

## Graduate Program Quality Assurance (QA) Review: 2023-24

### Excerpted Report

#### Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine

##### Graduate Program Review

Programs: Master of Science in Rehabilitation Science; Doctor of Philosophy in Rehabilitation Science; Master of Science (Speech-Language Pathology) / Doctor of Philosophy (Rehabilitation Sciences) Combined Program; Master of Science (Physical Therapy) / Doctor of Philosophy (Rehabilitation Sciences) Combined Program.

Date of Review: March 28, 2024

Reviewers: Angela Colantonio, (Chair), University of Toronto; William (Bill) Miller (External Member), University of British Columbia; Lin Snelling (FGPS Council Member), University of Alberta.

**A note on the program responses:** The Rehabilitation Science (RS) program is administered through the Dean's office in the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine. The RS program has responded to the recommendations, and these responses and associated action plans have been reviewed and approved by the Dean's office and Faculty administration.

##### Program Strengths

Overall, the external review team identified numerous strengths of the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine's Rehabilitation Science programs. This includes very accomplished and productive faculty in terms of scholarly outputs such as peer reviewed publications and scientific presentations. The quality of the research conducted by both faculty and students is of a high calibre. Trainees can also benefit from tremendous research opportunities through the Faculty's partnerships with leading Institutes and centres.

The Rehabilitation Science doctoral stream programs have had a great track record of stable or increasing enrolment, favourable time to completion rates compared to the rest of the university, high retention rates and increased number of external awards for students. Course evaluations have excellent ratings. Surveys of students indicate overall satisfaction with the program and their supervisory experience. New innovations have been successfully introduced such as the hyflex format, Prairie Rehabilitation Science Conference in addition to an annual research day, student teaching opportunities and course material has been implemented that addresses

professional development. Employment outcomes are excellent with graduates advancing to academic roles or in public health care institutions or industry.

These programs are supported by dedicated faculty assigned to doctoral stream programs which is a strength. In addition to excellent research track records in a broad range of areas, many faculty have been awarded teaching/supervision awards. Recent faculty hires bring new expertise and methodologies as well as perspectives. The Faculty structure overall is a great strength, being the only freestanding Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine and considered one of the leading Canadian faculties in rehabilitation education and research. The calibre of the staff is also a strength. Corbett Hall provides an accessible class, lab and social spaces that from the video appear to be state of the art.

With an estimated one in three persons globally in potential need of rehabilitation in their lifetime, there is an urgent need to scale up rehabilitation science and training worldwide. There is a demand for highly trained leaders in the rehabilitation science field and therefore employment prospects for graduates internationally are excellent. The Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine, which includes its Rehabilitation Sciences training program, is in a superb position to address these challenges nationally and internationally.

It is important to note that these successes have occurred during a difficult time at the University of Alberta administratively and worldwide due to the pandemic.

Additional strengths listed throughout the report include:

- REHAB 606 should be considered a strength of the program. The development of these 'soft' or informal skills is not a requirement in most programs but these skills are essential for surviving the academic environment.
- The hyflex and distance learning is a strength of the program and enables recruitment to out-of-town, -province and -country learning.
- The joint virtual Prairie Rehabilitation Science Conference (PRSC) is a refreshing collaborative which contributes a very meaningful opportunity to consolidate learning through presenting. Having faculty to attend and adjudicate the prizes for presentations brings in multiple levels of integration given the students exposure to other faculty and faculty to be. The virtual social networking is a creative method of enhancing engagement in an academic context in a financially viable manner.

- The strength of the Neuroscience and Mental Health research is reflected by the fact that 16 tenure-track faculty members work in this domain, supported with funding from CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC, and NIH, as well as from several national and international foundations. The department has a Tier I Canada Research Chair in Spinal Cord Injury, and a Tier II Canada Research Chair in Neuroscience in Literacy. There is the Heroes in Mind Advocacy and Research Consortium (HiMARC), an internationally recognized hub for research in the areas of operational stress injuries, including post-traumatic stress disorder and moral injury, within members of the military, veterans and public safety personnel.
- Research excellence in Children's Health and Wellness is supported by 11 tenure-track faculty. Research within the Family and Disability Studies Initiative which focuses on understanding and improving participation, inclusion, sustainable care and social justice for children with disabilities and their families. With funding from CIHR and Brain Canada, there is a multi-centre clinical trial of an intervention for children with perinatal brain injury.
- Living Well with Chronic Conditions is an important area for the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine. Supported by 14 faculty members, with funding from sources including CIHR, NSERC, The Arthritis Society, Canadian Cancer Society, and AGE-WELL, among others. The faculty affirms its long record of excellence in the area of musculoskeletal health research, including a recently awarded a \$2 million CIHR Team grant to focus on delivery of services in rural communities of Alberta. Another key area of strength in this domain is focused on cancer rehabilitation.
- The Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine has a cohort of exceptional researchers and supervisors dedicated to the growth of the next generation of rehabilitation scientists. There is a cross-section of the field of rehabilitation including: audiologists, biomedical engineers, chiropractors, computer engineers, neuroscientists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, rehabilitation scientists, and speech-language pathologists.
- It was identified that the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine has a strong performance in securing Tri-Council funding, both from students and from faculty. This continues to be important and necessary for both faculty and graduate and post doc students.
- The strength and focus of the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine is an asset to the College of Health Sciences and overall a source of pride for the university. It is important that within this new administrative structure, that it continues to flourish and be a leader in rehabilitation science research and training.

## Teaching and Learning Environment

**Recommendation:** Review the required methods courses for the MSc and PhD programs for overlap and unnecessary redundancies in learning objectives/goals. In addition, prioritize the availability of advanced qualitative and quantitative courses (REHAB 604 & 605) given difficulties students report accessing qualitative methods courses in other programs. Explore opening up course admission to students outside the program to promote interdisciplinary learning.

