

USC Seminar: How do Psychology and Pharmacy Combine?

- Meeting starts at 6:07 PM
- Dr. Lisa Goldstone from USC, MS, PharmD, BCPS, BCPP
 - Associate professor of clinical pharmacy
- A lot of ppl take a traditional route to pharmacy school (ppl major in bio, chem, microbio, etc)
 - Dr. Lisa started out with a bachelor's degree in psychology
 - Started to think about going to grad school in psychology
 - She ended up doing an internship with children, psychiatric patients who were 6-11 yrs old (had SCD)
 - Lived at the center; some of them had schizophrenia early and others came from violent backgrounds
 - Was a really good experience so she stayed and worked there throughout her senior year
- She did a master's in clinical psychology and she wanted to get a PhD in clinical psychology, but she felt kind of burnt out bc of how much school she had done so she decided to take a break
 - She moved to Arizona and got a job at a school in Arizona where she worked with teenagers and she learned about so much stigma and labeling of ppl
 - She also realized that in working with ppl in the court, there are unaddressed mental needs often times that affect ppl's lives
 - A lot of patients weren't adhering to their medication due to false beliefs from family members and/or ignorance so it caused a turning point for Dr. Lisa and she realized she wanted to do pharmacy instead
- Rural Arizona - lot of issues; access to care problems
 - A single mom has schizophrenia and she had a number of children that also had mental medical problems
 - A case worker asked her how she managed to get her kids to take their medication and they discovered that she was giving random meds to random kids bc she couldn't read
 - Many issues in mental health field that Dr. Lisa saw so she finished her prereqs at University of Arizona and got accepted at College of Pharmacy; graduated, got a clinical pharmacist position at a hospital
 - 500 bed hospital in Tucson, Arizona; decentralized pharmacy
 - Pharmacists would rotate through different shifts
 - Sometimes you'd be on the floor doing clinical service
 - Had a neurology pharmacist and ICU neurology unit so ppl traded shifts with her and Dr. Lisa got a lot of time working there

- Patients had diff neurological issues: brain injuries, trauma, brain dead but organ donors
- Position opened up at sister hospital as a pharmacy clinical coordinator - real job is to coordinate all the clinical activities; so she attended all the medical meetings with cardiologist, anesthesiologist, etc
 - Was also part of Pharmacy Committee that looks at medication errors, formulary, etc
- Previous mentor at University of Arizona was retiring so Dr. Lisa was told to interview for the position so she ended up applying and became a faculty member - which she never expected
 - So keep your options open and has been in faculty for 11 years
 - Clinical faculty member - normally, think of them teaching or in a lab
 - So they do research, teaching, and have a clinical practice site
 - Hers was an in-patient site with 3 units - 2 adults and 1 geriatric
 - Students would do rotations with her, she worked with medical team
 - Students would work with patients
- Was at University of Arizona for 6.5 years - psychiatric pharmacy experience helped her to work with pretty much every type of population in multiple settings
- Dr. Lisa opened a private practice and offered psychotherapy treatment + pharmacy-related psychological counseling
 - A patient wanted to get off of using benzodiazepine and needed help doing that
- Dr. Lisa also got involved with the College of Psychiatric and Neurologic Pharmacists (cpnp) - a group of pharmacists that are all about mental health and psychiatric pharmacy
 - Got really involved with it, joined committees, met ppl, networked, was elected president - finished term as president just last year
 - Important to follow your passion and things just happen
 - Met a lot of ppl through the organization, psychiatric pharmacy colleagues from USC school of pharmacy
 - In comparison to University of Arizona, she was the only psychiatric pharmacist so she got lonely, but it's different at USC
- Started working at USC School of Pharmacy in 2017 and she is ¼ psychiatric pharmacists
 - USC school of pharmacy has something for everyone - infectious disease, ambulatory care, acute-care
 - University of Arizona was very acute-care focused and ambulatory care
 - Keck Medical Center - patients on medicare, third party payer insurance: Aetna, Bluecross, Blueshield
 - Some ppl are referred for special services - oncology
 - Working with patients that are underserved - have medical, medicaid are seen in the clinics at USC

- A big part of what Dr. Lisa does is overseeing residents who are highly involved with grad students
 - Lead case conferences starting at end of P1 year to P3
 - PGY2 teach some classes
 - It's nice to see residents and how they grow
- Complete 4 years of pharmacy education - not enough so many pharmacy students go on to do residency - normally 2 years
 - PGY1 - acute-care where most time is in hospital, community-based pharmacy, retail pharmacy, etc. so much more! Clinics, medication management with patient screening
 - Right now, busy with covid vaccinations
 - PGY2 - specialty year - critical care, etc.
- Interested in residency - ask schools during their interviews what their residency match-rates are; rn, not everyone will get the residency they want
 - Pretty much 64% rate is avg
- Prospective students should look at CPJE and NAPLEX pass rates - made available to the public; some schools could have a bad year, but look for schools that have avg rate and above
- At 6:31 PM, opened up to Q&A
 - How do students differentiate themselves when applying to residency?
 - Residency prep is done for their students; they tell their students right away the things they need to do to stand out; don't just do what you have to in pharmacy school
 - Keep grades up and stay balanced with extra-curriculars and being a leader
 - Develop relationships with faculty, preceptors, supervisors is key
 - You need 3 LOCs for residency (LOC = letter of rec)
 - Ask these ppl to look at your CV in the future
 - Likes someone who is really well-rounded and has a passion
 - To get involved and reach out
 - Tell their students the above tips in P1 bc you need to do these things throughout your time at pharmacy school, make sure to keep up with it
 - I know you had a not as traditional of a path to pharmacy school so what would you recommend for a gap year situation especially now with covid (online opportunities?)
 - Depends what you do during your gap year; if you just watch Netflix and don't do much, then it will look like a detriment
 - If you're interested in mental health, you can use the time to increase your knowledge and go to seminars, it will be looked at much more positively

