Institutional Strategic Plan / Annual Report Update 2022 Midwest College of Oriental Medicine (MCOM)

Introduction

The last three years continue to represent pivotal change at the College when COVID-19 shut down the state and began re-opening in early 2021. By 2022, the College was in pre-COVID status. The changes moving all lectures online and practical courses to Saturdays have expanded Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, enabling working students better access to courses. The College continues to use the Padlet platform. A sample of the Padlet platform can be found at https://padlet.com/mcompresident/fw4m77s7gc3nypbx. This new platform is more efficient, with easy access, and is customizable. Students appreciate that all Zoom lectures are recorded, professionally edited, and posted to the Padlet LMS for review. Students are able to review any lecture throughout their education.

The College's clinics maintain universal precautions as prescribed by the Council of Colleges of Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine (CCAHM) "Clean Needle Technique Manual (CNT)." Before beginning the clinical internship, all interns must complete CNT, Blood Borne Pathogen, and OSHA healthcare workplace training. While masks are no longer mandated, the College provides free masks to any student or patient who requests one.

Dr. Dunbar created a website, <u>www.coronavirusplan.net</u>, to post accurate and reliable COVID-19 information for the MCOM community. This website is updated regularly as new information from the States of Wisconsin and Illinois, the Center for Disease Control, or the World Health Organization is published. Enrollment has remained stable, and interest in the College has increased as the pandemic ended.

The College conducts longitudinal studies of assessment results as part of the online course delivery and continues to compare in-person and online assessment results. No red flags indicate that the performance results from online courses are less than in-person classes. An essential aspect of online learning is creating a community of learners at a distance. Students' survey and comment results are positive, and they are grateful that the College has continued operation during the pandemic.

In 2022, Dr. Dunbar completed a comprehensive course in Quality and Safety in Clinical Operations: Advancement for Improving Health Outcomes at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Dunbar has been holding meetings with the College's clinic directors to improve clinical outcomes.

In summary, MCOM has consistently sought to improve education and educational delivery to benefit the students directly. Many members of the College leadership are members or committee chairpersons at the Council of Colleges of Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine. The commitment to Chinese medical education excellence has enabled the College to endure and thrive during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- I. School Information Name of School: Midwest College of Oriental Medicine (MCOM, College)
- II. Institutional Plan Elements
- **A. Mission** Describe your school's mission and vision, which identifies its purpose and its core values.

Mission (from current Catalog)

It is MCOM's mission to provide an education that is rooted in the historical context and teachings of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and combine it with modern clinical applications to create a practitioner of Acupuncture or Oriental Medicine that embraces the spirit of "ancient medicine for modern times".

Purpose

The combination of Eastern and Western science, together with an appreciation of the natural healing philosophies of Asia, leads to the development of the qualities that are the "Heart of Chinese Medicine". With this foundation, graduates will become true practitioners of Oriental healing. The subtle balance of clinical science and compassion is the key to a successful practice.

The Acupuncture Program is modeled on the modern eight-principle style currently taught at TCM Universities in China. Combined with the biomedicine courses, it prepares graduates to practice Classic Chinese Medicine using acupuncture, moxibustion, and other accessory modalities. The curriculum in the Oriental Medicine program includes a specific course of study in areas of food and herb therapy that are fundamental to Traditional Oriental Medicine. Baccalaureate study in nutrition within the Oriental Medicine program leads to a simultaneously granted Bachelor of Science degree in nutrition and a Master of Science degree in Oriental Medicine.

To meet the needs of students, MCOM affirms its commitment to educate broadly informed, ethically responsible, and scientifically competent professionals by offering the highest accredited entry-level degree in the field. To meet the needs of a community that is increasingly aware of the importance of nutrition and herb therapy, the Oriental Medicine program combines TCM theory with principles of nutrition.

Students from across the US and several foreign countries have entered our programs. The average age of students is 39 years old, and students have a wide range of educational backgrounds and work experience. MCOM seeks a diverse student population and encourages anyone interested in Oriental Medicine, with the appropriate prerequisites, to consider a career in Traditional Chinese Medicine.

