

A Descriptive Study of Political Activism in First-Year Pharmacy Students

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ABSTRACT. The purpose of this study was to assess first-year pharmacy students' attitudes toward and interests in political activism due to the lack of published information on the political awareness, attitudes, and involvement of pharmacy students. First-year pharmacy students at a southern university were administered a questionnaire pertaining to political activism. Frequencies and descriptive statistics were calculated. In addition, an exploratory cluster analysis was performed based on a political activities scale. Students agreed that pharmacists should be aware of public policy issues and influence policy decisions. Voting was the most common form of participation in the political process, and when considered in the aggregate only one-third of the students were interested in being actively involved politically. The cluster analysis revealed four distinct groups of students with markedly different attitudes toward political participation. Two groups had a greater tendency for political activism; however, their motivations for such activity appeared different. Overall, students' indications of both their current and future

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The authors would like to thank Susan Bishop, Manager, Regulatory Affairs and Political Action, American Pharmaceutical Association, for her assistance.

Journal of Pharmacy Teaching, Vol. 11(1) 2003
<http://www.haworthpress.com/web/JPT>
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Digital Object Identifier: 10.1300/J060v11n01_02

political participation varied based on their cluster membership. To stimulate interest in being involved and developing political activism skills, it is essential for students to be introduced and invited to participate in the political process during their education. This research indicates that two types of politically motivated students may exist, and although their motivations are different, their activism may be similar. Further investigation into the nature and motivations for political activism in pharmacy is warranted. [Article copies available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service: 1-800-HAWORTH. E-mail address: <docdelivery@haworthpress.com> Website: <<http://www.HaworthPress.com>> © 2003 by The Haworth Press, Inc. All rights reserved.]

KEYWORDS. Political involvement, pharmacy education

Government is not reason, it is not eloquence, it is force; like fire, a troublesome servant and a fearful master. Never for a moment should it be left to irresponsible action. —*George Washington*

INTRODUCTION

There are dozens of legislative proposals at both the state and federal level that pertain to health care every year. The Pharmacy Education Act, the Patient Bill of Rights, Medicare prescription reimbursement initiatives, collaborative practice agreement legislation, and pharmacist-technician ratio requirements are just a few that directly relate to the profession of pharmacy. As pharmacists perform their dispensing responsibilities and provide more comprehensive patient care in all practice settings, it is essential that they are politically active. Current and future legislative proposals will affect pharmacy practice both directly and indirectly. Pharmaceutical care and disease state management have been promoted as the cornerstones upon which the future of the profession of pharmacy is being built. Unfortunately, these issues seem ambiguous and invisible to legislators, illustrating the urgency for pharmacists to be politically involved.

Nurses and physician assistants have strengthened their political power. In many states, they have been successful in gaining prescribing privileges and advancing their practice through political means. Although each profession can be viewed as progressing, it was often despite each other. In Mississippi, physician assistants were not permitted

to sit for licensure for over 2 decades while the other 49 states had incorporated physician assistants into health care settings. This was largely due to the lobbying efforts of the Mississippi Nurses Association. This situation changed recently, but the Mississippi Nurses Association is still involved on any task force concerning the physician assistant issue. The Mississippi nursing and physician assistant conflict demonstrates the need for and strength of political activism. Without a strong voice, a profession's progression and growth can be severely impeded.

Pharmacists have a history of being politically active. As entrepreneurs in their community, many were involved in community politics as council members or mayors. Most pharmacists were autonomous and in a unique position to influence policy. Today, pharmacists need to be prepared to influence changes in policy that affect the profession. Pharmacists must educate their representatives about the issues from a pharmacy perspective. Failure to do so could result in policy decision making without pharmacy's interests being considered, or even with pharmacy's interests being subverted. Authors in the pharmacy literature have stressed the importance of being politically active and have provided steps to becoming involved, yet few studies have investigated this issue (1, 2).

