

# Academy for Five Element Acupuncture

## **STRATEGIC PLAN 2016 - 2021**

*Governing board, administration, staff, student, faculty, and alumni representatives met at a retreat on November 14-15, 2015 in Gainesville, Florida for strategic, long range planning for the future of the Academy. This Report, unanimously approved by the Governing Board on March 13, 2016, details the strategic plan developed at the retreat.*

*The VISION, MISSION and PRINCIPLES were reviewed and discussed, after which Goals, Objectives and Action Steps for the future were discussed, considered, and agreed upon.*

### **VISION**

To bring healing through the depth, heart and spirit of the Five Element tradition, in full harmony with nature and other healing arts.

### **MISSION**

To educate highly effective, compassionate and successful Five Element practitioners who provide exceptional, personalized patient care.

### **PRINCIPLES in SUPPORT of our MISSION**

#### **Rooted in the Five Element Tradition**

*The Elements are alive both around and in us; they describe the movement of all life and all energy and embody all the qualities which we encounter in Nature. Through understanding the Five Elements we may begin to understand both Nature and ourselves (Worsley, Classical Five-Element Acupuncture, Vol. III: The Five Elements and The Officials, 1998).*

The Academy's faculty, staff and students recognize health from the artistry and poetry of the Five Element perspective. Deeply rooted in the natural world, heart-centered, treating the body, mind and spirit, the Academy respects the efficacy of working in concert with other healing modalities, creating profound balance and harmony.

#### **Spirit**

*The essential point in the treatment of an illness is to root oneself in the five spirits of the person: to know whether they dwell or have been lost, whether one possesses or loses them, to know if the intent is for death or life. (Taisu; Larre a Rochat de la Vallee, 1995).*

One of the most distinguishing and exciting values of the Five Element tradition is its priority on treating at the level of spirit. The Academy is highly committed to the traditional value of working with each person's unique connection to spirit in order to achieve the highest level of care.

## **Inner Development**

*What is virtue? It is to hold yourself to your fullest development as a person and as a responsible member of the human community (Arthur Dobrin).*

Transformation is a process involving self-awareness and personal growth. The Academy emphasizes inner development of faculty, staff and students, encouraging cultivation of intention, humility, compassion, mindfulness and integrity in all aspects of their daily lives.

## **Excellence**

*We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit (Aristotle).*

In order to maintain the highest possible standard both academically and clinically, the Academy promotes excellence in faculty, staff and students and is continually assessing and enriching all aspects of the Academy experience, balancing innovation with core essentials and a strong foundation.

## **Community and Service**

*An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity (Martin Luther King, Jr.)* The Academy places a high value on creating a school community committed to achieving a unified set of goals that is enhanced by a spirit of service, encouraging and supporting each individual to focus on the larger context. Through service and participation in public events, we strive to carry this sense of community to the world at large.

## **GOALS, OBJECTIVES and ACTION STEPS**

### **1 ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT:**

#### **Further Enhance Curriculum Development and the Teaching Environment**

*The academic program at the Academy is the core of our existence. By engaging in ongoing evaluation, review and refinement, we strive to maintain excellence in our educational programs, our faculty, and our teaching environment as a whole. To further strengthen the curriculum, faculty development and teaching environment, we will:*

- A. Maintain excellent programs of study, faculty, staff and facilities to ensure high student satisfaction and retention rates (ongoing practice).
- B. Continue to refine the routine assessment and development of curriculum (ongoing).
  - i. Create a curriculum map to clarify course content and sequencing.
- C. Continue to develop resources for faculty and students (1 to 5 years), including:
  - i. patient-in-front-of-class videos to teach treatment planning
  - ii. point location videos
  - iii. improved faculty resources for course material sequence and teaching outcomes

- iv. resources and exercises to teach CSOE exercises and
- v. activities outside in nature

D. Develop and implement student portfolio process as an assessment tool and student centered learning system that results in a valuable, tangible body of work which students can keep and refer to as they enter practice (0 to 2 years).

2

*Academy for Five Element Acupuncture Strategic Plan 2016-2021*

E. Hold virtual periodic faculty-at-large-meetings through the use of technology (1 to 2 years).

F. Create and implement a clear, structured method of consistently collecting and reviewing faculty lesson plans (1 to 2 years then ongoing practice).

G. Improve outreach to the local community through public speaking events. (1 to 5 years).

- i. Partner with local venues for ongoing outreach efforts. Partner ideas include: UF nursing, FL massage school, Integrative Medicine program, senior centers, Oak Hammock, SFCC, UF Vet school, vet school, adult education course at UF Leisure, VA hospital, Crone's Cradle conserve, natural health markets.

