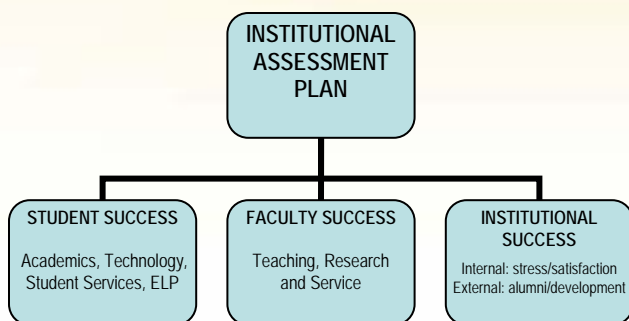


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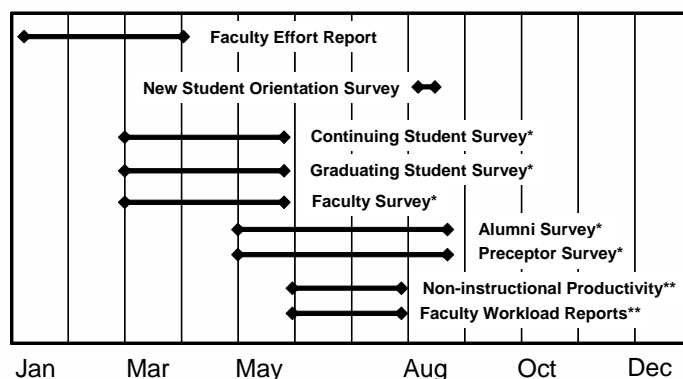
OVERVIEW OF THE ASSESSMENT PLAN. The University of Maryland's School of Pharmacy Assessment Committee has begun implementing its assessment plan in earnest. The primary goal of an institutional assessment plan is to focus the institution on key issues of critical importance, regardless of a seemingly endless supply of data, while maximizing the value of the effort. The University of Maryland School of Pharmacy's Institutional Assessment Plan was designed by a committee of faculty and staff under the direction of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. The plan consists of three areas: Students, Faculty and the Institution. Within each area, key indicators are assessed to determine the overall success of the institution. The Assessment Committee oversees the iterative process.

Institutional assessment must contain longitudinal data, when available, to watch for trends over time. It must also involve peer comparisons to the extent possible; this includes both national peers (other schools of pharmacy) and campus peers (the other professional schools at UMB). In each of the plan's three areas, these factors are taken into consideration.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ASSESSMENT PLAN

We recognize that too much surveying can make respondents feel overwhelmed. Our goal is to minimize the number of surveys and to maximize the utility of each of these tools. We have therefore developed a timeline of survey administrations (*at right*) in conjunction with the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP) surveys.

Other surveys may appear intermittently, but those noted in the figure, *right*, will continue to be our primary means of institutional feedback. Because the surveys we administer are consistent in their timing and wording, we can compare the status of the UM School of Pharmacy with other schools on campus and other pharmacy schools nationwide.



*Administered by AACP with supplements from UM SOP

**UMB Institutional Research report; Completed for faculty by department vice chairs and Assessment Coordinator

SURVEYS & OTHER ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Faculty Survey 2008. The AACP administered a revised version of its annual Faculty Survey this year. It was impossible to compare some response items to previous years because of wording differences. However, we were still able to glean some insight and identify potential areas for further investigation and improvement. The following questions concerning Administration/Leadership saw a *statistically significant improvement* between 2007 and 2008.

- * The college/school's administrators function as a unified team.
- * The college/school's administrator(s) are responsive to my needs/problems.
- * The Dean is an effective leader of the college/school.
- * The college/school effectively employs strategic planning.
- * The college/school requested my input during the development of the current strategic plan.

Faculty responses on career development guidance and opportunities, along with research-skill improvement training opportunities, are areas rated by faculty as an area that has not improved as much as School leadership. We will continue to track this area for possible trends. Overall, UM SOP faculty perceptions of the school, its leadership, and their roles in the school improved over last year, and are generally aligned with peer institutions.

