

ADDRESSES

The Relentless Pursuit of Excellence in Pharmacy Education

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Those of you who know me well, know that I try to approach life with a sense of humor. As this is a time for serious discussion, I have struggled a bit in considering how to address the House of Delegates to present my presidential priorities for 2013-2014. When I contemplated my speech, I hoped to be inspirational and eloquent, sharing remarks that would be memorable. However, the needed inspiration to achieve these lofty goals escaped me. So, I turned to an author and philosopher who I have admired throughout my life: Snoopy. Unfortunately, he wasn't very helpful.

I chose as the theme for 2013-2014, "the relentless pursuit of excellence." Throughout my career in academic pharmacy, schools and colleges of pharmacy have been leaders on their campuses as well as leaders in training healthcare professionals. We have always been about excellence in pharmacy education.

Academic pharmacy is at the crossroads of many avenues of change. Change is sometimes disruptive in nature. Areas of change include the continuing evolution of pharmacy as a profession, massive changes underway in how and to whom healthcare is delivered in America, and rapid change in higher education. This includes both the demand for greater accountability in higher education and innovation in delivery models to individualize and improve student learning as well as to increase access to learning. We live in a time where change is the new constant, and we must continue to strive for excellence in all that we do.

As I framed my priorities for the coming year, it was important to me that we build on the impressive work inspired by the presidential priorities of those who have gone before me. Our first priority area of excellence is technology-based education delivery. The 2012-2013 Argus Commission studied "game changers" likely to influence pharmacy education. A major theme of their report is the use of instructional technology to its fullest capability to create better instruction and to develop and use analytics for guiding and directing faculty members and students.

The New Media Consortium's 2013 Higher Education Report identifies 3 technologies in particular that have garnered significant interest within the Academy as areas warranting further study:

- The first is massively open online courses or MOOCs. This technology has the potential to provide educational resources to a broad audience at high efficiency and reduced cost. This makes MOOCs extremely appealing to institutions during times of economic recession and reduced federal and state support for higher education. MOOCs have also generated a great deal of concern across higher education.
- The second technology is *gamification*. Gamification incorporates elements of games into academic activities with the goal of increasing student interest, motivation, and engagement with the content. In a *gamified* curriculum, students accept challenges for points or other rewards and often have significant freedom in choosing what kind of assignments they undertake to achieve the desired outcomes.
- The third technology is learning analytics, the field that deciphers trends and patterns from education and student-related data to advance personalized learning. Student-specific data can be used for purposes that include tailoring learning platforms and guiding students to additional learning resources.

To provide direction on how academic pharmacy can achieve excellence in technology-enabled education and to elaborate on the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy's (AACP) role in the development of new educational resources, technologies and learning models, the Academic Affairs Committee, led by Jeff Cain, University of Kentucky, is charged to consider the question: What is AACP's role in assisting schools and colleges of pharmacy in implementing new and emerging educational technologies? In addition to MOOCs, gaming, and analytics, this group is asked to explore:

- Recognition within the promotion and tenure process for faculty members who are innovators in advancing technology-enabled education
- How accreditation standards revision can support innovation in technology-enabled learning and assessment models

Our second priority area of excellence is technician training. As the role of the pharmacist continues to evolve

in the healthcare system, the role of the pharmacy technician must also evolve. This is an area not frequently studied by AACP, but it is essential if we are to fully liberate the talents of our graduates in direct patient care. In the near future, pharmacy technicians will be subject to a number of changes in their education, training, and certification. This includes revisions to the Accreditation Standards for Pharmacy Technician Education and Training Programs developed by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists Commission on Credentialing that will take effect in 2014 and 2015, as well as changes to the certification program offered by the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB). These latter changes, announced in late February, seek to elevate PTCB's standards for national certification and recertification. Over the next few years, PTCB will phase in the changes, including mandatory background checks, accredited education requirements, and changes in continuing education for recertification.

In light of these proposed changes and the increasing reliance on pharmacy technicians by pharmacists and pharmacy organizations, the Professional Affairs committee, led by Miriam Mobley Smith, Chicago State University, will examine the potential role that academic pharmacy may play in promoting excellence in technician training. Specifically, this group will identify potential roles for pharmacy institutions and pharmacy faculty members in the education, training, and certification of pharmacy technicians. The committee is asked to recommend strategies to develop collaborative relationships between colleges and schools of pharmacy and pharmacy technician education and training programs to advance pharmacy practice in the evolving healthcare system.

