Dr. Kristin Weitzel

Dr. Kristin Weitzel is changing pharmacy education through creativity and leadership.

With an NIH-funded genomic medicine implementation grant within the College of Pharmacy, Weitzel created an innovative new course titled 'Clinical Applications of Pharmacogenomics.' Students can use their own DNA samples to create genotyped information and work through case scenarios that challenge them to make decisions about how the genetic information can influence and improve clinical direction and patient care. Students also learn to use the genotyped information to consider genetic risk predictions for common and complex disease as well as ethical issues in the field.

As an Entrepreneurship Fellow, Dr. Weitzel is focused on building innovation and entrepreneurship into the pharmacy curriculum. Among other activities, she is collaborating with the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation on a creative approach to integrating a set of entrepreneurial competencies into pharmacy education.

Dr. Weitzel received the 2014 Distinguished Achievement Award in Service from the American Pharmacy Association. She recently became the editor-in-chief of Pharmacy Today. Her current research interests include assessing innovative teaching and practice approaches in pharmacogenomics and precision medicine.

Coming Up…

• Faculty Fellows monthly lunch conversations:
  o March 22, 2016 at noon
  o April 20, 2016 at noon

• Women’s Entrepreneurship Symposium, featuring keynote speaker Kathy Fields, co-founder of Proactive and Rodan + Fields
  o April 1, 2016 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
  o Free admission. To register, visit tinyurl.com/hdualce

• Big Idea Competition Semi-Final and Final Rounds
  o April 21 – 22, 2016
Developing Entrepreneurial Competencies

An interesting trend in education is the movement toward competency-based learning. Here, the focus centers on developing the skills and capabilities of a student in a particular area of study. Hence, the concern becomes determining the competencies of a good artist, engineer, archaeologist, doctor, or social worker.

What, then, are the competencies associated with entrepreneurial behavior? Based on a major national study, the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation has identified thirteen primary competencies:

- opportunity recognition
- opportunity assessment
- risk mitigation
- resource leveraging
- conveying a compelling vision
- bricolage, guerrilla & bootstrapping skills
- focus and adaptation;
- creative problem-solving
- value innovation/creation of something new
- tenacity/perseverance
- building and using entrepreneurial networks
- entrepreneurial self-efficacy
- resilience

These competencies differ from more conventional managerial competencies, such as the abilities to organize, motivate, sell, budget or assess performance. Importantly, such competencies matter not just for those trying to start a venture, but for anyone striving to think and act in more entrepreneurial ways.

So how does a student become better at something like opportunity recognition or risk mitigation? A competency can be broken down into knowledge, attitude, and behavioral skill components. For instance, with opportunity recognition, we might consider:

- Knowledge: types and sources of opportunities, underlying nature of opportunities, major ways in which opportunities are uncovered, specific opportunity generation techniques.
- Attitude: curiosity about why things work a certain way, the value one places on being alert to opportunity, and an openness to being exposed to diverse and changing situations.
- Behaviors/skills: Abilities to draw associations, interpret trends, assess customer needs, as well as actual numbers of opportunities generated and their relative novelty.

The key is to build such competencies into the curricular and co-curricular elements of an academic program. Evidence suggests competencies are best mastered where theory and content are coupled with creative approaches to experiential learning.

“IF YOU CAN IMAGINE IT, YOU CAN ACHIEVE IT. IF YOU CAN DREAM IT, YOU CAN BECOME IT.”

~ William Arthur Ward