- Address it in your application; don't just pretend like it didn't exist and try to link it to a passion you have to make it even better
- What was the hardest part of your decision to incorporate pharmacy with psychology?
 - Ppl couldn't understand how the two careers connect
 - Pharmacists can prescribe medication with a physician
 - Amazing how fast technology changed
 - Kept her mind open when she went back to pharmacy school
 - Was interested in oncology bc she did a rotation on the bone marrow transplant unit; liked fast-pace nature of emergency unit
 - Force yourself to do things you might not like to do
 - Do things that make you uncomfortable, that push you, and challenge you to get out of your comfort zone - helps them find something they didn't know they loved
- Were you worried that your interests were too niche for you to find a job in the oversaturated job market?
 - If you wanna go to pharmacy school and do the basic minimum, rethink decision, bc it is saturated
 - But if you push yourself, challenge yourself, and do well
 - Residents that are worried about finding jobs found jobs that they are happy with
 - More emphasis on mental health in primary care settings and other settings as well
 - Just make sure you are someone willing to put all your interests in pharmacy to help you get a job
 - Also, be aware of how the pharmacy field is changing and think about that
 - 14 years in field of pharmacy so far - it's amazing how fast it has changed
 - Traditional pharmacy positions moved to patient-care pharmacists
 - USC is very innovative - run into a lot of innovative faculty that are thinking ahead
 - Strategic planning - what is needed for graduates of the future?
 - What are those up and coming fields that we don't know much about but our students should go into it
 - Last pharmacist consult was in pharmacogenetic - will probably grow
 - Be forward-thinking; think about what to do in the future and make sure you are prepared
- Where do you mention your gap year experiences?
 - In the pharmCAS form, you could put it in the personal statement or in an additional question if the school asks
 - Incorporate it somewhere, wherever it fits best for you

- How do you deal with feeling burnt out and stretched too thin?
 - In psychology training, it's addressed in the curriculum and how to deal with it
 - Students fall into a trap bc they think they need to do all these things so that they are the best candidates to get a job
 - Have faculty mentors to talk to so that you know what's important and what you can let go
 - Project wellness at USC - initiative to help students, faculty, staff to be able to be well; activities for ppl to participate in
 - Burnout is real, recognize that, and take care of yourself
- Realistically, how hard is it to find jobs right after pharmacy school?
 - Some students come in and they know exactly what they want to do and that's what they do
 - Others, find out what they love during rotations and while trying out new things
 - Prepare for all the options early on so that you don't get into the fourth year and feel like you didn't get involved right away
 - How hard it is to get jobs - depends on what kind of student you were: network, build relationships, put your all into it, reach out to others and get better grades, think about that going forward
 - Sometimes, students will get an internship early on and put all their energy there so they end up getting hired there
 - You won't get a job if you just put in the bare minimum
 - Be passionate in pharmacy school
- Due to online fatigue from online schooling, what do you suggest with P/NP classes?
 - Understanding of P/NPs
 - Even with residents, the process is a lot different
 - Online fatigue - recommend that you are taking breaks, try to not be doing things constantly when you are in control of your schedule
 - Residents - shortened their days bc everyone is fatigued
- Do you know of someone who had to apply to residencies a second time?
 - Yes, every year there are smart students who don't get matched; there's no harm in taking a year and improving to apply the next year
 - Resident took a year off and she's one of the best, so that's still an option
 - Worst thing - really good students that are so disappointed that they didn't match so they give up
- How did you know what types of loans to take without falling for predatory loans?
 - Make sure you are talking to your financial aid offices about that

- Student affairs office in pharmacy school could help you with that
 - Don't get into a loan option where interest rate keeps increasing after school
 - Is there any advice you would give to current pharmacy school applicants for interviews?
 - Be yourself, they are normally looking for a connection - hard to do in an online format
 - Make sure your background is professional
 - Schedule a zoom meeting for yourself and record it; have a family member or friend interview you - then watch it
 - Sometimes students will sound too rehearsed - it's good to know what you want to say, but don't sound too robotic or there won't be a personal connection
 - Sometimes applicants will look like they want to sink into the floor when they are given a question they don't know how to answer, just take a breath and say, "that's a great question, can you give me a moment to think about it?"
 - What makes you special/unique out of everyone else that we already interviewed?
 - Smile
 - Turn off phones, keep cats, etc out of screens
 - We know you have limitations, but try your best
- Directory at school of pharmacy at USC, look up Dr. Lisa Goldstone for her contact info
 - Jeopardizing pharmacy school acceptance
 - Prereqs are where you wanna do good; show improvement over time; won't get cut out of consideration bc there are always those few bad classes
 - If we P/NP classes that aren't prereqs, would that be less bad?
 - We understand what's going on, I think those would matter a little less bc those aren't the things we're looking at
 - We understand if you're doing P/NP due to COVID situation; it's been really hard on ppl
 - Advice you'd give yourself if you traveled back to before you applied to pharmacy school?
 - Didn't look around at pharmacy schools that much, just went straight to University of Arizona bc it was right there
 - Where you go to school may have an impact on residency, etc
 - NAPLEX pass rates, residency match rates
 - How is the school preparing you to be a pharmacist of the future

- Know the focus of the school - what percentage of the students apply to residencies
 - At USC, it's a little less than 50%
- Do you recommend taking the PCAT if you don't have a high GPA?
 - If you don't have to take it, think about whether it will help you or hurt you
 - Weigh that out carefully for yourself
- Do you have to report all PCAT scores?
 - Maybe ask PharmCAS that
- Meeting ends at 7:03 PM