The American Council on Pharmaceutical Education

The American Council on Pharmaceutical Education is a committee sponsored by the American Pharmaceutical Association, the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy, and the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy. It was organized in 1932 and is a direct outgrowth of a survey committee created by the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy five years earlier.

In 1927, the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy appointed a committee to make a comprehensive survey of pharmacy for the purpose of obtaining information which might be used as the basis for establishing standards for colleges of pharmacy. This committee was designated the Pharmaceutical Survey Committee. In 1928, the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy was tendered and accepted an invitation to join the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy in the furtherance of this survey project. Owing, however, to the difficulties experienced in raising the funds necessary to carry on the contemplated work, the project was abandoned and, in 1932, there was organized a new committee consisting of three representatives from each, the American Pharmaceutical Association, the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy, the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy and one representative from the American Council on Education. The new committee was given the title of the American Council on Pharmaceutical Education, and a constitution and by-laws providing for its organization and the conduct of its business were drafted and approved by the constituent organizations.

The Council held its first meeting in Toronto, Canada, on August 26, 1932. Since then, it has held one or more meetings each year. Its activities up to the present time have been confined largely to the work incident to the drafting
of standards to be used in the accreditation of colleges of pharmacy.

The American Council on Pharmaceutical Education, as the foregoing historical statement makes clear, was established for the purpose of setting up an accrediting agency in pharmaceutical education comparable to similar bodies now functioning in medicine, law, dentistry, and other professional fields.

It is believed that the Council can, and will, exercise a constructive influence in raising the standards of pharmaceutical education as the desire to meet the requirements for accreditation will stimulate the colleges to improve their teaching facilities and to adhere more rigidly than heretofore to sound educational procedures. It is also believed that the work of the Council will be of great benefit to the examining boards as it will make available to them an authoritative list of the colleges of pharmacy of this country which conform to acceptable educational standards.

From the very beginning of the work of the Council, the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy and the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy have been kept fully informed of the progress which was being made. Bulletins have been sent regularly to each of the sponsoring associations and annual reports have been made at the national conventions. Matters of specific importance were referred to the constituent groups on numerous occasions and, in the formulation of the standards for accreditation as finally adopted, due consideration was given to the criticisms and suggestions made by the individual boards and colleges.

It is, therefore, believed that the standards which the Council has set up represent the consensus of opinion of the groups most vitally concerned with maintaining pharmaceutical education on the soundest basis possible.

Now that the standards for accreditation have been officially approved, they have been sent to the several colleges of pharmacy, together with a form upon which to make application for accreditation. Accompanying the application was a questionnaire upon which the college requesting accreditation will furnish the detailed information which the Council requires. As soon as the completed questionnaires have been received, they will be given careful consideration by the Council itself and, as promptly thereafter as possible, arrange-
ments will be made to give the various colleges an official inspection. On the basis of the questionnaire returns and the data compiled as result of inspections, the Council proposes to issue a list of accredited colleges of pharmacy, this list to appear not later than September, 1939.

The standards for accreditation as finally adopted deal among other things, with the organization and administration of the colleges, the subject matter of the curriculum, qualifications of the faculty members, equipment and apparatus available for instructional purposes, with special emphasis upon laboratory and library facilities and financial structure. The Council recognizes that proper financial support is absolutely essential to a sound educational program and, for this reason, will refuse recognition to any college of pharmacy after 1944 that does not receive at least twenty per cent of its income from other than student fees.

While the Council will deal effectively with those conditions in pharmaceutical education which require improvement, it does, nevertheless, feel that four years of study leading to the bachelor degree is sufficient for the present to supply the necessary undergraduate training in pharmacy.

Andrew G. DuMez.

The American Council on Pharmaceutical Education as the Editor Sees It.

It will be the policy of the Journal to keep its readers in touch with the work of the Council. This can best be done by publishing in each issue excerpts from the minutes of the meetings.

The present status of the Council’s activities can be gleaned from the Annual report of Secretary DuMez, published in the October, 1937 number of this Journal and from Excerpts published in this issue. In a word—the final draft of the standards for accreditation of colleges of pharmacy has been prepared and published in booklet form and has been distributed to the deans of all colleges together with a questionnaire to be filled out by the institution seeking accreditation and returned to the Secretary by February 15, 1938. This questionnaire calls for a mass of information which
the Council must have in order to facilitate the work of inspection when the visits actually begin. The next step, therefore, is for every institution seeking accreditation to supply the material called for at the earliest possible moment and at a date not later than indicated.

For many years the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy maintained a standing committee which worked arduously to interest some foundation or some standardizing institution to undertake a survey of pharmacy with the ultimate aim of the standardization of colleges. All these attempts failed for reasons that need not be mentioned now. With the passage of time the standards for membership in the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy have become the traditional minimal standards for pharmaceutical education and these standards have been read into the consciousness, not only of all educators and administrators, but into the consciousness of the men who make and administer the law. A few years ago there came out of the mind of Andrew G. DuMez a clearer vision of a better plan for measuring and taking stock of our teaching institutions. The plan consisted essentially of creating a pharmaceutical standardizing body composed of representatives from the three great bodies representing education, law administration and practice of professional pharmacy, namely—the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy, the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy, and the American Pharmaceutical Association.

The work of the American Council on Pharmaceutical Education since its creation has been characterized by methods of procedure which are deliberate, studious, conservative, and fair. Standards of accreditation have been formulated as the result of the most careful study. These standards have been referred to the faculties of our colleges time and again for study and suggestions. Because of the constructive criticism the Council has changed, modified and rewritten the standards time and again. When a point had been reached which seemed to be satisfactory to all concerned, these standards were put to the test by making a study upon a number of schools representing different types of organization. As a result of these trials, the Council again modified the standards along lines that would seem to be fair and just and yet have a standard that would mean some-
thing and be of value to the individual colleges to be studied and to the improvement of pharmaceutical education as a whole. If these objects are not attained by the work of the Council, its creation and its effort will be a failure. The work of the Council will not be destructive. It will be creative. It is a tool of our own manufacture to be used to improve our educational system. When the writer catches sight of the committee sent to study the institution he represents, he expects to experience the same thrill that he has had when, being stalled on a Nebraska prairie, he caught the first glimpse of a wrecking car as it swept over the crest of a hill, bearing upon its burnished sides, in flaming letters a foot in height, the legend—"Here comes help". And if out of that study the Council does not fulfill the spirit of the legend, the writer and the institution will be disappointed in the efficiency of our newest tool. As a result of the earnest and sympathetic cooperation between the tool and every institution, the writer can vision the dawn of a new era for pharmaceutical education.

Rufus A. Lyman.