**Rehabilitation Science Response:** We recognize the overlap in learning objectives/goals between the required Rehab Science courses (i.e., Theory and Issues in Rehabilitation Science and the MSc/PhD methodology courses). We are also aware of the challenge of finding suitable quantitative, but especially, qualitative method and analysis courses and agree that access to such courses should be a priority.

### Action Plan:

- Review learning objectives for each required Rehab Science course and assess degree of overlap, clarify where overlap is desired as a form of scaffolding curriculum.
- The program has initiated discussion with faculty regarding offering an in-house quantitative and qualitative methods courses. As an interim measure, the program will link students to a list of current methodology course offerings across the faculties within the College of Health Sciences.

**Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) Response:** GPS supports the proposed interim and long term efforts to provide students with access to qualitative methods courses. Depending on the appropriateness of course content, qualitative and quantitative methodology courses in the College of Social Sciences and Humanities (Education and Arts) could be recommended to students.

**Recommendation:** Provide students with additional support in navigating the selection of methods courses offered by other faculties at the University. Support is particularly needed for students who begin their program in the Winter semester and may be disadvantaged with fewer course offerings at the start of their program.

**Rehabilitation Science Response:** We recognize the importance of support needed to navigate the selection of methods courses offered by other faculties at the University. We are also aware course offerings may be limited in Winter Term as most of the program's required courses are offered in Fall Term.

**Action Plan:**

- The program will share a list of current methodology course offerings across the faculties within the College of Health Sciences to help supervisors and students make informed decisions regarding coursework.
- Prospective students, especially MSc students, are strongly encouraged to begin their programs in Fall Term due to course offerings. Supervisors and students are made aware of flexible coursework options (e.g., Directed Study) for Winter Term.

**Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) Response:** There is a currently available list of research methodologies courses in the Faculty of Education that contains information on qualitative and quantitative research methods courses. If appropriate for this purpose, the Faculty can provide the list to graduate supervisors and students.

**Recommendation:** Consider more flexible minimum credit requirements, particularly for the PhD program. Building in a flexible credit load at the PhD level may better enable an individualized program that best meets the students' needs. Supervisors can require students to take as many courses as needed depending on the student's learning needs and the requirements of the research undertaken.

**Rehabilitation Science Response:** The current credit requirements are driven by required coursework which in turn are designed to assist students meet the program learning outcomes. However, the program also understands the need for flexibility within a student's program, especially for the PhD program, given the diversity of research areas. The program also acknowledges the recommendation to revisit current content within our required Rehabilitation Science courses.

**Action Plan:**

- The program will review the program learning outcomes, which underpin the required coursework for the degree and inform the

minimum number of credits.

- Options for flexible or supplemental credits to assist with individualizing a student's program will be explored with faculty and students.
- Consultations with an Indigenous consultant to our faculty have been initiated regarding curricular content related to Indigenous issues, worldviews, and health equity and how approaches to teaching this material.
- Initiate a discussion with the other faculties within the College of Health Sciences regarding relevant courses offered (e.g., critical disability) via Office of Education and the potential for guest lectures or interdisciplinary team teaching.

**Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) Response:** GPS supports the faculty's consultation efforts regarding the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge systems and epistemologies and encourages the faculty to consider using the [TRC Report to Community Dashboard](#) for related initiatives, approaches, and examples on campus.

**Recommendation:** Monitor the impacts of the hyflex environment on student well-being and access to courses which may not be virtual. Consider solutions to promote the learning environment/experience addressing issues around the loss of informal 'hallway' learning, the development of peer connections/networking and the creation of a strong affiliation with the program/university.

**Rehabilitation Science Response:** We appreciate this comment and agree we will need to monitor the impacts of the hyflex environment on learning and student wellbeing. In the context of hyflex delivery, we know that it works well and is preferred by some students but not all. This comment speaks to the importance of communicating student expectations when engaging in coursework with flexible delivery, as well as ensuring the program initiates and/or maintains opportunities for students to connect with their peers, faculty, and program.

**Action Plan:**

- To facilitate monitoring of the student experience and tracking of program-related issues as they arise, the program will explore the creation and administration of a survey at set time points within the program (e.g., end of Year 1 or after completion of coursework, after completing candidacy). The survey will be an opportunity for the student to provide anonymous feedback that

we may respond to with regard to informal learning and development of peer connections given the current opportunities and events and barriers to participation.

- The program intends to maintain the current graduate student events sponsored by the faculty (holiday party) and the Rehab Research Centre (monthly journal club). With existing opportunities, we will explore the possibility of joint events with faculty members.
- The program will explore partnership with the faculty's graduate student groups regarding ideas on activities or events to support the Rehab Science students' sense of connection and networking opportunities

**Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) Response:** GPS supports the idea of conducting surveys to gain insight into the connection and networking challenges and opportunities for hyflex learners. Digital networking and connection opportunities such as virtual hangout and virtual café events could provide networking and professional development opportunities.

**Recommendation:** Consider including a mandatory minimum of one presentation throughout the program of study at the virtual Prairie Rehabilitation Science Conference (PRSC) to promote collaboration and provide presentation experience.

**Rehabilitation Science Response:** Prior to this QA review, the Rehabilitation Science Graduate Program Committee (RSGPC) discussed the idea of making it mandatory for Rehab Science students to present at the annual Rehab Research Day. Doing so would be consistent with assisting students to meet the program learning outcomes. The Prairie Collaborative Research Conference (PCRC) is another excellent opportunity for students to further develop their presentation skills and to collaborate.

**Action Plan:**

- The RSGPC will reconsider implementing a requirement for the Rehab Science students to present at either Rehab Research Day, PCRC, or both as part of their program, given the reviewers' recommendation.

**Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) Response:** Students' participation in the two events is a great idea that provides them with multiple opportunities to share their ideas and research.

### Student Experience

**Recommendation:** EDI and decolonization were identified as aspects that need greater emphasis in both formal (e.g., coursework) and informal learning. Enhance the curriculum by working closely with the Indigenous Strategic Officer, faculty Indigenous Officer, and Treaty 8 First Nations partners to increase formal (course-work) and informal learning from and about First Nations with respect to rehabilitation. Students also commented that access to a greater variety of courses in topics such as critical disability would be beneficial.

**Rehabilitation Science Response:** The Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine, including the Rehabilitation Science program, is committed to embedding EDI and decolonization in all aspects of our teaching, research, and service activities. We agree with the recommendations put forth by the reviewers with regard to an increased emphasis on EDI and decolonization within formal and informal learning. However, to authentically take action, this recommendation will require support and time for our faculty, acknowledging and meeting where each individual is with their EDI and decolonization learning journey. We also understand the students' request for a greater variety of courses in topics aligned with students' varied interests within the Rehab Science program.

### Action Plan:

- The program, as part of the Faculty's collective efforts, will continue to nurture relationships between the Indigenous Strategic Officer in the College of Health Sciences and the Director of Education in Treaty 8, as a foundation to our collaborative work in curriculum enhancement.
- The Faculty is actively working towards establishing an Indigenous Advisory Council to counsel and provide advice on strategic Indigenous initiatives, including those related to teaching and learning within the programs. In the interim, the program will continue to consult with the faculty's Indigenous consultant as we work to implement and embed topics related to First Nations and rehabilitation into the curriculum.
- The program will consider implementing completion of the Indigenous Canada MOOC or equivalent as a requirement, which will align with the practices of the three professional programs within the Faculty.

- Opportunities for developing and engaging in interdisciplinary graduate coursework are a priority at the College level. In the interim, students will be linked to a list of potential courses of relevance and interest to rehabilitation offered within the College of Health Sciences and across campus.

**Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) Response:** GPS supports the proposed action plan and in particular, the introduction of a mandatory course for all graduate students to learn about Indigenization and decolonization. GPS encourages the faculty to consider the following scholarship opportunities to recruit Indigenous students:

The following GPS-administered scholarships could be used to recruit for further diversification of the graduate student body, including, Indigenous students, Black students, international students, and members of other underrepresented communities:

- Graduate Student Engagement Scholarship for Black, African-Canadian, African-American, or Afro-Caribbean or Afro-Latino heritage
- Alberta Graduate Excellence Scholarship (AGES)
- Alberta Graduate Excellence Scholarship (AGES) Indigenous (both Canadians and international students)
- Indigenous Graduate Award in Research

The faculty can also benefit from engaging with the [Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement](#) initiative and contact person and the [Indigenous Graduate Students Association](#) to enhance Indigenous recruitment activities.

As noted above, the faculty may consult the [TRC Report to Community Dashboard](#) for existing courses, educational programs and initiatives.

**Recommendation:** Prioritize funding for graduate students, including guaranteed funding packages and student support in grant applications. We advise that graduate student funding be an advancement priority for the University, and scholarship writing support (beyond GPS) is encouraged to continue to increase external funding.

**Rehabilitation Science Response:** The program agrees with the recommendation to prioritize funding for graduate students. The program is committed to implementing the principles of PhD Minimum Guaranteed Funding (MGF) beginning Fall 2025.

**Action Plan:**

- Implement PhD MGF beginning Fall 2025 by utilizing and coordinating different sources of funding including the faculty, supervisor, department graduate teaching and research opportunities, funding from the university through GPS, and in the future, funding for graduate studies via the institutional budget.
- Students will be advised to access GPS resources with award and grant writing at orientation and at times throughout the year corresponding with applications to major award competitions, such as Tri-Council.
- Continue with offering a session within REHAB 603 (Seminars in Rehabilitation Science) on sources of research funding support and applying for awards.
- Explore opportunities for peer-support and peer-led award writing sessions through the Rehabilitation Research Centre.
- Explore the establishment of an in-house library of successful award applications through the Rehabilitation Research Centre.

**Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) Response:** GPS works closely in partnership with the faculty to support the implementation of the minimum Guaranteed funding initiative beginning Fall 2025. This support includes bridge funding as well as a data dashboard to support the faculty in conducting predictive planning.

**Recommendation:** **Timely access to student mental health supports that are culturally sensitive is critical. Improve support for navigating these supports, particularly where English as a second language may be an issue. Given a goal of increasing the diversity of the student population with a focus on international students, this should be a priority.**

**Rehabilitation Science Response:** The program recognizes the importance of timely access to appropriate mental health supports for graduate students. We agree with the recommendation to improve support for navigating mental health supports, especially for international students.

**Action Plan:**

- Review the list of current mental health supports available to graduate students through the University. Any supports specific to international students will be highlighted. This list will be shared at program orientation (August and January) and posted to the Rehabilitation Science eClass page, to which all Rehab Science students and supervisors have access.

**Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) Response:** GPS supports these actions and encourages the faculty to widely publicize the new services offered by the Dean of Students, namely [One at a Time Therapy](#) (OaaTT) and single session therapy for students through [Counselling and Clinical Services](#).

**Recommendation: Address challenges in navigating additional supports, including avenues for appeals and the Ombuds Office, and relevant career counselling.**

**Rehabilitation Science Response:** The program agrees with this recommendation and has been working with the three professional programs to develop a common process at the faculty level for navigating supports, including issues of bullying, harassment, and discrimination, and appeals.