Alternatively, researchers in nursing and medicine have studied why nurses and physicians are or are not active and have developed interventions to increase political involvement in their disciplines (3, 4). One proposed model is the Political Influence Model, which suggests that political influence is the assimilation of commitment, initiative, involvement, and information (5). Nursing researchers have also identified facilitators and barriers to being politically involved (6). Study participants have indicated that the political involvement is an evolving process influenced by family, role models, and previous exposure to the political process (e.g., courses). The main barriers identified have been lack of knowledge, lack of time, apathy, and inadequate socialization to the political process. Nursing educators, at both the baccalaureate and master's level, have developed courses to teach health care policy and the political process and have provided opportunities for students to enhance their political activism skills (7-9).

Similarly, the pharmacy profession needs to be politically involved. There are a myriad of political activities occurring within each state, and it appears that some pharmacy students are participating in these activities. Additionally, the pharmacy literature contains an abundance of editorials encouraging pharmacy students to support pro-pharmacy legislation and to be politically involved (1, 10). However, little is

known about the political awareness, attitudes, or involvement of pharmacy students. Little empirical research has been conducted to describe the political activism of pharmacy students and to identify opportunities for interventions that foster political activism. It is important to understand the political activism of pharmacists and pharmacy students as well as how to achieve a higher level of political activism. Further research in pharmacy on political activism is warranted.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The overall purpose of this study was to explore first-year pharmacy students' attitudes toward and interests in political activism. Political activism was defined as students' political advocacy and involvement and included their political skills, political knowledge, understanding of political context, and political motivation and interest (8). The following objectives were accomplished to fulfill the study's purpose:

1. To describe pharmacy students' overall attitude toward pharmacy's role in politics and public policy
2. To describe pharmacy students' interest in political activism
3. To describe pharmacy students' perceived knowledge and skills with respect to political activism
4. To describe pharmacy students based upon their perceptions of politics, government, and activism.

METHODOLOGY

First-year pharmacy students at a southern college of pharmacy were selected as the convenient population to study. Only one school was surveyed because of the exploratory nature of the study and limited resources. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect the data. Students were administered the questionnaire at the beginning of a class period during the last month of their first professional year.

The questionnaire, as shown in Appendix A, was designed so that each question corresponded to one of the study objectives. Several questions were included to assess students' attitude toward government policy and political involvement. These questions were based on the works of the Harvard University Institute for Politics (11). This adapted scale was used as the basis for the cluster analysis. Students' political

interest and involvement were measured using categorical questions. The political activities included on the questionnaire were similar to those used by Davidson and Cotter in their study on political participation (12). Students' perceived political knowledge and skills were measured using a seven-point Likert-type scale. Demographic questions were included at the end of the questionnaire. Two faculty members who are involved in political aspects of pharmacy were asked to evaluate the questionnaire for content relevance and completeness. The questionnaire was pretested by three non-first-year pharmacy students. The questionnaire was revised based on their comments and questions.

Frequencies and descriptive statistics were calculated using SPSS 10.0. Cluster analysis was performed using a ten-item scale. All questions in the battery used a seven-point Likert-type scale. The cluster analysis involved two clustering steps as suggested by Hair et al. (13). First, a hierarchical cluster analysis was performed. After examining the agglomeration schedule and the dendrogram, the four-cluster solution was selected as most meaningful. Then, a non-hierarchical cluster analysis was performed, using the cluster means from the previous analysis as seed points. This technique allows for members of a cluster to change membership as new clusters are formed and tends to create a more stable solution.

RESULTS

Sixty-nine of 75 first-year pharmacy students completed the survey, yielding a 92% response rate. The mean age of respondents was 23 years, and approximately 70% were female.

To accomplish the first study objective, several questions addressed students' overall attitudes toward public policy and pharmacist involvement in public policy. Interestingly, students agreed that pharmacists should be aware of public policy issues and influence policy decisions, as shown in Table 1. On a scale from 1-7, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree, the respondents agreed that the government influences pharmacy practice (mean = 5.6), that pharmacists need to understand the political process (reverse-coded item, mean = 4.7), and that pharmacists should be politically active (mean = 5.1).

