




Description:
This workshop will include a discussion on creating a paperless admissions environment. Becoming paperless is environmentally responsible and saves time and money. Topics will include benefits and concerns of becoming paperless, scanning and saving procedures, and more. Ask questions and share suggestions to help move to this process.

Objectives:


- Save money and become more efficient and by reducing paper mailings and manual data entry
- Encourage other schools to become paperless in order to become environmentally friendly and reduce waste; and to expedite mailings from PharmCAS
- Provide concrete ways for offices to initiate the paperless process

There are only 18 schools who PharmCAS considers paperless.




Agenda

- Introductions
- What is paperless admissions processing?
- Benefits of being paperless
- Best practices
- Issues and concerns
- Processing procedures from the panel
- Next steps
- Questions and answers
- Processing procedures from other schools




Panel



- **Christine Stumm**, Assistant Director of Admissions, University at Buffalo School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences
 - Obtained her MS degree in Higher Education Administration at UB and began working in the Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences Admissions Office in 2006 as an Admissions Advisor. She became Assistant Director in 2009.
 - 716-645-2776, crm23@buffalo.edu
- **Laura Fox**, Assistant Dean for Professional and Student Affairs, Presbyterian College School of Pharmacy
 - Received her B.S. in Biological Sciences from Clemson University and her Ph.D. in Pharmaceutics from the University of Georgia. She served on the faculty of Midwestern University in Glendale, AZ and at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC before joining the leadership team at Presbyterian College School of Pharmacy in 2009.
 - 864-938-3912, lfox@presby.edu
- **Liz Heffernan**, Director of Student Services, University of Hawaii - Hilo College of Pharmacy
 - Received her B.A. in Biology from George Washington University and her Master's in International Administration from the School for International Training. She worked as a pre-health advisor at Utah State University and as a Coordinator for Maui College, Hana Outreach Campus before joining the UH Hilo CoP in 2008.
 - 808-933-7666, lheffern@hawaii.edu
- **Tara Hennessy**, Associate Director of Admission, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences
 - Received her B.S. in Biology from Siena College and is currently working on her M.S. in Higher Education Administration in Enrollment Management. Prior to MCPHS she worked as the Associate Director of Admission at a Medical and Veterinary school – she came to MCPHS in 2006 and was promoted to Associate Director in 2009.
 - 617-879-5032, Tara.Hennessy@mcphs.edu
- **James Walter**, Director of Admissions, Midwestern University College of Pharmacy
 - Started at Midwestern University in 2000, received his B.A. in Business from Eastern Illinois and his M.P.A. from the University of Illinois. He is the director of admissions for all 14 programs on the Glendale campus.
 - 623-572-3340, walte@midwestern.edu

Paperless Admissions Processing




To be paperless, you can adopt some/all of these practices:

- ✓ Requiring a web-based application (PharmCAS)
- ✓ Receiving PharmCAS mailings electronically
- ✓ Requiring electronic submission of supplemental materials
- ✓ Sending only electronic correspondences or phone calls
- ✓ Processing, saving, and reviewing materials electronically


**Verify with legal counsel*

Why Become Paperless?

Be Green
Be Efficient



- Less printing and postage
- Easier file finding and sharing
- Documents are secure and electronically available
- Less work compiling and entering data
- Increased accuracy
- More/easily responsive in communicating with students
- Clean office space without paper or filing cabinets
- Increased job satisfaction and less stress
- Easy to add/delete student files when needed
- More streamlined process

Paperless Best Practices




- Use PharmAdmit for as much as possible - interviews, supplemental processing, sending correspondence, scoring, etc.
- Use a service for easy online Supplemental Application submission and payment.
- Provide as much information as possible on the website (FAQs, interview agenda, application process, etc.).
- Be consistent. Streamline. Insist that students send all documents to PharmCAS.
- Use the helpful support provided by PharmCAS and PharmADMIT staff.

Paperless Common Issues & Concerns




- Applicants have problems completing and submitting certain attachments (PDF)
- Diligent staff needs to scan/record everything in order to keep accurate records (updated transcripts, TOEFL score, resume, extra letter of recommendation)
- Limited file space and storage
- Confidentiality and security
- Staff buy-in – they have been doing it a certain way for a long time....

