

**DCHP Dean's Response to the Program Review**  
**Evaluation of the Bachelor of Science in Athletic Therapy Program**  
**February 21, 2020**

The Dr. Ezekiel R. Dumke College of Health Professions (DCHP) dean received and valued the thorough review of our Bachelor of Science in Athletic Therapy Program by the review team at the on February 21, 2020. The college welcomed the program, this past year with enthusiasm and strong support. Comments from the dean is noted in *purple*.

The committee member were as follows:  
Dr. Deven M. Bawden, PT, DPT, CFCE, CIDN  
Dr. Casey W. Neville, DHSc, R.T. (R) ARRT

**Commendations:**

The Bachelor of Science in Athletic Therapy Program faculty appreciates the efforts of the Review Team to evaluate the program. The team identified several strengths of the program including a clearly outlined mission statement, a well-thought-out curriculum that provides a solid foundation for pre-professional undergraduate students, clearly described learning outcomes that align with the curriculum, improvements to academic advising that benefit both the students and college advisement office, the quality and cohesiveness of the full-time and adjunct faculty, the facilities, technology, and equipment in the classrooms, and the relationships that have been developed with various clinical facilities within the Wasatch front. We believe that the team's findings will serve to further strengthen the Athletic Therapy program in the years ahead. *Agreed*

**Recommendations:**

1. Standard B. Curriculum: Streamline the curriculum to facilitate graduation efficiency, and provide more employment opportunities with a Bachelor's degree
  - a. Since our last program review in 2014, there have been a few course revisions and additions to the Athletic Therapy curriculum. However, the faculty agree that the curriculum is in need of major revision to better accommodate the brand of student declaring Athletic Therapy as their major. The Athletic Therapy major appeals to students who are planning to attend graduate school in fields such as physical therapy, athletic training, occupational therapy, physician assistant, and medicine. However, the program's current curriculum is somewhat rigid and does not always accommodate the pre-requisite coursework that is required for many these graduate programs. Secondly, the lack of a standardized admission timeline has created confusion for students when developing their degree plans. Lastly, the faculty also agrees with the site team in regard to the lack of employment opportunities available to students after graduating with a Bachelor's degree in Athletic Therapy. This program is designed for a student to immediately transition to graduate school after graduation. Little thought was given to imbedding certifications within the curriculum that would facilitate employment opportunities for students after graduation. *Agreed. Modifying the curriculum in Athletic Therapy to provide an avenue to facilitate employment and also stay with the career ladder model that DCHP currently promotes.*

- b. Program proposals to revise the Athletic Therapy curriculum will be submitted to the college and university curriculum committees this Fall. In addition to revising courses that were originally tailored to athletic training students, we would also like to revise the overall curriculum in the Athletic Therapy program so that it is more inclusive to students who are interested pursuing other health care professions. Secondly, we would like to better standardize the application process for students who are interested in the Athletic Therapy Program. Currently, students are admitted to the Athletic Therapy Program on a rolling basis. This not only is difficult for students to know when they are eligible to apply to the program, but it is also difficult for the program director to supervise these students. The College of Health Professions Academic Advisors have recommended that we meet with the faculty in the Health Sciences (AS) program to develop an Athletic Therapy track for students to obtain their Associate's degree prior to applying and being admitted to the Athletic Therapy (BS) program. Lastly, the name, Athletic Therapy, has been confusing and sometimes misleading to students and colleagues at WSU. We would like to revise the name to "Rehabilitation Sciences" so that it better aligns with the mission of the program. Our goal is for these revisions to be approved and implemented in the 2021-2022 catalog. During the 2019-20 academic year, we attempted to partner with a local massage therapist to offer a Licensed Massage Therapy (LMT) route for students within the Athletic Therapy program. However, due to certain accreditation laws, the ability to integrate an LMT route in a timeline that would be both convenient and logical for students in our program was determine to not be possible. However, we currently looking to offer alternative certifications that are more accessible for students at Weber State University. Both the Phlebotomy certification and Limited Practical Technician (LPT) certification have potential to either be integrated or advertised to students in the Athletic Therapy program. Once the program revisions are submitted and approved this Fall, the faculty will continue exploring these (and other) certifications that have potential to be added to the program. *Agreed and support.*
  - c. We will rely on the biennial assessments and our next program review to determine the effectiveness of these revisions to the Athletic Therapy curriculum in terms of the academic outcomes and graduation efficiency of our students. We will also review future alumni surveys to determine if additional certifications would make graduates more marketable to graduate programs and/or employers. *Support and agree.*
2. Standard C. Student Learning Outcomes and Assessments: Distribute an assessment survey every semester be tailored in a way that asks specific questions regarding the student's status within the program.

  - a. We currently have a graduate exit survey that we distribute towards the end of each semester to students who have applied for graduation. This survey is used to assess students' post-graduate plans, graduate school acceptance rate, and perception of how well they believe the Athletic Therapy program prepared them for graduate school. Additionally, it asks for student feedback on what can be improved about the program. We have also created an alumni survey that we will be distributing to former graduates to track their education and/or employment statuses, which will offer information on graduate success of the Athletic Therapy program. We do see the benefit of creating another survey for current students with the Athletic Therapy major and/or program. It could provide contemporary feedback from students about their current perception of the



can offer unique insight as to how our program can be improved to make our graduates more marketable to employers. *Agreed and support.*

The chair of our department has tasked the program director this Fall with developing an Athletic Therapy program advisory board committee. The program director will gather recommendations from the other faculty to determine which clinical affiliates should be targeted during recruitment. The goal is to hold the inaugural advisory board meeting virtually during the Spring 2021 semester. *Agreed and support.*

Meeting minutes will be recorded during the inaugural Athletic Therapy advisory board meeting. These minutes will be summarized in either the Spring 2021 or Fall 2021 biennial assessment depending on when the meeting is held.

*Agreed and support.*

### **Department/program plans beyond Program Review Team recommendations**

1. Academic advising: Without having an academic advisor in our department, all of the advising responsibility for students within the Athletic Therapy program is placed on the program director. Therefore, we would like to hire at least a part-time staff to serve as our department's academic advisor, who could at least share the advising responsibilities with the program director. We have had recent discussions with the dean of the college about likelihood of adding an academic advisor to our department, and from these discussions, we are hopeful that we will have a position of this kind in the near future.

*Agreed and with the addition of 25% funding from the Provost's office for advising should benefit the student advising and follow up.*

2. Interdepartmental collaboration: Although we are content with the classroom and office space that are afforded to the Athletic Therapy program, as a new department to the college, we would like to further establish the Athletic Therapy program among our interdepartmental colleagues. This starts with collaborating with faculty in other departments to develop shared lab spaces and interprofessional education (IPE) courses. Our long-term goal is to relocate our department to be physically closer to other departments within the college. This move would likely require a new building to be built on campus due to the college's main buildings being at maximum capacity currently.

*IPE courses are ideal in DCHP and are very much encouraged. A new building that will be able to house all ten departments/schools in our college will be a big dream realized. However, at the present time and given the budget at hand the desire will be on our strong wish list. We will research every avenue to support and create IPE courses and programs as possible.*

*I would like to thank the Review Committee for their evaluation of the Bachelor of Science in Athletic Therapy Program ("Rehabilitation Sciences") in the Dumke College of Health Professions. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the dedicated and knowledgeable chair, faculty and staff for educating the best Athletic Therapy graduates and healthcare providers of the community.*

*Respectfully, Yas Simonian  
Dean, DCHP*