



SELF-STUDY

FOR MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

MAY 2023



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List of Acronyms

AAUP	American Association of University Professors	QPR	Question, Persuade, Refer
ALO	Accreditation Liaison Officer	RRT	Rapid Response Taskforce
APT	Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure Committee	SHS	School of Health Sciences
COA	Cost of Attendance	SOAP	Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program
CPD	Continuing Professional Development	SOP	School of Pharmacy
CUPA-HR	Colleges and University Professional Association for Human Resources	SPAP	School of Professional and Applied Psychology
DO	Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine	SPEC	Student Performance and Evaluation Committee
ELT	Executive Leadership Team	SP	Strategic Plan (SP 2020 or SP 2025)
DEI	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	TSPD	Center for Teaching Support and Professional Development
FA	Financial Aid	URiM	Underrepresented in Medicine
FAB	Office of Financial Analysis and Budget		
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid		
FERPA	Family Education Rights and Privacy Act		
FSBPT	Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy		
GCO	Goals and Course Objectives		
GPCC	Graduate Program Curriculum Committee		
GSH	General Student Handbook		
HR	Human Resources		
ITS	Information Technology Services		
NPTE	National Physical Therapy Examination		
OIR	Office of Institutional Research and Student Outcomes		
OSCE	Objective Structured Clinical Examination		
PEAT	Practic Exam and Assessment Tool		
PLA	Pending Loan Advance		
PMO	Project Management Office		
POps	Plant Operations Department		

Executive Summary



Executive Summary

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

The Philadelphia College and Infirmary of Osteopathy was chartered in 1899 to train osteopathic physicians. As the third osteopathic institution in the United States, the school grew and expanded as new medical ideas and paradigms were incorporated. The school changed its name to Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM) in 1967 and has expanded to include the School of Professional and Applied Psychology, the School of Health Sciences, and the School of Pharmacy.

PCOM is a private not-for-profit higher education institution with the Carnegie Classification of Institutions as Special Focus Four-Year: Medical Schools & Centers. The institution currently hosts 39 graduate and professional certificate and degree programs. The enrollment for fall 2023 was 3,027 students.

THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS

The Self-Study process took place over a period of 18 months following training sessions in which the Steering Committee participated. The president and provost delegated the operational leadership and guidance for the Working Groups during the Self-Study process to the associate provost and accreditation liaison officer.

Membership of the individual Working Groups was proposed by the Steering Committee chairs and vetted among the entire Steering Committee to develop appropriately constituted groups. Typically, each Working Group had representation of employees from each of the three PCOM campus locations and demonstrated experience and expertise in the areas being investigated. In total, there were more than 90 individuals involved in the Working Groups who contributed to the Self-Study. Representatives were selected from academic programs, all major administrative units, and the student body. Over the period of the Self-Study process, updates were provided to the administrative unit leaders, faculty, board of trustees, the provost, and the president.

STANDARD I – MISSION AND GOALS

PCOM's mission serves as the cornerstone of its work to educate future healthcare practitioners. The mission was refined as part of the strategic planning process and drove development of the current strategic plan, PCOM 2025: Path to Greater Excellence (SP 2025). The plan was approved in November 2020 by the board of trustees after an extensive and collaborative process.

Strengths:

- » The PCOM Board of Trustees monitors the mission statements of each school and program for alignment with the institutional mission through regular review, discussion, and affirmation. Programs are accountable to their respective missions and goals through an annual review process. Many goals of the Strategic Plan 2025 have been included in program goals and are reflected in annual reports.
- » PCOM has a structured process for various planning activities, including through the Office of Financial Analysis and Budgets, strategic planning, and annual employee reviews. Each of these processes includes references to the mission.
- » PCOM was selected as a Healthy People 2030 Champion of the United States Department of Health and Human Services Office of Disease Prevention for the institution's work in community-based health, which directly supports the mission.

Recommendation:

1. The PCOM mission is integrated throughout its various educational programs and student support activities. Strengthening the process that captures internal and external extracurricular activities of students, as well as community service collaborations between students and departments, will provide further evidence of mission-oriented outcomes and demonstrate the impact of PCOM's mission.

STANDARD II – ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

Various organizational units and departments were surveyed to identify practices and trends over the past three years in the thematic areas related to Ethics and Integrity: honesty and truthfulness; marketing and public relations; the mission and students; recruiting and hiring practices; complaints and grievances; academic integrity; conflicts of interest; institutional compliance; and institutional assessment. To complete the Self-Study assessment, institutional policies, procedures, practices, processes, and reporting systems were evaluated to ensure alignment with recognized best practices and implement corrective action plans as needed. The analysis of these processes and practices yielded several areas of institutional strength.

These Strengths include:

- » The Body Donor program instills fundamental values of integrity and dignity through the respectful approach to donor cadavers.
- » The award-winning PCOM website provides substantial information for various constituents, thus demonstrating ethical reporting.
- » The Financial Wellness program for students has highly trained staff that provides students with thorough one-on-one counseling sessions and financial literacy presentations on such topics as

budgeting, repaying student loans, home buying, and financial planning. Students leave PCOM with a thorough understanding of their financial responsibilities as reflected in the low loan default rates of graduates on loans.

Recommendation:

1. Develop an institution-wide faculty performance review process that documents and links faculty activities of teaching, research and scholarly activity, and research outcomes with the mission of the institution and program.

STANDARD III – DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF THE STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE

The design and delivery of PCOM's academic programming supports the mission and goals of the institution by providing a variety of quality experiences that foster critical thinking through research and clinical problem-solving. These experiences require a highly qualified faculty and supporting staff to deliver, assess, and improve the curricula.

The Strengths PCOM offers in these areas are:

- » There is a breadth of resources, perspectives, and support systems across three campus locations in two states that offer students, faculty, and staff outstanding opportunities to succeed. PCOM faculty have specific abilities and expertise that are spread among its three locations, which allows students at any location to connect with those who share their research and scholarly interests.
- » PCOM offers students the opportunity to participate in experiences with and at other PCOM locations, including pharmacy students from PCOM Georgia who rotate at the healthcare centers in Philadelphia, as well as Philadelphia students who rotate at Georgia sites.
- » PCOM's most critical degree programs are accredited by their respective specialty accrediting bodies, attesting to their strength in compliance and in support for PCOM students.

Recommendations:

1. Develop an institution-wide annual performance review process for faculty.
2. Based on the discovery that curricular maps are not of equal quality across the various academic programs, take steps to bring all curricular maps to the same standard and make them easily available to all.
3. Standardize an institution-wide procedure to provide direction and structure for course directors and program chairs/deans as they collect feedback from students.

STANDARD IV – SUPPORT OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Since its last Self-Study in 2014, PCOM has worked diligently to create an environment that supports and enhances the experiences of all students. By gathering and analyzing data, identifying gaps, exploring opportunities, and making curricular, structural, and staffing changes, the institution has intentionally and systematically created an environment that is conducive to the intellectual, emotional, and professional growth of our current student population.

Among PCOM Strengths are:

- » The Office of Student Affairs provides a strong support system for students by collaborating extensively across all three locations, capitalizing on technology tools such as Handshake and Maxient, and devising a multitude of workshops to convey practical skills, including resume and interview preparation.
- » The Office of Student Services and Financial Aid similarly offers a breadth of services for students, from financial aid to financial wellness, all with clear information that is presented in a transparent and accessible fashion.
- » The student support systems across all three campus locations are cohesive and responsive, including an emphasis on student mental health. This is supported by a data-driven process and includes two distinct teams: the Mental Health Task Force and the Behavioral Intervention Team.
- » PCOM faculty and staff are responsive to students' needs to foster their success.

Recommendations:

1. Review and revise the process of allocating funds from the Office of Student Affairs for student support activities to maximize participation and outreach consistent with PCOM and program missions.
2. Improve tracking of interventions and outcomes for the Behavioral Intervention Team.
3. Utilize the Mental Health Task force outcomes to identify initiatives that address student mental health and support wellness activities that can be tracked and evaluated across the three campus locations.

STANDARD V – EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS ASSESSMENT

The methods by which PCOM educates future healthcare practitioners must continuously be assessed to ensure alignment with the mission, the priorities as set forth in the strategic plan, and the effectiveness of those methods. The assessments utilized at both the program and institutional levels allow academic leaders to analyze the effectiveness of their curricula and educational goals. From both an academic and administrative perspective,

the Office of Institutional Research has provided substantial support to the data-gathering, review, and assessment of the metrics in the strategic plan.

The Strengths of PCOM's efforts to assess educational effectiveness can be seen:

- » At all levels, including the individual program and college/school levels, there is systematic and ongoing assessment.
- » There is robust analysis of student and graduate achievements through various collection methods and data points.
- » Institutional and programmatic goals are linked to educational experiences.
- » Data are used to inform a cycle of continuous quality improvement.

Recommendations:

1. Expand the role of the Graduate Program Curriculum Committee to review assessment procedures being utilized within programs.
2. Identify program-specific early warning indicators of students at risk for attrition or leaves of absence.

STANDARD VI – PLANNING, RESOURCES, AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

At the institutional level, PCOM has clear processes and effective procedures for planning and implementing its programs and services and conducts periodic assessments to identify and execute improvements. The institutional strategic planning and assessment process, as well as the annual budgeting process, involves several campus constituencies, as well as numerous reviews and approvals, resulting in a transparent and collaborative process that ties budget to priorities to mission.

Having reviewed resourcing, planning, and integration at the institutional and unit levels, PCOM demonstrates considerable strengths as it operationalizes the mission to achieve the institution's stated goals.

PCOM has identified the following Strengths:

- » PCOM's finances are incredibly strong, as evidenced by its high credit rating of AA- from Fitch.
- » The 2025 strategic planning process involved multiple stakeholder groups, several opportunities for constituents to provide feedback, and ongoing communication about plan progress.
- » During the budget process, individual departments have the opportunity to put forth their requests for due consideration, and the iterative process results in multiple reviews, discussions, and levels of approval.
- » When faced with COVID, PCOM immediately adopted a multipronged approach to keep the

safety of the entire community paramount while working diligently to maintain a high-quality educational experience.

- » PCOM has zero dollars in deferred maintenance costs.

Recommendations:

1. Encourage more individual administrative and programmatic units to create plans that advance their work in an intentional way that is aligned with the institution's strategic plan.
2. Identify non-tuition-based revenue streams to maintain the financial health of the institution in the future such as leases, rental fees, and partnerships.
3. Develop a comprehensive succession plan that preserves institutional memory to provide a seamless transition of knowledge and leadership.

STANDARD VII – GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND ADMINISTRATION

The governance structure of PCOM functions to ensure integrity in all operations and with a commitment to shared governance. The board of trustees, the president, and the senior vice president for academic affairs and provost are focused on fulfilling the mission of the institution through the initiatives enumerated in the strategic plan, PCOM 2025: Path to Greater Excellence.

This structure has led to several institutional Strengths:

- » PCOM is led by a strong, qualified leader who is recognized locally and nationally for his contribution to professional education and diversity.
- » The institutional governance structure ensures autonomy and the self-reflection needed to fulfill PCOM's stated mission and achieve its goals.
- » PCOM maintains a well-developed institutional strategic plan with defined metrics that are reviewed annually and drive action.
- » PCOM demonstrates transparency in its approach to seeking internal and external feedback to drive improvements and strengthen the mission.

Recommendations:

1. Recruit a diverse faculty to better reflect PCOM's increasingly diverse student body and the communities they serve.
2. Through the selection and implementation process of a new enterprise resource planning system, strengthen the use of technology to provide greater efficiencies, rapid information accessibility, and improved platforms of communication.
3. Enhance the lines of communication between and among the board of trustees, senior administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Introduction



Introduction

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PHILADELPHIA COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

The Philadelphia College and Infirmary of Osteopathy (PCIO) was chartered in January of 1899 and occupied two rooms of a downtown Philadelphia office building. This was the first East Coast outpost of a rapidly expanding medical profession originating in the rural Midwest. Many of the early students of osteopathy were attracted to the profession by personal experiences in which a medical problem that had not responded to conventional therapies was relieved by osteopathic management. This was the case for the founders of PCIO, Oscar John Snyder, DO, and Mason Wiley Pressly, DO. Dr. Pressly had trained with the charismatic founder of osteopathy, Andrew T. Still, DO, MD, at the original college established in Kirksville, Missouri.

When osteopathic schools were forming throughout the country in the 1890s, these two students at the Northern Institute of Osteopathy in Minneapolis targeted Philadelphia as a future home for an osteopathic medical college. The first PCIO degree was awarded to a transfer student in 1899; the first PCIO class, composed of two students, graduated from the fledgling College then located at 21 South 12th Street in February 1900.

In the beginning, the basic science curriculum was heavily weighted to anatomy, as restoration of normal anatomic skeletal alignment and function, particularly of the spine, was considered critical to adequate blood supply and neural function of the entire body. The physiologic concepts of self-regulation and organ system interrelationship were also important, as it was taught that a removal of the barriers to normal physiology would allow the body to “heal itself.” Clinical patient evaluation largely comprised searching for “osteopathic lesions,” which were characterized as local areas of muscular tenderness and abnormal (usually restricted) motion. The overall evaluation of nutrition, exercise, and emotional stability were also considered important. Therapy was usually manipulation to restore normal alignment and motion.

The college prospered and moved through a number of sites in its first century, including Walnut, Juniper and Sansom Streets; 33rd and Arch Streets; 1715 North Broad Street; 832 Pine Street; 19th and Spring Garden Streets; 48th and Spruce Streets; and finally, City Avenue. PCIO, which officially changed its name to the Philadelphia College of Osteopathy (PCO) in 1921, experienced an expansion in the medical school's student body and faculty. The medical curriculum intensified, osteopathic research was initiated, and clinic and hospital services grew dramatically. The United States economy grew rapidly after World War II, and PCO grew with it. Classes expanded to about 100 students during the 1950s. In 1954, PCO

purchased a hospital in North Philadelphia, increasing its total hospital bed capacity to 210. There was a parallel expansion of graduate medical education at the college, which grew to become the largest training site for residents in the osteopathic profession in the 1950s.

PCO was renamed as Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM) in 1967. Training in outpatient care, a characteristic of osteopathic education, also expanded as three outpatient health care centers were established in Philadelphia, and a rural healthcare center was established in Sullivan County, Pennsylvania. The growth of the College was accelerated in the 1970s as a result of federal and state programs to address a perceived shortage of physicians. The class size increased to 200. The full-time faculty was expanded, and a new campus was again constructed on City Avenue.

Institutional Overview

PCOM began diversifying its academic programs in 1993 after nearly a century of training osteopathic physicians. The institution launched a Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences program. Recognizing a need for primary care mental health providers, PCOM started a Doctor of Psychology in Clinical Psychology program in 1995. The institution continued to grow and now offers 39 certificate and degree programs in 4 schools: the College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM), the School of Professional and Applied Psychology (SPAP), the School of Health Sciences (SHS), and the School of Pharmacy (SOP).

August of 2005 marked the opening of PCOM Georgia, a branch campus in Suwanee, Georgia. Situated in a suburb of Atlanta, PCOM Georgia had, and continues to have, a focus on helping to fill the need for more healthcare professionals in the Southeastern United States. PCOM Georgia offers professional doctoral degree programs in osteopathic medicine, pharmacy, and physical therapy, as well as master's degree programs in biomedical sciences, medical laboratory sciences, and physician assistant studies.

The most recent expansion led to the founding of PCOM South Georgia. The institution received initial approval from the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation on December 5, 2017 to establish an additional location in Moultrie, Georgia. PCOM South Georgia welcomed its inaugural class of osteopathic medical students in August of 2019. In 2020, PCOM South Georgia expanded its academic offerings to include a biomedical sciences program.

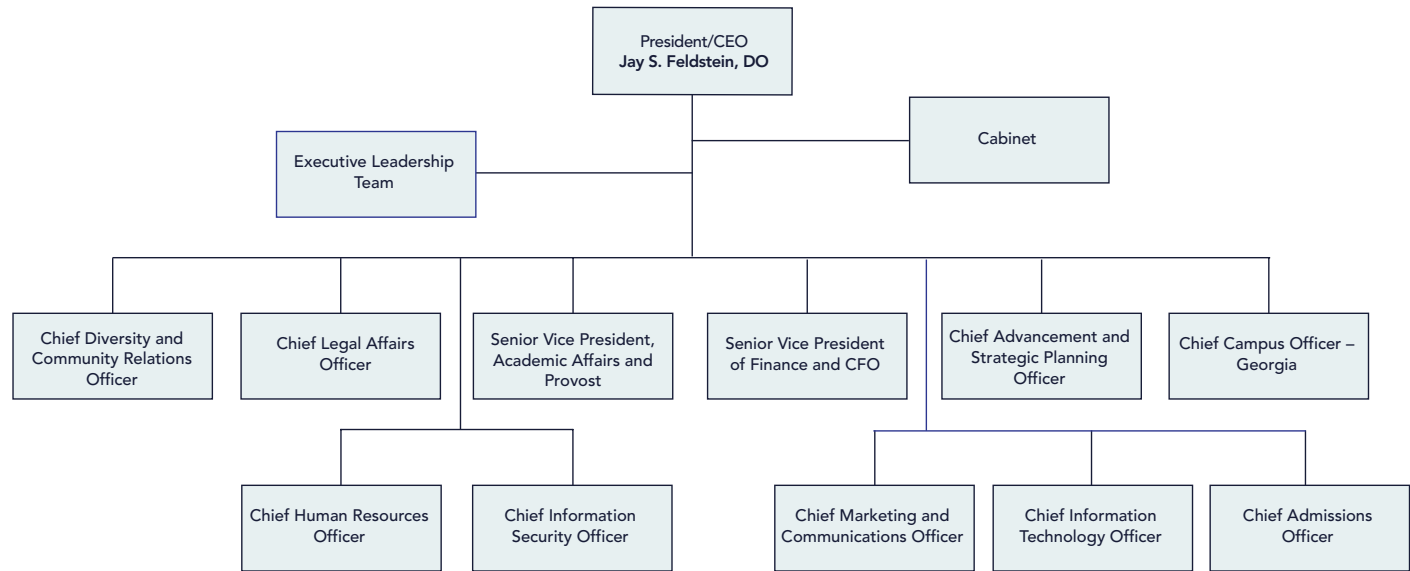
The two locations in Georgia are viewed as a strong complement to PCOM and further the institution's mission to educate health professionals and advance the health of diverse communities.

The faculty represents the operational component of PCOM's purpose and mission. They drive the educational program for student success with the support of other units, such as the Office of Student Affairs (Student Affairs). Students receive quality instruction from 214 faculty; over 82% of the faculty have earned a terminal degree. In addition to the faculty employees, there are more than 3,800 clinical preceptors involved in supervision and training of students in clinical environments.

The leadership of the institution is directed by the

president (Figure 1). The president is supported in his work by the cabinet and the Executive Leadership Team (ELT). The cabinet consists of the president, the senior vice president for academic affairs and provost, vice president for finance and chief financial officer, the chief diversity officer, chief campus officer for Georgia, the chief advancement and strategic planning officer, and the chief legal affairs officer. The ELT includes all cabinet members and other key personnel representing schools and units supporting the institution.

FIGURE 1. PCOM LEADERSHIP



PCOM operates three campus locations. The Philadelphia campus is located just minutes away from Center City Philadelphia and covers approximately 17 acres of land with facilities for teaching, clinical practices, and student support services. Included among the most recent major capital improvements:

- » In 2021, renovations were completed on the Meta Christy House, a former senior living facility adjacent to the Philadelphia campus, to create a 225-unit apartment complex.
- » In 2019, a lighting control system was installed and was followed in 2021 by an upgraded HVAC system. This building automation system at all locations provides the facilities team to manage the varied needs for climate control and lighting. PCOM can thus meet the demands of its users while still maintaining energy efficiency when spaces are unoccupied or during off hours.
- » In 2019, a 75,000 square foot building, situated on 31 acres, was completed for the new PCOM South Georgia location in Moultrie, Georgia. The facility provides teaching classrooms and labs, a cafeteria, a library, and recreational space for students in the

osteopathic medicine and biomedical sciences programs.

- » In 2015, the lower level of the 22,000 square foot Northlake building at PCOM Georgia was renovated for the physician assistant studies program.

Mission and Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is a collaborative and iterative process at PCOM. There are six goals set forth in the current plan, and this Self-Study focused on the four goals that most directly impact the mission and how the administration, leadership, and faculty strive to educate professionals to care for the whole person and advance the health of diverse communities. SP 2025 has strategies outlined to achieve the goals, which are supported by annual tactics. The plan also outlines various metrics to gauge progress toward goal accomplishment. There are quarterly meetings with individuals responsible for tactics in a given year, as well as annual review meetings. All metric data are visible on a dashboard available to the PCOM

community through the institution's intranet.

Recent Initiatives

INFRASTRUCTURE

PCOM has undertaken the initial steps of selecting a new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. This major initiative has several advantages to the current mix of electronic systems used to manage information throughout the institution .

These advantages include:

- » Data accessibility: Relevant data are accessible without prior authorization.
- » Data usage: Data are made available when and where needed to support informed decision-making.
- » Data integrity: Data converted into the ERP are as accurate as possible at the time of conversion.
- » Data governance: Rules and processes are outlined to establish guardrails around changes to data.

OUTCOMES-BASED DECISIONS AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

PCOM has a diverse student body and has implemented programs to enhance faculty, staff, and student awareness of bias and to increase sensitivity to the diversity of communities and health care needs.

To better respond to new MSCHE standards, including the emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion, new initiatives are being studied to specifically address the following:

- » Processes that define governance and security of disaggregated assessment results for student populations (Standards IV and V)
- » Processes to disaggregate and analyze student achievement data to inform and implement strategies that ensure students are appropriately served and the institutional mission and goals are met for all student populations (Guiding Principle 4, Standard IV)

STUDENT SUCCESS

Reviewing data gathered from campus climate surveys, student feedback, and academic outcomes, it became increasingly clear that a segment of PCOM's student population was having difficulty understanding content, creating an academic success plan, and managing their time. In addition, in spite of the constant communication about existing resources, students had difficulty identifying where to go for help. As a result, Student Affairs, working with several units at the institution,

proposed a central location, on each campus, serving as a one-stop-shop for academic support. The Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) is being included as part of the institution's comprehensive fundraising campaign, which is slated for a public launch in January 2024.

Self-Study Process

The president and provost delegated the operational leadership and guidance for the Working Groups during the Self-Study process to the associate provost and accreditation liaison officer (ALO). A Steering Committee was selected and set the stage for Working Groups by attending the MSCHE Self-Study Institute in 2021.

A letter from the president and provost was sent to all deans and those in leadership positions emphasizing the importance of the process for the continued growth and improvement of the institution. Faculty and staff were invited to participate in various Working Groups, and leadership encouraged deans and unit supervisors to recognize the value and time required for this work.

In order to maximize engagement among the different Working Groups, many of which pursued common areas of inquiry, each member of the Steering Committee served as a chair or co-chair of a Working Group. The Steering Committee met regularly to review the progress of the Working Groups, as well as any needs and findings of evidentiary reviews. Several members of the PCOM community served on more than one Working Group, which served to ensure efficient collaboration between the Working Groups and a reduction of duplicative efforts. The ALO also attended many of the Working Group meetings and served as a resource to communicate activities occurring in different groups.

Throughout the Self-Study process, the emphasis was to demonstrate how PCOM embodies its mission through the various MSCHE Standards. The lines of inquiry that were developed addressed the criteria and were reviewed, discussed, and approved by the Steering Committee. The Self-Study priorities were linked to those of SP 2025 to demonstrate PCOM's continuous efforts to improve the quality of all aspects of the institution's planning and execution. The Self-Study priorities are linked to the Commission's Standards and analyzed through the lens of the criteria.