After completing their program, graduates have the full range of knowledge, competencies, and skills necessary to begin a successful practice and meet the healthcare demands of the 21st century. These demands will result in new advances in TCM and unique ways that traditional medicine can be used to meet today's healthcare problems.

MCOM's educational programs reflect the best thinking of our faculty, administration, and advisors. Its goals, which are to facilitate our students' learning, must be consistent with realistic career expectations. These goals must also be related to the requirements of licensing and accrediting bodies and is responsive to the public trust. To achieve these goals, the faculty and students must work together to establish a mutually supportive learning community and an educational partnership from which both can benefit and to which both can contribute.

The College fulfills its purpose by carefully creating programs with academic objectives and clinical competencies that lead to entry-level independent practice. Its programs concentrate on ensuring that students have the necessary theoretical and clinical background to meet the challenges of practice and that they develop professional attitudes and behaviors that lead to success in a field where referrals are a key to growth. The College meets its goals by focusing on the modern therapeutic techniques of Traditional Chinese Medicine. The program avoids diluting the curriculum with other holistic health techniques, which may be perceived as diversity, but which lack the necessary foundation in TCM needed to address difficult healthcare problems found in the practice of Oriental Medicine.

B. Market - Discuss the nature of your school and the business in which it is engaged. Describe who your existing and potential customers are and what motivates them to enroll in your school. Explain how you let customers know you are in business. Finally, identify who your competitors are and how you are different from them.

MCOM was founded in 1979, making it one of the oldest schools of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine in America. Since then, faculty and student interns have contributed to community service at Cook County Hospital, the Pontifical Order of the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi in Milwaukee, and at the Chicago AIDS Alternative Health Project.

Graduates of our programs work in hospitals, medical groups, and in private practice. They are on the faculty of other schools, the boards of professional associations, state and national agencies, and are on the staff at hospitals across the country.

Since 1986, College administrators and faculty have participated in local and national organizations, including the Council of Colleges of Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine. The College has been accredited since 1987. In 2020, the College's Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine programs received a seven-year reaccreditation.

The College continues to collaborate with leaders of TCM education to ensure that our programs follow the true principles of TCM theory while keeping up to date with the current clinical practice of Chinese Medicine. The College's goal is to retain the traditional principles and attitudes from times past, which still draw patients to this medicine today: a medicine that values the spirit and heart as its heals the body.

Students who are interested in holistic healing are seeking an education that leads to a legal, professional practice that is licensed in their home state. Students from across the US and several foreign countries have entered our programs.

The College has a presence on the internet and also uses print advertisements in local publications that would be of interest to prospective students.

The College has received requests from various healthcare organizations for presentations on the use of acupuncture for the treatment of various conditions. Dr. Dunbar has made presentations at the Centegra Health Systems hospitals (Northwestern Medicine), Baxter Laboratories research departments, and multiple oncology clinics.

Although there are no other Colleges of Acupuncture in Wisconsin, there are two in Northern Illinois. One is a California-based school that requires students to maintain very flexible work schedules, and the other is a Chiropractic College, which attracts a different type of prospective student.

The Aurora Healthcare system has integrated acupuncture into their out-patient clinics, and MCOM

graduates are now working at various locations in Wisconsin, in addition to our graduates who are working at the Cancer Treatment Centers of America. These treatments are a growing trend showing the actual integration of acupuncture into mainstream healthcare. The US Veterans administration is now granting vouchers for acupuncture treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The College clinic is serving veterans through the new voucher system, which pays the entire cost of 15 treatments.

As of 2019, AARP and United Healthcare Medicare supplements pay for acupuncture treatment. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Medicare will cover acupuncture treatments under a proposal announced by DHHS on July 15, but only for Medicare beneficiaries with chronic low back pain enrolled in research to determine whether the treatment decreases their pain, improves function, or decreases the use of other medical treatments, such as opioids.

2022 Update

The College has moved some of the marketing effort to direct email to students who have requested information using the Constant Contact (CC) email platform. The College has used CC for student notices and updates. The use for marketing is new in 2022.

