

# The Mortar Board



International  
Pharmaceutical  
Federation  
Academic Pharmacy  
Section

Academic pharmacy

The Mortar Board COVID-19 Special Edition 1- April 2020 -

## Dear FIP member

In these extremely challenging times, I would like to share our heartfelt support and solidarity with you and your families.

Today, "the role of pharmacists is crucial: They are important actors in the health chain" were the **words** shared by FIP President Dominique Jordan. But, the COVID-19 pandemic is having an unprecedented impact on the way we live and work. In addition, the global lockdown of education institutions around the world has caused major disruptions with teaching moving online and assessments restructured, including many schools of pharmacy.

In this Mortar Board COVID-19 Special Edition, we share stories from FIP AIM Advisory Committee Member Faculties on how they best managed disruptions for continuity of education.

Our thoughts are with the people affected and everyone working around the clock to help those most in need of essential health services.

"Stay home, Stay Safe, and Stay Educated"



*Dalia Bajis, Editor*

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- [Message form the President](#)
- [Stay Home, Stay Connected and Stay Educated](#)
- [COVID-19 -focus research](#)
- [Live Twitter Chat](#)

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## Message from AcPS President



First and foremost, I wish good health and safety for all our Section members and pharmaceutical educators worldwide. We are in a unique time in our history. According to the World Health Organization on 4 April 2020, there have been COVID-19 cases reported in 206 countries and territories world-wide, with nearly 1.1 million individual patient cases and approximately 60,000 deaths. These numbers are expected to increase dramatically in the coming weeks. It is now reported that over 3 billion individuals are in jurisdictions that have stay-at-home orders in effect.

These past weeks have seen sudden and dramatic changes in pharmaceutical education and education in general. In those affected countries, pharmaceutical education has moved to online instruction for all coursework and there are many examples of best practice for this expanded delivery method. We, in pharmaceutical education, must look at this change in teaching methodology as an opportunity. The new distance education capabilities that are being developed and expanded will serve us well as we get past the pandemic and rethink the optimal balance of in-person classroom, laboratory and experiential instruction with online strategies. I am optimistic and confident that our educational outcomes will be enhanced with this new balance, given the tremendous talent that exists globally in our pharmaceutical educators. In addition,

will be directed to the battle against this virus and future viruses. Lastly, I know that our pharmaceutical educators are important sources of information to their communities, governmental groups and their families about therapeutics, immunizations, drug development and science in general. Thank you for all you are doing in your countries and local areas to assist in lessening the impact of this pandemic. I look forward to hearing and collecting your stories in the future. Stay safe and know that your Section leadership is here to support you.

John A. Pfeifer, FCCP, FAPhA, FFIP  
President, Academic Pharmacy Section

President and Professor  
St. Louis College of Pharmacy  
St. Louis, Missouri USA

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## “Stay Home, Stay Safe, and Stay Educated”

The world is experiencing a difficult time with the coronavirus outbreak and every field of work is challenged in various ways. The pharmacy profession has also been affected in every setting including community and hospital pharmacy. FIP launched a [guideline](#) to help pharmacists around the world navigate through the coronavirus crisis.

Pharmacy academics had to also take serious preventative actions against the COVID-19. Today, institutions are implementing new measures to protect the students and the academic community. Due to the outbreak, many educational institutions have closed and trying to adapt their students and curricula to the new ways of learning. In this Special Edition of the Mortar Board, FIP AIM Advisory Committee Members share a compilation from various countries on how academics best managed the disruption in education in order to “Stay home, stay safe, and stay educated”.

