



- **Why did you study Pharmaceutical Science? And how has the journey been thus far?**

I took H3 pharmaceutical chemistry in junior college. The curriculum dived deeper into organic chemistry as well as introduced to us some common categories of drugs and their mechanism of action, and I was really fascinated on how chemistry and biology link together to explain how drugs work in our bodies. Hence, when I saw the Pharmaceutical Science (PHS) course, I did not hesitate to put it as my first choice when applying for universities as I really like multidisciplinary nature of this course and it allows us the exposure to chemistry, biology, physiology, and many more.

In my short 3 years as a PHS student, there are of course ups and downs, but never for one moment have I regretted applying for it 3 years ago. I was able to learn what I was interested in and also was able to pursue the others I am interested such as doing a forensic science minor. I also gained invaluable friendship with my classmates as PHS is an extremely small cohort. Most importantly, I believe PHS has equipped me with the essential skills and knowledge to think and work independently, bridging the transition between school and society.

- **What interests you most in your studies?**

In general, I like to be challenged in my studies and gaining diverse exposure to different fields. I am glad that I am able to have the exposure in PHS and also have the chance to pursue deeper into the field that I am interested in through taking a minor, doing an Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programme in Science (UROPS) project, or an internship.

- **Apart from academic lessons, what other programmes (e.g. UPIP, UROPS, NOC, SEP, Summer/Winter Schools/Research/Internship, etc.) did you participate in? And how did the experience(s) benefit you in your personal growth and development, and academic pursuits?**

I had the chance to take both UROPS and internship in my undergraduate years.

I started a one-year UROPS research project with Professor Brandon Morinaka from the department of pharmacy in Year 2 Semester 2. It was a dry-lab research project and the objective was for me to code a program in Python to help with the early identification process of bacterial ribosomally-synthesized and post-translationally-modified peptides through a genome mining approach. I started this project with almost zero knowledge in coding and genome mining, but throughout this year, I self-learnt the necessary skills including coding, data analysis and genome mining in general. This project transformed how I view myself as an individual and made me realize the potential lies beneath every single one of us waiting for our discovery. I also started to enjoy being challenged, both intellectually and physically, and I believe this will benefit me through my entire life. In addition, my UROPS project allowed me to discover what I truly enjoy academically, and for the first time in my life, I had a very clear vision of what I would like to do and study in the future.

Testimonial by Su Qi
Pharmaceutical Science
Class of 2022

Besides my UROPS project, my current UPIP internship with Johnson & Johnson is also very enriching. I am working as a medical affairs intern in the Asia-Pacific team in the division of infectious diseases and vaccines. It is a rare opportunity to be able to work on infectious disease and vaccines in the middle of a pandemic, and though it has only been one short month since I started, I learnt so much of the things we cannot simply get from sitting in the classroom. Not only do I get to apply what I learnt in the past two and a half years to the job, but also developing critical thinking and systematic approach to solving real-life problems. Being able to talk to so many industrial experts on the job gained me more insights into the operational side of the pharmaceutical industry and what I need to learn to be able to do the things I enjoy.

• **What other interesting activities did you partake in to further enrich your student life?**

I stayed in Residential College 4 (RC4) during the first 2 years of my university life. I was in the EXCO committee of my house in RC and for the dance interest group, which allowed me to get to know more people from different majors and background. I also attended my RC's annual concerts as a dancer and a choreographer in Year 1 and Year 2 respectively, and this experience added so much more colour into my university life. I also did a community development project with a few of my friends in Purwakarta, Indonesia. We raised funds and built 2 biodigesters in a village there to help improve the economic and environmental well-being of the villagers. Our one-week staying in the village with the villagers allowed us to gain a deeper understanding of the community and be more empathetic. In Year 3, I applied to be the secretary/treasurer of NUS Pharmaceutical Society (NUSPS)'s Academic committee as well as the vice project director of NUSPS's Beyond! Health Hackathon 2021. The journey has being very exciting so far and I am learning a lot, such as project management and logical thinking, from the committee members who are all very capable individuals.