More on Staff Buy-In



- Be prepared for “what if this happens, how can we handle this” etc.
- Present a good case and listen to people’s concerns – write them down
- Contemplate how you can alleviate concerns most effectively – use creative thinking
- Know your allies and who the most powerful decision makers are
- Be patient with people as they process the ideas for change
- Bring the idea up again with the Admissions Committee; find the balance being too pushy with just giving up because you may meet resistance
- Solicit support

Presbyterian College




Workload and Staff:

- Number of Complete/Mailed PharmCAS Applicants (09-10): 555
- Processing: 3 staff members
- Reviewing: 3 staff members + 5 admissions committee members

How paperless?

- We are paperless except for:
 - Checklist for each applicant (1 sheet of paper)
 - Interviewer comments and scoring – will be electronic next year
 - Interview confirmation letters and campus maps are mailed – will be electronic next year
 - Acceptance letters are printed on letterhead and mailed

Presbyterian College




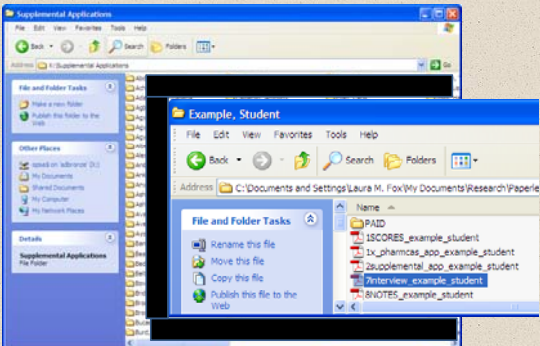
Processing and Reviewing Procedures:

- Create an electronic folder for each applicant
- Receive or scan documents into each folder then shred
- Download PharmCAS applications into folders when applicants are selected for interview
- Generate PharmAdMIT reports after interview; add to folder
- Create a pdf portfolio for each interviewed applicant
- Make applicant portfolios available for Admissions Committee review using Blackboard

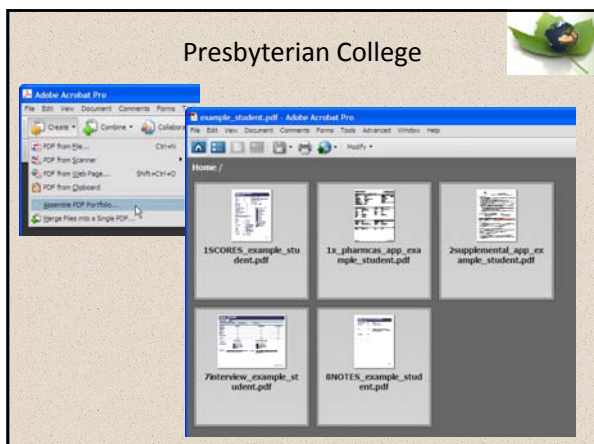
Other Issues:

- File sharing required the creation of a shared drive
- Tracking submissions by students to verify file completion – helped via paper checklist
- Learning how to optimally use PharmAdMIT for file processing

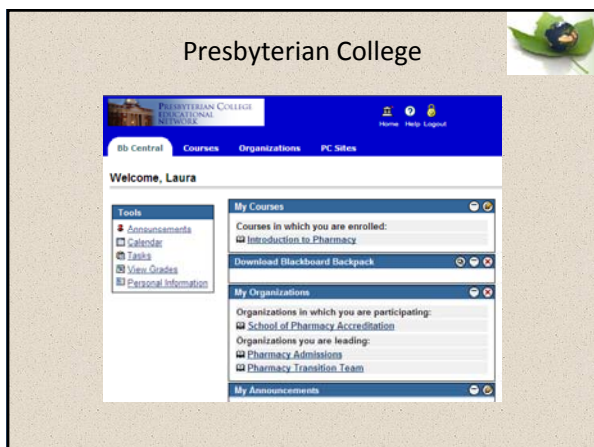
Presbyterian College

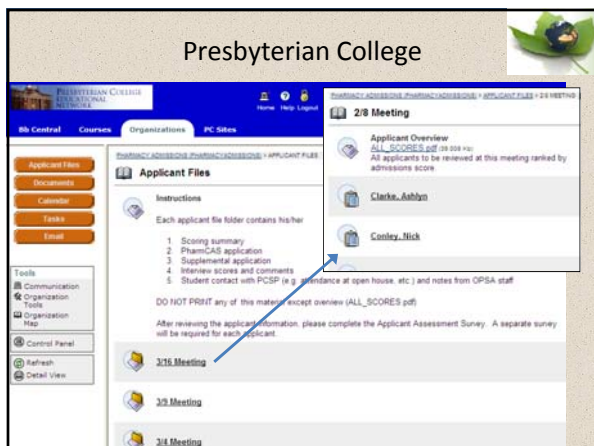
Presbyterian College



Presbyterian College



Presbyterian College



University of Hawaii - Hilo

Workload and Staff:


