

Weber State University Program Review
Athletic Training Program Response to Review Team Report
By Jennifer Ostrowski

On-site visit February 11, 2014

Overview/introductory Statement:

This report as part of the five year review process is written after reviewing the online self-study documents and performing an onsite visit. While on site, the Dean, Chair, Program Director, Faculty, Clinical Preceptors, and Students were interviewed. The Review Team also toured teaching and laboratory facilities on campus. The Review Team submits the following findings based upon the Program Evaluation Worksheet.

Program strengths:

The Athletic training program is a well-supported and a strong program within both the Department of Health Promotion and Human Performance and the Moyes College of Education. The four fulltime faculty along with adjunct instructors teaching the courses cover the heavy responsibility of planning and providing a competency based curriculum to Weber State Students. The facilities tour while onsite revealed well designed teaching facilities and adequate equipment making the Athletic Training Program strong. The program is in line with the programs in the state and superior to many across the country. This program is in line with national accreditation standards through CAATE (Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education). This national accreditation requires annual compliance in addition to regular self-studies and site visits.

Program challenges

Concerning Standard C, the program has a high ratio of courses taught by adjunct rather than full time faculty. This is being addressed with a new hire for fall 2014 but needs to be further evaluated for program delivery.

- a. **Program Response: Agree.** The Program, Department and College are committed to increasing the ratio of major required courses instructed by a full-time faculty member, as evidenced by the addition of a new faculty line (5th full-time faculty member) effective for the Fall 2014 semester.
- b. **Action Plan:** An additional faculty member has already been hired, and the fall 2014 course schedule has been created. Whereas 60% of all undergraduate major courses (AT-prefix) were instructed by adjunct faculty in Spring 2014, only 30% (14/47 credits) will be instructed by adjunct faculty in Fall 2014. Of these 16 credits, 12 credits (4 3-credit sections) of AT 2300: Emergency Response are included. While this course is offered through our program and is required of our students, this is open to students across campus. If we include only 3 credits of AT 2300 within the program-specific adjunct load, only 13% (5/38 credits) of required courses are instructed by adjunct faculty. Additionally, all but 1 of the credits assigned to adjunct faculty for the Fall 2014 semester are lower-division courses (AT 4700 is instructed by a full professor in the Radiology department).

- c. **Assessment Objective:** The program's goal is to have 20% of major required courses (and less than 5% of upper division courses) instructed by adjunct faculty by adjunct faculty during fall and spring semesters.

Regarding Standard D, The Review Team agreed with the self-study and verified through various interviews that advising is adequate but could be strengthened for the benefit of students. The program has responsibility in advising students in their curricular plan as well as requirements and prerequisites for graduate and professional education. Students mentioned a concern with the faculty level advising related to the GRE exam and preparing for graduate school in Athletic Training.

- a. **Program Response re: Academic Advising: Agree.** The current academic advisor is shared with all programs in the Department of Health Promotion and Human Performance. The Chair of the Department is aware of increased enrollments in the department across most program areas, as well as the additional load that this has created for the department's academic advisor. Last spring the department hired a second secretary. Both secretaries now schedule all advisement appointments with the academic advisement coordinator. There was also an agreement made with department faculty and the advisement coordinator in April of 2013 that difficult cases, such as those involving transfer students, would be handled by the program director rather than the advisement coordination. The department chair, in consultation with program faculty when needed, also does all the transfer articulation. This is a workload off the advisement coordinator.
 - b. **Action Plan:** The Department Chair is currently exploring ways to add either a 50/50 part-time hourly student worker or other additional part-time advisement support. As needs are viewed in light of all the department needs, a vision and plan for the upcoming years will be communicated to the Dean of the college.
 - c. **Assessment Objective:** The department program continually updates curriculum and advisement tools to assist students in successful completion of degree requirements. When program changes are made accommodations are in place so students can complete their program based on their catalog year. Advisement will continue to be progressive, include technology updates as a means to facilitate advisement and communication with students, and adapt to meet student and faculty needs based on survey results conducted minimally every three to five years.
- a. **Program Response re: GREs and Graduate School: Agree.** While the Program Director does send group advising emails to students each semester and meets one-one-one with students at their request, there is no formal process regarding advising for GREs and graduate programs.
 - b. **Action Plan:** A recommendation for what semester(s) the GRE should be taking will be included in students' track-specific academic planner. Additionally, as the result of the Bachelors of Science in Athletic Therapy site visit report, the Athletic Therapy Program Director has met with the academic advisor regarding the development of a detailed list of common pre-requisites for graduation programs outside of athletic training (eg, physical therapy, occupational therapy, physicians' assistant, medical

school). The list should be completed by the end of Summer 2014. However, students will continue to be informed that pre-requisites can vary significantly from one program to another, even within the same discipline. Satisfaction with advisement (both academic and career/professional) has also been included on the senior exit survey that is being implemented as of Spring 2014.

