

Graduate Programs
Student Handbook Supplement
to the CoPHS Student Handbook

2024 – 2025

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INTRODUCTION

Program Welcome

Welcome to the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (CoPHS), Graduate Programs at Western New England University (WNEU)! Our programs will prepare you to work in research, clinical practice, or industry through a customizable program that aligns with *you* and your personal career goals. With the help and guidance from faculty members in disciplines including but not limited to medicinal chemistry, pharmacology, pharmaceuticals, cosmeceuticals, pharmacogenomics, toxicology, neuroscience, oncology, immunology, biochemistry, pharmacoeconomics, data analytics, and biomedical engineering; you will learn useful skills to prepare you for a career path within the scope of pharmaceutical sciences. The College's comprehensive, student-centered programs prepare graduates for various career options, be they research, patient, or industry-oriented. Through the curricula, the graduate programs foster critical thinking, embrace professionalism, and instill a commitment to lifelong learning and leadership.

As you begin your graduate education, the administration, faculty and staff in CoPHS encourage you to make the most of your academic experience. Students are referred to the CoPHS student handbook for college-wide standards and behavioral expectations for students including Academic Integrity; Plagiarism; Early Advisory System; Honors; Academic Support Services; Transportation; Technology; Health Documentation and Insurance; Leave of Absence/Withdrawal and Readmission, etc.

This Graduate Student Handbook is designed to describe our programs and curricula in detail, delineate policies and procedures specific to the various Masters' programs, and provide information that will permit a student to maximize their potential for a successful graduate experience. The supplement provides information about the academic specifics concerning the program/curriculum (e.g. class attendance/absence; excused absences; academic probation; remediation procedures; suspension and dismissal; etc.).

We look forward to learning with you as we support your entry into the graduate program here at Western New England University College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences!

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Director of CoPHS Graduate Studies*

Accreditation Information

The New England Commission for Higher Education (NECHE, website: <https://www.neche.org/>) accredits the University of Western New England, including all of its Bachelor's and Master's degree programs. Students will be periodically encouraged to visit NECHE's website and maintain familiarity with the accreditation standards and guidelines. The most up-to-date information regarding the accreditation status of the Western New England University is available on the NECHE's website.

GRADUATE PROGRAM INFORMATION

Mission and Core Values

The Master's Programs are designed to reflect the mission and core values of Western New England University. The WNEU Mission is stated as follows.

“The hallmark of the Western New England University experience is an unwavering focus on and attention to each student’s academic and personal development, including learning outside the classroom. Faculty, dedicated to excellence in teaching and research, and often nationally recognized in their fields, teach in an environment of warmth and personal concern where small classes predominate. Administrative and support staff work collaboratively with faculty in attending to student development so that each student’s academic and personal potential can be realized and appreciated. Western New England University develops leaders and problem-solvers from among our students, whether in academics, intercollegiate athletics, extracurricular and co-curricular programs, and collaborative research projects with faculty and/or in partnership with the local community (Western New England University [WNEU], 2016, paragraph 2)”

“At Western New England University, excellence in student learning goes hand in hand with the development of personal values such as integrity, accountability, and citizenship. Students acquire the tools to support lifelong learning and the skills to succeed in the global workforce. Equally important, all members of our community are committed to guiding students in their development to become informed and responsible leaders in their local and global communities by promoting a campus culture of respect, tolerance, environmental awareness, and social responsibility. We are positioned well to accomplish these goals as a truly comprehensive institution whose faculty and staff have historically collaborated in offering an integrated program of liberal and professional learning in the diverse fields of arts and sciences, business, engineering, law, and pharmacy (WNEU, 2016, paragraph 3).”

