



A2 ACHIEVE COLLEGE & CAREER ALIGNMENT ASSESSMENT

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THE BIG PICTURE

When I look at you as a whole, I do not see a student whose strongest identity is built around grades, awards, or school titles. I see an **applied learner**.

You repeatedly choose things that require you to do something real. You ride and care for horses. You have trained across multiple disciplines and environments. You teach younger riders. You have taken healthcare courses and completed CNA preparation rather than simply saying healthcare sounds interesting. You have cared for young children for hundreds of hours. You scuba dive. You are moving into a hospital internship.

Those environments also have something important in common: **you have to pay attention**. A careless moment around a horse matters. A careless moment around a toddler matters. A careless moment in patient care matters. A careless moment underwater matters. That pattern tells me quite a lot about you.

Your strongest qualities appear to include practical responsibility, comfort with hands-on learning, persistence, adaptability, safety awareness, and the ability to remain functional in situations where you cannot control everything around you. That is one reason pharmacy is believable for you. But I also think we need to explore pharmacy more deeply before deciding that it is the only career that fits.

YOUR ACADEMIC PROFILE

Your current academic numbers are mixed. You report a 3.3 weighted GPA. Huntsville High does not report class rank, and we still need your unweighted GPA. Your ACT superscore is 26, with your strongest sections currently English at 29 and Science at 28.

What interests me more than the number alone is the direction of your coursework. You have completed AP Seminar, AP U.S. History, AP Language, AP Chemistry, Foundations of Health Science, Therapeutics, and Patient Care Technician coursework. Your senior schedule includes AP Calculus AB, Advanced Organic Chemistry, AP Literature, AP Government, debate, and a healthcare internship.

That is a purposeful schedule for someone interested in pharmacy. It also tells me you are not narrowly “a science kid.” Your stronger ACT English result, AP Language, AP Literature, debate, and AP Seminar suggest that communication can be part of your academic identity too. That matters in pharmacy.

A pharmacist does not simply understand chemistry. A good pharmacist has to explain complicated information to people who may be sick, scared, confused, rushed, elderly, distracted, or unfamiliar with healthcare terminology. Your combination of health sciences and communication is worth developing.

The academic concern is that pharmacy is science-intensive. Organic chemistry, biology, physiology, microbiology, math, and other prerequisite courses are not optional pieces of a PharmD pathway. Your 3.3 weighted GPA means we should deliberately choose colleges where you can receive strong academic support and where the learning environment fits you, not simply chase the most prestigious name.

HOW YOU SEEM TO LEARN

You appear to learn best when information has a purpose. That is visible in equestrian training, healthcare training, youth instruction, and scuba.

There is also strong evidence of adaptability. Riding different horses requires you to read what is happening in front of you rather than assume every ride will feel the same. You have trained at multiple barns and across several disciplines, and you have worked through fear and mental blocks rather than only describing successful outcomes.

I suspect a highly anonymous undergraduate environment where you spend most of your time in giant lecture courses may not be your ideal academic fit. A program with accessible professors, advising, laboratories, clinical exposure, smaller instructional settings where possible, and a clear pathway toward a profession may suit you better. That is one reason High Point deserves serious consideration even though we still need to examine it carefully.

DOES PHARMACY FIT?

Yes, there is enough evidence for me to say pharmacy is a sensible career direction for you to continue exploring. There is not yet enough evidence for me to say, "You should absolutely become a pharmacist." That distinction is important.

Your profile supports several aspects of the profession. You have an interest in science and healthcare. You are comfortable with precision and safety. You have sustained experience caring for others. You have taken steps to understand patient care. You appear comfortable communicating with both children and adults. You have a long history of being responsible for routines and living things.

You have also specifically identified **compounding pharmacy** as an area that interests you. That is particularly interesting to me because compounding has a hands-on, problem-solving element that may suit the way you seem to engage with work. It can involve preparing individualized medication forms or strengths when a standard commercial product does not meet a patient's needs.

But right now, I do not know *why* that appeals to you because you have not answered that part of the questionnaire. That is our next career-development question.

