

ST. PETERSBURG COLLEGE

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES, 5/19/2016

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Marlon Alaan, Mary Ellen Barkman, Teresa Chiavacci,
Norman Schlact, Mellen Sullivan, Cathy Garvey,
Shamsah Shidi

PROGRAM STAFF AND FACULTY: Dr. Rich Flora, Dean
Kory Thomas, PTA Program Director
Mary Hanlon, Barb Heier, Kirsten Snellenburg

MEETING TIME: 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

SUBJECT:

I. INTRODUCTIONS

- a. **Teresa Chiavacci** called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm. Those present introduced themselves and indicated their current place of employment.

II. PROGRAM UPDATE

a. **Staff Update**

- i. Kory Thomas introduced **Kirsten Snellenburg**, DPT, the new full time PTA faculty member. Her official start date was May 16, 2016. Kory also announced that Debra Fox, DPT, has been an Adjunct Instructor during the previous spring clinical session (clinical 3) managing students in their clinical and will continue to do adjunct work in the fall of 2016 in Basic Patient Care Lab on Mondays and Wednesdays.

b. **Current Number of Students**

- i. **Kory Thomas** referred to a handout and announced the current number of students in the PTA Program = 26, after starting with 34. This is referring to the Freshman class. 76% of the students are still in the PTA Program. Compared to the past years the grad rate in 2016 was 69.2% and for 2015 the grad rate was 52.5% = an average of 60%. CAPTE requirement is 60% averaged over the span of two years. Kory further stated that between 2016 grads = 69% coupled with this 2017 grads will be higher than 60%.
- ii. **Barb Heier** added that currently the percentage is between 76% and 70%, if student retention remains as it is.

c. **2015 Licensure Exam Pass Rates**

- i. **Kory Thomas** announced the 2015 licensure pass rates = 100% on all of the students first attempt. One student scored a perfect 800/800.

- iii. A comparison of first time test takers from the SPC PTA Program vs. other US Accredited Programs was discussed. SPC is higher in 3 out of 4 categories; but SPC is a bit lower on data collection. As the curriculum is assessed data collection will be looked at as an area to improve. **Kory Thomas** opened the floor to the attendees to offer up any suggestions as to how data collection may be improved. **Mary Hanlon** suggested incorporating data collection project rather than writing a case study in the clinical rotation. **Kory Thomas** addressed **Cathy Garvey** as a previous graduate of SPC and inquired about Cathy's experience in terms of preparation and if she felt data collection was a weak point. Cathy responded by asking: "What exactly are you looking for in reference to data collection? Are you looking for measuring ROM, gathering patient information?" **Kory Thomas** stated that data collection is any sort of measurement or assessment. Cathy responded with clinical application and data collection being incorporated in the Lab setting so that students can have more of a realistic experience with treating patients with actual conditions. **Kory Thomas** asked **Cathy Garvey** if she felt that having a patient simulator, or someone with actual conditions that could come into lab to provide a better sense of how to handle a patient and collect data during treatment. **Cathy Garvey** concurred that would work. **Kirsten Snellenburg** stated that she wonders if the other component of data collection would be related to previous students who took the Boards had mentioned to her that questions on the Boards were 'special test' (ie: Faber's, Vertebral Artery, Berg Balance Scale, etc.) questions that were not completely recognized as content that they learned in the Program. **Barb Heier** questioned as to whether or not students are exposed to 'special tests' out in their clinicals and what can be done in order to improve the experience of the student.

Kory reminded everyone present that they have to be careful when referring to special tests, as these are conducted by the PT, not the PTA, however the PTA has to be able to recognize and understand the 'special test.' **Mary Ellen Sullivan** mentioned the fact that some tests are called different names and therefore it may be difficult for a PTA to know what is being tested and why. **Mary Ellen Sullivan's** team of LPTA's use a data tracker to track patient goals, this helps with collection of data. **Mary Ellen Barkman** questioned: "What exactly is THE data?" **Mary Ellen Barkman** stated that questions on the Board exam are about quantification and qualification, each being different, yet necessary.