**Action Plan:**

- Communicate the process developed within the Faculty on issues related to bullying, harassment, and discrimination including options for reporting and resolution (e.g., reporting to the Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights)
- Continue with updating faculty policy and procedure documents related to student academic integrity and student conduct to reflect institutional policy and procedures. These documents will be shared with students and posted on the Rehab Science program eClass for reference.
- Share resources available through the university related to career counselling. These resources are often available through GPS via professional development opportunities and sessions and can be communicated to students in the monthly student newsletter.

**Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) Response:** GPS agrees with this recommendation. GPS organizes orientation and onboarding sessions for new graduate students in August and January every year and GPS Associate Deans provide the new students

with an introduction to the services and supports that they offer, including student-supervisor conflict, academic advising, program and exam related issues. GPS has recently revamped its website and the new website provides a one-stop place for the graduate students to seek support and advice through the new webpage called [Talk to a Graduate Advisor](#), where students can contact an advisor in-person, virtual or by phone to discuss their issues and schedule a meeting with a GPS Associate Dean if needed, and seek advice on how to contact the Ombuds Office and seek advice from them.

Furthermore, the [GPS Graduate Program Manual](#) provides a section on Academic Grievances and Appeals for graduate administrators and students with information and instructions on the process and points of contact if issues arise.

The Faculty is encouraged to include the above contact details in their orientation and advising sessions with the graduate students.

**Recommendation: Address variability in the quality of student supervision via resources/orientations available through the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies including supervisor/student expectation contracts initiated at the start of the student's program and reviewed annually. As well, greater student utilization of the Faculty Research Centre may be a way to address stress of comprehensive examinations and other aspects of the students' programs.**

**Rehabilitation Science Response:** We recognize the importance of ensuring all students in Rehabilitation Science receive excellent supervision in line with best practices. The recommendations reinforce the importance of supporting graduate supervisors to carry out their role effectively to support a positive student experience. We appreciate the recommendation of leveraging the Rehabilitation Research Centre as additional support for aspects of our students' programs, such as candidacy preparation and mentorship.

**Action Plan:**

- Advertise and encourage existing graduate supervisors to complete GPS modules on graduate supervision. New faculty members are already required to complete this training.
- Share resources from GPS related to graduate supervision with new faculty members at faculty orientation; review expectations regarding mandatory completion of GPS Student Supervisor guidelines when supervising a new student.

- Continue to support and advertise the Rehabilitation Research Centre's activities related to candidacy preparation (e.g., mock oral examinations) and explore potential enhancements based on student feedback.

**Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) Response:** GPS supports the proposed actions and is available for consultation on graduate supervision development training as a foundational component of education opportunities for supervisors. GPS emphasizes the importance of completing the Student-Supervisor Guidelines and the Progress Report to ensure consistent and continued support for all students.

**Action Plan:** GPS provides regular updates and access to the Progress Report and Student-Supervisor Guidelines to ensure all supervisors and students complete them. The Associate Dean, Graduate/Graduate Coordinator will be informed of the students who struggle to achieve satisfactory performance on their research. GPS provides the Associate Dean, Graduate/ Graduate Coordinator and graduate administrator with a list of new faculty members who are required to complete the graduate supervision training program.

**Recommendation:** **Alumni provide a critical resource to the formal and informal aspects of the program. The development of an active alumni association for the Rehabilitation Sciences programs has the potential to create greater engagement with students and assist with career planning/networking.**

**Rehabilitation Science Response:** We appreciate this recommendation and agree that the development of an active alumni association for Rehabilitation Science would enhance the Rehab Science program student experience and can assist with career planning/networking.

**Action Plan:**

- The program will explore with the Faculty's Assistant Dean (Advancement) on how to meaningfully engage with alumni, with the development of an alumni association as a potential option.

**Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) Response:** GPS supports the faculty's alumni engagement proposed action.

**Faculty and Supervision**

**Recommendation:** Faculty engagement in Rehabilitation Science teaching could be increased through greater consistent recognition of contributions by departmental chairs of cognate departments in workload assignments. If workload assignment issues can be navigated, elective course offerings based on the research/field of interest of faculty from OT, PT, and SLP in the Rehabilitation Science program would further enhance the UofA as a place to study. Addressing constraints of departmental chairs in terms of faculty contributions is encouraged to facilitate this process.

**Rehabilitation Science Response:** The program appreciates the reviewers' acknowledging the challenges with department faculty engagement in Rehabilitation Science teaching. The recommendation speaks to the need for planning and collaboration across the departments and the Rehab Science program related to teaching.

**Action Plan:**

- Initiate joint discussions with the three department chairs to increase awareness of teaching opportunities and needs within the Rehab Science program in January-February of each year as part of planning faculty academic assignments.
- Explore possibilities for reciprocal teaching across programs e.g., non-departmentalized faculty teaching within the professional programs on specific topics.

**Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) Response:** GPS supports the proposed action plan.

**Recommendation:** Explore ways to encourage professors to engage in more discussions across their specific discipline fields. This dialogue could be the beginning of more cross pollination in the exceptional research the faculty is already doing for the next generation of Masters and PhD graduates.

**Rehabilitation Science Response:** We agree with this recommendation as the program seeks to find ways to increase our faculty members' presence within the Rehabilitation Science curriculum.

**Action Plan:**

- The program will explore how faculty can share their research within the Rehab Science curriculum through, for example, the existing Seminar in Rehabilitation Science course, hosting Lunch and Learns via the Rehabilitation Research Centre, or through joint Faculty-level events (e.g., joint Faculty research day) in collaboration with the Research Committee.

**Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) Response:** GPS supports the proposed action plan.

**Resources**

**Recommendation:** Improve communication around existing funding support (i.e., travel to conferences) and scholarships available to students. The committee advises that orientation and follow up with supervisors and graduate advisors keep making it clear that there is scholarship funding available, rather than sharing this information solely through digest emails that may not be seen by students.

