

Addendum to the Physical Therapy 2008 Program Review

5-year Strategic Plan

The PT department is considering two areas of development: the implementation of a PTA program, and the continued development of the residency program under the Postprofessional degree.

The Department of Physical Therapy continues to evolve along with the profession. The first AU Masters level class began in 1985. In the early 1990s, we made plans to add a Physical Therapy Assistant program. Because of market changes in the late 1990s, we set aside those plans and concentrated our efforts on retooling our MPT and MSPT programs into the successful Doctor of Physical Therapy program we have today. We currently have over 100 students in the three cohorts of our program. National legislation has been favorable towards the physical therapy profession and we anticipate an ongoing increase in demand for our DPT graduates. The Bureau of Labor Statistics suggests a 30% employment growth rate for Physical Therapists from 2008-2018.

Physical Therapist Assistant Program

As the market for PT professionals stabilized, the demand for Physical Therapist Assistants returned and we are again considering the addition of a PTA program. The Bureau of Labor Statistics suggests a 35% growth rate for Physical Therapist Assistants between 2008-2018. After benchmarking 30 Midwest PTA programs, we have identified the following *minimal* space, personnel, and marketing needs required to begin a PTA program which would be accredited by CAPTE, the accrediting body of the American Physical Therapy Association.

According to our benchmarking, the preferable model is the “one-plus-one” where students complete one year of prerequisites and then one year in a PTA program. Academic prerequisites include courses such as algebra, english, anatomy and physiology, and psychology. The average PTA program is 68 weeks long (78 semester credits) which includes 16 weeks of offsite clinical education. All PTA programs culminate in an associate degree. PTA programs accept an average of 24 students per year (Loma Linda accepts ~60 per year). We would anticipate eventually attaining a similar class size with one cohort admitted per year.

In addition to our current resources, at this time the department expects it would need one additional classroom with a 40-student capacity load to accommodate the additional PTA students for didactic instruction and give more flexibility to schedule equipment-intensive labs around the entry-level and postprofessional DPT programs. The department would also need to hire 3 faculty and 1.5 staff. One faculty would be the Program Director, who would also teach in the program, a clinical coordinator (ACCE), who would manage the clinical internships and do some teaching, and one additional faculty to teach full time. In addition to the above core faculty, instructors would be required on a contract basis to give qualified instruction in areas of practice not covered by the core faculty. The minimal office staff would be one full-time administrative assistant and one half-time clinical education assistant. Each of these 4.5 faculty/staff would need dedicated office space.

Marketing and recruitment for this program would be handled by the Health Professions Marketing Coordinator, with materials provided by IMC in a manner consistent with current DPT and Postprofessional style and quality. We believe that our current PT Admissions office with one full-time director and two grad assistants at 20 hours/week each and one student worker (10 hrs/wk) would, at least at the beginning, be able to handle the additional volume of anticipated PTA applicants.

Postprofessional Orthopedic Residency Program

The Postprofessional program is almost complete! With the addition of the planned orthopedic residency program which is scheduled to begin no later than January, 2011, Andrews will offer all aspects of postgraduate Physical Therapy education. We will accept our 9th class of Postprofessional doctoral students this summer. Because the entry-level degree for physical therapists is now at the doctoral level nationwide, we plan to focus our marketing efforts primarily on the DScPT program. For DPTs who wish to teach in an academic setting or to gain specialist certification, this degree will continue to be relevant far into the future.

Our partnership with the North American Institute of Manual Therapy (NAIOMT) gives us the full breadth of postprofessional offerings. All of the NAIOMT courses can be taken for continuing education. For the Adventist market we continue to fill a niche of offering manual therapy education in non-Sabbath time. For the new graduate or inexperienced PT, the residency program consisting of 16 credits and 140 hours of 1:1 mentorship hours will get them started on the path toward specialization. We fully anticipate that persons in the residency program will most likely proceed on to, at minimum, achieve the Level III or Level IV certification that NAIOMT offers. Andrews will continue to host these exams on an annual basis.

For those that want more clinical specialization, they can continue through NAIOMT to a Fellowship with the American Academy of Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapists. Our partnership with NAIOMT allows these students to use the entire DScPT curriculum toward their fellowship requirements which also makes it attractive.

Over the next 5 years we expect to:

1. Continue to market and attract a minimum of 15 students a year for the DScPT program.
2. Accept our first students into the orthopedic residency program. The only limit on how many students we can accept is finding appropriate clinics where residents can do their mentorship hours. Our goal for the next 5 years would be to see if we could grow the program to at least 40-50 sites offering a residency slot.
3. Continue to offer the NAIOMT courses and exams on an annual basis.
4. Market all Postprofessional courses offered for academic or continuing education credit.