
UND SMHS Strategic Plan Individual Unit Report for 2021

GOAL 2 for **Physician Assistant Studies**

LEARNING

One UND Strategic Plan Goal 2: Increase undergraduate, graduate, and professional graduation rates.

UND SMHS Strategic Plan Goal 2: SMHS Units will expand their current systems of student support to ensure continued high graduation rates and improve student satisfaction with the overall quality of their education.

1. Describe if/how your unit has addressed this goal.

Faculty advisors monitor students closely throughout their 24-month enrollment. Advisors are assigned at the beginning of the program and student progress is monitored weekly by the Faculty Committee. Involvement in student progress and intervention as needed occurs early in the program, utilizing institutional resources for support whenever possible.

The admissions team continues to collect data related to key predictors of academic success. There was an ~82% increase in applications last year to data analysis is not yet completed for the most recent application cycle. This data collection and analysis will continue as we strive to accept the most qualified applicants with the strongest indicators of success to become future health care providers.

The final program assessment and the graduate survey data related to students/graduates prepared for the workforce is consistent with 90% agree or strongly agree and 10% neither agree or strongly agree. Additionally, 96% (26/27) of students report they are glad they attended the UND program and 4% (1/27), indicates that retrospectively, they should have attended a more traditional PA program.

The program has also implemented a "Study Skills" course for students needed deceleration and return into the next cohort. This spring is the third iteration of this course and data is being collected to determine success.

Additionally, a faculty member serves as the advisor for the UND Pre-PA Club. In this role, he has presented to undergraduates interested in the profession as well as coordinated a session related specific to admission to PA education.

2. Describe how your efforts are being assessed.

Assessment of student support occurs during weekly faculty meetings and regular faculty conferencing when discussing student performance and progress. Graduation rates are evaluated annually as part of the program goals required by accreditation and are posted on the DPAS website. Student satisfaction and workforce preparation are reviewed annually with the final program assessment completed by students and longitudinally as required by accreditation timeline intervals. The DPAS assessment team analyzes the data to make determinations and suggest modifications for full faculty consideration.

3. Describe how your unit analyzed these data and what assessments were determined.

The 5-year graduation rate for the DPAS is 93% which is comparable to medicine (93%) and slightly lower than health sciences overall (PT-97%; OT-96%; Vital Signs 2020). The most recently published national rate (2019 cohort) is 93%. All factors are considered in terms of rationale for deceleration, withdrawal, and dismissals.

Overall, students are graduating at a rate comparable with other disciplines in the SMHS and with other PA programs across the country. Students are satisfied with the program and feel as though the program prepares them for the workforce upon graduation.

4. Describe how your unit will implement any further changes and what barriers may exist.

The program will continue to analyze admission criteria in search of key predictors of academic success.

Faculty advisors, in concert with the Faculty Committee will continue to provide resources for students early in the curriculum, utilizing institutional resources whenever reasonable and available.

Student satisfaction scores will continually be collected to ascertain feedback and any necessary modifications to the program.

A barrier of progress in this area is the shortage of clinical site opportunities for student placement of clinical learning. These shortages cause much anxiety and angst in terms of satisfaction and training of our graduate professional students. To date, all have been able to graduate on time; however, the situation is becoming more and more difficult.

PROVIDE A RATING OF YOUR PROGRESS ON THIS GOAL: ● On Track

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