When asked about their participation in the political process, few students had participated in it other than voting. Table 2 compares the number of students who had participated in a political activity to the number of students interested in participating in the activity as a phar-

TABLE 1. Attitudes Toward Public Policy and Pharmacist Involvement in Public Policy.

Item	Mean* (Standard Deviation)
Government policy influences pharmacy practice.	5.6 (1.2)
The Government wastes tax money.	5.4 (1.4)
The Government is run by a few big interest groups.	5.0 (1.3)
The Government is run for the benefit of all.	4.0 (1.4)
People like me don't have any say in what the Government does.	3.8 (1.4)
Politics and Government seem too complicated to understand.	3.7 (1.6)
Public officials care what people think.	3.8 (1.1)
Pharmacists do not need to understand the political process.	2.3 (1.2)
It is important for pharmacists to be active politically.	5.1 (1.2)
My pharmacy education should prepare me to be politically involved.	4.4 (1.4)

*Measured on a 7-point, Likert-type scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree

macist. Seventy-five percent of students have talked about politics with friends or family, 40% have listened to political talk radio, and 60% voted in the last presidential election. Among the students surveyed, contributing money to a political campaign ranked as the least important of all types of activism. The results also indicated that some students were interested in participating in the political process by working on a political campaign or meeting with legislators.

Students were then asked about their involvement in professional associations and the political process. On average, students joined at least one professional organization during their first year of pharmacy school. They attended noon lunch meetings to listen to a variety of speakers discuss pharmacy issues. The researchers also assessed students' perceived knowledge and skills. Overall, students indicated they were not comfortable being politically active. Table 3 provides the mean response to each item.

The cluster analysis, based on the attitudes toward government policy and political involvement, revealed four distinct groups of pharmacy students. The mean scores for each cluster are reported in Table 4. These four groups were labeled as the "fence sitters," "true believers," "political cynics," and "resigned apathetics." The fence sitters were not extreme on any issues and constituted the largest portion of the sample. The true believers reported an understanding of the impact of government on the profession of pharmacy and saw their ability to change it. The political cynics saw the impact of government and seemed to feel that activism was necessary, but were unsure of activism's impact. The

TABLE 2. Level of Involvement and Interest in the Political Process.

Item	Involvement (Have Done the Activity)	Interested (Interest in Doing the Activity as a Pharmacist)
Work on a political campaign	9%	15%
Talk to people to influence a vote	43%	37%
Vote in a presidential election	66%	84%
Vote in local elections	60%	81%
Contact a state legislator about an issue	7%	NA*
Listen to political talk radio	38%	NA
Give money to a political campaign	2%	13%
Take a class on public policy	10%	NA
Seek information on public policy issues	24%	NA
Talk about politics with friends and family	NA	63%
Meet face-to-face with political leader	NA	35%
Join a national pharmacy association	NA	78%
Consult with pharmacy association lobbyists	NA	34%
Attend Legislators' Day events	NA	16%
Write a letter to a state legislator	NA	28%
Attend a state or national pharmacy meeting	NA	60%
Give expert testimony at legislature hearings and public forums	NA	21%

*Not asked on the questionnaire

TABLE 3. Perceived Political Knowledge and Skills.

Item	Mean* (Standard Deviation)
Feel confident talking to the media about pharmacy	3.5 (1.6)
Can communicate pharmacy issues to political leaders	3.5 (1.4)
Knowledgeable of the political process	3.6 (1.4)
Aware of political positions of other professions	3.2 (1.4)
Aware of public policy issues affecting pharmacy practice	3.9 (1.5)
Have the skills to write a letter to my legislator	4.8 (1.8)
Know who my state representatives are	3.7 (1.9)

*Measured using a 7-point, Likert-type scale where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree

TABLE 4. Cluster Summary.

