Pharmacy Assistant

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Pharmacy Assistant Program provides you with the foundational knowledge and practical skills required to support pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in community pharmacy settings. This program combines theoretical instruction with hands-on training preparing you for essential tasks such as processing prescriptions, managing inventory, handling customer inquiries, and maintaining pharmacy records in compliance with industry regulations.

You will gain a strong understanding of pharmaceutical terminology, dosage calculations, drug names and classifications, basic non-sterile compounding, and pharmacy law and ethics. You will develop communication and customer service skills necessary to ensure effective interactions with clients and healthcare professionals. As a graduate of the program, you will be well-prepared to begin your career as a pharmacy assistant who will be able to contribute to the efficient operation of a pharmacy while delivering quality patient care.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

As a Pharmacy Assistant, you'll work as part of a health care team to ensure that consumers receive the best possible pharmaceutical care. Graduates of the Eastern College Pharmacy Assistant program may work in retail pharmacies, home healthcare divisions/companies, insurance companies, institutional settings and pharmaceutical distribution wholesalers/manufacturers.

PREREQUISITES

1. Student has Grade 12 or equivalent or meets criteria for Mature Student Status.
2. Mature students must be 19 years of age, pass a qualifying test, and provide a Letter of Intent OR resume that supports their skills and aptitudes to be successful in the program.
3. The approved qualifying test for this program is the Wonderlic test. A passing score for this program is 14.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A student must obtain an overall grade, in each module of at least 70% in order to graduate and receive a diploma. A student must complete all requirements of Student Success Strategies as well as the field experience requirements.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Courses	**Hours**
Student Success Strategies	20
Digital Literacy for Professionals	40
Anatomy, Physiology and Terminology 1	80
Pharmacy Mathematics	60
Pharmacy Compounding	60
Pharmacy Law and Ethics	40
Pharmacology	80
Community Pharmacy for Pharmacy Assistant	80
Standard First Aid/CPR/WHMIS	20
Career Planning and Preparation - Level 1	20
Career Planning and Preparation - Level 2	20
Pharmacy Assistant Internship	6 Weeks
TOTAL WEEKS	**32**

NOTE: In order to continuously improve our programs, Eastern College reserves the right to modify programs at any time. Program delivery order may vary depending on program start date. This diploma program may not be available at all campuses.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Student Success Strategies

This course stresses the importance of developing non-technical skills to enhance personal, academic, and career success. The course will address strategies that are important for all adult learners, such as managing finances, maintaining health and wellness, understanding learning styles, setting goals, and honing practical study skills (such as memory, reading, and test-taking techniques). In addition, this course emphasizes strategies needed to succeed in your program, such as navigating technology efficiently, interacting and engaging with peers and facilitators/instructors, and managing learning time and space.

Digital Literacy for Professionals

This course introduces essential concepts and principles for navigating and working in a digital environment. Key topics include using devices, managing information, creating and editing content, communicating and collaborating with digital tools, and ensuring online safety and responsibility. You will also apply best practices for folder organization and file naming conventions.

Anatomy, Physiology and Terminology 1

In this course you will gain a comprehensive understanding of medical language, including prefixes, suffixes, root words, and abbreviations, alongside anatomy and physiology concepts. You will develop the ability to analyze, spell, define, pronounce, and apply medical words that relate to specific body systems and their pathology. In addition, you will acquire the skills to accurately communicate medical information and understand the structure and function of the human body.

Pharmacy Mathematics

This course begins with a review of fundamental mathematics and its application to pharmacy calculations. It covers essential math skills used in community pharmacy, including business math, prescription pricing, medication dosage calculations, compounding calculations, and prescription transcription for directions to use. To prepare you for diverse pharmacy environments, the course also explores calculations relevant to various pharmacy settings.

Pharmacy Compounding

This course provides you with the fundamental knowledge and hands-on skills required for pharmacy compounding. You will learn about various medication dosage forms, as well as the principles, techniques, proper use of equipment and tools, and regulations involved in preparing customized medications. The course covers key compounding procedures used for non-sterile preparations, weighing and measuring ingredients, mixing techniques, and proper labelling and documentation. Emphasis is placed on quality control, accuracy, and adherence to compounding standards to ensure patient safety. Through a combination of theoretical instruction and practical lab work, you will gain confidence in preparing compounded medications while following industry best practices and regulatory guidelines. This course involves the application of both pharmacy math and pharmaceutical abbreviations in the compounding and dispensing of medications.

