Program Review – Annual Program/Discipline Update
Administrative Response and Follow Up
2020-2021

Program/Discipline: **Nursing**
SAC Chair(s):   **Jane Palmieri**
SAC Admin Liaison: **Karen Sanders**
Other Division Dean(s):   **Heather Reynolds (Director)**
Department Chair(s):   **n/a**
Date: **April 20, 2021**

Administrative Response

I would like to thank the Nursing (NRS) SAC for the hard work, dedication and service your entire faculty and staff team provide to your students and to Portland Community College. Students have been successful in your program for many years, and I would like to commend all of you for maintaining this quality during the chaos of the last year. Thank you!

This administrative response is intended to both recognize your efforts, and provide you with some suggestions for the future. Specifically, it will:

1. Highlight the strengths and successes of the program as evidenced by the data, your analysis and your reflection
2. Recognize areas of challenge or concern
3. Address your reflection on goals and resources
4. Provide recommendations for next steps

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Strengths & successes of the program as evidenced by the data, analysis and reflection

Enrollment: I would like to commend the faculty and support staff on maintaining consistent numbers and full cohorts over the last year, despite the challenges of remote operations, overwhelmed health care systems and many other uncertainties. This is a reflection on the quality of the program and the dedication of the faculty and staff to student success.

Retention strategies: Intentional and consistent retention strategies that I understand from your report to have been successful over the last several years include: Maintaining a consistent student-teacher ratio, team teaching, faculty-written exams and post-exam analysis, individual student outreach and interventions. I encourage the SAC to continue these practices and to

reflect on learnings from the past year to determine if there are additional strategies that you can add to your tool kit.

High Completion Rates: 9-term completion rates over the last five years have hovered just below 90%. For a full time, highly demanding program this number is impressive. I applaud the department for being proactive and creative in looking for ways to support its students. Of particular note are the following strategies that have been implemented over the last two years Formalizing the role of Nursing Student Success Program Coordinator, assigning all students a faculty mentor and increasing collaboration of faculty across the program to facilitate early identification of students of concern.I encourage the SAC to continue these practices and to continue to approach their work from a lens of continuous improvement.

Focus on Equity and Inclusion: The department has taken several steps over the past three years to operationalize its values around equity and inclusion. I applaud the focus on both faculty professional development and on the admissions process. The intentional work on evaluating and improving the admissions criteria and overall process - with an explicit focus on increasing the diversity of the applicant pool - is a good example to other closed programs across the college.

Resiliency: Faculty and staff have successfully navigated simultaneous and significant change in the past two years. The rapid pivot to remote learning as a result of COVID-19, the disruptions and uncertainties related to the HT remodel, leadership turnover, the challenges of clinical placements and more - all happened at the same time - and yet you continue to offer high quality instruction and support for your students. You are amazing!

Continuous Program Improvement: I applaud the SAC on its use of data for continuous program improvement. In addition, it is clear that professional development - for both full and part time faculty - is valued and encouraged. I strongly support this and believe it is one of the reasons that students in the program continue to be successful.

Areas of Challenge (highlighted by the SAC)

Challenge: Providing consistent and high quality instruction in courses that require significant hands-on learning (remote lab courses).

Response: I acknowledge that this has been a significant challenge, both because of the need to significantly adjust the curriculum and course sequencing and because of students' limited access to equipment and materials. You did an amazing job of creating alternate assignments and creative ways for students to keep them engaged until they were able to return to in-person labs. Be patient and kind to yourselves and continue to think creatively. Reflect on what you have learned from this challenge that might contribute to the continuous improvement of your program in the future.

Challenge: The difficulty in recruiting and hiring new faculty due to a local and national faculty shortage

Response: This is an ongoing challenge and one that affects all nursing programs in the region. Two possible strategies to attract faculty to our program are highlighting the equity focus of our program and conducting personal outreach and targeted recruitment. The current faculty group and Director are all creative thinkers so I also suggest that they work together to brainstorm other intentional strategies for increasing faculty recruitment.

