

## **UCSF Student Panel**

April 28, 2020

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### **Introductions**

**All are UCD alums.**

**Jennifer (J)**- Class of 2019, Biochemistry major

**Kaleem (K)**- Class of 2019, Biochemistry from sac

**Mikael (Mk)**- Class of 2016, Biochemistry and music major, took a gap year to work and do research

**Erin (E)**- Class of 2018, Environmental science major

**Mitchell (Mt)**- Class of 2016, cell bio and chem minor, worked for a few years in industry

**Rafal (R)**- Class of 2018, pharmaceutical chem major, research assistant at hospital for one year

### **Q1: What about pharmacy appeals to you and why did you choose it?**

Mk- Worked at a medical (Amani clinic at UCD) and pharmacy setting (UCDMC). Saw diagnostic and drug therapy side and was more interested in the drug therapy side. Thought pharmacy had a greater impact on patients than just diagnosing them

E- Took a lot of toxicology classes and was interested in how different drugs interacted in body, was interested in learning how drugs can help us rather than harm us, saw how accessible community pharmacists were and really liked chemistry emphasis in pharmacy

K- Sister was pharmacist, medicine appealed to him in general. When thinking of medicine, thinks more about how to treat someone rather than diagnosing them, working in healthcare team is also appealing, UCSF emphasizes clinical experiences and knowledge

R- Enjoyed science and healthcare but rooted out medicine because too long of a journey. Worked at a rite aid pharmacy but did not like it however later got an internship at UCDMC pharmacy and really liked it. Saw the diversity in pharmacy.

Mt- Went through a process of elimination, did not like research and industry but wanted to still go into healthcare. Did not like med school because too long and did not want to deal with bodily fluids, saw pharmacy as a combination of all his interests

J- Did pharmacy internship before college, saw the scope of what pharmacists could do. Joined the prepharmacy club and really liked the environment. The profession is always growing, and pharmacists' responsibilities are growing. Also appreciated the good work life balance.

**Q2: How has your experience UCD prepared you for pharmacy school?**

E- The testing schedule at UCSF is like the quarter system (exam every three weeks). NPB 101 gave a strong physio basis that is still used at UCSF classes. The rigor at UCD prepares you well because you know how to study effectively

R- Took anatomy at UCD and it gave her a good basis for pharmacy school. UCD also allowed her to take internship at med center and allowed her to rotate at different pharmacy settings. At UCD, you are surrounded by people who are involved in a lot of clubs, programs etc which is like pharmacy students

Mt- Time management skills, did a lot of extracurricular activities and research. You have opportunities to talk to professors and communicate professionally.

Mk- UCD prepares you very well academically. 70% of class came from UC system. At UCD, learned not to stretch himself too thin because was involved in many clubs. Learned how to focus on academics first then extracurriculars

K- Learned how to grow academically, professionally, and mentally. UCD was very rigorous and allowed time for personal reflection. Upon getting into UCSF, focused first on how to do well on exams then commit to extracurriculars

J- Explored her interests and what are her passions, took NPB 168 at UCD which is a class on the biochemical interactions of drugs, met a lot of different people and established good relations with upperclassmen

**Q3: How is workload at UCSF and how do you manage your time with classes?**

R- Now UCSF is a 3-year program with a block system. It is doable, but you need to learn what you can personally handle. Take time for yourself when you need it.

There's pass, borderline pass, and no pass. It tells you how you should reassess the material that you are studying. You also learn to change your mind set about exams.

K- MWF is when bulk of the work is. At UCSF, curriculum is very comprehensive. Everything is tested together. You are given a case and you must determine what is the best course of action.

It is a pass/no pass system because UCSF wants to test your competency which is more applicable to the real world. You have a team of students with a resident and you can ask questions.

If UCSF does not think you are ready to pass, they are ready to not pass 70% of the class. If you do not pass, you have a first reassessment, a second reassessment, and finally a verbal reassessment with professors.

E- Since it was pass/no pass, it gave her time for herself and extracurriculars. It takes a lot of the pressure off, but you should not take it too lightly. When it comes to studying, you need to be conscious and honest of what you know and do not know.

Mk- Thought that UCD was a lot more work than UCSF personally. Classes are all integrated and you are tested comprehensively. UCSF's classes were more applicable to what his interests were and future career. You can still fit in time for a social life.

The Vice Dean told the class that in undergrad you focus on the "what" of the material but in pharmacy school, you focus more on "how" and "why." Exams are short essay format because you must rationalize what your thinking is and if you can justify your answer.

