

# JOINING THE PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE IN PHARMACY



UNIVERSITY OF MALTA  
L-Università ta' Malta

Want to develop your skills in advanced clinical pharmacy? Interested in furthering your studies at a Doctorate level? Then consider joining the Professional Doctorate in Pharmacy!

**UIC** UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT CHICAGO

## WHAT IS THE PHARM D COURSE?

The Pharm D programme is a new post-graduate course being offered by the Department of Pharmacy of the **University of Malta** in collaboration with the College of Pharmacy at the **University of Illinois at Chicago in Chicago, USA**. This course was developed to provide for the rapidly growing niche in pharmacy related to a professional doctorate. It is a means to develop professionals with a research-oriented approach and with skills in advanced clinical pharmacy practice with a focus on patient safety.

Pharmacists who would like to take up the area of Clinical Pharmacy as their specialisation will be able to develop the skills and attributes of undertaking research in the field while reading for a level 8 Doctorate level degree.

## COURSE DETAILS

- The programme is delivered using a blended learning model that includes lectures, distance-learning and practice based learning
- Taught elements integrate learning experience with the assessment and contextualization in professional practice
- The course includes a number of taught modules as well as clinical experience and research modules
- Course activities involve journal clubs, reflective portfolios, literature assessments and patient care discussions
- Over three years of study
- Successful completion of 90 ECTS will entitle students to a 'Masters in Advanced Clinical Pharmacy' should they opt to not proceed with the course





## CAREER PROSPECTS

The programme will empower pharmacists practising in the professional areas to take up leadership roles that will drive policies, developments in clinical practice and service provision which draw on a scientific and evidence base.

## SKILLS DEVELOPED

- Co-operate and collaborate with healthcare professionals and patients to provide individualised treatment and support patient care
- Manage medication knowledge, mitigate errors and support decision-making based on evidence-based sources including information technology
- Efficiently collect, analyse and apply required literature sources for the appropriate clinical management of patients
- Evaluate, analyse and synthesise information and knowledge available to undertake and propose rational decisions
- Identify opportunities for improvement of a medication-use system
- Collect and critically assess clinically relevant data to facilitate monitoring and management of drug therapy plans
- Contribute significantly to development of practice research

Scholarship opportunities are available. For more information contact the Department of Pharmacy, University of Malta on [pharmacy.ms@um.edu.mt](mailto:pharmacy.ms@um.edu.mt)

## CONTACTS



UNIVERSITY OF MALTA  
L-Università ta' Malta

Professor Lilian M. Azzopardi  
Department of Pharmacy  
University of Malta  
[lilian.m.azzopardi@um.edu.mt](mailto:lilian.m.azzopardi@um.edu.mt)  
Tel: (356) 21 344 971

## UIC UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO

Professor Alan Lau  
College of Pharmacy  
University of Illinois at Chicago  
[alanlau@uic.edu](mailto:alanlau@uic.edu)

---

# DOCTORATE IN PHARMACY STUDENT REFLECTIONS

Currently there are 34 pharmacists following the post-graduate Doctorate in Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) degree programme which is offered by the Department of Pharmacy of the University of Malta in collaboration with the College of Pharmacy of the University of Illinois in Chicago, USA. Students come from 8 countries from different parts of the world. Seventeen students have completed their first year of studies and are now working on their research dissertation and following rotations. Another group of 17 students joined the first year last October.

## DANIKA AGIUS DECELIS

As a recently-graduated pharmacist, I enrolled in the Pharm.D. programme as clinical pharmacy has always been one of the areas which interested me, especially after undertaking a dissertation in clinical pharmacy. I particularly enjoy the course as it expands upon the knowledge we have and goes beyond the local and European clinical scenario, adding richness to the course by discussing other approaches applied in the USA. Having students from various backgrounds, each with their own experiences in pharmacy, brings out the beauty of sharing experiences and knowledge we each have gained. I would recommend the course to pharmacists pursuing a career in clinical pharmacy or those who simply want to broaden their knowledge on the area.

