Wayne State University
Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences

Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences

Strategic Plan 2012 -2016

Approved by the Department faculty, January 11, 2012
Department Mission

We are a multidisciplinary department providing expertise in the areas of drug discovery, development, and evaluation. We are dedicated to pursuing scholarship that creates new knowledge, to learning that disseminates and preserves knowledge, and to engagement that exchanges knowledge. Our **MISSION** is to:

- Provide an integrated, multidisciplinary education in the pharmaceutical sciences to students enrolled in our professional and graduate programs;
- Maintain innovative research programs in the pharmaceutical sciences which contribute to our understanding of the design, synthesis, delivery, disposition, action and safety of biologically active compounds;
- Serve as a resource of expertise to the University and the community at large.

Department Vision

To achieve national recognition as a top ranked program in pharmaceutical sciences.

Defining Values and Commitments

The Department will champion and be led by values and commitments that define its character, principles, standards, and expectations of its members. They include to:

- Foster appreciation of the critical and unique contributions made by basic pharmaceutical sciences to the professional and graduate pharmacy programs, and to the Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences.
- Enhance the scientific and professional communities within and beyond the university.
- Strive for excellence, through assessment and iterative quality improvement.
- Maintain teaching and learning at the cutting edge of knowledge in our specializations.
- Promote and serve as models of life-long learning.
- Champion collaboration and interdisciplinary learning and research.
- Contribute to an atmosphere that conveys respect and supports outstanding communication.
- Pledge to act with honesty and integrity, and adhere to the highest standards of professional behavior.
- Act to make members, alumni, and observers proud of the quality of the department and its offerings.

Short Term Goals

**Short-Term Goal #1. Increase the Satisfaction of Faculty Regarding Departmental Administrative Support for Research.** We have outstanding faculty researchers and a great research facility, yet we need to improve departmental administrative support operations for research so the intended scientific productivity and impact can be achieved.

  **S1.1 Departmental Personnel:** Add a second administrative assistant to support research programs (By June 2012)

  **S1.2 Departmental Policies:** Create policies to accelerate paperwork processing particularly for Research PIs, whereby administrative support staff are responsible for conducting regular follow-up and informing PIs regarding the status of administrative support projects (By January 2013)
S1.3 Departmental Advocacy: Advocate for programs and policies at the College and University level that will increase the satisfaction of Departmental faculty with respect to support for research (Ongoing)

Short-Term Goal #2. Revitalize the Graduate Curriculum. We have highly qualified and motivated graduate students and the laboratory research training they receive is outstanding, but we need to improve other aspects of graduate student training provided by the Department; quality improvements would include:

S2.1 Course Content: Increase currency of coursework content and better challenge graduate students through more demanding assignments and higher expectations (By February 2013)

S2.2 Development Opportunities: Expand development opportunities outside of traditional learning contexts (By January 2013)

S2.3 Curricular Assessment: Strengthen program for assessment of graduate curriculum (By January 2013)

Short-Term Goal #3 – Differential Workload Policy. There exist differences in the time and effort each faculty member commits to scholarship, teaching and service. Recognizing individual differences in strengths, interests, and careers the department will implement a differential workload policy to maximize scholarship, instructional, and service goals.

S3.1 Workload Policy: Draft a workload framework that values differing strengths in teaching, research and service, and strategically uses differential workloads to maximize the overall effectiveness of teaching, service and scholarship (By January 2013)

S3.2 Workload Recognition: Recognize appropriately differential workloads that maximize the effectiveness of teaching, service and scholarship (By July 2013)

Long Term Goals

Long-Term Goal #1. Planning for and Positioning the Department for Increased Collaborative Research: We have multiple significant but relatively small islands of research that could grow significantly through a collaborative research environment such as that provided by Center, Program Project and/or Training Grant. We must position our researchers for participation in Center, Program Project and Training Grants.