- Number of Complete/Mailed PharmCAS Applicants (08-09): 1155
- Processing: 3 part-time student employees ~30 hours per week), 1 Academic Advisor
- Review: Seven Admissions Committee Members

How paperless?

- 4 paper forms: residency declaration and fee payment, interview scoring sheets

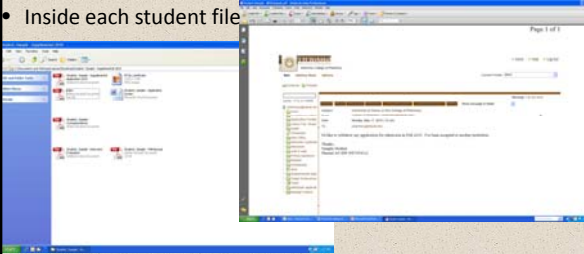
Processing and Reviewing Procedures:

- Supplemental emailed as an attachment & fee faxed or mailed
- Use PharmAdmit for **Everything** possible!
- Review in layers: 1st screen: student employees, 2nd screen: Academic Advisor & DSS and 3rd screen: Admissions Committee
- Customized PharmAdmit reports for AC review
- Accepted student website with complete matriculation documents




File Management/ Saving Correspondence

- Inside each student file




- File Print Preview – Only Selected Frame – Print to Adobe PDF



Challenges Along the Way

- PharmCAS and supplemental were due at same time – too much time matching & inefficient correspondence with students
- Zero Network Capability (remedy designated “Admissions Laptop” with double back up system)
- No method to accept online payments (faxed credit card payment form or mailed check)
- Emailed supplemental (word version for Mac/PC works better than Adobe)
- Confidentiality – social security numbers/credit card information
- Too many additional “extra” materials received
- Reports on degrees from PharmAdmit



It all adds up



- 30 pages on average per applicant x 1155 applicants per year x life of the college (100 plus years) = 2,887,500 sheets of paper.
- 1 tree makes 16.67 reams of copy paper or 8,333.3 sheets (Conservatree, non-profit in SF, CA)
- Save 415 trees through paperless application alone! Not to mention the hours of shredding!
- Fed Ex shipping costs = \$2700 per year

Massachusetts College



Workload and Staff:

- Number of Complete/Mailed PharmCAS Applicants (08-09): 1418
- Processing: 2 full-time staff members; Reviewing: 2 full-time staff members

How paperless?

- Completely paperless up until the interview process
- Applications (including supplemental) and folders are made for interviewees
- All correspondence (except decision letters) are e-mailed through PharmAdmit
- Loose papers (transcripts, scores, additional letters of rec) are in alpha-folders in a small secure filing cabinet

Time and Money Saver - total money: \$5,000 (to date) total time: approximately 100 hours/week!

Massachusetts College



Processing and Reviewing Procedures:

- Email notification arrives from PharmCAS; applications are uploaded to PharmAdmit and then into Datatel (colleague); emails to students through Admit to know application has been received
- Supplemental apps are matched to applicant; emails to students through Admit to know received
- Folder on secure shared drive holds all review rubric; applicants who meet the GPA are reviewed and rubric is saved (last, first) to shared drive.
- Students chosen for interview are sent invitations via email in Admit
- Students coming for interview (who have RSVP'd) are printed out and folders are made including any papers for applicant, rubric for interviewer, and supplemental
- Students are given a review sheet of the pre-requisite courses at their interview
- Items from students that are not chosen for an interview are shredded at the completion of application cycle

University at Buffalo

Workload and Staff:

- Number of Complete/Mailed PharmCAS Applicants (08-09): 1370
- Processing: 2 full-time staff members; Reviewing: Many in the School and Alumni

How paperless?