Our third priority area of excellence is scholarship, particularly the scholarship of engagement. The 2011-2012 Academic Affairs Committee examined the scholarship of teaching and learning and defined criteria for evidence-based assessment of excellence in scholarly teaching. I have asked the Research and Graduate Affairs Committee, led by Lauren Bloodworth, The University of Mississippi, to undertake a similar examination of excellence in the scholarship of engagement. Community-engaged scholarship is much more than volunteerism or service learning. The Community-Campus Partnership for Health defines the scholarship of engagement as "teaching, discovery, integration, application and engagement that involves the faculty member in a mutually beneficial partnership with the community." The Research and Graduate Affairs Committee is charged with assessing the breadth and depth of community-engaged scholarship in the Academy and identifying models that work, barriers to implementation, potential funding opportunities,

and ways to best recognize excellence in community-engaged scholarship in the incentive systems of colleges and schools of pharmacy—particularly in the promotion and tenure process.

Working synergistically with the Research and Graduate Affairs Committee and building on President Bootman's Advocacy Committee work, the Advocacy Committee, led by Hershey Bell, Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, will use 3 working groups to develop issue briefs in the areas of wellness and health promotion, community engagement, and the scholarship of engagement. The issue briefs will provide a statement of each topic's benefit to the public and recommendations for action by local, state, and federal agencies.

A second scholarship initiative will build on the 2011-2012 Academic Affairs Committee recommendation to establish an AACP designation that recognizes excellence in scholarly teaching and the scholarship of teaching and learning. I have asked Robin Zavod, Midwestern University/Downers Grove, incoming chair of the Council of Faculties, to charge a COF committee with the task of developing a process to identify, evaluate, and award the most outstanding scholarly teachers within the academy, to suggest an appropriate name for this designation, and to recommend one or more sustainable roles that this group of scholarly teachers could assume within the academy.

I have also made it a priority to identify excellence in pharmacy admissions. The 2011-2012 Argus Commission, in their report, "Cultivating 'Habits of Mind' in the Scholarly Pharmacy Clinician," recommended that colleges and schools of pharmacy identify the most effective validated assessments of inquisitiveness, critical thinking, and professionalism for use in admissions. They also recommended that prepharmacy requirements be minimized in favor of the aforementioned assessments and that consideration be given to prepharmacy experiences that develop an inquisitive mind.

Building on these recommendations, I have established a Special Committee on Admissions, to be chaired by Andrea Wall, University of Cincinnati, to work over the next 2 years to:

- examine current admissions practices used by pharmacy schools,
- evaluate innovative practices used by other professions, and
- make recommendations as to how schools may holistically assess, at admissions, the types of learners who will become the confident practice-ready graduates and future leaders and innovators the profession needs.

Let us turn now to the work of the Argus Commission, the group composed of the past 5 AACP presidents, who look at big-picture issues in pharmacy education. A timely big-picture issue is the incredible growth that academic pharmacy has experienced over the past one-and-a-half decades. Great diversity now exists in the academy in terms of public and private institutions, established and new programs, profit status, and religious affiliations to name a few. The diversity of our learners and our faculty members are also critical issues to study.

The Argus Commission, chaired by Past-President Victor Yanchick, Virginia Commonwealth University, will examine the strengths in our diversity across the academy and will suggest how we can address and serve the diversity in our membership at both the institutional and individual level to achieve greater levels of excellence.

The pursuit of excellence in pharmacy education requires that we continually spend time and energy to develop leaders for the academy. I would like to acknowledge the work of Past President Barbara Wells, The University of Mississippi, whose leadership agenda resulted in the establishment of the Academic Leadership Fellows Program (ALFP). My participation in cohort 2 (undoubtedly the most excellent ALFP cohort) was an essential leadership experience for me.

I ask each of you to consider how you can do more as a leader and mentor to promote excellence in pharmacy

education. Without the mentoring and encouragement of a number of pharmacy faculty members, I would not be here today as your president-elect. While I was a pharmacy student at Ohio Northern University, my advisor, Lou Vottero, encouraged me to enroll in graduate school. He drove me to Columbus, Ohio, and introduced me to pharmacology faculty members at The Ohio State University. Following graduation, I moved to Kentucky for my husband's faculty job in the College of Medicine and was introduced to faculty members in the College of Pharmacy. With their vision for the future, I was able to create a relatively nontraditional academic career with a focus on the scholarship of teaching and learning.

With the example set by Dean Jordan Cohen and my faculty colleagues who brought me to an AACP meeting and introduced me to many of you in the audience today, I became an active member of AACP. In order to sustain the excellence we enjoy in academic pharmacy, we must encourage our students to think "big," blaze new trails for the profession and encourage some of the best and the brightest to join us in an academic career.

In closing, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to serve as your president for the coming year. To borrow a phrase from Bill and Ted (of movie fame), please join me on this most excellent adventure in pharmacy education.