



P1 Fall Semester Survival Guide

P1's please note that the information contained within this guide has been collected and summarized from survey responses submitted by pharmacy students from the graduating classes of 2025, 2026, and 2027. Each year various revisions are made to the curriculum, due to different professors, changes in content taught, and feedback provided by previous pharmacy students. This survival guide includes numerous study tips and tricks and is intended to give you a general impression of what a first year pharmacy student might encounter.

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General Tips from Upperclassmen:

It is important to **study hard** for your P1 classes and to truly learn the information, as it will be the foundation for future classes. The first semester will start off difficult, but don't be afraid to ask upperclassmen, fellow students, or professors questions. Reach out **EARLY** if you need help, everyone wants you to succeed! Don't be afraid to try new study techniques or study in groups. The year is not impossible but will require effort to prepare for exams.

- Time management is key!
- **GO TO CLASS!** Don't get into the habit of studying for other courses during different lectures. It will only allow you to get behind.
- Even if you didn't need to study in undergrad, you HAVE to study in pharmacy school. Do not underestimate the first exams and quizzes.
- Don't be afraid to **get involved** in organizations! Leadership roles will teach you a lot and will help you in school, in work, and in your personal life. Try to enjoy P1 year and don't get discouraged. Take the opportunity to meet new people and get involved!

Note Taking Methods:

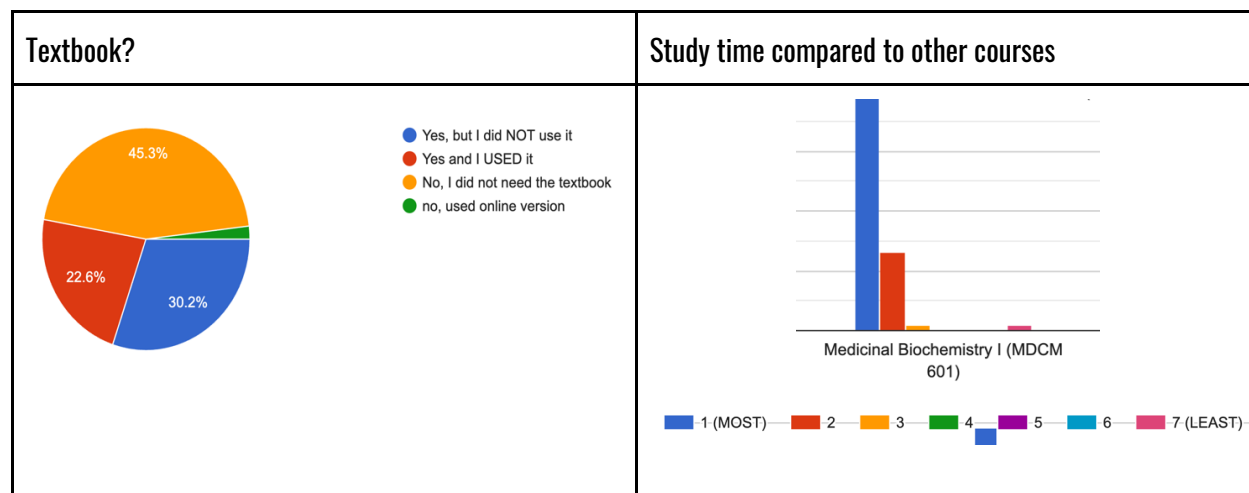
- Download lecture slides before class using an annotation app (ex- Notability, Goodnotes) onto iPad
 - Use Apple pencil to write notes directly on lecture slides
 - Type notes onto slides via annotation app
 - Highlight key concepts on the slides
- Actively listen to recorded lectures by taking detailed notes while watching
- Type notes on a laptop or iPad
- Handwrite notes in a notebook

Utilize Your Resources:

- Rho Chi Tutoring is offered Mon-Fri 12-1pm (no appointment needed)
- Email professors and/or Rho Chi Students to request exam review sessions
- Review past exams with your professors
- Contact your peer mentor with any questions about studying, scheduling, rotations, etc. (basically anything!)
- YouTube Videos: 'Speed Pharmacology' and 'AK Lectures Biochem'
- Color code a calendar (quizzes, exams, assignments, meetings, etc)
- Create a class GroupMe or Facebook Page
- The SOP Master Calendar will become your best friend!