CAREER DIRECTIONS WORTH EXPLORING

Your primary exploration should remain pharmacy, with specific attention to **compounding pharmacy and community/independent pharmacy**. I would also want you to understand **hospital and clinical pharmacy**, particularly because your hospital internship may give you a chance to see healthcare teams functioning in real time.

A third area worth learning about is **community-health-oriented pharmacy**. Your Community Health Worker preparation potentially intersects with pharmacy in an interesting way: medication education, healthcare access, prevention, navigating resources, and working with populations who may have difficulty accessing consistent care.

Your equestrian background opens one additional niche that may be worth learning about without assuming it should become your career: **veterinary or animal-health pharmacy**. Your interest in medication science and your long experience with horses could intersect there in a way you may not have considered.

If you discover that you love the medication-development and laboratory side but do not enjoy the patient-facing side, then **pharmaceutical science** could become worth exploring more seriously.

The purpose of considering these alternatives is not to talk you out of pharmacy. It is to help you understand which version of the field actually sounds like you.

MAJOR VERSUS CAREER

One of the most important things for you to understand is that “I want to become a pharmacist” and “I want to major in pharmacy” are not always the same decision.

At some universities, you can enter a six-year PharmD pathway directly from high school. At others, you complete undergraduate prerequisites and later apply separately to pharmacy school. At still others, you earn a bachelor's degree in a field such as biology, chemistry, pharmaceutical sciences, nutrition/medical sciences, or health sciences and then pursue the PharmD. That difference should drive your college list.

If you become increasingly certain that pharmacist is the destination, then a well-designed direct-entry or early-assurance structure has real value for you. If you remain less certain, a broader bachelor's program may give you more flexibility.

CAREER EXPLORATION I WANT YOU TO DO

The next experience I would prioritize is not another certificate. I want you to talk to a pharmacist. Ideally, I want you to spend time with someone in compounding or independent pharmacy because that is the specific career you have named. Ask what percentage of the day is actually spent compounding. Ask how much patient interaction occurs. Ask what parts of the job are repetitive. Ask what parts require problem-solving. Ask what they wish they had understood at seventeen. Ask about ownership versus employment. Ask how reimbursement and insurance affect the work. Ask what they enjoy and what frustrates them.

Then compare that with a hospital pharmacist if your internship gives you access to one. You are trying to answer one question: **Do I like the actual work, not just the idea of the profession?**

YOUR LEADERSHIP PROFILE

You are not currently a résumé built around formal titles. That is not the same thing as lacking leadership. You served as a 4-H Treasurer during freshman year. But some of your more meaningful leadership may be informal: helping younger riders, teaching children at Pine Ridge, managing horse safety, working independently with young children, and being trusted by adults to take responsibility. At Pine Ridge, your role involved teaching children foundational riding and horse-care skills, supervising horse interactions, and helping create a safe learning environment.

That tells me you may be more of a **hands-on, supportive leader** than someone who wants to be the president of everything. That is a legitimate leadership style.

ACTIVITIES AND INVOLVEMENT

Equestrian involvement is clearly your anchor activity. It is long-term, demanding, personally meaningful, and connected to your life outside school. Because you estimate roughly 30 hours a week around riding, horse care, training, travel, and related commitments throughout the year, admissions readers need to understand its scale.

Healthcare preparation should be another anchor because it shows intentional career exploration.

Your church nursery service is the third activity I would elevate. Five hundred-plus cumulative hours (roughly 80% during high school) is not casual volunteering.

Pine Ridge is especially valuable because it bridges two parts of your life: horses and children. HOSA, 4-H, scuba, babysitting, peer mentoring, and other involvement round out the application, but they do not all need equal weight.

Your profile is strongest when we show **depth**, not when we try to prove you did everything.

SERVICE AND WORK

The church nursery involvement feels authentic because it has lasted over time and required trust. You worked weekly with two- to four-year-olds, helped with special events, supported lessons, handled snacks and cleaning, and were trusted to serve independently. Babysitting can reinforce that same responsibility if we complete the missing details about families, ages, hours, and responsibilities.

Pine Ridge adds something different because you were not simply supervising children, you were helping them learn in an environment where safety and confidence both mattered.