The Core Values of Western New England University are:

- Excellence in Teaching, Research and Scholarship, understanding that our primary purpose is to provide an outstanding education supported by faculty with the highest academic credentials, and with national prominence in their fields.
- Student-Centered Learning, providing an individualized approach to education which includes a profound commitment to small class sizes, personalized student-faculty relationships, and student engagement and personal growth both within and beyond the classroom.
- A Sense of Community, treating every individual as a valued member of our community with a shared sense of purpose and ownership made possible by mutual respect and shared governance
- Cultivation of a Pluralistic Society, celebrating the diversity of our community, locally and globally, and creating a community that fosters tolerance, integrity, accountability, citizenship, and social responsibility
- Innovative, Integrated, Liberal and Professional Education
- Commitment to Academic, Professional and Community Service
- Stewardship of our Campus

Academic Goals of the CoPHS Graduate Programs:

1. Ensure that a critical outcome of the CoPHS Masters programs is that graduates are provided with a strong knowledge base of the relevant pharmaceutical sciences. In addition, emphasis should be placed on applied strategies to excel in various health-centered fields, as a means to improve patient/client care in current medical, educational and community-based settings.
2. Develop and implement innovative and relevant Masters degree programs based on upcoming fields in the pharmaceutical industry, pharmaceutical sciences, biomedical sciences, and/or pharmacy administrative sciences to prepare graduates for leadership roles in their respective fields, educating them to be outcome-driven, population health-focused, and respectful of all that their research and work might benefit.

STUDENT STANDARDS, REQUIREMENTS, & EXPECTATIONS

Drug Testing Policy

Some experiential sites and field work educators may require students to submit to a drug screen prior to placement at the site. Students are required to comply with the drug testing

policies of experiential sites; a student cannot refuse to go to a particular experiential site because they do not wish to submit to a drug test required by the site. The College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences may also conduct random or for-cause drug screenings on its students.

The COVID vaccine is mandatory for MS in Pharmacogenomics students. Contact the Center for Health and Well-Being for more information.

ACADEMIC POLICIES, REQUIREMENTS, & EXPECTATIONS

Graduate Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon graduation, all CoPHS Masters students are expected to:

1. Have the knowledge to obtain, understand, and analyze healthcare resources in order to problem-solve and make informed, rational decisions as they further their career both in and beyond graduate school.
2. Be aware of and understand social and cultural differences present in our society in order to work collaboratively with others, communicating clearly, to produce outcomes for the greater good.
3. Understand the legal and ethical aspects of pharmacy, pharmaceutical, or biomedical-related fields so that they may make decisions founded in integrity, empathy, responsibility, and respect.
4. Have a solid foundation of scientific knowledge which they are able to apply to their practice of pharmacy, pharmaceutical, or biomedical-related sciences post-graduation.

Program-Specific Outcomes:

1-Master of Science in Pharmaceutical Sciences Program Outcomes:

Students will be expected to achieve the following primary outcomes prior to graduation, which will demonstrate competency in core knowledge areas and relevant skill sets:

1. To comprehend and have a thorough understanding of fundamental biological systems, processes and core principles that are critical to proficiency in the pharmaceutical sciences.
2. To comprehend and have a thorough understanding of pharmaceutical sciences and focus areas critical to developing proficiency in this field, including pathophysiology, pharmacology, medicinal chemistry and drug development, pharmaceuticals and drug delivery, pharmacoconomics and health care delivery.
3. To gain an understanding and proficiency in basic pharmaceutical techniques.

4. To achieve proficiency in understanding and applying biologically relevant statistical analysis to research methodology and experimental data interpretation.
5. To be abreast of current scientific advances in the pharmaceutical sciences.
6. To develop proficiency in skills such as hypothesis testing in a focus area of the program.
7. To develop proficiency in executing aims of a research project based on specifically developed hypotheses.
8. To develop proficiency in the analysis of experimental data and its interpretation acquired in fulfillment of a hypothesis-driven research project.
9. To develop proficiency in presentation of research data acquired in fulfillment of a hypothesis-driven research project.
10. To develop proficiency in synthesizing experimental data from a research project and utilizing it to draw conclusions about the original hypothesis.