Medicinal Biochemistry I (MDCM 601)

Dr. Wu – Course Coordinator



What do you wish you would have known before taking this course? What would you have done differently?

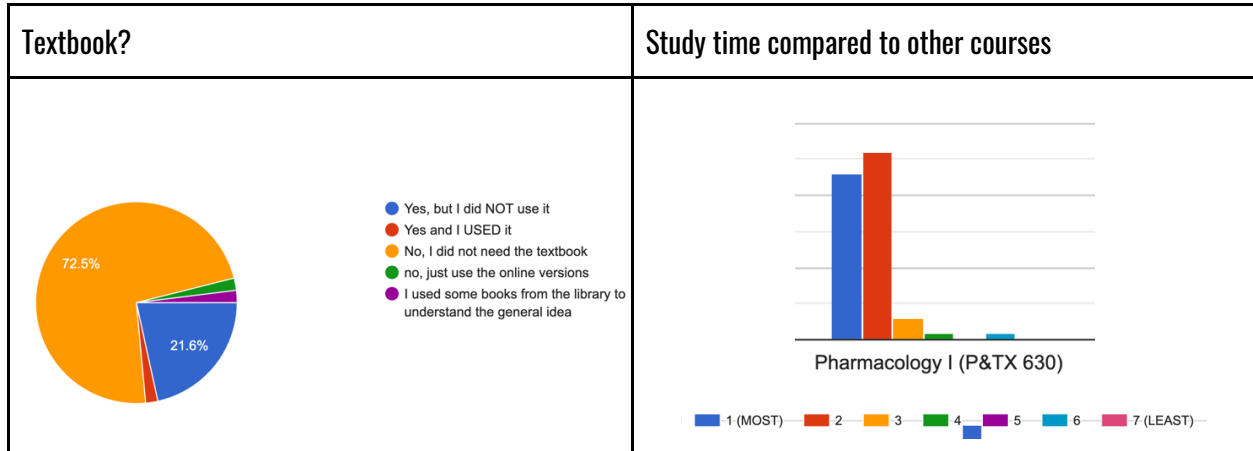
- I wish I would have had my amino acids memorized before, they come up a lot. I would have not listened to the students above me and feared the class, there is nothing to be scared about. Every class is doable if you put your mind to it.
- It's okay if you fail the first exam. You will not fail the entire class, but you will need to work hard. Pay attention in lab because it will help you out with some of the questions on the exam.
- The study guide will allow you to do well on Dr. Boskovic's portions - also complete his assignments. Know everything on the slides for Dr. Wu's tests
- Talk to your instructors! They are there to help you succeed and do not know what your needing help with if you do not talk to them
- Using whatever resources the professor gives was helpful. When they tell you to pay attention to a specific section of the slides, definitely pay attention and make sure you remember it.
- KNOW your amino acids!

Study Tips!

- Utilize the practice exams. Know all pathways from beginning to end. Be able to recognize similarities in structures
- Re-watch the lecture videos!!!! A lot of stuff you need to know is what the professor says and it might not be on the lecture slides.
- For the metabolic processes, draw them out completely to learn them
- The most effective study technique I used was to reorganize the topics into a way that I understood. This made it easier to learn the information.

Pharmacology (P&TX 630)

Dr. Zhao – Course Coordinator



What do you wish you would have known before taking this course? What would you have done differently?

