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Strategic planning for the Academic Pharmacy Section

John Albert Pieper

St. Louis College of Pharmacy, University of Health Sciences and Pharmacy, St. Louis, Missouri, United States

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Correspondence

John Albert Pieper
St. Louis College of Pharmacy
University of Health Sciences and
Pharmacy
St. Louis
Missouri
United States
jpieper52@yahoo.com

Abstract

Strategic planning is a vital and ongoing process to define an organisation's purpose (mission, vision, and values), the direction an organisation is going in the future and how an organisation will arrive at a desired future state (goals and objectives). An effective plan articulates the action steps needed to achieve an organisation's goals and objectives. The Academic Pharmacy Section (AcPS) of the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) initiated a strategic planning process in 2015 due to the growth of the membership and the need to align the activities of the section membership with FIP strategic plans. Over the past seven years, the plan has evolved into a strategic implementation plan, with extensive consultation across the FIP, supported by working groups, to achieve the goals and objectives of the AcPS.

Introduction

"If you don't know where you are going, you might wind up someplace else." Yogi Berra, New York Yankees (1946-1963, 1965)

Strategic planning defines an organization's purpose (mission, vision, and values), future direction, and path to a desired future state (goals and objectives). In March 2015, the Academic Pharmacy Section (AcPS) began a strategic planning process with the knowledge that the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) had a current strategic plan, as did FIP's two constituent boards, the Board of Pharmaceutical

Practice (BPP) and the Board of Pharmaceutical Sciences (BPS). At the same time, FIP Education (FIPed), the unit within FIP that is focused on pharmaceutical practitioner and scientist education, was developing an action plan that included vision and mission statements. In addition to being one of the eight sections of BPP, AcPS was a founding unit within FIPed as was the Education Development Team (EDT), which transformed into the Workforce Development Hub (WDH) in 2018, and the Academic Institutional Membership (AIM), the unit within FIP that consists of faculties and schools of pharmacy. The structure of FIPed in 2016 is illustrated in Table 1, along with the areas of focus.

Table 1: FIPed structure in 2016 and areas of focus

Academic Institutional Membership (AIM)	Academic Pharmacy Section (AcPS)	Education Development Team (EDT)
1. Leadership	1. Faculty development (including career development)	1. Workforce Development Goals
2. Networking/ engagement/ implementation	2. Curriculum design	a. Monitoring
3. Knowledge sharing	3. Curriculum assessment	b. Progress – reports
		c. Enabling
		2. Workforce intelligence
		3. Education workforce research

The Executive Committee (ExCo) of the AcPS believed planning was critical for the future of the Section given its recent growth in membership, potential future growth and to align with other FIP plans. The advantage of a strategic plan is that it defines the mission and creates a vision for the section and sets measurable goals and objectives for the section, prioritises the activities of the membership of the Section, enhances the engagement of members and enables the allocation of resources and finances for Section activities.

Strategic planning progress

In March 2015, AcPS Section President, Ralph Altieri appointed a Strategic Planning working group. The working group was chaired by John Pieper and included Judith Barr, Kayley Lyons, Past Section President Jennifer Marriott, Sven Norman, Doug Reid, Magaly Rodriguez de Bittner, and Mike Rouse. The existing mission statement for AcPS in 2015 was, “to conduct an organisation by and for persons interested in all aspects of the education and training of professional pharmacists and those supporting the profession.”

The initial working group met throughout 2015 and in December 2015 proposed a new mission statement to the AcPS ExCo. “The mission of the Academic Pharmacy Section is to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and best practices for individuals engaged in teaching

pharmacy students in all settings and engaged in research at faculties and schools of pharmacy and schools of pharmaceutical sciences”.

The working group initially identified four strategic goals, called critical issues. These included: 1) develop pharmacy educators to provide high-quality professional pharmacy and graduate education programmes; 2) develop faculty members to conduct high-quality pharmaceutical research programmes within faculties and schools of pharmacy; 3) identify and encourage resource and leadership development; and 4) support the mission and vision of FIP and other relevant bodies within FIP.

In January 2016, the Strategic Plan working group was disbanded, and an AcPS Strategic Planning committee was named by Section President Altieri. The committee was chaired by John Pieper and the members of the committee were Hisham Aljadhey, Filipa Costa, Abdullah Dayo, Mariet Eksteen, Sherif Gourgui, Pam Heaton, Stephanie Lukas, Whitley Ly, David Steeb and P.T. Thomas. The committee had the responsibility to take the feedback from the AcPS ExCo and develop a full strategic plan, with vision, mission, and value statements, strategic goals and objectives and an implementation plan. As a constituent part of both BPP and FIPed, the planning of the Section needed to be conducted in alignment and in coordination with the concurrent planning by FIP, FIPed and BPP. The vision and mission statements for FIP, BPP, FIPed and AcPS, as of March 2016, are shown in Table II.

