

ST. PETERSBURG COLLEGE
PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES, 9/9/2014

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Marlon Alaan, Mary Ellen Barkman, Marja Beaufait, Teresa Chiavacci, Shamsah Shidi, Maryellen Sullivan, Tricia Trinque

PROGRAM FACULTY: Rebecca Kramer (Program Director)
Mary Hanlon, Barb Heier, Kory Thomas

GUESTS PRESENT: Phil Nicotera (HEC Provost)
Magaly Tymms (Director of Assessment)

MEETING TIME: 7:45 PM – 9:00 PM

I. Introductions

Those present introduced themselves and indicated their current place of employment.

II. Program Updates

Current Students

There are currently 22 sophomores. This class initially began with 40 in the fall of 2013, 36 came from the wait list, 3 from the selective admission process and 1 EAYL. Of the 18 students no longer in the program 1 was from the selective admissions.

There are 39 freshmen, this class began August 18th of 2014. There were 98 applicants interviewed for this class, 18 of them had secure seats via the wait list, 18 were selected using the new selective admission criteria, 2 are EAYL and 1 is PHCC linkage.

Open admission for next August will be March 1st and will close May 15th. There is no more wait list and all admitted students for 2015 will be from the selective admission process.

III. National Exam Pass Rate Scores

R. Kramer distributed national licensing exam pass rate scores for the 2012, 2013, and 2014 graduating classes. The SPC PTA 2014 graduates had a 100% first time pass rate (all 26 took and passed the national licensing exam on the first attempt). This was well above the state percentage of 86.92% and U.S. percentage of 88.42%.

Last year the 2013 graduating class had an 85% first time pass rate, still above state and national reported scores (83.41% and 84.42%) but low for the Program. There were two variables that required consideration by faculty, new exam content in January of 2013 and the 2013 graduating class having been a consistently low scoring class during their matriculation through the program. All students in the 2013 graduating class came from the wait list and this class had the lowest graduation rate of any class since 2006 at 52.5%.

Faculty agreed to track pass rate scores one more year to determine if additional curriculum changes were required in response to the new exam content outline or if the statistics for 2013 simply reflected the under-performance of that class.

IV. Clinical Education

The Summit

R. Kramer discussed the upcoming clinical education “Summit” meeting to be held in October in Kansas in conjunction with APTA’s Educational Leadership Conference. It will be at this meeting (by invitation only) that the American Council of Academic Physical Therapy (ACAPT), a component of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), will decide the direction of clinical education in physical therapy. The current clinical education model in physical therapy cannot be sustained and changes are eminent.

Position papers on the future of clinical education in physical therapy were published ([*position papers*](#)) in a special edition of the Journal of PT Education. Feedback from stakeholders to these proposed changes have been solicited through webinars, round table discussions at APTA national conferences and state/district meetings. The Florida Consortium of Clinical Educators (FCCE) will hold an event at FPTA’s Annual Conference in Orlando September 13th at 5pm to gather feedback from CCCEs, CIs and employers regarding proposed changes. Some of the proposed changes are a dramatic shift from the current model, R. Kramer reviewed some of those changes in power point slides including the year-long internship model and the dialogue regarding when during that internship the academic institution would turn over the student to the

employer as an employee. Regional consortia were also proposed and R. Kramer discussed the pros and cons of that model.

R. Kramer then asked the Committee for their thoughts and feedback to give to FCCE members who will be attending the Summit. S. Shidi stated hospitals would be the best site for year-long internships. R. Kramer related one of the cons regarding year-long internships discussed in the webinar was the number of hospital sites vs PT students, there would not be enough acute care sites. Several Committee members indicated they would be unwilling to have a student for an entire year.

P. Nicotera stated last year was the first year medical school graduates could not find residencies. R. Kramer read from an article in the NY times, July 2014, that stated “another hurdle that will potentially affect nurses, physicians and students in medical programs is an expected shortage in clinical training sites where students get the hands-on experience they need to supplement classroom instruction and earn their degrees.” Committee members agreed much of the decline in physical therapy sites is related to reimbursement and 3rd party payer policies on student involvement in patient care.

Action: R. Kramer will take Committee feedback to the FCCE meeting this upcoming Saturday night so their thoughts can be considered at the “Summit” meeting in October.

PTA Program

R. Kramer discussed the Clinical Slot Availability handout to show program decline in available clinical sites. She stated depending on the decisions made at the Summit, PTA programs may or may not be affected.

V. Reduction in PTA Program Enrollment

Given the decline in clinical site availability R. Kramer stated the concern that when all 2015 applicants come from the selective admissions process and previous attrition data hold true - attrition will be less. She stated significant difficulty the past year securing slots for 22 students and is concerned about the consequences of taking in more students than the program can find clinical slots for. If students are successful through two semesters of courses and then cannot continue on in the program due to not fulfilling the clinical course requirement – this will present a big problem for the College. The Committee was asked if they had any recommendations other than decreasing enrollment.

P. Nicotera stated other SPC programs (nursing, EMS) having the same problems securing enough clinical sites for their students.

T. Chiavacci asked if clinical sites were dropping because of competition from the increase in PT and PTA programs both in Florida and the U.S. R. Kramer responded partly, and more from the PT programs than other PTA programs as the PT student can assist the facility with more tasks (evaluations, management projects, interventions, re-certification and discharge summaries). Another big driver of the decline is the buying and selling of health care companies (hospitals, SNFs, OPs). She gave the example of Bayfront Medical Center being sold again, the second time in a two year period. There is always at least a year of change after a buy-out and students are not taken during that corporate change-over year. Dynamic Rehab (whose 12 SNF sites in the Tampa Bay area were big providers of clinical sites for SPC students) dissolved and to-date SPC had only been able to secure a contract with one of the previous Dynamic sites.

T. Chiavacci suggested reducing enrollment next year, monitoring clinical site availability and increasing enrollment as clinical site availability allows. Other members were in agreement with this suggestion.

- VI. R. Kramer closed the meeting thanking members for attending and for providing feedback/suggestions.