

CONNECTICUT COMMUNITY-TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM
Program Review
COLLEGE SELF-STUDY REPORT

Discipline evaluation is part of the institution's overall planning process. It is to be viewed as a critical self-study designed to review systematically the achievement of a discipline's purpose and goals.

College: Quinebaug Valley Community College

Discipline: Allied Health Certificate Programs

Report Prepared by: Cheri Goretti, Program Coordinator

Department Chair Signature

Date

4/30/14

Cheri Goretti
College Discipline Member Signature

Date

04-26-16

Others (Optional) Signature

Date

Please see attached report
for names of review
committee

Report Submitted To: College Academic Dean and College President

Alfred Williams
Dean of Academic Affairs and Student Services

Alfred Williams

5/9/16

Dr. Carlee Drummer
President

Carlee Drummer

5.11.16

Date

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Allied Health Certificate Programs Self-Study Committee Review Report

Friday April 25th

Members of Review Team

Bob Kozlowski, Director of Advising

Jennifer Oliver, Professor & Coordinator, Business Programs

Stacey Bottone, Adjunct instructor and member of MA advisory board

Patricia Bradbury, phlebotomy student

The review committee met on Friday April 25th to review the allied health certificate programs self-study. Bob and Stacey were selected to be on the committee since they were on the first AH self-study six years ago. Jenn was selected since she had just completed a program self-study the previous year and would be a great resource for this review and I Patricia was selected as the student representative as this is her second semester here and she is in the phlebotomy program, taking both on ground and online courses.

The process for the day's review was outlined as well as the process for how the self-study was performed. Specifically stating that this is the second allied health certificate self-study ever performed. The first one was done in 2009. The changes to the program since 2009 were pointed out, specifically noting the changes that the first review team suggested.

Below are the strength and weaknesses discussed:

Strengths:

- ~ Enrollment in phlebotomy, HIMT, and administrative medical office skills
- ~ Community support
- ~ Job placement
- ~ Exam passing rate
- ~ Full and part time faculty

Weaknesses:

- ~ Enrollment in PCT program
- ~ The ability to get data/information for such reports. Need a more efficient way to get the data each program needs.

Comments/suggestions made:

~ It was suggested prior to terminating the PCT program if it could be combined with another certificate to make one larger certificate that would be 28 credits and eligible for financial aid.

~ Suggestion to do a direct mailing to the local facilities that hire CNAs to promote the PCT program and to reach out to the CNA graduates.

~ Another suggestion was to combine the CNA and PCT program into a new credit program, seeing that the CNA has earned college credit from COSC.

~ Stacey specifically told the committee about the Fact Book that MCC does every year and sends to all staff and faculty that gives them information on all of their programs. Stacey said she would forward that to me for QVCC to review.

Conclusion

The review team was very helpful in coming up with suggestions for increasing the enrollment for the PCT program before going through the termination process. They also were pleased with the changes that were made to certain programs based on the suggestions from six years ago.

Allied Health Certificate Programs Self-Study

A. Narrative

The allied health department consists of five certificates, four of which are career oriented while one is a transfer certificate. The certificates range from 15 to 28 credits. The current allied health certificates include:

Health Careers Pathways – 27 credits

Health Information Management Technician: Coding - 28 credits

Administrative Medical Office Skills – 15 credits

Patient Care Technician – 20 credits

Phlebotomy – 16 credits

Students are able to dually enroll in more than one certificate. Admission requirements are the same as for any program at QVCC.

B. Mission and Goals

Allied Health Department Mission

The mission of the allied health department at Quinebaug Valley Community College is to enable allied health students, regardless of which program they are enrolled in, to enhance and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professionalism required by transfer institutions and employers.

Program Goals

1. Provide program-specific advising to all students enrolled in any of the allied health programs.
2. Prepare graduates to utilize their knowledge base as a foundation for continued academic studies.
3. Prepare students for various professional certifications.
4. Maintain open communication with clinical facilities to update programs for better student training and placement.
5. Prepare students for appropriate employment in the health care industry.

C. Curriculum & Instruction

1. Health Careers Pathways

The allied health certificate program was designed by the System as a transfer certificate for students who have interest in going into the various allied health programs such as nursing, diagnostic imaging, or medical laboratory science. The curriculum is varied enough for students to tailor their course of study to maximize transferability to the desired allied health program. The curriculum is a good combination of general education courses and core science courses.

