

Physician Assistant Studies Department

COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Program Review Action Plan

May 2010

The Physician Assistant Studies (PAS) program at Missouri State University is a graduate entry-level professional course of study leading to the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MS-PAS) degree upon completion of the 24 month curriculum. The program is designed to prepare graduates for primary care practice in the context of team delivered care in a rapidly evolving health care arena. The program is 24 months (six semesters) duration and is divided into didactic (12 months) and clinical phases (12 months). Enrollment is on a continuous, full-time basis only. Coursework begins in January of each year for the students who are selected by the Admissions Committee from the annual applicant pool of CASPA applications. The curriculum is based on the Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education and incorporates the principles of scientific inquiry, self-directed study, critical analysis, and problem-solving. The PAS program accepted its first class in January 2000 with the first graduates in December 2002. The PAS program is accredited through March 2012 and the next scheduled site visit for reaccreditation will occur in October 2011.

The PAS Department received approval from ARC-PA in 2009 for an expansion of the class size from 24 to 30 students, utilizing funding from the Caring for Missourians Initiative. There are currently 26 students enrolled in the second year and 28 in the first year which is the largest total enrollment in our department's history. Expansion was made possible through relocation from the PT Building to the office and classroom space previously occupied by the School of Social Work in the Professional Building.

The department has four tenure track faculty, one clinical associate professor, a .75FTE research coordinator and two staff members. Caring for Missourians funding is used to support a part-time Clinical Education Assistant, whose role is to develop additional clinical sites. Credit hour production for 2009 totaled 2,085 hours. The University conferred 23 M.S. in Physician Assistant Studies degrees in 2009. The program has 472 affiliation agreements with practitioners in Missouri for clinical rotations as well as 189 agreements with preceptors in 29 other states.

Of the Class of 2009, 22 of the 23 graduates (95.6%) passed the national licensing examination on their first attempt. Comparison results for the Class of 2008 on the national examination became available in January 2009 and were quite satisfactory. The mean score for this class placed them at the 79th percentile compared to all other PA programs in the United States.

An external review of Physician Assistant Studies program was conducted by Dr. Bridget Calhoun, Chair of the Department of Physician Assistant, Rangos School of Health Sciences, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Dr. Calhoun reviewed the Department's self-study and visited campus in Fall 2008.

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Consultant's Recommendations¹

December 2008

¹Dr. Bridget Calhoun