

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**ACCREDITATION REPORT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

Action Requested: Receive the accreditation report from the Physician Assistant Program at the University of Iowa.

Executive Summary: The Physician Assistant (PA) Program (1) underwent a self-study that addressed the standards defined by its accrediting body; and (2) had an on-site visit by peer evaluators. The Program was accredited for the full period allowed by the accrediting body.

Background:

- ◇ **Description.** Physician assistants are health professionals licensed to practice medicine with physician supervision and are responsible for making medical decisions and providing a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic services. The physician assistant program is a 25-month graduate level curriculum which is integrated extensively with the medical student curriculum. Graduates are awarded the Master of Physician Assistant Studies degree upon completion of the program.
- ◇ **Accrediting Agency.** The accrediting body is the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant.
- ◇ **Review Process.** The self-study prepared by the PA Program contained responses to the standards defined by the accrediting body – administration; curriculum; evaluation; student services; and accreditation maintenance.
- ◇ **On-Site Team Report.** In October 2005, the visiting committee determined that the PA Program was in compliance with the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant's standards for accreditation.
- ◇ **Citations Related to Noncompliance with the Standards Identified by the Visiting Team.**
 - ☑ Admission of students must be made in accordance with clearly defined and published practices of the institution and program.
 - ☑ Critical analysis of outcome data must be incorporated in self-study reports and must include student attrition, deceleration, and remediation.
 - ☑ Critical analysis of outcome data must be incorporated in self-study reports and must include faculty attrition.
 - ☑ Critical analysis of outcome data must be incorporated in self-study reports and must include student failure rates in individual courses and rotations.
 - ☑ Critical analysis of outcome data must be incorporated in self-study reports and must include student evaluations of individual didactic courses, clinical experiences, and faculty.
 - ☑ Critical analysis of outcome data must be incorporated in self-study reports and must include timely surveys of graduates evaluating curriculum and program effectiveness.

◇ Institutional Responses to Citations Related to Noncompliance with the Standards Identified by the Visiting Team.

- ☑ The faculty adopted a policy¹ that reflects the current admissions process regarding the minimum acceptable GPA (science and cumulative) - “applicants to the University of Iowa PA program must have a minimum cumulative and science GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale or attain a science GPA of 3.0/4.0 on the most recently completed 30 semester hours of science coursework.”
- ☑ “Information regarding critical analysis of data related to student attrition, deceleration, and remediation was provided to the accrediting body. The program will include this information in subsequent self-studies.”
- ☑ “Information regarding critical analysis of data related to faculty attrition was provided to the accrediting body. The program will include this information in subsequent self-studies.”
- ☑ “The PA program reviews student performance in all courses on a regular basis. The Director of Curriculum and Evaluation monitors each student’s progress during the semester and the Promotions Committee reviews class performance after each semester. The Director of Clinical Education monitors individual student progress during the clinical rotation year and the Promotions Committee reviews each student’s performance after the completion of each 12 week block of rotations. The program will include an analysis of student failure rates in individual courses and rotations in subsequent self-studies.”
- ☑ “The PA program collects outcome data from students, including student evaluation of individual didactic courses, clinical experiences, and faculty. Modifications to the program have occurred based on faculty review of the student evaluations. The program will incorporate an analysis of student evaluations of individual didactic courses, clinical experiences, and faculty in future self-studies.”
- ☑ “The PA program collects annual data regarding graduates’ perception of their preparation for practice. The program plans to administer a survey 12 months after graduation to provide graduates an opportunity to assess how well the program prepared them for practice and to assess the effectiveness of the program. Data will be used to assess the need for curriculum modifications. The program will include survey results in subsequent self-studies.”

◇ Additional Information Requested by the Accrediting Body.

- ☑ An update of the ongoing discussions about financial stability currently under way with the dean and the Carver College of Medicine (CCOM). *A proposal was submitted to the provost requesting to transfer the program from the Graduate College to the Carver College of Medicine and to redirect the tuition funds to the PA program. If the transfer is not possible, the program will investigate a proposal to assess a student fee.*

¹ The policy becomes effective during the 2007-08 admissions cycle.

- ☑ An update on how the program knows that all students have clinical experiences with geriatric patients and experiences in long-term care settings. The program reports in its application that they do not do paper logs and do electronic logs 50% of the time. *Based on the results of a clinical rotation experience questionnaire completed by all PA students and an analysis of students' responses to the questionnaire, the program concluded that all students have experience with geriatric patients. The questionnaire also solicits information about students' experiences in long-term care or nursing home settings. The program has prepared an inventory of existing rotation sites and is developing strategies to provide students with rotation sites with access to long-term care facilities. Students who have little exposure to this clinical setting will be assigned to clinical activities in a long-term care setting.*
- ☑ An update on the critical analysis of outcome data which was not included in the self-study report or the program response but may have been submitted in the CCOM self-study. *Responses to this item were provided in the individual citations.*

◇ Accreditation Status.

- ☑ In March 2006, the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant granted accreditation to the Physician Assistant Program for the maximum period of seven years.
- ☑ By July 2006, the program was required to submit a report indicating how the citations have been addressed and how the program plans to assure compliance in the future. This report has been submitted to the Commission.

This report addresses the following objective in the Board's Strategic Plan – “offer high-quality programs through ongoing program improvement for undergraduate, graduate, professional, and non-degree students and special school students” (1.1.).

Details about the accreditation report are available in the Board Office.