**Department/Program Review Summary**

**2020-2021**

**Department: 0678 –** RAT – Radiologic Technology

**Date of Review:** March 26, 2021

**Review Team Members and Titles:**

Kathleen Cleary, Interim Provost

Jennifer Kostic, Associate Provost

Jared Cutler, Assistant Provost of Accreditation and Assessment

Sean Frost, Professor, Sociology

Kelly Joslin, Chairperson/Professor, Art

Tanya Scheper, Assistant Director, Academic Advising

Michelle Abreu, Associate Professor, Respiratory Care

Megan O’Toole, Pathway Manager, Tech Prep

**Department Members Present:**

Rena Sebor, Dean, Health Sciences

Angie Arnold, Chair, Radiologic Technology (RAT)

Faculty:

Vicki Luster, Professor

Pam Callahan, Associate Professor

Ann Swartz, Associate Professor

Staff:

Audrey Muslar, Administrative Assistant I

**Commendations:**

* This was an excellent self-study - easy to read, well-written, and focused. Each section was addressed thoughtfully and completely, yet concisely. This self-study pulled off the rare feat of keeping the narrative brief while still comprehensively addressing all the required components of the self-study.
* This is a well-functioning, tight-knit department that truly operates as a team. Led by an experienced, hard-working, conscientious chairperson, faculty support each other, and meet the challenges that the department faces with a unity and comradery that is highly commendable. With such a small department, this level of cohesion is vital to keeping its functions running smoothly.
* The Review Team was so impressed by the department’s accreditation work, especially by the fact that the department received the maximum eight-year re-accreditation at the same time it was planning and managing a move into a new building. The self-study noted that “the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT) were very impressed with the program facilities, students, and faculty, and the clinical education settings”. Well done!
* Students in this department benefit from exceptional student leadership opportunities, gain valuable training through interprofessional education experiences, and have demonstrated their superior skill and knowledge in the annual Student Quiz Bowl Competition. The department provides abundant opportunities for students to develop strong levels of engagement with the course materials and with the field as a whole. The department does an excellent job of promoting student engagement.
* The 96% average first attempt pass rate over the past five years on the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT) National Certification exam in Radiography is outstanding, and leaves very little room for improvement. It is obvious that the department really prepares students for their post-graduation credentialing exam.
* The increase in the five-year average completion rates from 60% to 72% deserves special mention. The department is rightfully proud of this accomplishment, which is attributable at least in part to the excellent student mentoring program that has been implemented in the last couple of years.
* The student mentoring program, which uses second year students as mentors for first year students, is remarkable, and appears to have played a role in increasing retention and completion in the program. It really makes a difference to first year students to have a more experienced student there to encourage them, guide them, and help them have the confidence they need to succeed in the program.
* The Review Team was impressed that the chairperson teaches one of the gateway courses in the program, with the administrative assistant also playing an important role in the course. This helps students build strong connections with the department from the time they begin work in the program, and doubtless has a positive impact on retention.
* The COVID pandemic presented unprecedented challenges to all higher education, but was particularly difficult to navigate for departments such as this one, where hands-on instruction is so integral to educational practice. The department did an outstanding job of adapting to the restrictions on learning environments imposed by the pandemic without sacrificing quality of education.
* The assessment practices of this department are outstanding. Assessment activities that measure increasingly sophisticated levels of mastery are embedded strategically throughout the curriculum. These assessment results are reviewed annually, and faculty discuss improvements that can be made to improve student learning.
* This is a department that is extremely involved with its stakeholders, maintaining strong connections to local hospitals and taking an active role in the state professional organization. These relationships make the department well positioned to implement informed program adjustments based on community needs and accreditation requirements. This department goes beyond just responding to needs that are communicated from the community, and instead is proactively looking for needs that it can meet.
* The department does a great job of promoting its programs with multiple stakeholders, such as with its strong support of Tech Prep, through career fairs and other recruiting events, and by leveraging its excellent relationships with Academic Advising. It would appear that increases in diversity in the program are attributable at least in part to these efforts. The Tech Prep efforts deserve special mention, and are among the most promising strategies for maintaining the increase in diversity in the department.
* Since the last Program Review, the department has added a short-term certificate, Mammography, which is evidence of the manner in which it successfully monitors and meets emerging needs in the field. In addition, the department stands ready to offer any additional short-term certificates as needs in the community are identified.
* The department evidences a true commitment to ensuring that its programs are as affordable as possible for students. It strives to make changes where possible that have a positive impact on students financially. For example, the department only requires course materials that students can use for at least two semesters, selects books that can be purchased used or in less expensive electronic versions, etc. The department’s concern for minimizing costs for students is highly commendable.
* The development use of the Facebook alumni page is impressive, and has allowed the department to gather a considerable amount of data from graduates. This is also indicative of the faculty’s commitment to students even after they graduate, in that it helps the department maintain connections with former students, and provides a resource for alumni with job postings.
* With the knowledge that two faculty will be retiring soon, the department is doing an exceptional job with succession planning, helping another faculty member step into a new role as clinical coordinator while the retiring faculty is still there to help them learn the ropes.
* The department does a great job of managing enrollment, adding sections as need becomes apparent from feedback from Academic Advising and from other sources. The department displays a real responsiveness to enrollment needs, ensuring that we enroll interested students right at the time when they are interested. It does an exemplary job of using its introductory course to help students figure out whether the program is right for them early on.