Pharmacy Law and Ethics

This course provides you with a comprehensive understanding of the legal and ethical frameworks governing pharmacy practice. You will explore key legislation, regulations, and professional standards that impact the dispensing, distribution, and handling of medications. Topics include the Food and Drugs Act, Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, provincial pharmacy regulations, and the role of regulatory bodies in ensuring public safety. Ethical principles, professional responsibilities, and decision-making in pharmacy practice will also be examined. Through case studies and real-world scenarios, you will develop the critical thinking skills necessary to navigate legal and ethical challenges while maintaining integrity and professionalism in a pharmacy setting.

NOTE: In order to continuously improve our programs, Eastern College reserves the right to modify programs at any time. Program delivery order may vary depending on program start date. This diploma program may not be available at all campuses.

Pharmacy Assistant

Pharmacology

This course provides you with a foundational understanding of pharmacology, including drug classifications, mechanisms of action, therapeutic uses, and potential side effects. You will explore the principles of pharmacokinetics, learning how drugs interact with the body and how they are absorbed, distributed, metabolized, and excreted. The course covers major drug classes, including prescription, over-the-counter (OTC), and controlled substances, with a focus on their applications in treating various medical conditions. Through lectures, scenarios, and practical exercises, you will develop the knowledge and skills needed to support pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in ensuring safe medication distribution. Students will be introduced to commonly used Canadian generic and brand name drugs.

Community Pharmacy

This course will introduce students to the roles and responsibilities of pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy assistants. It will also teach students the procedures to prepare and dispense medications, which include prescription interpretation skills, billing and inventory, as well as medication safety. This course also addresses professionalism, work ethics, and communication in the workplace. Students will train with a common pharmacy computerized dispensary system. Using this system, students will enter prescription information, generate labels, fill prescriptions, and generate pharmacy reports.

Standard First Aid/CPR/WHMIS

This course provides you with comprehensive CPR training. It includes the latest first aid and CPR guidelines and meets federal and provincial regulations for Standard First Aid and CPR Level C. The course includes the following topics: preparing to respond; the EMS system; check, call, care; airway emergencies; breathing and circulation emergencies; first aid for respiratory and cardiac arrest; wound care; head and spine injuries; bone, muscle, and joint injuries; sudden medical emergencies; environmental emergencies; and poisons. The WHMIS section of this course teaches you the basic elements of WHMIS 2015 and the Global Harmonization System. This covers the safety measures and guidelines to be followed when exposed to or working with hazardous materials.

Career Planning & Preparation - Level 1

This course will introduce you to, and provide practice in, using the tools required for a successful job search. Concepts covered in this course will help you maintain a career-focused approach throughout your studies so that you are better prepared to conduct a job search after graduating. Specifically, you will learn how to identify your soft and hard skills and how to articulate your abilities in a clear and concise Elevator Pitch that will appeal to employers and resonate with industry contacts. You will learn about the job search resources available to you including using career websites, creating LinkedIn profiles, accessing the “hidden” job market, and networking. You will examine sample résumés and cover letters and begin the process of creating your own professional résumés and cover letters that align with current conventions for content, organization, and formatting. You will also learn about the role of references, thank you letters, workplace philosophies, and strategies for success including maintaining a professional image and using proper etiquette when communicating with potential employers and industry contacts.

Career Planning & Preparation - Level 2

This module builds on concepts and skills introduced in the Career Planning and Preparation Level 1 module. In this subsequent module, you will update and refine your résumé and LinkedIn Profile. You will continue writing cover letters and learn the value of customizing cover letters to specific job postings. You will have the opportunity to apply this knowledge as you conduct a job search and write a cover letter tailored to an ideal job post. Through research, you will create a list of top employers and target current industry opportunities. You will learn about current methods for applying to job postings using technology. You will also gain an understanding of the job interview process, typical interview questions and possible responses, and expectations of both the interviewer and interviewee. In addition, you will engage in practical application of the interview process through role-play. Topics such as negotiating salary, self-management, and on-the-job success for placements and post-graduate employment will be also covered.

NOTE: In order to continuously improve our programs, Eastern College reserves the right to modify programs at any time. Program delivery order may vary depending on program start date. This diploma program may not be available at all campuses.

Pharmacy Assistant

Pharmacy Assistant Internship

Upon successful completion of all modules of this program, you will be placed in a 6-week, 200-hour internship in a community pharmacy. You will have the opportunity to apply your new and developed skills within a real-world environment.

NOTE: In order to continuously improve our programs, Eastern College reserves the right to modify programs at any time. Program delivery order may vary depending on program start date. This diploma program may not be available at all campuses.