

# SWOSU PharmD & MBA Dual Degree Students Move Forward in Program

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Three Southwestern Oklahoma State University students—Ying Lin of China, Malorie Vaughan of Altus and Jessica Murphy of Tulsa (Union)—are the first students to participate in a joint venture between the SWOSU College of Pharmacy and Everett Dobson School of Business and Technology that allows pharmacy students to concurrently work toward a Masters in Business Administration degree.

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The first cohort of students admitted to this unique program includes Malorie Vaughan of Altus and Jessica Murphy of Tulsa (Union) and Ying Lin of China.

The three pharmacy students, while finding the dual program challenging, also have found that they are being exposed to business concepts not routinely covered in the pharmacy college curriculum.

“Even with only having been in the program for a semester, I can already see the benefits of integrating the two degrees,” Vaughan said.

Dr. Virgil Van Dusen, professor in the College of Pharmacy, said the creation of the dual degree opportunity has sparked the interest not only of current pharmacy students but also pre-pharmacy students and pharmacy students who are about to graduate.

Pharmacy students are allowed to apply to the dual degree program during the second semester of their first year in the PharmD program. The College of Pharmacy makes recommendations to the School of Business before students are considered for admission to the dual degree pathway.

“The ultimate goal of the PharmD/MBA program is to provide selected students with the skills, knowledge and practical experience needed for career enhancement and success,” said College of Pharmacy Dean Dennis Thompson. “We believe this program certainly provides expanded opportunities for graduates and we continue to encourage qualified students to apply.”

Marci Grant, instructor in the School of Business & Technology, said some pharmacy students who missed the window of entry into the dual degree program are increasingly enrolling in the MBA program at SWOSU because of the perceived benefit of this advanced degree.

As the number of pharmacy colleges continue to increase and place pressure on employment opportunities, programs such as this will provide pharmacy graduates with the opportunity to enhance their employment options and elevate their employment standing, according to Van Dusen.

Students interested in more information about the dual degree program should contact Van Dusen or Grant.