Students who obtain this certificate usually transfer to a nursing program or another allied health program. Students have successfully transferred to the following colleges:

Nursing Programs

Three Rivers Community College
Windham Tech
Becker College
Worcester State College
Anna Maria College
Quinsigamond Community College (QCC)
Rhode Island College
Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI)
Mount Wachusett Community College
St. Joseph's College
Tunxis Community College
Quinnipiac University

Allied Health Programs

CCRI – dental hygiene and medical lab tech
QCC – dental hygiene and radiology tech
Windham Hospital School of Radiology – radiology tech
Tunxis – Dental hygiene
Springfield Technical Community College – ultrasound tech

2. Health Information Management: Coding Specialist

The HIMT program was originally established in 1997 and suffered from low enrollment. Major programmatic and curricular changes took place in 1999 and 2000. First, many of the core HIMT courses were only 2 credits so they were made into 3 credit courses in order to add more content and aid in their transferability. Secondly, the program was developed and approved for online delivery. Since those changes, an increase in enrollment occurred. However, since the System at that time decided that online students were not eligible for in-state tuition, enrollment started going down, due to the fact that many of the students were from an agreement with Aetna to send their employees from all over the country to QVCC for the online coding program.

Multiple changes were made to the program from 2009 through 2013. First, BIO* 110 Principles of the Human Body, which is a human disease course, was added to the curriculum. Secondly, due to the decrease of available practicum sites and upon having conversations with the local employers, HIM* 254 HIMT Practicum was deleted from the program and MED * 216 Electronic Medical Records was added. Third, based on student feedback, HIM* 210 and 211 were made into hybrid courses instead of fully online as the students did not think they were getting enough contact with the instructor. In addition, the instructor for these two courses was not rehired due to her inability to attend class regularly. Since the addition of a new coding instructor, the feedback from students has been positive, and there has been an increase in the number of graduates who have taken and passed the CPC coding exam.

3. Administrative Medical Office Skills Certificate

The medical office skills certificate is a short certificate in which students can earn a good skills set in only two semesters. This certificate was originally under the BOT department and was called Medical Office Skills. Since the termination of the BOT programs, the allied health department took over the certificate and renamed it. The current curriculum is adequate and updates are made to individual courses, such as MED* 111 Administrative Medical Assisting and MED* 112 Medical Insurance and Billing to maintain current in the field. In 2012, a new course, MED* 216 Electronic Medical Records (EMR) was added to the certificate to provide students with real-life work on an EMR, as the local medical facilities are all using some type of EMR.

Students who earn this certificate obtain gainful employment in various office settings. Currently, based on the inquiries from local employers, there appears to be more positions than graduates to fill them.

The administrative medical office skills certificate is a feeder program for the medical assisting associate degree. Many students will continue on in medical assisting since all of the courses they've already taken transfer nicely into the degree program. Many times, students obtain employment in the medical office setting, and return to obtain additional clinical skills.

4. Phlebotomy Certificate

The phlebotomy certificate is one of the most popular of the allied health programs. Since it can be completed in two semesters, it provides the student with a skill set that will allow for immediate employment. This program is also very popular with the medical assisting and nursing students since phlebotomy is a skill that will make them more marketable in their profession.

There have been some minor changes to the curriculum in the past few years. Based on feedback from practicum sites, PSY* 112 Psychology I was taken out and replaced with HLT* 103 Investigations in Health Careers. This course is a first-year experience course for students new to health care and the topics covered have been very beneficial to the phlebotomy students, as well as students who have an interest in other allied health programs. COM* 171 was taken out and HLT* 170 Medical Law and Ethics replaced it. This change occurred due to TAP, as COM* 171 was no longer being offered.

In 2013, a change in how the program was being scheduled occurred. The amount of practicum sites decreased due to competition from another community college taking up the sites at an existing hospital, another's hospital's outpatient laboratory closing and a mandate from the System saying that students could not have internships/practica in the state of Massachusetts. The program coordinator decided to offer HLT* 141 Techniques of Phlebotomy only in the fall semesters and HLT* 294 Phlebotomy Practicum only in the spring semesters. Although this program is very popular, there were not enough practicum spots to place over 30 students a year.

5. *Patient Care Technician Certificate*

The patient care technician program began in 2003 and was developed out of the health care community's need for trainer personnel in the areas of patient care. This certificate is the only program that has an admission requirement of a current certification in either EMT or CNA. This is a great program for a person who is a CNA and is looking to increase their clinical skills in order to obtain a position in a hospital.

The curriculum was developed based on conversations with the local hospitals and consists of the skills sets needed to perform at a patient care technician. This certificate is also a feeder program for the medical assisting program, as all of the courses transfer into the degree.