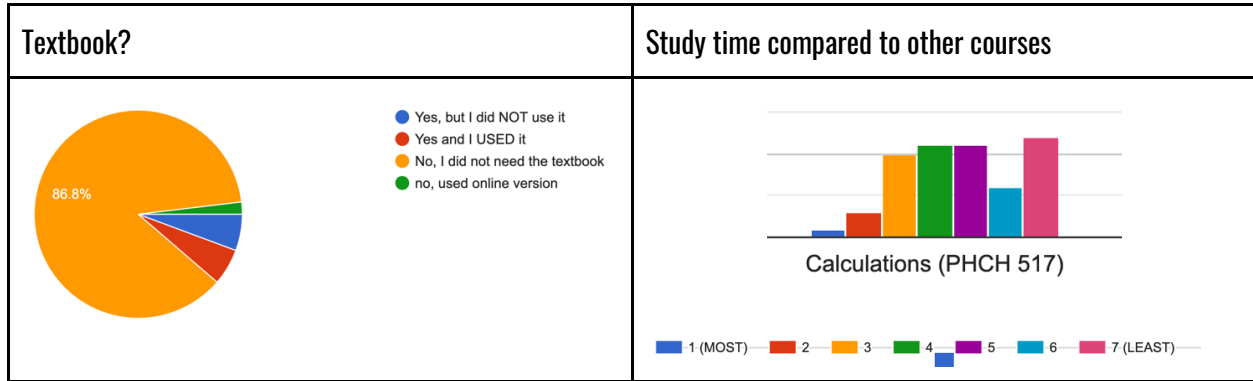
- There are a lot of professors so don't get comfortable with one teaching style.
- I wish I had known that the quizzes are helpful grade boosters if you are prepared for them.
- I wish that I would have started preparing for exams well beforehand instead of waiting until the last moment.
- Make sure you understand the general mechanism of the central nervous system and watch videos from Ninja Nerd before school starts to refresh your biology knowledge.
- The pathophysiology is IMPORTANT! If you can understand how the drug affects the pathophysiology of the disease state you will do well!

Study Tips!

- Draw out the diagrams from beginning to end and be able to talk yourself through every step
- Creating a drug list associated with the topic and describe the MOA.
- Quizlet, active recall, making concept maps (especially with vitamins)
- Study for this like physiology. If you understand the physiology, you'll know how the drugs work!
- Make study guides for every test and use active recall. Take every quiz as serious as the exam - every point counts and it will help you identify what you need to work on before the exam.

Pharmacy Calculations (PHCH 517)

Dr. Davidow – Course Coordinator



What do you wish you would have known before taking this course? What would you have done differently?

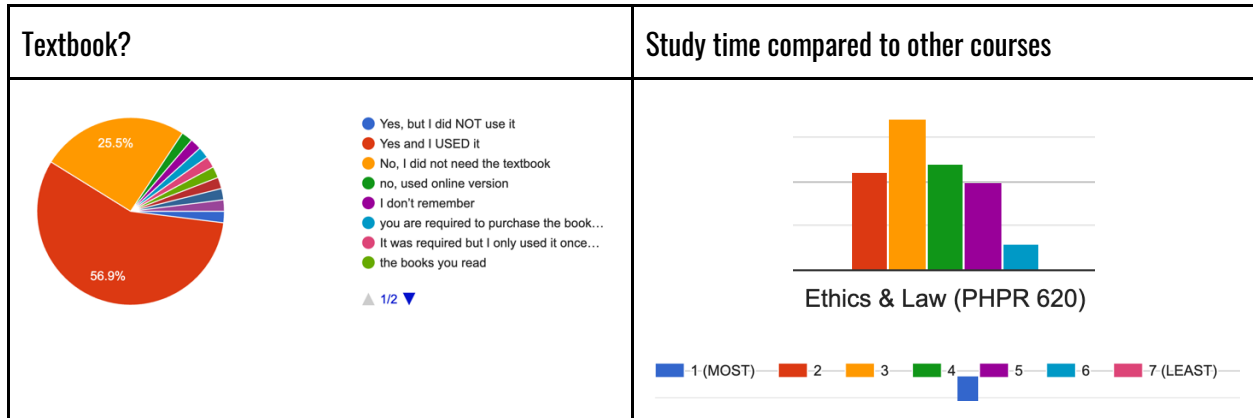
- 50 percent of the course is homework, do not count on this to hold the weight of your grade
- Go to Larry's review sessions if possible before the exam. They are long but worth it because he will be very honest with you about what is coming on the exam!
- Use the endless practice problems as much as you can, and study the homework and in-class questions too. This class isn't too bad, but don't blow it off either. I thought the first quiz would be easy, but it was a humbling experience. Dr. Davidow is a great professor; don't be afraid to ask him for help if you are struggling.

Study Tips!

- Doing homework problems again and working on practice problems. Make sure you watch the pre-class lectures to have an idea what the topic is about.
- Stay up on the homework and do the practice problems in the book!
- Get the repetition down! Know how to plug and chug it'll make your life easy
- I did the endless practice problems and practiced each unit regularly. This helped me understand each topic with ease.