H. Identify and weigh the benefits of separate vs. integrated Herbal Studies Program (timeframe – concurrent with doctorate program development in Goal #6 below).

I. Stay current on accreditation and licensing requirements and trends in order to smartly position ourselves for the future (ongoing practice).

J. Create standard practices for communicating administrative and curricular changes to all faculty in a timely manner. (ongoing practice)

K. Continue to support and nourish faculty by offering ongoing learning opportunities with CEU credit (at least once every 1 to 2 years for local faculty; once every 2 to 3 years for entire faculty).

L. Enhance the usage of JR Worsley's *Vol. III The Five Elements and the Officials* (1 year).

M. Improve the "Practice Management" course curriculum to help graduates be successful in their careers. Use alumni survey information as a guide. Include community outreach activities in the course, if appropriate, to better prepare students for marketing their own practices (1 to 2 years).

3

## 2. OUTREACH to STUDENTS:

### Update and Implement a Cohesive Marketing Plan to Enhance Enrollment

*With an enrollment goal of 25 students per year, we will strengthen our marketing and recruitment efforts as follows:*

3

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- A. Evaluate annually our student demographic data to determine prospective applicant profiles. Update profiles of prospective student demographics, and pursue recruitment in the most effective ways. (ongoing practice)
  - i. Improve intra-staff communication and effective follow-up with prospective students who express an interest in the Academy.
  - ii. Increase alumni engagement to increase student enrollment, and ensure a sense of connection with the Academy. *See also Alumni Engagement Goal below*
- B. Enliven the effective use of Social Media, targeted for specific outcomes and measurable results from specific action steps – define who needs the info, what they need to know, and what’s the most effective way to disseminate the info (6 months and then ongoing practice).
  - i. Develop a Social Media Policy and Guidelines.
  - ii. Use various media platforms (currently #, Instagram, Facebook, Google +, etc.) [to] create relevant, updated hashtags and share them with constituents. Create a hashtag # specifically for prospective students.
  - iii. Empower students to develop and post using social media tools.
  - iv. Consider expanding use of Facebook or other social media ads.
  - v. Keep alumni and students informed of current social media efforts.
  - vi. Revive Horary parties as student planned and managed events, with faculty supervision, promoted by students via social media, with seasonal postcards featuring element/season/recipe.
  - vii. Ask each class to submit photo(s) to the website coordinator for posting; and - via the alumni association – elicit alumni photos, writings, advice, blog links for posting on the website (once a month).
- C. Continue to develop and distribute beautiful and effective marketing materials, including brochures, catalog, flyers, website (positioned to appear on the 1<sup>st</sup> page of search engine) and brand recognition (ongoing practice).
  - i. Share graphic and written materials with alumni for their website posting.
  - ii. Establish links to the Academy’s website from alumni websites.
  - iii. Distribute recruitment materials at college career centers and career fairs.

4

- D. Increase interest in the school by developing strategic partnerships with media, nonprofits, and schools for the mutual exchange of information through social media, blogs, websites and other outlets and thereby increase student enrollment.(3 to 5 years).
- E. Expand and keep our email marketing lists and listserve participant lists current (ongoing practice).

4

*Academy for Five Element Acupuncture Strategic Plan 2016-2021*

- F. Continue to publish and improve the distribution of our e-newsletter for alumni, faculty, staff, board, students, donors, potential donors, career development offices, press, others (seasonal newsletter).
- G. Host activities at the Academy and in the community to bolster name recognition and to attract new students and patients (i.e. open house, celebrations, fund raisers, etc.). (semi-annually).

### **3 FINANCIAL PRACTICES:**

#### **Create New Revenue Opportunities**

*The most consistent and significant revenue stream for the Academy is tuition, thus our primary financial objective is to continue recruiting, enrolling and retaining optimal-size classes. However, tuition alone does not support our total operating costs; additional income sources are vital to our financial health. In order to maintain financial stability, we commit to the following action steps:*

- A. Sustain and maximize ongoing revenue streams:
  - i. Increase enrollment consistently to at least 25 students per cohort. Evaluate tuition rates and adjust as needed and as appropriate in the market (ongoing practice).
  - ii. See also Outreach to Students Goal #2 above.
  - iii. Maintain a strong, self-sustaining clinic, with consistent income goals per intern per month (ongoing practice).
  - iv. Offer at least 3 CEU workshops per year, ensuring high quality, relevancy, and financial profitability (3 times per year).
  - v. Further develop opportunities for licensed practitioners to rent treatment room space in our clinic (ongoing practice).
- B. Pursue new revenue streams:
  - i. Create and implement a faculty clinic (6 months to 1 year).

