Western UNIVERSITY · CANADA

Advanced Health Care Practice
Final Assessment Report &
Implementation Plan
May 2022

Faculty / Affiliated University College	Health Sciences	
Degrees Offered	Master of Clinical Science (MCISc)	
Date of Last Review	2012-2013	
Approved Fields	Applied Health Sciences Interprofessional Pain Management Comprehensive Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy Wound Healing	
External Reviewers	Dr. Sharon Gabison, Department of Physical Therapy University of Toronto	Dr. Sandy Rennie, Physiotherapy – School of Rehabilitation Sciences University of Ottawa
Internal Reviewers	Dr. Kevin Mooney, Associate Dean (Graduate) Faculty of Music	Karik Pradeen, Ph.D. Candidate, Neuroscience
Date of Site Visit	March 1 & 3, 2022	
Date Review Report Received	March 21, 2022	
Date Program/Faculty Response Received	Program – April 21, 2022 Faculty – April 29, 2022	
Evaluation	Good Quality	
Approval Dates	SUPR-G: June 27,2022 ACA: September 7, 2022 Senate (for information only): September 16, 2022	
Year of Next Review	Year of next cyclical review: 2028-2029	

Overview of Western's Cyclical Review Assessment Reporting Process

In accordance with Western's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), the Final Assessment Report (FAR) provides a summary of the cyclical review, internal responses, and assessment and evaluation of the Advanced Health Care Practice Program delivered by the Faculty of Health Sciences.

This FAR considers the following documents:
- the program's self-study brief;
- the external reviewers' report;
- the response from the Program; and
- the response from the Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences.

This FAR identifies the strengths of the program and opportunities for program enhancement and improvement, and details the recommendations of the external reviewers – noting those recommendations to be prioritized for implementation.

The Implementation Plan details the recommendations from the FAR that have been selected for implementation, identifies who is responsible for approving and acting on the recommendations, specifies any action or follow-up that is required, and defines the timeline for completion.

The FAR (including Implementation Plan) is sent for approval through the Senate Graduate Program Review Committee (SUPR-G) and ACA, then for information to Senate and to the Ontario Universities' Council on Quality Assurance. Subsequently, it is publicly accessible on Western's IQAP website. The FAR is the only document from the graduate cyclical review process that is made public; all other documents are confidential to the Program/School/Faculty, the School of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS), and SUPR-G.

Executive Summary

The MClSc program in AHCP is a one-year course-based Master's program that is designed to offer experienced health-care providers the opportunity to obtain advanced training in a clinical specialty. The Program has enrolled an average of 33 students per year since 2012 and has graduated 410 students since its inception in 2007.

The Comprehensive Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy (CMP) and Wound Healing (WH) fields of the MClSc – AHCP Program are scheduled over three terms and delivered using a combination of online courses and onsite 1-3 week residency periods during which clinical skills lectures and labs are provided. Two additional fields were added in 2019: 1) Interprofessional Pain Management (IPM); and 2) Applied Health Sciences (AHS).

To inform the self-study for this program review, program learning outcomes were reviewed and redrafted in 2018 with input from instructors, students and mentors. Data collected through regular exit surveys and interviews, along with data from an alumni survey were compiled and analysed.

The external reviewers shared a positive assessment of the AHCP Program, sharing that the program has *"consistently demonstrated the capability of producing evidence-informed and research supported programs for students wishing to enhance their clinical skills."* They offer four recommendations for further enhancement.

Strengths and Innovative Features Identified by the Program
- Via the use of educational technologies, the program brings together world renowned faculty with program students to discuss novel and emerging information and practices in each clinical field.
- In-class and online work is complemented by a clinical mentorship experience where students have the opportunity to receive direct supervision and feedback from experts in their respective fields.
- The "residency periods" provide hands on experience with clinical skills and case discussions and allow students to demonstrate newly acquired clinical competencies in an objective, standardized clinical exam (OSCE) format.
- Access to clinical and research facilities such as: the Wolf Orthopaedic Biomechanics Laboratory, the Wound Healing Research Centre, the Clinical Research Lab within the Roth/McFarlane Hand & Upper Limb Centre, and the Pain and Quality of Life Translational Research Laboratory.
- The program maintains strong individualised support, and access to training and tools provided by an instructional designer with postsecondary online learning.
- The WH field is the only Master's program in Canada that allows health care professionals to obtain graduate-level education specifically in the area of wound care.