ATTITUDES TOWARD PUBLIC POLICY AND PHARMACIST INVOLVEMENT IN PUBLIC POLICY	All Students (n = 68)	Fence Sitters (n = 30)	True Believers (n = 13)	Political Cynics (n = 15)	Resigned Apathetics (n = 10)
ITEM	MEAN*				
Government policy influences pharmacy practice.	5.6	5.0	6.5	6.3	5.4
The Government wastes tax money.	5.4	4.7	5.2	6.5	6.2
The Government is run by a few big interest groups.	5.0	4.3	4.4	6.7	5.4
The Government is run for the benefit of all.	4.0	3.7	5.1	3.5	4.0
People like me don't have any say in what the Government does.	3.8	3.6	2.5	4.4	5.1
Politics and Government seem too complicated to understand.	3.7	4.1	3.1	2.5	5.3
Public officials care what people think.	3.8	3.3	4.7	3.5	4.5
Pharmacists do not need to understand the political process.	2.3	2.6	1.5	1.3	3.7
It is important for pharmacists to be active politically.	5.1	4.5	5.8	6.1	4.3
My pharmacy education should prepare me to be politically involved.	4.4	3.8	4.3	5.6	4.1

*Measured on a 7-point, Likert-type scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree

resigned apathetics reported that government was too complex and too out of reach to even bother with activism.

The four clusters have unique members within them. While their motivations for and against activism appear to be different, two of the clusters, fence sitters and the resigned apathetics, reported lower frequencies in historical and future political participation. For example, only 40% of the resigned apathetics reported voting in local elections, compared to 92% of the true believers. Results that illustrate these differences are reported in Tables 5, 6, and 7.

LIMITATIONS

This research is exploratory in nature. The results are based on a convenience sample of first-year pharmacy students at one university. As such, the results are representative of the sample only and are not generalizable to other institutions or to pharmacy students in other stages of progression. The cluster solution, based on the sample, may

TABLE 5. Cluster Summary.

LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT AND INTEREST IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS	All Students (n = 68)	Fence Sitters (n = 30)	True Believers (n = 13)	Political Cynics (n = 15)	Resigned Apathetics (n = 10)
WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING HAVE YOU DONE?	PERCENT "YES"				
Worked on a political campaign	9	0	23	20	0
Talked to people to influence a vote	43	37	54	53	30
Voted in a presidential election	66	67	77	60	60
Voted in local elections	60	53	92	60	40
Contacted a state legislator about an issue	7	7	23	0	0
Listened to political talk radio	38	27	38	67	30
Given money to a political campaign	1	0	8	0	0
Taken a class on public policy	10	7	23	13	0
Sought information on public policy issues	24	10	54	33	10
WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN DOING AS A PHARMACIST?					
Working on a political campaign	15	3	8	47	10
Talking to people to influence a vote	37	20	69	53	20
Voting in the next presidential election	84	77	100	87	80
Voting in local elections	81	73	100	93	60
Talking about politics with friends and family	63	57	100	73	20
Joining a national pharmacy association	78	70	92	93	60
Meeting face-to-face with political leader	35	13	62	73	10
Attending Legislators' Day events	16	10	23	33	0
Consulting with pharmacy association lobbyists	34	17	54	67	10
Writing a letter to a state legislator	28	17	46	47	10
Attending a state or national pharmacy meeting	60	53	77	67	50
Giving money to a political campaign	13	0	23	33	10
Giving expert testimony at legislature hearings and public forums	21	7	31	40	20

TABLE 6. Cluster Summary.

IMPORTANCE OF PHARMACISTS' INVOLVEMENT	All Students (n = 68)	Fence Sitters (n = 30)	True Believers (n = 13)	Political Cynics (n = 15)	Resigned Apathetics (n = 10)
ITEM	MEAN*				
For pharmacists to contact state legislators	5.1	4.4	5.7	5.9	4.9
For pharmacists to give money to political campaigns	4.1	3.6	4.5	5.2	3.3
For pharmacists to join professional organizations	5.5	5.3	5.8	5.9	5.5
For pharmacists to influence public policy	5.4	5.1	5.9	6.1	4.9
For pharmacists to keep up to date with public policy issues	5.6	5.2	6.2	6.2	5.3
For pharmacists to be an advocate for pharmacy in public policy issues	5.6	5.1	6.0	6.3	5.5

TABLE 7. Cluster Summary.