Kirsten Snellenburg stated that the PT Program she graduated from did a test and filmed an evaluation/reassessment of a patient and the students had to document what was positive. **Shamsah Shidi** added: "It's nice to have a student who understands..." **Cathy Garvey** followed up by stating that it would be beneficial for SPTA's to be exposed to as much as possible so that they can be prepared and have a broader knowledge of 'special tests' and perform

PT interventions within the POC that will address the needs of the patient and assist them in reaching a goal that will be tested via a 'special test'.

Kory Thomas reiterated the learning process in lab that occurs with students, their classmates, and instructors who "simulate" patient conditions for the intents and purposes of making the experience of the student more 'real'.

- iv. **Kory Thomas** reviewed the 'systems content' on the Board Exam and stated that SPC is higher than all of the other accredited Programs in Neuro, Cardio, and PT Interventions.
- v. **Kory Thomas** reviewed the SPC Program regarding 100% first time test takers compared to five other Programs in the surrounding area = Indian River State College, Miami Dade College, Polk State, South University in Tampa, and State College of Florida first time test takers are at 86%.

d. CAPTE Visit

- i. Visit date is next year: 9/10 – 9/13, 2017. The self-study report will be due around July 12, 2017. Faculty is currently working diligently on organizing and meeting criteria that CAPTE now calls standards and elements. **Kory Thomas** stated: "As we go through the process we are amending what has been submitted previously, as well as researching areas in need of improvement. Getting organized is not easy, however, it's going well." **Teresa Chiavacci** gave her input in reference to her latest CAPTE visit regarding criteria/standards and elements; elements are what is used to meet particular standards. **Kory** informed all who were present that there was a faculty meeting addressing CAPTE visit and she had her first conference call with Becky McKnight and will be meeting with her in person on June 14, 2016. **Mary Hanlon** requested that the conversation return to data collection and she brought up one of the PTA EXAM text books that has a section on "Types of Data"/Scales of Measurement that is statistical data. **Barb Heier** mentioned "Hooked on Evidence" that explained all of the validity with data collection to Clinical Instructors who were not members of the APTA, however, now the APTA has switched to "PT Now" and one must be a member in order to access it. In the PTA Program students can access the APTA and information and research sources.

III. Academic Pathways

- a. **Dr. Flora** thanked everyone for attending and went on to further state that: "Right now in higher education Pathways is a big thing that means that from the time a student gets into SPC until they leave, their pathway is mapped out for them. What we are now finding is that students are graduating and wandering all over the place. So, far a lot of SPC AS Degree Programs students have to have 60 – 73 credits and graduates are having 85 – 120 credits and so, the Federal Gov't learned that and tightened Financial Aid rules... If a student takes a class that is not required for their degree, it is NOT Financial Aid eligible. What's happening is when a student comes to SPC they sit down with an Academic Advisor and goes over a Pathway that pertains to the interest/degree of the student. There are 10 different Pathways that the College has identified. HEC areas are Veterinary Technology and Health Sciences."

Dr. Flora referred to a handout in the meeting packet that shows the Pathway for PTA. He explained that: “it starts with the first class in the sequence and spans all the way to the end in an order that the students should be taking their classes in. Pathways were developed a year or so ago. Within the career Pathways the first 15 credits are identified. As a student goes through a program/Pathway and they see what their academic performance is faculty can sit down and assess the status of the student and if their GPA is low, then other options can be explored so that the College doesn’t lose student enrollment. Pathways help students achieve their career goals by directing students and giving more options for the students to succeed. We know from the first semester if it’s going to work or not because you cannot predict reliably how they’re going to do in the interview. Academically, a student can be advised after the first semester, if their academic qualifications are going to qualify them to be considered to be in the program or not. The point of putting a common Pathway with each career is so that if a student chooses to go from PTA Program to Respiratory care, then they haven’t lost any time and will get through without extra credits. The push in higher education now is performance funding... are students getting through in a reasonable amount of time with a reasonable amount of credits? This is what SPC funding is based on: completion and retention.