The College has updated the official website this year to reflect a more modern look and feel. The market for new students continues to be strong. The two competing colleges in Illinois have entirely different missions and educational philosophies. As a result, students gravitate to the College; they identify with MCOM's teaching of the modern applications of ancient Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) techniques. The other two colleges are based upon an Americanized version of acupuncture rather than TCM. Interest is strong, and catalog requests and enrollment remain stable in a post-pandemic period.

The College has added mind maps to the clinical courses for case discussions and populated them onto clinical Padlets. A sample can be found at https://padlet.com/mcompresident/oi3dcs35ftklx88y. This change fosters interest by prospective students.

C. Management - Describe your management team and how it functions to lead, administer, and position the school. If your school has Advisory Boards, describe how the school uses them for program and school improvement.

Management Structure

There is a high level of individualized personal responsibility in each administrative position. The President has determined that the group structure was inefficient and that one-on-one interaction would lead to more productivity and personal responsibility.

Job descriptions delineate responsibilities in a detailed listing of duties. Combined with the many years of experience of key administrators, the new organizational plan works efficiently to manage two campuses where some staff activities relate to both campuses and some for a single campus. The Racine Campus Director works closely with the President as an administrative team and has a crucial leadership position when it comes to all administrative policies and procedures.

The Registrar has been in the position for 28 years and is well-versed in the applications of the Campus Management software system to take a student from initial registration through graduation.

The Financial Aid Director, along with the Manager of Student Financial Compliance, regularly attends state and federal conferences to stay abreast of the changing regulations. Each year they attend the Financial Aid

Management for Education (FAME) annual convention (now in-person). Our new financial aid director was the College's compliance accountant and attends weekly seminars held by FAME on financial aid and financial matters.

The Admissions Director plans recruiting efforts, including print and web-based activities, holds open houses and attends various health fairs and other functions where prospective students can find out about the College.

To ensure consistency in operations and a plan for possible staff changes, the various members have created flow charts that accurately show their duties in a detailed and realistic manner. These charts ensure that each staff member knows what must be done and the order in which it should be done. The charts are regularly reviewed and updated when needed so that the numerous compliance issues are current and completed on a timely basis.

Advisory Board

Advisory Board members are selected for expertise in various areas and public representation. They include input from financial and legal knowledge, elected office, the military, the arts, acupuncture associations, alumni, and the public interest. The Advisors review for approval, government compliance documentation, and internal College statistics and actively participate in planning and evaluation. The Board reviews changes in the mission statement and participates in program review. Each week, Dr. Dunbar, the College President, meets with the Advisory Board Secretary to discuss all aspects of the College operations, which are reported to the entire Advisory Board for discussions and actions, if necessary. Detailed logs of these weekly meetings are recorded for future discussion and action.

The results of these meetings are brought to the Board during regularly scheduled meetings.

The Directors attend all Board of Advisors meetings and have developed a very good working relationship with its members.

While the Board of Directors does have final authority, it looks to the Board of Advisors for direction and approval in all circumstances. The Directors and Advisors have both informal meetings and consultations in addition to formal Board meetings. Through these two activities, the individual members can participate with personal input and also act as a body, giving a consensus opinion.

2022 Update

In 2022, the College upgraded the phone system to allow messages to be transcribed, sent to email addresses, and forwarded as texts. This has decreased response time for addressing student issues and answering questions. The College continues to use the anonymous suggestion box at www.mcomsuggestionbox.com.

Doug Pittman, Financial Aid Director, was instrumental during this year's financial aid audit, and as a result of his work, the College has no findings.

The College continues using a resource website for the Advisory Board and the Faculty. The site offers recaps of discussions, new procedures, and policies and is a method of discussions between meetings.

As the pandemic is ending, the College continues to monitor CDC guidance and follows all recommendations to fight COVID-19.

