

Successful Practices in  
**Short-term and Long-term College/School Planning**  
Pharmaceutical Education 2002

**Mercer University**  
Southern School of Pharmacy  
Atlanta, Georgia 30341

**Short-term and Long-term School Planning**

**Description**

The School of Pharmacy developed a new strategic plan during the 2000-2001 academic year using a technique developed by Robert Fritz called structural tension charting. This technique requires an accurate description of current reality and clearly defined measurable goals. The discrepancy between current reality and desired goals generates structural tension. Structural tension seeks resolution through a number of action steps necessary to move the organization from its current reality to its desired goals.

The strategic planning process began at a working retreat in October 2000 during which the School's Executive Committee was taught the basic principles of the Fritz method for creating an organizational strategic plan. After the training session, the Committee spent time critiquing the old strategic plan, redefining some of the goals of the old plan in more measurable terms, and developing new goals using the following criteria:

1. The goals must be sensitive and responsive to both internal and external environments
2. The goals must be consistent with the overarching mission of the School and the University
3. The goals must be specific and quantifiable
4. The goals must describe an actual result that is desirable and not simply a process for achieving that result
5. The goals must represent results we want to create rather than ways to solve problems.

The Executive Committee continued refining the strategic goals over the course of several regularly scheduled Executive Committee meetings and then submitted a draft of the School's strategic goals to the faculty for review and further refinement. Several weeks later, the Executive Committee, at a second all-day retreat, created a revised draft of the strategic goals based upon the suggestions and ideas submitted by the faculty.

The Executive Committee then began the process of defining the current reality for each strategic goal using the following criteria:

1. Current reality is described in reference to the stated goal
2. Current reality describes the relevant picture
3. Current reality describes the whole picture
4. Assumptions have been translated into objective facts
5. All the facts needed to describe current reality have been included.

After refining current reality statements, the Executive Committee identified the action steps that the School would need to take to move from current reality to the desired goals. A draft of the strategic plan containing the goals, current reality statements, and action steps was then submitted to the faculty for review. At the same time, the School's mission statement along with a newly created vision statement and set of core values were submitted to the faculty and a select group of students for review and adoption.

To obtain final input from the faculty, an open forum on the strategic plan was conducted during which some minor modifications were made and consensus on the goals, action steps, and current reality statements was reached.

#### **Outcomes**

A final draft of the strategic plan was prepared and is being used and monitored closely by our faculty and administrators.

#### **CONTACT**

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# **Nevada College of Pharmacy**

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## **Short-term and Long-term College/School Planning**

### **Description**

Short-term planning and implementation for the Nevada College Of Pharmacy is the primarily the responsibility of the College's Executive Committee. This committee consists of the College's administration and includes the President/Dean, the Associate Dean, the Financial Officer, the Facilitative Officers for Academic Affairs, Clinical Programs, and Student Services, and as a representative for faculty, the Faculty Secretary.

As a mechanism for identifying the College's needs and goals, assigning responsibility, and establishing timelines, the Executive Committee has utilized a "planning proforma". The planning proforma is a dynamic document that continually undergoes review, modification, and update, but serves to ensure that needs and goals are defined and prioritized and that timeframes are met. The Executive Committee meets weekly and as a standing order of business, reviews the proforma. A portion of the current proforma can be obtained by contacting the individual listed below.

### **Outcomes**

The planning proforma has been extremely successful in helping our developing program stay on track. The members of the Executive Committee use the proforma faithfully and consistently work to update, refine and review the document. Additionally, this document has been submitted to the American Council on Pharmaceutical Education (ACPE) as a component of our successful application for Candidate Status with that body. The site evaluation team, in its report to ACPE commended the College on its use of the planning proforma and encouraged the College to continue the process.

### **CONTACT**

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