5

- ii. Increase Herbal Studies for Acupuncture (HSA) program to at least 10 students per cohort (6 months to 1 year).
- iii. Establish effective and user-friendly revenue tracking system for the herbal clinic (6 months to 1 year).
- iv. Further develop operating procedures for the herbal dispensary.
- v. Effectively market loose, granule and patent herbal dispensary services to alumni, local and regional practitioners (1 to 2 years).
- vi. Explore grant opportunities and obtain one grant for fiscal year 2016/17; evaluate feasibility and usefulness of pursuing additional grants in following fiscal years (1 to 5 years).
- vii. Create “green” investment portfolio for the Academy (1 to 2 years).

5

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- viii. Explore and pursue business sponsorships, for example with clinic treatment for employees at reduced rates (1 to 3 years).
- ix. Create a process and structure for alumni (and other donors’) ongoing financial support, for example have 3 membership levels (1 to 2 years).

C. Create a Development Plan for fundraising and continued improvement of the Academy’s programs and income streams (2 years).

D. Alumni Community Support: Fully support alumni relations to stay connected with graduates of the Academy. This can mutually benefit the Academy and alumni – when we support alumni in creating successful practices, we also encourage a referral stream of new students and contributions (ongoing practice). *See also Alumni Engagement Goal #4 below.*

#### **4. ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT**

##### **Improve Alumni Support and Relations**

*Graduates of the Academy are valuable resources and our best source of referrals. We will support alumni in developing successful practices and increase alumni engagement by strengthening a symbiotic, ongoing relationship with alumni, who in turn help us replenish the pool of new students and keep our programs vibrant.*

A. Establish a highly effective Alumni Organization.

- i. Develop a purpose statement, structure and system for initiating and maintaining an alumni organization (6 months to 1 year).
- ii. Maintain updated, accurate and complete database information for past graduates. Include at least one alumni representative from each alumni class in the alumni organization (ongoing practice).
- iii. Communicate and stay connected with alumni regularly via e-newsletter, activities at or sponsored by the Academy, CEU workshops and other methods (ongoing practice).
- iv. Interface with the Alumni Mentor Program. See B. below

6

*NOTE: Pam Smith volunteered to get the organization started, with Natalie Shea Giusti.*

- B. Establish an Alumni Mentor Program to pair experienced practitioners with new graduates and further support new graduates in developing their practices. Mentors often benefit from the relationship as well as mentees (1 to 2 years):
  - i. Identify an Alumni Mentor Program coordinator or supervisor and develop a job description.
  - ii. Develop mentoring guidelines and tips, for both mentors and mentees. Mentoring within this program is envisioned as a free service.
  - iii. Collect and maintain an active list of alumni members willing to volunteer as a mentor for a new graduate(s); and ensure appropriate training or preparation of mentors.
  - iv. Starting with class 31, make a list of volunteer alumni mentors available to upcoming graduates.
  - v. Seek periodic feedback from program participants (both mentors and mentees) regarding program effectiveness, and suggestions for improvement.
  
- C. Use appropriate technology to communicate and stay connected with alumni:
  - i. Incorporate more alumni information and visibility in the seasonal e-newsletters from the Academy - possibly with an alumni member highlighted, or an article from an alumni in the e-newsletter, or links to alumni blogs (ongoing).
  - ii. Energize the alumni list serve as an on-line discussion and information forum (1 year).
  - iii. Link alumni websites to the Academy website and vice versa (1 year).
  - iv. Post alumni profiles and website info on the Academy website (1 year).
  - v. Utilize current tools like blogs and Facebook to stay connected with alumni and promote Five Element wellness (1 to 2 years).
  
- D. Continue offering dynamic and relevant professional development seminars and CEU workshops for alumni and faculty, as well as for non-Five Element practitioners who want to deepen their understanding of the Five Element tradition. (3 times per year).

## **5 FIVE ELEMENT TRADITION**

### **Become the frontline for the heart and future of the Five Element Tradition**

*The Academy is deeply rooted in the Five Element tradition, in full harmony with nature. To consistently offer exceptional education and patient care, we recognize that we must nourish ourselves – our staff, teaching faculty, and students. To deepen and keep the Five Element*

*tradition alive and vibrant, we renew our commitment to:*

- A. Continue to support faculty in teaching the Five Element Tradition:
  - i. Further develop and improve the Teaching Manual, in order to ensure consistency and lesson plan focal points or outlines (3 to 5 years).
  - ii. Continue to offer high quality Five Element continuing education courses for faculty with CEU credit (once a year) as described in Academic Development Goal #1.K.
  - iii. Continue to develop effective Five Element teaching resources as described in Academic Development Goal above #1.B (1 to 5 years).
  - iv. Encourage and support dialogue among faculty by hosting periodic faculty meetings as described in Academic Development Goal #1.D (1 to 2 years).
  