TABLE 1. ALIGNMENT OF MISSION, VISION, VALUES WITH INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES

	Priority I: Student Success	Priority II: Innovation and Technology	Priority III: Organization and Infrastructure	Priority IV: Diversity, equity, and inclusion
MISSION				
Educate health professionals	x	x	x	x
Advance health of diverse communities	x	x	x	x
VISION				
Transforming health professions education by integrating human connection with innovation and research	x	x		x
VALUES				
Accountable to one another	x	x	x	x
Act with integrity and treat everyone with respect	x		x	x
Foster innovation	x	x	x	
Embrace diversity, advancing equity and inclusion	x		x	x
Work as a team and seek opportunities to collaborate	x	x	x	x

TABLE 2. ALIGNMENT OF MSCHE STANDARDS WITH INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES

	Priority I: Student Success	Priority II: Innovation and Technology	Priority III: Organization and Infrastructure	Priority IV: Diversity, equity, and inclusion
Standard I	x		x	x
Standard II	x	x	x	x
Standard III	x	x	x	x
Standard IV	x	x	x	x
Standard V	x	x	x	x
Standard VI	x	x	x	x
Standard VII	x	x	x	x

Throughout the process, faculty and leadership were updated on the progress of the Working Groups. Student members were also engaged with the groups to help toward the end of the process. The Self-Study report was posted on the institution's intranet site for any member of the PCOM community to review.

Timeline for the Self-Study

- » October-November 2021: Middle States Self-Study Institute attended by the Steering Committee
- » October-January 2022: Steering Committee meetings; vetting of Working Group members
- » January-April 2022: Creation of Self-Study Design
- » February 2022: Working Groups begin evidence collection and analysis
- » June 2022: First drafts from Working Groups due
- » September 2022: Second drafts from Working Groups due
- » January 2023: Third drafts from Working Groups due
- » March 2023: Chairs and Co-chairs complete final drafts
- » March-May 2023: Self-Study Final Report assembled and reviewed
- » June 2023: Self-Study Report submitted

Most of the Working Groups completed their collection of evidence and analysis between summer 2022 and winter 2023. The Working Groups' reports were read, critiqued, and finalized by the chairs. Once submitted to the Steering Committee, reports were reviewed by members who had completed a complementary report to evaluate for overlap and congruence. This process had several iterations. The Self-Study report was also posted on a shared drive for employee and student review and comment prior to submission. Finally, the draft was reviewed by the provost, the president, and representative members of the board of trustees.

Standard I - Mission and Goals



The institution's mission defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission.

PCOM is a proud institution with a history of educating healthcare providers for 125 years. A detailed analysis was undertaken to establish the strength of the mission and values of the institution. This undertaking revealed that the mission and values demonstrate a substantial depth and breadth that impact both the business of the institution - the education of healthcare providers - and the operations that support this business.

The analysis of Standard I, Mission and Goals, focused on the criteria of the standard with a series of questions in the areas of stakeholder awareness, strategic plan development, academic and operational goals and objectives, evidence supporting achievement of the mission, and how relevant and effective the mission remains in the recent challenging times of graduate and professional training.

The review demonstrated a strong list of program mission statements that are aligned with the institutional mission. It revealed the PCOM Board of Trustees remains fully aware and engaged in the process of review, discussion, and reaffirmation, supporting a management structure with strong oversight of the direction of the institution and its schools.

The driver behind the strength of the institution is the preplanned planning and strategies to maintain a strong mission through its programs. The goal-oriented tactics and metrics allow the programs to remain connected to the purpose – the mission. The values of the institution reflect how PCOM executes business. The organization is a community of respectful individuals who have a strong sense of integrity, who respect diversity on many levels, and who relish opportunities to be innovative through collaboration.

Evidence from this detailed endeavor demonstrates the significance of data-driven decision-making. It guides the institutional process and recognizes the impact of outcomes as necessary. This process is evident in the analytics of the mission, the importance of the academic reputation, the success and development of programs, and most importantly in the outcomes of graduates. PCOM connects its mission to the outcomes of its students and graduates.

Finally, the review addressed the effectiveness of the mission and values. The institution has remained steadfast in its commitment to the field of health care. All programs are aligned with the institutional mission and have curricula that will produce graduates who contribute to many different areas of the healthcare field.

The institution identified the need to expand beyond the greater Philadelphia area and established two additional campuses in a state with a severe shortage of healthcare professionals - Georgia. This review demonstrates that with the guidance of the PCOM Board of Trustees and the strategic plan, its mission of **educating professionals to care for the whole person and advance the health of diverse communities** is observed.

Stakeholder Awareness

(Criteria 1.a, 1.c, 1.f, ROA 8)

PCOM is dedicated to the education of students in medicine, health, and behavioral sciences. It supports this dedication through its mission of educating professionals to care for the whole person and advance the health of diverse communities.

The mission is reflected in PCOM's core values:

- » We are accountable to one another.
- » We act with integrity and treat everyone with respect.
- » We foster innovation.
- » We embrace diversity, advancing equity and inclusion.
- » We work as a team and seek opportunities to collaborate.

PCOM's college/schools each have their own mission statement as well. Within the school, there are multiple academic programs with their own mission statements. All of these unit-based mission statements are aligned with and support the PCOM institutional mission (EI I.1).

When new programs are considered, there is a defined process of internal and external analysis to determine the feasibility of the program.

Considerations are given to:

- » Program fit for the institutional mission and goals
- » Operational feasibility with the resources available
- » Prospective student enrollment
- » Internal support required to start and sustain the program
- » Financial impact

Among these, aligning with the institutional mission and goals is foremost. Periodically, as part of its oversight responsibilities, the PCOM Board of Trustees reviews, discusses, and reaffirms the missions of the schools and programs. This was most recently done in 2022 (EI I.2). The mission statements of schools and programs

are included in the University Catalog and Student Handbook and program-specific handbooks. The provost regularly begins PCOM faculty meetings with a review of the mission of the institution.

The Standard I Working Group sought evidence that stakeholders are aware of the PCOM mission statement that is prominently displayed on the PCOM website (pcom.edu) and intranet. Results demonstrate that this PCOM mission statement is primarily visited through organic searches (76.8%), referrals (11.5%), and direct searches (9.4%) (EI I.3).

During the report period of 2021-2022, there was an increase in searches from the prior year. The peak months for searches were between May and August, with June registering the most views. These months parallel student interest in searching various schools and programs in preparation to apply.

The number of potential PCOM applicants is greater than represented in the analytics of those visiting the institution and program pages. These analytics do not distinguish between internal and external stakeholders. However, once matriculated, students are aware of the mission and feel connected to the PCOM mission. This awareness and connection have increased over the past five years (EI 1.4.A-D). This evidence demonstrates that the mission and values of the institution and various programs are presented in a manner that provides transparency and accessibility to stakeholders.

During 2021, first-year DO students were assigned an exercise around prioritizing values and were asked "Do your values align with the institution's values?" Of the 258 students that responded, 91% reported "Yes."

Below are a few of the comments from students:

- » PCOM is committed to the well-being of the community through leadership and service. This is a part of the foundation for all my values.
- » My institution's values make it very easy for me to live out my personal values while upholding theirs.
- » My values align with the institution's values in that striving to treat others with respect and see the world from their point of view lines up with the osteopathic understanding that a person is more than just their affliction, but rather a product of all the biopsychosocial factors that have been present in their lives.
- » I feel that the values of the institution reflect my own. Being accountable for my own actions, respecting others, and promoting inclusion are all sentiments that I try very hard to emulate. Reflecting on these values makes me smile as it helped me remember why I chose this school.

Strategic Plan Development (Criteria 1.a-d, 2-3)

PCOM's academic direction is based upon the mission, vision, and goals of the institution. PCOM operates with a 5-year strategic plan. The current strategic plan, SP 2025, built upon the successes of the 2020 plan and the reflective discussions about the best future direction of the institution (EI I.5). Representation on the SP 2025 Strategic Planning Steering Committee was composed of 20 individuals representing all programs and administrative units. Members of the board of trustees also participated. An 80-person retreat was convened in September 2019 to review, discuss, and determine PCOM's path forward in a collaborative and transparent process. These efforts led to a comprehensive strategic plan with quantifiable metrics, clear lines of responsibility, and opportunities to pivot.

The Strategic Plan has 4 goals that were selected as the focal points for this Self-Study:

- » **Student Success:** PCOM graduates are successfully positioned for a competitive marketplace and are leaders in interprofessional team environments.
- » **Securing Clinical Experiences:** PCOM has a sustainable network of valuable clinical experiences for students in all programs.
- » **Innovation and Technology:** PCOM fosters a culture of technological innovation both in pedagogy and in practice.
- » **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:** PCOM embeds diversity, equity and inclusion in its curriculum, policies, processes and practices to advance student, faculty and staff performance and excellence in service to communities.

Each of the goals identified was selected to align with the institutional mission, vision, and values. The PCOM Board reviewed and approved the SP 2025 plan and is provided with regular updates. Annually, a report is issued highlighting the various tactics that supported progress toward goal achievement, as well as the status of the individual plan metrics. The president includes highlights of the plan for the year in his annual reports. The Strategic Plan Metrics Dashboard tracks the progress of metrics and is available to the PCOM community to view (EI I.6).

These 4 strategic goals clearly demonstrate the prominence of the PCOM mission to educate professionals to care for the whole person and advance the health of diverse communities. PCOM is focused on student success in its graduate and professional programs. The institution provides valuable clinical training opportunities and an environment that sustains student success upon graduation. Through its many organizational and community outreach efforts, PCOM students, faculty, staff, and leadership provide service to communities for the next generation of healthcare providers.

Academic and Administrative Strategic Plans

(Criteria 1.a-c, 2)

As part of SP 2025, academic and administrative units were asked to create unit strategic plans that aligned with the institutional plan. As an example, the SOP has goals to increase residency preparation and to increase career counseling activities (EI I.9). Both of these are aligned with the Student Success goal of the 2025 institutional strategic plan. Another example is seen in the osteopathic medicine program, where the Medical Education Center of Excellence (MECOE) was developed to make recommendations to the osteopathic deans at all three PCOM locations about the effective alignment and delivery of the DO program. This clearly aligns with Student Success and Organization and Infrastructure goals of SP 2025.

Each school and program develops courses based upon a core set of educational objectives. These objectives align with the mission of the program and school or college. Periodically, the curricula, curriculum maps, and student assessment are reviewed by the programmatic Curriculum Committees. The responsibility of the committees is to conduct continuing reviews of the curriculum considering the academic goals of PCOM, recommend educational goals and make recommendations for curriculum changes, and receive reports from course directors. All courses must have educational goals and an evaluation of student achievement (EI 1.7). The curriculum maps and the Goals Course Objectives (GCO) grids supporting Standard V criteria demonstrate the institutional goals and how degree/program educational goals are aligned (EI I.8).

Administrative units also have strategic plans that align with the institutional mission and the mission and SP 2025. For example, Marketing and Communications has a goal to support the growth of PCOM academic programs and diversification of the institution. The plan provides guidance through its metrics and actionable tactics to support student success. It also reflects the ever-changing area of technology and how the department must demonstrate innovation and flexibility in its approaches to potential applicants. These efforts have been acknowledged externally through multiple awards. (See Standard II, Marketing and Communications, p. 17). Another example is in the SPAP, which has the goal to develop a plan for an Applied Behavior Analysis service clinic. This goal aligns with the revenue stream diversification goal of SP 2025.

Finally, all academic and administrative units receive their funding through the annual budgeting planning process and the Office of Financial Analysis and Budget. (See Standard VI, Budgeting and Planning, pp. 53-54). This process is transparent, participatory, and involves multiple meetings with unit leaders to review proposals and to discuss new budget items that are aligned with strategic priorities. The development of the new programs process must meet strategic priorities for success to be approved.

Supporting Achievement of the Mission

(Criteria 1.b, 1.d-e, 3, ROA 7)

PLANNING DRIVES THE MISSION

The robust strategic planning process aligns the institutional goals with the mission, vision, and values. The institutional goals are aligned with educating professionals to care for the whole person and advance the health of diverse communities.

A deeper look at the goals and the values also shows that the goals reflect the values held as an institution:

- » We are accountable to one another: All employees participate in an annual performance evaluation that addresses PCOM's commitment to student success. This success is intimately linked to the network of quality clinical experiences.
- » We act with integrity and treat everyone with respect: All employees and students are expected to complete assigned modules of SafeColleges training and abide by the PCOM Code of Conduct which states, "PCOM must uphold the tenets of honesty and integrity in learning and in serving its students and other members of the academic community" (EI I.10). The Code of Conduct guides interactions internally and with external entities. These fundamentals support student success, clinical experiences, and diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- » We foster innovation: PCOM has a culture of technological innovation to parallel the educational programs offered. This innovation includes various software and learning management systems to enhance grading and capture of data, library resources for student learning, and the creation of a data warehouse to provide program analytics available internally and externally.
- » We embrace diversity, advancing equity and inclusion: PCOM recognizes the institution provides a stronger learning environment because of its diversity, equity, and inclusion. These fundamentals are reflected in policies for recruiting and hiring and throughout the educational programs. (See Standard II, Recruiting and Hiring, p.18).

- » We work as a team and seek opportunities to collaborate: Faculty and staff collaborate in many venues. The Working Groups for this Self-Study are an excellent example of such collaboration between faculty and staff from all schools, programs, and campus locations.

CONNECTING THE PURPOSE

PCOM substantially advanced its mission with the addition of two locations in Georgia to address the severe physician shortage in the South. Approximately one-third of graduates from PCOM Georgia have entered Georgia residency training programs in primary care specialties (EI I.11). For the past 5 years, PCOM Georgia has placed more osteopathic medicine graduates (77.7%) in primary care and core disciplines than any other Georgia medical school.

The AAMC reports that 57.1% of graduates completing residency training from 2011 through 2021 are practicing in the state where they did their residency training.¹ More than 10% of Georgia counties have zero to one physician. Nine counties have no hospital; five of these counties are in the region known as Southwest Georgia, where PCOM South Georgia is located. These results, in combination with a diverse PCOM student body, support the focus PCOM places on advancing the health of diverse communities in a state with a physician shortage.

Another essential connection supporting achievement of the mission is a significant collaborative effort between the faculty and Student Affairs. Together, they have developed a comprehensive approach to support students by maintaining their psychological well-being while helping them to attain their educational goals. The goal of all programs and units is to realize the success of students attaining their goals. (See also Standard IV, Academic Support, p. 34).

Relevancy and Effectiveness of the Mission

(Criteria 1.g, 4)

A recent survey of students showed that the number one reason for selecting PCOM for graduate and professional training was for its academic reputation. This attraction is supported by admissions data for 2022-2023 which show more than 19,000 applications. From these applications, 882 students were matriculated (EI I.12).

Operationally, individual academic units are charged with various responsibilities to assure programs are compliant with the mission. For example, potential new

programs must address a need within the scope of the PCOM mission. Annual budgets for programs must fulfill educational and operational needs for certificate and degree programs within the scope of the PCOM mission. Even at the program level, educational outcomes must support the PCOM and program missions.

Demonstrating the effectiveness of the institutional mission statement requires that the institution identify what it does, what populations it serves, and how to best serve communities. The mission identifies the institution's purpose, while the vision outlines a desired future state. Since its founding, PCOM has admitted qualified individuals who seek to become healthcare professions and provide care to their communities. Not only do its graduates serve their communities, but the institution itself has always sought to serve the communities in which it is located. Broadening this scope through the development of new academic programs and two additional locations is further embodiment of PCOM's commitment to its mission.

During its 124-year history, PCOM has graduated 22,986 students. Of these, 17,477 were physicians and 12,777 are still in practice.

There are currently 507 graduates from the Doctor of Clinical Psychology program. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports that mental illnesses are the most common health conditions in the United States impacting more than 50% of individuals in their lifetime. The Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania reports a shortfall of 6,330 mental health professionals, which is the third worst in the nation. In Georgia, 88 (55.3%) counties have a shortage of mental health professionals. Psychiatrists and psychologists are an important part of the solution to these conditions.

PCOM has contributed to the needs in physician and healthcare providers through its physician graduates, its 757 graduates with a Doctor of Pharmacy degree, 1,223 graduates with a Master of Physician Assistant Studies degree, and 73 graduates with a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree.

As PCOM expanded from a single college of osteopathic medicine, with two graduates, to three additional schools, two additional locations, and 39 certificate and degree programs, the PCOM Board of Trustees vigorously upheld the mission focused on health care and communities.

1. Report on Residents, Executive Summary, Nov 2022, Association of American Medical Colleges, pp 1-4. <https://www.aamc.org/data-reports/students-residents/data/report-residents/2022/executive-summary>.

Standard II – Ethics and Integrity



Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully.

Honesty and Truthfulness

(Criteria 2, 6)

The PCOM Code of Conduct embodies the institutional commitment to uphold all legal and ethical requirements in an environment that maintains the highest standards of ethical behavior (EI I.10). This Code of Conduct applies to all PCOM trustees, officers, faculty, students, and employees, including PCOM-affiliated physicians, physicians-in-training, physician assistants, pharmacists, psychologists, and other individuals involved in the provision of healthcare services. The Code of Conduct is the foundation that guides the policies, procedures, and practices that are the framework for PCOM's interactions with patients, suppliers, vendors, regulatory agencies, the surrounding community, and each other.

Students are also expected to abide by professional ethics during both course work and clinical training. These behaviors encompass respectfulness, professional interpersonal relationships, honesty, integrity, and a respect for diversity (EI I.4.H-I).

Throughout this chapter, references are made to behaviors, procedures, and processes that support the PCOM Code of Conduct and Ethics Code. In the most recent climate survey, 95% to 100% of students at all locations felt academic honesty and integrity were extremely important to them.

Marketing and Communications

(Criterion 6)

Internally, members of the PCOM community are kept informed through messages from the administration and town hall events. Minutes from cabinet meetings and ELT meetings are made available on myPCOM (my.pcom.edu), the institution's intranet.

Communications targeting both internal and external audiences further highlight PCOM's efforts to truthfully, honestly, and transparently communicate important information. These communications include:

- » **The President's Report** - The President's Report, which serves as PCOM's annual report, showcases highlights from each year, delineating many of the strategic initiatives set forth by Jay S. Feldstein, DO '81, President and Chief Executive Officer.

- » **Strategic Initiative updates** - PCOM's strategic plan (EI I.5) outlines how the institution is transforming health professions education by integrating human connection with innovation and research.
- » **Institutional HEOA disclosures** - This section of the website is designed to help prospective and current students locate important information about PCOM and is accessible through the footer on every page of the website.
- » **Admissions** - Prospective applicants have access to accurate program statistics updated annually to best guide the applicant in the important decisions surrounding the choice of an institution and program of study.
- » **Financial Aid/Cost of Attendance information** - Cost of attendance (COA) is the estimated amount it will cost to attend doctoral, graduate and certificate programs at PCOM, PCOM Georgia, and PCOM South Georgia. This information is linked to every page on the website. The website also features a tuition calculator to help students assess program costs.
- » **Public Safety logs** - In compliance with the Clery Act, the Department of Public Safety maintains a daily log of all reported crimes, whether occurring on campus, on a non-campus building or property, on public property or within the patrol jurisdiction of the Department of Public Safety. The PCOM Annual Security and Safety Report 2022 (EI II.1) reports those events required by the Clery Act. Separate from this documentation are those events reported through the daily crime log. Reports from all campuses are available to the PCOM internal and external community (EI II.2). Some of the events are also reported through EthicsPoint (EI II.3).
- » Immediately upon the March 2020 closure of schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic, PCOM established a Rapid Response Task (RRT) force that tackled the day-to-day adjustments required for the institution. Decisions were communicated through many venues regularly. Internal communications kept the PCOM community informed of case numbers at each location and important health-related information along with related policies and procedures.

PCOM's commitment to truthful, honest, and transparent communications has been shown to meet the external review criteria of the Annual Educational Advertising Awards (EduADAWARDS) in the category of Graduate and Professional Schools. It has also been recognized by the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), the College and University Public

Relations and Associated Professionals (CUPRAP), and the Higher Education Report. PCOM's Office of Marketing and Communications has earned numerous awards over the past several years. Recently, PCOM received the gold award in the category of website refreshing as part of the 38th Annual Educational Advertising Awards (EI II.4).

The Mission and Students

(Criterion 7)

PCOM recognizes that meeting its mission of *educating professionals to care for the whole person and advance the health of diverse communities* starts at the very beginning of a student's journey during the application phase.

Upon inquiry about potential admission to the college, PCOM's Office of Admissions (Admissions) is in immediate communication via email to assist potential applicants with questions they may have about the programs. This personal attention to helping applicants navigate the admissions and financial aid process is cited among the top five reasons applicants choose to attend PCOM.

Cost and financial aid information is prominently presented on the institution's external website. This information can be accessed through the main navigation with a footer link on every page and through a prominent link in the bottom banner on every page of the website. The website also includes links to COA and financial aid information.

Prospective applicants and students have access to tuition and other program costs, as well as a Budget Worksheet to assist with determining financial aid needs. Information about loans, scholarships, and financial wellness are provided. The Financial Wellness program, operated by the Office of Financial Aid (FA), provides resources on topics such as debt management, financial planning, and budgeting. As shown, this program has been increasingly utilized since its inception (EI II.5).

Throughout students' educational programs, financial aid workshops are scheduled to address questions and serve as a refresher of information necessary for being an informed borrower. There are in-person sessions for students that address purchasing a home, financial planning after professional school, and loan repayment strategies. These are recorded and available on the website for asynchronous access and review. The success of the Financial Wellness program is apparent in the PCOM default rates on student loans (Table 2.1).

TABLE 2.1: PCOM FIVE-YEAR COMPARISON OF COHORT DEFAULT RATE.

Fiscal Year	PCOM 3-Year Cohort Default Rate	3-Year National Cohort Default Rate
2019	0.5%	2.3%
2018	0.2%	7.3%
2017	1.2%	9.7%
2016	0.8%	10.1%
2015	0.9%	10.8%

Recruiting and Hiring Practices

(Criteria 5, 2)

RECRUITMENT

PCOM's commitment to fair and impartial hiring of new employees is demonstrated through several best practices implemented by the Office of Human Resources (HR).

- » PCOM utilizes Cornerstone, a talent experience platform, for its job postings and hiring processes.
- » Advertisements for positions are posted on LinkedIn, Higher Ed Jobs, and individual organizations that specialize in the functional area for that position.
- » Prior to becoming a member of a search committee, individuals must complete implicit bias training. Since September 2020, 161 PCOM employees have completed this training.
- » In addition to reviewing search committee materials, HR provides search committee members with a list of behavioral interview questions to utilize during the screening process.

The recruitment process and position qualifications are described in HR Policy 1.15 – Employment Hiring Procedures (EI II.6). The unit manager or department head submits a Position Authorization Request to the HR along with a job description. Once approved, the position is posted in the appropriate internal and external venues. HR personnel screen and refer applicants to manager or department head for consideration. Qualified applicants are interviewed, and the selected applicant is referred to HR to confirm the applicant's references and initiate a background check (EI II.7). Once these are satisfactorily completed, an offer of employment, including compensation and benefits, is made by HR and final plans are made for the employee to start and begin the onboarding process.

EVALUATION AND PROMOTION OF EMPLOYEES

PCOM staff members are evaluated in accordance with HR Policy 3.35 - Performance Management (EI II.8). PCOM began utilizing the SABA Performance Management platform for staff in 2020. Supervisors discuss performance management with new staff at the conclusion of their trial period. Prior to each fiscal year, supervisors work with their employees to develop measurable goals for the upcoming year and to review key competencies. Employees are formally evaluated at the conclusion of the fiscal year. In FY 2022, 95% of staff completed their performance review. In 2022, PCOM launched a merit-based bonus program for staff.

Faculty are evaluated by their department chair in a process that is different than the one used with staff. Recently, faculty in some schools have taken an active role in reviewing best practices from other academic institutions and developed an Annual Appraisal Policy and Procedure. The policy includes a process for a three-year average to calculate an Annual Merit Score and an appeals process (EI II.9). Promotions and transfers are guided by HR Policy 1.75 (EI II.10). This policy outlines the eligibility and process for transfers and promotions.

DISCIPLINE AND SEPARATION OF EMPLOYEES

Disciplinary action of employees is outlined in HR Policy 2.05 (EI II.11). The progressive action process proceeds from coaching and verbal warnings to termination. Termination only occurs for serious violations of policies or guidelines, continued poor performance or behavior, or in combination with an employee's prior and current performances. Each step requires documentation and consultation with HR or the Chief Human Resources Officer.