D. SWOT Analysis. Identify your school's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). Update 2022.

Strength

- The College continues to adopt state-of-the-art technology to enhance student services
- Continuous syllabi review to ensure Carnegie credit compliance
- Continuous review and update of the PowerPoint presentations used during lectures
- Experienced faculty with new faculty in training as assistants
- KSA (Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities from nccaom.org) project to match national and institutional standards, including reworking the final paper in the Master's program
- Continuous monitoring of the Capstone courses in TCM theory, herbs, and bioscience to ensure the curriculum matches the national standards
- Experienced office staff
- Experienced key administrators (campus directors average 25 years of experience)
- Continued very low default rate on student loans (0%)
- Dr. Julie Mayrose, EdD, former Vice-President of Silver Lake College, as Assessment Director to coordinate all assessment activities at MCOM and consults with Dr. Dunbar on high education issues
- The College uses the learning management platform Padlet, which was new in 2021
- Clinical discussions during the internship have been moved to padlet.com, sample at https://padlet.com/mcompresident/oi3dcs35ftklx88y
- Dr. Dunbar graduated from Harvard University from a graduate program in Learning Design and Technology and has implemented numerous improvements to course delivery using Harvard's eLearning framework
- The College continues to offer free online and live tutoring
- The College offered online training for faculty during the year

Goals 2022-23

Virtual Online Open Houses and New Student Orientation

The College created virtual online open houses and new student orientation using the new Canvas LMS in combination with the Zoom video conferencing platform. This new style allows multiple staff members and faculty to participate remotely. Prospective and enrolled students can attend without driving to the campus.

MCOM Learning Resources for Library Support and Student Service

The library support staff is continuing to update the website www.mcomlibraryresources.com to enable students to remotely use the library and conduct research 24/7. In 2021, this resource was opened to the general public and has received positive feedback from acupuncture students throughout the country.

Update 2022

Both College librarians continue to use the Zoom meeting platform to assist in the student in academic research.

Virtual Mind Maps to Support Memorization

Through assessment, the College identified the need for memorization support in specific areas such as acupuncture point location, herbal materia medica, and herbal formulation. The library support staff, working with the Dean of Students, have created mind maps for these subjects and included them in the mcomlibraryresources.com page on the internet. In addition, the College is working to develop content-related crossword puzzles to be published to this site.

The creation of clinical mind maps was essential to moving the student internship online. The College's mind map working group created over 350 disease-based maps illustrating critical diagnostic considerations when arriving at a Chinese medical diagnosis. The group continues to create new maps at a rate of 20 per week for future clinic sessions.

Update 2022

Additional mind maps have been created for the sub-specialty of hospital-based non-opioid pain management using acupuncture. This new specialty was designed within the program to enable more of the College's graduates to apply for positions in medical centers and hospitals. A new staff member has returned after a COVID break to create mind maps to support clinical courses that cover the acupuncture treatment of post-surgical pain and pain-related treatments. This new set of mind maps will enable interns to address the opioid crisis better. The College continues to look for additional methods of increasing student information retention.

Anonymous Online Suggestion Box

The College continues to us an anonymous suggestion box platform, www.mcomsuggestionbox.com. Individuals comment using their email addresses; however, the College cannot see the individual email address when responding. This communication method has reduced the student's stress during these difficult times. Chris Krajniak, an Advisory Board member, and Dr. Dunbar review the suggestion weekly to take action steps, if necessary.

Assessing Student Satisfaction Using Examsoft

The College monitors student satisfaction using questions (voluntary) as part of all examinations within the Examsoft platform. This allows for quarterly "check-ins" between the College and the students. It appears students appreciate both anonymous and non-anonymous opportunities to give feedback.

Synchronous Distance Education Approved by ACAHM (Accrediting Commission for Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine), formerly ACAOM (Accrediting Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine)

The College received formal approval for offering lecture courses through distance education and has received approval from NC-SARA. MCOM has no plans to offer online-only programs.

Community Outreach

MCOM started a pilot program in early 2020 with the Ascension Health System using no-cost acupuncture treatments to reduce stress within in-patient hospice care. The initial patient and administration response was overwhelmingly positive. The College had planned to expand the services. Both projects were put on hold in March of 2020 when COVID-19 struck. The College is working with Ascension Health System to again offer acupuncture treatments at the Luther Hospice Center in Milwaukee in 2023 or 2024.

No Cost Use of Classroom Facilities

The College continues to offer free use of its classrooms and facilities to local not-for-profit organizations. An example is the use of the space to provide community-based CPR training.