The enrollment in this program has always been low, compared to the other allied health programs. It was anticipated that the non-credit CNA program would be a feeder to the PCT program, and even with marketing to that population, it has not been the case.

D. Resources

a. Faculty

The faculty for the allied health department consists of two full time members: Cheri Goretti, MA, MT(ASCP),CMA(AAMA), is the program coordinator whose duties include coordinating the medical assisting degree and the allied health certificate programs. She is responsible for hiring, supervising, and evaluating adjunct instructors, securing externship and practicum sites, supervising student externs, curriculum development, and overall direction and maintenance of the programs.

Cindi Brassington, MS, CMA(AAMA) is the other full time professor in the allied health department. She is responsible for teaching courses in various disciplines such as medical assisting, business office technology, health, and biology. Additional duties Cindi performs include evaluation of adjunct instructors and curriculum development.

The program relies heavily on adjunct faculty members to teach a wide-variety of courses. All adjuncts are hired based on their specialty and professional experiences. Adjuncts are interviewed and hired by the program coordinator, while the classroom evaluations are performed either by the program coordinator or the allied health professor, depending on the course the adjunct is teaching. For example, if a new adjunct is teaching Administrative Medical Assisting, the allied health professor teaching that course will evaluate the adjunct. This not only allows for consistency in content but the full time professor can provide course-specific suggestions.

Below is the current list of adjuncts used by the allied health department and the courses they teach:

Abet Ching, BSMT, CPT, Program Coordinator, American Red Cross
– Techniques of Phlebotomy, Clinical Lab Procedures

Stacey Bottone, Professor, Manchester Community College
– Administrative Medical Assisting, and Medical Insurance and Billing, HIM Principles

Penny Lewis, RN, Registered nurse, Smithfield Pediatrics
– PCT Techniques

Jo-Ann Black, MSN, RN, Division Director
– Principles of Pharmacology, Clinical Medical Assisting
Melissa Cacciapuoti, Center for Bone and Joint
– Coding I and Advanced Coding
Angela Chviek, CMA, MBA, Harrington Hospital

b. Financial

A yearly budget is designed and submitted to the Academic Dean for approval. Each year, equipment and supplies are assessed and proposals for new equipment are put forward in the new budget request. To date, the allied health department has been able to purchase state-of-the-art ECG, INR, and HgbA1c machines, additional phlebotomy practice arms, an additional phlebotomy chair, and various Practi-meds for the pharmacology class. Additionally, the program has received funding from the College's Perkins and Tech Prep funds. These funds have been used to purchase additional coding books and phlebotomy practice equipment.

c. Learning and Instructional

QVCC provides instructional support to students in all programs. Students and faculty are provided convenient and effective access to the library and other learning resources. The learning center provides free tutoring services to all students. In addition, the college has a learning disabilities specialist on staff to work with students who may have a physical or learning disability.

d. Technical

The college provides information technology resources support programs to both faculty and students. Equipment and facilities meet current technology standards and are adequate to support the allied health program. Laboratory support is provided by the laboratory academic associate.

E. Enrollment Data

Major	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15
Admin. Medical Office Skills					4
BOT: Medical Off Skills Cert	7	1	2	4	
Health Career Pathways Cert	13	12	11	7	9
HIMT Coding Specialist Cert	21	12	9	12	16
Patient Care Technician Cert	4		2		
Phlebotomy Certificate	29	13	13	10	2

F. Graduation Data

Major	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015*
Admin. Medical Office Skills*						8
BOT: Medical Off Skills Cert*	5	5	5	9	14	0
Health Career Pathways Cert**	3	1	2	4	4	1
HIMT Coding Specialist Cert***	4	3	3	5	9	6
Patient Care Technician Cert****	3	2	3	1	6	2
Phlebotomy Certificate*****	30	11	23	25	23	9

*Graduation rates are steady for the administrative medical office skills/BOT: Med Off Skills certificate. This is a starting point for many students who end up going on to the medical assisting program.

**Most of the students in the health career pathways certificate transfer to nursing school before they graduate. Upon admissions, advisors put students in this program but once the student has applied to and gotten accepted by a nursing program, they tend to either not finish the program or do not apply for graduation.

***Since the changes in the HIMT program, enrollment and graduation rates are increasing slightly.

****With the exception of 2014, the graduation rates for this program have been extremely low.

*****Graduation rate dropped drastically due to the fact that the phlebotomy practicum is only offered once an academic year instead of twice, due to lack of practicum sites. Graduation rates are always higher than actual enrollment numbers since most phlebotomy students are enrolled in a degree program, which will always come up as the student's primary program, and the institutional researcher is unable to call up secondary program data.