## JESSICA ATTARD

Clinical pharmacy is an area of interest to me so I opted to continue my studies straight after completing the Master of Pharmacy course. The Doctorate in Pharmacy is an intense programme with high academic standards. It provides students with an in-depth overview of various health and disease topics and their application in various clinical pharmacy scenarios. During the course, students are not only given the opportunity to learn through theoretical and online lectures, but also through rotations which provide students with hands-on experience. The course is well-organised with both local and foreign staff willing to help out and contribute to making this three-year journey a positive one.

## DANIA AL-HADDAD

I graduated from the University of Jordan with a Bachelor of Pharmacy degree in 2012. I worked as a patient counsellor at the Drug Information Centre and as a medical claims auditor at an insurance company in Jordan. I decided to enrol in the Pharm.D. course in Malta to become a professional clinical pharmacist. The pharmacotherapeutics unit was the most enjoyable since I wish to practice in a hospital within a clinical pharmacy setting. The rotation at Karin Grech Rehabilitation Hospital was very challenging and motivating as it was my first practice rotation in Malta. I would recommend the course to pharmacists interested in clinical pharmacy.

## DENISE BORG

The Doctorate in Pharmacy programme has proven to be an invaluable opportunity to further my education. With the emerging innovations within the pharmacy sector, it may be challenging for pharmacists to keep up-to-date. The course is based on developing clinical skills and competencies in practical aspects of current practice. One can benefit greatly from the flexibility of the course and the strong organisational structure to review course material according to one's personal schedule. I would strongly recommend this course to any pharmacist wishing to further develop research-based skills and delve into pharmacotherapy and other clinical aspects.



## The pharmacotherapeutics unit was the most enjoyable since I wish to practice in a hospital within a clinical pharmacy setting

### NEIL BUGEJA

As a newly-graduated pharmacist, the Doctorate in Pharmacy was the next step for my education since this programme provides the ideal balance between taught and research learning in clinical pharmacy. Lectures are engaging and provide further in-depth knowledge on the most important aspects of clinical pharmacy. Tutorials via videoconferencing, which were a novel experience for me, give the course an interactive facet. While it is challenging to balance work with studies, learning new information is always motivational, especially so when looking in detail at possible future careers within clinical pharmacy. I would recommend the course to pharmacists wishing to further their career in clinical pharmacy as well as those interested in other approaches to healthcare and treatment protocols.

### CHARYL FAVA

The Doctorate in Pharmacy programme is a course with a difference since it delivered using a mixed learning approach. It involves distance-learning via online-teaching and lectures through video-conferencing by specialised foreign pharmacists who share their expertise with the students. This course also consists of practice-based learning, such as clinical rotations in a rehabilitation hospital, where a patient-centred approach together with evidence-based decision-making are highlighted within the multidisciplinary team. I highly recommend this course to other pharmacists as it enhances skills in different pharmaceutical areas resulting in holistic patient-centred care.

### SHAISTA SADAF

I completed my Bachelor of Pharmacy degree last year in India. I opted for the Doctorate in Pharmacy course with the University of Malta since I wish to practice and serve as a clinical pharmacist in the hospital. This is a professional post-graduate pharmacy course dealing with patients and the healthcare system. Clinical rotations at the hospital and solving actual case studies in class are the most challenging yet exciting as we learn to apply knowledge gained to real-life scenarios. I would recommend this course to all pharmacists who are passionate about serving patients in a hospital setting. The University of Malta makes the learning experience even better with its student-friendly atmosphere surrounded by the serenity of the island.

### JESSICA SPITERI

I graduated as a pharmacist in 2013 and have practiced my profession both in community and administrative settings. I strongly believe that professionals should continuously enhance their knowledge to be better equipped to exercise their profession. The Pharm.D. programme gives the opportunity to study various aspects of pharmacy with the main focus being the clinical scenario. The lectures have been very useful in guiding students on how to approach and work through clinical cases in real-life settings. The clinical module has been the most challenging and motivating part of the course. I strongly recommend this programme to pharmacists interested in taking their profession to the next level, be it clinical pharmacy or policy-making.

**I would recommend this course to all pharmacists who are passionate about serving patients in a hospital setting**