Complaints and Grievances (Criterion 3)

PCOM provides a platform for all employees to resolve an internal dispute. During recent years, there have been no formal complaints filed through the Grievance Committee, the Employee Grievance Policy, or the Student Complaints and Grievance Policy (EI II.12). All reports have been resolved through the informal processes. In 2017, PCOM implemented a hotline and incident management system called EthicsPoint. Initial lessons were learned about how to better disseminate information about EthicsPoint, and in recent years, it has become a prominent method to express concerns and complaints (EI II.3). Many of these are also reported in the daily logs maintained by the Department of Public Safety (EI II.1, EI II.2).

Academic Integrity (Criteria 1, 2)

There are two components to academic integrity in professional and graduate programs - the integrity displayed in academic settings and research settings.

ACADEMIC SETTING

All employees, but particularly the faculty and leadership, must demonstrate a commitment to and demonstration of honest and moral behavior in the academic setting. Just as students pledge through the Code of Conduct not to give or receive unauthorized aid in academic or clinical work, faculty are expected to make choices that reflect integrity and responsible behavior.

RESEARCH SETTING

PCOM recognizes the importance of promoting a culture that supports inquiry and innovation through research, teaching, and clinical practice. Research at PCOM is conducted pursuant to the ethical principles set forth in [The Belmont Report and the Federal regulations for the protection of human research subjects \(45CFR46\)](#). Faculty, staff, and students involved in human subjects research are required to complete training in research ethics in the form of the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) program and CITI's Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) course. These courses contain modules related to authorship, collaboration, conflicts of interest, plagiarism, research misconduct, mentoring, peer review, data management, mentoring, and overviews of human subjects and animal research. Additional courses are mandatory for faculty and students engaging in animal research. A review of PCOM Research from 2020-2023 shows there have been no complaints from subjects enrolled in research protocols.

Students are introduced to topics in research courses that include the history and ethics of research involving human subjects, Institutional Review Board regulations and review process, informed consent, populations requiring additional considerations and protections, research involving pregnant women, fetuses, neonates, children, prisoners and vulnerable subjects, avoidance of group harms, reporting unanticipated problems, HIPAA privacy protections, FDA regulations, and conflicts of interest. The objective for this content is to demonstrate knowledge of and an ability to apply ethical principles in the practice of research, with an emphasis on conflicts of interest, data reproducibility, and accuracy of reporting. Also stressed within the research course is the necessity for including diverse populations in study designs to reduce bias and the ethical imperative to lessen restrictions for inclusion to expand access to clinical trials.

Skilled and impactful mentoring is highly regarded at PCOM. In addition to imparting knowledge of research methodology, advising involves setting examples of ethical behavior for producing and reporting data and encouragement and affirmation of accomplishments. Students involved in basic and translational research receive written guidelines for conduct in the laboratory that include expected behaviors of responsibility, collegiality, patience, and accuracy of reporting. Effective mentoring is a criterion for faculty promotion and for internal funding of research studies.

Conflicts of Interest

(Criterion 4)

PCOM's institutional commitment to truthfulness, honesty, and transparency is demonstrated through various internal and external communication efforts. This commitment is the foundation of the PCOM Compliance Program approved by the Audit Committee of the board of trustees in 2020 (EI II.13). Real and potential conflicts of interest are managed at several levels. These include issues of conflict for the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the PCOM Board of Trustees. There are processes that must be reported, and documentation is regularly updated to support the due diligence of the institution. In addition, there are processes for internal stakeholders who may report a conflict of interest. These best practices and processes are expected of all academic institutions.

FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS TO AVOID CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The IRS Form 990, the information return required to be filed by 501(c)(3) charitable organizations exempt from federal income tax, requires that exempt organizations provide information to the IRS regarding

the independence of the trustees; business transactions between or among the organization and its officers, key employees and trustees; and business and family relationships among its officers, trustees, and key employees. This information must be reported annually with respect to each fiscal year of the organization.

There is a 100% submission rate for disclosures from all board members, principal officers, and key employees at PCOM. For all other categories of individuals, the completion rate is approximately 87% and 80% for 2021 and 2022, respectively. These rates are reported as approximate because some individuals assigned the module may have already completed the IRS 990 Disclosure Form. In addition, changes in the active employment status of faculty, staff, and administrators assigned to complete the disclosure form are not captured by the platform and a manual process is needed to confirm accuracy.

PCOM PROCESS TO INVESTIGATE POTENTIAL OR ALLEGED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Trustees, officers and key employees, and others identified in the PCOM Code of Conduct, Section III (EI II.15) receive annual information to review and a form to complete, which helps the Compliance Office manage and identify potential and real conflicts of interest:

- » PCOM Code of Conduct
- » Compliance Policy 5.03 - Disclosure Policy (EI II.16)
- » Certification and Financial Information Form (EI II.17)

The Compliance Office may receive reports of conflicts directly or through EthicsPoint, the hotline and incident management system. All reports are confidential and investigated. From 2020-2022, there were two reports of conflicts of interest in 2021 and neither of these were found to be a violation of policy. In 2022, there was one report of a conflict of interest as a result of an invitation of an outside organization to participate on the leadership team; a potential conflict for PCOM was identified and participation was declined and withdrawn.

Institutional Compliance

(Criterion 8, ROA 7, ROA 10, ROA 13)

To provide comprehensive information about its academic programs, PCOM presents statistics including enrollment, demographics, and other variables as part of its [program statistics webpages](#). [PCOM institutional data](#) are also presented on the website and include financial aid data, total enrollment, enrollment by program, and enrollment by gender. Additionally, the PCOM website includes state licensure

and [accreditation information for PCOM programs](#). Eighteen PCOM academic programs meet curricular requirements for state licensure.

During the recent two years, PCOM has submitted two substantive changes, and the direction, advice, and support from MSCHE and its website were instrumental in submitting the applications. The first was a straight-forward closure of two additional sites. The second was an action required by the U.S. Department of Education to come into compliance with revised academic calendar definitions. This action required a year to coordinate the institutional processes needed to request a substantive change in the PCOM academic calendar.

As part of the Self-Study process, each Requirement of Affiliation was reviewed by at least one Working Group and is documented in the Self-Study design as well as the individual Standards' self-studies.

Institutional Assessment

(Criterion 9)

Evidence has been presented that demonstrates PCOM has institutional policies and processes that guide its approach to monitoring the ethics and integrity of the internal stakeholders. When reports are documented through the daily Safety Log, the Crime Log, and EthicsPoint, these reported issues are addressed promptly, and the process is documented. An issue may be reported in more than one place, and in these instances, responses from the appropriate offices are coordinated. Issues reported to HR are investigated and mediated by the Chief Human Resources Officer.

An important component of several professional programs that is linked to the PCOM mission is the ethical treatment of anatomical donations. Anatomical donations are critical for educational and research purposes. These donations provide students with first-hand knowledge of the anatomical structures in a spatial context, but they obligate PCOM to ensure appropriate treatment of the donor cadavers.

Human body donations are regulated and managed by the [Human Gifts Registry](#) in Pennsylvania and the [Uniform Anatomical Gift Act in Georgia](#). Donor bodies are identified by a series of numbers to ensure the protection of privacy and to document correct identities. Researchers and students in all programs with anatomy lab requirements receive specific instruction about the respectful and ethical treatment of cadaver specimens (EI II.18).

Standard III – Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience



An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence at all program, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, level, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations.

PCOM's analysis of the design and delivery of student learning experiences is critical to ensure that the institution's mission is fulfilled. At both the institutional and degree program levels, there are clear processes and effective procedures for designing educational programs, providing learning opportunities and resources to students, promoting research and independent thinking, communicating with students, demonstrating high standards for faculty qualifications and support, engaging third parties to provide clinical training opportunities, and evaluating and improving curricula.

Program Design

(Criterion 1, ROA 9)

PROGRAM PROPOSAL, REVIEW, AND APPROVAL

All academic degree and certificate programs are subject to a comprehensive review and an approval process before they are opened for student enrollment. A variety of details are reviewed throughout the process, including approval of content delivery, curricular approaches, student assessment, credit hours, and duration of training.

The program approval process begins when an academic sponsor, typically a dean in collaboration with one or more faculty members, conducts an initial feasibility study, which includes interviews with administrators, consultation with subject matter and educational experts outside of PCOM, a market study, and a financial pro forma prepared by the Office of Budget and Strategic Finance. The market study includes consultation with the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) as well as external research regarding overall demand for the program, potential student interest, competitors (tuition, class size, program format, credits, etc.), accreditation requirements (if applicable), and future growth for the profession. A feasibility analysis for the Master of Science in Laboratory Sciences serves as an example (EI III.1, EI III.2, EI III.3). The results of the market study, business unit interviews, and the pro forma are forwarded to the cabinet for review, and ultimately, to the PCOM Board of Trustees for approval. Once approved, the information gleaned from the aforementioned sources, including market analyses, accrediting bodies, other programs, and academic standards, are considered and applied to shape the new program curriculum, including content and duration of the academic degree or certificate program.

The majority of PCOM students are enrolled in programs that require additional degree-specific program accreditation (EI III.4). As new programs are developed, they are designed to comply with these accreditation requirements. Each accrediting body conducts its own review of student experiences, faculty qualifications, assessment, curriculum, credit hours, and duration of training. Through degree-specific accreditation reviews, these programs are designed to meet universal standards, including the duration of training.

Further, regardless of accreditation status, when new programs are developed, courses are closely evaluated for several factors, including the number of credit hours. At the course level, faculty and leaders ensure course duration complies with nationally accepted credit hour standards by using an instructional equivalency chart (EI III. 5). Development of course learning objectives, content, mode of delivery, and assessments is a collaborative effort between faculty with similar expertise across all PCOM locations. The curriculum committee then reviews the credit hour calculations and forwards any approved changes and other pertinent information to the registrar for proper entry into the PCOM course management system and catalog.

MECHANISMS TO ENSURE DELIVERY OF A COHERENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE

There are several methods utilized to ensure that degree and certificate programs are designed to foster coherent student learning experiences, which begins with the curricular design and mapping process. In the initial creation of any program, curricular maps are created based on the goals and objectives of the courses contained within these programs (EI III.6).

Programs are overseen by a curriculum committee or curriculum review group. These reviews occur on a regular basis and include a multimodal analysis of student outcomes, performance, and experiences and are conducted on both non-specialty-accredited and specialty-accredited programs.

Lastly, PCOM provides experiential learning opportunities during which students spend time with clinical supervisors and patients in various healthcare settings. Through the respective offices of clinical educational and experiential learning, PCOM's degree and certification programs place an emphasis on developing professionalism, self-directed learning experiences, interprofessional

education, and an appreciation for culturally diverse populations throughout a program's curriculum, especially during clinical training in healthcare settings with diverse patients. For programs which integrate clinical experiential training, each degree program has developed learning objectives, curricula, and assessment methods for the student to learn from caring for real patients in the clinical setting.

INSTITUTION-WIDE PROGRAM SUPPORT AND COLLABORATIVE DESIGN

PCOM recognizes the importance of delivering a curriculum that equips students and graduates to deliver comprehensive care to diverse communities. In addition to program-specific initiatives, PCOM has made intentional efforts to incorporate student wellness, enhanced interprofessional opportunities, and cultural sensitivity and inclusion across all degree programs, all of which align with SP 2025.

Three examples of institution-wide efforts include:

- » **Mental Health.** Extensive mental health services are available to all students, and a list of support and program resources can be found on the Mental Health and Wellness page of the student section of the PCOM intranet (EI III.7). In addition, a Mental Health Task Force was created in July 2022 to provide mental and emotional support to students through cross-functional teams that offer recommendations to improve students' access to services and support for students in crisis.
- » **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.** As supported by SP 2025, PCOM embeds diversity, equity and inclusion into its curriculum, policies, and practices to advance student, faculty, and staff performance and excellence in service to communities (EI III.8).
- » **Interprofessional Education.** Interprofessional Approach to Caring for the Community (EI III.9) has specific objectives that address student stress and well-being and maximize emotional intelligence, enhance interprofessional education opportunities, and enhance a climate of respect and inclusion among the "One PCOM" community. In addition, students learn interdisciplinary approaches to caring for the whole patient during their clinical training experiences.

Learning Opportunities and Resources

(Criterion 4, ROA 9)

As depicted in its mission statement (EI I.1), PCOM courses strive to teach students to care for the whole person and advance the health of diverse populations. PCOM provides an array of various opportunities and resources to support students' success and enrichment,

both within the educational setting and outside the traditional learning environment.

The formal curriculum is designed, approved, and implemented by PCOM faculty with oversight from deans, program chairs, and curriculum committees. Educational activities include didactic learning, small group active learning, team-based learning, laboratory exercises and assignments, procedural skills training, online and blended learning, and interdisciplinary activities. The majority of academic programs also include one to two years of clinical training, where students are exposed to the rigors of practice and supervised by clinicians in healthcare settings. Students learn to apply their acquired knowledge to real patients with varied backgrounds. Course goals and objectives are aligned with content, learning experiences, and evaluation methods to achieve educational outcomes required to allow for initial practice in their program-specific healthcare fields. Originally designed to assist faculty organize content within Blackboard, PCOM's learning management system, the Instructional Design Workbook, serves as a helpful resource to organize and align course objectives, activities, and assessments (EI III.10).

The informal curriculum is extremely important and well-supported by students and Student Affairs. PCOM supports more than 150 student clubs and organizations, including but not limited to clinical subspecialties, professional and career development, research, community service, sports, and recreation (EI III.11). Resources to support these endeavors are also available through Institutional Advancement and from the PCOM Alumni Association. Club activities often involve lectures and interactive sessions with clinical specialists and researchers, social activities, skills-based workshops, community outreach and engagement. Many of these student-led community initiatives address the needs of the communities where PCOM is located.

Several departments support formal and informal learning experiences across degree programs.

- » The Office of Diversity and Community Relations hosts workshops and speaker sessions, supplies a list of resources on diversity, equity and inclusion, partners with student and community organizations to enhance student enrichment, and provides campus resources and inclusive spaces, such as meditation rooms, lactation rooms, and gender neutral bathrooms.
- » The Library offers support through comprehensive workshops and instructions for student learning and success, as well as services supporting all academic programs and instruction delivery modes. In addition to the physical libraries situated at each campus location, the Library supports a

well-funded and robust digital library (EI III.12). A substantial budget supports Library personnel, support services, and acquisitions (Table 3.1). Library access and services are used to support all academic programs and instruction delivery modes

(Table 3.2). The Library also sponsors a number of workshops and one-on-one instructions for students, staff, and faculty (Table 3.3).

TABLE 3.1. THE ANNUAL PCOM LIBRARY BUDGET, 2019-2021

	AY 2019	AY 2020	AY 2021
National Median	\$3.60M	\$3.44M	\$3.45M
National Average	\$4.02M	\$4.07M	\$3.96M
PCOM	\$4.16M	\$4.77M	\$5.04M

TABLE 3.2. LIBRARY ACCESS AND RESOURCES

	AY 2019	AY 2020	AY 2021
Gate count	537,479	352,879	12,111
Reference session	2,682	3,028	1,811
Online guides views	199,251	217,742	223,535

TABLE 3.3. LIBRARY EDUCATION SESSION AND ATTENDANCE

	AY 2019	AY 2020	AY 2021
Education Session	93	98	103
Attendance	2,948	2,601	5,245

- » The Simulation Centers provide standardized patient encounters, simulated learning environments, and objective structured clinical examinations (OSCEs), for students of all degree programs, providing them the opportunity to learn and practice clinical skills in safe and controlled environments.

- The Saltzburg Clinical Learning and Assessment Center at PCOM in Philadelphia is an 11,000 square foot facility featuring patient rooms, operation room, emergency room/trauma bay, an intensive care unit, critical care unit, medical surgery suite, and high-fidelity robotic simulators.
- At PCOM Georgia, a 7,000 square foot Simulation Center allows students to practice a broad range of real-world scenarios, including taking vital signs, inserting IVs, and delivering babies. The facility houses exam

rooms, a simulated operating room, and other realistic training equipment.

- At PCOM South Georgia, a 6,850 square foot Simulation Center allows students to develop essential skills in clinical practice, patient care, child delivery, and various other procedures and surgeries. The facility features full-body patient mannequins, modern surgery tables, virtual reality headsets, and debriefing rooms.
- » Information Technology Services (ITS) provides the infrastructure and support for many educational technologies, including laptops, videoconferencing, cross-campus streaming, learning management system, assessment, and software integration (EI III.13).
- » Student Affairs provides academic support, as well as mental health counseling services, for students within all degree programs (See also Section IV, Academic Support, p. 34).

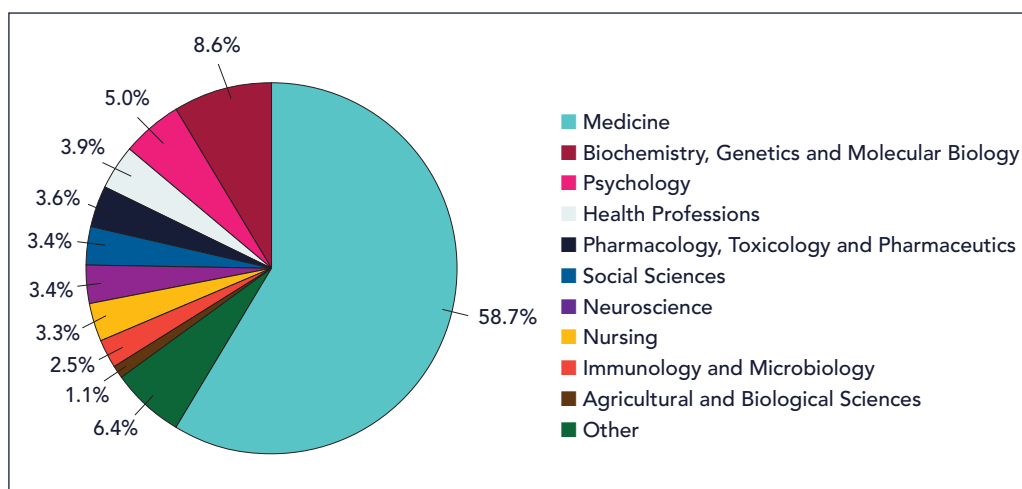
Research, Scholarship, and Independent Thinking

(Criterion 6)

PCOM recognizes the importance of research and scholarly activity for advancing health care, promoting evidence-based practice, creating a climate of inquiry,

innovation, and collaboration among faculty and students, and enhancing the reputation of the institution as a contributor of new knowledge, as set forth in Figure 3.1. Research accomplishments also enhance students' competitiveness for post-graduate training programs and employment opportunities.

FIGURE 3.1: PCOM AREAS OF RESEARCH PUBLICATION FOCUS, 1972-2023



PCOM's commitment to supporting student research and scholarly activity is reflected in its three-pronged research mission statement:

- » Develop innovative approaches to promoting health through basic, translational, clinical, population health, community-based, behavioral, and education research.
- » Mentor students in investigative methodologies and information retrieval, appraisal, and dissemination.
- » Promote students' curiosity, critical thinking, application of evidence-based clinical practice, drive to engage in scholarly activity, and competitiveness for post-graduate residencies and programs.

All PCOM programs offer instruction in the research process, either as stand alone courses or embedded within courses that have a component of evidence-based practice. For instance, the DO program launched a Research Foundations in Medicine course in the spring of 2022. Commonalities in this content include instruction in hypothesis generation, review and evaluation of the literature, study design, and statistics. Emphasis is placed on the importance of including diverse populations in all research, including clinical trials. Variation in the requirements between programs for engagement in and completion of research projects and other forms of scholarly activity reflect accreditation mandates and the density of course work and clinical rotations.

PCOM's multimillion-dollar investment in research each year is primarily geared toward facilitating student engagement. For example, the NIH-sponsored "All of Us" program provides students with access to de-identified electronic health records of over 300,000 patients from diverse populations for research purposes (EI III.14). Students may conduct studies of their own inception and/or become part of a research team composed of faculty, non-affiliated clinicians, residents, technicians, and interdisciplinary groups of students.

Student presentations and publications of research findings and scholarly activity are extremely important for recognition of their achievements and facilitating their career goals. PCOM hosts the annual Research Day/Week events at all three campus locations for students to present their research and compete for awards. A number of funds are available to which students may apply for monies to offset the cost of traveling to present their work at regional and national conferences. Publication costs are covered by the principal investigators' grants and department, library subscriptions, and in some cases, clinical rotation sites (EI III.15).

Although opportunities to conduct and share research were restricted nationally during the COVID pandemic, the number of PCOM student presentations and publications increased between 2020 and 2022, as set forth in Table 3.4.

TABLE 3.4. NUMBER OF STUDENT PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS BY YEAR

FY	Presentations	Publications
2020	14	123
2021	150	210
2022	192	249

These metrics of research productivity are expected to continue to increase in accordance with SP 2025, which includes goals and initiatives to increase clinical research opportunities for students and build collaborative programs of research education and practice with the institution's core clinical campuses.

Communication of Program Expectations to Students

(Criterion 3)

Detailed information about academic programs is available to prospective and enrolled students through a variety of sources, most notably the PCOM College Catalog and General Student Handbook, academic program-specific handbooks, and the PCOM intranet. PCOM's website outlines key information about the various programs, including program-specific application and admission requirements, degree requirements, time to degree, campus location, and curriculum. There are also links to other helpful information such as Financial Aid and career opportunities, as well as contact information for Admissions and the program department (EI III.16). In addition, faculty advising is available in each program, and details about the type of advising and methods used by the program are available in the student's program handbook. All sources are available through PCOM's website or intranet for easy access to all students, staff, and faculty.

At the course level, course directors use Blackboard to publish syllabi, instructional themes, assessment schedules, grading policies, and course policies. Faculty also use email to communicate information, such as assessment times/room assignments, lab schedules, and lecture changes.

Each degree program has a Student Progress and Evaluation Committee (SPEC) to ensure that the students enrolled in that program understand the degree requirements and maintain a steady pace to graduate

in a timely manner (EI IV.6). The SPEC monitors the academic performance of students who consistently perform low within a class or fail a course(s). SPEC meets with individual students to discuss issues that are affecting their ability to succeed, to recommend strategies for improvement, and to possibly recommend a change in the students' academic status to their respective dean (EI III.17).

Faculty Qualifications, Evaluations, and Support

(Criterion 2, ROA 9, ROA 15)

FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS

PCOM is dedicated to providing excellence in teaching, and there are several methods utilized to ensure faculty are qualified to design, deliver, and assess learning experiences. This begins in the hiring process, which is grounded in PCOM's commitment to maintaining a faculty that is highly qualified, diverse, and representative of its student body. Based on the needs identified by the department chairs and/or deans, when a faculty position is created or vacated, a rigorous faculty recruitment process is initiated. In coordination with HR, the chair submits a requisition through the online talent acquisition platform, which causes the position to be listed on the PCOM website.

A search committee is formed and charged with recruiting, vetting, and interviewing potential faculty members. The qualifications of each faculty candidate are thoroughly reviewed by the search committee, with attention given to prior clinical experience, teaching experience, research and publications, and licensure and certifications. Applicants are interviewed by the committee and asked thought-provoking questions so that the committee can identify the best qualified applicants. HR approves a list of interview questions that are divided into relevant categories, including teaching, research, service, communication, problem solving, and diversity, equity, and inclusion (EI III.18, See also Standard II, Recruiting and Hiring Practices, p. 18-19).

Faculty performance is evaluated on a continuous basis through reviews by the Curriculum Committee of course syllabi and evaluations. Deans and department chairs utilize the PCOM Performance Management Form for Faculty (EI III.19). Faculty effectiveness in the design, delivery, and assessment of learning experiences is also documented in each program's accreditation and self-study report. Preceptors, those individuals

who supervise PCOM students in clinical settings, are identified and vetted according to procedures set forth in Academic Affairs Policy 1.003, Preceptor Appointment, Reappointment, and Credentialing (Volunteer) Policy (EI III.20). Appointments are reviewed annually, and departmental reappointments are for a three-year period (Table 3.5).