- B. Establish a Student Mentor Program - in addition to, or in coordination with, the Alumni Mentor Program described above - to pair first and second year students with clinic intern mentors, and to pair clinic interns with recent graduate mentors (6 months to 1 year):
  - i. identify a Student Mentor Program coordinator or supervisor and develop a job description, possibly the Clinic Supervisor and/or Student Dean.
  - ii. Develop mentoring guidelines and tips, for both mentors and mentees
  - iii. Collect and maintain an active list of clinic interns and recent graduates willing to volunteer as mentors; and ensure appropriate training or preparation of mentors. Consider asking faculty/admin to nominate students as mentors in the program.
  - iv. Make a list of volunteer clinic intern mentors and volunteer recent graduate mentors available to the appropriate 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> year students and clinic interns who would like to have a mentor.
  - v. Seek periodic feedback from program participants (both mentors and mentees) regarding program effectiveness, and suggestions for improvement.
  
- C. Host a Five Element Symposium (1 to 3 years).
  - i. Create a Committee to oversee planning, development, logistics and marketing
  - ii. Bring in speakers/practitioners to offer Five Element continuing education seminars
  - iii. and workshops, with a goal of 15 to 20 CEU credits.
  - iv. Consider hiring a student to coordinate with administration and oversee the project.
  
- D. Continue to support and nourish our faculty, staff, administrators, and students in order to maintain our focus on educating highly effective, compassionate and successful Five Element practitioners (ongoing practice).

## **6 THOROUGHLY EXPLORE DOCTORAL LEVEL EDUCATION AT THE ACADEMY**



The time has come for the Academy to explore doctoral level education. Post-Master's doctoral degrees have been in existence for over 10 years and recently ACAOM has released educational standards for a first professional doctorate (FPD) degree. Several schools are already offering the FPD. In order to stay competitive with this emerging trend, the Academy will investigate doctoral level options to determine which, if any, is the best fit.

A. Project Mapping:

- i. Utilize results of the Academy's 2016 Self-Study, and up-to-date information regarding likely development of doctoral level education requirements and competencies, to map out a rough process for making the best decisions and moving forward in a timely way on this issue (3 to 6 months).
- ii. Continually monitor and relate doctoral requirements to the Five Element tradition and principles we hold most dear and to which we are firmly committed (ongoing practice).

B. Work with a Consultant:

- i. Hire a Consultant as needed to guide us in an effective process of developing successful doctoral level education program that fits within the vision, mission, philosophy and principles of the Academy (as needed).
- ii. Create a timeline of Action Steps.

C. Conduct Market Research (6 to 9 months):

- i. Share information about development of doctoral level education, and survey alumni and staff.
- ii. Assess projected integrated health industry needs.
- iii. Gather information about and research how other schools have successfully managed the development of doctoral level education.

D. Decide the best and most appropriate path for the Academy to provide doctoral level education (9 months to 1 year). Currently, the two main approaches are:

- i. First Professional Doctorate (FPD) where students enter the program from the start on a doctorate track; or
- ii. Post-Master Doctorate where students obtain their Masters of Acupuncture and then continue for an additional time of study in order to obtain their doctorate.

E. Curriculum Development (3 years):

- i. Keep abreast of doctoral level accreditation standards.
- ii. Gather curriculum examples from other schools.
- iii. Develop [doctoral] curriculum based on the Five Element tradition, required "competencies" and accreditation and licensing standards.

- F. Determine Infrastructure and Technology Needs (3 years):
  - i. Assess technology needs and requirements.
  - ii. Maximize the use of current systems already in place.
  
- G. Determine Financial Needs and Set a Budget (3 years):
  - i. Develop a Budget for implementation of the program.
  - ii. Determine cost to the Academy.
  - iii. Determine cost to students.
  - iv. Determine cost to faculty working on upgrading to doctorate.
  
- H. Plan to Upgrade Faculty (3 to 5 years):
  - i. Determine doctoral teaching faculty requirements and qualifications.
  - ii. Plan to upgrade existing faculty members who are interested in teaching within the doctoral program.
  - iii. Plan for the first class of students to include existing faculty members.
  
- I. Licensing and Accreditation:
  - Apply for and gain state and national approval of the [proposed doctoral] program (3 to 5 years).