

Update on the MITCM Teach-out

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As vice president for academic affairs at Tai Sophia Institute, I would like to report on what has happened with the teach-out of students from the Maryland Institute of Traditional Chinese Medicine (MITCM) that Tai Sophia assumed at the beginning of 2003, and that was reported in the March 2003 issue of *Acupuncture Today*. I write both as a tribute to the MITCM students and faculty with whom we have worked, and as a record of how successful a teach-out can be.

Sixty-two students joined the teach-out that began in February 2003: 48 in the second and third years of their acupuncture study, and 14 in the final stage of their program in Chinese herbology. At this time, all of the students in the Chinese herbology program have completed their studies, and all but 19 students have completed the program in acupuncture. We believe this is a remarkable success story.

It is very important to note that the success of this teach-out is a direct result of the people who have been involved in it. From the earliest planning stages, the students of MITCM displayed a flexibility and a willingness to collaborate with the administration at the Tai Sophia Institute in service to the achievement of their educational goals, in spite of their having undergone a considerable amount of uncertainty and an understandable disappointment at the closing of the school they had chosen to attend. They are the true heroes of this story - but they are joined by others as well. The MITCM faculty who continued their work with the students in the teach-out proved their dedication by in many cases taking on less than convenient teaching schedules to ensure that students could complete their work as efficiently as possible. These faculty deserve to be mentioned and thanked publicly for their dedication. They are: Dennis Barrow, Jie Chen, John Corame, Steven Kaufman, Weilin Liu, Sheryl Martin, Carolyn Shenmen, Paul Soong, Kelly Walker, Jean Wu, Hanlong Yao, Eugene Zhang, Grant Zhang, and Mark Zhang.

The MITCM teach-out director, Susan Testa, who had worked earlier at MITCM as academic dean, has worked long and hard to ensure that faculty are on board, that schedules are produced, that the clinic runs smoothly, and that the countless details of keeping a program running are attended to. Susan's assistant, Anne Wang, has also been crucial to the success of the teach-out, through her tending to both the facility and the students on a daily basis with tender loving care.

One more person who must be recognized as being crucial to the success of the teach-out is Judy Hendrickson, director of academic affairs for career and workforce education at the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). Ms. Hendrickson's efforts to coordinate planning and agreement among MHEC, MITCH, Tai Sophia Institute and the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM) were extraordinary. Finally, the leadership of ACAOM should be acknowledged for its collaboration in extending the accreditation of the MITCM program for the duration of the teach-out program, thus ensuring that graduates would be able to achieve licensure.

I think it is important to note and to celebrate the success of this teach-out, and to realize the contribution to the wider community that is being made (and will be made) by the graduates of this program. To all of the students who have already graduated from the program, I would like to

publicly say, "Congratulations!" To those who remain, I extend my best wishes for successful completion within the next several months. To everyone who has worked together so well to enable these students to become practitioners, thus benefiting the larger community, I offer my appreciation. This collaborative effort has been a very rewarding one, and I am certain that the positive results of our work will be appreciated for years to come by those for whom it was ultimately carried out: the patients of the practitioners who have graduated and will graduate from these programs.

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