TABLE 3.5 FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME FACULTY

Faculty Rank (Spring 2023) *	Full-Time	Part-Time	Percent
Instructor	4	2	2.80
Assistant Professor/Clinical Assistant Professor	49	14	29.44
Associate Professor/Clinical Associate Professor	69	3	33.44
Professor/Clinical Professor	71	2	34.11
Total Faculty	193	21	

* Does not include adjunct faculty or lecturers

FACULTY ADEQUACY

PCOM relies on its faculty to effectively deliver the curriculum, promote critical reasoning, and motivate students. In spring of 2023, there were 214 faculty members (193 full-time and 21 part-time, excluding clinical faculty) responsible for teaching 3,036 students across 39 degree and certificate programs. On average, 49% of the faculty are on a tenure track (Table 3.5). With over 82% of the faculty holding a doctorate degree, PCOM is committed to delivering strong learning experiences by a highly qualified faculty and maintaining a low student-to-faculty ratio across all programs ranging from 6.94:1 to 10.6:1.

Each faculty member receives an annual performance assessment that is completed and reviewed by the department chair. This process, outlined in the Article III, Section 1 of the PCOM Faculty Handbook (EI III.21), evaluates the faculty's teaching effectiveness, commitment to research, and their contribution to service. The department chairs use these reviews for faculty evaluation, but also to ensure faculty have adequate time to support students.

Additionally, students complete end-of-course evaluations and provide feedback to assess the quality of faculty teaching, adequacy, and availability outside of classes for questions and mentoring. In addition, student responses to the 2022 Campus Climate Survey positively reported they have regular opportunities to interact with faculty members and are comfortable asking faculty for help when

needed (EI III.22), providing a clear indication that students appreciate the guidance and availability of program faculty.

FACULTY EVALUATION

PCOM ensures that student learning experiences are reviewed regularly and equitably based on written criteria that are disseminated, clear, and fair. This is accomplished primarily by reviewing and evaluating faculty performance.

There are several modalities utilized to evaluate the effectiveness of a faculty member's teaching, assessment methods, scholarly activity, and service. For example, the DO program provides faculty with detailed information on expectations for course direction and methods of assessment, defining the qualifications necessary to serve as course director or co-course director, and the process involved for collecting and reviews of course evaluations (EI III.23).

Course evaluations are another means of assessing faculty effectiveness. Components of the course evaluations include whether there was appropriate emphasis on key concepts, clear communication of expectations, a clear grading policy, and appropriateness of the number of assessments in the course. Components of the lecturer evaluation often include organization of the lecture, ability to maintain the attention of the class, ability to deliver material at a level conducive to student comprehension, and

knowledge of the subject matter (EI III.24). Each degree program maintains its own procedure for reviewing course evaluations and making changes based on those evaluations. Chairs, deans, curriculum committees, and faculty generally review course evaluations, enabling actions to be taken to continually enhance the delivery and quality of the education delivered.

Through annual performance reviews, a faculty member's teaching, scholarly activity, and service are more closely reviewed by their supervisor (EI III.19). Supervisors review and discuss various evidence in support of ways the faculty member met core competencies throughout the year. Faculty are evaluated as not meeting expectations, meeting expectations, or exceeding expectations, and supervisors address performance gaps and opportunities to improve. In addition, core competencies, faculty competencies, and leadership competencies are discussed and examples of job related behaviors are documented. Performance goals are mutually agreed upon and discussed at both mid-year and end-of-year.

FACULTY APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTION

The promotion and tenure process is thorough and rigorous, affording critical appraisal of faculty. The charge of the Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure Committee (APT Committee) is to review faculty applications and portfolios to make recommendations, as described more fully in the Faculty Senate Bylaws (EI III.25). Faculty are evaluated in four areas: service, teaching, research/scholarly activity, and clinical competence, if applicable. The APT Committee Member Review Form (EI III.26) includes the criteria for ratings of progressing towards promotion, meets expectations, or exceeds expectations. Faculty are expected to serve in a specific rank for a certain number of years before promotion is considered. For instance, faculty are expected to be in-rank at the time of review from assistant professor to associate professor for five years, and from associate professor to professor for seven years.

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

PCOM offers a number of professional development opportunities through the Office of HR, Office of Diversity and Community Relations, the Library, and the Center for Teaching Support and Professional Development (TSPD). The PCOM Continuous Professional Development (CPD) list of 2021-2022 faculty development program listings outlines current offerings (EI III.27). Professional development programs are informed by the Annual Faculty Needs Assessment Survey (EI III.28).

HR programs include:

- » Aspiring Leadership Development, Leadership Course for New Supervisors, Leadership Development, Skillful Conversations, Resolving Conflict with Peers, For Supervisors--Conducting Performance Reviews and Correcting Performance Problems, Identifying Work Priorities
- » HR staff also provide individual consultations and oversee online compliance training using SafeColleges (EI III.29).

Office of Diversity and Community Relations offers:

- » On-demand resources, training programs, programs and initiatives in collaboration with other institutional departments, and lectures and presentations.
- » The OnePCOM Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Certificate was launched in January 2022 and aims to provide employees with the tools and skills to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion at PCOM and in their communities. This certificate program assisted faculty, staff, and departments to successfully meet the standard in the annual performance review and to contribute to promoting inclusive campus communities.
- In total, there are 218 participants currently enrolled in the DEI certificate program, and 27 have completed the certificate.
- A sampling of action steps reported by attendees include: auditing student forms to be more inclusive, adding pronouns to signature, reviewing communication strategies to ensure they are inclusive of diversity at PCOM, including DEI team-building activities at department meetings, recruiting a more diverse student group into research labs, and encouraging URiM students to apply for work-study and research positions.
- In 2022, the office hosted 31 speakers/panels and 23 DEI workshops; these included over 300 participants.

The Library also provides support for students, faculty and staff.

- » Professional development resources include on-demand training materials, resource training sessions, author series webinars, writing support, publishing, and one-on-one consultation.

TSPD supports teaching, assessment, student engagement, and life-long learning in six areas:

- » On-demand educator resources
- » Faculty and staff development programs
- » Consultative services for educators (e.g. instructional design support)
- » Liaison services (e.g. facilitate collaboration between departments, such as library services, research and simulation centers)

- » Clinical education resources and programs
- » Continuing Education and Continuing Medical Education programming.

ITS provides a 24/7 online professional development tool, LinkedIn Learning, that provides staff training related to business, technology, and creative skills through expert-led course videos.

Individual academic degree programs also sponsor their own professional development initiatives. Additionally, PCOM provides financial support for travel and conference fees in recognition of the importance of life-long learning and communication of PCOM's innovative educational programs, research, and scholarly activity.

Third-Party Relationships

(Criterion 6, ROA 10)

COLLABORATION WITH HIGH-QUALITY THIRD-PARTY CLINICAL TRAINING AFFILIATES

PCOM students are afforded educational opportunities with core affiliated partners throughout the Eastern United States thanks to its locations in Pennsylvania and Georgia.

PCOM partners include organizations of the following types:

- » Large, integrated healthcare systems that offer both inpatient and outpatient services
- » Healthcare systems offering residency training programs
- » Federally Qualified Healthcare Centers (FQHC)
- » Non-profit, state-supported behavioral health centers
- » Small, rural community hospitals
- » Private practices
- » Retail pharmacies (large retail stores to small, independent pharmacies)

As recent examples, PCOM established formal agreements, including financial support, with Chestnut Hill Hospital and St. Christopher's Hospital for Children in Philadelphia. PCOM's support of these institutions strengthens the vulnerable and underrepresented communities they serve and provides training opportunities for PCOM students in these healthcare systems.

This full complement of training settings provides PCOM students with opportunities to learn in diverse communities, from rural to suburban to urban. Members of these communities present with a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds, many of which impede access to care and compliance with a treatment plan. Consequently, students learn how socioeconomic status affects psychological and physical health.

Students are oriented to these clinical training affiliated sites by their program's respective clinical education or experiential learning department. As an example, pharmacy students have access to a website that provides pertinent information and the experiential learning handbook. Similarly, students, administrators, and preceptors in the osteopathic medicine program access the Clinical Education Clerkship Website for information regarding their clinical training and affiliate sites. A list of affiliate partners in the Philadelphia area highlights the variety of training experiences and diverse populations to which students are exposed (EI III.30).

ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING RELATIONSHIPS WITH HIGH-QUALITY AFFILIATE TRAINING SITES

Clinical programs at PCOM regularly acquire new partners, while evaluating and modifying existing relationships. Programs increase clinical capacity by forging new relationships and engaging in ongoing conversations with potential partners that have expressed an interest in training PCOM students. PCOM leadership endeavors to partner with organizations that can provide opportunities across all of its educational programs. For example, DO, pharmacy, physical therapy, physician assistant, and counseling students who train within the same partner institution reap the benefits of interprofessional education.

- » **Approval Process.** For any new potential clinical partner, the program leadership initiates contact to discuss the specific clinical education needs for that program. If a partner is able to meet the educational and accreditation needs, PCOM enters into an affiliation agreement with the partner. After the terms of the affiliation agreement have been accepted by both parties, this partner site is approved to accept students. Based on requirements of accrediting bodies, PCOM programs work to create and review curriculum that meet required objectives. Once curricular objectives have been determined internally, faculty and staff work with partners to ensure the design, delivery, and assessment of these educational experiences are actualized at partner sites.
- » **Review and Evaluation Process.** Once a partnership is established, PCOM begins an annual or bi-annual review cycle of each partner depending upon the program's accreditation requirements. Program reviews of partners include annual site visits to partner training sites, site evaluation forms completed by program leadership, student evaluations of clinical experiences with partners (EI III.31), and preceptor

evaluations of student performance (EI III.32). The program leadership reviews all information to confirm that the partner is providing quality education and meeting the agreed upon terms and standards. Regular site visits allow for the maintenance of relationships and ensure the quality of educational experiences.

- » **Modification Process.** After reviewing and evaluating submitted materials, if a partner site does not meet the PCOM educational objectives, a member of the program contacts that partner to further discuss issues, concerns, or opportunities for improvement. Modifying and/or correcting partner concerns can be accomplished in many different ways. If a partner site has become saturated with students, PCOM offers suggestions such as whether they have any additional locations that could offset the number of students. If concerns regarding a specific preceptor are continually highlighted, PCOM will connect with the host institution to inquire about alternative preceptors and/or to offer faculty development programs to improve the delivery of the clinical experiences. In addition, PCOM's TSPD offers preceptor development programs (EI III.33). It is the goal of all PCOM programs to work in collaboration with partners to help strengthen the educational experiences they are able to provide our students. If the same concerns are continually raised after PCOM has worked with the partner to correct and modify any issues, the partner relationship may be terminated.
- » **Sustain/Maintenance Process.** It is the goal of each clinical program to sustain third-party relationships. Workshops and continuing education programs are offered to preceptors and clinicians who supervise PCOM students in clinical training sites. Program leaders also try to work collaboratively with external partners to establish and sustain interdisciplinary education offerings. Finally, programs may offer partners financial compensation to secure clinical experiences.

Curricular Review and Effectiveness

(Criterion 7, ROA 9)

PCOM conducts regular periodic assessment of student learning with the goal of continuously improving the quality of education at PCOM. The focus of the institution's programs is providing high-quality, cutting-edge comprehensive and competency-based education.

The primary educational outcomes include:

- » Demonstration of basic science knowledge and clinical skills, as appropriate, in the specific program of study.
- » Demonstration of the whole-person approach at the educational level.
- » Demonstration of the understanding of the scientific inquiry appropriate to the academic program.
- » Inclusion of embedding diversity, equity and inclusion at the course and program level so as to reflect best healthcare practices to include diverse communities.

Each degree program has a curriculum committee that is responsible for oversight and assessment to ensure that students learn the necessary skills and possess comprehensive knowledge. Additional responsibilities of a program-specific curriculum committee include reviewing and approving course syllabi and reviewing courses at the end of terms (EI I.7).

Examples of evaluations that guide continuous quality improvement in programs are shown in the following evidence:

- » Applied Positive Psychology Evaluation Form (EI III.34)
- » Physician Assistant Studies Program End-of-Term Analysis (EI III.35)
- » Annual Course Director Report (EI III.36).

To improve the effectiveness of curricula, the information obtained from student, alumni, and faculty evaluation surveys, as well as results from national licensing board examinations, is reviewed and analyzed. Often, these analyses lead to changes to improve the program. As an example of a continuous quality improvement process, the DO program utilized all the above-mentioned data to streamline and realign the DO curriculum, resulting in a unified curriculum across all three campus locations.

In summary, each academic degree program has a curriculum committee with the responsibility to ensure students learn the requisite knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors to enter professional practice. These committees consider the overall design, management, and evaluation of a coherent and coordinated curriculum. Several steps are involved in this process including the review, evaluation, and revision of competencies. Evaluation of individual course data and aggregate data is part of the process of continual analysis and offers insight on actions required to continually enhance the curriculum. These processes and procedures are also part of programs' accreditation and self-study reports and have been deemed acceptable by the respective accrediting bodies.

Standard IV - Support of the Student Experience



Across all educational experiences, settings, levels, and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience, and fosters student success.

The goal of improving the student experience directly aligns with the mission and priorities of the institution. Since the last MSCHE accreditation review in 2014, PCOM has worked diligently to strengthen the environment that supports and enhances the experiences of all students. By gathering and analyzing data, identifying gaps, exploring opportunities, and making curricular, structural, and staffing changes, the institution has intentionally and systematically created an environment that is conducive to the intellectual, emotional, and professional growth of its current student population. Specifically, PCOM has expanded financial aid resources and assistance, increased opportunities for academic support and enrichment, secured career and professional development services, provided additional access to physical health and wellness services, and supported students and faculty with managing crises.

Program Expenses and Support (Criterion 1.a)

Graduate and professional students incur significant financial debt to achieve their career goals. PCOM is committed to making this process as seamless and transparent as possible. By providing prospective and newly-admitted students with pertinent information, publicizing the costs associated with attending, disseminating information on scholarships and grants, and providing personal financial counseling services, PCOM makes attending the institution financially feasible.

Annual tuition for programs is determined by the board of trustees. Once established, these are published on the

PCOM website for prospective applicants and students. Other items included in the COA are maintained by FA and are conveyed to prospective students as the program's COA. Data from FA surveys help determine indirect costs (EI IV.1). Students have access to online Budgeting Worksheets to help them better understand the actual cost of a program and calculate the cost of attendance.

Students may request adjustments to the standard COA by completing an online request, prompting a financial wellness coordinator (FWC) to complete a professional judgment review. If adjustments are made to the COA, documentation is filed, and the student has the opportunity to increase their financial aid. The Budget Adjustment Request Form is located on the student portal of the PCOM intranet.

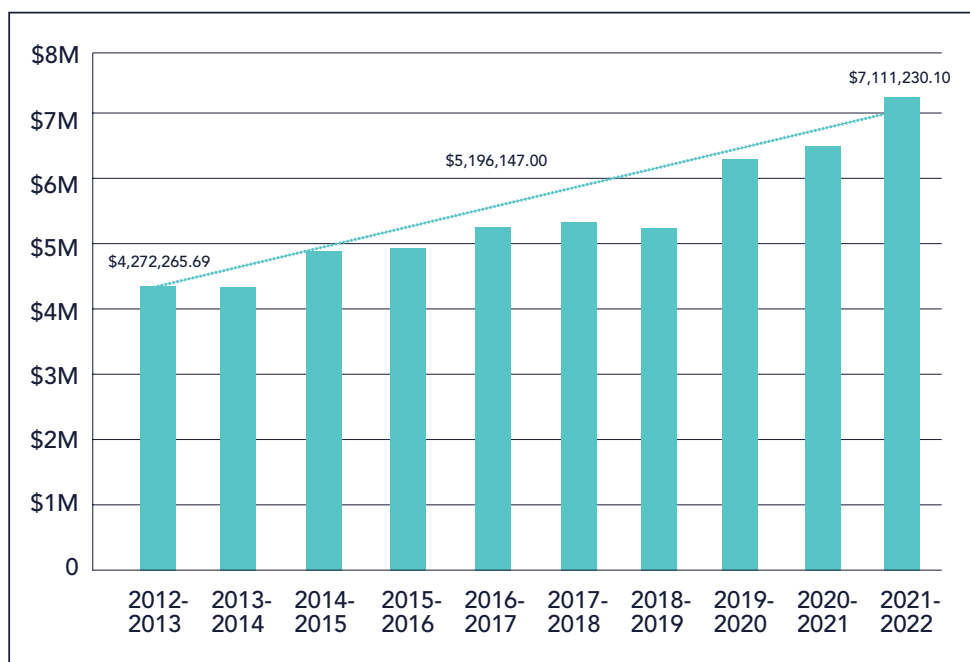
FINANCIAL AID

All information regarding financial aid is located on the PCOM website and is reviewed regularly for updates and changes. Written instructions and several videos are provided along with the FA Overview resource.

SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS, AND LOANS

PCOM offers multiple scholarships for new and returning students based on academics, financial need, community involvement, and other merits. Resources are also provided for external scholarship opportunities. As shown in Figure 4.1, PCOM demonstrates a trend of increasing scholarship funding for students. This commitment underscores the institution's attention to recruitment and retention in an effort to keep student indebtedness as low as possible.

FIGURE 4.1. INCREASING SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING



Additional funding is available through FA and the financial aid packaging process. Students will be reviewed for scholarship eligibility Information based on information submitted via the PCOM scholarship profile as well as information submitted on the federal Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application. Students can also apply for loan programs, including the Federal Direct student loan program, Health Resources and Service Administration loans, and private student loans.

DISBURSEMENT

Student loans and most other aid are electronically disbursed toward students' PCOM tuition/fee charges on the first date of enrollment at the beginning of each term. When students borrow funds beyond tuition/fees, the PCOM Bursar Office releases the remaining "living expense refund" seven to 10 days after the first date of enrollment for the term. It typically requires one to three business days for the bank to deposit the funds into student bank accounts. Students without direct deposit receive a refund check via U.S. Mail. Disbursement and refund dates vary by program, year, and individual student enrollment (EI IV.2).

FA provides a Pending Loan Advance (PLA) to students who need to receive pending "living expense refunds" up to two weeks prior to the start of a term. PLAs are meant primarily to assist students who have a delayed rotation start that would delay their living expense refund.

LOAN REPAYMENT

Established in 2014, the Financial Wellness program sponsored by FA offers a robust suite of services. It is designed to provide resources on the topics of debt management, financial planning, and budgeting. The main goal of the program is to increase awareness and education regarding financial topics so students have a reduced burden of stress and anxiety. Core components of the program include: one-on-one financial counseling, loan repayment counseling, exit counseling coordination and presentations, annual professional lecture series, monthly table topics, presentations to student groups, orientation support for all programs, and topics integrated into the curriculum. Three full-time staff coordinate events, identify resources, and provide individualized loan repayment counseling for all students and alumni. All students participating in the Direct Loan program complete online exit counseling. Wellness Coordinators complete one-on-one loan repayment counseling with more than half of our graduating DO students. Each year, the program has grown to reach more students through events and individual counseling appointments (EI IV.3). The success of this program is reflected in the 0.5% three-year cohort default rate of PCOM graduates compared to the national 2.3% default rate (Table 2.1, p. 18).

Academic Support (Criterion 1.b)

PCOM recognizes that students enter academic programs with varying degrees of experience and

foundational knowledge. Identifying gaps in knowledge, securing assistance, and providing a pathway to success can mean the difference between success and failure. Academic programs offer a comprehensive approach to support students in attaining their educational and professional goals. Through targeted programs, the faculty and administration identify, monitor, intervene, and guide students through their academic journey.

These approaches are summarized below:

- » Pre-matriculation programs. Several academic programs proactively offer opportunities for accepted applicants to gain exposure to foundational knowledge to help them succeed in the classroom. For example, the DO program offers virtual reading during the summer before the first year of medical school. When asked how well the program prepared them for the first term, students commented:
 - It helped with core ideas.
 - The material for the first few lectures looked familiar due to the reviews in the summer reading sessions.
 - The material served as a refresher on some basic concepts I needed to thrive in the first term of medical school.
 - The professors were very straightforward in letting us know what their expectations are even before orientation. I loved having a set of topics to review and I felt less anxiety.
 - They covered the same concepts we are learning in classes so it served as a wonderful primer!
 - It was helpful to have some guidance on what to expect and how to prepare.

A parallel two-week opportunity, Fundamental Integration for Required Excellence (FIRE), was developed for students entering the DO program at PCOM South Georgia. These students had a lower mean undergraduate grade point average, science grade point average, and MCAT score than other accepted students. The students received instruction in major disciplines represented in the early M1 curriculum and strategies for success. Through the first two terms, this self-selected cohort had only 29% failures in courses and a mean score in courses within one point of the remaining class cohort. This program has met the challenge of proactively helping students become successful.

- » Orientation. Students are introduced to each program's rigorous expectations along with information to help them become successful, such as mentoring meetings and exercises to strengthen safety, well-being, and inclusion. Students are also required to complete online compliance training (EI IV.4).

- » Academic advisement. Once matriculated, each PCOM program oversees the academic advising process with a methodology that aligns with its curriculum. In programs such as pharmacy, physician assistant, psychology, and physical therapy, academic advisors guide and counsel students throughout their program; the process is managed by the director or respective dean. The program dictates the frequency at which advisors meet with advisees.

Students in the DO program are monitored by the Academic Counseling Team (ACT) (EI IV.5). This team of faculty assists students who develop academic challenges prior to the completion of the course. Students managing personal life situations are encouraged to meet with a counselor, while those with academic issues are prompted to seek tutoring from the academic support specialist. Upon discussion with the student, an action plan is developed to ensure success.

The efforts to guide students toward academic achievement begin at the program level with the faculty and students. Assisting and supporting these efforts are academic support specialists in Student Affairs who schedule regular support sessions with students. The academic achievement of students is reviewed periodically to identify those in academic difficulty. Any student falling below the metrics for satisfactory progress is referred to the program's Student Progress Evaluation Committee (SPEC), which encompasses program faculty and specialists who review student progress. The committee meets with students who have academic deficiencies. Additional information about the SPEC and the duties and responsibilities of the SPEC are outlined in each program handbook (EI IV.6).

Some students may find it necessary to take a leave of absence from their program of study (EI IV.7). In these cases, PCOM recognizes the specific academic or personal challenges that potentially put the student at risk. A senior program manager (SPM) in the Provost's Office monitors these students who move off-cycle as a result of a leave of absence or repeated course work. The SPM serves as the liaison between the academic departments, student services, and the student.

ENHANCING RETENTION THROUGH EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES (*Criterion 1.c, ROA 7*)

The resources and expectations of graduate and professional schools are significantly different from undergraduate schools. At the start of each academic year, incoming students are provided a robust and comprehensive overview of resources at PCOM. Orientation programs consist of three components: general resources, services (library, IT, academic

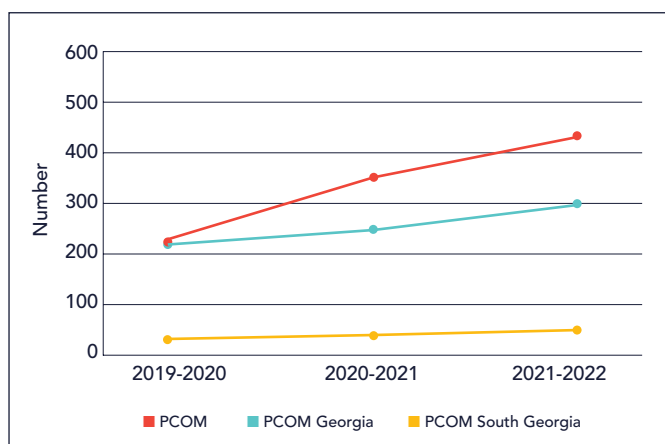
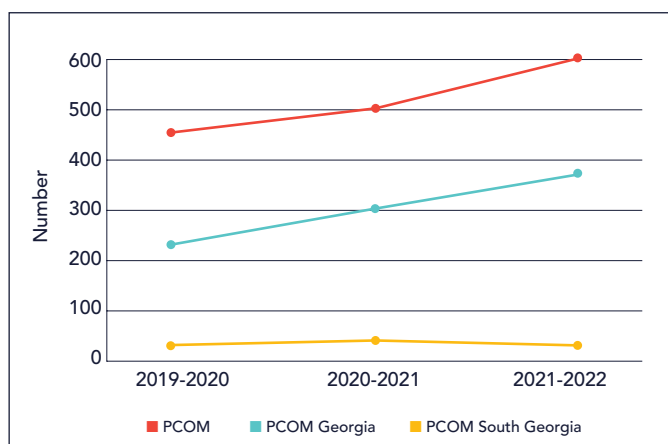
support), and program-specific information (syllabi, class schedule, program advisors, etc.). Online training modules, mentoring meetings, and diversity exercises help to strengthen safety, well-being, and inclusion efforts (EI IV.4). These introductions prepare students for the various programs of study. After orientation, students complete a survey (EI IV.8).