- Everything except interview folders (application, evaluations, rubric, and instructions); acceptance letters; UB login information

Processing and Reviewing Procedures:

- For each new download, manually enter in PharmADMIT: Level of Education, Application Code, Applicant Type, Current Status.
- Create folders for each downloaded applicant in a shared, secure directory and create a "clearinghouse" folder for documents that arrive without a corresponding application.
- Scan, save, shred documents.

Level of Education (points to Highest Level of Education dropdown)

Applicant Type (points to Applicant Type dropdown)

Current Status (points to Official Status dropdown)

Application Code (points to App'l Code dropdown)

SUNY Code and Person Number (if accepted) (points to SUNY Codes and UB Person # fields)

University at Buffalo

Create folders, scan documents, save to network drive.

Acceptance letters, criminal background check, interview assessment, writing sample, any other supplemental materials.

PharmCAS packet at end of cycle (if complete and competitive).

Next Steps for Becoming Paperless

1. **Convince others** through meeting and/or e-mails by providing the rationale and having answers for their concerns
2. **Write up a plan** for processing and reviewing applications. Include timelines and goals.
3. **Test.** When setting up process, test on multiple computers.
4. **Provide training** to staff and welcome constructive feedback.
5. **Set up a conference call** with paperless school(s) to discuss.

Questions?

Procedures from other schools...

- Mary Caldwell, Interim Director for Office of Student and Professional Affairs, University of Louisiana-Monroe
- Michelle Cassetty Collins, Director, Admissions and Student Services, Northeastern Ohio Universities Colleges of Medicine & Pharmacy
- Darcy Doty, Admission Liaison, Drake University College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences
- Cher Espina-Nguyen, Advisor, University of Washington
- Karen Jacobs, Assistant Vice President of Admissions, Thomas Jefferson University
- Michael Kelly, Associate Dean for Professional Education, University of Iowa
- Phyllis Nally, Director of Admissions Academic & Student Affairs, University of Kentucky
- Richard O'Brocta, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, St. John Fisher College Wegmans School of Pharmacy

University of Louisiana-Monroe

Workload and Staff:

- Number of Complete/Mailed PharmCAS Applicants (08-09): 281
- Processing: 2 full-time staff members; Reviewing: 15

How paperless?

- About 60%
- All correspondences are done via e-mail
- Each app has an electronic file – Admissions Committee views online
- Applicants mail a paper supplemental application
- Interviews are on paper
- We do still keep a paper file on each student

Processing and Reviewing Procedures:

- All materials are scanned and placed in applicant file

Other Issues:

- Time consuming scanning and saving in the electronic files

Northeastern Ohio

Workload and Staff:

- Number of Complete/Mailed PharmCAS Applicants (08-09): 551
- Processing: 1 full-time staff; Reviewing: 1 (Director)

How paperless?

- 100% paperless for applicant
- Send information electronically for interviewer, but they still want us to print out for interview day

Processing and Reviewing Procedures:

- Data from the PharmCAS application is loaded into our Banner system and is then stored as a pdf.
- Supplemental is completed in pdf and emailed electronically in xml, which is then imported into the pdf and stored electronically by staff.
- Supplemental and PharmCAS app are forwarded on for review.
- Extra materials like a green card are not submitted electronically (yet) and are stored in an applicant's file

Drake University

Workload and Staff:

- Number of Complete/Mailed PharmCAS Applicants (08-09): 324
- Processing: 3 full-time staff members; Reviewing: various staff and faculty

How paperless?

- We still keep files on students because we require a Supplemental Form.


Processing and Reviewing Procedures:

- Due to competitiveness, we do not see the need to have paper applications for all
- Save files only for those who complete a supplemental form

Other Best Practices:

- You must have the process in place.
- A planning meeting was the best way to come up with various situations, so we could plan ahead for them.

University of Washington



Workload and Staff:

- Number of Complete/Mailed PharmCAS Applicants (08-09): 816
- Processing: 1.5 staff members, 1.5 staff members evaluate (calculate prepharmacy gpas); Reviewing: 1 full-time staff member


How paperless?