2-Master of Science in Pharmacogenomics Program Outcomes:

Students will be expected to fulfill the following primary goals and objectives prior to graduation, which will demonstrate competency in core knowledge areas and relevant skill sets:

1. To comprehend and have a thorough understanding of fundamental biological systems, processes, and core principles that are critical to proficiency in the field of pharmacogenomics, including knowledge of basic cell biology, biochemistry, genetics, and other biological systems.
2. To comprehend and have a thorough understanding of pharmacogenomics and other areas critical to developing proficiency in this field, including pathophysiology, pharmacology, healthcare outcomes, and medical genetics.
3. To gain an understanding and proficiency in basic pharmaceutical and molecular genetic techniques.
4. To achieve proficiency in understanding and applying biologically relevant statistical analysis to research methodology, and the interpretation and analysis of data from genetic sequencing.
5. To be abreast of current scientific advances in the fields of pharmaceutical sciences and pharmacogenomics.

6. To achieve proficiency in skills such as hypothesis development and experimental design.
7. To acquire skills needed for the implementation of pharmacogenomics in a clinical setting.
8. To develop proficiency in oral and written communication related to dissemination of pharmacogenomics concepts and interprofessional collaboration.

3-Master of Science in Medical Sciences Program Outcomes:

Students will be expected to fulfill the following primary goals and objectives prior to graduation, which will demonstrate competency in core knowledge areas and relevant skill sets:

1. To comprehend and have a thorough understanding of fundamental biological systems, processes, and core principles that are critical to proficiency in the health care fields, including knowledge of basic cell biology, biochemistry, genetics, and other biological systems.
2. To demonstrate an in-depth and integrated knowledge of the processes underlying normal and abnormal function in the human body in preparation for advanced studies in a healthcare field, comprehending and having a thorough understanding of critical subjects, such as pathophysiology, pharmacology, biostatistics and medical genetics.
3. Demonstrate the ability to work as part of a team to integrate and apply concepts in the medical sciences and draw linkages between structure and function at the level of molecules, cells, organs and systems.
4. To achieve proficiency in the ability to critically read and analyze the scientific literature, propose and test a hypothesis and communicate findings clearly, incorporating them into the existing body of knowledge.
5. To develop proficiency in oral and written communication related to dissemination of health care concepts and interprofessional collaboration.

Graduate (MS) Program Progression Policy

Student progression will be determined by the Academic Standards Committee of the College, taking into consideration course grades and grade point average. To progress from one semester to the next, a student must earn a minimum passing grade in each course and maintain the minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) each semester. For Graduate programs, the minimum cumulative GPA is 3.000. In addition, a graduate student who earns 3 or more C+'s and/or C's, or 2 or more F's in a graduate program will be subject to dismissal. A student who fails to meet these requirements may progress to the next semester if he/she has been granted a continuance by the Academic Standards Committee, or subsequently submitted a successful appeal to the Graduate Programs Committee. If unsuccessful with the Graduate

Programs Committee appeal, the student can subsequently appeal to the Dean of the College. If granted a continuance, for the student to progress, all required coursework, as well as any required remedial or repeated courses, must be completed in the manner prescribed by the Academic Standards Committee, or the Graduate Programs Committee.

The Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs shall review each student for satisfactory progress through the curriculum, considering grades and completion of programmatic requirements. Students who fail to maintain satisfactory academic progress in the graduate program are automatically placed on academic probation. The Assistant/Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will inform students, advisors, the Academic Standards Committee, and the Graduate Programs Committee of probationary status. The Assistant/Associate Dean or Director of Graduate Studies will report to the Academic Standards Committee academic information for all students placed on academic probation. The Academic Standards Committee will determine student progression and report to the faculty body the disposition of each class of students on a semester basis, either for continuance, suspension, or dismissal.

All coursework in a graduate program must be completed within a period of six years, unless the student petitions the Office of Academic Affairs for an extenuating circumstance. The Office of Academic Affairs verifies the completion of degree requirements by checking each student record against a checklist and submits names of students for graduation to the faculty. Once the faculty approves, the list of eligible students for graduation will be submitted to Student Administrative Services.