Ethical, Legal, and Cultural Issues in Patient Care (PHPR 620)

Dr. Bates – Course Coordinator (different from past years)



What do you wish you would have known before taking this course? What would you have done differently?

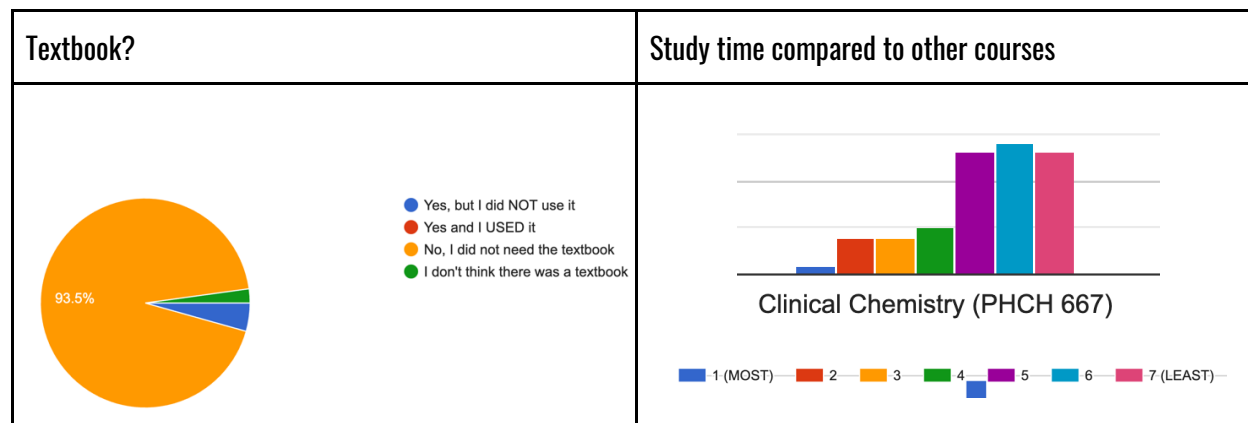
- A lot of what is taught seems like it would just be common sense, but I wish I would have studied the smaller/more nitpicky sections because that's what I felt like got tested. For the video project that we did, I wish I would have listened more to feedback and fixed things with my video. Even if it feels awkward, you are being graded on a specific rubric so make sure to follow that rubric.
- I wish I would have known about the strictness of the instructions. ALWAYS FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS OR YOU WILL GET 0 POINTS. I would have completed the pre-work more consistently if I were to take this class again.
- Study EARLY! This class is going to have a lot of definitions and examples you need to be able to recognize and apply and it is imperative you have a good understanding of the material ahead of time, instead of the night before. You will be grateful to yourself for it!

Study Tips!

- Doing the homework helps a little with general concepts. The study guides are helpful to do yourself
- Use her study guides, take notes during class; know the charts she gives; you'll do better if you study from all the slides
- Watch all the videos and read all assigned readings from the ethics book. Make your own study guides and practice active recall. Follow all directions from the projects - make sure to read them over again!
- Rewatch the lecture videos and LISTEN to what the professor says

Introduction to Clinical Chemistry (PHCH 667)

Dr. Wang – Course Coordinator



What do you wish you would have known before taking this course? What would you have done differently?

