and/or teaching. Mentors may be UB SPPS faculty or adjunct faculty members. Each year, an available list of mentors will be provided and students will submit their top three mentor preferences ([Appendix B](#)) (submit by March 31st). Students may identify a mentor from this list or may identify a mentor on their own. Mentors not pre-identified will need to be approved by the UB SPPS Scholars Program Committee.

Mentor Responsibilities

UB SPPS Scholars Program mentors are expected to mentor students during their third and fourth professional year in the following activities: (1) clinical practice through experiential education activities; (2) scholarship through research and/or scientific writing (e.g., reviews of therapeutics, case reports); and, (3) professional presentation of research / scientific writing ([Appendix D](#)).

Curriculum

Students enrolled in the UB SPPS Scholars Program will be given the opportunity to complete modified coursework encompassing clinical practice, research, teaching, and leadership. Courses identified with “(E)” indicate courses that will count towards the required elective credit hours over the first three professional years required by the UB SPPS. Students are expected to enroll in the required courses as outlined below on the course listing. Students who do not enroll in the listed courses, or who resign from any of the listed courses, will be automatically dismissed from the Scholars Program and will not receive their UB SPPS Scholars Program certificate of completion.

Standard PharmD P3 Curriculum with Required Scholars Program Electives					
Fall			Spring		
PHM 720	IPC GI/Hepatology	3	PHM 724	IPC Dermatology/Rheumatology/Ophthalmology	3
PHM 721	IPC Neurology	2	PHM 725	IPC Reproductive Health	2
PHC 722	IPC Pain/Psychology	3	PHM 726	IPC Pediatrics/Geriatrics	3
PHM 723	IPC Toxicology/Critical Care	2	PHM 727	IPC Hematology/Oncology	2
PHM 781	IPPE-3a	3	PHM 730	Topics in Pharmacy Law	1
PHM 555	Pharmacy Student Series	0	PHM 732	IPC OSCE	0.5
PHM 777	Pharmacy Professionalism	1	PHM 782	IPPE-3b	3
PHM753	Journal Club (E)	1	PHM 555	Pharmacy Student Series	0
PHM 550	Leadership in Pharmacy (E)	2	PHM 795	Advanced Pharmacotherapeutics (E)	2
PHM598	Independent Study with Mentor (optional) (E)	1-2	PHM598	Independent Study with Mentor (optional)(E)	1-3
		14-19			16.5-19.5

E = Counts towards the required 8 hours of elective credit hours required by the UB SPPS for graduation.

Experiential Education

Students enrolled in the UB SPPS Scholars Program will be given the opportunity to partake in tailored advanced pharmacy practice (APPE) experiences focusing on clinical practice, scholarship, and/or teaching, to better prepare them for post-graduate training.

Students in the standard PharmD program will complete one direct-patient care APPE rotation (6 weeks) with their SPPS Scholars Program mentor. Students will also complete one non-direct patient care elective APPE (6 weeks) in Education, Practice, and Theory with Dr. Polischuk. Students have the option to complete a non-direct patient care elective APPE (6 week) in research with their Scholars Program mentor if desired by the student and mentor. The clinical, teaching, and potential research rotations will be pre-arranged with the experiential education office during the spring of the P3 year. The specific modules that the rotations will be scheduled are at the discretion of the mentor, student, and availability but it is highly recommended that the clinical rotation be scheduled either during the summer or early fall of the P4 year.

Scheduling of the APPE rotations will be overseen by the UB SPPS Office of Experiential Education. Questions regarding experiential education within the UB SPPS Scholars Program should be directed to Dr. Richard O’Brocta, Clinical Associate Professor / UB SPPS Director of Experiential Education, at robrecta@buffalo.edu.

Scholarly Activities / Requirements

Students enrolled in the UB SPPS Scholars Program will be given an opportunity to conduct a scholarly project. The goal of the scholarly project is to provide the student with experience in clinical / pharmaceutical research / writing through the completion of a research or other scholarly project in close collaboration with a mentor. This guided experience is intended to familiarize the student with all aspects of the research and/or scholarly writing process.