Academic Standing, MS Programs

Students' academic standing is determined by their cumulative grade point averages (GPA) and earned course grades. Academic Probation, Suspension, and Academic Dismissal will be permanently recorded on students' official transcripts. An Academic Warning will not appear on the official transcript. However, all Academic Warnings, Academic Probations, Academic Suspensions, and Academic Dismissals will be permanently recorded on internal academic records.

Good Standing

Students are in good academic standing when they:

- earn a "B-“ or better, or “Pass” in all courses;
- have less than 3 C+ or lower, and/or 2 F course grades;
- maintain a cumulative grade point average of ≥ 3.000 ; and
- satisfy all program requirements.

Academic Warning

Academic Warning is an indicator to students that they are in academic difficulty or may experience academic difficulty in future coursework. Students whose semester GPA falls below 3.000, have received a C+ or lower course grade, and/or have received a non-passing course grade within a semester will be sent a warning indicating that they must meet with the Academic Standards Committee and enter into a written agreement defining an academic improvement plan. This status does not appear on the transcript and is not subject to appeal.

Academic Probation

Academic Probation is a formal standing that shows the student is in academic distress. Once placed on probation, a student must meet with the Academic Standards Committee and enter into a written agreement defining an academic improvement plan. This standing appears on the transcript and is not subject to appeal.

Students will be placed on Academic Probation when they:

- have accumulated 3 passing course grades of C+ or lower; or
- have failed 2 courses; or
- have a cumulative GPA ≤ 2.500

Academic Suspension

Academic Suspension from the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences is decided upon by the Academic Standards Committee. Students may be suspended if the deficits predict limited chance of success in the subsequent semester, such as multiple C+ or lower, or failing course grades. Students may be placed on academic suspension, albeit with a delayed year of graduation, in order to repeat coursework or experiential components that are deficient.

Students on suspension from full-time enrollment may take courses as a part-time student to remedy any deficiencies. Students returning from suspension shall confer with their academic Deans prior to re-enrollment. This standing appears on the transcript and is eligible for appeal.

Academic Dismissal

Academic Dismissal is a separation from an MS program. This standing appears on the transcript and is eligible for appeal.

Academic Dismissal from an MS program is decided upon by the Academic Standards Committee and may occur if a student:

- Fails to make satisfactory progress during a period of academic probation
- Earns three C+ or lower, or two failing grades within one semester that preclude continuation in the prescribed program of study, and/or may not reasonably be expected to complete the requirements for the degree
- Is placed on academic probation two or more times while in the MS program

Students dismissed from the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences may seek re-entry by applying for re-admission through the Readmission Policy or the Academic Progression / Dismissal Appeal Process.

The Office of Academic Affairs will notify students of academic standing. Students placed on academic probation or with academic warnings may be required to attend a hearing with the Academic Standards Committee (ASC) of the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences within five calendar days of notification. Students are entitled to advice and assistance through the ASC hearing process from an advisor of the student's choice, provided that the advisor is a member of the university community (current student, faculty member, or staff member). Advisors are permitted to attend meetings and hearings but may not speak during a hearing. The ASC chairperson, at their discretion, may seek out clarification or information from the advisor. Parents, legal guardians, and/or legal counsel, regardless of their affiliation with probationary students, are not permitted to attend any part of the ASC hearing process. If a parent or legal guardian believes that they have first-hand information about an incident or situation, they may prepare a written statement that the student may provide to the committee. Students on academic probation or academic warning may be required, via an academic plan, to participate in academic counseling, adhere to stipulations, and/or enroll in a remedial program of study outlined by the ASC, or they may be academically suspended or dismissed from the program according to the policies described in subsequent sections. Actions taken in these matters are not to be viewed as punitive, but as an attempt to design a plan of study that meets the individual needs of the student and in recognition that it is unrealistic for a student to continue in a course of study where there is little probability of success.