- b. **Shamsah Shidi** brought up attrition rates in PTA programs... **Dr. Flora** responded with: “SPJC focused on getting everyone in...now it’s get them in, get them graduated, AND get then a job. SPC now has better trained counselors in providing a service to the students. One thing PTA students will have to understand and accept is that they are going to be touching people during treatment sessions. Smart start contextualizes courses and specifically states what the students class experience as well as job duties will be so that the students are well informed prior to enrolling in a Program. The Gates Foundation is very high on Pathways which means there is a lot of money to be given via grants, etc. The College is one of 18 Colleges chosen to participate in a Pathways Program. The focus is on: How are we implementing Pathways? All faculty is involved which ensures that a student will receive proper direction and support.”
- c. **Teresa Chiavacci** asked Dr. Flora how many students are lost from SPC to other Universities, as in SPC is just a stepping stone to get into a different College/Program? Dr. Flora responded: “Degrees, transfers, and certificates...it’s the student who transfers to an institution of higher learning are not considered lost. Students may leave SPC and go to a private Institution, or a College that is not accredited.”
- d. **Mary Ellen Barkman** asked Dr. Flora about the coursework and if students are identified prior to enrolling and put on a Pathway? **Dr. Flora** stated: “students are on the Pathway prior to enrolling and that’s where the career and academic advising comes in as soon as a student enrolls in SPC. Enrollment remains open for the most part and by the time the student comes to us they’ve already been through advising to address what career they want to pursue. A student can change their major as many times as they wish as of now. When they change their major the only credits that get looked at are the credits that go towards their major. Private for Profits = once a student reaches max funding the student has to pay out of their own pocket and then they’re gone...”
Dr. Flora went on to state that the website for SPC will be amended due to the fact that it advertises Physical Therapy rather than Physical Therapist Assistant. When a

student goes to the website a student can view the academic pathway and course descriptions.

IV. Clinical Education Update (Kory Thomas)

a. Spring/Summer 2016

- i. 26 Freshmen are going out this summer for Clinical Practice I, and 27 Sophomores completed Clinical Practice II in January, and in March they completed Clinical Practice III.

b. Number of Clinical Placements for 2017 (Kory Thomas)

- i. We currently have 48 clinical placements for 2017 with a need of 86 total for both cohorts.
- ii. Kory referred to the handout in packet to look at where the PTA Program is currently. 2017 has 48 slots, 26 Sophomores, plan to enroll 34 Freshmen in Fall 2017. We are down 38 slots; however, we are in a better position compared to last year at this time. Barb Heier commented on Spring 2015 numbers = -60 slots. Dr. Flora complimented faculty on how hard they've worked to get all the slots. Kory Thomas mentioned the clinical site board posted in her office and how it is utilized as both a tracker and reminder to keep up on clinical slots.

c. Reimbursement for APTA CI Credentialing Course

- i. **Kory Thomas** followed up on CI's interested in reimbursement for CI course. One person has submitted a receipt for reimbursement. CI's have been emailed to be notified of reimbursement potential. Time frame and location may be an issue as to why numbers of attendance and reimbursement are low.

V. APTA Membership for Students (Kory Thomas)

- a. SPC is interested in paying for students to have a membership with the APTA. Options have been explored as far as payment, however, there really is not an option. Kory Thomas asked for PAC members' ideas. Membership costs \$90. **Mary Hanlon** suggested a "text book" fee to cover APTA membership costs. **Dr. Flora** stated that FA will cover fee as long as it's listed as a requirement. **Mary Ellen Barkman** stated that if it's tied into an objective that it will be covered. Mary questioned other Programs that include APTA membership in their fees. Dr. Flora stated:

"The question is whether or not membership in a professional organization is ok to have as a class requirement? If you have students pay the College then the College has to pay the membership and that does not happen. **Cathy Garvey** stated that when she was a student her class found sponsors to pay the APTA fee."

The difficulty of not being able to mandate sponsorship deters the process actually happening. **Dr. Flora** further stated that another issue is that if the College pays for Physical Therapy Asst. Program, then other Programs will want/expect for their membership fees to their related professional organization be paid for by the College.

Mary Ellen Barkman asked about a grant. Dr. Flora said he will check with the Foundation Office. **Dr. Flora** stated possibly an alternate creative form to cover about \$3K a year to cover the APTA cost. **Shamsah Shidi** stated that the APTA will cover the cost for a student, however a student must submit reports, etc. in order to receive coverage of membership. Cathy recalled a student from her class receiving that their membership was covered under the West Central District. **Kirsten Snellenburg** mentioned doing a fund raiser to cover the cost. **Kory Thomas** stated Denise Kerwin may be of assistance with this. Dr. Flora questioned if there was a process for maintaining a CE license and if not then there could be a CE class here.

