REPORT ON AY2022-2023 ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT

Submission date: 11/14/2023

Assessment Plan covered in the report: Physical Therapist Assistant AAS

College: College of Health

Campuses where the program(s) is delivered: ☒Anchorage ☐KOD ☐KPC ☐MSC ☐PWSC

Submitted by: LeeAnne Carrothers, PT, PhD Assistant Dean School of Preventive and Therapeutic Sciences, Interim Program Director lcarrothers@alaska.edu

After responding to the questions below, the program should email this form to the dean, with a copy to the appropriate community campus director(s) if the program is delivered on a community campus.

1. **Please list and number the Program Student Learning Outcomes your program assessed in AY23. For each outcome, indicate one of the following: Exceeded faculty expectations, Met faculty expectations, or Did not meet faculty expectations.**

   Example: 1. Communicate effectively in a variety of contexts and formats – Exceeded faculty expectations.

   1. Exhibit professional behavior in their role as responsible physical therapist assistants, adhering to appropriate ethical, legal and regulatory standards - met faculty expectations.

   2. Integrate the principles of the physical, biological and behavioral sciences with the clinical practice of physical therapy - did not meet faculty expectations

   3. Communicate effectively and sensitively with patients, families and other members of the health care team - met faculty expectations.

2. **Describe your assessment process in AY23 for these Program Student Learning Outcomes, including the collection of data, analysis of data, and faculty (and other, e.g., advisory board) conversations around the findings.** *(1000 words or less)*

   Two major ways the PTA program gathers data include clinical performance and performance on the national licensing exam. Data gleaned from these methods provide valuable summative data about student learning. Our most recent graduates completed the program in December 2022. Assessment

of clinical performance is completed utilizing an assessment tool called the Clinical Performance Instrument, which allows clinical instructors to rate student performance on psychomotor and affective skills. The program has specific performance thresholds that students must meet to successfully complete their clinical rotations. All 12 students passed their clinical experiences, demonstrating competence with PLSOs 1 and 3, at least their ability to apply the learning for PLSO 2 in the clinical setting. That said, student performance on the licensing exam reflected gaps in their knowledge for PLSO 2, as only 58% (7/12) passed the licensing exam on the first attempt. This was cause for significant concern, as it was the first time such a thing had occurred in the 8 year history of the program. Upon learning of the students' performance, the program immediately arranged for the students to take a review course, which resulted in 100% of the remaining 5 students passing the exam on their second attempt. Faculty and advisory committee discussion of potential causes for the change focused on faculty turnover, specifically related to the departure of one of the two full-time faculty members and the illness and eventual death of the prior program director (and second full-time faculty member) with subsequent use of adjuncts to fill gaps in teaching.

3. **What are the findings and what do they tell the faculty about student learning in your program?** *(1000 words or less)*

Our analysis of student performance revealed that although students had entry-level clinical reasoning, professionalism, communication skills, cultural competence and hands-on skills, there were gaps in student ability to translate those skills to performance on the licensing exam.

4. **Based on the findings, did the faculty make any recommendations for changes to improve student achievement of the Program Student Learning Outcomes?** Yes

i. **Please describe the recommended action(s), what improvements in student learning the program hopes to see, the proposed timeline, and how the program will know if the change(s) has worked. If no recommendations for changes were made, please explain that decision.** *(1000 words or less)*
   In addition to the immediate action to assist the students who didn't pass the exam, the program implemented several changes for the cohort of students who started the program in January 2023, to include:

   1. Better oversight and mentoring of adjunct faculty. We recognized, based on the results of the prior year's students that one explanation for that could be the significantly increased use of adjunct faculty, many of whom were first time faculty. This year, while we were still dependent upon several adjuncts due to our inability to recruit a second full-time faculty member, we provided better one-on-one and group mentoring to help ensure that adjunct faculty had the resources they needed. We also had each faculty member (adjuncts and the relatively new full-time faculty member meet regularly with the COH's instructional designer.

   2. Providing more structured exam review for students that is integrated throughout the program. Our intent in doing this is to provide students and faculty with earlier and more

frequent feedback on students' ability to perform on board-style questions, as well as to help us identify gaps in student learning.

We will be able to assess (at least for a single cohort) whether these changes have had an impact on student learning based on their performance on the licensing exam when they take it in 2024.

5. **In the past academic year, how did your program use the results of previous assessment cycles to make changes intended to improve student achievement of the Program Student Learning Outcomes? Please check all that apply.**

☐Course curriculum changes
☐Course prerequisite changes
☐Changes in teaching methods
☐Changes in advising
☐Degree requirement changes
☐Degree course sequencing
☐Course enrollment changes (e.g., course capacity, grading structure [pass/fail, A-F])
☐Changes in program policies/procedures
☐Changes to Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)
☐College-wide initiatives (e.g., High-Impact Practices)
☐Faculty, staff, student development
☐Other
☒No changes were implemented in AY23. *(If no options above were selected)*

If you checked "Other" above, please describe. *(100 words or less)*

6. **Do you have any information about how well these or other past improvements are working? Are they achieving their intended goals? Please include any data or assessment results that help you demonstrate this. *(1000 words or less)***

n/a

DEAN SECTION (Due to the program on January 15)

After completing the Dean Section and signing it, the dean should email this form to the program, and copy uaa_oaa@alaska.edu for posting. If the program is delivered on one or more community campus, the dean should consult with the appropriate community campus director(s) on the response and copy the

appropriate community campus director(s) when emailing the response to the program.

1. **Based on the program's responses above, what guidance and support do you have for the program moving forward?** *(200 words or less)*

   This program is to be commended for a quick and thorough response to an identified PSLO that did not meet faculty expectations. A clear and actionable response was outlined to address this concern and this plan could also consider strategies to assess student learning of board exam style questions and content in each course. For example, embedding board style questions as part of the assessments in each course, educating students on required learning styles for this kind of assessment, and utilizing test prep opportunities as needed. The changes implemented in AY23 could be considered changes in teaching methods and indicated as such.

2. **Discuss what the program is doing particularly well in terms of its processes for the assessment and improvement of student learning, for example, the use of a common rubric or prompt, a signature assignment, etc.** *(200 words or less)*

   The Physical Therapy Assistant program offers valuable healthcare training at the Associates Degree level. The program has historically demonstrated high board exam pass rates and job placement rates. Three PSLO's were reported this year and one did not meet faculty expectations. The program is to be commended for a thorough evaluation of this outcome and the generation of actionable steps to address the concern. Progress on this PSLO will be evaluated and reported in AY24.

Cary C Moore

Dean's signature: _____   **Date:** 1/8/2024