

SCHOOL OF PHARMACY & HEALTH SCIENCES

Advancing Health Science Education: **A PATH FORWARD**

STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2026



**FAIRLEIGH
DICKINSON
UNIVERSITY**

School of Pharmacy & Health Sciences

ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

Innovation, service and interprofessional engagement are at the core of health science education at Fairleigh Dickinson University's School of Pharmacy & Health Sciences.

Our **Doctor of Pharmacy** enrolled its first class in 2011 and remains one of only two Pharm.D. programs in New Jersey.

Our School has grown to also include these degree programs:

- **Master of Public Health**
- **Master of Social Work**
- **Master of Science in Physician Assistant (PA) Studies**
- **Occupational Therapy Doctorate**

The following pages outline our School's 2021-2026 Strategic Plan as we continue to respond to the changing needs of healthcare locally, nationally and globally through the preparation of caring, skilled, and forward looking healthcare professionals.

OUR MISSION

Provide a nurturing and inclusive academic community to educate healthcare professionals within an interprofessional, collaborative culture focused on practice, leadership, advocacy and research.

Mission
& Vision

OUR VISION

Cultivating caring and committed professionals to lead the future of healthcare.

Message from the Dean



It's my honor to introduce our School's strategic plan for 2021-2026 — *Advancing Health Science Education: A Path Forward*. Created through a concert of collaboration with voices from across the health professions, it offers a forward looking vision of health science education.

In developing this plan, we sought to incorporate innovative ideas around how to effectively prepare students for the ever-changing dynamics of healthcare practice, while staying true to the identity of our School's mission to develop students through a collaborative, caring and committed community.

We believe that the opportunities here are transformational, and will set us apart as a distinctive program that is focused on preparing students for existing, traditional, emerging and innovative roles across the healthcare continuum.

We believe that the opportunities it offers our students — to learn with and from each other, to learn about and from diverse populations, and to understand their role as members of a healthcare team — will prepare them to effectively navigate the complex and changing landscape of care.

And, we believe that our strategic plan will position our School effectively to lead the way in this educational process, enabling us to grow and evolve effectively to meet the challenges of the next decade and beyond.

We are excited to see this plan unfold as we operationalize our strategies and look forward to bringing these goals to life.

I hope that you will find aspects that will excite you and engage you to become involved as a student, partner, team member or supporter. If you are interested in being a part of our vision or would like to learn more, I invite you to reach out to us to discuss your interests.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'MA', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael Avaltroni, PhD
Dean

Message from Strategic Planning Committee Co-Chairs

In spring 2020, the School of Pharmacy and Health Sciences of Fairleigh Dickinson University embarked on a process to outline a clear, focused and compelling vision and trajectory for the School through 2026. Dean Michael Avaltroni charged the Strategic Planning Committee with initiating the creation of a new and revitalized strategic plan.

Our collective input drove the project's success and quality of outcome. From the beginning, it was paramount to provide meaningful reflection and engagement with a broad range of voices, and we were inspired by the enthusiastic and sincere responses from members of our School's community. We are grateful to all who joined the conversation and contributed to this important work.

The plan will strengthen our distinction as a competitive health sciences school in an era when both the healthcare industry and academic sector are facing dynamic change.

The new strategic plan codifies our values and defines goals that will guide the community in achieving the School's vision. These goals are rooted in the existing strengths of the School, as well as in areas where we have unique opportunities to assert and differentiate our institution, both locally and globally, and align with the direction of the University at large.

The goals articulated may be ambitious, but by working together we will continue achieving them. As we begin implementation of this vision for the School's future, we welcome your involvement and invite you to join us on this journey.

Co-chairs

Chadwin Sandifer, EdD

*Associate Dean for Student Affairs and
Administrative Operations*

Lillian Rozaklis, PhD

*Assistant Dean of Assessment,
Accreditation and Strategic Planning*

OUR PROCESS

APRIL 2020

- In collaboration with Keeling & Associates Consulting, LLC, the project began with interviews of our executive leadership, faculty, preceptors, administrators and staff, alumni and students – both individually and in small groups.
- We also convened a virtual town hall meeting with these stakeholders to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the School to inform planning priorities for the future.

JUNE & JULY 2020

- A total of 128 surveys were collected from faculty, preceptors, administrators and staff, students and alumni to receive their ideas, opinions and recommendations.
- Simultaneously, we evaluated the School's standing in the local, national and global community. We examined four broad comparative factors across a total of 23 peer and aspirant comparator institutions in pharmacy, public health, social work, physician assistant and occupational therapy.
- At the end of July we convened another series of small group interviews and a second town hall meeting with all stakeholders to further explore planning priorities and directions for the School as a whole.

AUGUST & SEPTEMBER 2020

- We analyzed and synthesized data from interviews, surveys, and gained insights from comparative research, developing four cross-cutting themes.
- We affirmed our purpose and mission and held rich discussions about the School's identity.

OCTOBER 2020

- At our strategic planning retreat, we confirmed our strategic analysis and articulated four goals from the emergent themes and priority areas.
- We established subgroups within the Committee, one for each goal, to draft objectives for their goal area.
- By the end of the retreat, we had the core elements of the new strategic plan: direction, priorities, goals and objectives – in solid draft form. Subgroups met individually after the retreat to continue to refine the objectives.

NOVEMBER 2020

- We reviewed and further refined our draft goals and objectives. We assessed if they aligned with our mission and values, demonstrated our distinctiveness, served as aspirational and as a key overarching framework, and determined their practicability and feasibility.
- We reflected on the extent that the draft goals and objectives represented the ideas put forth over the course of the planning process.
- We paid close attention to ensure there were no omissions. Subgroups met again to write rationale statements for their goal area.