The Academic Support and Enrichment program within Student Affairs develops and delivers programs that promote academic excellence by aligning study skills and personal habits to the rigor of professional school. Recognizing that the volume and pace of curricula may present difficulties, peer tutoring, academic support, review sessions, practice questions, learning strategies, and time management programs are available through

the office and on the student portal of the PCOM intranet. Academic support services have grown steadily from year-to-year as noted in Figure 4.2 below (EI IV.9).

In 2015, significant changes were made to address the need for additional student support staff on each campus (EI IV.10). The additional staff correlates with a significant increase in counseling contact hours for the student population (Figure 4.2). The counseling team develops initiatives, coordinates programming, and identifies resources for current students. A monthly newsletter highlights mental health awareness, wellness activities, offers one-on-one and group sessions, partners with the Office of Diversity and Community Relations, and engages students on social media (EI IV.11).

FIGURE 4.2. ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND TUTORING SESSIONS BY CAMPUS, 2019-2022.



PCOM counselors have also responded to the national mental health crisis by designing and distributing a flier to faculty/staff on how to intervene with troubled students. Information in the flyer includes Student Affairs' email address and numbers for phone messages, suicide prevention training (QPR) for student mentors and student leaders, and directions to additional SafeColleges modules to curb high-risk behavior and educate staff. PCOM counselors provide mental health training to campus security and collaborate with officers to sponsor self-defense classes for students.

The academic programs in each school recognize the need to provide support through curricular adjustments and review. Often this involves working closely with Student Affairs. Working together, the faculty and Student Affairs coordinate a variety of academic success services to support PCOM students in reaching their goals. This includes enrichment for students who are on track and support for those who could benefit from additional opportunities for learning and retaining information.

The number of students receiving disability services has consistently increased over the past 10 years. In that time,

PCOM hired a disability services coordinator to oversee the accommodation process for all three locations. The coordinator works closely with members of the Student Affairs team to deliver approved accommodations (EI IV.12).

Enhancing Student Success (Criteria 1, 2)

While the institution is focused on academic progress and success, students are focused on degree completion and starting their post-graduate career journey. As a result, career planning has become increasingly more important to student satisfaction. PCOM has bolstered the career services offered to students through staff additions, an increase in student appointments, events, resources, and interdepartmental collaborations.

CAREER PLANNING

Graduate and professional students receive support and resources for career planning from Student Affairs and departmental initiatives. These include career-related conversations through individual appointments and online resources.

The DO program provides a four-year career planning program that includes guided sessions to investigate career specialties, develop personal statements for residency applications, information sessions to understand the Medical Student Performance Evaluation, residency ranking strategies, and early preparation for the SOAP process. In addition, students are provided with **Careers in Medicine** sponsored by the AAMC with information and resources about residency programs and career goals. Students have access to Big Interview Medical, a resource specific for osteopathic students, as well as practice interviews with more than 150 alumni. The institution also provides support to graduates seeking a second residency match or fellowship.

Student Affairs provides the Big Interview (non-medical version) for students in all other programs (biomedical sciences, forensic medicine, pharmacy, physical therapy, physician assistant studies, psychology, and medical laboratory sciences) to prepare for job interviews. Biomedical science students can also use the platform to practice for medical school interviews (EI IV.13)

Other resources provided to PCOM students include Handshake, a personalized career management system for use by students, staff, and employers. This platform features a career fair platform, employer network and job postings, appointment scheduling, and tracking features (EI IV.14).

TRANSFER STUDENTS

Occasionally, students will request to transfer to another institution to complete their degree requirements. These students receive counseling from the SPM and the registrar about the documents that will be transmitted and the requirements to release student academic information. For students from another institution who wish to transfer into a PCOM program, credit for transfer will be considered that is no older than five years and is from a graduate program with regional or national accreditation (EI IV.15).

The osteopathic medicine, pharmacy, and physical therapy programs will consider a transfer application, on a limited basis, under extenuating circumstances, and depending on the applicant's prior program credentials and the availability of seats. In either case, the student must be in good standing in their current/prior program. The physician assistant studies program does not offer advanced placement based upon the transfer of credits for academic work completed at other institutions of higher learning. The policies, with respect to each program, are re-evaluated as deemed necessary by the programs and their professional organizations. The graduate programs offered by PCOM accept a limited amount of transfer credits (EI IV.16).

Student Records

(Criterion 3)

PCOM safeguards and retains student records to meet applicable law or management and operational needs. The Records Retention Policy and Procedure eliminates the onerous expense of storage of irrelevant and obsolete documents; reduces the time and cost expended retrieving documents in response to business requests and management needs; prevents the improper alteration, destruction, mutilation or concealment of its records; and improves the efficiency of its operations. The policy provides detailed direction for the retention period of various forms of documents and records (EI.IV.17).

Given the confidential nature of the pre-matriculation, academic, and personal information collected by the institution, a plan must exist to ensure that this information is safe and secure. In 2018, PCOM hired a Chief Information Security Officer to manage PCOM's information security organization, including overseeing training and updating of security policies; talent acquisition and development; setting and implementing standards for security operations and support; and ensuring compliance of systems and applications with information security best practices and standards.

PCOM adheres to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the federal law that protects the privacy of student education records (EI IV.18). Student information is only released with consent from the student, and all employees are required to complete yearly FERPA training on SafeColleges.

The University Catalog and General Student Handbook states "All records and conversations between an aid applicant, his/her family and the staff of the Financial Aid Office are confidential and entitled to the protection ordinarily given to a counseling relationship." As a rule, PCOM does not allow a student to permit access unless the student is present for all conversations, in-person or otherwise. The registrar maintains PCOM's compliance with FERPA.

PCOM considers certain information to be "directory information" under FERPA and, therefore, subject to disclosure without prior consent of the student. Unless written objection is received by the registrar, PCOM treats the following as directory information to be released at the discretion of the registrar: student name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, date and place of birth, enrollment status dates of attendance, major field of study, dean's list, degrees and awards received and names of undergraduate and/or graduate schools attended, internships, and residencies. Students may withhold disclosure of directory information by submitting a written request to the registrar indicating

the information to be withheld. Once received, future requests for such information from non-institutional persons or organizations are denied.

All data stored in the PCOM data center are backed up to the NetApp infrastructure in the Philadelphia data center. In addition, all data are backed up to a cloud-based provider for offline storage, disaster, and information security assurance.

ITS and Information Security are involved in the evaluation of all technology vendors as part of PCOM's contract review process. Once the department identifies a vendor of choice, the vendor must provide evidence of SOC2 compliance or comparable (e.g. HIPAA Risk Assessment if applicable, penetration testing, or security audit results). If the vendor cannot provide these documents, the vendor must complete the Higher Education Community Vendor Assessment Tool (HECVAT) and provide a certificate of insurance that includes cyber liability coverage. Information Security also reviews each contract to ensure that appropriate confidentiality and breach notification language is included.

Student Life (Criterion 4)

PCOM offers a wide array of opportunities for students to connect with classmates and the institution outside of the classroom. This includes participation in student government, student organizations/clubs, intramural club sports, wellness events, community service projects. These experiences create a sense of belonging and offer opportunities for leadership, a chance for self-care and wellness, exploration of personal interests, and time for engagement at the

institutional and community level. Studies have shown that increased participation outside of the academic classroom leads to both stronger performance inside the classroom and a greater sense of connection to the institution.¹

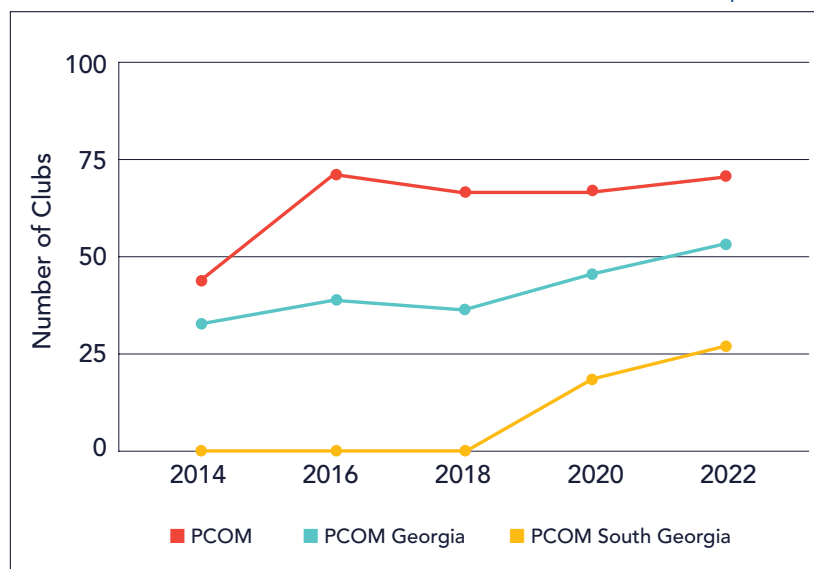
Student Leadership Opportunities at PCOM

- » Student Government Association (SGA): The overarching umbrella leadership organization for all three locations. This group provides programming for each campus and advocates for the student body. The SGA provides oversight for the academic councils (EI IV.19).
- » Academic Councils: Each academic program has a student government branch that provides programming (both academic and social), advocacy, and communication for their specific student cohort(s).
- » Student Organization Council: Each location has a Student Organization Council. This group oversees the registration/formation of new clubs, the oversight of existing clubs, and the process for discontinuing clubs.

Student Organizations and Events

PCOM locations have dozens of officially recognized student organizations (EI III.11). These groups develop and deliver hundreds of events each year on and off-campus. During the development of each event, a Pre-Event Form outlining the proposed activity, a detailed agenda, and how the event will impact the selected audience is developed. The number of student organizations/clubs on each campus has increased significantly over an eight-year span. There are currently 154 active clubs at the three locations (Figure 4.3).

FIGURE 4.3. GROWTH OF STUDENT CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS, 2014-2022



¹ Relationship of Students' Extracurricular Activities And Academic Performance. (2021, August 17). Edubirdie. Retrieved March 3, 2023, from <https://edubirdie.com/examples/relationship-of-students-extracurricular-activities-and-academic-performance/>

Community Service Opportunities

PCOM students are very civic-minded and dedicated to community service. There are many opportunities to volunteer through the SGA, academic councils, and clubs/organizations. Each organization is required to do at least one community service event per term and through PCOM-organized programs (EI IV.20). Community service hours are tracked via non-Student Affairs entities, such as the AOA/COSGP Touch Program (for DO students only), honor societies (Sigma Sigma Phi, Psi Chi, Gold Humanism), and via specific academic programs.

PCOM South Georgia matriculated its first students in 2019. The COVID-19 pandemic contributed to the slower development of clubs and community service activities for these students. During 2020-2021, the Philadelphia numbers include student groups and academic programs volunteering for on- and off-campus COVID vaccination clinics.

Intramural/Club Sport Activities

Each campus provides athletic, health, wellness, and recreational activities/events/programming for students throughout the year (EI IV.21).

Institutional Review of Student Services

(Criterion 5)

Continuous improvement of Student Affairs operations is extended with the help and expertise of third-party vendors that assist the institution in reviewing student resources with the goal of designing and delivering services that are current, relevant, and meaningful. Third-party vendors include ModernThink LLC, Carebridge Reports, United Healthcare HealthiestYou, AACOM Surveys (DO), and the AACOM Empathy Survey.

- » ModernThink. An engagement survey was developed and administered to better understand and ultimately improve the student experience. Examples of these outcomes are provided in EI I.4 and EI III.22. In addition to these survey results, PCOM seeks mental health feedback from students and follows up on the feedback to strengthen the institutional mental health initiatives (EI IV.22, EI IV.23).
- » Carebridge Utilization Reports. Carebridge is a service offered in addition to personal counseling through Student Affairs and is best utilized when away from campus or in an emergency when PCOM's offices are closed. A quarterly utilization report is used by Student Affairs and the counseling staff to identify current and emerging areas of concern (EI IV.24).

- » United Healthiest You Utilization. FirstRisk advisors and Healthiest You have partnered together to provide PCOM students with access to physicians and licensed mental health professionals. Students receive access to mental health specialists, mobile support, member-counselor matching, flexible scheduling, and interpretation services (EI IV.25).

In addition to the third-party vendors, PCOM uses the services of OIR to conduct additional reviews of the student services.

The feedback obtained from external, third-party surveys and internal data collection are used to drive improvements. The impact of these has been seen in additional resources, staffing, and programming to allow the institution's student support programs to evolve and meet the needs of an ever-changing student population.

INITIATIVES FROM FEEDBACK

PCOM is responsive to outcomes reflected in surveys and other metrics to implement improvements to enhance student success. Responses have included expanded career services and increased programming through the academic support and counseling teams. The data drove these improvements as the institution remained focused on its goal of student success.

Listed here are examples not mentioned previously.

- » In 2021, PCOM counselors created the Mental Health Taskforce a multidisciplinary team that supports the mission of PCOM by caring for the whole person and promoting, improving, and fostering positive mental health and well-being for PCOM students. The taskforce uses evidence-based decision-making to strengthen outreach programming, services, and policies for the PCOM community (EI IV.23).
- » As a follow-up to a wellness survey, underscoring the need for efficient and effective responses to students in crisis situations, PCOM established a Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT). The objective of the BIT is to help students in crisis and proactively provide opportunities to prevent burnout, which is increasing at alarming levels in the healthcare field.¹ By teaching students to monitor their feelings, practice self-care, and address stress and anxiety through healthy avenues, lifelong lessons can be utilized and will follow them into their professional and personal lives.
- » Many students were affected by the coronavirus pandemic in unforeseen ways. PCOM established an emergency fund to help students adversely impacted. The funds were provided by donors and federal assistance for students to be able to continue their education during the difficult period.

¹ Addressing Health Worker Burnout: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on Building a Thriving Health Workforce, 2022.
<https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/health-worker-wellbeing-advisory.pdf>

Effectiveness of Supporting the Student Experience

(Criterion 6, ROA 7, ROA 8, ROA 10)

Directed by the PCOM mission, a strategic goal of the institution is student success. Standard IV provides a view of the network of support provided to graduate and professional students to assist them in achieving their goals. This network spans multiple departments, including academics, admissions, financial aid, and student affairs. Student Affairs provides a variety of support, ranging from academic support and counseling to mental health and behavioral health interventions. All of these help PCOM meet its mission of **educating professionals to care for the whole person and advance the health of diverse communities**.

PCOM programs supporting the student experience produce regular internal reports that show the data from units' efforts to track the usage of their services. These reports typically include measures of student satisfaction and proposed improvements. The outcomes are also tied to the strategic plan and periodically reviewed for relevance (EI I.6).

A Campus Climate Survey was performed in 2018 and again in 2022. These surveys represented different cohorts of students and very different learning environments due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nonetheless, PCOM felt it important to repeat the survey as planned. The comments and data could be segregated by location but not by program. Overall, the trend across locations showed Georgia was trending in a positive direction and Philadelphia remained about the same. The South Georgia campus participated in the survey for the first time in 2022 (EI I.4, EI III.22). A summary of key areas from the survey are shown here.

Communication

- » Student expectations of behavior and perception of being free to inquire and express opinions related to the institution remain significantly positive with examples of strong improvement (EI I.4.D-G).

Diversity

- » Members of the PCOM community indicate a strong sense of respect and trust, and steadily increasing strong sense of support relative to heritage, background, and sexual orientation.
- » Members of the PCOM community feel that the institution is more represented with diverse members than previous years and that the institution has procedures for dealing with

discrimination. Adding to these positive trends is the expressed sense of belonging at the institution is very high.

- » There is the perception of being exposed to diverse opinions, cultures and values, and individuals. The institution's emphasis to promote this is personally important to members, thus these sentiments show a steady increase in the past four years across all locations (EI I.4.H-N).

Security

- » The students perceive that the security measures align to provide a feeling of safety on all campuses. Although there was a slight slip in students feeling their technology needs are met, the sentiment across all three locations remains very favorable (EI I.4.O-P).

Pride in Institution

- » The responses show that the student perception of the institution's culture is positive relative to other graduate and professional institutions and shows a significant four-year increase at PCOM Georgia. Grounding the sense of pride is a sentiment related to understanding learning objectives and academic competencies. This pride is positive to significantly positive as is the student comfort level for speaking up if witnessing dishonesty and/or cheating. The latter and other perspectives, such as knowing the institution's mission and expressing pride gives indication that students are synthesizing what the institution means to them. Response selections infer students are ready to evaluate gaps that members or programs may create and are ready to call-out or speak to someone about misalignments or inconsistencies based on previous pronouncements or expectations (EI I.4.A-C, Q-U).

Protection from Harassment and Discrimination

- » Students' responses about school pride and their willingness to protect it and inform others when something is amiss are echoed in prompts about harassment and discrimination. The consistency of positive responses to prompts about harassment and discrimination in 2018 ranged from 93% to 52% and in 2022 ranged from 93% to 56%. PCOM Georgia posted a positive increase of nearly 14% relative to feeling that if a student made a complaint about discrimination they would not have concern for their status as a student (EI I.4.V-AA).

Student Experience

- » The trend across locations remains positive and the four year changes lean mostly to the positive (EI I.4.AB-AC).

Facilities

- » The two campus service areas important to student life for student convenience and health are the cafeterias and fitness centers at both PCOM and PCOM Georgia. Both locations have respectable increases fully meeting the needs of students. One aspect for Philadelphia's rise may be due to the continuance of dinner service that started just before the pandemic.

In addition to the Campus Climate Survey that demonstrates PCOM seeks to assess its effectiveness, the goals and metrics of SP 2025 also use outcomes data to demonstrate that the institution continually seeks to become better at delivering its mission. For example, evidence is provided in support of this Standard that PCOM addresses student persistence through financial assistance, academic support, and personal support (EI I.6). Evidence is also provided about a data warehouse being created to easily monitor dashboards for student enrollment, retention, and graduation data (EI V.4).

The institution also assesses the effectiveness of many units based on the results of student surveys and has developed improvement plans based on the findings. The focus of these surveys is on the students as the central stakeholder and understanding the extent to which they are satisfied with the academic programs, operations, climate services, and outcomes of the learning community. Effectiveness is viewed from indicators that are measurable outcomes aligned with institutional and unit actions taken to achieve the outcomes.

Examples of surveys include:

- » Career advisement feedback and post-graduation employment surveys
- » Quality of campus experience/culture of non-discrimination, positive atmosphere, and support for continuance surveys
- » Effective usage of physical space and facilities surveys

In summary, PCOM continually monitors the effectiveness of the programs supporting success from pre-matriculation and orientation initiatives through academic and personal counseling services and interaction with other units and faculty groups. It actively participates in the shared responsibility of student graduation and placement. The institution proactively seeks feedback from these efforts and then takes steps to address any issues or to revise expectations for supporting the student experience as a PCOM graduate or professional student.

Standard V – Educational Effectiveness Assessment



Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution's students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their program of study, degree level, the institution's mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.

An important aspect of all higher education programs is the evaluation of student learning and achievement. The goal of this evaluation is to ensure students have received the requisite knowledge and experience to enter their profession with competence. The mission statement of PCOM has evolved since its founding and continues to develop and offer new healthcare education and training opportunities. Since PCOM's previous accreditation, additional programs have been created in medical laboratory studies, physical therapy, and applied behavioral analysis. As these changes take place, the need for assessment of student outcomes has increased, and PCOM faculty and staff have met this mission-directed challenge.

Student Learning

(Criteria 1, 2.a-c, ROA 7, ROA 8, ROA 9, ROA 10)

The four PCOM schools perform systematic evaluation of educational effectiveness through three general processes including (a) student assessment of courses and programs, (b) education assessment, (c) and program accreditation processes. An overview of what the institution is doing in each of these processes is provided, followed by specific examples from various programs.

The data collected during the programmatic reviews demonstrate many commonalities across programs in assessment of student learning and achievement (EI V.1, EI V.2, EI V.3.A-B).¹ For example, programs collect student course evaluations at the end of each term, faculty analyze exam and course grades, and supervisor ratings of student competencies are evaluated. For student evaluations of courses, programs utilize various platforms for collecting these data, including BlackBoard, CourseEval, SurveyMonkey, and REDCap. More recently, most academic programs updated their curriculum maps to ensure necessary competencies are being addressed for students to be successful upon graduating and entering professional careers. The curricula maps allow faculty to indicate if the programmatic agreed-upon competencies are introduced, reinforced, mastered, or are summative.

Examples from three academic programs clearly demonstrate how students' learning and achievement are evaluated.

- » The masters in forensic medicine program evaluates students' learning throughout each

semester through electronic exams, written research papers, crime scene reconstruction days, lab exercises, and interactive intern or capstone experiences. The assessments are graded and monitored by the faculty to ensure that all areas of the program mission and competencies are being accomplished. Students are surveyed via REDCap after each completed lecture series to obtain strengths and weaknesses of the learning activities.

- » The doctorate in clinical psychology program reviews course grades, lab experiences, and written papers. In addition, faculty are responsible for examining student practicum and internship surveys, as well as comprehensive exams and student competency evaluations completed by site supervisors to determine if students are achieving educational goals throughout the year. Faculty also evaluate student performances with a standardized rubric for simulated cases. A professional development seminar was created to review student engagement in advocacy, and students are required to maintain self-reflection portfolios in which they evaluate personal competencies across course content, knowledge, skills and attitudes. Students complete course evaluations at the end of every semester. These identify students' views of in-class activities, discussions, assignments, and learning goals, as well as provide insight on ways to improve student learning. Student performance is reviewed at faculty meetings for this program.
- » The masters in medical laboratory studies outlines student learning goals and competencies in the program curriculum map. For each course, the competencies and learning objectives are clearly defined and assessed via lab exercises, exam grades, and faculty evaluations. Some examples include the assessment of a student's ability to demonstrate a scientific framework necessary to be a medical laboratory scientist, establish and maintain an appropriate relationship with professionals within the clinical setting, as well as appropriate professional relationships with classmates, instructors, and professionals. Other competencies evaluated include the skills necessary for lifelong learning (e.g. critical thinking skills, problem solving, independence, initiative), advocacy, and the ability to understand scholarly research with a comprehensive review of the clinical literature in a selected topic as assigned for a course.

These Self-Study data reveal that PCOM demonstrates active, regular, on-going, and targeted assessments

¹ A curriculum map, GCO grid, and outcomes and data source list are available for each program. Shown through this and other chapters are examples.

of student learning and achievement across each academic program and campus. While there are many commonalities across the programs, they do differ in the ways in which they assess student learning and achievement that is most relevant to their respective disciplines.

Educational Goals and Experiences

(Criteria 2.a-c, ROA 10)

Academic programs utilize a curriculum map to confirm that there are clearly articulated and interrelated educational goals at the institution and degree or program levels and that there are specific relevant educational experiences that map directly to the goals. The relevant educational experiences delineated in course syllabi are designed to fuel the attainment of competencies through learning, assessment, and feedback. Annual reviews of course syllabi across programs ensures educational experiences are specifically tied to programmatic goals.

Across academic programs, a sampling of relevant educational experiences may include some combination of examinations, work samples, individual class presentations, group presentations, laboratory exercises, capstone projects, simulations, role playing, case conceptualizations, crime scene simulations, laboratory analysis of data, group process exercises, analyzing movies, and data analysis exercises.

Recently, every academic degree program underwent a program review that resulted in updated curriculum maps and outlines of student assessment. Programs were also asked to indicate ongoing or future plans for program improvement based on student outcomes data and feedback. The perceptions of program strengths and weaknesses were assembled from students, faculty, and alumni and led to ideas for improvements.