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## Nepal, Kathmandu University

By: Rajani Shakya

"To prevent transmission, Nepal is in complete lock down since March 24. My university has shut down a couple of days ahead of this since the Nepal Government asked all academic institutions to close on March 18. The students and faculty members were given a holiday and academic programs have been halted. At that time, we had wrapped up all the semester courses and were expecting end-semester exams within a couple of weeks. Due to the lockdown, exams have been postponed until further notice... My Department -the Department of Pharmacy- has its own small 'Production Unit' where we prepare daily use items like liquid hand wash soap, dish washing soap, toilet cleaners, and sanitizers. Recently, the university's COVID-19 Task Force was formed where my department has taken responsibility for producing necessary sanitary items related to COVID-19 prevention and management within the university system. We are now producing hand sanitizers and disinfectants and supplying these to students, faculty and staff of the university. We are also supplying disinfectants for the university vehicles, cafeterias, offices etc. In addition, we supply necessary sanitary items to the Dhulikhel Hospital, Kathmandu University Teaching Hospital."

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## Lebanon, Lebanese International University

By: Mohamad Rahal

"All classes at the School of Pharmacy, and experiential education practices at community pharmacies and in hospitals are suspended. However, didactic classes are given remotely online using different tools: Google classroom is used in all courses, where lectures are recorded and uploaded, then the professor arranges an interactive session (live session) with the students using either zoom or google meet. Regarding simulation classes and experiential education practices, the professor is either creating a case or brings a case from the hospital, and send it to the students in order to discuss it, detect errors/omissions/interactions and propose therapeutic plan and counseling for a virtual patient. Regarding practical courses or laboratories, videos and simulation experiments are uploaded to the google classroom and students are required to

to the students with simple but efficient way to achieve the courses Intended Learning Outcomes. With respect to assessments and grading, the school will currently use online quizzes, projects and assignments at this stage through the Moodle system."

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## South Africa, University of Witwatersrand

By: Yahya Choonara

"At the Department of Pharmacy, our staff and students are feeling anxious about what will happen next to our health and safety, livelihood, education, research, freedoms and to life as we know it. Whilst we continue to practice physical distance and social solidarity, this disruption provides us with an opportunity to re-imagine how we deliver our academic programs, how we will teach and learn going forward. It also allows us to exercise control over the aspects that we can change and in this instance, how we can learn and work remotely. Currently we are on lockdown and uncertainty around movement in the months ahead. After much deliberation we agreed that we will take our academic program online within the next two weeks. We are also exploring the possibility for allowing our senior students to assist with the pandemic as a supportive role where relevant. This will provide them with a unique learning experience to understand the issues faced at the coal-face of a pandemic. Some of the issues we face with the online format of our program is the digital divide in South Africa and how to mitigate against deepening this divide, student access to smart mobile devices, access to data (Wits University has secured zero rated sites from mobile phone providers in South Africa so that data access can be granted to staff and students at no cost). Our contingency plans keep evolving as the pandemic reaches various stages in the coming days. However, with all that is happening around us we still remain very upbeat and positive by adopting the mantra that "We Will Take the Opportunity in Every Crisis"."

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## Malta, University of Malta

By: Lilian M. Azzopardi

"In the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Pharmacy of the University of Malta has focused on three activities: maintaining teaching sessions, mobilizing students to volunteer to support pharmaceutical services needs, and providing scientific updates to the healthcare professionals. As the university campus is closed down, the department activated the plan to address the first action, namely shifting teaching sessions to on-line platform. The department already has established experience in on-line teaching, since we run the post-graduate Doctorate in Pharmacy programme in collaboration with the College of Pharmacy of the University of Illinois in Chicago. This collaborative

sessions, we are now offering teaching sessions for all the pharmacy and pharmaceutical technology degree courses using different modalities including Zoom and Webex Video Conferencing for live link-ups by the lecturer. Students log-in at the scheduled time and have an interactive session with the lecturer. Lecturers can share their screen and put up PowerPoint presentations which students can follow. We have found this to be a better way to connect in real-time with students rather than pre-recorded lectures. When the pre-recorded lectures are preferred by the lecturer, the Panopto platform is used. For tutorials and research discussions, where small group teaching is involved, the Google Meet platform is being used. The second action, mobilize students to volunteer to support joining task teams that are geared to address pharmaceutical needs as the situation evolves. Examples of these needs included preparing hand rubs for healthcare facilities according to the World Health Organisation formulations, providing a pharmaceutical delivery service to older persons and persons who are housebound to receive their chronic medications and attending community pharmacies which are currently inundated by patient requests for preventive medicinal products and for chronic medications. The third activity is the delivery of regular short live Webinars targeting pharmacy and medical students and healthcare professionals to present scientific evidence on evolving topics related to COVID-19 including prevention of transmission, use of medications and updates on research in the pharmacotherapeutics of coronavirus management."

