**Department/Program Review Summary**

**2013-14**

**Department:** ALH (Allied Health) and MAS (Medical Assistant Technology)

**Date of Review:** March 28, 2014

**Review Team Members and Titles:**

Lori Zakel, Associate Provost

Sue Merrell-Daley, Dean, Business and Public Services

Chad Atkinson, Research Analyst, Research, Analytics & Reporting

Jared Cutler, Assistant Provost of Accreditation and Assessment

Tina Hummons, Registrar, Registration & Student Records

Rukhi Jan, Senior Academic Advisor, Academic Advising

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Bill Legler, Budget Technician, Budget & Analysis

Lisa Mahle-Grisez, Chair, English

Patti McCormick, President, Institute of Holistic Leadership, LLC

Aaron Moyer, Assistant Professor, English

Jennifer Romero, Assistant Professor, Business Information Systems

Tillie Watts-Brown, Professor, Electronics Engineering Technology

**Department Members Present:**

Rena Shuchat, Dean, Life and Health Sciences

Jennifer Spegal, Chair, Allied Health and Medical Assistant Technology

Faculty

Debra Atkinson

Martha Armstrong- Benjamin

Mary Brown

Greg Dudash

Kelly Gruver

Judy Kronenberger

Julie Ledbetter

Shayesteh Lyons

David McFadden

Vann Rogers

Diana Todd

**Commendations**:

* While the ALH/MAS department consists of several disparate pieces, these pieces appear to work very well together. There are a lot of moving parts in this department, but they appear to work in harmony with each other. What might have been a hodgepodge of disconnected and disassociated programs appears to function well as a single department with interconnected parts – parts which perhaps serve different functions, but that maintain a sense of unity.
* Few departments have been as responsive to emerging industry needs as this one. The self-study highlighted the ALH/MAS Department’s ability to recognize a demand in the market and quickly develop a program of study to fill that need. There are several examples of short-term certificates that have been developed like this, and without question the department has been quick in its response to developing areas of opportunity.
* The dedication of the faculty to their students was abundantly evident during the discussion with the Review Team. It was clear that faculty and staff in the department are willing to go the extra mile – and beyond – for their students.
* Many departments benefit from the input of an Advisory Committee, which can provide a crucial link to industry needs. This department benefits from multiple Advisory Committees, and while it takes time and effort to cultivate these groups, the department’s efforts in this regard have no doubt contributed to its strong ability to meet industry needs.
* The section in the self-study where the department addressed the recommendations from the most recent Program Review team was outstanding – clearly the recommendations were prioritized, and the department had no difficulty documenting progress on them. It is clear that feedback is valued and used by the department in the spirit of continuous improvement.
* The department bravely moved forward with establishing the MAS program and expanding other offerings at Sinclair’s Courseview Campus location. This involved a considerable amount of effort - the amount of work that was required should not be understated, and it is to the department’s credit that it shouldered the load and did what needed to be done to increase our offerings at this location that is seen as key to Sinclair’s future development. There have inevitably been growing pains as the MAS program and other programs have been established at Courseview, and the department has displayed a great deal of resourcefulness and problem-solving ability in meeting these challenges. Without question, the institution owes the department a great deal of thanks for its work at the Courseview Campus.
* While it was not evident from the self-study, in the conversation between the department and the Review Team it became clear that the department is doing a tremendous amount of assessment work, and its efforts in this area should be applauded.
* The department did an excellent job of being efficient in meeting its reporting needs by combining its work on preparing the Program Review self-study with work that needed to be done on accreditation reports. The Program Review process was intended to augment a department’s ability to respond to accreditation requirements, and it appears that the department was able to use it in this manner.
* During the meeting with the Review Team it was mentioned that there are cases where area employers hold job fairs that are only open to Sinclair graduates – what an incredible affirmation of the quality of a program that employers would only be interested in graduates from Sinclair!
* The completion rates and job placement rates in the MAS program are superb, and deserving of high commendations.
* The development of ALH 1101 as a “core course” for all Life and Health Sciences programs is an excellent example of efficiency, and has served as an invaluable introduction to all health related fields in the division. Without question that has been immense cost savings to the institution by having one course that serves many programs, rather than each individual program offering similar courses that produce the same result.
* During the conversation with the Review Team a number of commendable practices that are used in the ALH 1101 course were discussed, including collaborative learning, contextualization, development of critical thinking and problem solving skills, and other “best practices”. The course has adopted many of the practices promoted by Sinclair’s Center for Teaching and Learning – in many ways it is an exemplar of the kinds of activities that Sinclair is promoting at the course level to increase student learning.

