

## BULLETIN # 7

### TO: LENDERS PARTICIPATING IN THE HEALTH EDUCATION and ADMINISTRATORS OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID AT HEALTH PROFESSIONS SCHOOLS

#### Definition of ".equivalent degree" for pharmacy students.

A number of pharmacy schools have requested a definition of an "equivalent degree" as found in the eligibility criteria for the HEAL Program. Section 770 (c)(2) of the Public Health Service Act states that, for purposes of participating in the HEAL Program, an eligible pharmacy student is one who is "pursuing a full-time course of study leading to a degree of Bachelor or Master of Science in pharmacy or an equivalent degree."

In addition to the eligible Bachelor of Science degree in Pharmacy, some pharmacy schools are conferring two different degrees: one, the doctor of pharmacy degree (commonly called the Pharm. D.); the other, the Ph.D. in Pharmacy.

Students in schools of pharmacy are eligible to borrow under the terms of the HEAL Program provided they are enrolled or plan to enroll:

- a. in a program leading to a Bachelor or a Master of Science degree in pharmacy or
- b. in a program leading to a Pharm.D. degree if it is offered as a first professional degree if it is offered as a first professional degree by a school that does not require the Bachelor or Master of Science in pharmacy as a prerequisite for a Pharm.D. degree.

Students enrolled in the Ph.D. programs in schools of pharmacy are not to participate in the HEAL Program because the Ph.D. degrees cannot be considered first professional degrees and consequently do not meet the criteria for an "equivalent degree".

If you have any further questions related to the HEAL eligibility criteria,  
please contact us at the HEAL Program, P. O. Box 23033, L Enfant Plaza,  
Washington, D.C. 20024

Sincerely yours,

David C. Bayer  
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