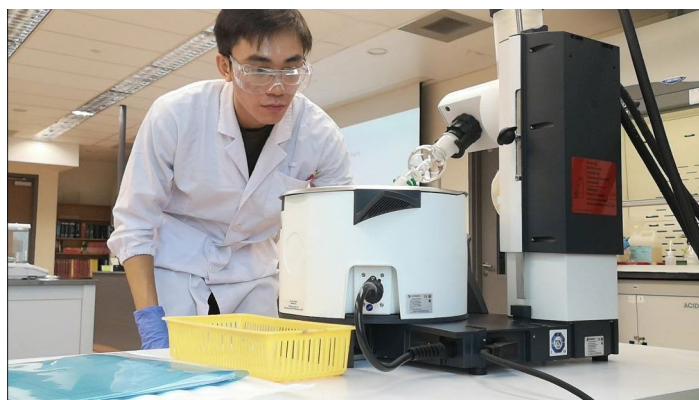


Testimonial by Lim Joel
Pharmaceutical Science
Class of 2022



As a fresh-faced student just coming into university, I knew that I wanted to study in a course that would be rigorous in building upon scientific fundamentals, but also incorporate my desire to pursue a career in something healthcare-related. Hence, I had initially applied and been accepted into NUS Pharmacy. However, very early on I knew that I would want to go directly into the industry rather than being on the clinical front. This stemmed from my particular interest in the drug discovery and development process – I wanted to learn about how scientists researched for new ways to tackle both infectious and chronic diseases, to improve the quality of life of people all around the world. With this goal in mind, I immediately decided to take up the opportunity to join the pioneer batch of Pharmaceutical Science in 2018, and I have to say that in spite of the ups and downs faced, I have thoroughly enjoyed every single moment of the past 3 years spent with my fellow coursemates and professors.

Within Pharmaceutical Science, I greatly appreciate the small class size and interactive tutorials that we have with our professors, which not only help us to internalise and engage with the content better, but also allow us to learn in a collaborative manner and get to know our professors and coursemates a lot better as well. Projects and presentations are doled out frequently; these experiential learning opportunities are essential to reinforce our understanding of material and help us critically examine as well as analyse how theoretical knowledge is translated into real-world application. The lab modules in preparation for the final-year project in Year 4 are undoubtedly key highlights of the curriculum too. Rather than a cook-book style lab manual where every instruction is given to you, the lab modules challenge us to examine literature to find out how to conduct the respective experiments and then execute it during the session. We are subsequently tasked to present our findings



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and defend our analysis in front of a panel of professors. Whilst it is definitely a daunting process, these modules have taught me perseverance, problem-solving and evaluative skills that would be difficult to replicate in any other environment. We also had the chance to visit the Pfizer manufacturing plant in Tuas on a field trip, which was an eye-opening experience, and I was fortunate enough to be directly involved as an emcee at the inaugural Pheature, a biannual biopharmaceutical conference bringing together industry professionals to speak to students about the current trends in the industry.



Aside from my career aspirations, I also chose Pharmaceutical Science due to the breadth of study and opportunities for external programmes that it afforded me. I had a large amount of unrestricted elective space, which gave me the freedom to pursue a Public Health minor and take Forensic Science modules. The content I learnt was tangential to but still varied enough from what I was studying in my course to intrigue and excite me. I was also able to apply for Student Exchange Programme (SEP) and was fortunate enough to be selected to enter the prestigious King's College London. Unfortunately due to the pandemic, this trip never materialised, however in place of this, I was able to embark on a 6-month long internship at Sanofi in the Diabetes and Cardiovascular domain as a Marketing Intern. In my role, I am able to experience working at the intersection of science and business, and this internship has definitely trained my soft skills in being able to communicate effectively, having good time management, and harnessing good organisational skills. This journey in the industry is definitely a priceless experience as it has also allowed me to glean insights into the career paths of other colleagues that I have had the pleasure to cross paths with.

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Outside of my course, I had the opportunity to take part in the Pharmacy Orientation Programme 2019 as the Programmes and Games Head, organising two 4D3N camps with 200 participants to foster camaraderie among the freshman batch through fun and engaging activities. I proceeded to take on the role of a Scheele House Committee Member, organising events to promote senior-junior bonding such as Scheele Chill and Grill (BBQ), Meet our Profs, and CNY Louhei. This academic year, motivated by my desire to speak out and cater for the needs of PHS students, I decided to take up a position in the NUS Pharmaceutical Society as the Academic Director, organising events to provide avenues for students to grow their knowledge in technical expertise and soft skills to chart their career in becoming more capable healthcare and industry professionals. I also participated in Beyond! Health Hack, a bespoke online hackathon involving over 200 students from more than 18 countries, for intense ideation and solution development over two weeks to tackle the challenges standing in the way of influenza vaccine uptake, where my team clinched the 1st place. I am thankful to be involved again in the planning and organisation of this event in the year ahead.

I was also able to join the UTown Residential Programme as a resident of Tembusu College in my first 2 years. Truly a “Home of Possibilities”, being in Tembusu College gave me the opportunity to explore many different extra-curricular activities in the Arts and Sports arenas. I was the Quartermaster of the Tembusu Arts Council in 2018, helping to organise the biannual Arts Week which featured a host of performances, workshops and talks for Tembusu College residents to be acquainted with and explore a variety of art

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forms. I also played Tennis in the Inter-College Games, where we won 1st place. I also had the privilege to lead the Tembusu Christian Fellowship in 2019. Being in the UTown Residential Programme also meant that I could read special modules known as seminars, which were very broad-based and intended to challenge your thinking and preconceived notions on different topics. Of note were my modules on “Climate Change” and “Biomedicine in Singapore”, which though demanding, helped me to further crystallise my understanding, expanding beyond the science to balance political, social, economic and ethical considerations.



All in all, these 3 years have been extremely eventful and I am thankful for all the different lessons I have gained as well as the knowledge accrued from being in the Pharmaceutical Science programme, truly a course like no other. I cannot encourage students enough to join this programme if you are looking to enter the pharmaceutical industry!