**Recommendations for Action**:

* Based on the recent experience of the Review Team, it is probably not necessary for the department to complete two separate Program Review self-studies for ALH and MAS. For the next Program Review, the department is encouraged to provide a common Section I and II combining both departments, and then discuss ALH and MAS separately within Sections III and IV without creating a separate self-study for each. Also, it is recommended that in the next self-study all full-time tenure track faculty be involved in writing the self-study and preparing the information so that the burden does not fall disproportionately on the department chair.
* During the meeting with the Review Team there was a lengthy discussion regarding general education and program outcome assessment. It emerged that data exists and is being collected on an ongoing basis, but results of outcome assessment were not shared in the self-study. The department needs to be able to document that assessment is occurring at the both the general education and program outcome level. Being able to document our assessment work will be increasingly important to our institutional accreditation in the years to come. The department is strongly encouraged to share these assessment results in its Annual Updates submissions and highlight specific assessment results in the next Program Review self-study.
* It appears that there is the potential for expansion of the MAS program – existing student demand and clinical sites could apparently accommodate a doubling or perhaps even tripling of the size of the current MAS cohort. The department is encouraged to submit a formal cost-benefit analysis to the Provost’s Office with itemized detail regarding the costs that would be incurred if the program were expanded along with the resultant increase in enrollment and completion. The department is strongly encouraged to work the Budget Office to generate dollar amounts for the faculty costs of increasing the program compared to the additional revenue that would be generated by increased enrollment. How would the contribution margin be impacted – and how should this be weighed against the potential number of increased graduates in MAS in terms of Performance Based Funding? Within the next year the department is asked to submit to the Provost’s Office a recommendation regarding whether expansion of the MAS program is feasible and fiscally desirable based on the factors mentioned above.
* The department’s self-study noted the “need to provide more continuing education opportunities”. What is the demand for continuing education by those working in the field who lack credentials? Is there a community need that is not being met? The department is encouraged to carefully consider how Prior Learning Assessment might play a role in any continuing education opportunities that the department begins offering.
* It sounds as though the MAS department has excellent retention, completion, and employment numbers. How might these numbers be used to recruit students to the program? The department is encouraged to explore how these successes might be used in marketing the program.
* Given the scarcity of institutional resources for traditional marketing at the department level, the department is also strongly encouraged to develop new and innovative approaches to marketing their program. Social media, outreach to Academic Advising, and other possible approaches should be explored.
* It would appear that other higher educational providers are sensing the opportunities in Warren County. What other providers are offering similar training? How can Sinclair’s program remain competitive with these other providers? What information about these other providers must be collected to make this happen?
* Under “Noteworthy innovations” in Section IV the department listed “completed several students who had extraordinary circumstances (family and/or personal illness, pregnancy)”. Helping students who experience extraordinary circumstances complete is no small task, and the department has earned commendations to the extent it has been able to accomplish this. Are there best practices in this regard that could increase success for other students, perhaps strategies that could be shared with other departments? If there are strategies to be shared, the department is encouraged to identify them and disseminate them via workshops, the Faculty Forum, or some other means.
* The self-study noted the need for greater parity between Dayton offerings and Courseview offerings – the department is strongly encouraged to continue its efforts in this regard. Much work has already been done, and it is evident that the department has made this a priority.
* The department is encouraged to compare success rates in online and face-to-face ALH sections. Data in the Appendix indicated that there may be some fairly substantial differences, and these differences should be addressed to bring online success rates in line with those of traditional sections.
* Are there connections that could be established with the Business Information Systems department in BPS? Is there any duplication of course content that might be eliminated or reduced? Are there services or assistance that BIS could provide the ALH courses?

**Overall Assessment of Department’s Progress and Goals**:

The Allied Health Department oversees a variety of different degree and certificate programs, some of which would not appear to be closely related on the surface. However, even with all of these different pieces, the department is high-functioning. In fact, the many disparate degrees offered by the department are a testament to its ability to respond well to the needs of the community – as new areas of need have emerged, the department has shown a great ability to develop short-term certificates that meet those needs and get students into high-demand jobs. Another example of the department’s willingness to explore new approaches is the work with the TEAS assessment, which has the potential to radically change the way what students enter programs of study in the Life and Health Sciences division.

The department’s work on recommendations from the most recent Program Review was outstanding, and demonstrates a serious commitment to continuous improvement and openness to feedback from external sources. During the meeting with the Review Team it seemed that there is a great deal of assessment work that is being done that perhaps was not explicitly detailed in the self-study, and it is hoped that in the future this assessment work is shared in a way that documents the fine efforts that the department is making in this area.

**Institutional or Resource Barriers to the Department’s Ability to accomplish its Goals, if any**:

The meeting with the Review Team raised a couple of issues that are not unique to the ALH Department, and that may need to be explored at an institutional level:

* Institutional resources for marketing are limited, and little will be available for individual departments for the foreseeable future. How can we ensure market awareness of our programs given this limitation – particularly for new programs? What strategies can we develop without substantial financial resources that might still effectively promote our programs of study? How can these strategies be disseminated across departments once they have been developed?
* The use of the TEAS assessment in several Life and Health Sciences programs will need to be carefully reviewed – thus far the division has been very conscious of using data to determine the effectiveness of the assessment, and hopefully this focus on using data will continue.
* Ensuring parity between offerings at Dayton and other locations is not just a concern for this department. What can we do to ensure comparability between different sites for all programs? How can communication be improved such that physical visits to remote sites are not necessary?
* During the meeting with the Review Team there was discussion regarding students who fail ALH 1101 and do not subsequently re-enroll. Are these students simply lost to Sinclair? How can we re-direct them to other programs so that they can continue pursuing an education at Sinclair? Given the number of students that take the course, addressing this should be a priority of the institution, and goes well beyond this department alone.
* There are a number of programs at Sinclair that need data from RAR for accreditation – how can we encourage these departments to give RAR advance notice and schedule their data needs in a way that allows for a manageable workload?