**Rehabilitation Science Response:** We appreciate the recommendation and wish to add that the program has employed communication strategies to raise students' awareness of funding support. We understand there is a lot of information in the digest emails. However, the digests consolidate information in one email, whereas before several emails were sent throughout the week, and students have control over which digests they subscribe to. Angela Libutti (Rehab Science Academic Advisor) will amplify relevant awards within these digests and resend over the faculty's graduate student listservs to bring these to students' attention. Angela also disseminates any information she receives regarding awards and funding opportunities, including graduate teaching assistantships external to the faculty, over the graduate student listservs.

**Action Plan:**

- During orientation, the program will share information on where to find information on funding support (i.e., GPS webpage, graduate student digest, emails from Angela).
- Explore advertising funding opportunities via the monthly FRM student newsletter.

- Consider copying faculty on email to Rehab Science students regarding upcoming awards competitions and funding opportunities.

**Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) Response:**

- Beginning in Fall 2025 and in line with the new GPS Minimum Guaranteed Funding for doctoral students, current and new doctoral students will receive minimum guaranteed funding of \$100K CAD over four years and not less than \$25K CAD in year one.
- GPS awards and Scholarship teams meet with new graduate students in August and January every year to provide a comprehensive introduction to awards and scholarships.
- GPS holds multiple workshops and events throughout the year for students to advise them on how to apply for various institutional, provincial and federal funding opportunities.

**Recommendation: The University of Alberta for Tomorrow restructuring has moved staff centrally. It will be important to monitor how this restructuring affects programming and the student experience.**

**Rehabilitation Science Response:** We agree with this recommendation and recognize the critical contributions of our administrative staff to the success of our academic mission, including the delivery of high-quality educational programming and an exceptional student experience. Administrative staff meet at regular intervals to discuss any issues arising. Concerns are brought forward to the senior leadership team for awareness and problem-solving.

**Action Plan:**

- The faculty will continue to monitor the effects of restructuring on program delivery and the student experience. Where increased support is necessary due to workload, staff wellness, or delayed processes impacting program delivery, the faculty will consider strategic deployment of additional resources as a solution.
- The faculty will provide constructive feedback to the university and College through established channels (e.g., surveys, town-halls) regarding the impact of restructuring.

**Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) Response:** GPS agrees with this recommendation and recognizes the importance of student experience. GPS is currently working on a graduate student and postdoc experience project and their journey mapping to provide a coherent and holistic perspective of graduate and postdoc academic and personal experiences on campus and in their programs. Once completed, graduate and postdoctoral journey maps will be shared with the faculty to support them in enhancing graduate and postdoctoral experience and the ways in which GPS and Faculty can partner to provide consistent and seamless support.

**Additional Notes from the Faculty and/or GPS**

# **Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology**

## **Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine**

### **Quality Assurance Review and Accreditation: Excerpted Report 2023-24**

Programs	MSc Speech-Language Pathology
Site Visit Review Dates	February 27 - March 1, 2024

#### **Final Outcomes**

Accreditation Status	Accredited
Effective Date	February 1, 2024
Accreditation Term	Seven year term

#### **About Council for Accreditation of Canadian University Programs in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CACUP-ASLP)**

The Council for Accreditation of Canadian University Programs in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CACUP-ASLP) is an accrediting body for graduate education programs that prepare students for the practice of audiology and speech-language pathology. The Council promotes excellence in the education of audiologists and speech-language pathologists to ensure the continued growth and development of these two Professions.

CACUP-ASLP is a collaboration of three organizations related to the practice of speech-language pathology and audiology in Canada:

- Canadian Council of University Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CCUP-CSD), comprised of the heads of five programs that offer education in both audiology and speech-language pathology and seven programs that offer speech-language pathology only
- Speech-Language and Audiology Canada (SAC), a national professional association for speech-language pathologists and audiologists
- A National Regulatory Panel comprised of representatives from the regulators of the professions of audiology and speech-language pathology in Canada.

CACUP-ASLP is a member of the Association of Accrediting Agencies of Canada (AAAC).

#### **University of Alberta Accreditation/QA Crosswalk Process**

The University of Alberta [QA Guidelines for Review](#) and For the Public Good allow for Faculties that undergo accreditation to align review processes to maximize value and minimize overlap and redundancy, when possible.

Initially, content requirements in the accreditation self-study and final report documents must be compared to the content required within the institutional QA templates. This comparative analysis of the accreditation requirements and institutional QA requirements must be conducted by the Faculty and submitted to the Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) for review. This 'crosswalk' document informs the decision about whether accreditation activities satisfy the requirements of institutional QA activities, or whether an alternate process needs to be crafted. In the case of complete overlap between the reports for accreditation and the QA reports, the Faculty may submit their accreditation self-study, final report, and response to final recommendations, with the cross-listing of pertinent sections to the institutional QA templates, to the Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) for use in the QA review process. If specific content required by the QA process is missing from the accreditation documents, the Faculty is required to submit additional material to address the missing content.

The MSc in Speech Language Pathology program completed all crosswalk documents demonstrating alignment between accreditation and institutional QA requirements.

## Outcome

The Accreditation Board voted unanimously to renew the (MSc in Speech Language Pathology) program's accreditation for the full (seven-year) term, starting from February 1st 2024. The site reviewers and the Board were very complimentary overall about the quality of the MSc program. The Board was impressed by the comprehensive and coherent MSc curriculum, the competent and dedicated faculty and staff of the Department, and the program's commitment to support equity, diversity and inclusion, particularly with regards to curriculum and student accreditation standards.

## Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine (FRM) Response

While the Accreditation Board's decision was unanimous, it was noted that one accreditation standard (B4.5) was only partially met. In addition, there were four other concerns raised by the reviewers. These issues and our planned actions are detailed below.

