

## BACKGROUND

- Increasingly more institutions are offering dual degrees together with their Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) programs, with the most common dual degree being a Masters in Business Administration (MBA).
- Despite the growing popularity, studies have shown room for improvement in bridging the two separate programs of a dual PharmD/MBA degree and providing additional mentoring to students enrolled in the program
- A previous study at SIUE School of Pharmacy has shown interest and preferences for the mentorship program to include a “buddy” system, guest lecturers, networking opportunities, shadowing opportunities, and additional advising.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**Goal:** Continue the PharmD/MBA Mentorship program for dual degree students at SIUE School of Pharmacy utilizing past survey data.

**Objectives:**

- Design 3 online sessions for Fall 2020 semester.
- Create and distribute a survey for PharmD/MBA students that measures the impact of the mentorship program on bridging the two degrees.
- Take learnings from the survey to further improve the program and suggest future interventions.

## METHODS

**Study Design**

- Descriptive Survey (Cross-Sectional)

**Study Population**

- All P2, P3, P4 students currently enrolled in the dual PharmD/MBA program at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville School of Pharmacy (SOP)
- Students who attended the Fall 2020 sessions were targeted, but all dual degree students were asked to participate in order to suggest important updates to the program

**Study Measures**

- Electronic survey sent via Qualtrics to 42 students in the dual PharmD/MBA program at SIUE to identify the impact of the Fall 2020 sessions
- Survey respondents were given 2 weeks between March 10th and March 24<sup>th</sup> to complete the survey

## METHODS

- Responses were anonymized to help prevent response bias and remove hesitation regarding true thoughts and/or opinions about the program

**Data Analysis**

- Sample was described using frequencies/percentages and 5-point Likert scale scoring

## RESULTS

- Attendance of the sessions were as follows:
  - Session #1 → 11 students
  - Session #2 → 6 students
  - Session #3 → 4 students
- Seventeen (17) of 42 students surveyed (40%) submitted the electronic survey. Two (2) surveys were incomplete and excluded from the results.
- Of the 15 complete responses, 3 were P2 students (20%), 4 were P3 students (26%), and 8 were P4 students (53%)
- To refine the impact of each session, survey questions were objectively measured with the scoring of a 5-point Likert scale, with scores closer to 1 indicating responses closely aligned with “Strongly Disagree” and scores closer to 5 indicating responses closely aligned with “Strongly Agree”
- All results can be seen below in Tables 1 and 2

**Table 1: Survey Results with Likert Scale Scoring**

Session 1: Career Opportunities with Ryan Birk n=5	n*
Session 1 aided in exposing me to a career path utilizing both the PharmD and MBA degrees.	3.8
Session 2: Interview Preparation & Cover Letter Review n=2	
Interview preparation session 2 added to my level of comfort and confidence in an online interview environment.	5
Cover letter review session 2 provided useful guidance in drafting a cover letter for my future endeavors.	4.7
Session 3: Resume Building Discussion n=4	
Resume building discussion session 3 was useful in editing my resume to be comprehensive, organized, and professional.	5

\*Score of 5.0 equals 100% Strongly Agree.

## RESULTS

- Students were also asked the following questions regardless of which sessions they attended.

**Table 2: Survey Results with Likert Scale Scoring**

Overall impressions about sessions attended n=6	n*
The session(s) I attended of the PharmD/MBA mentorship program were helpful in exposing and preparing me for future management level positions.	4
The session(s) I attended of the PharmD/MBA mentorship program were helpful in furthering my professional development skills.	4.2

\*Score of 5.0 equals 100% Strongly Agree.

- The survey also included 2 free response questions to determine what the most helpful parts of the program were and to identify what improvements could be made.

**The most helpful session or part of a session? n=5**

- Overall helpful information (1), career opportunities (1), and CV/resume building (3).

**Suggestions to improve the program? n=10**

- Communication about sessions (3), scheduling conflicts (2), include more alumni and guest speakers (2), and personal feedback or one-on-one meetings (1).

## CONCLUSION

- PharmD/MBA mentorship sessions held in Fall 2020 were well received and impactful overall based on attendance and survey data.
- Further steps may include planning future sessions based on the needs of students, and implementing suggestions to improve the program such as enhancing communication pathways, providing more field experience or guest speakers, and including personalized feedback.
- Ideally, further development of this program will assist students in bridging the gap between the two degrees and help create successful, well-rounded graduates to enter the workforce.