

BACKGROUND AND REQUEST

Mount Union College

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATION

Mount Union College meets minimum Ohio Board of Regents' standards for graduate degree programs. There were concerns raised in the review resulting in a recommendation for authorization through December 2012, with annual progress reports due December 31, 2009, 2010, and 2011. A follow-up review will be performed by December 31, 2012 to determine continued authorization.

Profile: Mount Union College is an independent institution located in Alliance, Ohio. The college was established in 1846 and currently offers degrees at the baccalaureate level.

The mission of the institution is as follows: "Mount Union College offers a liberal arts education grounded in the Judeo-Christian tradition. The College affirms the importance of reason, open inquiry, living faith, and individual worth. Mount Union's mission is to prepare students for meaningful work, fulfilling lives, and responsible citizenship."

Accreditation/Authorization: Mount Union College is regionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and has been continuously authorized by the Ohio Board of Regents since 1970. The college's current authorization expires December 31, 2013.

Program Information: The Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies, a ninety-five semester-hour program, was developed in alignment with the Accreditation Review Commission Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) standards. The curriculum includes basic medical, behavioral, and social sciences; clinical medicine and patient assessment; supervised clinical practice; and health policy and professional practice issues. The mission of the program is "to educate knowledgeable and compassionate physician assistants who provide patient care with professionalism and integrity".

Review Results: The consultants noted many strengths during the review, including: exceptional institutional support; broad support from the local medical community; the use of outside physician assistant (PA) consultants during the program development process; the qualifications of the PA program director; an impressive physical facility; outstanding library services, and the consistency of the college's mission with the PA concept of service.

The consultants noted several weaknesses, including: the lack of a graduate department or division with specific graduate level policies and procedures; clinical faculty members with projected teaching assignments outside their areas of expertise—e.g., in the basic sciences; high teaching loads for PA program faculty, given the multiple demands on their time; the need for increased specificity in the learning

objectives on graduate-level course syllabi; the lack of a feedback process for program improvement. The college responded appropriately to the suggestions and recommendations of the consultants' report by submitting: 1) a revised organizational chart, which illustrates the placement of a newly created graduate division into the academic affairs structure; 2) a plan to work with faculty and staff to reassess current educational policies and practices and revise as needed to reflect graduate program needs; 3) revised teaching assignments for the PA program; 4) a reduction in teaching load for the core PA faculty members; 5) revised syllabi; and 6) a plan for using data for program improvement and modification.

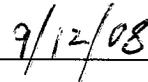
Recommendation to the Chancellor: Mount Union College meets minimum Ohio Board of Regents' standards for graduate degree programs. There were concerns raised in the review resulting in a recommendation for authorization through December 2012, with annual progress reports due December 31, 2009, 2010, and 2011. A follow-up review will be performed by December 31, 2012 to determine continued authorization.

End of Comment Period: September 11, 2008
No Comments Received, Recommend Approval

Approved:



Eric D. Fingerhut, Chancellor



Date