Depending on the nature of the academic deficiencies and the student's overall academic record, a student placed on academic probation may or may not be permitted to continue in the regular sequence of the professional curriculum. The ASC will share the academic plans of a student with academic advisers. Following resolution of any appeals, the academic plan will be shared with all Instructors of Record while the student is on probation or warning. In addition, any stipulations related to student organization leadership will be shared with lead faculty advisers of student organizations.

Academic Progression/Dismissal Appeals Process

Any student in the College has the opportunity to appeal any decision made by the Academic Standards Committee. Written (email) confirmation of a Graduate student's intent to appeal must be received by the Director of Graduate Studies within one business day of the student's receipt of notification of the Committee decision. Upon review of the Academic Standards Committee decision and the student's academic record, the Graduate Programs Committee will determine if a meeting with the student is warranted and will determine a final disposition regarding the appeal within five business days. Final disposition may result in the upholding

the Committee's decision or overturning the Committee's decision (and may result in lesser or more severe actions).

Written (email) confirmation of a Graduate student's intent to appeal the decision of the Graduate Programs Committee must be received by the Dean of the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences within two business days of the student's receipt of notification of the Committee decision. The student then has up to three business days to submit the letter of appeal to the Dean. The letter of appeal must provide a detailed account of why academic difficulty was experienced and an explanation of why the actions of the Academic Standards Committee should be reviewed. Upon review of the appeal, the Dean will determine if a meeting with the student is warranted and will determine a final disposition regarding the appeal within five business days. Final disposition may result in the upholding the Committee's decision or overturning the Committee's decision (and may result in lesser or more severe actions). The student may appeal the actions of the Dean to the Provost of Western New England University within three business days of the student's receipt of notification of the Dean's decision. The appeal must be sent to the provost.office@wne.edu address. Appeal to the Provost occurs only in the event of a claim that due process was violated or in the event that new supportive evidence becomes available.

Graduation Policy

Students who have satisfactorily completed all academic requirements and who have been recommended by the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences faculty (as indicated by the successful completion of the MS program curriculum) may be awarded the respective MS degree, provided that they are of good moral character and have met the following standards. They must have:

1. Satisfactorily met the cumulative grade point average requirement of 3.000;
2. Successfully improved all course scores below C;
3. Attained no more than two course grades of C+ or lower;
4. Satisfied all programmatic requirements;
5. Completed all coursework in the program within a period of four years, unless the student petitions the Office of Academic Affairs for an extenuating circumstance.
6. Met their university obligations for payment of tuition, fees, and other costs.

Grading Policy

Letter Grade	Percentage	GPA Point Value	Description
A	93-100	4.0	Superior
A-	90-92.99	3.7	Above Average
B+	87-89.99	3.3	
B	83-86.99	3.0	Average
B-	80-82.99	2.7	
C+	77-79.99	2.3	Below Average
C	70-76.99	2.0	
F	Below 70	0.0	Fail
Pass-Fail Grading			
Pass (P)	70-100	0.0	Pass
Fail (F)	Below 70	0.0	Fail

Graduate (MS) Program Academic Performance Requirements:

A graduate student must have a minimum grade point average of 3.0 in all courses applied toward the degree in order to qualify for a graduate degree. Subject to the approval of the dean of the college within which the student is enrolled, a course with a grade of “C+” or lower may be repeated and the grade point average will be computed on the basis of the most recent earned grade. Credit for the course will be awarded only once. The official transcript will show the complete record.

In cases where a course grade of “F” has been assigned as a penalty for academic dishonesty, the student may not replace that grade in the cumulative GPA. If the student is allowed to retake the course, the resulting grade will be counted as a separate course.

Any student who receives three or more grades of “C+” or lower, or two or more grades of “F” will be dismissed from the program. With regard to dismissal, all grades in all courses are considered. In all cases where a letter of intent to dismiss for academic reasons has been sent, the student has the right to appeal to the Graduate Committee within two weeks of the notice. If an appeal is successful and the student is allowed to continue, the conditions of continuance are spelled out for the student in a letter. If an appeal is unsuccessful, or if no appeal is filed, the student is formally dismissed and such action becomes part of the permanent record.

