

Doctor of Pharmacy Program Awarded Full Reaccreditation by ACPE

Following a rigorous two-year review process, the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) reaccredits the Doctor of Pharmacy program at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy.

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The Doctor of Pharmacy program at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy has been issued an eight-year accreditation term by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) following the successful completion of a thorough self-study report and comprehensive on-site visit.

“Reaccreditation means that prospective and current students can be assured that our Doctor of Pharmacy program is compliant with the standards of quality set forth by ACPE and that it provides a comprehensive pharmacy education, preparing them for a position in a dynamic pharmacy profession,” says Natalie D. Eddington, PhD, FAAPS, FCP, professor and dean.

“Throughout their visit, the team heard from a broad range of perspectives by meeting with internal and external stakeholders including standing committees, individual faculty, students, alumni, and preceptors. We are so grateful for the engagement and enthusiasm of all



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members of our School community in this important visit and delighted that ACPE validated our self-assessment of our program.”

Preparation for reaccreditation began in 2010 with the formation of a Self-Study Committee, led by the Office of Academic Affairs. All full-time faculty, as well as key staff and students, were organized into six subcommittees that corresponded to each area of the self-study: Mission, Planning, and Evaluation; Organization and Administration; Curriculum; Students; Faculty and Staff; and Facilities and Resources.

Approximately half of the members from each subcommittee were tasked to review accreditation standards and data and draft an initial report that provided an honest, critical assessment of the School’s strengths and weaknesses in its assigned area. The remaining members served as reviewers who evaluated the initial report and offered suggestions for improvement as needed. This process was important to make sure the self-study reflected the general perceptions of the school community.

The reports prepared by each subcommittee were merged into one document and shared with all faculty at a retreat in May 2012. This retreat was dedicated to refining the self-study document, discussing any outstanding issues, and orienting participants on the major findings in preparation for a vote by the faculty assembly to accept the report in June. The final report was submitted to ACPE in October 2012.

“The most gratifying aspect of this process was its ability to update faculty, staff, students, preceptors, alumni, and Board of Visitors members on all of the excellent educational opportunities currently available in the School,” says Richard Dalby, PhD, FAAPS, associate dean for academic affairs. “Many people who participated in this process, including me, were amazed to discover that there was so much happening in the School.”

To complete the reaccreditation process, a site evaluation team visited the School of Pharmacy in late November. This team — comprised of peers from other schools of pharmacy across the country, a peer school dean, and an ACPE professional staff member — conducted an on-site evaluation of the School’s Doctor of Pharmacy program, visiting the School’s campuses in Baltimore and Shady Grove and speaking with a number of faculty, students, alumni, and preceptors.

Since its last on-site evaluation in 2006, the School has seen significant changes in each area addressed by the ACPE accreditation standards. Members of the site evaluation team took note of these changes, which included the appointment of a new dean, development of a new strategic plan, revitalization of the curriculum, launch of a distance learning Doctor of Pharmacy program the Universities at Shady Grove, 30 percent increase in faculty, and completion of a \$62 million building addition.

“The purpose of the site visit was to assure that the noteworthy items and areas for improvement identified in the report were truly reflective of the current state of the

program,” says Lisa Lebovitz, JD, assistant dean for academic affairs. “I think the evaluation team was particularly impressed with the collegiality of the faculty, the transparency of our processes and data, the robust infrastructure at our Baltimore and Shady Grove campuses, and our commitment to students.”

Following the site visit, the evaluation team’s report was reviewed by the ACPE Board. Upon discussion of the program, the Board decided that accreditation of the Doctor of Pharmacy program be continued for the full eight-year cycle, which ends June 30, 2021.