L1.1 Expanded Funding Base: Increase the number and proportion of faculty with extramurally-supported research programs

L1.2 Promote Collaboration: Recognize appropriately and reward multi-PI and multidisciplinary collaborations

L1.3 Enhance GRAs: Make graduate program changes that heighten abilities to submit competitive Training Grant proposals. Increase GRAs and the domestic graduate program applicant pool through more effective marketing and promotion, and incorporate research rotations

L1.4 Grow Visibility / Impact: Promote greater recognition of the research faculty and their programs, including through named and endowed professorships and chairs and by expanded recognition of the graduate training program within the University Community
L1.5 Build Strategically: Partner with strategic units outside of the college and with new faculty additions and replacements within the department to strengthen collaborative applications for Center, Program Project and Training Grants

Long-Term Goal #2. Contributions of Pharmaceutical Sciences to the Doctor of Pharmacy Program. The Department continues to offer excellent foundational training in the Pharmaceutical Sciences to PharmD students. Working with the Department of Pharmacy Practice, we share in the governance and operation of this program, which is fully accredited through 2015.

L2.1 Accreditation: Continue the ACPE accreditation of the Doctor of Pharmacy program

L2.2 Problem-Based Learning: Increase the contribution of pharmaceutical sciences in the problem-based learning curriculum

L2.3 Research: Provide excellent research opportunities for PharmD students

Long-Term Goal #3. Graduate Program Improvements. In addition to the Short-Term goal of improving the graduate program core courses, we will work to improve the Graduate and Postdoctoral training programs. We will strive to have our programs earn acclaim within the university, regionally and nationally as world class programs that train high caliber graduates. This will involve working with and gaining input from our Graduate Students, Postdoctoral Fellows, and other stakeholders.

L3.1 Recruitment and Admissions: Conduct graduate program open houses, improve tracking and promotion of the accomplishments of past and current students, consider a BSPS program to serve as a feeder program, consider joint programs involving pharmaceutical engineering, interdisciplinary biomedical sciences, and others

L3.2 Non-Curricular Professional Development Program and Experiences: Support for mini-sabbatical or research internships for Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Fellows, promote supervised experiences as lecturers, increase representation in college leadership groups, and expand participation in faculty, committee and other meetings

L3.3 Operational Infrastructure: Strengthen infrastructure support for achieving program goals and objectives by strengthening current and developing new policies and procedures and by re-evaluating committee structures and committee charges. This will include updating Graduate Program policies and procedures

Peer and Stretch Institutions

For the purpose of benchmarking and ongoing assessment of the scholarship of our program against pharmaceutical sciences departments in peer institutions, the following are selected because they served this role in the Pharmaceutical Sciences 5-year review of academic progress concluded in 2011. Peers were selected based primarily upon NIH funding and research productivity. Institutions include the University of New Mexico, Oregon State University, the University of Houston, and the University of Georgia. The 5-year review identified stretch institutions. These are pharmaceutical sciences programs that are substantially more highly ranked and have earned greater recognition and reputation for quality. These are institutions that we seek to emulate through successful execution of this strategic plan. They include the University of Pittsburgh, University of Kentucky, The Ohio State University and the University of Wisconsin. Future progress in scholarship will be measured against peer and stretch institutions.
Accountability

We acknowledge the significant commitment made by members of the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences in preparing an inclusive and forward-looking strategic plan, one with the capacity to direct our programs to the next level of excellence. Given the resources and efforts committed to this process, it is our desire that the strategic plan not signify a goal accomplished, but that it serve as an active roadmap to our future, guiding our evolution and increasing our successes. This can not occur unless two outcomes are achieved.

First, equal effort cannot be committed to all action items, nor can equal progress be made. It is essential to prioritize action items as part of an action plan that takes into account factors including budget, personnel, and other internal and external forces that affect the feasibility, need and desirability of accomplishing individual action items. A limited number of short-term and longer-term action items has been identified to receive priority attention.