Class Attendance/Absence Policy:

Refer to the COPHS Student Handbook for basic Class Attendance/Excused Absence Policies and Processes.

According to the Master’s philosophy of teaching and learning, the faculty believe that students learn best through a developmental process that relies on interactive learning

experiences. Optimum learning is achieved when basic knowledge and competencies are progressively supported by more advanced experiential opportunities and learning activities. Class attendance is vital to initiate and advance learning and to integrate course content with fieldwork experiences. Therefore, students are expected to make every effort to attend classes and fieldwork experiences.

Co-Curricular Standards, Requirements & Expectations

Student Governance

The College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (CoPHS) maintains its own governance structure, the Graduate Student Governance Association (GSGA). The GSGA is the overarching governing body for CoPHS graduate students, governing issues and concerns. The GSGA Executive Committee consists of the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Members of the GSGA Executive Committee are prohibited from serving within an executive position (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer or equivalent) within another GSGA-recognized CoPHS student organization. The voting members of the GSGA consist of the Executive Committee and one member of each GSGA-recognized CoPHS student organization. The CoPHS Director of Graduate Studies or a Coordinator of an MS Program may serve as the faculty advisor or deputy faculty advisor to the GSGA. Additionally, the Dean and/or the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs may periodically attend GSGA meetings to interact with students, solicit their opinions, and provide updates on current CoPHS initiatives. Students will be referred to the GSGA constitution and other guiding documents for specific information concerning student involvement and the responsibilities of GSGA-recognized organizations and clubs.

Students are important participants in the governance of the CoPHS. In addition to the GSGA, graduate students may be elected or appointed to serve on one of the College's standing committees. Students are also participants in various ad-hoc committees, including those committees tasked with completing accreditation self-studies and evaluating the College's strategic plan for revisions. The GSGA will nominate students to serve on these ad-hoc committees. These nominated students will then be appointed by the Dean.

Professional Clubs and Organizations

The CoPHS may have professional clubs and organizations in which graduate students can participate, some specific to graduate students and others oriented toward PharmD students. Student clubs and organizations are recognized as essential vehicles to increase a student's growth, professional maturity, and leadership development. Membership and active participation in professional clubs and organizations is an expectation of the students enrolled in the Master's programs. Anticipated outcomes of professional organizations are the sharing of ideas, values, activities, and cultures among faculty, staff and students. Ultimately, active

participation in professional organizations benefits the College, the student, and the professions.

American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists Code of Ethics

AAPS member scientists recognize their special obligations to society and the public welfare. They use their expertise with integrity to advance the health and welfare of mankind. In their scientific pursuits they:

- Conduct their work in a manner that adheres to the highest principles of scientific research so as to merit the confidence and trust of peers and the public in particular regarding the rights of human subjects and concern for the proper use of animals involved and provision for suitable safeguards against environmental damage.
- Avoid scientific misconduct and expose it when encountered. AAPS uses the current federal definition of scientific misconduct, 65 FR 76260-76264: Fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research or reporting research results.
- Recognize latitude for differences of scientific opinion in the interpretation of scientific data and that such differences of opinion do not constitute unethical conduct.
- Disclose sources of external financial support for, or significant financial interests in the content of, research reports/publications and avoid the manipulation of the release of such information for illegal financial gain.
- Report results accurately, stating explicitly any known or suspected bias, opposing efforts to improperly modify data or conclusions and offering professional advice only on those subjects concerning which they regard themselves competent through scientific education, training or experience.
- Respect the known ownership rights of others in scientific research and seek prior authorization from the owner before disclosure or use of such information including the contents of manuscripts submitted for pre-publication review.
- Support in their research and among their employers the participation and employment of all qualified persons regardless of race, gender, creed or national origin.