**Recommendations for Action:**

* The department has done a great job of increasing diversity in its programs, but has not as yet quantified that increase. The Review Team recommends that the department provide trend data on changes in diversity with quantifiable numbers. In addition, the department should also analyze data on success and completion disaggregated by race and gender.
* The department has developed a remarkable student mentoring program. Data should be collected and analyzed regarding the effectiveness of this program. The department is encouraged to collect feedback from students on how the mentoring program has helped them succeed. Without question, it has had a beneficial impact on students, but data should be collected to demonstrate this, and also be used to identify any existing opportunities to improve it. These efforts may also provide information that other departments could use in developing mentoring programs of their own.
* The department is encouraged to continue to monitor - and where appropriate expand - clinical education. The department should continue to make sure they are meeting needs of students in terms of clinical experiences, and ensure students are getting a productive rotation.
* With key faculty retirements on the horizon, succession planning is crucial, and there is a unique opportunity to increase diversity among faculty in the department. Is this a situation where the Grow Our Own program might be used to increase faculty diversity in the department? While these was some discussion with the Review Team regarding the challenges of recruiting more diverse faculty, the department should do its best to increase the diversity of faculty as new tenure track positions become available.
* The department has made changes to admissions requirements in an attempt to increase persistence and completion, increasing the TEAS score requirement and the GPA requirement. Is it possible that this might negatively impact diversity? The Review Team recommends that the department carefully track diversity of students and where possible assess the impact of these changes on student diversity.

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

This is an impressive department, one that created an equally impressive self-study. The Review Team saw so many things worthy of commendation, and came away with the sense that this is a department with a high level of unity and teamwork, one that works exceptionally well together, and one that benefits from strong leadership. Clearly this is a department that works as a team, one where faculty rely on each other, where members are able to step in and cover for each other when necessary.

The self-study was exceptionally well written, and was very concise, almost as though the department had taken a clinical approach to its development, in that it didn’t give more or less than what was needed. This self-study can serve as a model for other departments undergoing Program Review.

This department does a great job of breaking data down – it monitors data trends, addresses areas of concern, and responds appropriately. It has developed excellent processes for maintaining high quality assessment, and regularly reviews assessment results to drive improvements.

The Review Team was deeply impressed with the work of this department, and strongly encourages it to maintain its current efforts and direction. Keep up the great work!

**Institutional or Resource Barriers to the Department’s Ability to**

**Accomplish Its Goals, if any:**

* In the discussion with the Review Team, there was mention of barriers to hiring faculty of color through traditional hiring practices at Sinclair. Sinclair is currently working to address these barriers, but faculty searches should make every effort to overcome these challenges in the meantime.
* Sinclair has benefited immensely from the Grow Our Own program. However, one challenge of using the program is the barriers some potential GOO prospects face in paying for their baccalaureate degrees. Many cannot afford to get baccalaureate degrees on their own, it is often difficult for them to find funds to get the bachelor’s degree. It is imperative that Sinclair increase the diversity of its faculty, but using GOO to accomplish this is challenging when students have difficulty completing a four-year degree. Are there strategies Sinclair could employ to help potential GOO students achieve their bachelor’s degree?
* Like many departments, the impact of the COVID pandemic and its associated social distancing present challenges with in-person instruction for Radiologic Technology courses, and is particularly challenging in PC classrooms. Hopefully restrictions associated with the pandemic will soon be a thing of the past, but in the meantime Sinclair will want to monitor classroom capacities closely and increase them as soon as it can safely be done.
* The pandemic has forced all higher educations to implement more remote offerings than has ever been the case in the past. The impact of this change needs to be tracked and documented. There is a potential that an increase in remote education will lead to decreases in outcome measures, and it is important to track and document the impact of COVID in this respect.
* This department will soon experience the retirement of key faculty – succession planning is always challenging for departments, particularly during periods of budget uncertainty. This department has done an exceptional job of planning ahead, and provides an example for other departments who are facing impending retirements to follow.