Faculty Effort Reports and Non-Instructional Productivity Reports

These reports are required annually at different times for UM's Institutional Research Office. To reduce the effort required of faculty and staff to collate the data and produce these reports, the Assessment Committee is developing an online reporting tool. Notably, SOP saw a **5% increase** in grants with our faculty as Primary Investigator, a **19% increase** in peer-reviewed articles, and a **62% increase** in meeting presentations, resulting in an overall 35% increase in the eyes of UMB in total "scholarly productivity" for the 2008 academic year.

Graduating Senior Survey 2008

The Graduating Senior Survey had a response rate of 55% in 2008, up from 51% in 2007. Following are a few highlights of these surveys, with particular attention to the 2008 graduates.

Professional trajectories - 2008

Community Pharmacy: 56%
Residency/PhD program: 31%
Other: 13%

Place of practice - 2008

Maryland: 52%
East Coast: 25%
Other: 13%
Rural: <20%

In most of the 19 areas of professional competency surveyed, 2008 graduates expressed greater competence than the previous graduating class. Graduating students in 2008 regarded the curriculum more positively than the Class of 2007, with several noting that they heard of planned improvements for the curriculum revision.

The Experiential Learning Program was highly regarded overall by both the Class of 2007 and 2008. A potentially problematic area is the site selection process, which is currently being revised by the Office of Experiential Learning.

Advising services provided by the School were rated somewhat lower by graduating seniors in both 2007 and 2008. This result may be questionable because 1) questions were worded differently among surveys and 2) AACP survey questions did not differentiate between faculty and professional advising services.

New Student Orientation Survey 2008. As part of the School's focused approach to use assessment to improve the student experience, the inaugural New Student Orientation Survey was administered in August. This survey has multiple purposes including establishing baseline information for expectations of PharmD students, understanding the academic and professional background of new students, assessing and improving the Orientation program, and developing baseline data for student stress levels. Most new students report spending less than 20 hours per week outside of class on coursework. Almost two-thirds of incoming students had some background in the pharmacy industry, frequently as pharmacy technicians. Developing concordance between student viewpoints and faculty outlooks should minimize any misunderstanding arising from conflicting expectations.

ePortfolios. With the renewed attention now being paid to the Experiential Learning Program, several initiatives are underway to better facilitate assessment and improvement for student learning. The first of these is the beta testing of the SUCCESS (System of Universal Clinical Competency Evaluation in the Sunshine State) program, an online reporting/automated grading tool has previously resulted in more consistent, objective, and standardized grading for students. Combined with the ePortfolio package developed by the Assessment Committee and the Instructional Design and Technology staff, students can assess and monitor their own progress toward the PharmD in conjunction with their faculty advisors.

PEER COMPARISONS. We took advantage of nationwide peer surveys conducted by AACP of faculty and graduating seniors to compare ourselves with schools that are both higher- and lower-ranked than UMB, including UMB's current designated peers, UC-San Francisco, University of Illinois-Chicago, University of Michigan, and University of North Carolina. We also compared ourselves with UMinnesota, UKentucky, UArizona, and USC, among others. Surprisingly, almost no differences existed between UM SOP and the average responses and attitudes reported by either set of peers for either graduating seniors or faculty. These results reflect the keen competition for excellence and general high quality of education provided by the top pharmacy schools nationwide. We will continue to monitor our peers whenever possible to find year-to-year or school-to-school variation.

Stress Survey 2008

Further analyses of the Stress/Satisfaction Survey were conducted during the summer of 2008. A number of key factors were identified to correlate with overall self-reported stress levels ("low," "constant but manageable," or "high, with fatigue or loss of control"); and their self-reported effects on performance ("positive," "no effect," "negatively affects morale," "negatively affects morale and performance").

- **Cohort.** The SOP Class of 2010 was much more likely to report high stress and for this stress to be detrimental to performance.
- **Time constraints (courses).** Time spent on course-related and extracurricular activities only affected students negatively in the case of course-related out-of-class time requirements.
- **Curriculum.** The strongest group of indicators of stress effectors related to the curriculum. Even though responses were generally positive regarding the structure and quality of the curriculum, these factors still were all strongly linked to stress-related performance issues.
- **Academic support services** were generally rated very highly.
- **Administrative support** was highly regarded.

The notion that self-reported stress levels correspond to self-reported performance levels encouraged the Assessment Committee to look at this issue using a more methodical approach. The New Student Orientation Survey was developed and first administered to the matriculating Class of 2012, as described below.