

School of Pharmacy

The creation of a school of pharmacy at UNCG would help address the shortage of pharmacists within North Carolina and the nation. The school would offer the PharmD, the first professional degree, and graduate degrees in pharmacy. It is estimated that the school would admit 75-100 students annually.

A 2002 study of the pharmacist workforce in North Carolina by the Sheps Center for Health Services Research reported data showing both a pharmacist shortage in the state as well as significant imbalances with respect to type of employment setting and rural location. National studies show not only that there is a substantial shortage of pharmacists at present but that the shortage will worsen over the next 20 years. In 2005 Medical New Today reported that the nation's chain stores alone had 6,000 unfilled pharmacy positions and that the pharmacist shortage was most severe in high-growth states including North Carolina.

A school of pharmacy located in the Triad would also assist in economic development in the region. It would be a resource for pharmaceutical firms, pharmacies, hospitals and other medical facilities, and health-related businesses. It would provide strong support to efforts by the Greensboro Partnership to focus on the life sciences as one of five clusters identified as having great economic development potential.

UNCG's School of Nursing and the new Ph.D. program in Medicinal Biochemistry would be a very useful resource to a school of pharmacy and would also benefit from such a school. There are significant areas in which Nursing and the Ph.D. program would share expertise with a school of pharmacy and there would be many opportunities for shared research. Two key participants in the doctoral program in medicinal biochemistry previously held positions at schools of pharmacy. Dr. J. Phillip Bowen was previously at the School of Pharmacy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Dr. E. Will Taylor was at the School of Pharmacy at the University of Georgia.

Connections to UNC Tomorrow Components

A School of Pharmacy would have especially strong connections with the following components:

B. Increasing Access to Higher Education

The addition of a School of Pharmacy at UNCG would provide Triad residents with access to pharmacy education. In addition, applications to the existing three pharmacy schools in North Carolina far exceed their capacity. Recently UNC-CH received 800 applications for 155 positions in its school of pharmacy and Wingate University received 1112 applications for 70 seats.

D. Economic Transformation & Community Development

The presence of a school of pharmacy in the Triad would be a major asset to pharmaceutical firms, pharmacies, health-related businesses, hospitals and medical facilities in the region. The research resources of a pharmacy school and the supply of pharmacy graduates should be useful in attracting new employers to the Triad. For example, last year the Greensboro Economic Development Alliance worked to recruit a life sciences company to Greensboro that would have resulted in \$30 million of new capital investment and 1000 jobs. Although the company was very interested, the total number of pharmacists within 30 miles of Greensboro was not adequate for their needs, and we were dropped from consideration.

E. Health

Graduates of UNCG's School of Pharmacy would help address the growing shortage of pharmacists in North Carolina's independent pharmacies, chain stores, and hospitals. Research by faculty and graduate students would also benefit the health of North Carolina citizens.

G. Outreach and Engagement

Public education related to the use of pharmaceutical products would greatly benefit from a school of pharmacy located in the Triad. The increase in the number of graduating pharmacists would also help address unmet needs for counseling of patients about pharmaceutical products.

Timeline

A year or more of planning and consultation with the American Council on Pharmaceutical Education would be needed to initiate the process of seeking accreditation. Once a new program has a dean, the American Council on Pharmaceutical Education can grant Precandidate accreditation status. Once students enroll in the program, Candidate status can be granted. Full accreditation can generally be obtained within five years. Depending on the availability of appropriate facilities, it should be possible to launch a school of pharmacy within three years of the initial planning.

Necessary Resources

A School of Pharmacy will require a major investment. A new building or renovated facilities to house classes and laboratories for 350 – 400 students, faculty and staff offices, and research facilities will be needed. Lines for approximately 25 faculty and ten staff will be necessary along with an operating budget.