Students are expected to attend the didactic research course, “Fundamentals of Postgraduate Scholarship.” Students will attend this class during the summer prior to their P3 year.

Students may fulfill this requirement by preparing an original research project, a case report, or a review of therapeutics, in collaboration with their UB SPPS Scholars Program mentor ([Appendix D](#)). If the student is involved in a research project, the student may participate in the initial development of the idea (the mentor may provide options), prepare a research proposal, collect and analyze data, prepare and submit the manuscript for publication, and present the results. Original research may be prospective or retrospective in design but should be able to be completed prior to graduation. If the student is involved in a writing project, the student may participate in the initial development of the idea, complete the literature review, critically evaluate the literature, prepare and submit the manuscript for publication, and present the results.

Students should work with their mentor to develop a project timeline and should view the scholarly project as a longitudinal effort, working with their research mentor throughout their P3 and P4 year. Students and mentors may elect to conduct independent study electives (PHM598) during P3 year to facilitate time spent on scholarly activity. Additionally, a non-direct patient care APPE elective (6-weeks) focused on scholarly activity may be completed at the student and mentor’s discretion. One of the fundamentals of being an outstanding researcher is time management. Therefore, the student and faculty mentor should establish a timeline and make sure you are meeting milestones.

Students who do not fulfill the scholarly project requirement (see above) will not receive their Scholars Program digital badge. Questions regarding the UB SPPS Scholars Program scholarly project activities should be directed to Dr. Maya Chilbert, Clinical Assistant Professor, at mayahols@buffalo.edu.

Professional Presentation Activities / Requirements

Poster Presentation (local): Students enrolled in the UB SPPS Scholars Program will be required to present their scholarly project in the form of a poster presentation during the spring semester (usually in April) of their fourth professional year at the annual UB Postgraduate Research Forum. Students should try to plan their APPE schedule accordingly to assure they are available for this event, but will be excused if they are completing an out-of-region APPE. The poster should be developed in collaboration with their UB SPPS Scholars Program mentor. Students who do not fulfill the professional presentation requirement, unless excused for an out-of-region APPE, will not receive their digital badge, indicating completion of the UB SPPS Scholars Program Micro-Credential.

Poster Presentation (state/national): Students enrolled in the UB SPPS Scholars Program are encouraged to submit their scholarly project as a poster at a state or national pharmacy meeting. The meeting to which the poster is submitted will be at the discretion of their UB SPPS Scholars Program mentor.

Questions regarding the UB SPPS Scholars Program professional presentation activities should be directed to Dr. Maya Chilbert, Clinical Assistant Professor, at mayahols@buffalo.edu.

Program Completion

Students enrolled in the UB SPPS Scholars Program are required to complete all components of the Scholars Program (Appendix D) prior to the end of their P4 year. These requirements will be tracked by the Scholars Program Committee. Failure to complete any of the SP requirements may result in dismissal from the program. Upon completion of all requirements and submission of final project (eg. poster), a digital badge will be issued by the UB Office of Micro-Credentials.

Combined/Dual Degree Policy:

Students accepted into the Scholars program who are entering a dual-degree program after their second professional year of pharmacy school will forfeit their acceptance into the Scholar's program. Students may reapply to the Scholars Program during the application cycle prior to entering their third professional year of pharmacy school. Students re-applying will be evaluated based on the same criteria as other (initial) applicants.

Dismissal Policy:

Students were invited to enroll in the Scholars Program, in part, due to their evidence of high scholastic achievement. However, a decline in academic performance can adversely impact a student's overall grades as well as their ability to obtain post-graduate training. Additionally, Scholars Program students are expected to reflect the highest levels of professionalism as representatives of UB SPPS. Therefore, students may be dismissed from the Scholars Program due to either poor academic performance or lack of professionalism.