PERCEIVED POLITICAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS	All Students (n = 68)	Fence Sitters (n = 30)	True Believers (n = 13)	Political Cynics (n = 15)	Resigned Apathetics (n = 10)
ITEM	MEAN*				
Feel confident talking to the media about pharmacy	3.5	3.2	4.0	3.3	3.7
Can communicate pharmacy issues to political leaders	3.5	3.4	4.1	3.0	3.5
Knowledgeable of the political process	3.6	3.4	4.5	3.7	2.7
Aware of political positions of other professions	3.2	3.1	3.6	3.5	2.4
Aware of public policy issues affecting pharmacy practice	3.9	4.0	4.4	4.1	2.7
Have the skills to write a letter to my legislator	4.7	4.8	5.4	4.7	3.9
Know who my state representatives are	3.7	3.6	5.3	3.3	2.7

*Measured on a 7-point, Likert-type scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree

“over fit” this sample and needs to be confirmed in a multisite, randomized study. Finally, this study is not longitudinal in design, and trends in political activism can only be elucidated through a longitudinal study.

DISCUSSION

Understanding political activism is important to ensure that the pharmacy profession has a viable future in influencing health care policy deci-

sions. Unfortunately, there is little information on political activism in pharmacy students. This study introduces political activism as a research topic into the pharmacy education literature with the intention of developing interest among other educational researchers in investigating political activism and students' propensity to participate in political activism.

From this study, it appears that only one-third of students are interested in politics and public policy, although students generally agree pharmacists should be politically active. Perhaps part of the lack of interest is due to the perceived lack of knowledge about the political process. In other studies, lack of knowledge on how to participate in the political process was identified as a barrier to participating (4, 6).

The results of this study provide some evidence that pharmacy students may be less interested and less involved because they do not feel confident in the political arena. This provides an opportunity for pharmacy faculty and preceptors to serve as facilitators, educators, influencers, and role models for students. The cluster analysis demonstrates this potential. Two unique groups of students, the fence sitters and the resigned apathetics, were less inclined to participate in political activism. While their motivations for this appear different, if this cluster solution holds for pharmacy students in general, the implications for education are clear. Changes to current pharmacy curricula can be used to change the fence sitters into true believers and the resigned apathetics into political cynics or true believers.

While a two-cluster solution of pharmacy students—"involved" vs. "not involved"—may be appealing and does exist, in this sample the four-cluster solution provided more insight into the nature and beliefs of the students. It appears that while the two groups who tended toward political activity (the true believers and the political cynics) may have had different underlying motivations for their actions ("idealism" and, "protectionism"), political activity is more likely beneficial to the profession than a lack of activity.

Rains and Carroll suggest that health policy education has the potential to increase the political skills and involvement of students and, therefore, political socialization must be a component of the curriculum (8). Perhaps this is true for pharmacy as well. Colleges of pharmacy should consider formally educating students about the political process, facilitating the development of political skills, and increasing students' confidence that they can make a difference. Many pharmacy schools already provide various opportunities for students to learn about the political process. These opportunities range from attending lectures to visiting state capitols to participating in letter-writing campaigns.

Because the study results suggest that students entering pharmacy school are not completely knowledgeable about or comfortable with being politically active, more structured courses and activities that promote political activism may need to be developed, offered, and evaluated. Approximately one-third of the surveyed students were interested in taking a public policy elective, indicating public policy electives or independent studies in political activism should be offered to students. Students who understand how the process works will be empowered to make a difference through political means.

