March 27th, 2020

Dear Year 4 E2P PharmD Students,

Re: Outstanding Practice Experience Hours

The evolving COVID-19 situation has created a tremendous amount of stress and uncertainty for our students. Our leadership team has been in numerous discussions with other faculties of pharmacy, experiential education program leaders, accrediting agencies and professional associations across the country as we all work to consider the safety and wellness of students and patients while maintaining the continuity of the learning experience. The ability of our year 4 E2P PharmD students to successfully graduate from their programs remains a key priority.

As a temporary measure for those on track to graduate in the spring of 2020, CCAPP has enabled each institution to be innovative in identifying best practices to assist in their assessment of whether students have met the required competencies and determine which students are competent to graduate. This would include evidence of practice competency even though all required practice experience hours have not been met.

We acknowledge that there are many conflicting concerns and worries for our students including the financial impacts from a delayed start of their professional careers, previously signed contracts and commitments post-graduation while balancing concerns about their health or those of their loved ones. Students will need to consider their own individual circumstances and determine what will be best for themselves and their families. Recognizing this, the faculty is providing 3 options for year 4 students to complete their remaining program requirements. Students may choose to:

1. Return to practicum to complete remaining requirements in the coming week(s)
2. Delay their return to practicum until May, June or July; or
3. Withdraw from their current practicum and complete the practicum course in its entirety during the 2020-21 Winter Session. Details around re-enrolment would be determined on a case-by-case basis.

As we’ve previously communicated, the Canadian Council for Accreditation Requirements of Pharmacy Programs currently requires graduates to have completed 32 weeks (1280 hours) of sustained end-of-program practice experiences of which at least 24 weeks (960 hr) comprises full-time direct patient care (DPC) practice (http://ccapp-accredit.ca).

Students that have NOT completed the required DPC hours:

- All students with outstanding DPC hours must successfully complete all of these hours to meet their experiential education program requirements. The OEE will let you know if this is the case when we reschedule your practicum.

- If the student is still in the area and the site/practice educator is able to accommodate, the OEE will work to have these students return to their original practice site to resume their practicums.

- If this is not possible, an alternate community/outpatient practice site will be identified for the student.

- All practicum courses remain pass-fail grading. Students must be successful in all required course components in order to successfully complete the practicum. Please refer to the relevant Practicums Course Handbook for further information.
Students that have completed required DPC hours, but have outstanding practice experience hours:

- All students are to return to a DPC practicum to complete a minimum of 80 hours (2 weeks).
- If the student is still in the area and the site/practice educator is able to accommodate, the OEE will work to have these students return to their original practice site to resume their practicums.
- If this is not possible, an alternate community/outpatient practice site will be identified for the student.
- All practicum courses remain pass-fail grading.
- If the student meets the expected level of performance for all criteria as outlined and described in the Practice Educator Assessment of Student form and consistently exhibit all elements within the Professionalism domain, the experiential education program requirements will be deemed complete. Any outstanding practice experience hours beyond these 80 hours will not be required to be completed.
- Should the student not meet expected level of performance by the end of week 2, the practicum will be extended to a third week to provide a second supplemental opportunity to meet practicum course requirements. Should the student not meet course requirements by the end of week 3, a fail recommendation will be made to the Student Progress Committee.
- The above exemption of practice experience hours is applicable only to those that are on track to graduate in spring 2020. November graduates will have their repeat practicums rescheduled in their entirety in Term 1 of the upcoming Winter session.

OEE Course Coordinators will work with practice educators to facilitate flexibility in completing practicum requirements where feasible for the site. Students placed within outpatient/community practice sites are expected to provide direct patient care and/or engage in activities that contribute to patient care. Some sites may have means to complete these activities while minimizing in-person contact with patients e.g. electronic medical records/charting, telehealth, limiting patient access within the site, etc.

What about our health and safety?
The COVID-19 has presented unprecedented challenges, but in a very short period of time, you will no longer be students and each of you will be joining our profession as front-line health care providers. Pharmacists are a critical resource and the provision of high quality, patient-centered health care is needed by our communities now more than ever.