- Electronic mailings from PharmCAS
- Applicants send us a supplemental application
- Print applications for only those who submit Supplemental

Processing and Reviewing Procedures:

- Download PharmCAS applications from only those who send a supplemental application.
- Check application and all paperwork such as LOR, AP scores, etc.
- Make folders, contact applicants if incomplete, print PharmCAS application, use folders to evaluate
- Academic Advisor evaluates application using PharmAdmit

University of Washington



Processing and Reviewing Procedures (Continued):

- Forward file onto the Chair of Admissions who determines if eligible for interview
- PharmCAS application and supplemental application materials are then scanned and added to a secure website for interviewers
- Decision letters are sent as mailed letters not email


Other Issues:

- We had to go back on the website and print off the PharmCAS applications when there were updates. Didn't always keep up with updates.
- Seeking secure way for applicants to submit paperless supplemental

Other Advice

- A paperless admissions process has some getting used to.
- Outline processing details and have someone knowledgeable about admissions process set up PharmAdmit.

Thomas Jefferson



Workload and Staff:

- Number of Complete/Mailed PharmCAS Applicants (08-09): 1088
- Processing: 1 full-time; Reviewing: 1 full-time staff member

How paperless?

- 100%

Processing and Reviewing Procedures:

- IT developed a script that launches an email to each downloaded PharmCAS applicant with a link to the supplemental application
- Once all documents have been received and an application is complete, we generate a list to faculty for evaluation


Other Best Practices:

- Establish a timeline for downloading and reviewing.
- Spot check that all documents have come over in download.

Other Issues:

- The only problems stem from not receiving all updated information from PharmCAS. This sometimes results in manual entry of info

University of Iowa




Workload and Staff:

- Number of Complete/Mailed PharmCAS Applicants (08-09): 793
- Processing: 1 full-time staff member; Reviewing: 2 full-time staff members

How paperless?

- All materials that are available to us through PharmCAS/PharmAdmit are dealt with electronically
- Admissions Committee access the information through a SharePoint website
- Supplemental application and fee are not submitted electronically - they are maintained in a general file and included in folders for those who matriculate. This application is scanned and given to the Admissions committee on the SharePoint site.

University of Iowa



Processing and Reviewing Procedures:

- Receive information from PharmAdmit and manipulate the data using Excel in any way that is necessary
- Communicate with applicants by e-mail through PharmAdmit
- Verify transfer equivalencies
- Director reviews applicants to determine who will receive a personal interview using a holistic process
- Before we used SharePoint, info would be loaded on a local, password-protected server or on laptops for committee.


Other Best Practices:

- SharePoint has worked very well to distribute the information to our Admissions Committee in a secure confidential manner.

Other Advice:

- There are always issues when new computer programs are introduced, but this one did not pose a great burden.

University of Kentucky



Workload and Staff:

- Number of Complete/Mailed PharmCAS Applicants (08-09): 725
- Processing: 2 full-time; Reviewing: 1 (Director) then Committee


How paperless?

- 100%. Students are required to mail back 3 pages with signature.
- No checks are processed.

Processing and Reviewing Procedures:

- Save all applicant files using Microsoft OneNote. Keep one notebook for each year, with every applicant's files as "sections" or folders.
- Collect supplemental online, which comes directly to e-mail. Save to OneNote file using print function.

University of Kentucky




Processing and Reviewing Procedures:

- Color-code students' files, for example green if everything is in
- Committee meetings involve projecting these files onto a large screen.
- Print and pass around a 2-page report including GPA, PCAT, etc.
- SharePoint for those who want to review prior to/outside of meeting.
- E-mail accepted students a handbook (policies) in PDF format

Other Issues:

- Experienced issues using Word for correspondences in PharmADMIT. We attach PDFs to lock information and to avoid problems.

**St. John Fisher College
Wegmans School of Pharmacy**



Workload and Staff:

- Number of Complete/Mailed PharmCAS Applicants (08-09): 1431
- Processing: 1 full-time staff member; Reviewing: Several within admissions and the School


How paperless?

- Partial, we just print the PharmCAS applications and files of accepted students for the Registrar's Office

Processing and Reviewing Procedures:

- Receive new and revised application mailings electronically from PharmCAS.
- Once all application data is processed, the Admissions Committee conducts review.

**St. John Fisher College
Wegmans School of Pharmacy**



Other Best Practices:

- Communication is key between staff members who have access to viewing applications in the PharmCAS portal.
- Have processes, guidelines, goals in place that will keep staff members organized.

Other Issues:

- No major obstacles during the transition because PharmCAS is very easy to work with.
- It would be helpful if foreign credit evaluations were calculated into the PharmCAS GPA and included with the verified coursework as part of the complete application.