- c. **Assessment Objective:** Satisfaction with advisement from both AT program faculty and the advisement coordinator will be at a minimum of 4/5 on the likert scale utilized in the survey.

Students indicated a few problems with advising and curriculum planning related to the regular and accelerated tracks of the Athletic Training program. Students in the traditional track were not offered AT 3501 and another course because of the numbers of students on the accelerated track of the AT program. Students mentioned that advising related to graduate school and professional schools could be included on programmatic map sheets or the plan of study. The review team understands that adjustments and division of responsibility related to advising is currently underway.

- a. **Program Response: Disagree.** We are unsure what is being communicated by the review team. All students in both the accelerated and regular track are offered major-required courses in a logical sequence. This sequence is outlined in the track-specific course planner that each student is provided upon admission to the program. The only course that accelerated students are required to take that is not a requirement for regular track students is AT 3550, which is a summer clinical course between the first and second years in the program. This summer clinical class is required in order to meet the same minimum clinical hours requirements between students in the 3-year program (regular track) and 2-year program (accelerated track). There was one issue during the Spring 2014 in which some students (accelerated track, regular track, and athletic therapy majors) were not able to enroll in AT 4101 due to the class being at capacity. Due to limitations of the 4 full-time faculty, we were not able to offer a second section of that course during the spring 2014 semester. Students were enrolled following the University staggered registration block system, in that junior/senior-level students were allowed to register before sophomore-level students. We did commit to offering AT 4101 during Summer 2014 so that no students' graduation would be delayed.
- b. **Action Plan:** With the addition of a 5th full-time faculty member effective Fall 2014, the program is committed to offering 2 sections of each major required course per year (fall/spring) in addition to summer offerings of selected courses.
- c. **Assessment Objective:** Enrollment will be monitored each semester; goal is to have 100% placement of all students who attempted to register for the course and met the course pre-requisites.

Areas where the program did not meet the Standards and why.

The Athletic Training program met all of the standards and only received one concern related to faculty and adjunct ratios and one for advising. The concern identified by the self-study was in part verified by the Review Team. While we understand the concern with a high ratio of

adjunct faculty compared to full time tenure track faculty, the adjunct faculty are strong and passionate about their involvement in the program.

Recommendations for change – suggested changes for meeting Standards

Specific suggestions are addressed below in each evaluated section.

Additional recommendations and comments from the review team: None

A – Mission

Outcomes are well defined as included in the self-study. The Review Teams' only suggestion is that the program makes them more accessible to students. Clarify the distinct programming offered and available and how they achieve the articulated mission.

- a. Program Response: Agree.**
- b. Action Plan:** The Mission Statement has been added to the program website (<http://www.weber.edu/athletictraining/undergraduateprograms.html>). A description of the two tracks (regular and accelerated) are included on the admissions page (<http://www.weber.edu/athletictraining/undergraduateadmissions.html>).
- c. Assessment Objective:** None needed.

B – Curriculum

While the curriculum is planned, students on the various tracks may have class offerings limited and possibly changed unexpectedly. One student mentioned “waiting” for class to come around because most students were in the accelerated program and she was not. The program may benefit from a course offering evaluation comparing student potential schedules from each Athletic Training track. Further evaluation including the Athletic Therapy and the Master’s program may help determine curriculum needs. This will assure that students can maintain the proscribed curricular plan and move toward graduation in a timely manner.

- a. Program Response: Disagree.** We feel that this may potentially be confused with the athletic therapy program (as these 2 program site visits occurred simultaneously), as all athletic training students are guaranteed placement in major-required courses during the semester that they are required (or were provided a summer alternate to provide for on-time graduation in the one-time case described above with AT 4101 in Spring 2014). In the event that pre-requisite courses are added (as was the case when Human Performance Management added the PEP 3450 course and made it a pre-requisite for PEP 3500), faculty work to accommodate the students by allowing substitutions for pre-requisites so that students are not required to take additional courses outside of what was outlined during their declared catalog year.
- b. Action Plan:** The Program Director will continue to compare AT-required course offering times with other support courses required in the department with limited offerings (eg, PEP 3450, PEP 3500, PEP 3510) to ensure that there is no time conflict between two required courses in the semester they are designated.
- c. Assessment Objective:** None needed.