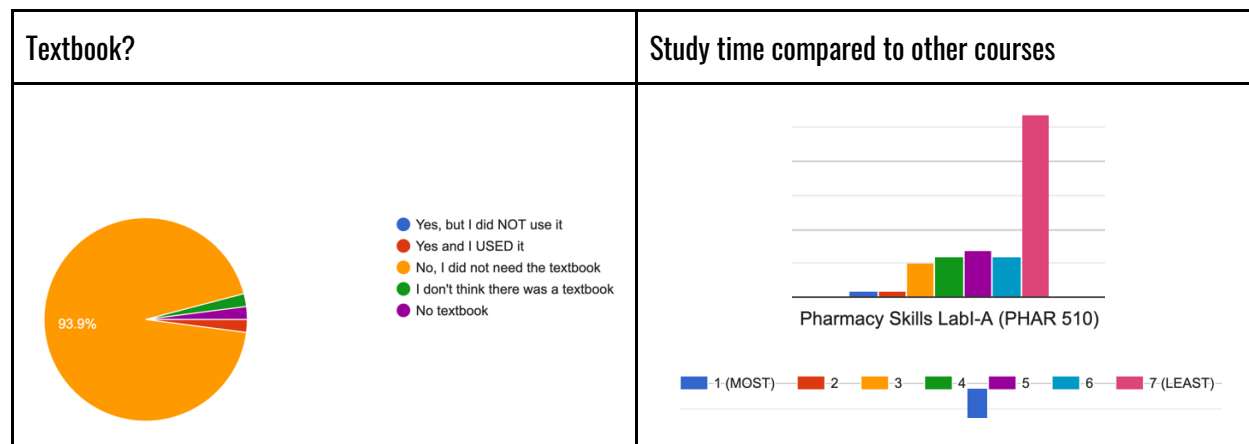
- These concepts are very important for your entire pharmacy career. I wish I would not have brushed off this course as much and really learned what was presented. Unfortunately it was presented in a rather dry way so it was easy to brush off, don't do that though.
- A lot of people will blow off this course and ended up with a grade lower than they expected. It's not too hard, but make sure you study and practice active recall of ALL material that was covered.
- I would have spent more time actually paying attention in class. They would cover different things than what was on the videos.

Study Tips!

- Study the quiz questions
- Making sure that you understand the basic concepts for all of the tests. The little homework quizzes are helpful if you use all of your attempts to see as many questions as possible.
- Quizlet was really helpful remembering all the small detail that they covered!
- Remember to do the weekly quizzes! Those are a lot of (free) points. You have multiple tries and will most likely see those questions again.

Pharmacy Skills Laboratory I-A (PHAR 510)

Dr. Davidow – Course Coordinator



What do you wish you would have known before taking this course? What would you have done differently?

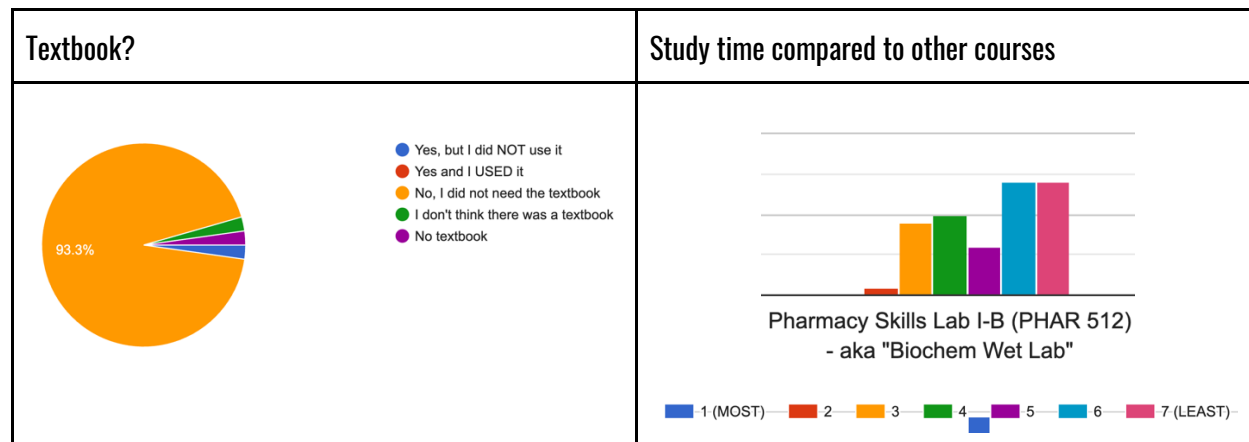
- As someone who didn't work in retail before this lab, learning the top 100 was kind of a struggle. I wish I knew that it's important to learn, but also not that big of a grade overall as long as you're doing well in the rest of lab. The first OSLE is a lot, but feeling confident and doing the practices beforehand are very helpful.
- Study for the drug quizzes in advance. Even 5-10 minutes a day is better than trying to cram the night before lab, especially if you don't have pharmacy experience entering school.
- It's a long lab with lots of lecturing so make sure to bring water and eat lunch before hand.

Study Tips!