In the clinical psychology doctorate program, some relevant educational experiences include the creation of a student retreat where risk assessments for underserved populations are conducted. Osteopathic medical students are incorporated into advocacy days and course labs, which help provide additional feedback on assignments and student evaluations; simulations allow students to practice mental status exams and professional debriefings. These experiences address the institutional goal of caring for the whole person.

In the medical laboratory science program, there are several multimodal, proximal, and distal assessment methods being used to ensure programmatic goals are met. For example, to assess the program goal, 'Create an environment which encourages and develops critical

thinking, critical reasoning, and creative problem solving,' there are five different types of assessments: student class evaluations, student clinical evaluations, individual feedback, employee satisfaction surveys, and graduation surveys. To ensure the program goal, 'Demonstrate a scientific framework of the work requirements necessary to be a Medical Laboratory Scientist' is met, similar assessments are utilized but also include graduate placements. The multimodal approach to assessment of program goals includes assessment before entering the program, while in the program, upon graduation, and post-graduation. These various assessment mechanisms serve to assess programmatic goals reliably and validly for purposes of continuous quality improvement.

In summary, reviews of curricula maps and Goals and Course Objectives (GCO) grids (EI V.1-EI V.2) reveal clearly articulated and interrelated educational goals at the institution and degree or program levels, which are coupled with relevant educational experiences directly related to the goals. There are many commonalities of educational experiences across programs, but there are unique educational experiences that are specific to particular programs. Ultimately, specific educational experiences within programs capture the fulfillment of student learning goals. Educational experiences are derived through faculty consensus and the demands of particular disciplines in order to instill competency in a given discipline.

Achieving Educational Goals

(Criterion 1, ROA 7, ROA 9, ROA 10)

Utilizing the assessments mentioned in the Student Learning section hereinabove, directors and faculty determine the extent to which each student achieved the requisite academic success to progress through and continue in the program. This is accomplished on a term-by-term basis and over the course of the program. The educational goals of each program are aligned with the program's mission as well as with the PCOM mission (EI V.1, EI V.2, EI I.1). Achievement on these measures that are specifically tied to the educational goals provide evidence that, by definition, students are achieving goals that are congruent with the program and institutional missions.

Each program has uniquely defined competencies related to their specialty and informed by standards of the profession; these relate to key strategic goals and PCOM's mission. Analysis of the GCO grids shows that each program has mechanisms in place to substantiate that students are achieving the educational goals that are congruent with both the program and institutional goals (EI V.2). There are varieties of proximal and distal mechanisms used to evaluate goals, including

exams grades, course grades, skills reviews from clinical rotations, research papers, theses/dissertations, career outcomes, employer ratings, alumni surveys, and graduation surveys. These data support that each program addresses both the overall institutional mission, as well as individual programmatic goals, that are related to the student expectations expressed in competencies and found in their mission statement and outcomes data.

As an example, the masters in applied positive psychology program clearly delineates how each course in the curriculum addresses the institutional goals of caring for the whole person and advancing the health of diverse communities. Across the curriculum, each course is categorized according to where the content is introduced, reinforced, mastered, and then where a summary master assessment is conducted (EI V.1). Further, students are assessed for achieving goals that are congruent with the program of study by delineating how the courses map onto the competencies and the four institutional learning goals. Embedded within these courses are assessments that capture the extent to which students are mastering the requisite competencies of the program of study. These assessments include objective exams, research papers, skills observation and ratings, and graded oral presentations, all of which are evaluated on a term-by-term basis. The comprehensive analysis of this and all other programs demonstrates that students are achieving the specified educational goals that are congruent with each respective program of study and PCOM's institutional mission.

Systematic Review of Institutional and Program Goals

(Criteria 2.a-c, ROA 8, ROA 10)

PCOM has a strong commitment to creating and nurturing a culture of assessment. This culture thrives on asking questions that directly or indirectly inform educational effectiveness and providing data to determine the extent to which academic programs are achieving their goals. The system of evidence-directed assessment of achievements fosters an environment in which faculty are supported in answering questions of direct relevance to their goals (e.g., to what extent are students achieving the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes to succeed in their fields of study). In creating this culture, OIR and the Student Outcomes Assessment team are available to support all PCOM programs and locations. This team includes three psychologists and a data analyst with extensive experience in measurement, survey development, analysis of large data sets, and program evaluation. The team also collaborates with the associate provost, who emphasizes data-driven decision-making

and networks with faculty across all academic programs and locations and the PCOM leadership. OIR provides consultation and support for design, development, distribution, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of relevant data to stakeholders. The team is available to all academic program directors/deans and faculty to address questions and support efforts in outcomes assessments.

By virtue of the analysis, the faculty and OIR conduct organized and systematic, ongoing assessments of student achievement of institutional and degree or program goals that are used to inform decisions. Within the past year, OIR and ITS have been developing a data warehouse and data reporting system to improve data driven decision-making. Specifically, PCOM now utilizes Tableau to generate institution and program specific dashboards. These dashboards allow for academic program directors or deans to monitor student enrollment, leaves of absence, attrition, graduation, retention rates, course grades, and exam performance on a real-time, continuous and on-going basis (EI V.4.A-B).

There is also evidence that ongoing assessment activities are yielding outcomes data that support the development and refinement of curricular goals and available mechanisms for improving these educational activities. For example, the osteopathic medicine program was assisted with the design and implementation of a series of predictive studies related to performance on COMLEX, study skills related to COMLEX performance, and studies of absolute risk reduction for COMLEX success that can be used early in clinical training (EI V.5). Among these studies, comparisons of characteristics of DO students who passed versus failed COMLEX on the first attempt reflected differences in study skills and habits. This information was directly shared with feedback to students.

A detailed list of OIR projects categorized by accreditation, external reporting, statistical/program evaluation/research consultation, market studies, and needs assessments including projects are provided for review (EI V.6). This list does not include ongoing assessments conducted by faculty in their respective programs.

This review reveals that faculty and OIR are conducting numerous, multimodal organized and systematic, ongoing assessments of student achievement of institutional and degree/program goals. These assessments are used to inform a cycle of continuous quality improvement across the institution. The existing system encourages deans, program directors, faculty, and administrators to seek answers to questions that relate to student achievement of institutional and program goals. To embed a culture of assessment, studies are routinely conducted in a collaborative manner with input from program directors/deans and faculty.

Data Collection Supporting Institutional and Programmatic Goals

(Criteria 2.a-c, ROA 8, ROA 10)

Program directors and faculty use many approaches to develop curricular goals including input from national training organizations, consultants, faculty in other programs, students, published reports, specialty accreditor standards, reports to and overview by the associated school Graduate Program Curriculum Committees (GPCC), and programmatic curriculum committees. Strategies for evaluating the curriculum include a variety of mechanisms such as student performance in courses, student progression through the program, leave of absences, remediation, attrition rates, Student Performance Evaluation Committee (SPEC) meeting necessity, faculty review of the curriculum, attainment of program milestone and capstones, graduation surveys, alumni surveys, placement data, licensure and certification rates, and competitiveness of graduates in the marketplace.

Faculty within programs meet regularly to discuss programmatic issues, curricular goals, strategies for evaluating goals, goal attainment, trends in the field, achievement of students, review of individual student progress, student issues and related remedial plans, and competency attainment. These meetings are designed

to monitor and ensure that students are progressing through their programs of study and attaining the knowledge, skills and attitudes in a sequential, increasingly complex, graded, and cumulative fashion. They are supplemented by advising sessions, mentoring experiences, and town hall meetings.

The institution has implemented REDCap as a tool for creating measures of student success and campus climate. A data warehouse was created during 2022 and has already been utilized to create student enrollment, retention, and graduation dashboards, accessible by an online portal. Deans and directors are now able to track enrollment data via daily updates to these dashboards. As more data are populated within the data warehouse, including course grades, exams, and admissions data, program directors will have even more access to student outcomes data. These are just a few of the changes either already made or currently in progress to improve PCOM's ability to make data-driven decisions, particularly in regard to student learning and achievement.

There are a variety of data sources available to validate student performance (Table 5.1). Careful attention is given to what students are required to know, what they need to be able to do, and what values they need to possess to succeed in their respective fields. Once available, the results which represent both proximal and distal mechanisms for monitoring student progression are disseminated to relevant stakeholders on a regular basis.

TABLE 5.1. DATA SOURCES TO VALIDATE STUDENT PERFORMANCES

Quantitative Data Sources	Qualitative Data Sources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Admissions metrics » Internal exam » External exam » Laboratory Skills » Simulations » Standardized patients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Meeting minutes » Written feedback to students » Dissertations and theses » Capstone projects » Milestones achievement » Performance evaluations for postgraduate training

Some additional mechanisms are faculty teaching satisfaction ratings; student support through alumni discussion groups, mental health resources, SPEC meetings, and mental health surveys; student retention; persistence to earning the degree; and placement rates. This information is gathered and reviewed through survey data, student performance evaluations, the number of dissertation defenses prior to applying for internship, and trends data (EI V.3.B).

PCOM also gives attention to post-graduation experiences. In the Doctor of Physical Therapy program, students are surveyed before graduation and a 1-year survey after graduation to assess what students have gained from the program in terms of meaningful lives, subsequent education, and preparation for their careers. In the osteopathic medicine program, graduates may receive assistance for second residencies or fellowships through Student Affairs and the Provost's Office.

The collection and review of data supporting institutional and programmatic goals demonstrate a focus on transparency and collaboration in a group problem-solving approach and action plans to fuel a cycle of continuous quality improvement. Programs ensure they are meeting goals through curricular changes, such as adding a professional development seminar, advocacy day presentations, changing the number of credits in the dissertation seminar sequence, and adding courses and skills labs. Associated data sources and outcomes are collected and reviewed to monitor student progress. This is accomplished by ongoing student evaluations with regard to professionalism, evaluating advocacy goals by using presentation rubrics, course grades, preparedness to work, graduation and alumni surveys, reviewing practicum evaluations, and student papers evaluated through established rubrics.

Processes to Improve Student Outcomes

(Criterion 4, ROA 8)

MECHANISMS DESIGNED TO IMPROVE STUDENT RETENTION

A major initiative of SP 2025 is to identify student success indicators in programs, such as early warning risk factors for failure at the end of the first year. Extensive analyses have been conducted and this information is fed back to the program directors and faculty. Similar analyses are conducted for the Admissions Department. OIR conducts regular literature reviews of research to guide data analyses and finds academic predictors on the variance of academic success. This has led to the search for nonacademic predictors available through PCOMs data warehouse.

To improve student retention, PCOM has instituted or increased a variety of services to support students including counseling for personal issues, academic issues, time management, and test anxiety. These services will be monitored over time to determine the effectiveness of student retention.

PREDICTORS TO IMPROVE GRADUATION RATES

Analyses of graduates are ongoing. A number of factors are known to impact student success including financial problems, family and marital issues, illness, and burnout. PCOM places a high priority on student mental health as it relates to not only educational achievement but also a meaningful life. There are a variety of institutional initiatives to support student success and mental health with an emphasis on self-care. (See Standard IV, Academic Support, pp. 34-35). Examples include the campus climate

survey, mental health survey, technology survey, and analyses of student success indicators by program (EI I.4, EI III.22, EI I.6). All of these data are aggregated and formal presentations are provided to relevant stakeholders (EI IV.22, EI IV.23).

These data are directly used to inform decision-making about the development of programs and interventions needed to address the noted concerns. For example, two-year survey data was utilized to obtain information at the start of the COVID pandemic concerning how students were coping. Results show a significant change in students' perception of the need for mental health services. In 2021, 47% of respondents indicated the need for services compared to 85% in 2022. There was a 5% increase in those currently receiving mental health services, with a majority indicating participation in counseling or therapy. In 2022, there was a decrease in feeling disconnected from friends and family, as well as classmates, likely due to being back on campus and the reduction in COVID restrictions in public (EI IV.22).

The mental health survey led to greater involvement of the Mental Health Taskforce to strengthen mental health initiatives and to better identify barriers to mental health care and improve access to services. This process resulted in a complete review and revision of leave of absence procedures and the inclusion in all syllabi of a civility statement, as well as mental health resources for students (EI IV.23).

STUDENT RETENTION AND PERSISTENCE

Graduate professional programs are designed to matriculate students directly into careers or additional post graduate training. Most programs are designed to be completed within two to four years. For example, the osteopathic medicine program has a four-year curriculum and the physician assistant studies program is 26 months. During this period, students have direct access to their program directors, faculty, deans, advisors, and counselors to help guide them through rigorous academic programs. (See also Section IV, Enhancing Retention through Educational Experiences, pp. 35-36). These data reveal that students who begin PCOM graduate and professional programs in general persist to the degree. The newly developed dashboard allows program directors to monitor year-to-year retention rates.

In general, transfer rates into and from PCOM are low (EI IV.16). Students considering a transfer can discuss a possible transfer to another program or institution with faculty or counselors. There are also few students who transfer into a PCOM program primarily due to its focus on graduate and professional programs. For example, in the past five years only three students have transferred into the osteopathic medicine program.

IMPROVE PLACEMENT RATES

Preparing students to pursue further education is based on preparing them for further graduate or professional studies. Clinical training, practicums, and internships are monitored and analyzed to determine what leads to successful placement. Available resources include clinical training directors and faculty dedicated to mentoring students. Student support services provide career counseling, assistance with application development, alumni engagement, and mock interviewing services. Mentorship by faculty is also a key factor. PCOM is highly successful in placing students into very competitive practicum/externship/clerkship experiences, internships, residencies, and post-doctoral positions. Examples include the following: the DO program has had a match rate of 98% to 100% over the past five years; the clinical psychology doctorate program has had an average match rate of 98% over the past 10 years.

OTHER PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES WITH THE GOALS OF IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The university engages external consultants (e.g., Baker Tilley) to conduct interviews and focus groups and provide external guidance to improve its processes, programs, and student services. This information is aggregated and recommendations are subsequently made to the ELT.

Outcomes and Educational Effectiveness

(Criteria 3.a-h, 5, ROA 10)

Student outcomes information is reported to relevant stakeholders to fuel a process of continuous quality improvement. A review of program data sources reveals that programs typically employ a combination of data sources to inform educational effectiveness including: course grades, milestone grades, capstone grades, preceptor/supervisor evaluations, comprehensive exams lab grades, and student, graduate, and alumni surveys. These aggregated data are collected on a regular basis and provide a snapshot of student achievement of knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to program goals and competencies.

Curriculum committees are charged with the task of reviewing curricula across programs (EI 1.7). Program directors report on the existing curriculum and any suggested changes, including why changes are being suggested and how these might enhance the curriculum. Input is actively sought from program directors, allowing for cross fertilization of ideas. The

recommended improvements are based on ongoing trends nationally; specialty accreditor expectations; where relevant changes are in the field; feedback from supervisors, students and faculty, and graduate/alumni surveys; and performance of students. For example, a curriculum committee requested Grammarly be provided through the Library to improve student professional writing. In addition to this, a writing consultant was engaged to improve student writing. These changes were recommended and approved with the intent of improving the curriculum in all programs.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, it became immediately apparent that three campus locations with different faculties and curriculum presentations was not necessarily in the best interest of student learning, particularly without the knowledge of numbers of faculty and students who would or might be impacted. This led programs to quickly evaluate their situations with faculty resources and move to a more symmetrical curriculum layout across campuses. The DO program re-imagined its curriculum to better align learning goals and content delivery across three locations that could be monitored through outcomes metrics. This particular example supported better effectiveness and measurable outcomes across all locations.

IMPROVEMENT OF LEARNING

Program faculty meet regularly to discuss student learning and mechanisms to improve student outcomes. Faculty and program directors monitor student performance on exams, high stakes exams, national licensing exams (e.g. COMLEX Level 1 and Level 2 CE), and other assessments such as supervisor ratings, student performance, end of clerkship national exams, and the PANCE exam for physician assistant students to delineate what students are effectively learning and areas in which specific challenges are being encountered. This process assists faculty with identifying problematic areas and making appropriate curriculum, as well as support mechanism changes to enhance student learning. Faculty investigate best practices in pedagogy, as well as analysis of course, program, and faculty-specific factors that may undermine student performance; based on a problem-solving model, adjustments are made to enhance the student learning outcomes.

An example of enhancing student learning outcomes is in the clinical psychology doctorate program. In this program, one of the more challenging courses is Psychometrics and Univariate and Multivariate Statistics. To improve student learning, the following adjustments were made: two sections were created to improve the student to faculty ratio; two research assistants were added to provide more support for the lab portion of the course; recitation (review) sessions were developed;

online resources were made available on selected topics by a noted expert and the textbook author; a group project on development of an instrument; and weekly demonstrations of data analysis were added to each weekly lecture. These changes enhanced student learning as demonstrated through improved performance on objective examinations.

Improvements for physical therapy students with the use of the Practice Exam and Assessment Tool (PEAT) illustrate another example of enhancing student outcomes. The program provides two forms of the exam, which students take in their final year at the conclusion of the didactic curriculum just prior to their final clinical rotations. The exam provides individualized feedback on performance across the major content areas of the National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE) administered by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT). The PEAT scores indicate a moderated to strong correlation with success on the NPTE, in addition to a positive association on first-time pass rates. Program faculty analyze all student performance feedback and use the data to influence curricular adjustments as needed to enhance student learning and assist students in preparing for the NPTE leading to licensure.

IMPROVEMENT OF TEACHING

Programs may employ one or more mechanisms to solicit feedback about how to improve teaching. TSPD plays a pivotal role in this regard by providing in-service training to faculty on pedagogy, providing the latest information on enhancing teaching. PCOM also provides financial support for the continuing education of faculty. Faculty also avail themselves of opportunities to discuss and share teaching strategies and may attend selected conferences on teaching to earn continuing education (CE) credits (EI III.27). Course/faculty evaluations are reviewed by program directors to identify areas of strength and areas in need of improvement for given faculty members. Proficiency and excellence in teaching is incorporated as one key element of evaluation for faculty promotion and tenure. One identified goal for TSPD is to enhance faculty involvement in these trainings, which can be linked to performance goals and evaluation.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The quality of academic programs is evaluated and revised accordingly per feedback from stakeholders and comparisons to existing standards of quality in the respective fields. Stakeholders include but are not limited to program directors, faculty, current students, graduating students, alumni, national bodies, and accrediting bodies. Program directors, faculty, and student representatives are given ample opportunities to provide critical feedback on the quality of the educational experience, academic and

related preparation, quality of faculty, climate of program, climate of classrooms, availability of resources, support of students, and attention to work-life balance. One challenge is getting students to complete course evaluations. Consideration of factors likely to enhance adherence has been addressed including prompts, reminders, and allocation of time at the end of the last class.

Ultimately, the evaluation of academic programs hinges on a number of factors; however, it is the performance of the students on coursework, course sequences, milestones, capstones, success in securing quality practica and internships, securing postdoctoral training opportunities, licensure rates, and supervisor evaluations that reflect the quality of programs internally and to external stakeholders. All of these factors are addressed by providing a multimodal perspective in understanding and enhancing program quality.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

OIR collaborates with Student Affairs, the Office of Diversity and Community Relations, HR, students, SGA, and cabinet to create surveys designed to solicit feedback on student experiences. Climate surveys are conducted every two to three years to gauge the opinion of students on the accessibility and approachability of a variety of services: cafeteria, fitness center, Library, parking, simulation center, Bursar, faculty, clinical education, dean's office, Student Affairs, counseling, and FA. Comparisons are made by location and other demographics in order to target particular problem areas, subgroups, and any location differences. These data are shared with cabinet, department heads, program directors, ELT, and board of trustees for input to identify areas of strength, problem areas, and strategies for improvement. OIR, Student Affairs and SGA representatives are also involved in yearly student mental health surveys of the mental health needs of students. Information gleaned from these surveys is then used to develop specific programming targeting areas of concern. For example, in response to the most recent mental health survey, Student Affairs designed and implemented a comprehensive plan that included points of contact, phone contact information, available services, hiring more counselors, and other relevant programs.

DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

TSPD conducts annual assessment surveys of faculty to identify areas of need and develops programming to address these needs (EI III.28). In addition, in SPAP, internal professional development programs are available at times to assist faculty. This has included programs on teaching effectiveness and statistical analysis to enhance faculty skills in mentoring students. In the past, SPAP has sponsored in-services on regression

techniques, ANOVA, MANOVA and other statistical techniques, as well as teaching.

FINANCIALLY SUPPORTING THE PLANNING AND BUDGETING OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The budgeting process at PCOM is one through which programs (program directors, faculty, and coordinators) identify their needs, provide justification, and seek approval from the dean who then presents budgetary requests to the provost, CFO, and members of the finance team (EI VI.8). Program directors are encouraged to review their budgets carefully and identify specific needs required to sustain or improve their programs. A similar process is used for services, including mentorship activities, simulation experiences, and counseling.

COMMUNICATING INFORMATION TO APPROPRIATE CONSTITUENTS ABOUT THE INSTITUTION AND ITS PROGRAMS

There are several mechanisms for communicating to constituents about PCOM and its academic programs. All information about PCOM and its accomplishments are vetted through and disseminated by the Office of Marketing and Communications to both internal and external audiences and demonstrate PCOM dedication to truthfulness, honesty, and transparency. These communications include press releases, television spots on topics of interest, community service projects, and billboards. Programmatic statistics are also available online. (See Standard II, Marketing and Communications, p. 17).

PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS AND STUDENTS

All applicants are provided accurate, relevant, up-to-date information about PCOM and its programs, detailing all expectations related to goals of the program, prerequisites, time to completion, curriculum, milestones and capstones, costs, faculty, students, diversity, equity and inclusion, scholarships, and program-specific details. This information is disseminated through media sites, Admissions, departments, programs, and faculty. Applicants are provided with the necessary details to determine whether PCOM is a good fit for their needs. While much of this information is online, direct contact with representatives from departments is available to answer questions as well.

Once matriculated, students are kept apprised of important information through several communication routes, including emails from the president, provost, deans, program directors and chairs, faculty, and staff; an online repository of information is available to students;

announcements on TV monitors; town hall meetings; advisement sessions; student program representative meetings; and the PENS emergency notification system.

CHAIRS, PROGRAM DIRECTORS AND FACULTY

Faculty, chairs, and program directors have an open and direct line of communication to their respective deans. School, department, and program meetings are another vehicle used to distribute information with a focus on transparency.

This information may include:

- » changes related to admissions, tuition, graduation
- » faculty and student climate survey results
- » mental health survey results
- » faculty and staff announcements, such as hirings and promotions
- » incentive plan updates
- » performance management information
- » changes to institutional schedules
- » cybersecurity, public safety information

It is also a common platform for reminding faculty about compliance trainings such as conflicts of interest, active shooter, FERPA, sexual harassment, microaggressions, and unconscious bias.

Staff members have an open and direct line of communication through their supervisors, program directors, faculty, deans, cabinet members, and HR. Staff receive the same information and updates about compliance training, as well as workflow information, job responsibilities, and work efficiency issues.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES, CABINET, AND EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

The president and provost serve as ex officio members of the board of trustees (EI VII.2). Cabinet members and deans attend quarterly board meetings and report on the latest developments in their areas.

Cabinet meets on a weekly basis, and the ELT joins on a biweekly basis to update attendees on the constantly evolving environment, which may necessitate further discussions with other stakeholders, and decisive recommendations and responses. Each ELT member has the opportunity to report and update others on points of relevance. The deans report to cabinet and the ELT all critical information related to operations of the schools, department, programs, students, and faculty.

Standard VI – Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement



The institution's planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.

PCOM is a supported entity of the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine Foundation (PCOMF or the Foundation), which maintains oversight of the investment and expenditures from the endowment (as of November 2022 valued at more than \$570 million). All of the institution's educational activities are supported by an annual operating budget of approximately \$175 million. PCOM's finances are incredibly strong, as evidenced by its high credit rating of AA- from Fitch (EI VI.1), but the institution relies heavily on tuition revenue to support its activities (EI VI.2).

Strategic Planning *(Criteria 1, 2, 8, 9, ROA 7)*

In 2014, PCOM launched its first strategic planning process, which culminated in a plan titled PCOM 2020: A Strategic Vision (SP 2020). This plan identified five strategic themes to drive the institution's growth both physically and academically: ensuring strength and consistency of training opportunities for students; exploring new revenue streams for the institution to reduce tuition dependency; capitalizing on PCOM's osteopathic heritage; expanding educational mission and footprint; and enhancing its national reputation for educational excellence. Upon completion, a highlight report outlined the accomplishments that PCOM achieved during the plan period (EI VI.3).

