

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Department of Athletic Training
Bachelor of Science in Athletic Therapy Program
Self-Study Document, Fall 2019

Author's Contact Information:

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The following is a summary of the self-study document, highlighting important points. For complete information, please refer to the full, self-study document itself.

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Weber State University Bachelor of Science in Athletic Therapy Program is to provide quality educational and internship experiences for students who are interested in pursuing a career in health care. This pre-professional program is designed for students preparing to enter professional graduate programs in athletic training, physical therapy, occupational therapy, physician's assistant programs, or medicine. Students are presented with didactic and psychomotor experiences that will lead them to being able to exercise sound ethical judgment. The coursework and internships will prepare students for their graduate program of choice and position them to gain admission into these programs.

Curriculum:

Since its inception in 2009, the Athletic Therapy program has been designed to prepare students who are interested in pursuing professional graduate programs in athletic training, physical therapy, occupational therapy, physician's assistant programs, or medicine. Our program provides a balance between didactic and psychomotor learning that is unique to WSU, and prepares students to succeed in a graduate-level health care program. In addition to general education and professional knowledge courses, students enrolled in the Athletic Therapy program are required to take 22 credits of AT courses, 13 credits of AT electives, and 28 credits of support courses

Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment:

At the end of their study at WSU, students in this program will

1. Educate patients and manage risk for safe performance and function.
2. Implement standard evaluation techniques and formulate a clinical impression for the determination of a course of action.
3. Employ standard care procedures and communicate outcomes for efficient and appropriate care of the injured individual.
4. Recondition patients for optimal performance and function.
5. Understand and adhere to approved organizational and professional practices and guidelines to ensure personal and organizational well-being.

6. Prepare for graduate school through satisfying pre-requisites and completing applications to graduate programs of choice.

The annual assessment reports and the constructive feedback that we have received from graduates of the Athletic Therapy Program within the past five years have made it apparent that the curriculum is in need of additional revision. Prior to Fall 2018, AT 3300 and AT 3301 were being co-offered to undergraduate athletic training students as part of their Athletic Training curriculum. Therefore, students from a pre-professional program (Athletic Therapy) and a professional program (Athletic Training) were taking the same courses at times. In order to satisfy the Athletic Training accreditation standards, these courses had to cover educational competencies for athletic training. While the athletic training students were learning what they needed to learn in order to become certified athletic trainers, the athletic therapy students were often taught content beyond the scope of the Athletic Therapy program.

Revisions to the Athletic Therapy curriculum are currently being developed, and the faculty are planning on holding a one-day department retreat in Spring 2020 to discuss and vote on these revisions. 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 such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, and physician assistant. Our goal is to submit these revisions as proposals to University Curriculum in Fall 2020, so that they can be approved and implemented in the 2021-2022 catalog.

Academic Advising:

In the Summer of 2019, the Athletic Therapy program moved from the Moyes College of Education to the Dumke College of Health Professions. Due to limited funding, the Athletic Training Department was unable to hire an academic advisor, and an alternative method was developed to provide advisement to students. Currently, those students who have been admitted to Weber State University and have declared Athletic Therapy as their major are instructed to contact an advisor within the DCHP Admissions Advisement Office for academic advising. Once a student has been accepted in the Athletic Therapy Program, the program director (Conrad Gabler) will provide the academic advising services until graduation.

The most significant challenge for students currently is getting a timely appointment with the Dumke Admissions office for academic advising. Due to the large volume of students they serve, students need to make an appointment 2-4 weeks in advance. Without having an academic advisor in our department, much of that responsibility is placed on our full-time faculty, and their availability to advise students is limited. Therefore, we would like to hire at least a part-time staff to serve as our department's academic advisor in the near future. The faculty would also like to standardize the application process for Athletic Therapy majors in the future to improve its efficiency.

Faculty:

The program faculty members are held to the Dumke College of Health Professions teaching standards and policies and procedures for tenure and promotion (per the tenure document and PPM 8-11). The department chair reviews faculty in their second year. Peer review committees

review faculty according to policy in their third and sixth year. Department and college ranking tenure and evaluation committees also review faculty in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service in their third and six years, according to policy.

The Athletic Therapy program has four, full-time tenure-track faculty members, and one, full-time contract faculty member. There are four adjunct faculty members who teach a few of our courses each year. One of our adjunct faculty members has a BS degree, but only teaches AT 1300 and AT 2300. He is EMT certified and is an Instructor Trainer for the American Red Cross in both Emergency Response and CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer and Health Care Provider, so we feel he is qualified to teach the content in both of those courses that offer those certifications.

Program Support:

We currently have a 3/4 time classified staff position who is under a 12-month contract, serving as our Administrative Specialist II. This one staff member currently meets the needs of the department. However, as the Athletic Therapy program continues to grow, there will be an increased need for additional program support to assist with advising, application processing, marketing, and recruiting.

Relations with External Community:

The Athletic Therapy program utilizes a large number of off-campus internship sites that were developed over the past 10 years through efforts by all of the faculty. The number, quality, and diversity of internship sites benefit our students tremendously as they provide a breadth of clinical opportunities and experiences. Through their internships at these sites, students have the opportunity to work with a variety of health care professionals in several different settings including outpatient rehabilitation, inpatient rehabilitation, athletic training at the collegiate level, athletic training at the high school level, family practice clinics, orthopedic clinics, etc.

Student, Faculty, Contract/Adjunct Faculty and Staff Statistics:

Gender equity in students in the department programs has improved to nearly 3:4 (females: males) in 2018-19. The student/faculty ratio has been consistent over the past three years (around 25:1), with the declared athletic therapy majors reaching above 300 students over the past 5 years. Our student population has become more diverse ethnically, with the percentage of non-white students increasing 4% over the past 5 years. Our students are also performing above the college and university in terms of grades, with 93% of students achieving 73% (C or better grades) in 2018-19. Furthermore, 81% of our students are achieve these grades in upper division courses, which is the highest percentage observed over the past 10 years.

Results of Previous Program Reviews:

2012-13 Program Review

The Program Review Committee designated the Athletic Therapy program as "a strong program with a few issues that need to be addressed." The committee had several recommendations as the program moves forward with their responses to the review. Specifically:

- 1) The committee is very supportive of the development of an advisory committee and encourages the inclusion of both external partners and campus partners who are involved in advising pre-professional students.

- 2) Devise means of getting students to pre-professional advisors very early in their academic pursuit.
- 3) Ensure that students understand the ramifications of their choices on their potential to change program direction and the impact that might have on the total number of credit hours they may need to complete .
- 4) The committee encourages continued work on the development of a common pre-requisite list.

The committee also cited the following:

- 1) The program's move to create and integrate an external advisory committee is to be commended.
- 2) The Program Review Committee applauds the program faculty's' selection of their site visit review team. In particular, the external members appear to have been selected for their ability to provide aspirational perspective.

The committee saw no need for additional efforts in terms of this program review process and recommended that the department complete its next program review, as scheduled.

Information Regarding Current Review Team Members:

Team member outside the program, but within the Dumke College of Health Professions

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