Second, it is critical that a mechanism be set in motion for regular re-evaluation and adjustment of the strategic plan to assure that it continues to serve the needs and interests of the department. This strategic plan must become a living document that is used, regularly revisited, appropriately revised, and enacted. Progress on priority action items must be assessed continuously, the same way that progress is assessed in successful quality improvement programs. To achieve this, the strategic plan will be reviewed by the department and stakeholders annually. A progress report will be prepared after 24 months, and every 24 months thereafter. Select lists of Immediate, 2-Year and 5-Year priority action items will be revisited. These action items will be accorded the highest priority for activity in immediate, 2-year and 5-year periods.

Future Breakthroughs

Short-Term Breakthroughs (by July 2012): Progress in Faculty-Focused Research Administration. The administration and faculty of the department have refined guidelines for the administration of the research program. Those guidelines ensure more flexibility in the system, facilitate faculty oversight of their own projects, speed up decision processes, and ensure propriety and accountability in the expenditures of research funding at the investigator level. The department has made substantial progress in securing a second administrative assistant who can restore and strengthen management of investigator requests, fulfill investigator needs, and increase feedback about the status of investigator requests. Timelines for processing investigator requests are in place and ensure faculty that their research needs are met in timely and responsive ways. Faculty members as a whole are satisfied with this progress and feel like they can proceed with their research in a timely way. Overall, there is less controversy in this area than when the department initiated improvement six months earlier.

Intermediate-Term Breakthroughs (by July 2014): Progress in Revitalization of the Graduate Curriculum. The department has made considerable progress in moving the quality of the graduate program forward, particularly in increasing the satisfaction about the program among current graduate students. Those students see the program now as more challenging and relevant since a new emphasis on improvement of existing courses, the creation of professional development opportunities, particularly in lecturing and publishing, and the development of curriculum tracks helps students feel more competent in their chosen areas, and more competitive for job markets. The curriculum function has moved successfully through one improvement cycle in which (a) courses are stronger in terms of the currency of content, and challenge of assignments, (b) expectations for PhD students have increased among faculty, and (c) students have at least two avenues of professional development outside of the traditional learning contexts, such as laboratory and classroom. The department realizes progress in marketing the graduate program through better promotional materials, diverse ways of communicating with potential students,
and a new look achieved through a website that demonstrates the importance of graduate education within the department.

**Long-Term Transformations (by December 2016):** *Progress in Multidisciplinary Research Teams, and Faculty and GRA / Postdoctoral Fellow Growth.* The department has realized considerable progress through its discipline of identifying specific breakthrough objects in six month increments, and in taking action to achieve those breakthroughs in the three pillars. The faculty has monitored its development of those assets that position it well for NIH Program Project and Training Grants. The progress it has made in the areas of (a) enhancing the research environment, (b) strengthening the quality of graduate education, (c) increasing GRAs and Postdoctoral Fellows and the proportion of GRAs supported by external grants, and d) partnering with strong units outside of the college positions it well for competitive Training, Program Project and Center grant applications. PhD students now enjoy considerable success because of the improvements in the learning experience the department has achieved in graduate education expectations. The adoption of a faculty-centric research environment facilitates the success of investigators, and the new emphasis on teaching as a *bona fide* contribution faculty members can make to the success of the department pays off in terms of instructional innovation, teaching quality, and the success of students. Retention of faculty members and faculty additions or replacements strengthen the portfolio and performance metrics of the department and strengthen the capacity of the department to undertake collaborative applications that anticipate the preparation of a center, program or training grant. Faculty are supported for honorific recognition inside and outside the university. By 2013 the faculty members agree that the department is on the right track developing a center, program or training grant. It possesses those assets it requires to bring together a sound application.

*Progress in Recognizing and Rewarding Teaching and Service as Vital to Achieving the Scholarship Goals of the Department.* Within the department there is now a salient and broadly accepted framework of workload that prizes distinctive and differential workloads playing off of the strengths of faculty members in the areas of teaching, research and service. While faculty members who capture research dollars can petition for release from teaching, those faculty members who do not have a strong interest in research can augment their contributions in the areas of teaching and service. The workload practice helps faculty members position themselves in areas of contribution they feel are consistent with their strengths and interests.

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