Table II: 2016 FIP unit strategic planning

Unit	Vision	Mission
International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) (FIP, 2022)	Wherever and whenever decision makers discuss any aspects of medicines on a global level, FIP is at the table.	FIP's mission is to improve global health by advancing pharmacy practice and science to enable better discovery, development, access to and safe use of appropriate, cost-effective, quality medicines worldwide.
Board of Pharmaceutical Practice (BPP)	None	The BPP represents the interests of all aspects of the practice of the profession of pharmacy throughout the world, regardless of any national or local issues. The ultimate objective is to unify the profession and, as a result, bring about an increase in the standards of healthcare for the benefit of the patient.
FIPEducation (FIPed)	FIPed, as the global leader, ensures that education and training provide the foundation for pharmaceutical services and professional development and advancement in order to meet global and societal needs for medicines expertise	To bring together organisations and leaders who are working to improve health through advancing pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences education. The FIPed will stimulate transformational change in professional pharmacy, pharmaceutical sciences, and pharmaceutical education to advance and develop their diverse profession towards meeting present and future health care needs around the world.
Academic Pharmacy Section (AcPS)	The vision of AcPS is to support the vision of FIP and FIPed by being the premier international group for developing and supporting individuals committed to the advancement of pharmaceutical education and training,	To conduct an organisation by and for persons interested in all aspects of the education and training of professional pharmacists and those supporting the profession,

In May 2016, a second version of the AcPS Strategic Plan was presented to AcPS ExCo. The format of this plan included a new vision and updated mission statements, and a list of seven proposed long-term strategic outcomes and eight proposed one-year outcomes. The plan also included a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis.

The AcPS Strategic Planning committee and the ExCo assessments were that there was reasonable alignment in vision and mission statements, from the general statements of FIP on pharmaceutical practice and science improving global health to the specific focus of AcPS on supporting and developing pharmaceutical educators. The alignment exercise involved members of the ExCo reviewing and evaluating the plans from FIP, FIPeD and BPP as the planning process was initiated for the section plan. The committee continued its work throughout 2016 and 2017, with the goal of developing a comprehensive strategic plan.

In September 2017, the AcPS Strategic Planning committee proposed a new vision and mission, along with a renewed list of strategic goals and more fully developed strategic objectives. The plan was presented to the AcPS Executive Committee in June 2017 and, following revisions, to the members of the Section for approval at the Annual Business Meeting of the AcPS in Seoul, South Korea. The plan was approved on 12 September 2017. The revised vision and mission statements were:

Vision Statement: The Academic Pharmacy Section, as the premier international group empowering pharmaceutical educators, supports the vision of FIP and FIPeD, by advancing pharmaceutical education and training to meet societal needs for improved health through medicines expertise.

Mission Statement: The Academic Pharmacy Section serves as an international source for networking, collaboration, and inspiration for educators to transform pharmaceutical education for the purpose of advancing practice and science to meet present and future health needs in communities around the world.

The plan had seven goals, including 1) Collaboration, 2) Faculty Development, 3) Connections and Communications, 4) Resources and Infrastructure, 5) Educational Trends, 6) Programme Outcome Competencies and 7) Programme Assessment. Each goal had 3-7 strategic objectives. For the first time, working groups were established for each of the seven strategic goals, and section members volunteered to work on objectives within each goal area. Additional working groups were established in the operational areas of Section Projects, World Congress

Programming, Section Abstract and Adjudication and Strategic Plan Monitoring.

During the 2018-2019 period, FIP was in the process of updating its strategic plan. In March 2019, in response to this planning process, the AcPS ExCo held a retreat in The Hague. Following a presentation of the FIP strategic planning process, the ExCo held a day-long discussion on the structure and components of the AcPS Strategic Plan. The decision was made to reframe the Section strategic plan as a strategic implementation plan that would align with FIP plans and focus the Section activities on implementing those parts of the FIP plan that involved educator issues. Again, the ExCo reviewed the existing FIP plans as the new implementation plan was being developed. The vision, mission, and value statements from 2017 were reviewed and reaffirmed. A new set of strategic implementation goals, with descriptors, were developed at the retreat including 1) educator and career development (people): provide support for all educators using development tools, competency frameworks and educational scholarship; 2) educational Programme design and assessment (programme and curriculum): advocate and communicate outcome-based and needs-based education and training programmes and assessment strategies; 3) sustainability (membership and resources): develop financial resources and enhance membership size, engagement, and commitment; and 4) collaboration and communication (connections): implement and execute mechanisms of collaboration across FIP to advance and lead pharmaceutical education globally.