**Standard B4.5 Resources - Technological support is available to the school or department:** "... the centralized IT system at your institution has often been unable to provide IT support to faculty and staff in a timely fashion. The Board is concerned that long wait times in receiving IT support will negatively affect faculty/staff productivity, and student learning."

- Response: This issue was brought up to the College of Health Sciences Dean, College General Manager and to the Chief Information Officer in July 2024. In collaboration with our IT Partner, Dean and Faculty General Manager, we have been problem-solving potential solutions to address this challenge. One immediate action that was taken was to embed additional IT staff during the first few weeks of the Fall 2024 semester while we were rolling out the new technology platforms and equipment related to our satellite program expansion into Augustana Campus. A dedicated person was housed in Corbett Hall during the first three weeks of September, and another person was housed in Camrose, working in concert with Augustana IT staff to solve technical issues. Resources and training were developed by our Learning Technology Specialist for all instructors and we have had very responsive communication from the Director of Digital Learning Environment, IST - Teaching and Learning Services throughout

August and September on the status of the technology to support teaching and learning. Admittedly, IT support for research activities is a work in progress and we will continue to work with the College and IST to ensure that IT support to the department is conducive for faculty/staff productivity and student learning.

**Standard B.2.4 Faculty and Instructors - Faculty and sessional contract instructors engage in activities to support the teaching mission of the school or department, including developing and/or maintaining their own content expertise and teaching ability:** *"A concern was expressed about sessional faculty workload... the Board would also like you to report on the impact of the seat expansion on the workload of tenure-track faculty and of Academic Coordinators of Clinical Education."*

- Response: We have taken several steps to ease workload of both sessional and academic faculty (tenure-track and academic teaching staff):
  - Instructors participated in a series of workshops with Centre for Teaching and Learning (June 2024) on best practices for teaching large cohorts
  - Hired additional faculty (1.3 FTE - Augustana campus; 1.5 FTE - Edmonton campus) to support teaching and clinical education activities. This allows for every course to be minimally staffed by a teaching team with a Primary Instructor and a Co-Instructor - Augustana. All instructors have access to a Graduate Teaching Assistant and many courses also have a Lab Coordinator.
  - Added a 0.5 FTE placement coordinator to assist the Academic Coordinators of Clinical Education in securing placements for expanded cohort
  - As of Fall 2024 we are introducing OSCE/Practical-Skills Demonstrations as final assessments across multiple classes allowing for integration of learning and shared/distributed grading
  - Conducting bi-weekly teaching team meetings of all instructors teaching in one term to problem-solve and coordinate due dates and workload across the term
  - Created a common resource hub for all instructors housing information, resources, policies, templates (syllabus, rubrics, etc.)
  - Associate Chair conducting regular 'check-ins' with sessional faculty to ensure they are being supported
  - Adjustments to sessional faculty contracts such that they are being compensated appropriately for preparation time

In the 2024-2025 academic year, only 5 of the core courses in our curriculum are taught by sessional faculty, compared to 8 courses in the 2023-2024 academic year. As we are bringing on new tenure track faculty and they are able to take on additional teaching so we anticipate fewer courses being taught by sessional faculty in the future.

**Standard B.2.10 - Faculty and Instructors - Clinical educators have appropriate (in their province or territory) academic qualifications, registration credentials, clinical experience, and supervisory training necessary to supervise students:** *"Clinical educators reported a lack of clarity about procedures for appointment to a clinical faculty rank"*

- Response: This standard has to do with ensuring clinical educators have the appropriate qualifications and credentials to supervise students while the reviewers' comments are referring to a FRM Clinical Educator (CE) recognition program. The recognition program, which confers a clinical faculty title, is based solely on the number of students/placements that a CE supports on a yearly basis and is meant to reward CEs for their dedication to clinical education. We will be providing information to CEs about this optional recognition program at our biannual information sessions we are hosting for CEs. These sessions are designed to provide continuing professional education around use of the new National Competency tool used to evaluate students on their clinical placements. These meetings will also provide a touchpoint for clinical educators to provide feedback on areas of the curriculum that students may need additional support in, and provide for two-way communication opportunities.

**Standard B.3.9 - Students - The school or department has a process in place to evaluate its support of students:** *"Students reported variability in the ease of access to their designated faculty advisor"*

- Response: As a department, we have clarified expectations of faculty advisors and have initiated procedures for advisors to check-in regularly with students. We have also made these procedures and advisor lists available to students in their MScSLP Resource Hub. In addition, we have added a question on our student surveys that will allow the department to evaluate the effectiveness of these actions moving forward.

**Standard B.5.1 - Administrative Structure and Governance - The academic department is autonomous. The department has clear and distinct administrative authority over its academic and clinical education and research programs within the university:** *"The Board requests that you provide an update about the impact of this administrative and academic reorganization [College of Health Sciences] on your programs academic and administrative activities."*

- Response: The impact of the restructuring of the College of Health Sciences (CHS) is ongoing and the full effects are yet to be realized. As a Department and Faculty, we continue to collaborate with the CHS to find efficiencies and extend the capacity of Departmental and Faculty programs. The interim report will provide an opportunity to comment on this question after a period of implementation.

The Accreditation Board also asked us to report on the success and challenges related to the implementation of the distributed MSc program in our 3 year interim report in February 2027. We have plans in place to monitor outcomes related to distributed learning and multiple avenues for collecting data related to the implementation, including:

- 1:1 Meetings with students in Year 1 cohort - May 2025
- Student surveys at end of academic coursework prior to going on externships - December 2025
- Program completion surveys - July 2026
- Staff/faculty surveys - August 2025 (end of one calendar year with distributed model)
- Evaluating and comparing student outcomes (GPAs, performance in clinical placements) by cohort

The Chair and Associate Chair visited Augustana campus on September 20, 2024 at the end of the first full week of distributed learning in Augustana. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive from the students. They

commented on how seamless the technology was and that they could see and hear everything with great clarity. They felt very supported by both Augustana faculty and Edmonton based faculty. We have reserved funds for staff/faculty members to travel between Edmonton and Camrose to ensure students at the satellite are adequately supported and are provided with an equitable learning experience.