Beginning in June 2019, while the institution was bringing the 2020 plan to a successful conclusion, PCOM began the process for the next strategic plan. Through a transparent and collaborative process, the entire PCOM community participated in the examination of critical issues, the formation of goals to address those issues, and the crafting of initiatives to direct its future activities. Input was sought from the campus community through surveys, an in-person retreat, town hall meetings, and opportunities to serve on various working groups (EI VI.4). SP 2025, using the tagline "A Path to Greater Excellence," is a comprehensive plan with quantifiable metrics to gauge progress, clear lines of responsibility, and flexibility to allow the institution to capitalize on any unexpected opportunities. Since its approval by the PCOM Board of Trustees in November 2020, the plan has served as a guide for all institutional decisions (EI I.5).

Each year, the Strategic Plan Steering Committee is convened to develop a new set of tactics to help realize

plan initiatives; achievement of these action items moves PCOM that much closer to achievement of the initiatives, which moves the institution that much closer to achievement of the plan goals. During the annual budgeting process (discussed further below), the human and capital needs are evaluated with an eye to SP 2025, and the question is posed whether particular needs will result in progress to meet the goals. For example, the Office of Clinical Education (Clinical Education) for the DO program referenced Metric 2.2.a. from SP 2025 as evidence to buttress its request for additional personnel. This metric states that clinical capacity will be increased by 10% by 2025 (EI I.6). Clinical Education was only going to be able to support that increase with additional personnel, and its request was therefore granted.

Several tactics in the initial years of the plan asked that proposals be crafted to support potential new activities. At the conclusion of each fiscal year, the cabinet reviewed all proposals to determine which ones would proceed. On several occasions, the cabinet withheld approval because the proposals did not demonstrate the requisite level of alignment with plan goals. For example, a proposal was presented to hire two full-time, experienced researchers to direct investigations, engage in clinical research, and secure external funding. While it was thoughtful and informed, the operating expenses set forth in the proposal were greater than the expected revenue stream; thus, it did proffer a new source of revenue but the negative impact on the bottom line led cabinet to withhold approval.

To further demonstrate the care and attention with which PCOM approaches the alignment of resources with plan elements, Student Affairs provides an apt example. Initiative 1.3 of the plan states that PCOM will address student stress and well-being and maximize emotional intelligence; this is one of four initiatives under Goal 1, Student Success (EI I.5, EI VI.4). In fiscal year 2022, Student Affairs created a Mental Health Task Force and a Behavioral Intervention Team to properly care for students at risk of mental health stressors and effectively respond to campus crises. Funding to support both of these initiatives was included in the fiscal year 2022 budget, and additional dollars have been allocated in the fiscal year 2023 budget to provide additional support services. As a result of these efforts, the number of students who utilized support services jumped from 3,487 in fiscal year 2021 to 5,015 in fiscal year 2022 (EI I.6).

With the advent of SP 2025, various academic units across the organization created plans for their own endeavors that aligned with the institutional plan. Each of the institution's schools/colleges has its own plan to address the issues unique to its respective programs, students, and opportunities (EI VI.5). PCOM's administrative units also created strategic plans to support their core activities in alignment with the institution's plan goals. Institutional Advancement, ITS, and Marketing and Communications each developed plans that buttressed the goals and initiatives of the overarching institutional plan (EI VI.6). For example, the first goal of Institutional Advancement's strategic plan is to foster student relationships and, from their first year on campus, serve as a home for students to find professional, financial, and support resources. This is directly complementary to the institution's goal of ensuring student success (EI I.6). The Office of Diversity and Community Relations conducted a months long strategic planning process in parallel with the institution's process, and its plan was fully integrated as goal six of SP 2025 (EI III.8).

New to the 2025 plan was the implementation of an online platform to record plan elements, assign owners and collaborators, note comments, upload supporting documentation, and track progress with metrics dashboards and comprehensive reports (EI 1.6). This system has allowed the institution to make ongoing updates, in real time, and share advancements with the campus community. Not only does SP 2025 use this system, but several units have also built their plans on the platform to capitalize on the dashboards and outcomes tracking. To demonstrate the effectiveness of this tool and the assessment process applied to it, the Medical Education Center of Excellence (MECOE) provides an apt example.

Metric 1.2.a provides that by 2025, PCOM will be in the top 25 percent of COMLEX I (initial licensing board examination for DO students) scores. Upon review of the first year of data, academic leadership created MECOE, which has as its mission to support and facilitate education of the finest osteopathic physician-leaders in patient-centered healthcare. Since its inception, MECOE has been guiding the realignment of the DO curriculum across all three PCOM locations and providing tools, human, and financial capital to improve board scores, reduce the number of leaves of absence, and improve assessment and student outcomes.

SP 2025 provides a clear roadmap for institutional success, offering alignment and prioritization for financial, human, physical, and infrastructure resources.

Financial Resources

(Criteria 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, ROA 2, ROA 11)

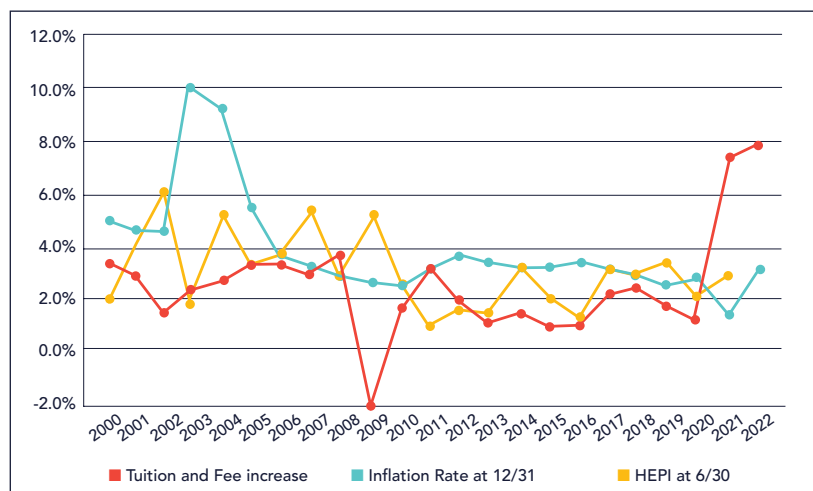
BUDGET PLANNING PROCESS

The Office of Financial Analysis and Budget (FAB), under the direction of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), guides the annual budget process. PCOM uses participative budgeting, beginning with department leadership and ending with approval by the PCOM Board of Trustees (EI VI.7), allowing individuals multiple opportunities to provide input into what expenses are necessary.

Beginning in December each year, departments gather data from the current and previous fiscal years' budgets to determine what allocations to request for the upcoming fiscal year. In addition to operating expenses, departments also prepare personnel and capital requests. Personnel requests are submitted to HR by the end of January for review and approval before being included in the overall budget (EI II.6). The department heads are responsible for leading this exercise and approving what line items are included in the budget. Each department uploads the budget information into Banner in February.

Once FAB has received all proposed budgets, the office organizes a series of budget justification meetings held in March. During these meetings, department heads are asked a series of questions by their respective cabinet members and the CFO about any new expense requests or significant variations from previous budgets. Despite PCOM's strong financial position, not all proposed expenditures are included in the final budget for approval. During the justification meetings, expenses may be removed (as well as added) because the full amount requested is not needed to effectively execute the department's work. PCOM pays careful attention to slowing the growth of expenses to maintain lower tuition increases than its peers (Figure 6.1; See also Figure 2.1, p. 18). Although not an express policy, any requested expense increases are limited to the percentage by which tuition is increased for that year; if the tuition increase is three percent; most departments restrict their budget growth to three percent.

FIGURE 6.1. PCOM TUITION AND FEE INCREASES COMPARED TO INFLATION AND HEPI RATE



Upon conclusion of the budget justification meetings, the consolidated budget for the institution, PCOM Foundation, and various other related entities is prepared and reviewed by the cabinet in April. Depending on the final amount net of expenses, the cabinet may request that key expenditures such as proposed new positions be re-examined. The Finance Committee of the PCOM Foundation Board reviews and recommends approval of the budget to the full board, and said approval is an action item on the agenda for the May board meeting.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PLAN

As evidenced by the budget planning process, there are multiple levels of approval to review and confirm that the proposed expenses are aligned with institutional priorities.

Strategic plan metric 5.4b. states that the institution will increase its academic program offerings by 15% by 2025 (EI VI.6). In fiscal year 2021, pursuant to tactic 5.4.2., the Provost's Office finalized a formal process for development and approval of new academic programs. That process requires any new program proposal to include a pro forma statement projecting revenue and expenses for up to 10 years (EI III.1, EI III.2, EI III.3). In 2022, SPAP submitted a proposal to commence a mental health counseling degree program at PCOM South Georgia. Because the pro forma showed losses in years one through 10 as a result of insufficient student headcount, the cabinet declined to approve it. Contrast that with the proposal submitted by the SHS in 2021 for degree programs in medical laboratory science, which demonstrated excess revenue over expenses as early as year 2023. Both academic programs were aligned with the strategic plan and the mission of the institution, but the financial impact led the cabinet to approve only one.

In Philadelphia, PCOM operates three healthcare centers located in underserved communities, which provide direct patient care and serve as clinical rotation sites for students in various programs (EI VI.9). Annually, the institution subsidizes these centers with approximately \$5 million because they support the mission and are directly aligned with the strategic plan. Goal 2 of the plan focuses on a sustainable network of clinical experiences for students, and Goal 6 outlines that the institution's policies and practices will foster excellence in service to communities (EI I.5).

Using a participative budgeting process, multilevel approvals, and clear focus and attention on the strategic priorities, PCOM ensures effective use of its financial resources.

Human Resources (Criteria 1, 4, 6, 8, ROA 10)

The most important asset of any institution is its people. The mission of HR at PCOM is to serve as an effective business partner by attracting, developing, rewarding, and retaining a talented and diverse workforce in order to support PCOM's mission of educating health professionals to care for the whole person and advance the health of diverse communities. As of November 2022, PCOM has approximately 430 full-time, non-faculty employees who offer support and administrative services across the institution and its three locations. PCOM employs approximately 225 full-time faculty members who offer instruction, guidance, and assessment across all academic programs.

HR provides a variety of services to PCOM employees, including:

- » Recruiting and filling vacant positions with the most qualified individuals available;

- » Providing equal opportunity to all applicants and employees regardless of age, race, color, gender, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, religion, creed, disability or marital status;
- » Increasing retention of quality employees by offering a competitive compensation and benefits program;
- » Developing and communicating policies and procedures that contribute to the overall PCOM mission;
- » Providing internal training programs that will enhance the effectiveness of employees;
- » Providing wellness and fitness programs that support healthy lifestyles;
- » Creating an environment of mutual respect and being available for problem-solving.

TALENT ACQUISITION

New Position Process

PCOM has a well-documented process for requesting new positions, which coincides with the annual budget process. Requesting departments submit a form to HR with all the pertinent details of the new position (EI II.6). This information is then reviewed by the Chief Human Resources Officer, any questions or concerns are resolved, and a proposed salary is assigned to the position before being forwarded to Finance for inclusion in the budget. Approval by the Chief Human Resources Officer does not, however, guarantee inclusion in the final budget. The cabinet reviews multiple drafts of the budget, and where new proposed positions are not aligned with the strategic plan, those positions are removed.

Talent Recruitment

Attracting the best and brightest faculty and staff is a continuous process of networking and building relationships. In 2020, HR formed an internal team specifically focused on talent acquisition. In addition to identifying, acquiring, assessing, and hiring skilled individuals, the team is focused on strategic initiatives such as employer branding, succession planning, diversifying faculty and staff, and developing a robust pipeline of talent. Also in 2020, PCOM launched Cornerstone, a new talent management system that provides a holistic view of the talent acquisition process, including recruiting and onboarding. This system has been instrumental in helping the talent acquisition team to streamline processes, more effectively onboard employees, and promote a culture of continuous training and opportunities for professional development.

Total Compensation

As the largest expense item in the annual budget,

salaries and benefits are continuously reviewed to make certain that they are fair, equitable, and in line with the market. In 2018, PCOM overhauled its staff compensation and classification system in order to improve transparency, consistency, and competitiveness in compensation, resulting in salary bands with a minimum, midpoint, and maximum range (EI VI.7). Now, staff jobs are mapped to the salary grades, with compensation benchmarked against the median of various markets, depending on the job, according to PCOM's classification structure. An analysis by Willis Towers Watson in 2018 found that PCOM's rate of compensation for staff salaries is approximately 103% of the median, which buttresses the institution's ability to attract and retain the best staff. Another key benchmark is data from the Colleges and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR), which indicate that PCOM's base pay supports the recruitment and retention of qualified staff.

Although delayed several times by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, PCOM launched a merit-based bonus program for staff in 2022. All staff were required to upload documentation into the Saba performance management system that supported their performance of individual goals and institution-wide competencies. Supervisors then completed online performance evaluations within the Saba system, using the documentation as a basis for the performance rating. Any evaluation that rated an employee as "Highly Effective" or "Exceptional," which entitled the employee to a bonus, was reviewed by HR to verify sufficient documentation and the supervisor's appropriate use of the rating system.

Initially, 150 staff were rated as "Highly Effective," and 50 staff were rated as "Exceptional." From its review, HR requested that the supervisor provide further documentation to support the rating, counseled the supervisor about what constituted performance above an "Effective" rating, and/or accepted the evaluation as presented. This led to a final result of 120 staff being rated as "Highly Effective" and 37 staff being rated as "Exceptional." Each individual rated as "Highly Effective" received a bonus equal to 2.5% of their salary; anyone rated as "Exceptional" received a 5% bonus. This system allowed PCOM to budget appropriately while rewarding its very best staff.

To further the impact of salary grades, PCOM embarked on an initiative in 2022 to review and restructure staff job descriptions. Currently, an administrative assistant in the osteopathic medicine program could have a very different job description—and salary—than an administrative assistant in the finance department, despite doing the same work. This project will allow

staff positions to map more closely and evenly with the salary grades, providing greater consistency across departments and campus locations.

Faculty pay is benchmarked on an annual basis against the 50th percentile of American Association of University Professors (AAUP) data, which also indicates that PCOM's base pay supports the recruitment and retention of qualified faculty.

Health, retirement, tuition reimbursement, and other benefits are reviewed against benchmarks on an annual basis. PCOM relies upon its benefits broker, Trion Group, for benchmarking; Trion, in turn, sources information from Mercer, CUPA-HR 2022 Higher Education Employee Retention Survey, and Marsh. In the spring of 2022, PCOM conducted an employee engagement survey as a follow-up from surveys conducted in 2018 and 2015. The results of the 2022 survey demonstrated that 84% of employees are satisfied with the current benefits, which is a three percent increase from 2018.

Internal Training Programs

HR offers a variety of opportunities for employee growth, including leadership courses, customized workshops, structured mentorship opportunities, and performance consulting. Employees are encouraged to participate in classes that meet their personal and professional development needs.

Examples of offerings in 2022 - 2023 include the following:

- » Aspiring Leadership Development: virtual training geared to those not yet in leadership positions
- » Leadership Course for New Supervisors (First Line Essentials): training geared toward first-time managers of people who have been at PCOM for at least one to two years with key learning outcomes:
 - Deliver results through the people who report to them
 - Invest more effort in high-value activities
 - Coach team members to higher levels of performance
 - Build the team's capability to drive business results through effective goal setting and delegation
 - Maximize the team member's willingness to provide discretionary effort
- » Skillful Conversations: session to help attendees build clarity and accuracy in communicating by fostering careful listening and speaking in order to ensure full understanding

Forty-five percent of PCOM employees participated in an internal training program in 2022, which is a 15% increase from the previous year.

Employee Wellness Initiative

PCOM is dedicated to providing its employees with practical tools and techniques to enhance overall wellness and quality of life. Just as the institution trains healthcare professionals to practice a whole person approach in caring for patients, HR practices a whole person approach to employee wellness—an approach that recognizes the importance of physical, mental, and emotional fitness in carrying out PCOM's mission. This approach yielded 54% of PCOM employees having utilized some form of wellness services, including the following:

- » Wellness coaches
- » Health advocate
- » On-campus seminars, classes, and other wellness events
- » Carebridge employee assistance program

PCOM employees at all campus locations have access to recreation and fitness centers and activities, whether on campus or as provided by a local partner.

Outcomes Effectiveness

HR reviews its internal efficiency metrics on a periodic basis to determine how they impact the institution's budget. With the implementation of Cornerstone, HR now has the ability to extract data for the metrics below:

- » HR expenditures versus total institutional expenses
- » Average time to fill open staff positions
- » Cost per new hire
- » Return on investment for training

PCOM provides myriad benefits, opportunities, and support for its nearly 700 employees. Continuous investment in HR has resulted in a productive and satisfied workforce.

Information Technology Services

(Criteria 1, 4, 6, 8)

ITS is tightly integrated into the fabric of the institution, providing services to varied groups of constituents – staff, faculty, students, departments, administrators, and other stakeholders. These constituents carry out the day-to-day operations of the institution, providing a focus on long-term goals and assessments of PCOM's success. Each of these groups has different expectations of ITS. To ensure long-term success in support of their work, PCOM ITS focuses on purposeful priorities and seeks to employ technology where it will have the greatest impact. PCOM, like many other organizations, often confronts difficult choices about how best to execute work while adopting a holistic approach to maximize resources.

ITS is guided by 5 key principles:

- » Focus on supporting students, faculty, and staff operating in a hybrid work and learning environment.
- » Support and guide institutional constituents to thoughtfully select tools and use data with the intention of providing actionable insight and intelligence.
- » Partner with administrative and academic colleagues to identify and implement solutions that will drive organizational efficiency and effectiveness.
- » Continue to advance PCOM's analytical and reporting capabilities to drive improvements in student engagement and outcomes.
- » Embed security in all aspects of information technology, constantly striving to improve the institution's security posture.

The ITS department utilizes an evergreen three-year strategic planning model, i.e., the department will always be in year one of the three-year plan, with a two-year forward look (EI VI.6). This approach allows ITS to set annual goals, be agile and responsive, and report annually on progress, while maintaining the plan's relevance with current internal and external influences.

When evaluating and setting ITS department goals, the following criteria are used:

- » Improve service delivery
- » Improve efficiency and control
- » Improve customer satisfaction rates and communication
- » Improve financial health and organizational effectiveness
- » Enrich student and faculty experience
- » Implement business intelligence capability
- » Commit to diversity, equity, and inclusion (EI III.8).

The ITS infrastructure is critical to students, staff, and faculty to successfully access the system resources they need on a daily basis. Whether those resources are on premise or off-premise, the user experience should be seamless. ITS infrastructure assessments are conducted annually to ensure the technology that supports students, staff, and faculty is up-to-date. Lecture halls, classrooms, and labs are routinely upgraded to allow for the best teaching and learning experience. Upgrades to address hybrid teaching and flexible learning have been a priority the last two years.

The ITS department has a strong partnership with the Information Security department to implement best practices in cybersecurity. All systems are hardened and the principle of least privilege is used when granting access to resources. A Security Operations Center monitors system logs and alerts when necessary.

Cybersecurity vulnerability scans (quarterly) and penetration tests (annually) are routinely conducted. These assessments are reviewed and appropriate measures are taken to address any issues. Overall, the partnership has significantly improved PCOM's cybersecurity posture without compromising access to critical resources on which students, faculty, and staff depend.

At the very beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, PCOM was able to shift from on-ground, in-person educational experiences to online delivery of content in approximately 48 hours. In the ensuing weeks, ITS worked to provide equipment, information security, support, and training to the entire campus community to maintain the then existing levels of productivity.

Such efforts included:

- » Work from Home
 - Equipment
 - + PCOM laptops
 - + Headsets
 - + Printers
 - + Docking stations
 - + Monitors
 - + Webcams
 - Remote Access
 - + Citrix Cloud deployment
 - + Cisco AnyConnect VPN
 - Communication
 - + Softphones
 - + Google Meet and Google Chat
 - + Online PCOM Directory
- » IT Security
 - Forcepoint (web content filtering)
 - Absolute (endpoint security)
 - Device hardening
 - MDM (Mobile Device Management)
 - Duo (2 factor authentication)
- » Virtual Classes
 - Blackboard Collaborate Ultra
 - Google Meet
 - Zoom
- » Support and Training
 - Open Houses at all three locations
 - + Setup and test Citrix Cloud access
 - Information Sessions
 - + New technologies that are being deployed

- Training documentation
 - + Located on myPCOM
- Kaseya
 - + Ticketing system
 - + Remote access support
 - + Asset inventory
 - + Remote software deployment

Planning and institutional improvement for information technology is incredibly complex. Ensuring students, staff, and faculty have access to all the resources they need and implementing the appropriate cybersecurity measures is paramount. Also, building IT infrastructure that can scale on demand and is flexible enough to accommodate a multitude of teaching and learning models is key. ITS serves as a strategic partner and focuses on creating a roadmap that is in alignment with and supportive of PCOM's strategic plan.

Facilities

(Criteria 1, 4, 6, 8, ROA 11)

PCOM operates at three distinct locations: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (main campus); Suwanee, Georgia (branch campus known as PCOM Georgia); and Moultrie, Georgia (additional location known as PCOM South Georgia). The institution also operates three healthcare centers: one located on the Philadelphia campus, one in North Philadelphia, and the final location in West Philadelphia (EI VI.9). Given the depth and breadth of the geography and services offered at the institution's various locations, i.e., both educational and direct patient care, the facilities issues are complex and ongoing. The Plant Operations department (POps) is responsible for managing the physical facilities in support of all academic and non-academic operations, and it has significant input in the development of a campus master plan, any current and future capital projects, and space planning in support of PCOM's overall strategic plan.

Investment in facilities and physical infrastructure is substantial and continuous, with funding originating from both operating and capital budgets. On an ongoing basis, POps assesses facility conditions based on a wide range of criteria, including preventive maintenance and an effective program of corrective maintenance and repairs, and recognizing in all cases that safety is paramount. Realizing that even a well-maintained building system and its components have finite life cycles, PCOM also implements a program of

capital renewal, which is necessary to replace systems/components at the end of their useful lives. Annually, POps determines what maintenance and renewal projects are most critical and how much should be budgeted for the following fiscal year; this analysis is then reflected in the institutional capital budget and the POps operating budget.

A critical facilities issue with which most institutions must grapple is deferred maintenance. Deferred maintenance has been defined by Rush as "renewal, replacement, and maintenance projects that have been postponed because of perceived low priority status then those completed by available funding" (p. 97).¹ Gager further contends that "a policy of continued deferred maintenance results in higher costs, higher failure rates, and in some cases, health and safety problems" (p. 1).² As a result of POps' preventive, corrective, and renewal approaches to maintenance, PCOM has no deferred maintenance expenses, and any potential safety concerns, such as ventilation in the anatomy labs, are addressed immediately. PCOM's budget over the last few years is a key indicator of preservation, adaptation, and renewal of physical plant assets (EI VI.10).

INFRASTRUCTURE AND EQUIPMENT

Between fiscal years 2018 and 2022, PCOM invested approximately \$132 million in infrastructure and equipment, including new construction, renovations, and energy management/sustainability.

- » PCOM, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
 - Meta Christy House: renovation of former senior living facility into apartment complex
 - Family Medicine at PCOM: renovation and expansion of patient healthcare center
 - Replacement of heating, air conditioning, and ventilation systems
 - LED lighting retrofit projects
 - Building Automation System (BAS) renewal and upgrades
- » PCOM Georgia, Suwanee, Georgia
 - New addition to Peachtree building for the Department of Physical Therapy
 - Replacement of heating, air conditioning, and ventilation systems
 - LED lighting retrofit projects
 - BAS renewal and upgrades

1 Rush, S.C. (1991). *Managing the Facilities Portfolio: A Practical Approach to Institutional Facility Renewal and Deferred Maintenance*. Washington, DC: NACUBO.

