

Transforming Community Pharmacy Culture:

An Academic–Practice Pipeline Partnership

Program Framework: The Academic–Practice Pipeline

The initiative is structured into four longitudinal pillars that guide student pharmacists from early identity formation to professional placement.

Pillar I: Early Professional Identity (P1 Year)

- **Curriculum Integration:** Within the *Principles of Social and Administrative Sciences* course, P1 students engage with real-world cases involving leadership, conflict management, and medication safety.
- **Baseline Assessment:** Students complete a *Community Pharmacy Interest Survey* to identify career intent and baseline perceptions.
- **Targeted Mentorship:** Students expressing interest in community roles receive individualized resources and mentorship.

Pillar II: Applied Clinical Practice (P2–P3 Years)

- **Clinical Complexity:** Students are introduced to MTM workflows, Comprehensive Medication Reviews (CMR), and DUR case simulations.
- **The “Community Pharmacy Connection”:** This series allows students to analyze patient scenarios as the “pharmacist on duty,” bridging classroom theory with clinical judgment.
- **Competency Validation:** A practicing community pharmacist serves as a judge for the APhA-ASP Patient Counseling Competition, providing real-world feedback on clinical communication.

2. Advocacy and Professional Engagement

The program emphasizes the influence of policy on practice to make advocacy “tangible and impactful”.

- **Legislative Action:** 54 P2 students attended the *Tennessee Pharmacists Association Pharmacy Day on the Hill*.

- **Witnessing Reform:** Students observed the Senate Health and Welfare Committee hearing for **SB 2040**, a historic bill focused on PBM reform and ownership restrictions.
- **Monthly Networking:** The "College Connect" series provides a monthly space for students to engage with the Dean, faculty, and industry leaders like the Walgreens Healthcare Supervisor.

3. Longitudinal Mentorship & Workforce Pipeline

The initiative's unique strength is the **Shared Faculty Role**: a BUSOP alumna who serves simultaneously as a Walgreens Pharmacy Manager and a District Intern Engagement Lead.

- **Mentorship:** Provides a narrative of professional growth and showcases community pharmacy as a viable leadership pathway.
- **Direct Recruitment:** The shared faculty member and Walgreens Supervisor coordinate campus visits and conduct interviews with graduating students.
- **Experiential Learning:** APPE students participate in integrated academic–practice experiences to see how leadership and education intersect.

4. Student Perception Data (P1 Baseline)

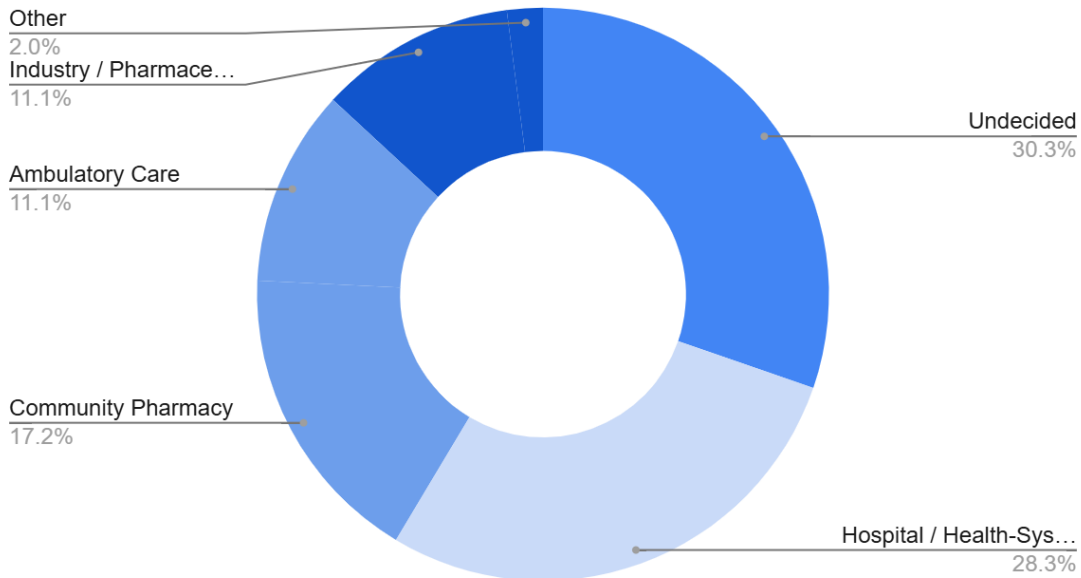
A survey of 53 P1 students established the following baseline for the program:

Career Intent and Confidence

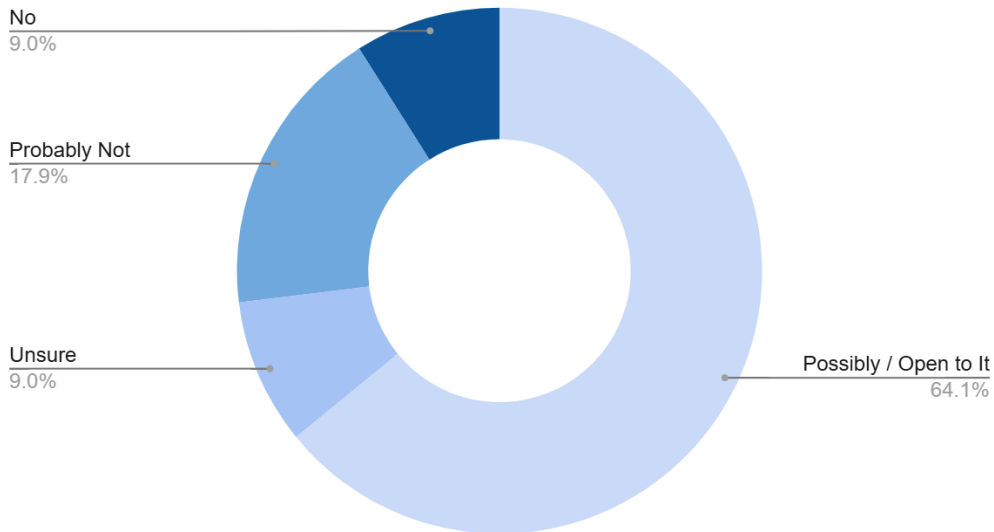
Category	Metric
Prior Pharmacy Experience	74%
Confidence to Succeed in Community Role	74% (Confident/Very Confident)
Open to Community Job (if not already employed)	71%

Planned Career Path After Graduation

Career Path



Post-Graduate Plans



Factors Influencing Perceptions

Students identified what shapes their view of the profession and the specific pros/cons they associate with community practice.

Influence Rankings (1 = Most Influential)

1. **Personal Work Experience:** Avg Rank 1.69
2. **Conversations with Pharmacists/Preceptors:** Avg Rank 2.44
3. **Friends or Classmates:** Avg Rank 4.08
4. **Classroom Content:** Avg Rank 4.15

The Community Pharmacy Outlook

Perceived Advantages	Perceived Concerns
• Direct patient interaction/relationships • Competitive salary (no residency required) • Job security/geographic availability • Leadership/advancement opportunities	• Burnout and unsustainable workload • Corporate metrics prioritized over care • Understaffing and high turnover • Limited use of clinical skills in practice

6. Ongoing Metrics for Success

To sustain the initiative, BUSOP tracks the following longitudinal data:

- **Employment Placement:** Tracking graduates into community pharmacy roles.
- **Perception Shifts:** Annual pre- and post-surveys to measure changes in student sentiment.
- **Engagement Levels:** Participation rates in advocacy events and mentorship follow-through.