

1. Is the stipend also available to international students who want to apply to the program?
 - a. Yes, the stipend would also be available to international students.
2. Is part-time PhD positions available?
 - a. We typically don't have part-time PhD positions available in DPMP since the work requires full-time engagement.
3. Is DPMP involved in drug design or is that more with CBMC's drug discovery focus?
 - a. We are involved in the design of drug carriers, that can include cells, microparticles, nanoparticles, polymers, yeast, etc. Drug design is more the focus of CBMC.
4. Do we need to contact before application or not?
 - a. You can but don't need to. We will look through all applications.
5. Are there spring semester admissions for PhD students?
 - a. We don't typically have spring semester admissions for PhD students. However, some labs will accept students as technicians and a transition into the PhD program is possible.
6. I have my IELTS exam on the 4th of November and I will get my report on 17th November so is that possible to submit the IELTS report later the deadline
 - a. The application deadline is Nov. 29
7. Can you take those business classes while you are actively participating in rotations?
 - a. Hi Jackson, it's technically possible to take those business classes during a rotation, but they'd have to be an elective or something which might be tough to fit in given the course load. There are a lot of opportunities to get exposed to business aspects (tech review, start-ups, etc) either through programs, internships, etc. that might give you the experience without needing to take a full business class.
8. Do you offer an online option?
 - a. We don't offer an online option since most of the work will require wet lab experiments.
9. What are the admission criteria for international students who are in the US?
 - a. We have the same admission criteria for all students.
10. Is there a secured master degree after completing all the courses?

- a. You will go straight through to a PhD!
11. As you said there will be 2 rotations so should we need to specify the name of any prof in the statement of purpose?
- a. Hi, it would be good to name the professors you would be interested in, but this won't lock you in. The rotations typically evolve after admission. Typically students will reach out to PIs over the summer, then the PIs work with the students to make sure their is scientific alignment, space in the lab, etc.
12. Do you offer the option of co-advisement? For example, if I would like to study something like the viability of AI in drug delivery, could I be co-advised by another professor who might have experience with both fields?
- a. Co-advisement is possible, however, as a PhD student, you may prefer to have only one advisor. UNC is very collaborative, so there are collaborations across multiple disciplines.
13. If someone has worked on porous silica nanoparticles but has deep knowledge in nanomedicine, can they work on other nanoparticles or a previous work on the team's field is required?
- a. This will really be up to the lab you join. The scope of the dissertation project is typically a blend of what the students are interested in and what the scope of work the lab generally works in. Perfect alignment in past skills and the dissertation work typically doesn't happen, but it will really end up being a decision by the PI and the student. This is something you could finalize as you work with the PI to set up rotations.
14. Does applying to both DPMP and BSSP hurt your chances of acceptance into either program?
- a. It won't hurt your chances!
15. Do you get a master's along with a PhD when you finish the program?
- a. You will graduate with a PhD!
16. How long should the statement of purpose be, like the length of word count for the statement of purpose?

- a. 1 to 2 pages is a good length
17. Did I correctly hear the speaker mention that the PhD program primarily targets individuals with a background in pharmacy, or did I mishear?
- a. Our students have a broad background in pharmaceutical sciences. Many students come in with experience in chemistry, biomedical engineering, and other related fields. Some do have a PharmD, but most do not.
18. Does it hurt your chances to not submit a GRE score?
- a. We don't require a GRE score. It won't hurt your chances not to submit one.
19. Does it mean if you decide to drop after 2 years you would still only get a BS from undergrad?
- a. Depending on how far along you are in the program, it is possible to receive a MA if you would leave early.
20. Do you need to finish your master's before applying for the program?
- a. No, a master's is not required for entrance to our program!
21. Is TOEFL mandatory for applicants from Nigeria?
- a. Yes, TOEFL is mandatory.
22. Does IELTS get accepted as well?
- a. Please check the UNC Graduate School Page. Only TOEFL is readily acceptable.
23. How often do you accept students into your program?
- a. We only have 1 admission cycle per year.
24. How many candidates are usually accepted into the program?
- a. Based on numbers from the past several years, our typical class size is 5-8 students per class.
25. Is your stipend guaranteed by the school? So if something were to happen with funding in your research lab, would the school support you until your lab gets funding or you can switch into a different lab?
- a. Stipends are typically guaranteed, and the school will support you in case of funding issues in your lab.
26. Do you consider the stipend healthy to live comfortably in NC?