Not only are didactic opportunities necessary, but experiential opportunities in political activism should be provided. Many state and national associations host students for externships, clerkships, and internships and can assign students to government affairs for this rotation. For example, the Arkansas Pharmacists Association takes fourth-year pharmacy students on rotations to learn about the political process. The American Society for Consultant Pharmacists (ASCP) has the Paul G. Cano Legislative Internship which gives pharmacy students experience and training in federal and state legislative and regulatory processes. Elected leaders should also be provided an opportunity to speak to the student body. For example, George Milevich, a third-year Pharm.D. candidate at Wilkes University, was responsible for former Vice President Gore's visit to the Nesbitt School of Pharmacy nearly three weeks prior to the presidential election of 2000 (14).

The pharmacy associations have also created other valuable resources and means of being politically active. Specific to political involvement, about 40% of the respondents indicated they had joined the Student Political Information Network (SPIN), an American Pharmaceutical Association/Academy of Students of Pharmacy (APhA/ASP) program. As members of SPIN, students received e-mails pertaining to current political issues, were invited to attend state legislative receptions, and were encouraged to contact local political leaders to discuss pharmacy issues. Moreover, elected officials (e.g., United States Congressman) spoke at the noon lunch meetings sponsored by the local chapter of SPIN. The American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) website (<http://www.ashp.org>) explains the legislative process. For those unaware of how to write their congressmen, there is a page with explicit instructions on how to compose a letter. The page even links to another site providing background information on members of Congress (15). The ASCP website (<http://www.ascp.com>) has a specific section entitled "How You Can Become Involved with Government Affairs Activities" that is applicable to pharmacy students as well

as practitioners (16). These websites and others include pages that display current legislation that potentially affects the pharmacy profession.

Currently, there are several bills in Congress that need the political support of pharmacy students and pharmacists. The Medicare Pharmacists Services Coverage Act proposes that Medicare recognize pharmacists as health care providers, and the Pharmacy Education Aid Act of 2001 addresses some of the issues related to the shortage of pharmacists. Additional relevant legislation includes potential Medicare drug benefit changes, the Prompt Payment Act, and the health care provider negotiations bill.

Overall, it is important for pharmacy students to understand the process and how they can affect legislation relating to the profession of pharmacy. Although this study begins to explore the issues of political activism in pharmacy students, additional research is necessary.

This study provides a glimpse of the many issues that need to be further investigated. First, the scale used to measure political activism in pharmacists/pharmacy students should be developed further and refined. Other research possibilities that stem from this study include the following:

- Verify the clusters developed in this research in a larger, randomized sample of pharmacy students
- Conduct a longitudinal study that demonstrates how political activism in students changes as they progress through pharmacy school
- Assess what courses and opportunities that foster political activism are currently offered in schools of pharmacy. How do these courses/activities affect political activism in students? What types of interventions are most successful?
- Explore the relationships between certain personality characteristics/involvement in pharmacy activities and political activism
- Investigate the barriers and facilitators to political activism for pharmacists/pharmacy students.

Understanding political activism better will facilitate the development of educational interventions that foster political activism.

CONCLUSION

It appears that most students are interested in joining professional organizations and voting and less interested in being on the front line con-

tacting legislators to discuss pharmacy issues. The likelihood of participation in political activities seems to be different depending upon a student's attitudes toward government and political involvement. To stimulate interest in being involved and developing political activism skills, messages that move students to a more active state politically need to be communicated. Educators should review and alter the didactic and experiential opportunities that are provided to students in order to foster political activism. Further investigation into political activism in pharmacy students and pharmacy is warranted. In the educational arena, longitudinal studies investigating how educational interventions influence political activism should be conducted. These studies should take into consideration the potential for four unique subsets of students based on their attitudes toward political activism.

Received: October 1, 2001

Reviewed: February 18, 2002

Revised: May 7, 2002

Reviewed and Accepted: October 10, 2002

Revised: December 16, 2002

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APPENDIX A Questionnaire PHARMACY STUDENT SURVEY

1. We are interested in your attitudes toward government policy. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement by circling a number from 1 to 7, **whereby 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree.**