The Scholars Program Committee conducts routine check-ins with mentors to ensure that Scholars Program students are progressing through program requirements and meeting expectations regarding academic performance and professionalism. Any students flagged by mentors (or other faculty/preceptors) as requiring improvement will be asked to meet with the Scholars Program Committee. Depending on the issue(s), the student may be asked to write a performance improvement plan (PIP) or be subject to automatic dismissal from the Scholars Program. If asked to create a PIP, it should identify deficiencies and a plan to improve them, including SMART goals and a reasonable timeline for follow-up. The student, Scholars Program committee, and Scholars Program mentor must all agree on the PIP. Progression on the PIP will be determined based on input from the mentor and any other involved faculty/preceptors. Students unable to progress as outlined in their PIP will be dismissed from the program.

Students are expected to maintain all Satisfactory or Honor's grades (Honors encouraged). Students who receive Unsatisfactory grades including an IPPE or APPE rotation will automatically be dismissed from the Scholar's Program. Students who are placed on academic probation by the UB SPPS Student Affairs Committee will be automatically dismissed from the Scholars Program and may not be readmitted. Grades will be reviewed each semester by the Scholar's Program Committee. The students may choose to petition the SP Committee for readmission into the program (unless placed on academic probation), pending support from their SP mentor.

Student Outcomes Monitoring

The Scholars Program of the University at Buffalo School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (UB SPPS) is designed to provide mentorship to third and fourth professional year students in the areas of clinical practice, scholarship, and teaching to help mold the future leaders of our profession. Students enrolled in the scholars program are asked to provide the following information upon graduation and every two years thereafter.

- Contact information: Email address
- Post-graduate training information: Residency, fellowship, other (specify)
- Career information: Position, title, institution, location

Important Deadlines

Student application to SP	December 31 st (P2 year)
E-mail invitation to applying students	January (P2 year)
Interview	February (P2 year)
E-mail invitation to accepted students	March (P2 year)
Appendices A and B due from students	March 31 st (P2 year)
Scholarly project platform presentation	May 1 (P4 year)
Submission of verification form (Appendix D)	May 1 (P4 year)
Submission of abstract (if applicable)	Per Professional Meeting Deadlines

Appendix A: Scholars Program Student Commitment Form

I hereby acknowledge that I have read, understand and agree to adhere to the UB SPPS Scholars Program policies and procedures as detailed in the UB SPPS Scholars Program Student Handbook.

Student Name (print)

Student Signature

Date

Please complete this form and submit to Mrs. Kelly Sustakoski, Academic Coordinator, in 201 Pharmacy Building by March 31st of your P2 year.

Appendix B: Scholars Program Student Information / Mentor Request Form

Student Name: _____

Primary Post-graduate Training Interest (check one):

- ☐ PGY-1
- ☐ PGY-1 and PGY-2
- ☐ Fellowship
- ☐ Post-doctoral Training
- ☐ Other: _____

Clinical / Research Interest(s) (check up to five):

- ☐ Academia / Academic Administration
- ☐ Ambulatory care
- ☐ Cardiology
- ☐ Critical Care
- ☐ Drug information / Informatics
- ☐ Emergency Medicine
- ☐ Geriatrics
- ☐ Health-System Administration / Medication Use Safety
- ☐ Infectious Disease
- ☐ Internal Medicine / Family Medicine
- ☐ Nephrology
- ☐ Nuclear
- ☐ Nutrition Support
- ☐ Oncology
- ☐ Pain Management / Palliative Care
- ☐ Pediatrics
- ☐ Pharmaceutical Health Services
- ☐ Psychiatry
- ☐ Solid Organ Transplantation
- ☐ Toxicology
- ☐ Underserved Population Patient Care
- ☐ Other: _____

Mentor identification (check one):

- ☐ I have identified potential mentor(s) † (please list name(s) here in order of preference):
 - (1) _____
 - (2) _____
 - (3) _____
- ☐ I have not yet identified a mentor and would like assistance based on my interests

