



2008-2009 Unit Action Plan

Division: ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
College/Unit: COLLEGE OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES

Significant Areas of Success:

Increased enrollment for the 7th consecutive year. Between fall 2006 and fall, 2007 there was a 204 (11%) increase in student enrollment and 6% increase in the number of SCH generated in the college. The greatest increase in enrollment was on campus (145 students) while the greatest increase in student credit hours was for off-campus courses (579 SCH). The increase in SCH for off-campus can be directly attributed to the increased enrollment in the Respiratory Care and RN-BSN programs. The greatest enrollment (41% of the total enrollment increase) occurred in the Nursing programs. Increased enrollment in the nursing programs is a result of the expansion of the RN-BSN program to an on-line format, the continued high demand for programs from area hospitals and the increased enrollment in the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program.

Received external validation for program quality. In its continuing effort to assure that programs meet and/or exceed external standards, the MSN, Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT), and Medical Technology (MT) programs hosted accreditation site visitors in fall, 2007. In each program, the results validated the quality of the programming within the college by awarding full accreditation. Two additional programs, Diagnostic Medical Sonography (DMS) and Nuclear Medicine Technology (NMT) have submitted self-study reports, with site visits expected during the spring 2008 semester.

Program redirection/creation. The NMT and Dental Hygiene (DHYG) programs have developed bachelor degree options for implementation during the 2008 academic year. Both proposals were developed as a result of demand by the professional community and are expected to increase enrollment in the programs during a 3 year period. In addition, a gerontology certificate has been developed to meet the emergent need for expertise in dealing with an aging population.

Enhanced technology in programs. The imaging science programs DMS, Radiography (RADI) and NMT have implemented an interdisciplinary PACS system to enhance student's capability to utilize digital technology in their respective fields. A digital radiology unit was purchased by the DHYG program to enhance student skills and equipment was funded by an external grant to allow DHYG students to perform noninvasive procedures in the community setting.

Began academic year with full complement of faculty. For the first year in the past five, all tenure track faculty positions were filled at the beginning of the academic year. This required filling 10 faculty positions for the current academic year. Having full-time tenure track faculty in place allows the programs to reach their potential in terms of planning, curriculum development and enrollment.



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Challenges to Continued Success:

Continued demand for enrollment growth. Continued growth in student enrollment, while it signifies success, must be managed. Growth challenges the programs, college and university to consider facilities, equipment, number of faculty, number of support staff, availability of clinical sites, level of programming and external demands placed upon the programs by agencies and students. Currently, the laboratory space allocated to the programs is adequate to meet the currently enrolled numbers of students. In the BSN, MLT, MT, RADI, continued on-campus enrollment growth is inhibited by availability of laboratory space. Coincidentally, those are the programs in highest demand by students. The amount of equipment available for students is adequate to meet the needs of currently enrolled students. However, the programs are continually challenged by the need to upgrade equipment to meet the changing needs of health care. Enrollment growth requires additional sections of courses, necessitating additional instructional faculty. In 2007-2008 there are 32 FTE faculty assigned to the CAHS and an additional 10.58 FTE required for adjunct or overload to provide coverage for the needed on-campus courses. In addition there are 8.07 FTE adjunct or overload to provide instruction for off campus courses. Clinical site placement limits enrollment in several of the programs especially BSN, DMS and RADI. Balancing the demands of the external agencies for additional programming off campus with the availability of faculty, equipment and clinical sites continues to be a challenge for program faculty. Frequently, the demand from external agencies is for programming at the BS level or higher. While there is potential for continued enrollment growth, program development and the availability of faculty to teach at the higher levels poses a challenge for the majority of the programs.

Changes in student expectations. Students' expectations about how, when and where they will complete coursework have changed and will continue to change. Those expectations challenge faculty to adapt their teaching methods to meet student demands. Continued time to develop on-line coursework, student centered teaching methods and other innovations in teaching challenge faculty members to challenge their beliefs in fields where there are frequently few accepted techniques for completing a procedure. Faculty development activities are ongoing to assist faculty in the adaptation of their courses to meet student needs while assuring that students are safe practitioners.



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Ongoing or Proposed Significant Activities:

Evaluate the mix of programming within the college. Evaluation is necessary to assure that the level of the programs meets the emergent needs of the medical community and the standards of the external accreditation agencies.

Increase number of personnel. The amount of release time for faculty members has increased with the result that some faculty are performing administrative or support staff roles. At the same time, the number of support staff decreased or remained constant while program enrollments grew and expanded beyond the Big Rapids campus. The result has been that the use of overload pay and the use adjunct faculty have increased and student surveys document increasing dissatisfaction with the services provided by the college. There is a need, following careful evaluation to increase the number of faculty, support personnel and possibly administrative personnel within the college to relieve current faculty to return to the classroom, to meet growing need for additional programming and to ensure that students are adequately served.

Development of on-line courses to support efforts of program redirection. In several programs, Health Care Systems Administration (HCSA), DHYG, and RN-BSN, there is documented enrollment growth potential from working adults who have indicated that they desire to complete coursework either in a fully on-line or mixed delivery format. To accomplish the goal of continued growth, especially in the HCSA and DHYG programs, funding for on-line development will become necessary.

Strengthen Assessment Activities within the college. Although the CAHS is a campus leader in performing program outcomes assessment, there is a need to centralize the assessment function to be able to assess the college as a whole. Assessment of student learning is in the formative stages and there is a need to increase support for faculty efforts in this area.

Increase cooperation with other colleges to develop innovative programming. In the past year, several opportunities for cross-college programming have been identified. However, none have been realized because faculty are on maximum overload or involved with administrative or support staff functions. Relief in that area, as previously discussed, will allow time for interdisciplinary programming, with the colleges of Business, Arts and Sciences, Technology, and to a lesser extent the Michigan College of Optometry and the College of Pharmacy.