2 Gager, A. (2017, October 20). *Paying the price for deferred maintenance*. FacilitiesNet. <https://www.facilitiesnet.com/maintenanceoperations/article/Paying-the-Price-for-Deferred-Maintenance--17407>

- » PCOM South Georgia, Moultrie, Georgia
 - Additional location, including newly-constructed 75,000 square foot building

ENERGY MANAGEMENT/SUSTAINABILITY

The POPS department has pursued energy management and sustainability initiatives, recognizing that energy efficiency is critical to address issues associated with climate change.

These efforts are driven to achieve three objectives:

- » Reducing raw energy consumption
- » Lower unit cost of purchased energy
- » Minimize environmental footprint

Highlights of these initiatives include the following:

- » Maximize the use of BAS to monitor and control HVAC and lighting to yield smart energy consumption at all campus locations
- » Energy conservation, highly efficient technology programs, design standards, and renewable technologies
- » Utility negotiations/monitoring to assure proper rates/charges
- » Capitalize on opportunities in the electric wholesale market to receive revenues if load is reduced
- » Pursuing complete purchase of energy/development of supply portfolios
- » Shift fuel consumption towards natural gas, which is domestic, plentiful, and has the lowest environmental impact of all fossil fuels.

With prudent management and a proactive approach, the POPS department at PCOM provides clear assessments for facilities expenditures and constantly works to reduce those expenses.

Institutional and Unit-Level Assessments

(Criteria 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, ROA 10)

INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

SP 2025 provides the blueprint for institutional priorities. To make certain that activities included in the plan achieve the stated outcomes, there are several plan assessments that occur during the fiscal year.

Tactics

Tactics for the upcoming fiscal year are identified and discussed during a meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee. These action items are then documented in the online platform, and status indicators (on track, caution, below plan, completed) are reviewed and

updated on a monthly basis. The online platform generates a monthly report of tactics progress, a link to which is posted on the PCOM intranet for all members of the PCOM community to view. These monthly updates ensure that individual tactic owners are steadily making progress throughout the year. Upon the conclusion of a fiscal year, an executive summary is created to document highlighted tactics that were completed during the year. All accompanying reports and other documentation are forwarded to cabinet, and the summary is shared with the board of trustees.

Metrics

The plan metrics were set during the initial planning period and have been adjusted only when a situation required it. For example, the DO board examination was converted from a scored exam to a pass/fail exam, thus the metric tracking student success needed to be adjusted. On an annual basis, updated data are gathered and recorded in the online platform, and a metrics dashboard is exported and shared with the cabinet and the board of trustees. The cabinet reviews the metrics in detail to determine what efforts, if any, need to be adjusted to keep progress on the proper track (EI I.5, EI I.6).

Strategies

In December 2022, the cabinet held several sessions during which they updated the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) faced by the institution from the original SWOT completed in 2019. Cabinet members identified eight critical issues that, while they are captured in the PCOM 2025 plan, needed to be examined more closely and critically. From those eight issues, the list was narrowed to the top three, which was shared with the ELT. A strategic planning retreat was held in January 2023 to discuss these issues and edit, if appropriate, any of the strategic plan strategies (EI VI.11).

UNIT-LEVEL ASSESSMENTS

The assessment process followed by academic and administrative units varies greatly from unit to unit. A significant number of PCOM's academic programs, as shown in Table 6.1, are accredited by program-specific accreditors, which have definitive assessment requirements (EI VI.12).

TABLE 6.1: PROGRAMS AND PROGRAM-SPECIFIC ACCREDITATION

Program	Accrediting Agency
Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine	Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation of the American Osteopathic Association
Doctor of Pharmacy	Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education
Doctor of Physical Therapy	Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education
Clinical Psychology Doctorate (PsyD)	American Psychological Association
Physician Assistant Studies (MS)	Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant
Applied Behavioral Analysis (MS)	Association for Behavior Analysis International
School Psychology (EdS)	National Association of School Psychologists
School Psychology (PsyD)	American Psychological Association

Those programs that are not subject to specialty accreditation follow an assessment plan that aligns with generally accepted best practices.

Because there are no accreditation concerns for administrative areas, each unit follows its own process. As an example, Institutional Advancement engages in multiple assessments of its departmental strategic plan throughout the fiscal year (EI VI.4). Strategies are reviewed on an annual basis to confirm that they are still aligned with the institutional strategic plan and the mission and vision of the department. Plan metrics are tracked and reviewed on a quarterly basis, which identifies whether any mid-course corrections are necessary.

Standard VII – Governance, Leadership, and Administration



The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with governmental, corporate, religious, educational systems, or other unaccredited organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.

Education is PCOM's primary purpose, and its governing structure is instrumental in promoting its academic and educational mission. The institution and its foundation are governed by boards of trustees, which have overall legal and fiduciary responsibility for the institution. PCOM's administration is composed of the president, provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, chief administrators, deans, and department chairs. All are firmly committed to ensuring a top-quality educational experience for PCOM students.

Shared Governance

(Criterion 1, ROA 12)

PCOM is committed to shared governance. Among those contributing to the shared governance of the institution are the board, the faculty, and the student body:

- » PCOM Board of Trustees (PCOM Board): The PCOM Board is currently composed of 18 members, including the president and the provost. The board is chaired by Thomas J. Gravina.
- » PCOM Foundation Board of Trustees (Foundation Board): The Foundation Board largely mirrors that of the PCOM Board; the primary exception is in the composition of the officers.
- » Administration: PCOM's administration is headed by its president who is supported by 11 chief administrators, one of whom is the provost and senior vice president for academic affairs. Six deans report to the provost, as well as other academic support units.
- » Faculty: Members of the faculty have a role in the development, implementation, and management of educational policy and curriculum through membership in their own program faculty and through the Faculty Senate. This body includes all professors, associate professors, assistant professors, and instructors who are full-time employees of one of the institution's degree granting programs. (See Table 3.5 for Full-time Faculty, p. 28).
- » Student Government Association (SGA): The SGA is the primary elected body representing the students of PCOM whose membership and function are described in its governing documents (EI IV.19). The SGA representatives of each campus location present reports at board meetings and provide input to the president and the provost.

Board of Trustees

(Criterion 2, ROA 12, 13)

The PCOM Board has one voting member, the Foundation Board, as described in the PCOM Bylaws Article VI, Section 1 and Article VIII, Section 1 (EI VII.1). The PCOM Board is responsible for the institution's governance and is integral to determining how the institution meets challenges and opportunities. Trustees play a key role in overseeing fiscal, academic, and physical operations, and they rely on the PCOM president and staff to manage the day-to-day operations of the institution. The board also provides leadership for PCOM's strategic initiatives to enhance the academic and student life on its campuses.

A board's function is to govern, not manage, the affairs of the institution, through a process that recognizes the importance of transparent and direct communication with the institution's officers and administration. The PCOM Board (EI VII.2) consists of a number of committees that provide oversight of the following functional areas:

- » Executive Committee: Members of the Executive Committee (EC) include the chair and vice chairs of the board, chair of the Finance Committee, and the president. Within certain limitations, the EC can act on behalf of the board between meetings.
- » Foundation Committee: Members oversee funds received by gifts, devise, and bequests transferred to the institution, as well as management and investment of the endowment.
- » Finance Committee: Members oversee the fiscal integrity of the institution.
- » Compensation Committee: Members oversee all executive compensation, including the president and cabinet.
- » Board Effectiveness and Governance Committee: On-going functioning of the board and management of the board member nominating process is the responsibility of the Effectiveness and Governance Committee.
- » Student and Academic Affairs Committee: The committee oversees the academic mission and strategic academic priorities.
- » Audit Committee: The Audit Committee is in charge of financial reporting and the audit processes.

- » Development Committee: Members provide support and advance the institution's fundraising and alumni engagement strategies.

To ensure that board members and officers maintain their fiduciary responsibilities to the institution, and ensure that no conflicts of interest exist within this group of individuals, the chair requires completion of the Annual Questionnaire and Disclosure Form: Trustees, Officers, and Key Employees each fiscal year (EI II.14). This questionnaire requests information related to personal and family business transactions and relationships with PCOM, the Foundation, and any related entities. Over the past two years, there has been a 100% submission rate of this form by all board members, officers, and key employees.

The President

(Criterion 3, ROA 12)

DUTIES

According to the PCOM bylaws, the president is the chief executive officer of the institution and supervises and controls all business and affairs of the institution, its locations, academic programs, affiliated residencies, continuing education programs, and healthcare centers. The president also has operational oversight of financial, administrative, and academic leadership reports (EI VII.3). The president is elected by and subject to the policies and oversight of the board, providing effective and visionary leadership for the institution.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

The board regularly evaluates the performance of the president, and the evaluation is intended to contribute to continuous improvement of the work of the president and to the effectiveness of the institution's methods of governance and decision-making. The president at PCOM is evaluated annually by the Compensation Committee of the board, which assesses the effectiveness of his governance, leadership, and administration.

PCOM PRESIDENT

Jay S. Feldstein, DO '81, is PCOM's eighth president and chief executive officer. He earned his bachelor's degree from Pennsylvania State University and his doctor of osteopathic medicine degree from PCOM. He completed his residency in emergency medicine at the Medical Center of Delaware and his internship at John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital (now Jefferson Stratford Hospital) in Stratford, New Jersey. He is board certified in emergency medicine and occupational medicine and is a fellow of the American College of Preventive Medicine (EI VII.4). Prior to joining PCOM, Dr. Feldstein served as

president, Northern Division, Pennsylvania Managed Care Plans, at AmeriHealth Caritas Family of Companies.

The Administration

(Criterion 4, ROA 12)

PCOM's president is supported by an expert cadre of individuals in the cabinet, including six chief administrators who report directly to him, as well as additional leaders on both the academic and administrative sides (Figure 1). As their biographies indicate, these individuals have the qualifications and the experience to fulfill their roles effectively (EI VII.4). All members of cabinet have served for at least seven years. A larger leadership team, the ELT, joins the cabinet's biweekly meetings to discuss issues and concerns that cross disciplines.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Since 2019, the administration has spearheaded a number of technology initiatives resulting in digital transformation to strengthen how the institution is led. Outcomes of these initiatives, led primarily by ITS, have included:

- » Creation of a project management office (PMO) to support the successful implementation of new technologies across the institution. Recently, PMO partnered with Admissions to implement a system called Slate, which manages relationships with student applicants and facilitates application management and review. The PMO continues to collaborate with departments across the entire institution, supporting more efficient and effective project management.
- » Implementation of a data warehouse and data lake to extract, organize, and utilize data from both internal and external sources for use in reporting and analytics. Through these tools, as well as dashboards for data visualization, PCOM is well positioned to make data-informed decisions. Examples of these are seen in EI I.6 and V.4.
- » Launch of an initiative to review, identify, and implement a more modern Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system—one that encourages technological innovation while supporting learning.
 - The purpose of this change is to increase operational efficiency and productivity across departments while enhancing the quality and ease of access to accurate and reliable data and reporting for faculty, staff, and students. The future benefits of undertaking this project include:
 - + Having an enterprise resource system that is uniformly used across the entire enterprise
 - + An ability to make better decisions, ones informed by critical data

- + Contributing to achieving operational excellence by aligning people, processes, and technology
- + Reducing the number of software platforms that have been used as “add-ons” and reallocating those budget dollars to other projects (EI III.13).

- » Senior leadership has the knowledge, skills and experience necessary for institutional success (65%);
- » Employees believe what they are told by senior leadership (62%); and
- » The institution is well-run (61%) (EI VII.6).

When compared with the 2018 results, views of senior leadership have remained consistent.

In summary, among PCOM's greatest strengths is its strong commitment to the mission of the institution and the alignment of its processes to the mission and core values. PCOM leadership has a vision for the future and methodically approaches day-to-day operations to realize its goals. The board and the president's leadership teams represent diversity in backgrounds and experience that help support the mission through a shared evidence-based governance structure. Furthermore, PCOM maintains a well-developed institutional strategic plan, demonstrated throughout this self-study, with defined outcomes metrics that are reviewed annually and drive revisions. However, and probably most importantly, the strategic plan metrics and program statistics dashboards demonstrate transparency in their approach to seeking internal and external feedback to drive improvements and support a stronger mission.

PCOM Board of Trustees, leadership, and administration recognize the needed focus and importance in diversity of its faculty, the ever changing technology landscape, and the importance of timely communications. While there has been an increase in the appointment of deans and midlevel management who represent a diversity of perspectives and insights, PCOM is continuing its focus on recruitment of diverse faculty to better reflect its increasingly diverse student body and the communities they serve. On the technology front, PCOM must constantly assess its capacity to provide greater efficiencies, rapid information accessibility, and ever-changing ways of communication because that is what is being demanded by faculty, staff, and its students. Most importantly, PCOM must also continue to assess and improve lines of communication, from the board down to students, and from students up to the governing bodies.

Effectiveness of Governance, Leadership, and Administration

(Criterion 5)

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

An assessment of the board of trustees is completed annually by the Board Effectiveness Committee (Committee). The Committee uses the Statement of Commitment and Responsibilities (Statement) as set forth in the bylaws to review incumbent trustees who are eligible for re-nomination and re-election (see EI II.14, p. 2 for Annual Statement of Responsibility). The Committee applies the Statement to complete an assessment form that lists board member competencies to guide their evaluation. Further, each board member is asked to complete an annual survey to provide feedback, suggestions, and an overall assessment of how the board is functioning (EI VII.5).

OFFICERS

At the start of the year, the president works collaboratively with each cabinet member to define individual goals for the upcoming year. Information gathered during the annual performance evaluation process is shared with the Compensation Committee of the board.

ADMINISTRATION IN GENERAL

Starting in 2018, the administration enlisted the support of ModernThink to generate a campus climate survey and obtain data on employee and student experiences across the institution. The survey was repeated in April 2022 to monitor feedback and gauge the level of satisfaction following changes implemented as a result of the 2018 survey (EI I.4 and EI III.22). The 2022 survey of employees (N = 354, 55% response rate) demonstrated that a majority of faculty and staff agreed that:

Conclusion



In the fall of 2021, the president and the provost convened ten individuals to lead the institutional self-study process in preparation for the ten-year accreditation visit from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). These individuals formed the Steering Committee and attended the MSCHE Self-Study Institute. Each member of the Steering Committee then served as a chair or co-chair of a working group to review and critically assess the MSCHE standards. Working Groups included faculty, staff, and students. The groups collected evidence in the form of policies, procedures, and practices that demonstrated

and supported PCOM's compliance with the MSCHE standards and Requirements of Affiliation.

Throughout the Self-Study report is the evidence and discussion that PCOM meets the Requirements of Affiliation (ROA) and demonstration of its commitment to the standards. Not all of the evidence collected and reviewed is shown in the report due to the volume; more evidence is available upon request. Examples of evidence collected and reviewed supporting PCOM's compliance with the ROAs are shown here:

Requirement of Affiliation	Supported by Evidence	Evidence
ROA 1	Standard III	PCOM Articles of Incorporation ROA 1 – Certificate of Approval PCOM Georgia 2023-2024 ROA 1 – Certificate of Approval PCOM South Georgia 2023-2024 EI III.4 – PCOM Degree of Certificate Programs https://www.pcom.edu/disclosures/
ROA 2	Standards II, III, VI	EI III.4 – PCOM Degree and Certificate Programs EI VI.1 – 2022 Fitch Ratings EI VI.2 – PCOM Consolidated Financial Statement 2022 and 2021 ROA 2 ROA 10 – IPEDS Summary Data and Feedback https://www.pcom.edu/program-statistics/
ROA 3	Not Applicable	
ROA 4	Verification of Compliance Review	ROA 4 ROA 5 – MSCHE Statement of Accreditation 2014-2024 ROA 4 – MSCHE Mid-Point Peer Review with No Further Actions Required
ROA 5	Verification of Compliance Review	ROA 4 ROA 5 – MSCHE Statement of Accreditation 2014-2024 ROA 4 – MSCHE Mid-Point Peer Review with No Further Actions Required ROA 5 – U.S. Department of Education Eligibility and Certification Approval https://www.pcom.edu/disclosures/
ROA 6	Verification of Compliance Review	ROA 4 ROA 5 – MSCHE Statement of Accreditation 2014-2024 ROA 4 – MSCHE Mid-Point Peer Review with No Further Actions Required https://www.pcom.edu/accreditation/documents/statement-of-accreditation-pcom.pdf
ROA 7	Standards I, II, IV, V, VI	EI I.1 – PCOM Mission Statements EI I.2 – BOT Approval of Mission Statements 2022 EI II.4 – PCOM Awards for Communications EI I.5 – PCOM Strategic Plan 2025

ROA 8	Standards I, IV, V	EI I.5 – PCOM Strategic Plan 2025 EI I.6 – Strategic Plan Metrics Dashboard EI III.31 – Clinical Clerkship Site Evaluation Form EI III.35 – Physician Assistant Studies Program End-of-Term Analysis EI V.3 – Outcomes and Data Source List Examples EI V.6 – Institutional Research Project List
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PCOM has identified key strengths and important opportunities for continued improvement during this Self-Study. Among PCOM's greatest strengths, woven throughout this Self-Study, is its strong commitment to

the mission of the institution and the alignment of its processes to the mission and core values. This strength is the driving force, and the beneficiary, of the strategic planning process. PCOM has leadership with the vision to

plan for the future and to methodically approach day-to-day operations to realize its goals. The institution provides certificate and degree programs that address healthcare needs through education, clinical experience, and continuous professional development.

The Self-Study also identified opportunities where PCOM could enhance its mission and provided 16 recommendations. The institution has already begun to act on many of these listed. These recommendations are listed by standard:

STANDARD I

1. The PCOM mission is integrated throughout its various educational programs and student support activities. Strengthening the process that captures internal and external extracurricular activities of students, as well as community service collaborations between students and departments, will provide further evidence of mission-oriented outcomes and demonstrate the impact of PCOM's mission.

STANDARD II

1. Develop an institution-wide faculty performance review process that documents and links faculty activities of teaching, research and scholarly activity, and research outcomes with the mission of the institution and program.

STANDARD III

1. Develop an institution-wide annual performance review process for faculty.
2. Based on the discovery that curricular maps are not of equal quality across various programs, take steps to bring all curricular maps to the same standard and make them easily available to all.
3. Standardize an institution-wide procedure to provide direction and structure for course directors and program chairs/deans as they collect feedback from students.

STANDARD IV

1. Review and revise the process of allocating funds from the Office of Student Affairs for student support activities to maximize participation and outreach consistent with PCOM and program missions.
2. Improve tracking of interventions and outcomes for the Behavioral Intervention Team.
3. Utilize the Mental Health Task Force outcomes to identify initiatives that address student mental health and support wellness activities that can be tracked and evaluated across the three campus locations.

STANDARD V

1. Expand the role of the Graduate Program Curriculum Committee to review assessment procedures being utilized within programs.
2. Identify within programs early warning indicators of students at risk for attrition or leaves of absence.

STANDARD VI

1. Encourage more individual administrative and programmatic units to create plans that advance their work in an intentional way that is aligned with the institution's strategic plan.
2. Identify non-tuition-based revenue streams to maintain the financial health of the institution in the future, such as leases, rental fees, and partnerships.
3. Develop a comprehensive succession plan that preserves institutional memory to provide a seamless transition in knowledge and leadership.

STANDARD VII

1. Recruit a diverse faculty to better reflect PCOM's increasingly diverse student body and the communities they serve.
2. Through the selection and implementation process of a new enterprise resource planning system, strengthen the use of technology to provide greater efficiencies, rapid information accessibility, and improved platforms of communication.
3. Enhance the lines of communication between and among the board of trustees, senior administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Steering Committee and Working Groups



Steering Committee

- » **Linda Adkison**, Steering Committee Chair, Working Group I Chair, Associate Provost, Key Representative, Accreditation Liaison Officer
- » **R. Bryan Ginn**, Working Group II Co-Chair, Chief Campus Officer, PCOM Georgia
- » **Erik Langenau** Working Group II Chair, Chief Academic Technology Officer; Director for the Center for Teaching Support & Professional Development; Professor of Pediatrics
- » **Joanne Jones**, Working Group IV Tri-Chair, Chief of Campus Operations
- » **Michael Lombardo**, Working Group IV Tri-Chair, Executive Director of Student Affairs
- » **Patience Mason**, Working Group IV Tri-Chair, Chief Student Affairs Officer
- » **Robert DiTomasso**, Working Group V Co-Chair, Dean and Professor, School of Professional and Applied Psychology
- » **Carrie Collins**, Working Group VI Chair, Chief Advancement and Strategic Planning Officer
- » **Samuel Matheny**, Working Group VII Co-Chair, Chief Student Services Officer, Offices of Financial Aid and Registrar
- » **Francis Jenney**, Working Group VII Co-Chair, Professor, Faculty Senate Chair (2021-2022)

Working Groups

STANDARD I

- » **Linda Adkison**, Steering Committee Chair
- » **Nicole Dillard**, Provost Office Manager
- » **Lynn Kush**, Executive Assistant to the President and CEO; Board of Trustees, Secretary
- » **Gary Freed**, Professor of Pediatrics, College of Osteopathic Medicine
- » **Jennifer Shaw**, Associate Professor, Chair of Biomedical Sciences, College of Osteopathic Medicine
- » **Eric Olsen**, Web Services Architect
- » **Michael Lee**, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, School of Pharmacy
- » **Jennifer Schaffer Leone**, Director of Communications
- » **Meghan DiRito**, Education and Outreach Librarian
- » **Lauren Ball**, Associate Professor of Family Medicine, College of Osteopathic Medicine

- » **Kelsey White**, Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine student
- » **Kristen Prijs**, Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine student

STANDARD II

- » **R. Bryan Ginn**, Chief Campus Officer, PCOM Georgia (Co-Chair)
- » **Matthew Weinberg**, Associate Professor, Medical Humanities, College of Osteopathic Medicine (Co-Chair)
- » **Mindy George-Weinstein**, Chief Research and Science Officer
- » **Alicia Hahn-Murphy**, Assistant Director of Diversity and Community Relations
- » **Isaiah Lopez**, Director of Risk Management
- » **Kristi Reed**, Associate Director, Web Strategy and Development
- » **Daniel McCunney**, Associate Director, News and Media Relations
- » **Kari Szentesy Shotwell**, Executive Director of Admissions
- » **Jeff Seiple**, Director, Anatomical Labs and Services
- » **Jeremy Dickens**, Anatomical Coordinator
- » **Kimura Leonard**, Director of Financial Aid, PCOM Georgia
- » **Karen Springer**, Director of Financial Operations
- » **Jacob Fritton-Amorose**, Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine student

STANDARD III

- » **Erik Langenau**, Chief Academic Technology Officer; Director for the Center for Teaching Support & Professional Development; Professor of Pediatrics (Chair)
- » **Sheree Aston**, Counsel to the Provost
- » **Peter Bidey**, Vice-Chair, Family Medicine; Assistant Dean, Clinical Curricular Integration; Assistant Professor of Family Medicine
- » **Hsinliang "Oliver" Chen**, Chief Library Services Officer
- » **H. William Craver**, Dean and Chief Academic Officer, College of Osteopathic Medicine, South Georgia; Professor of Surgery
- » **Denise Curran**, Division Director of Student Affairs

- » **Lori Cushing**, Coordinator, Office of Undergraduate Clinical Education, College of Osteopathic Medicine
- » **Nicole Dillard**, Provost Office Manager
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- » **Bryan Mann**, Chief of Simulation Operations
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- » **Julie Wickman**, Assistant Dean of Clinical and Experiential Affairs, Department of Pharmacy Practice; Associate Professor of Pharmacy
- » **Barbara Woods**, Associate Director of Education & Engagement, PCOM Library
- » **Kim Woody**, Clerkship Site Developer, Georgia campuses
- » **Kolson Lamb**, Doctor of Physical Therapy student
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STANDARD IV

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- » **Michael Lombardo**, Executive Director of Student Affairs (Tri-Chair)
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- » **Robert DiTomasso**, Dean and Professor, School of Professional and Applied Psychology (Co-Chair)
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- » **Tara Hixon**, Institutional Research Analyst
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- » **Ruth Maher**, Professor and Chair, Department of Physical Therapy, School of Health Sciences
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- » **Carrie Collins**, Chief Advancement and Strategic Planning Officer (Chair)
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