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Six-year Pharmacy Option Offers Quicker Path to Increased Earnings

CEDARVILLE, OHIO – This fall, students at Cedarville University’s School of Pharmacy will have the option of finishing with a Doctor of Pharmacy degree in six years instead of seven, with an expected savings of about \$20,000--with the opportunity to begin earning a salary 12 months earlier.

The new six-year option is another important benchmark for the Cedarville school of pharmacy, which received accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education in July 2016.

“We’re looking for ways to improve,” said Dr. Marc Sweeney, dean of the School of Pharmacy. “We’re innovating new ways for students to approach the curriculum. In an age of rising higher education costs, this is an opportunity for students to finish a year earlier and enter the workforce sooner,” added Sweeney.

Adjusting the curriculum to allow for a six-year finish allows Cedarville to leverage a change in higher education: many students arrive on campus with almost a semester’s worth of credits.

“We realized we needed to look at those students a little differently and see if we could help them complete the program in fewer years,” Sweeney said.

The six-year option requires students to take a full load of online classes during the summer between their freshmen and sophomore year. Students considering this option should also have successfully completed college-level general chemistry I and II prior to arriving on campus.

Sweeney advises students considering the six-year plan to contact the school of pharmacy for guidance about other advanced placement and dual enrollment courses that would be helpful to complete before attending Cedarville.

Although students are finishing three years of prepharmacy coursework in two years, there’s no change in the curriculum, Sweeney said. Plus, students taking the accelerated option will earn a bachelor’s degree in pharmaceutical sciences by the end of what would be their sophomore year.

“Other six-year pharmacy programs typically don’t offer their students the chance to earn a bachelor’s degree,” Sweeney said. “We’re affording them the opportunity to receive both a bachelor’s degree and their Doctor of Pharmacy in six years.”

According to Sweeney, earning two degrees sets apart Cedarville School of Pharmacy graduates among their peers. “As they’re competing for jobs, that additional credentialed degree is very valuable,” he said.

“Students have to recognize they’re going to put a lot of work into those first two years,” Sweeney added. “They’re going straight from freshman to junior year, with summer classes in between. You have to be ready, motivated and willing to push forward.”

Students choosing this plan can still take advantage of internships and mission trip opportunities during the summer between sophomore year and the beginning of the professional program.

For more information, contact Lauren Wiebe, Cedarville's director of pharmacy admissions, at laurenwiebe@cedarville.edu or call her at 766-7404.

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 3,760 undergraduate, graduate, and online students in more than 100 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings, and leading student satisfaction ratings. For more information about the University, visit www.cedarville.edu.