The administrators mentioned that the faculty were aggressive in gaining the resources they need to keep the program at a high level. This is a definite strength of the program and is desirable to assure that materials and equipment needed to teach Athletic Training competencies and proficiencies are provided to students. The Dean and Chair appear to have continued and ongoing interest in providing the Athletic Training program with required curriculum support.

C – Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment

We understand that the Role Delineation Study (RDS) was used for this self-study and that the competency matrix will be used for CAATE accreditation. The adequate rather than Strong rating on this standard is only the perception from faculty and students that the competencies in part and certainly the Athletic Training proficiencies should be more accessible to students and perhaps directly in syllabi. The A-Track matrix we talked about on site could be made publicly available.

- a. Program Response: Disagree.** The Athletic Training faculty selected learning objectives from the Role Delineation Study because they provide the opportunity for direct measures of student achievement, versus indirect measures as would be collected if we used the competencies as learning outcomes. If students have expressed interest in knowing what competencies are tied to which AT-required courses, the faculty will work to add a list of these competencies (generated by A-Track) into these AT course syllabi.
- b. Action Plan:** AT Competencies will be included in the syllabi of major-required courses in the program (AT-prefix courses). We do not feel it is appropriate for non-AT support courses (eg, PSYC 1010, NUTR 1020, HLTH 1030, PEP 3450, PEP 3500, PEP 3510) to include a list of AT competencies on their syllabi, as these courses service students outside of the AT program and these competencies are not relevant to their program of study.
- c. Assessment Objective:** Competencies included in all AT-courses by Fall 2014.

D – Academic Advising

Assessment of academic advising was adequate through the current structure and processes used in the Athletic Training program. The reviewers heard from almost all groups interviewed that more advisors are needed. The Dean supports more advisors so that faculty are free to do what they do best; teach and research. We encourage that more advisors are hired to help the one strong but over worked advisor currently employed by the Department. Determine the advisor to student ratio that is more in-line with other majors on campus. Then determine the appropriate ways to engage the advisors with all student groups including those from Athletic Training.

- a. Program Response: Agree.**
- b. Action Plan:** described above (Program Challenges; Standard D)

E – Faculty

We agree with the assessment in the self-study concerning ratio of adjuncts. The additional hire this fall will certainly help with faculty load. We do recommend keeping many of the high quality and very enthusiastic part time faculty in teaching roles and connected to current practices in

the field. The new faculty hire helps make this standard adequate. Depending on program growth and development an addition hire may be necessary.

F – Program Support

The administrative and library staff along with others supporting the College, Chair and Programs are a strength to the Athletic Training program. The addition of the suggested position Department lab coordinator could enable the Health Promotion and Human Performance department to further assist several majors and all of their students.

- a. Program Response: Agree.**
- b. Action Plan:** Currently, the department budget does not allow for the hiring of this position. The faculty are exploring ways to justify the creation of this position and/or ways to fill it at a lower cost, such as an hourly position for a qualified athletic trainer.
- c. Assessment Objective: N/A**

G – Relationships with External Communities

The relationships with the medical and athletic training communities is strong and a strength of the program. Many of the staff are Weber graduates and so they have a strong relationship with the program. The review committee suggests that the program consider alumni and or an external advising board to expand and strengthen the relationships with the broader medical community.

- a. Program Response: Agree.**
- b. Action Plan:** The AT faculty have begun exploring the formation of an external advisory committee. The AT Program Director has developed a list of potential committee members that has been approved by the rest of the AT faculty. The committee will consist of all AT full-time faculty, the program's medical director, and a preceptor from each clinical site category (high school, clinic, university, etc). The potential committee members identified are being contacted to determine their willingness to serve. We anticipate having the AT faculty meet with the committee once per year, with our first meeting occurring near the end of the Spring 2015 semester.
- c. Assessment Objective: N/A**

H – Results of Previous Program Reviews

The Athletic Training program continues to maintain the national athletic training accreditation through CAATE : Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education.

Review Team:

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