Mt- your social life and academic life blurs together at sometimes. When studying in a group, it is more fun to study. Passing depends on exams with an 80-90% average (fluctuates a lot). They are more concerned with if you have mastery in the concept however which is why averages differ so much. Questions are also weighted differently because you can get a higher score than someone and still not pass. There is an exam review where students can give opinions on exam questions.

J- They give you a lot of practice material and practice exams which prepare you well for what the exams will be like.

#### **Q4: Given the rigor of classes and, how is the quality of teaching at UCSF compared to undergrad?**

Mt- At UCSF, there is a small class so you can get close with the professors. The professors really care about you and want you to succeed. They do not give you the fear of reaching out for help.

Mk- Every faculty member views your success as their success. At UCD, the professors are teaching because it was their job and were more focused on their research. At UCSF, emailed a faculty member and got a response in 5 minutes. In lecture, professors will not move on in the lesson if they do not think the students have a strong grasp of material.

K- The professors are super invested in the students. They will push you but never let you fall. There is a small group meeting with graduates and provide insight on pharmacy. In the STEP

program, there are undergraduates that can teach classes. The second year (P2) class are invested in the first-year students and are willing to help you with what you are struggling with.

R- There are only really two classes that are in lectures. The ratio of faculty to students is a lot better than in undergrad. There are also advisors that are ready to talk to you about whatever you want. There are office hours all the time and many sources to get help.

**Q5: What kinds of organizations are you in at UCSF and how hard is it to join campus organizations?**

K- It is not competitive to get into clubs; you just need to pay a fee however, getting on board can be a bit cutthroat. However rather than being concerned with putting things on your resume, explore what your interests are.

J- At UCSF there are many organizations that you may get overwhelmed, but this allows you to explore so many facets of pharmacy.

E- Do your research about the organizations so that you know for sure which organizations you want to invest your time in.

R- When you first start at UCSF, you can join the P1 committees for the various organizations. You learn about the organization and you get a glimpse as to how competitive UCSF can get in terms of board member positions. If you want something, just go for it. With time, you develop your interests so do not dive into a lot of organizations right away.

Mt- There are organizations that are not necessarily pharmacy related. There are a lot of opportunities so do not get discouraged if you do not make the board of one organization.

Mk- At the beginning of the year, there is a lot of buzz about the different organizations but at the end of the day, you should join what you are interested in.

**Q6: How hard is it to get housing at UCSF and is it affordable?**

K- Getting housing right now is not too difficult because they just opened two new buildings. It is still SF however, so rent is more than Davis' rent. Parnassus is where the main campus is, and Mission Bay is next to it but you need to take a shuttle to get to Parnassus.

E- You do not have to live in student housing but most of the class opts for student housing. There are some people who commute though. It is hard to get housing in Parnassus specifically because it is a lottery system. There can sometime be opportunities to take over someone's lease in sunset on Craigslist.

R- Tidelands is the new building and it cost \$1300 a month to share an apartment with someone else with a small living room, small kitchen with no oven, and no dishwasher. It was too much for what she was getting. Moved out to get closer to campus so did not have to commute as much. You can check the UCSF student housing page to find roommates. Student housing is valuable in first year because you can build more connections with other pharmacy students. Liked the atmosphere of Mission Bay but too far from campus so need to commute.

**Q7: Can you choose to do APPEs in the Bay Area, can you choose which specific regions?**

E- You rank the areas then there is an algorithm that tries to put everyone at the number one spot.

R- You can rank five regions then if you get in that region, you rank which specific city you want to do the APPEs in.

**Q8: did you receive full funding or additional scholarships? How are you paying for pharmacy school?**

Mt- There is a financial aid advisor, but it is mostly from loans.

J- It also depends on your family's financial status so you can get money from grants.

R- Took a year off after undergrad and worked to get money for pharmacy school. Save money however you can. Apply to CAL Fresh which gives you \$200 a month for groceries. When you move to SF, you learn how much you spend, and you learn how to be money conscious.

K- UCSF might be the cheapest pharmacy school in California. You can get a pharmacy grant which is based on your family income and is need based system. A lot of it is going to be out of loans, however. UCSF is willing to work with you on your financial circumstances.

Mk- Worked two jobs and graduated undergraduate debt free. Two years of saving up was a huge help for pharmacy school. There is also a FAFSA application available for UCSF grants.

Mt- There is no rush to jump straight into pharmacy school after undergrad so you can take time to work.

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