## **Master of Science in Physical Therapy (MScPT)**

**Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine**

**Quality Assurance Review and Accreditation: Excerpted Report 2023-24**

Programs	Master of Science in Physical Therapy (MScPT)
Site Visit Review Dates	May 2024

### **Final Outcomes**

Accreditation Status	Accredited
Effective Date	October 15, 2024
Accreditation Term	Fully Compliant until October 31, 2030

### **About Physiotherapy Education Accreditation Canada (PEAC)**

Physiotherapy Education Accreditation Canada (PEAC) is an incorporated body under the Canada Corporations Act and operates as the accrediting agency for physiotherapy education programs in Canada.

### **University of Alberta Accreditation/QA Crosswalk Process**

The University of Alberta [QA Guidelines for Review](#) and For the Public Good allow for Faculties that undergo accreditation to align review processes to maximize value and minimize overlap and redundancy, when possible.

Initially, content requirements in the accreditation self-study and final report documents must be compared to the content required within the institutional QA templates. This comparative analysis of the accreditation requirements and institutional QA requirements must be conducted by the Faculty and submitted to the Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) for review. This 'crosswalk' document informs the decision about whether accreditation activities satisfy the requirements of institutional QA activities, or whether an alternate process needs to be crafted. In the case of complete overlap between the reports for accreditation and the QA reports, the Faculty may submit their accreditation self-study, final report, and response to final recommendations, with the cross-listing of pertinent sections to the institutional QA templates, to the Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) for use in the QA review process. If specific content required by the QA process is missing from the accreditation documents, the Faculty is required to submit additional material to address the missing content.

The Master of Science in Physical Therapy program completed all crosswalk documents demonstrating alignment between accreditation and institutional QA requirements.



October 15, 2024

Dr. Tammy Hopper  
Professor and Dean, Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine  
University of Alberta  
3-48 Corbett Hall  
8205 – 114 St NW  
Edmonton, AB T6G 2G4

Dear Dr. Hopper:

Physiotherapy Education Accreditation Canada (PEAC) is an incorporated body under the Canada Corporations Act and operates as the accrediting agency for physiotherapy education programs in Canada.

The most recent Accreditation Committee meeting took place September 26 & 27, 2024 during which the Accreditation Review of the Master of Science in Physical Therapy program at the University of Alberta, which took place in May 2024, was considered. After comprehensive review, the Accreditation Committee made the following motion:

**That the Master of Science in Physical Therapy program at the University of Alberta be awarded Accreditation – Fully Compliant until October 31, 2030 with a Self-Study Report due in December 2025 for a Focussed Review in spring 2026 for a new distributed site.**

**Note** that the level of accreditation status Fully Compliant can change throughout the six-year accreditation cycle should the program not demonstrate (in future Progress Reports) that work is being done towards achieving a level of “Fully Met” in each of the PEAC accreditation criteria OR should it not demonstrate continuing compliance with the accreditation standards.

#### ***Accreditation Review and Status Report (AR & SR)***

You will find attached an Accreditation Review and Status Report, which provides detailed information about the program’s compliance with the accreditation standards and required follow-up action.

#### ***Acknowledgement form***

You will also find attached an acknowledgement form. Please copy the acknowledgement form on institutional letterhead and return a signed copy electronically to PEAC by **October 30, 2024**.

#### ***Maintenance of Accreditation Status***

It is the responsibility of the education program to maintain compliance with the accreditation standards. Evidence of continuing compliance includes:

1. submission of the SSR for the Focussed Site Review as required in this AR & SR
2. submission of an annual report (survey link is provided to each program annually by PEAC)
3. payment of the annual accreditation fee (invoiced annually) (*GUIDE-10 Fee Schedule*)
4. reporting of any substantive change in an education program (*ACC-04 Substantive Change*)
5. publication of accreditation status using required text—see below (*ACC-02 Disclosure*)

### **General Comments**

The Accreditation Committee congratulates the program on a successful accreditation review process in the context of a recently completed administrative restructuring, the re-opening of the Augustana distributed site, and implementation of a new learning management platform. Program strengths include strong, collaborative leadership, a strong sense of collegiality, commitment and resilience amongst the faculty, instructors and staff, innovative and inclusive approaches to teaching, learning and assessment, and a strong curricular design with emphasis on evidenced-based practice and clinical decision-making using CORE and CDM models developed in-house. The program is also recognized for its commitment to continuous quality improvement with a robust program evaluation plan.

The committee did note that the restructuring of the College system and associated budget reductions have caused challenges for faculty, staff and students associated with increased administrative burden and loss of work productivity. With the re-opening of the Augustana distributed site and implementation of the new learning management platform, there are opportunities to re-evaluate the effectiveness of administrative support to determine whether modifications may be needed to ensure the administrative support needs of the faculty, students and program at large continue to be met.

### **Next Accreditation Activity**

Submission of a Self-Study Report in December 2025 for the Focussed Review of the new distributed site at the Augustana Campus that also addresses concerns related to criteria 1.4, 2.6, 5.4, and 5.5.

Following the Focussed Review, the program will be invoiced the Focussed Review Administrative Fee (see *GUIDE-10 Fee Schedule*) in addition to expenses incurred for the Peer Review Team to complete the Focussed Review. Payment of the invoice will need to be received by PEAC prior to the accreditation decision being communicated to the program.

### **Statement of Disclosure**

It is required for the Master of Science in Physical Therapy program at the University of Alberta to publish its accreditation status as part of its responsibility to maintain

compliance with the accreditation standards. This information must be easily accessible for prospective and current students and other stakeholders/partners in the education program. Please update the necessary webpages, publications and documents by **October 30, 2025**.