Appendix C: Scholars Program Mentor List

Academia / Academic Administration

William A. Prescott, Jr., PharmD
Contact: prescott@buffalo.edu

Ambulatory care

Erin Slazak, PharmD, BCPS, BCACP
Contact: emsabia@buffalo.edu

Mary Riedy, PharmD, BCPPS
Contact: maryried@buffalo.edu

Angel Cellino, PharmD, MBA, BCAP
Contact: christan@buffalo.edu

Bariatric Surgery

Scott V. Monte, PharmD
Contact: svmonte@buffalo.edu

Cardiology

Maya Chilbert, PharmD, BCCP
Contact: mayahols@buffalo.edu

Collin Clark, PharmD, BCGP
Contact: collincl@buffalo.edu

Critical Care

Kelsey Gregorie, PharmD, BCCCP
Contact: kviolanti@yahoo.com

Megan Nadler, PharmD
Contact: MNadler@kaleidahealth.org

Patrick McGrath, PharmD
Contact: pmcgrath@kaleidahealth.org

Emergency Medicine

Kevin Chilbert, PharmD, BCPS, BCEMP
Contact: kevinchi@buffalo.edu

Geriatrics

Robert Wahler, PharmD, BCGP, CPE, FASCP
Contact: rgwahler@buffalo.edu

Health-System Administration / Medication Use Safety

Timothy Vink, PharmD, MAOL, BCPS
Contact: tvink@chsbuffalo.org

Internal Medicine / Family Medicine

Ashley Woodruff, PharmD, BCPS
Contact: aw7@buffalo.edu

Drew Lambert, PharmD
Contact: lambert7@buffalo.edu

Stephanie Seyse, PharmD
Contact: SSeyse@KaleidaHealth.Org

Internal Medicine / Family Medicine

Nicole Cieri-Hutcherson, PharmD, BCPS
Contact: necieri@buffalo.edu

Nephrology

Calvin Meaney, PharmD, BCPS
Contact: cjmeaney@buffalo.edu

Neurology

Michelle Rainka, PharmD, CCRP
Contact: MRainka@dentinstitute.com

Oncology

Catherine Forbes, PharmD
Contact: catherine.forbes@roswellpark.org

Ilana Cypes, PharmD, BCOP
Contact: ilana.cypes@roswellpark.org

Jeffrey Baron, PharmD, BCOP
Contact: Jeffrey.baron@roswellpark.org

Pediatrics

Nicholas Fusco, PharmD, BCPS
Contact: nmfusco@buffalo.edu

Emily Polischuk, PharmD, BCPS
Contact: empolisc@buffalo.edu

Pharmaceutical Health Services

David Jacobs, PharmD, PhD
Contact: dmjacobs@buffalo.edu
Research mentor only, clinical mentor identified with Dr. Jacobs based on interest and research project

Psychiatry

Kimberly Mulcahy
Contact: Kimberly.Mulcahy@omh.ny.gov

Michelle Rainka, PharmD, CCRP
Contact: mrainka@dentinstitute.com

Reproductive Health

Nicole Cieri-Hutcherson, PharmD, BCPS
Contact: necieri@buffalo.edu

Transitions of Care

Collin Clark, PharmD, BCPS, BCGP
Contact: collincl@buffalo.edu

Underserved Patient Populations/Global Health

Gina Prescott, PharmD, BCPS
Contact: gmzurick@buffalo.edu

Angel Cellino, PharmD, MBA, BCAP
Contact: christan@buffalo.edu

Appendix D: Scholars Program Component Checklist

The following requirements must be completed prior to the end of the P4 year.

Curriculum / Experiential Education

- ☐ PHM 550 Leadership in Pharmacy
- ☐ PHM753 Journal Club
- ☐ PHM 795 Advanced Pharmacotherapeutics
- ☐ PHM 820/821/823/824 APPE (with mentor)

Scholarly Project / Professional Presentation

- ☐ Scholarly project
- ☐ Poster- Local: UB SPPS Postgraduate Research Forum (if excused, please keep documentation/email verification)
- ☐ State: _____ or National: _____

Other

- ☐ “Fundamentals of Postgraduate Scholarship” didactic research class (Summer/Fall P3 year)