	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree
a. Government policy influences pharmacy practice.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b. The Government wastes tax money.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c. The Government is run by a few big interest groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d. The Government is run for the benefit of all.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
e. People like me don't have any say in what the Government does.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
f. Politics and Government seem too complicated to understand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
g. Public officials care what people think.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
h. Pharmacists do not need to understand the political process.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
i. It is important for pharmacists to be active politically.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
j. My pharmacy education should prepare me to be politically involved.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. We are interested in your perceptions of the Federal and State Government. Please indicate whether you think the Federal or State Government influences each of the following issues by circling a number from 1 to 5 in each column, **whereby 1 = no influence and 5 = strong influence.**

	FEDERAL					STATE				
	No Influence		Strong Influence			No Influence		Strong Influence		
a. Pharmacy reimbursement	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
b. Prescribing laws	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
c. Drug pricing	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
d. Generic substitution	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
e. Patient counseling	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX A (continued)

3. Do you ever talk about politics with family and friends?

- Yes No

IF YES: How often do you discuss politics with your friends?

- Daily 2 or 3 times a week
 Once a week 2 or 3 times a month
 Once a month Less than once a month

How often do you discuss politics with your family?

- Daily 2 or 3 times a week
 Once a week 2 or 3 times a month
 Once a month Less than once a month

4. Which of the following have you done? (**PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY**)

- Worked on a political campaign.
 Talked to people to influence a vote.
 Voted in the last presidential election.
 Voted in local elections.
 Contacted a state legislator about an issue.
 Listened to political talk radio.
 Given money to a political campaign.
 Taken a class on public policy.
 Sought information on public policy issues.

5. Which of the following would you be interested in doing as a pharmacist? (**PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY**)

- Working on a political campaign.
 Talking to people to influence a vote.
 Voting in the next presidential election.
 Voting in local elections.
 Talking about politics with friends and family.
 Joining a national pharmacy association.
 Meeting face-to-face with political leaders.
 Attending Legislators' Day events.
 Consulting with pharmacy association lobbyists.
 Writing a letter to a state legislator.
 Attending a state or national pharmacy meeting.
 Giving money to a political campaign.
 Giving expert testimony at legislature hearings and public forums.

6. We now want to know how likely you are to complete the following tasks within the next year. Please circle a number from 1 to 7, where **1 = highly unlikely and 7 = highly likely**, to indicate how likely it is for you to complete the following within the next year.

- | | Highly
Unlikely | | | | | | Highly
Likely |
|--|--------------------|---|---|---|---|---|------------------|
| a. To keep up to date with public policy issues. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| b. To participate in community activities. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| c. To be an advocate for pharmacy in public policy issues. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| d. To join a professional pharmacy organization. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

7. We also want to know how important it is for pharmacists, in general, to be involved in political activities. Please circle a number from 1 to 7, where **1 = not at all important** and **7 = very important**, to indicate how important each of the following is.

	Not at All Important				Very Important		
a. For pharmacists to contact state legislators.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b. For pharmacists to give money to political campaigns.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c. For pharmacists to join professional organizations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d. For pharmacists to influence public policy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
e. For pharmacists to keep up to date with public policy issues.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
f. For pharmacists to be an advocate for pharmacy in public policy issues.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

8. Do you have any intentions to run for a state or national public office in the future?

- Yes No Maybe

9. Do you have any intentions to be an officer in a state or national pharmacy association in the future?

- Yes No Maybe

10. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement by circling a number from 1 to 7, **whereby 1 = strongly disagree** and **7 = strongly agree**.

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree		
a. I feel confident talking to the media about a pharmacy issue.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b. I can communicate pharmacy issues to political leaders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c. I am knowledgeable of the political process.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d. I am aware of political positions of other professions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
e. I am aware of public policy issues affecting pharmacy practice.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
f. I have the skills to write a letter to my state legislator.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
g. I know who my state representatives are.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

11. Are you interested in taking an elective class during pharmacy school on how to be politically active and influence public policy?

- Yes No Maybe

12. Demographics

a. Age: _____

b. Gender: Male Female

c. Please check the box by each type of activity that you have been involved with in the past 2 years?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Civic activities | <input type="checkbox"/> College activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Community activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Church activities | |