Teresa Chiavacci mentioned how the College sponsors so many CE classes, why not have a table set up for students to fund raise that shows what the PTA Program is all about and receive advocacy/sponsors for membership by targeting Clinicians. **Mary Hanlon** stated that there are extremely strict fund raising policies that may prohibit something like fundraising to occur. **Kory Thomas** stated that we have to go through Mary Gerst to see if any of these ideas would work. **Cathy Garvey** brought up graduate renewal. **Teresa Chiavacci** stated that once a student graduates and passes the Boards they are no longer a student and may receive a reduced rate for 3 years before having to pay full membership price.

VI. Comprehensive Academic Program Review (Kory Thomas)

- a. Handout to refer to view stats. The report came out in March and includes data for the past three years. **Dr. Flora** explained what the report entails: previous enrollment, graduation rate, credentialing exam result, employment trends according to DOL stats, results of employer surveys, grad surveys for the last 3 years. All programs go through this process each year. Dr. Flora will present the report to the Academic Committee. Mary Ellen Barkman inquired as to what the stats were for retention the last few years. Kory stated in 2015, it was 52.5%, in 2016 it was 69.2%, currently SPC is at 76%. 2015 and 2016 avg. = 60%.
- b. Kory stated that the assessment piece of Selective Admissions may very well increase the numbers. **Mary Hanlon** stated that the first semester is not so much due to academics, yet the second semester is about academics as the Program lost 2 students due to academics most recently.

VII. Program Advisory Feedback Form (Kory Thomas)

- a. Kory provided supplemental materials to complete survey/feedback form; a copy of the SPC Mission Statement and Curriculum, as well as a presentation of all text books utilized in each CORE class.
- b. The feedback form assists in obtaining data that is necessary for the assessment process. Data will be analyzed to see if any changes need to be made. **Teresa Chiavacci** asked about the Student Handbook and how she could not access it on the SPC website. **Dr. Flora** questioned why it's not on website as it is in electronic form and stated that it should be added to the website. Barb Heier presented each text book to the members. **Mary Hanlon** stated that every 5 years the text books change.
- c. Members completed the feedback form and returned it to Kory Thomas. The data will be reviewed and analyzed as part of our assessment process.

VIII. Admissions Interview

- a. **Kory Thomas** referred to the rubric as the guideline that assists with assessing someone's leadership skills, problem solving skills, and team player behaviors. **Barb Heier** referred to the Mission Statement of the College, located in the Student Handbook, as a piece that reflects the standards and values, as well as expectations of students. **Kory Thomas** stated that the Mission of the Program is to mirror the Mission of the College. Kory asked for suggestions on activities for prospective students to perform during the interview process to promote the key facets/objectives that the Program looks for in a person. What is currently in effect works, yet any other ideas to implement may be helpful to meet objectives even better. The members suggested activities of building something, without directions, within a certain amount of time that will enhance team building, as well as critical thinking. **Marlon Alaon** offered up to be on the interview panel. Mary Hanlon suggested that members present email her with ideas, as they may not be able to decide upon something in the meeting. Everyone present was in agreement that the rubric is acceptable. Interviews are scheduled for June 7th and June 16th. **Teresa Chiavacci** suggested that students who apply over and over again receive some credit when re-applying. Possibly this could get added to the interview process when someone does not get selected. **Dr. Flora** stated he will check with the legal department to inquire as to whether or not a person who does not get selected can be told why they weren't selected, as well as what they can do the next time to increase their chance of getting admitted into the Program. **Kory Thomas** mentioned increasing the number of observation hours prior to admittance into the Program to further increase prospective students understanding of the demands of the PTA career.

The committee agreed to keep the current interview questions and implement the new problem-solving activity suggested by Mary Ellen Barkman.

IX. Announcements

- a. Opportunities for CE

Kory Thomas stated that while Denise Kerwin, head of CE could not be present, she has requested if there is anyone who could speak on Medicare Bundling as well as any other opportunities for CE. Committee members were asked to contact Kory Thomas.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:08 pm.