Taken together, these experiences suggest that working directly with people may be more important to you than you currently realize. That is useful information as we compare pharmacy careers.

YOUR DIFFERENTIATORS

The first is the **scale and seriousness of your equestrian life**. This is not a once-a-week hobby.

The second is your **early healthcare preparation**. CNA training and testing, a health internship, Community Health Worker preparation, health-science coursework, HOSA, CPR, and First Aid collectively give you more exposure than the phrase “interested in healthcare” suggests.

The third is your **comfort with real responsibility for other people**. Young riders and preschool children are not theoretical leadership experiences.

The fourth is an interesting thread of **calm, precision, and safety** across seemingly unrelated activities: equestrian work, childcare, healthcare, and scuba.

That combination is more interesting than trying to manufacture a single “brand” around pharmacy.

THE STORY BEHIND YOUR APPLICATION

The story I see developing is this: You have spent much of your life learning how to be responsible when something (or someone) depends on you. Horses taught you that control is never complete. Children require patience and judgment. Healthcare requires precision. Scuba requires preparation and respect for risk.

I do not necessarily want those words placed into an essay exactly as written. I want the application, taken as a whole, to leave the reader with that impression.

WHAT KIND OF COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT FITS YOU?

I would prioritize a college with strong undergraduate advising, a clear health-professions pathway, accessible faculty, hands-on laboratory and experiential opportunities, and enough flexibility that you can adjust if your career interests evolve.

Your desire to bring your own horse substantially changes the fit analysis. You have told me that access to a hunter/jumper or eventing barn within roughly 45 minutes is **extremely important**. That is not a minor preference we should revisit after acceptance letters arrive. It needs to be researched now.

For every serious college, we need to know whether there is suitable boarding, the quality and discipline of nearby barns, transportation requirements, boarding cost, whether freshmen may have cars, lesson/show opportunities, and whether the arrangement would be realistic with your academic schedule.

A collegiate equestrian club is nice. It is not a substitute for finding a safe, appropriate home for your personal horse.

HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY

High Point is one of the more interesting fits on your list. Academically, HPU offers a six-year pharmacy structure (two pre-pharmacy years followed by the four professional years) and an Early Assurance pathway for qualifying students who enter HPU's Pre-Pharmacy track. Early Assurance requires students to maintain a 3.0 cumulative HPU GPA with no grade below C-, complete the designated course plan, participate in the Pre-Pharmacy Club, and later complete the PharmCAS application.

That is close to what you say you want, but I want you to understand the wording carefully: **early assurance is not the same as an unconditional six-year guarantee handed to you in high school.**

The positive side is that HPU appears to offer the kind of personalized environment that may suit you. Its pharmacy school emphasizes small class size, faculty access, early patient interaction, and experiential learning.

There is also an HPU equestrian club, but that alone does not answer our much more important question about bringing your own horse and locating an appropriate hunter/jumper or eventing facility. That still needs individual investigation.

I also want us to evaluate professional outcomes rather than only campus experience. HPU reports that its 2025 first-time NAPLEX pass rate was 73.5% versus 86.8% nationally, while its residency-match performance was stronger (86% for PGY-1 in 2025 and 94.7% in 2026).

I would not use one year's exam result by itself to rule out a school. I **would** ask the pharmacy program about it. A thoughtful question would be: What happened with the 2025 NAPLEX cohort, what changes have been made, and what do more recent student performance indicators show? That is the kind of question a serious future pharmacy student should ask.

Current alignment: Strong, pending academic admission, financial fit, pharmacy due diligence, and horse logistics.

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

From a pharmacy-pathway perspective, URI may actually be the cleanest match on your current list. URI offers direct entry to its 0–6 PharmD program from high school. Students complete two pre-professional years and can progress directly into the professional years, provided they meet progression requirements, including the required math/science GPA and interview.

The challenge is admission. URI specifically states that the direct PharmD program is competitive and that competitive applicants generally have strong science and math records with grades of B or better.

URI's overall 2026 admitted-student profile reports a 3.7–4.1 GPA range and ACT 27–32 middle 50%, so your current 3.3 weighted GPA and 26 ACT do not place you in the strongest statistical position even before considering the additional competitiveness of pharmacy.