Objectives and strategies were developed for each strategic goal and specific projects and FIP workforce development goals were mapped to each goal. This revised plan was more focused on strategies and objectives, linked to projects and assigned to working groups. The new plan was shared with the AcPS membership, in July 2019, with the goal of presenting the strategic plan at the Annual Business Meeting in September 2019 in Abu Dhabi. The feedback from members was strong support for the plan and excitement that working groups would be established within each goal area. The feedback was limited but consistently positive. The 2019-2024 AcPS Strategic Implementation Plan was approved unanimously by the 152 Section members in attendance at the Annual Business meeting on 23 September 2019 (FIP Board of Pharmacy Practice Academic Section, 2019). Table III illustrates the alignment among strategic implementation goals noted above, working groups and objectives and demonstrates the importance of strategic planning on organisational activities. Membership engagement and section accomplishments have expanded since the implementation of the plan, with over 100 members participating in a working group.

Table III: 2022 AcPS strategic goals, working groups and objectives

Goals	Working groups	Objectives
Goal 1 Educator and career development	Educator development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Support leadership development for educators b. Develop competency framework for educators c. Identify and disseminate best practice in educator development d. Build capacity in educators e. Promote scholarship in education f. Identify career needs
	World Congress poster and abstract adjudication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Promote scholarship in pharmaceutical education
Goal 2 Educational programme design and assessment	Programme design and assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Apply global educational innovations to advance pharmaceutical education
	World Congress programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Plan and conduct high quality programming b. Enhance member engagement
	Educational trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Utilise global pharmaceutical observatory to meet member needs b. Advocate for outcomes-based education
Goal 3 Sustainability	Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop a three-year financial plan b. Identify external sources of funds
	Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Increase numbers of members b. Create a membership database c. Create environment for engaging all academicians d. Improve awareness of section goals and activities
Goal 4 Collaboration and communication	Connection and communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop and execute action plan for enhancing communications and collaborations b. Identify strategies to promote the use of technical reports, tools, and supplements to meet member needs c. Foster joint educational programmes through collaboration with FIP units

The Projects working group and the Strategic Implementation Plan Monitoring working group were formed as section-wide groups that cut across the four goals.

In April 2022, the AcPS ExCo met remotely in a retreat to discuss the current and future characteristics of section members and section accomplishments and to perform a SWOT analysis and revise the section's strategic plan. The ExCo discussed adding two additional strategic goals in the areas of advocacy, policy and global influence and research and scholarship and the need to restructure working groups. These are items for ExCo and membership discussion in 2022 and demonstrate the evolutionary nature of strategic planning.

Conclusion

The journey of seven years to develop, receive approval, implement, and revise a strategic plan for the AcPS has been accomplished. It was possible to align the strategic plan for a unit with other organisational plans. Regular communication across the organisation was required for appropriate alignment.

The impact of the plan is evident today as the AcPS working groups have been committed to meeting the goals and objectives of the plan, which has engaged,

energised and transformed the membership of AcPS. The plan is regularly monitored on a quarterly basis by the Strategic Implementation Plan Monitoring working group. In December 2020, AcPS strategic goals and objectives were further refined to include deliverables, responsible individuals, timelines, status update reporting and priority assignments. At present, all the work of the AcPS is connected and mapped to the Strategic Implementation Plan.

The APS ExCo met in retreat in April 2022 to once again review the vision, mission, values, goals, and objectives of the AcPS Strategic Implementation Plan. Additional goals and objectives were discussed and will be further considered by the ExCo prior to consideration by the AcPS membership.

Many individuals are responsible for the strategic planning process that has been established by AcPS. President Ralph Altieri (2011-2017) formed the first strategic planning working group and committee, chaired by John Pieper, in 2015. John Pieper continued to chair the strategic planning process as a member of AcPS ExCo (2015-2017), as President-Elect (2016-2017) and President (2017-2021). All the AcPS ExCo members from 2015-2022 have generously participated in and made significant contributions to the strategic planning process. Section President Toyin Tofade (2021-present) inherits a highly aligned and effective strategic implementation plan that will serve as the foundation

for future section activities and planning to ensure that AcPS will meet its important vision and mission for advancing global pharmaceutical education and training.

"If you don't know where you are going, every road will get you nowhere." Henry Kissinger

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