G. Employment and Transfer Data*

Major – 2010-2015 grad	Job in field	Transferred	Job not in field	Unknown/no information
Admin. Medical Office Skills - 8 2015 only	4	2	unknown	2
BOT: Medical Off Skills Cert - 38 2010-2014 only	20	3	unknown	15
Health Career Pathways Cert - 15	3	3	unknown	9
HIMT Coding Specialist Cert - 30	16	1	unknown	13
Patient Care Technician Cert - 17	11	1	unknown	
Phlebotomy Certificate - 121	39	13	15	54

*The college does not do a formal survey on employment and/or transfer so all data is anecdotal and gathered by the allied health faculty.

G. Student Satisfaction Survey Results

Approximately 200 surveys were sent electronically to the graduates of the various allied health certificates. The return was not very good, but since the program coordinator and professor of allied health do keep in regular communication with graduates, employment data was able to be collected.

H. Certification examination results

Students in the phlebotomy program are encouraged to take the national phlebotomy certification exam. The program coordinator is a certified certification exam proctor through the National Center for Competency Testing (NCCT), and thus, can offer the phlebotomy certification exam on site at QVCC.

The other allied health programs do not require students to take a national certification exam. For students who graduate from the HIMT program and find employment as a medical coder, upon working one year as a coder, these graduates are eligible and encouraged to take the national certification exam offered by AHIMA. Students who wish to take an exam upon graduation are encouraged to take the CCP exam offered by the AAPC.

Phlebotomy National Exam Results

Year	# students taking exam	# students passing exam
2011		
2012	9	9
2013	19	19
2014	19	19
2015	13	13

Coding National Exam Results

Years	# of students taking CPC exam	# passing
2011-2015	10	10

I. Practicum sites

One of the allied health certificates require a practicum component. Practicum sites are secured by the program coordinator. The program coordinator forms relationships with local health care facilities and develops guidelines and agreements for each type of practicum. Placement at a site is based on availability and student preference, but the program coordinator has final say as to the exact placement of each student.

Students are well prepared prior to going out on their practicum. Students must maintain a proper GPA and/or grade for certain core courses. Topics such as professionalism and ethics in the workplace as well as proper communication skills are integrated into many of the courses students take prior to their practicum course. Below is a list of current practicum sites for each program:

Phlebotomy Practicum Sites

Day Kimball Hospital

Backus Hospital

Lawrence and Memorial Hospital

J. Program Strengths

The allied health programs have a very strong enrollment. The wide variety of allied health programs offered by QVCC allows students to see which program will fit their academic and personal goals. Students are never locked into one program and many students graduate with one or more different allied health certificate, thus making them more desirable in the employment market.

A big strength of all of the programs is the community support. Since many of the programs have an internship/practicum component to them, sites within a 25 mile radius must be secured. Not only are there plenty of sites for most of the practica, sites routinely call the department looking to hire the allied health graduates. These partnerships have allowed the college to offer new courses and programs as well as increase enrollment in the various certificates.

The program also has a strong full time and adjunct faculty. Most of the adjunct faculty members are currently working in the health care field and bring a lot of real-life experience to the classroom. Some adjuncts act as site supervisors, thus keeping a consistency to the student's learning experience.

The program has sound financial support from the college. The department has been able to purchase expensive equipment such as EKG machines, INR and Hgb1c testing instruments and state-of-the-art phlebotomy supplies in order to keep current in the field.

K. Program Weaknesses

Enrollment in the PCT program is extremely low. Students do not seem to obtain employment as well as graduates from the other allied health programs.

Lack of phlebotomy practicum sites is a huge weakness for the phlebotomy program, as the enrolment in that program could be so much higher based on the interest in this program from prospective students.

L. Proposed Changes

Upon discussion with the Division Director regarding the PCT program, the allied health program coordinator will make the recommendation to terminate the PCT program.

M. Conclusion

With the health care field ever changing, the allied health programs continue to stay current in the areas in order to keep up with the changes. Students are getting the most current information as well as exposure to state-of-the-art technology. As one can see by reading this self-study, all of the allied health programs can be dually enrolled for students to maximize their skills and marketability. In addition, students are able to take common science and health care courses prior to deciding which area of focus they will continue in. This flexibility offers the student the opportunity to explore various health career options and make informed decision for transfer or employment.