

# UND SMHS Strategic Plan Individual Unit Report for 2020

## GOAL 4 for **Physician Assistant Studies**

### LEARNING

**One UND Strategic Plan Goal 4:** *Enhance discovery at a level consistent with most research intensive universities (Carnegie R1) Goal by 2022, (\$120) million-internal and external funding sources.*

**UND SMHS Strategic Plan Goal 4:** *The SMHS will enhance basic, clinical, and translational health sciences discoveries while focusing on its stated purpose “of discovery of knowledge that benefits the people of this state and enhances the quality of their lives.” The SMHS will support Goal 4 by increasing its extramural funding by 10% per year based on a three year rolling average.*

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

The DPAS faculty currently participate in scholarship of teaching by continually assimilating the most current clinical practice methods and latest research discoveries within their lectures, classroom activities, case studies, assignments, simulation scenarios as well as practical and objective testing. In a query of faculty regarding their scholarship of teaching, in aggregate, all courses are reviewed each year with 50-80% of each course updated and/or revised and 20-50% integrated with new content or assessment methods. This year, there were several alternative learning exercises developed by faculty due to the coronavirus pandemic. Approximately half of these case studies and learning exercises were newly authored based on the clinical expertise of faculty and the other half were enhanced from teaching resources within the department.

In addition, each faculty member works individually with each student throughout the research process and development of a scholarly project paper and poster as required of a master's degree. These projects are focused to primary care and are presented to colleagues each spring. Faculty were also invited to present at the SMHS Homecoming CME Symposium and a Sanford NP/PA Town Hall meeting last fall. This spring, faculty presented a Leadership session hosted for UND through TTaDa and virtually published a poster for the Dakota Conference. There were also faculty scheduled to present at the NDAPA conference which was cancelled due to the pandemic.

The Journal of the American Academy of Physician Assistants has also selected a column written by a student/faculty team for publication and faculty have submitted three book reviews in a basic science textbook.

Moving forward, the DPAS research plan is that the department will collectively work toward additional scholarship in submitting topics for presentation and/or publication in the next 3-5 academic years as faculty development continues in this area and as related to faculty percentage of effort. Extramural funding is dependent upon government appropriations for PA training and cannot be considered a consistent source of potential resources. All extramural funding opportunities will continue to be monitored regularly and assessed for application as deemed appropriate to the work of the department.

### 2. Describe how your efforts are being assessed.

Each learning activity is directly related to an instructional objective; therefore, assessment of student performance is directly related back to all aspects of student teaching. This data is reviewed by each course instructor and then is presented to the full faculty through an end of course (EOC) report at the end of each semester. All faculty take part in the discussion as to whether modifications are needed and the data to support such and the Curriculum Committee listens for reportable change necessary for continual accreditation processes. Additionally, SELFI scores, including added qualitative questions also relate back to new and revised teaching techniques and are an integral part of the EOC report narratives.

Additional areas of student performance assessing the scholarship of teaching and learning include scores on step exams throughout the curriculum (final scholarly project score, OSCE scores and comp exam scores) and student performance on the national certification exam prior to application for medical licensure.

Outside presentations are often assessed by participant evaluations for alignment with provided objectives, presentation style, presenter knowledge of subject, content delivery and provided resources. Not all outside presentations have an assessment process depending on the hosting organization.

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

Strategic plan goal 4 is primarily focused to the scholarship of teaching and learning for continual improvement in the education of competent physician assistants. As faculty members become more familiar with their roles in academia, additional scholarship on a more regional and national level will be further considered and explored. In addition, government funded PA training grants will be monitored for availability and applicability with the work of the department.

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

The DPAS will continue to engage in meaningful scholarship of teaching and learning in terms of staying up to date with medical literature and best practices. The department will continue to explore innovative methods of teaching and engaging students in various settings throughout the curriculum (lab, sim ctr, classroom, virtually, etc.) and will continually assess student performance looking for methods of improvement as required of accreditation maintenance.

Faculty members are excellent clinicians with minimal experience in conducting formal research or submitting journal articles for publication. As the department grows in expertise and familiarity with research, this will improve over time.

External funding opportunities are not widely available and are not always applicable to the work of the department. Further, when they are available, faculty are unfamiliar with the application process and simply aren't involved enough to feel confident in grant writing skills. Again, with professional growth and exposure to grant opportunities, this will improve over time.

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