Challenge: Clinical placement availability

Response: As with the faculty shortage, clinical placement availability is a regional (if not national) problem. During remote operations the department was extremely creative in developing and implementing alternative clinical experiences for the students. What have you learned from these experiments? Are there things that could continue even when we return to 'normal' operations? In addition, I support your plans to develop a more comprehensive simulation program as this too could be a successful strategy in addressing the challenge of clinical placement availability.

Reflection on Program Objectives and Required Resources

Program Objectives:

- Develop a written plan to orient and provide mentoring of new nursing faculty. **This has support from the director and the division dean. Next steps** could include the director facilitating a discussion of what is currently working well and what is not. In addition, looking at mentoring best practices and/or connecting with in-house expertise through the TLC could be helpful in developing this plan.

- Develop a simulation program that meets the OSBN requirements for simulation as a replacement for clinical hours. This is a requirement and **has support from the director and the division dean.** This will likely be a multi-term process that will require the development of a detailed work plan. **Immediate next steps** could be to develop a high level work plan and timeline for this work, to designate a lead (a designated SIM Coordinator) and to use the language in Division 21 to outline a prioritized list of protocols that need to be developed and documented.

- Develop a plan to increase enrollment beginning Fall 2023 (anticipated completion date for HT remodel). **This has support from the director and the division dean. Next steps** could include reviewing the previous plan presented in the ACEN accreditation documents and adjusting this for current realities.

- Identify opportunities for additional clinical experiences outside of acute care nursing. **This has support from the director and the division dean. Next steps** could include evaluating the community-based clinical experiences implemented during COVID to see

if some or all of these ideas could be implemented long term. Additional information could also be gathered by talking with other nursing programs and with other PCC health programs to see if any have implemented successful non acute care options.

- Continue to improve quality of assessment within the program especially as it relates to examinations and preparing students for changes in the national licensing exam. **This has support from the director and the division dean. Continuing the** current practices of faculty professional development related to exam construction, tweaking existing standards for how exam statistics are used across the program and collaborative testing are all important next steps.

Resources

Requests:

- Examination software program (e.g. Examsoft)
- Annual Nurse Tim subscription for nursing faculty professional development
- Subscription to the California Simulation Alliance
- New position: Simulation Technician

Comments: All four of these requests have the support of the director and the division dean. There is sufficient money in the current budget to cover an annual subscription to Nurse Tim - and I agree with the department that access to this resource would increase effectiveness and efficiency of exam development and analysis. Because it is a reasonable cost, and would have a positive impact on the program, the director is free to make the decision at any time to purchase this product.

Purchasing examination software involves much more than just sufficient funding. I suggest that the first step would be for the department to become familiar with the process for adopting digital courseware (contact Kathleen Freitag) and then assess if this is a project that the department would like to take on at this time.

The final two requests are important and should be prioritized because the new administrative rules are already in effect and the program must now demonstrate progress towards compliance. As such, I suggest that the director work with the dean to create a budget ask/proposal for these items and include it in whatever process is used by the Associate Vice President of Academic and Career Pathways for the upcoming budget year.

Conclusion and Suggestions for the Future:

Thank you for putting together a comprehensive and meaningful Annual Program Update. The Nursing program is strong and I commend all of you on your resilience, creativity and dedication to the students. Some things for you to think about for the next year:

- Data Collection and Analysis: Continue to track and analyze the demographic makeup of the applicant pool to determine what, if any changes occur.

- Explore a part time program option that may allow some students to pursue or persist in their nursing education while balancing other life demands.

- Create a plan for simulation expansion taking into account the new facilities that will come on line at the conclusion of the HT remodel.

_XX__ Proceed as planned on program review schedule

___ Follow up conversation needed with SAC, Dept Chair(s) and Dean

Thank you,

Karen Sanders, Dean - Health Professions and Physical Education