Update 2022

This program was re-instated with COVID-19 guidelines in place.

Online Formative Quizzes

The College uses the online examination platform Examsoft for paperless examinations. The College is now using it for weekly formative quizzes to re-enforce classroom lectures and reading. Each quarter 10 quizzes are published for student practice.

Update 2022

The College's assessment director has determined that the use of formative quizzes has increased summative performance, and MCOM will continue to refine the quiz process. In addition, crossword puzzles and Quizlet flashcards have been added to courses. For courses that require weekly assignment, the submission of work has been moved to the Formsite platform, which provides a receipt to the student and sends the work directly to the faculty member email. For a course such as A603 Evidence Based Practice, the Formsite submission has replaced weekly quizzes.

Gainful Employment

Update 2022

The College continues to employ a part-time staff person to update our graduate files and measure practice and employment rates.

Cohort Default Rate

The College's cohort default rate has dropped from 2.1% to 0%.

Weaknesses

- Adapting course delivery to support millennials, GenX, and other adult students.
- Limited space for expansion of clinical services and library holdings.
- Addressing the national move to eliminate the word "oriental" from the profession of acupuncture.

Update 2022

The College continues to offer weekly formative online quizzes for each student in each course to re-enforce the weekly lectures. The College offers free online and live tutoring. The change to the Padlet platform has enabled the College to tailor educational support to the wide variety of generations attending MCOM.

The College owns approximately 8,000 sq. ft. of medical office space on the first floor of the current location. Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare previously occupied this space. The first floor has been leased to a medical group and two Chiropractors. The chiropractors have vacated the space; some of the library holdings in storage have been moved downstairs, and part of the clinic will allow for MCOM clinic expansion.

During 2022, approximately 250 new books have been donated to the College by retiring graduates.

Opportunities

- The possible inclusion of acupuncture in Wisconsin's Badger Care program was put on hold during COVID-19, and reactivation of this opportunity will be a game-changing event supporting low-income and underserved citizens.
- Expand clinical services to include affiliation with physicians and medical clinics.
- Currency with national standards and future vision of the field.
- Continued increased employment trends in the field of healthcare, including integrative medicine.
- Aurora Health System has created an acupuncture department and is continuing to hire MCOM graduates.
- Update the list of Wisconsin insurance companies covering acupuncture treatment.
- The American Acupuncture Council offers comprehensive training on filing insurance reimbursement for patients receiving acupuncture. The College is reaching out to this organization to offer their courses within the College's curriculum.

Update 2022

The Department of Labor and Statistics created a Classification of an Occupation code for acupuncture. This represents a dramatic change in government recognition of the profession, leading to an increase in public recognition of the profession. This classification has allowed the College to monitor changes in acupuncture salaries as they are listed on https://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/29-1291.00?redir=29-1199.01.

The College continues to work with its lobbyists and State Representatives to monitor the implementation of any new health insurance initiatives and prevent other professions from practicing acupuncture with less than the current state and national standards. The College's lobbyist continues to work with state legislators to prevent the passage of any bill which would allow chiropractors to practice acupuncture with little or no training.

The College is regularly conducting email campaigns targeting healthcare administrators to promote the hiring of our graduates. The College is redesigning the website (www.addanacupuncturist.com) to promote the advantages of employing acupuncturists. This website will contain a new searchable database to allow prospective patients and employers to find MCOM graduates by zip code.

Threat

- As employers require students to return to in-person work, the College needs to monitor their stress levels and find ways to support the students.
- As gasoline prices increase, the College needs to encourage and help arrange carpooling.
- Addressing the continued student stressors surrounding financial aid debt.

Update 2022

The College is creating a new online support course in Padlet to orient faculty to the methods of teaching distance education courses during the pandemic and beyond.

Even with the effect of COVID-19 on the economy, graduates continue to offer clinical services; the last cohort default rate has dropped to a reported 0%. The College continues to maintain a reasonable tuition cost relative to the amount that can be borrowed.

Although the Gainful Employment rule was repealed, the College continues to work with its graduates to prepare business plans and help negotiate office leases and has responded to individual requests by graduates.