- Quizlet for the drugs, making sure that you're actively learning during demonstrations and such for OSLE practice.
- Using the simulations from the Pharmacy Skills Lab website to help me understand things taught in class
- Practice in the mirror for OSLEs if you don't have someone you can work with.

Pharmacy Skills Laboratory I-B (PHAR 512)

Dr. Wu – Course Coordinator



What do you wish you would have known before taking this course? What would you have done differently?

- The pre lab quiz/lectures are a lot more difficult than I felt we were led to believe. Actual lab is kind of fun as long as you're prepared. Don't be afraid to ask questions of either the TAs or the professor
- Don't blow off the pre-lab readings and quizzes - actually read through the material, take notes/highlight important info.
- Try and get your lab reports done sooner rather than later! If you have any questions ask Dr. Wu or the TAs and they are always happy to help!

Study Tips!

- Being proactive for this lab can reinforce some concepts for Med Biochem which is super helpful. Use the time and information presented by the faculty to really hone in on big, overarching concepts that will be used across your entire SOP career (ex. Henderson-Hasselbalch equation).
- If possible, trying to choose a lab partner that you know (or at least think you can get along with) is a big help on working on lab reports.
- Active recall for the quizzes! Make sure you know how to do calculations too!
- Read the lab manual before lab. Read instructions carefully. Ask for help when needed

Overall Semester Study Tips

What were some challenges you faced when completing your pharmacy courses and how did you overcome them?

- Staying motivated can be hard. It's a long semester with a lot of tasks. Learn to celebrate every small victory. That will help to keep you motivated in the long run
- I didn't discover the power of asking others for help and studying with others. I was often embarrassed to let anyone know I was struggling and once I started collaborating with others on study materials or asking my friends who were tutors to explain something to me, I was able to really improve my grades
- Sometimes you have to fail a little bit to find out what you need to change, you may realize after your first quizzes/ exams that your class priorities should be different from some of your friends' and that's okay! Do what you need to do to be successful!
- Time management- I started to use a planner to help organize the weeks ahead of me
- It's stressful trying to stay on top of exams especially weeks when there are multiple. Don't let it stress you out. Schedule short study breaks daily for each course. Create your own study guide and form a study group. Don't beat yourself up too much. Learn how to improve after 1 bad exam, it's not the end of the world.
- My challenges involved moving across the country to come to KU SOP, and with that came adjusting to the environment and meeting new people. I think getting involved helped, I would highly recommend coming to the optional orientation the day before because most of the people I met there became my close friends. If you have time to, work. Working helped me meet more people and I was able to apply concepts from my classes easier. Go to all the free club events in the fall. This kept me occupied when I would have been sitting at home otherwise.

What advice/tips/tricks do you have to successfully complete pharmacy courses?

- Find the best way for YOU to study, don't just follow what everyone else is doing! It could be re-writing your notes, making quizlets/study guides/practice exams, or pretending to teach it to someone else. You're going to learn differently and that's okay!
- One of the biggest pieces of advice was to get involved in pharmacy school and join an organization! I was able to network with many incredible individuals and practice my time management skills. Another thing is to your older peers for help or advice. I wouldn't have survived without their wisdom and still reach out to them for help on all things concerning P4 year. Lastly, I wouldn't be as successful on my rotations or during OSLEs/OSCEs if I didn't have a job with an intern development program. The skills and patient interactions I gained are incredibly invaluable and I am grateful for those experiences.
- While studying create your own questions they might ask or be similar to questions they'll ask
- Quizlet will be your best friend. Schedule a study time. Don't forget to take care of yourself by eating meals, moving around, and getting enough sleep.
- Give yourself time for breaks! If you don't take time off from pharmacy, you will burn yourself out so quickly!
- Keep a planner with deadline, due dates, quizzes, and exams To help learn material, try to think about the reasons the wrong answers are wrong/what would make the wrong answers correct
- Do not be discouraged about your first exam if you do poorly. Use it to figure out how you study best because I learned that everyone digests information differently. Also, utilize office hours! Especially if you need help, your professor will help you!
- Keep up with class work, re-watch the lecture videos and fill in the gaps on material you don't quite understand. Be proactive!! You can't study everything in one night.
- Get a head start on anything that you can. Your time is so valuable and planning things in advance really helps. Make lots of study guides (they were my best friends). Use pomodoro method if you are unmotivated.