



# ST. LOUIS COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

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UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES & PHARMACY

Suzie Chen has always wanted to pursue a career in health care. In 2014, that desire led her to St. Louis College of Pharmacy at the University of Health Sciences and Pharmacy (UHSP), where she embarked on her journey to become a pharmacist.

Chen is currently completing [UHSP's Pharm.D. program](#), which features a combination of elective and selective coursework that allows students to explore pharmacy-related topics in depth, along with Introductory and Advanced Practice Experiences that extend learning from the classroom to pharmacy practice settings, giving students opportunities to care for patients.

Now in her third professional year of the program, Chen's college experience has been anything but typical. From her involvement in St. Louis' music community to serving as president of the interprofessional Health Professional Student Leadership Council (HPSLC) and working as a pharmacy intern, Chen is balancing an aggressive course load with numerous extracurricular activities.

On an "average" day, her mornings are spent in class, while her afternoons and evenings are devoted to music rehearsals, HPSLC meetings, work on research projects and studying. Every other weekend and one weekday, Chen also works up to 24 hours in the pharmacy at SSM Health Saint Louis University Hospital, where she has interned since her first professional year.

Chen says much of her work so far in the Pharm.D. program has focused on the pathophysiology and clinical manifestations of disease states.

"I think there is a perception that pharmacy students spend most of their time learning about medications," said Chen. "But like medical students and other health professions students, we have to also learn about different disease states so that we are able to best treat them."

Chen says that one of her favorite courses in the Pharm.D. program has been pharmacology, which educated her on the mechanisms of action of medications and how they work in the body. Additional classes she's completed have included medicinal chemistry, which examines the molecular structure of medications; pathophysiology, which examines the clinical manifestations of disease states; and a therapeutics course sequence on integrating medications and using them to manage disease states.

Outside the classroom, Chen promotes interprofessional collaboration among health professions through her role as president of HPSLC. Focused on the extracurricular side of interprofessionalism, HPSLC works with the Center for Interprofessional Practice and Education to encourage and advance collaboration between the health professions members working in the Washington University Medical Campus.

"I wanted to go into pharmacy so that I could work with other health professionals," said Chen. "When I heard about HPSLC, I was very interested because it is so in line with what I see myself doing in the future."

Off-campus, Chen pursues her love of music, singing with the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis Cathedral Choir, playing flute and piccolo with the Washington University Symphony Orchestra and participating in the College's concert band. "I do the things I do because I enjoy them," said Chen. "It's important to make time to pursue your interests because when you put effort into things you love, it can open doors for you."

In May 2018, Chen will begin the clinical portion of the professional program. She will be on clinical rotations throughout the year, and [received] her Pharm.D. in 2019