The OEE is currently calling and speaking with practicum educators to assess what is currently happening on the ground and working with sites to ensure the safety of our students. Many have implemented several proactive measures to protect staff, patients and students. This includes enforced additional sanitization and cleaning, plexiglass around the pharmacy and front store cashiers, limiting the number of patients within the store at one time and advising staff and patients to stay home if they are unwell. Our pharmacy partners are working to ensure their practice sites are safe enough to provide care without an unreasonable burden of risk.

Students are reminded that they are covered by WorkSafeBC while on practicum. Please see https://srs.ubc.ca/health-safety/student-safety/practicumclinical-placement-student-safety/. Students are to follow the guidelines and recommendations provided by Public Health and continue to adhere to all infection control policies as directed by the practice site and their practice educator.

What if I am not able to return to practicum?
Students with extenuating circumstances that prevent them for returning to practicum may submit an Academic Concession request as per usual Faculty policies.

If an Academic Concession is granted, only those students that have completed all required DPC hours will be eligible to complete 80 hours (2 weeks) of comparable academic activities and/or project work. The structure of these activities and the required assessment processes will need to be determined and created by the faculty. A designated practice educator or faculty member will be required to supervise and assess students and provide documentation that required competencies have been met. The timeframe in which these academic activities/project work will be offered is subject to their availability.
Students with outstanding DPC hours requesting an academic concession are reminded that they may delay their practicum or withdraw from their practicum and complete the course in its entirety during the 2020-21 Winter Session. These students will still need to successfully complete their required DPC hours to meet program requirements.

Students with an ongoing medical condition or disability are asked to immediately connect with the Centre for Accessibility if they haven’t done so already - https://students.ubc.ca/about-student-services/centre-for-accessibility

I have an existing accommodation for my practicum
Students with an existing accommodation for their practicums have been noted and an appropriate practice site will be identified accordingly.

Why can’t all students just be “force graduated”?
The Faculty has an obligation to our profession and to the communities we serve to ensure that the successful graduates of our E2P PharmD program have achieved the key competencies as mandated by our accrediting organization and pharmacy regulatory authorities. The above process is intended to ensure all graduates have demonstrated the ability to meet all competencies as per the AFPC Educational Outcomes and CCAPP accreditation requirements and that this is formally documented by the Faculty.

What happens next?
The OEE has already begun working to reschedule your placements based on the information provided in the student survey. If you wish to change your preferences based on the information above, please email phar.oee@ubc.ca immediately to let us know what you had previously submitted and what you would like to change.

If you have already restarted or have been rescheduled to restart your practicum, there is no further action. Please proceed with your practicums as planned.

I have more questions!
The OEE will be hosting a town hall this afternoon to provide students with the opportunity to ask further questions or discuss any concerns they may have about completing their remaining program requirements. We welcome year 4 students whose practicums have been impacted by the COVID-19 situation to attend.

Date: Friday, March 27th, 2020
Time: 2pm

Conference ID: 451380

Options for joining this meeting:

Chrome Web Browser
Go to http://meet.vc.ubc.ca and connect to your meeting.
User guide and test call

Skype for Business Account Holders
In the Contact box, enter: 451380@vc.ubc.ca
User guide, test call: 82998@vc.ubc.ca

Telephone
Dial toll-free 1-844-651-2007, followed by the Conference ID and #.
Once again, we thank you for your ongoing patience and understanding as we navigate these unprecedented times. We continue to assess the situation on a day-by-day basis, but we hope the above provides some clarity and direction that will assist students in determining what is best for them. We look forward to chatting with you further at this afternoon’s town hall.

Kind regards,

Janice Yeung BSc(Pharm), ACPR, Pharm D.
Director | Office of Experiential Education
Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences
The University of British Columbia | Vancouver Campus
Phone 604 827 4846
janice.yeung@ubc.ca

Kerry Wilbur BSc(Pharm), ACPR, PharmD, MScPH, FCSHP
Associate Professor & Executive Director | Entry-to-Practice Education
Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences
The University of British Columbia | Vancouver Campus
Phone 604 827 0198
kerry.wilbur@ubc.ca