

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST FOR A PROGRAM NAME CHANGE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA:
FROM MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM IN PHYSICAL THERAPY TO MASTER OF ARTS
PROGRAM IN PHYSICAL REHABILITATION SCIENCE**

Action Requested: Consider recommending approval of the request by the University of Iowa to change the name of the Master of Arts Program in Physical Therapy to the Master of Arts Program in Physical Rehabilitation Science in the Department of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Science in the Carver College of Medicine.

Executive Summary: The proposed program name change will clarify the degree options available to students, especially those interested in an entry-to-practice option. This request has been reviewed by the Board Office and the Council of Provosts and is recommended for approval. This request addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan priority to pursue “educational excellence and impact” and Goal #8 – “Iowa’s public universities and special schools shall be increasingly efficient and effective.”

Background:

- ◇ **Description of program.** The mission of the Department of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Sciences is to advance the health of people by excellence in education, discovering new knowledge, and developing leaders in health care and science. The Master of Arts Program in Physical Therapy is granted to students pursuing knowledge about the underlying science of rehabilitation. Students often work toward the Doctor of Philosophy in physical rehabilitation science with the goal to promote scholarship in the field. The Master of Arts program does not prepare students to practice physical therapy.
- ◇ **Proposed name.** The request is to change the name of the Master of Arts Program in Physical Therapy to the Master of Arts Program in Physical Rehabilitation Science.
- ◇ **Reason for proposed name change.** The Master of Arts Program in Physical Therapy has been offered at the University of Iowa since 1948 with a purpose to train physical therapists to perform research. However, the Master of Arts program is not the entry-level clinical degree that entitles a person to “practice” physical therapy; rather, it provides the underlying science of rehabilitation to promote scholarship in the field. Recently, *U.S. News and World Report* inadvertently included the Master of Arts Program in Physical Therapy in their annual ranking which gave the impression that future practicing physical therapists are still trained at the master’s degree level. While it was an appropriate name in 1948 when the University offered a graduate certificate in physical therapy to become a licensed clinician, it has now become a source of confusion to prospective students seeking information on degree options.
- ◇ **Comparable name at other institutions.** The Master of Arts Program in Physical Rehabilitation Science is not available as such in the state or elsewhere. The most similar program is the Master of Science Program in Health and Rehabilitation Sciences at The Ohio State University.

- ◇ Consistency with accreditation requirements. This program is not accredited.
- ◇ Effect on program configuration. Both the thesis and non-thesis options will be continued for the Master of Arts Program in Physical Rehabilitation Science. There are no curriculum changes proposed for the name change.
- ◇ Effect on students. Current students and those already admitted to the program will have the option of retaining the current program title (Master of Arts Program in Physical Therapy) or changing to the proposed name (Master of Arts Program in Physical Rehabilitation Science) without affecting their coursework. All students admitted after August 2015 will be admitted to the Master of Arts Program in Physical Rehabilitation Science.
- ◇ Effect on resources. No new costs will be incurred with the proposed name change. The department does not anticipate the need for additional faculty specific to this program in the foreseeable future.
- ◇ Proposed name consistent with College mission. The proposed name change will support the University's mission to "advance scholarly and creative endeavor through leading-edge research and artistic production; to use this research and creativity to enhance undergraduate, graduate, and professional education, health care, and other services provided to the people of Iowa, the nation, and the world; and to educate students for success and personal fulfillment in a diverse world." The program will also meet the College's mission to "change medicine through pioneering discovery, innovative inter-professional education, delivery of superb clinical care, and an extraordinary patient experience in a multidisciplinary, collaborative, team-based environment; and changing lives, preventing and curing disease, improving health and well-being, assuring access to care for people in Iowa and throughout the world."
- ◇ Date of implementation. The proposed program name change will become effective upon approval by the Board of Regents and will be included in the University's General Catalog. The anticipated implementation date is Fall 2015.