The College will continue monitoring USDOE rules and initiatives regarding changes in financial aid.

Students receive their financial aid distribution, which includes disclosure of the total financial aid debt, including the disbursement and estimated monthly payment based on the total debt as of that date. This has had the effect of students choosing to borrow less.

The College continues working closely with its attorneys and lobbyists to address the "Dry Needling" issue.

Based on the results of the SWOT analysis, provide the following: three to five goals for strengths/weaknesses and how they will be addressed by your school.

Strength: Syllabi has been revised to ensure compliance with Carnegie credits (homework vs. classroom time).

- In 2021 and 2022, the following areas were added to student assignments outside of the classroom. In 2021-2022, syllabi were reviewed, expanded, and updated for currency.
- The College plans to request a name change to Midwest College of Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine and a degree name change to Master of Science in Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine.
- The College continues to refine the use of the Padlet platform.
- Sufficient reading assignments and outside assignments were added to many courses.
- Review and revise outcomes and competencies based upon changes to the "Knowledge, Skills and Abilities" listed by the National Commission for the Certification of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine.
- Selection of new textbooks to ensure sufficient and relevant readings to meet USDOE, Carnegie credits,
 Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine (ACAHM), and National Commission
 for the Certification of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM) requirements.

Strength: Response to the changing competencies and outcomes as the profession matures.

The College is continuously monitoring proposed changes in the standards of the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine; this is being referred to as the "Revised Master's Standards." It uses competency-based terminology instead of the older "curriculum content" language.

The College has developed competency-based rubrics using the ACAHM standards and the Accreditation Commission of Graduate Medical Education.

The College has developed handouts and working documents based on the Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities rubric of the National Commission for the Certification of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine.

Dr. Chelnick and Dr. LaPoint are on both the Entry Level Standards and Curriculum Development Committees, where new proposals are discussed. Dr. LaPoint is now the President of the Council of Colleges of Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine. This organization sets the curriculum standards for all of the 63 member colleges.

This enables the College to do long-term curriculum planning to ensure that the College maintains currency with the educational standards and resulting marketplace positioning.

Update 2022

Changes consolidating some standards are now published, and Drs. Chelnick and LaPoint continue to participate as committee members to keep abreast of any changes that will affect the College's programs.

Weakness: Addressing the continued student stressors surrounding the economy and financial aid debt.

MCOM's average student loan debt is less than similar colleges in the Midwest. MCOM continues to use a form when students receive more than \$4,000 in financial aid checks. This form indicates their estimated monthly payment after graduation based on the total student loan debt at the time of the disbursement. This information has resulted in some students borrowing less.

E. Future Think - Describe your school five years from now. What will it look like, and how will it be positioned in the marketplace?

The recognition of Acupuncture as a mainstream therapy for treating all aspects of pain will allow the College to form internships and integrated partnerships with medical centers and hospitals. As third-party payments for Acupuncture increase, the College and the profession will have better opportunities to provide healthcare services to a broader patient base.

MCOM will continue to engage its students in a "traditional and holistic" approach to the field while acquainting students with the idea of "evidence-informed practice," which is more in keeping with the philosophy of traditional medicine.

In five years, the College's curriculum will continue to represent the mission statement with greater use of technology to support the students, faculty, and staff, such as virtual cadaver dissection and 3D imaging.

The College plans to assess the need for a future professional doctorate as described by ACAHM. The Board of Directors and Board of Advisors will be briefed after Dr. Julie Mayrose, Ed.D., designs an assessment of need. The College will also assess the re-activation of the approved DAOM program and how these two programs will impact the future of the College.

As the practice of Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine (AHM) becomes more integrated into mainstream medicine, this will require graduates to work as part of a healthcare team and participate collaboratively in

patient care and decision making. Therefore, future students will need to better interact within the structured and rigorous environment encountered in any scientific career.

New graduate certificate programs in pain management, hospital based practice, and sports medicine will provide specialties for graduates.

The College will continue to revise the Practice Management components of the curriculum to reflect the current practice models and additional components to better prepare graduates for professional practice.