

Administrative Response to Program Review

Ophthalmic Medical Technology Program

May 2019

On May 3, 2019, the Ophthalmic Medical Technology SAC presented its Program Review findings to an audience of PCC administrators and others with an interest in the discipline. The presentation was engaging and informative. It provided an opportunity for information sharing, dialogue, discussion, and a tour of the renovated OMT lab. The energy and enthusiasm of the presenters was noted and appreciated.

This Administrative Response will: A) note particular highlights of the Education Program and Program Review; B) provide observations and recommendations; and C) provide the administrative response to the SAC recommendations.

Noteworthy Efforts or Achievements

- The Program Review document and supporting materials were well written and clear.
- The program review presentation was engaging and demonstrated the commitment of the faculty to meeting the needs of students pursuing careers in OMT and for the health care operations they serve.
- The OMT program's commitment to maintaining high quality instruction and student learning is recognized and appreciated.
- The advocacy on behalf of the OMT program and profession is appreciated.

Observations and Recommendations

We appreciate your attention to assessment of student learning outcomes, and encourage you to continue to identify and document examples of assessment results that inform instructional changes to improve teaching and learning (such as the specific changes to support student learning in imaging content by providing more time for hands-on training, and the SACs recognition of and plans to address gaps in assessment of Core Outcomes).

However, the description of your best assessment project was a little disconcerting. While the focus on an important course with sub-optimal pass rates is very appropriate, the assessment was limited to test item analysis, and concluded that no trends were discernible. The improvement in pass rates from 80% in 2013-2018, to 89% in 2019, is a positive development, but not connected to using the results of assessment to inform changes to teaching and learning.

It is commendable that PCC students surpass the national average for passing rate on the certification exams. That analysis can give you regular, valid and reliable information on which to base program improvements. Since three of the four 4 OMT AAS learning outcomes are routinely assessed via your

Perkins TSA (your national certification exam), it would be worthwhile investing some effort in direct assessment of the outcome that is not (“utilize effective oral and written communication skills with patients and other health care professionals.”) Your CTE assessment coach, Jackie Williams should be able to help you in this. It would also be good if a member of your team could attend the Assessment 101 training that is offered in the Fall. Contact Academic Affairs for more information.

Administrative Response to OMT Recommendations

The OMT SAC will continue to monitor the results of the (TSA) COT examination for areas that can be improved for student success. Annually graduating students are surveyed about their experiences in the OMT program, areas that have been addressed in the 2018-2019 program year include more lab time for students. The OMT program has provided open labs on weekends, and week-day evenings for students to practice their skills or get help with the lab tutor/faculty member. Other areas of focus are providing online distance education for students to better balance employment and family obligations as we recognize that we could better accommodate students to be successful with these factors with more courses that are offered remotely.

The Instructional Deans support this ongoing work in assessment and program improvement.

The OMT program is in a unique position to be able to grow the amount of qualified ophthalmic technicians that are desperately needed in the United States. In order to make future plans to be able to expand the OMT programs offerings the OMT program has tentative options of revising the order of curriculum, offering more online courses, and revising the clinical practicum of the OMT program. The goal of making these possible changes would be to better meet the needs of the ophthalmic clinical partners, better meet the needs to students who are commuting great distances, and better at meeting the needs of students who still need to work more than 20 hours a week during the OMT program. The goal of these changes would better allow for the working student to better balance work, family and an academic allowing our program to be equitable in that regard.

The Instructional Deans support this ongoing work of curriculum revision and of making the program more accessible, with or without resources and a plan to grow the size of the program.

What support do you need from administration in order to carry out your planned improvements?

1. Provide special project funds to develop a strategic plan for adding second cohort model (Winter start) in the next two years. Preliminary exploration has already identified that a hybrid model for second cohort would best meet community needs.

The need for more qualified, certified OMTs was noted throughout the PR. The Deans also appreciate the preliminary work the SAC has done in adapting their current curriculum and educational delivery methods. While there could be room for further discussion of piloting a hybrid/rural option, due to severe resource restrictions the College cannot commit to funding a second cohort at this time.

2. Support to fund a dedicated or shared clinical coordinator. Due to the large clinical time requirements of the program's accrediting body (760 hours per student starting in Fall 2019), the coordination, placement, evaluation, and oversight of students at clinical sites is a very time consuming endeavor. The expansion to a second cohort cannot be achieved without a dedicated or shared clinical coordinator.

Other Allied Health programs have asked for a shared coordinator of clinical placements. With or without a second cohort, we support examining the need for such a position if/when resources allow.

3. Support for additional faculty for future expansion of the OMT program.

We cannot commit to an additional full-time faculty position at this time.

4. Support for an industry-recognized Electronic Health Record (EHR). The free EHR system currently is limited and lacks many of the features of the programs used in clinical settings. Having access to more sophisticated software, such as EPIC, NextGen, Modernizing Medicine or something comparable would better emulate the clinical environment, improve the employability of graduates, and further distinguish the OMT Program from alternative programs and training models.

This is consistent with a recommendation from another Allied Health program (Health Information Management); however, further discussion clarified that different health care organizations use EPIC differently, so that even if PCC purchased it, students would need additional on-the-job training at different work sites. In addition the cost of purchase, hosting, and maintaining such a system needs further analysis and could be prohibitive. Administration supports further conversation/investigation around the need for EHR training in many of our Allied Health programs, but remains cautious about the need to purchase an EHR system.

Closing

In closing, we want to again thank the Ophthalmic Medical Technician Program for sharing the results of your program review with us. We enjoyed learning more about the discipline, your successes and plans for the future. We look forward to supporting your ongoing work on continuous program improvement.

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