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## Canada, University of Toronto

By: Wayne Hindmarsh

"The University has cancelled in-person classes and for the remainder of the term all classes will be delivered through the internet. Students in pharmacy for the experiential components are not able to continue with hospital components of the programme. Canada is virtually in a total lockdown state since the first week of March."

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## USA, Howard University

By: Toyin Tofade

"Our College of Pharmacy has adopted a remote classroom environment where all instruction is now conducted through Blackboard Collaborate Ultra®, Zoom® or Microsoft teams. All faculty were provided instructions on how to operate these systems and licenses were obtained for each of the departments to keep the current academic class schedule as much as possible. OSCE/Simulations will be done in person however with limits to the number of students allowed per live session."

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By: Ralph Altieri

"We have moved to online learning with training for faculty, we are now all working remotely, because our campus is officially closed. Research labs are nearly shut down, travel bans are in effect indefinitely and it looks like our in-person graduation ceremonies in May will be canceled and we will try to find a digital alternative."

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## Russian Federation, St. Petersburg State Chemical and Pharmaceutical University

By: Yulia Ladutko

"Almost all of the educational organizations in Russia have cancelled the person classes and started classes online. We have the university's platforms and classes on all-Russian educational platforms (that are free for the universities here). Senior students of medical and pharmaceutical faculties may continue their experiential practices in hospitals and pharmacies according to their qualification and desire to be helpful."

## South Korea, Ajou University

By: Beom-Jin Lee

"Korea had peaked in the number of corona infected people but is settling down with the aid of excellent medical services. All of the pharmacy schools have cancelled in person classes, and all classes will be delivered through the virtual online lecture until the first week of April. Senior students who do the pharmacy practice and internship in community and hospital pharmacy, have stopped temporarily."

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## Kuwait, Kuwait University

By: Pierre Moreau

"We are in a complete shutdown and announced that we will continue the current semester in August. Because our university does not accept online education as a replacement for our current courses, more meetings will be on the education status."

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By: Carlo Marra

"In my country, we haven't taken our courses online yet but are planning to do shortly."

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## COVID-19-focus research

From: St. Louis College of Pharmacy, St. Louis, MO USA

Authors: Elizabeth Ridgway, Pharm.D. Candidate 2020

John A. Pieper, Pharm.D., FCCP, FAPhA, FFIP; President, and Professor

1. Forecasting COVID-19 impact on hospital bed-days, ICU-days, ventilator-days and deaths by US state in the next 4 months. [More](#)
  2. COVID-19: Exploring Clinical Features, Nutritional Supplementation, and Proposed Management in the USA. [More](#)
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## AcPS Live Twitter Chat



Later this week, a **Live Twitter Chat** will be hosted by the Academic Pharmacy Section of FIP. The chat will be facilitated by Associate Professor Rebekah Mole from the University of Sydney who is also the Secretary of the Hospital Pharmacy Section (HPS) at FIP.

**Topic:** Online assessment

**Date:** 9 April 2020 at 13:00 CET

Follow our [Twitter](#) account @FIP\_AcPS

Hash tags: #OnlineAssessment #COVID19 #FIPAcademicLive

Moderator: Dr Dalia Bajis

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## About the Academic Pharmacy Section

FIP's Academic Pharmacy Section was founded in 1972. Our mission is to serve as an international source for networking, collaboration and inspiration for educators to transform pharmacy education for the purpose of advancing practice and science to meet present and future health needs in communities around the world.



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