DECEMBER 2020

- The draft strategic plan was presented to each program's faculty, administrators and staff.
- Each program discussed the plan and additional feedback was collected for consideration. Changes were accepted and the plan was modified.
- Each program formally endorsed/ratified the plan.
- The University's leadership received a presentation about the planning process and viewed the plan.

JANUARY 2021

- With the new direction in place, several implementation planning sessions followed to develop and finalize operational plans for the strategic priorities.
- Additional subject matter experts will be invited as we develop key actions and tactics. Implementation of the new strategic plan will include ongoing monitoring and performance measurement.

2021 2022 2023 2024 2025 2026

GOAL 1

EDUCATION FOR A CHANGING HEALTHCARE LANDSCAPE

We will prepare future health professionals who are committed to comprehensive, interprofessional, patient-centered and population-based care.

RATIONALE

Recognizing the importance of both individual and societal wellbeing, our School is committed to preparing students in each of its programs who appreciate the importance of population health and recognize that caring for patients involves more than treating diseases.

We will expand interprofessional opportunities to increase students' awareness of the roles and responsibilities of other healthcare professions and how they work together as a team.

We will prepare students for an ever-changing landscape in healthcare and population health by inculcating analytical reasoning and culturally-sensitive communication skills.

Having new health science offerings will allow us to maximize curricular alignment among various professional programs, thereby creating unique opportunities for educating team-ready practitioners.

Expanded scope of practice is central to the continuous evolution of each profession and is essential to long-term growth and attraction of talented students into all health and healthcare fields.

We will prioritize faculty and student-led research and scholarship as a means to cultivate clinical/scientific reasoning, increase recognition and advance collaboration and advocacy for expanded professional roles.

OBJECTIVES

- 1.1** Strengthen and expand inter-professional education (IPE) and cross-disciplinary collaborative practice across the School.
- 1.2** Establish interdisciplinary teams to increase shared decision making regarding the design and integration of IPE across the curriculum.
- 1.3** Optimize interdisciplinary research and scholarship within and across programs.

GOAL 2

STUDENTS FIRST

We will provide a distinctive, student-centered experience that aligns with students' lives and goals, builds a close-knit community, elevates students' prospects, creates diverse career opportunities and responds to the unique talents identified in students.

RATIONALE

Students are future healthcare professionals with unique backgrounds and goals. We prioritize the student experience by providing didactic and experiential modalities of learning to respond to students' distinctive talents, interests and needs.

To achieve the highest quality preparation, our School is committed to fostering a student-centered community where students are supported in their ongoing professional development.

We will attain this through:

- Continuous exposure to career-focused programming;
- Co-curricular and interprofessional opportunities;
- Augmented advising, mentoring and engagement with alumni; and
- The celebration of their personal and professional achievements.

OBJECTIVES

- 2.1** Enhance programming across disciplines that facilitates engagement, connection and affinity among students, faculty and staff, and builds a sense of belonging.
- 2.2** Engage students in identifying and exploring various and emerging career pathways throughout their programs.
- 2.3** Strengthen academic and personal support services that bolster student success in a holistic manner.
- 2.4** Recognize and celebrate academic and extracurricular student accomplishments.
- 2.5** Recognize and respond to the unique qualities and needs of students that enhance their potential for success, both at our School and in their careers.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

We will foster a diverse, equitable and inclusive culture that facilitates access to resources, makes opportunity available to all and promotes understanding across disciplines and the School.

RATIONALE

We recognize that the vitality of our School community stems from a diversity of perspectives, values, ideas, backgrounds, styles, approaches, experiences and beliefs.

We will leverage existing diversity within the School to build out our initiatives to enrich learning, promote scholarship and deepen understanding to support and achieve a desired inclusive culture.

We strive for intentional and open conversations among administrators, faculty and students about existing and future processes for enhancing diversity, equity and inclusivity so that everyone knows what we want to achieve, and we can all hold one another accountable.

We firmly believe that our internal diversity and inclusion efforts will further prepare all members of our community to be culturally competent ambassadors who embody the know-how to mitigate systemic health disparities and inequalities.

OBJECTIVES

- 3.1** Nurture an inclusive and equitable climate and community throughout our School.
- 3.2** Recruit, retain and promote the success of a diverse community throughout the School.
- 3.3** Support inclusive pedagogy, scholarship and practices across the School.
- 3.4** Develop educational and experience-based learning with a focus on diversity and disparities in health-care and society.

RESOURCING EXCELLENCE

We will strategically cultivate and integrate programs in response to societal, healthcare and academic needs.

RATIONALE

As healthcare continues to evolve and influence society in both demands and opportunities, our School will focus on leading efforts to respond to this progressive change through program growth, expansion and innovation.

This includes examining novel ways to strengthen our program offerings to better prepare students for the dynamically changing landscape and to expand our offerings to enable students as future professionals to be ready to lead this change.

OBJECTIVES

- 4.1** Monitor academic, socioeconomic, environmental and healthcare trends to identify professional program needs and recognize changing market demands.
- 4.2** Secure and maintain professional accreditation for all programs.
- 4.3** Expand the scope of programs to include doctorates, dual degrees, certificates, specializations and concentrations, as appropriate, to broaden career options for graduates.
- 4.4** Develop robust strategic partnerships and affiliations to expand and sustain a broad variety of interdisciplinary opportunities including clinical and field placements, research partners and service activities.

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