- Students shared that the blend of theory and practice leading to effective knowledge mobilization was what attracted them to, and subsequently experienced in, the program.

Concerns and Areas of Improvement Identified and Discussed by the Program
- Increased work demands and difficulty getting time off work for program students may require the program to limit required onsite residency periods.
- Emerging areas of clinical practice in the field that could be further integrated in the curriculum include: skin tears and increased demand for qualified professionals who can provide conservative sharp wound debridement.
- Better integration of research methods into wound healing clinical courses.

Review Process

As part of the external review, the review committee, comprising two external reviewers, one internal reviewer and a graduate student reviewer, were provided with Volume I and II of the self-study brief in advance of the scheduled review and then met virtually (due to pandemic restrictions) over two days with the:

- Vice-Provost of the School of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies
- Associate Vice-Provost of the School of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies
- Vice-Provost, Academic Planning, Policy and Faculty
- Associate Vice-Provost, Academic Planning, Policy and Faculty
- Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences
- Associate Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences
- Department Chair
- Graduate Program Chair
- AHCP Program Committee Members
- Associate University Librarian
- Graduate Program and Department Staff
- Program Faculty Members
- Graduate Students

Following the virtual site visit, the external reviewers submitted a comprehensive report of their findings which was sent to the Program and Dean for review and response. Formative documents, including Volumes I and II of the Self-Study, the External Report, and the Program and Decanal responses form the basis of this Final Assessment Report (FAR) of the Advanced Health Care Practice Program. The FAR is collated and submitted to the SGPS and to SUPR-G by the Internal Reviewer with the support of the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement.

Summative Assessment – External Reviewers' Report

External reviewers shared that *"interviews with current students and program graduates, […] course evaluations and exit surveys, clearly indicate that the program is very well run, the fields provide excellent theory and clinical components (where relevant), and the teaching and supervising faculty, and administrative staff are very knowledgeable and supportive."*

Strengths of the Program

- One of the first programs in Canada to use a distributed education model of delivery to provide graduate level education to experienced clinicians working in health care organizations located across Canada.
- On-site residency periods during which clinical skills lectures and labs are provided.
- A unique mentorship program that pairs up individuals in the field who mentor students throughout the year.
- Quality of the faculty and of their contributions to the program.
- Excellent website with program descriptions, basic and additional admission requirements, and fields of research.
- Ability to complete the program in one year, even with such a heavy workload.
- Many students as authors on publications of the papers or guidelines that are developed within the context of their work in the program.
- Assignments produced as part of program requirements have been used as quality improvement projects for several large health care organizations.
- Administrative staff indicated that they were well supported and felt very proud of the program and how successful it has been.
- A graduation rate of 97%.

Areas of Concern or Prospective Improvement

1. No specific program-wide overarching strategy on addressing EDID in the curriculum.
2. Need for improved communication and clearer guidance regarding expectations and student roles for the program projects and regarding which courses would be available during specific terms.
3. The program may want to consider the use of bursaries/subsidies through philanthropic contributions in order to offset the high fees for international students.
4. Certain professors indicated that they were overwhelmed while adapting to new teaching roles.

Summary of the Reviewers' Recommendations and Program/Faculty Responses

The following are the reviewers' recommendations in the order listed by the external reviewers.

Reviewers' Recommendation Recommendations requiring implementation have been marked with an asterisk (*).	Program/Faculty Response
1. Ensure a transparent strategy to address Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization in the MClSc AHCP in line with Western University's strategic plan: Theme 2 - People Community, and Culture. * (Related to area of concern #1 identified by the external reviewers in the list above)	**Program:** The program will discuss strategies to showcase how EDID is incorporated into the curriculum with the Manager Communications & Technology and Marketing & Student Engagement Specialist from the Dean's Office, Faculty of Health Sciences at the May meeting of the AHCP Program Committee. The AHCP Program Committee includes the ACHP Program Chair, Field Leaders, and student representatives from each field. The program will aim to implement strategies in time for open of applications in October 2022. **Faculty:** Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Decolonization and Accessibility is of paramount importance in Western's new Strategic Plan and, also, for the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) and its constituent Schools and programs, including AHCP. FHS has hired an EDIDA coordinator to support its Schools and programs in this important work, and several faculty members from Health Sciences are leading or are members of university-level committees addressing decolonization of curriculum, antibias, anti-racism and anti-oppression, equity, diversity and inclusion, and accessible education. Most recently, FHS has created a new leadership position, an Assistant Dean of EDIDA, to lead this portfolio, with this new Assistant Dean starting May 1, 2022. FHS graduate programs, including AHCP, are also currently participating in the admissions reflection exercise which is being spearheaded by the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies at Western and which has been designed to identify and foster holistic admissions processes. The FHS Associate Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies will be collating information from FHS graduate programs, attending the SGPS admissions reflection retreat in May (which will involve all Faculties), and then sharing the outcomes of that retreat with the FHS graduate programs to inform admissions for the 2023-2024 academic year.