It also sits farthest from home geographically among your four current choices, so we need to make sure it works with the travel parameters you gave me.

Current alignment: Excellent program alignment, higher admissions risk, geographic and horse-logistics fit still to be tested.

UNC-CHAPEL HILL

UNC is a school I would keep only if you genuinely love UNC itself enough to accept a less direct pharmacy route and substantial admissions risk. The Eshelman School of Pharmacy does not provide the same high-school direct-entry pathway. Students need at least 60 semester hours of undergraduate prerequisite work before entering the PharmD professional degree process.

So if your reason for choosing a college is “I want the most direct route into pharmacy,” UNC does not beat High Point or URI on that criterion. It may still be worth an application because a student can want a university for more than one reason. But we should be very clear about what problem UNC solves for you. Given your current academic numbers and your out-of-state status, I would treat Chapel Hill as a high reach rather than build your plan around it.

Current alignment: Strong university interest potentially; weak alignment with your preferred direct-pharmacy structure; very high admissions risk.

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

Delaware is another school where we need to separate “good health-science preparation” from “direct pharmacy program.” Current UD information identifies majors such as Nutrition and Medical Sciences as preparation for students who may later pursue a PharmD. The curriculum can be tailored to pharmacy-school prerequisites such as organic chemistry and calculus. That can absolutely be a valid route to pharmacy. It is simply a different route from the one you currently say you prefer.

Delaware's currently published general admitted-student profile reports a 3.68–4.22 middle-50% GPA and 28–32 ACT range. It is test optional. That means your current academic profile would also require a thoughtful admission strategy.

Current alignment: Potentially good college/environmental fit, but a less direct pharmacy pathway and meaningful academic risk.

WHAT YOUR CURRENT LIST TELLS ME

Your college list is revealing something important. You are not choosing colleges solely because they have pharmacy. You are also choosing a lifestyle: East Coast, distance from home, a campus you enjoy, access to horses, and a place where you can picture yourself living. I think that is healthy. The next step is making sure we do not sacrifice the academic pathway while chasing the campus—or sacrifice the student experience while chasing the most direct PharmD. You need both.

FINANCIAL ALIGNMENT

We do not yet have enough information to evaluate financial fit. For you, I want us to look beyond the freshman scholarship letter. We need to understand the entire cost of the pathway, especially at a school where you may remain for six years. We need to determine whether undergraduate merit aid continues into the professional-school years, what PharmD tuition becomes, and what restrictions apply.

At High Point, this is especially important because HPU notes that Presidential Scholars in the Pre-Pharmacy track may receive continued Presidential Scholarship funding after matriculation into the pharmacy program under specified circumstances. That could be meaningful, but we would need to know whether you are realistically competitive for that scholarship and confirm the current terms.

Then we add your horse. Boarding and horse-related expenses belong in the college budget from the beginning, not as an afterthought.

MY CURRENT ALIGNMENT ORDER

If I were evaluating your existing four schools primarily around **your stated goals**, High Point and Rhode Island deserve the deepest investigation first.

- High Point may offer the stronger overall combination of campus style, personalized environment, and accelerated pharmacy pathway.
- Rhode Island currently offers the purest match to your request for a true 0–6 PharmD.
- UNC is the highest-risk admission and does not give you the direct-entry structure.
- Delaware can prepare you well for pharmacy school but also requires you to be comfortable with a more traditional undergraduate-to-professional-school route.

That does not mean I am ready to rank them 1–4 for you. The barn, financial, campus, and personal-fit questions still matter too much.

WHAT I WANT YOU TO LEARN NEXT

Before you make a final college decision, I want you to be able to answer three questions with confidence.

First: **Why pharmacy, and why compounding?**

Second: **Do you want the certainty and structure of a direct/early-assurance pharmacy pathway enough that it should drive your college choice?**

Third: **What kind of college environment actually helps you perform at your best academically?**

Those answers will tell us much more than another college ranking. You already have enough evidence to move forward confidently in the pharmacy direction. What you need now is not more résumé building. You need better information, more direct career exposure, and a college list designed around the life and career you actually want.