Strategies for a Winning Career in Academic Pharmacy

The American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy

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– Click on Career Development tab
– Then click Faculty Recruitment and Retention
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Trends in Pharmacy Education: Implications for New Faculty Members

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Objectives

• Identify trends in pharmacy education that are shaping the workforce of the pharmacy profession.

• Outline the potential benefits and challenges associated with a career in academia.
Outline

• Characteristics of the pharmacy education enterprise.
• Diversity of pharmacy schools and colleges.
• Issues and challenges in academic pharmacy – looking to the future.
• Characteristics of pharmacy faculty.
• Why would you want to join academic pharmacy?
• Choosing your first academic home – the next step.
Characteristics of the Pharmacy Education Enterprise

- Approximately 112 schools / colleges (some in preliminary stages of accreditation).
- Accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) is essential for licensure.
- 0-8 schools per state.
- Many new schools.
- Many existing schools are expanding class sizes or developing satellite campuses.
- All award the Doctor of Pharmacy as the only entry-level degree for practicing pharmacists.
From: SK Gershon, JM Cultice, KK Knapp, “How Many Pharmacists are in our Future.”

Figure 2. U.S. pharmacy graduates: 1980-2020.
A study by Gershon, Cultice, and Knapp projected that there would be about 8,000 graduates in 2008. Since this was reported in 2000, there have been increasing class sizes and the opening of new pharmacy colleges. About how many actually graduated in 2008?

A. 6,500  
B. 8,500  
C. 10,500  
D. 13,500
Diversity of Colleges and Schools
Pharmacy

- 40% are part of Academic Health Centers.
  - Some colleges have academic health centers at a distant campus (e.g., U. Texas, U. Georgia, Purdue, U. Connecticut).
- Some associated with osteopathic medical schools.
- Some associated with larger comprehensive universities.
- Some are stand alone (e.g., St. Louis College of Pharmacy, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy).
Diversity of Colleges and Schools Pharmacy

- Public (state funded) and private.
- Urban and rural and in-between.
- 4 year PharmD, 6 year PharmD starting from high school, and 3 year accelerated year-round programs.
- Some are research-intensive; others are more teaching-intensive.
- Class sizes range from 26 to 345.
- Some are at Historically Black Colleges/Universities (HBCUs).
- Some are at religiously-affiliated institutions.
Issues and Challenges in Pharmacy Education

- Implementation of Institute of Medicine objectives to improve health care
- Curriculum changes to meet Center for the Advancement of Pharmaceutical Education (CAPE) outcomes
- Faculty recruitment and retention
- Assessment
Demand for Pharmacy Faculty

- Enough qualified applicants
- Major limitation: experiential education (enough quality sites; role of simulation; development and support of volunteer preceptors as educators)
- Paid faculty members
- Is distance education one solution?
Can we be part of the healthcare improvement solution?

• Healthcare is uncoordinated, not patient-focused, inefficient and expensive.
• IOM has recommended that health care become:
  – Patient-centered (coordinated, integrated)
  – Team-delivered (interprofessional)
  – Evidence-based
  – Informatics-supported
  – Safer; more efficient and more effective
  – Engaged in continuous quality improvement
The CAPE outcomes and ACPE suggest similar curricular focus.

- Pharmaceutical care
- Systems management
- Public Health
2008-09 Type of Appointment

Majority of pharmacy faculty are on full-time, calendar-year appointments.

Question:

The highest percentage of college of pharmacy faculty members are in:

A. Nontenure track positions
B. Tenure track positions
C. Tenured positions
Tenure Status

Tenured 34%

Nontenure-track 45%

Tenure-track 21%

Faculty Gender Diversity

1991-92 Full-time faculty

2008-09 Full-time faculty

Three kinds of faculty members

• Basic, translational, and clinical pharmaceutical scientists
• Practice faculty
• Social and administrative pharmacy
The highest number of college of pharmacy faculty members are:

A. Basic, translational, and clinical pharmaceutical scientists
B. Practice faculty
C. Social and administrative pharmacy faculty
Discipline
2008-2009 Full-time faculty

- Pharmacy Practice 2463
- Pharmacology/Biological Sciences 725
- Pharmaceutics 556
- Medicinal Chemistry 541
- Social/Admin Sciences 342
- Continuing Education 41
- Libraries/Educ Resources 26
- Liberal Arts 46

What do they have in common?

• All teach pharmacy students*.
• All engage in and publish scholarly work*.
• All participate in service activities*.
• All are experts in their fields.

*The balance of teaching/research/service expectations varies with the mission of the school and the university.
How do they differ?

• Type and length of post-Pharm.D. education and training.
• Practice and patient care responsibilities
• Educate residents and fellows vs. graduate students.
• Focus and amount of research activity expected.
• Teaching: classroom vs. practice setting.
Practice Faculty

• Pharm.D. → Residency (general; 1 year specialty) or additional practice experience. Some research training (exposure) → faculty position. Pharmacy practice is significant job expectation.

• Clinician-educator model accepted; often non-tenure track.

• Should document, assess, and publish impact of innovations on patient care outcomes.
Faculty are change agents.

- Competent and confident in their skills and abilities.
- Lead change and engage in continuous quality improvement.
- Post-graduate training and experience that facilitate innovation.
Issues in assessment

• How do we define excellence, achieve program excellence and measure and document our students’ performance and skills?
• ACPE pressured by Department of Education to develop more standardized assessments.
• Progress exams? To assess individual and/or institutional performance?
• Outcome exams? [e.g., should a standard Observed Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) be required prior to licensure?]
Why would you want to join academic pharmacy?
Question

Which one of the following would be most characteristic of a pharmacy faculty position?

A. Forced overtime
B. Inability to refocus professional career direction
C. Lack of developmental opportunities
D. Need for good communication skills, self-direction, and strong work ethic
What’s good about being a faculty member?

- Can impact the future of the profession or your discipline nationally and internationally.
- Variety of opportunities, including travel.
- Students are fun, challenging and keep you intellectually young.
- Constantly learn new things; can change focus over time; sabbaticals!
- “Academic freedom:” choose your interests and how you spend each day, within the mission of the school and your defined position expectations.
- It is the BEST job in all of pharmacy!
Attributes of a successful faculty member

- Passion for teaching.
- Passion in research or practice area; change agent.
- Communication skills.
- Interpersonal skills.
- Independence and self-direction...combined with a willingness to work with others.
- Strong work ethic and ability to balance one’s life.
- Excellent post-Pharm.D. education and research training – be prepared; don’t rush it!
My advice: Try it out by getting some teaching experience as a resident; and then....

Go for it!