2.	Review student exit interviews to draw on recommendations (e.g., need for improved communications about course offerings and project-related expectations). (Related to area of concern #2 identified by the external reviewers in the list above)	**Program:** Students in all fields are asked to complete an exit survey in July/August. Students in fields teaching advanced clinical skills also participate in one-on-one interviews with their Field Leader. Information from these sources is used to make improvements where possible. The student representatives are also members of the AHCP Program Committee and attend quarterly meetings. Student reps survey their peers, anonymize and summarize feedback, and present their report as a regular agenda item. Issues raised are discussed and action items are generated and minuted. **Faculty:** The Program has provided a detailed response to this recommendation. The Faculty supports the Program's ongoing engagement with students and their plans to address student feedback when feasible and appropriate.
3.	Give serious consideration to lowering fees for international students, especially for the two online fields, IPM and AHS. (Related to area of concern #3 identified by the external reviewers in the list above)	**Program:** The Assistant and Associate Dean Graduate Programs, and the Director of Operations & Finance for the Faculty of Health Sciences met with the Associate Vice-Provost (Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies) on March 14, 2022 to begin this conversation. The Associate Vice-Provost shared that other programs have asked similar questions and that discussions on tuition policy for online graduate masters programs are taking place at the university-level. **Faculty:** As noted in the Program response, discussion on tuition policy for international students in Master degree programs and for online graduate programs has begun within the Faculty of Health Sciences (e.g., April 19, 2022 Academic Plan Townhall focused on Partnerships, including Internationalization). In addition to tuition discussions, the Dean is seeking the appropriate approvals to use operating funds to provide scholarships to international students in AHCP from Low Income Countries.
4.	Onboarding faculty and providing a consistent structured mentorship for new faculty throughout all the fields. * (Related to area of concern #4 identified by the external reviewers in the list above)	**Program:** The Program will create an OWL website for all existing and new faculty members (including limited duties) with information on the following topics: - Orientation to OWL - Creating an effective course outline - Review of most relevant policies/procedures (e.g., Academic Integrity) - GTA Duties & Responsibilities, mentorship of GTAs - Review of grades submission process and timelines The program has added this item to the agenda for the May meeting of the AHCP Program Committee to elicit additional ideas for content. **Faculty:** The Program has provided a detailed response to this recommendation, and the Faculty endorses the Program's plans to guide and support existing and new faculty members. As an additional resource of

	ideas for faculty support, this could be a topic of discussion at the June FHS Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Committee meeting; that is, the content and format of faculty supports currently offered by other FHS graduate programs could be discussed and shared.

Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan provides a summary of the recommendations that require action and/or follow-up. In each case, the Graduate Program Chair, in consultation with the SGPS and the Dean of the Faculty is responsible for enacting and monitoring the actions noted in Implementation Plan.

The number of recommendations prioritized for implementation has been reduced as some are already being actioned, as described in the program and faculty responses above. As a result, the recommendations not appearing in the implementation table are recommendations #2 and #3.

Recommendation	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
Recommendation #1: Development of a program-wide strategy to address Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization	1. With the support of the new Assistant Dean EDIDA and the Faculty's EDIDA coordinator, initiate a dedicated discussion at upcoming AHCP Program Committee meetings and outline an actionable EDID strategy. - Consider adding this topic as a standing item at each AHCP Program Committee meeting. 2. Share and co-develop EDID best practices with other graduate programs.	Graduate Chair AHCP Program Committee Assistant Dean EDIDA EDIDA coordinator Manager Communications & Technology Marketing & Student Engagement Specialist	By April 2023
Recommendation #4: Development of supports and resources for new faculty members	1. Creation of an OWL site for all faculty members and instructors that contains a suite of themes relevant to program operations, policies and teaching in the program. 2. Discussion about the benefits and feasibility of supports such as: a structured mentorship program, an orientation session, and peer coaching.	Graduate Chair AHCP Program Committee FHS Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Committee	By April 2023