- a. The stipend is generally sufficient to live comfortably in North Carolina.
27. Do you feel like the stipend goes far/is the cost of living reasonable in NC?
- a. The stipend is reasonable for the cost of living in North Carolina.
28. How much funding is available to go to conferences? Does the faculty encourage that?
- a. Usually, conference funds are accounted for and budgeted within the grant. It is often up to PI discretion, but there is a reimbursement process with resources available within the department. Additionally, there are plenty of alternative funding opportunities for funding conferences that you can apply to throughout the year.
29. Do you (as students) ever worry that your degree will limit you due to the specialization or do you expect you will be just better prepared for a more specialized role in the future?
- a. Specialization can open doors in specific fields, and the program is designed to prepare students for specialized roles. However, it's essential to balance specialization with broader skills and adaptability.
30. I'm currently in ChemE, and all the ChemE profs encourage me to continue along that track. What are the pros and cons of a more specific degree? For context, I'm interested in either working for the NIH or developing my startup.
- a. A specialized degree can make you highly competitive in a specific field, but it may limit your career options outside of that area. Consider whether your career goals align with a specialized or more versatile skill set.
31. Did you feel any level of imposter syndrome applying to a program with such a small number of accepted applicants, and if so, what helped you?
- a. Imposter syndrome is common in academia. Remember that the admissions committee saw potential in your application, and seeking support from peers and mentors can help combat imposter syndrome.
32. How many hours do you typically work in a week?
- a. This varies by student/lab/research advisor. The thing about being a graduate student, you never truly "clock-in" or "clock out." Depending on your class work, like during your first year, the time working in lab might be less than the hours of a 3rd or 4th year student who is not taking classes. I typically look at it like a 9-5!

33. What are your post-graduation plans (to get an idea of what possibilities lie with the degree)?
- I want to work in industry, hopefully in the RTP! That was a plus of coming here, there is a nice chance of getting an industry job without having to move across the country.
34. How would you describe your relationship with your Ph.D. mentor? Do you meet often one on one? Are they in the lab often? Do they set unreasonable expectations?
- I can speak for Sasha Kabanov, I meet with him one-on-one every week and then present in our weekly group lab meetings every 3 weeks. I see him as often as I need and can tune it up or down depending on my needs. He is in his office next to the lab every day and is very readily available. I think he has done a great job at pacing my growth, not putting too much on me while also encouraging me to keep getting better.
35. Do you need a car to live in NC?
- I have a friend without a car who will often need to ask friends for a ride to things, otherwise she has a bike and can take the bus. A car will help tremendously, but technically it can be done without.
36. Does the UNC area have good public transport? I heard the comment about driving.
- Most students will take the UNC bus to get to campus. It can be a bit annoying with the timing or delays, but in general, it works! There is also other bus lines that go deeper into the RTP and Durham that come less frequently.
37. What is the chance of an international student getting accepted? I read in the comment section that less than 10 students are admitted yearly?
- 1-2 international students per year.
 - I think I saw on Kristy's graph that 1-2 international students have been accepted each year. Unfortunately, I do not know the percentage of international applicants.
38. How many students are selected by a professor in a year, and are there any considerations for experienced students?
- Usually 1-2, depending on their funding and how many students may have recently graduated. I would feel acceptance into a lab is a combination of personality fit and

aptitude for the work. It is okay to not have direct prior experience if you demonstrate you will be able to learn!

39. Why did you all choose DPMP?

- a. Excellent research, wonderful community, specialized in our interests so that we could have many diverse options for a research topic (as opposed to programs with only 1-2 professors working on drug delivery)

40. Why do you want a PhD?

- a. I want to be really involved in science and not have my growth opportunities in my career be limited.

41. Did you reach out to the professors before applying?

- a. I did! Many times professors will be open to getting on a one-on-one Zoom call to chat.

42. How much collaboration is there between research groups in the program? And within your own research group?

- a. The majority of our labs are all together on one floor of the building. A lot of labs will share equipment, some will co-PI grants together, and you can get a lot of feedback and research ideas from other professors during seminars and committee meetings. Often times students will find a collaborator who is more specialized in the clinic or a field outside of DPMP and they will have a close mentor relationship with them in addition to their PI

43. Is the payment the standard 0.5 FTE (like half of the "payment" is "going to tuition and university fees)?

- a. No. All the payment is just your stipend, goes directly to you. The tuition and university fees automatically get covered each semester.

44. Can you add your emails?

- a. Alyssa Holden: aholden@unc.edu
- b. Eshan Narasipura: enarasip@unc.edu
- c. Ryan Woodring: rwoodring@unc.edu
- d. If you have any more questions or need further assistance, feel free to ask!