The required text for programs holding Accreditation – Fully Compliant when publishing their information is:

*The Master of Science in Physical Therapy program at the University of Alberta has completed the accreditation review process administered by Physiotherapy Education Accreditation Canada (PEAC). PEAC is an incorporated body under the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act and operates as the accrediting agency for physiotherapy education programs in Canada. The status of Accreditation – Fully Compliant was awarded to the program for the period until October 31, 2030. A description of Accreditation – Fully Compliant follows.*

More details regarding the definitions of the levels of accreditation are available at <http://www.peac-aepc.ca/english/accreditation/levels-of-accreditation.php> or by contacting Physiotherapy Education Accreditation Canada, Suite 26, 509 Commissioners Road West, London, Ontario, N6J 1Y5, (226) 636-0632, [www.peac-aepc.ca](http://www.peac-aepc.ca).

### Accreditation – Fully Compliant

- A program is in compliance with 100% of the accreditation criteria within the Accreditation Standards.
- There are no criteria in non-compliance.
- There could be identified concerns that the program must improve upon and report back about in Progress Reports.
- If progress is not made, the program's accreditation status could be changed to partially compliant or probationary at any time in the six year accreditation cycle.

### STUDENTS—IMPORTANT TO NOTE

- If a program loses its accreditation status, its students may not be considered graduates of an accredited physiotherapy education program.
- Students must be considered graduates from an accredited physiotherapy education program in Canada in order to be eligible to write the Physiotherapy Competency Exam and be licensed to practice physiotherapy in Canada.
- The program's accreditation status is important to graduating students with regards to becoming licensed to practice physiotherapy in Canada. It is recommended that students contact the Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators ([alliancecpt.org](http://alliancecpt.org)) for information regarding the process to become licensed as a physiotherapist in Canada following graduation.

When and wherever an education program makes public disclosure of its accreditation status, it must include the full name, address and contact information for PEAC as: Physiotherapy Education Accreditation Canada, Suite 26, 509 Commissioners Road West, London, Ontario, N6J 1Y5, (226) 636-0632, [www.peac-aepc.ca](http://www.peac-aepc.ca).

Should the program choose to make public the contents of its accreditation reports, including this Accreditation Review and Status Report, the reports must be published in full.

If you have any questions about this letter or the next steps required by the program, please don't hesitate to contact Jessica Pilon-Bignell, PEAC Physiotherapy Accreditation Program Manager, or myself.

Sincerely,

Kate Grosweiner  
Vice Chair, Accreditation Committee, PEAC

cc: Dr. Doug Gross, Chair, Department of Physical Therapy, University of Alberta  
Dr. Mark Hall, Associate Chair, Department of Physical Therapy; Director,  
MScPT Program, University of Alberta

**MSc. Occupational Therapy (MScOT)**  
**Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine**  
**Quality Assurance Review and Accreditation: Excerpted Report 2023**

Programs	Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (MScOT)
Site Visit Review Dates	Off-site: November 28, 2021 On-site: March 21-24, 2022

**Final Outcomes**

Accreditation Status	Accredited
Effective Date	March 2022
Accreditation Term	7 years

**About Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT)**

*[Direct language taken from the sources listed]*

'Founded in 1926, the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT) is the national professional association for occupational therapy in Canada. The mandate of CAOT is to develop leadership, advance knowledge, develop and maintain professional and education standards, and build human resource capacity for excellence in occupational therapy.'

'The CAOT accreditation process follows an internationally accepted procedure and emphasizes consistency and transparency in the review of objective, tangible documentary and observable evidence. On- and off-site accreditation reviews generate evidence of a program's achievement, or lack of achievement, of the individual indicators. The required evidence is organized under nine standards (degree granted, curriculum frameworks, student affairs, financial/human/environmental & learning resources, program evaluation & knowledge generation).'

(CAOT Accreditation Self Study Guide 2017 English rv 2019)

- The Academic Credentialing Council is responsible for establishing standards, and evaluating education programs. A recommendation for an accreditation award is submitted to the CAOT board which approves accreditation decisions based on procedural compliance.
- CQI approach establishes a clear partnership in the accreditation process by working collaboratively with program representatives to address program quality issues and to value and appreciate program strengths. Once entered into a 7 year cycle, the program will undergo a continual quality improvement process that includes a self-study, off site, and on site review, and CQI plan, using the CAOT academic accreditation standards.
- The review will result in identification of strengths and areas for improvement that are documented in a

CQI plan. CAOT's Academic Credentialing Council (ACC) is responsible for oversight and awarding accreditation status.

### Importance of academic accreditation for Canadian occupational therapy education programs

- serves to maintain consistent national standards;
- ensures quality professional education;
- supports the growth and development of educational programs and the occupational therapy profession.
- monitors educational standards worldwide so as to assess trends and ensure better graduate mobility

[\(https://caot.ca/site/becomeanota/accreditation\)](https://caot.ca/site/becomeanota/accreditation)

### University of Alberta Accreditation/QA Crosswalk Process

The University of Alberta [QA Guidelines for Review](#) and For the Public Good allow for Faculties that undergo accreditation to align review processes to maximize value and minimize overlap and redundancy, when possible.

Initially, content requirements in the accreditation self-study and final report documents must be compared to the content required within the institutional QA templates. This comparative analysis of the accreditation requirements and institutional QA requirements must be conducted by the Faculty and submitted to the Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) for review. This 'crosswalk' document informs the decision about whether accreditation activities satisfy the requirements of institutional QA activities, or whether an alternate process needs to be crafted. In the case of complete overlap between the reports for accreditation and the QA reports, the Faculty may submit their accreditation self-study, final report, and response to final recommendations, with the cross-listing of pertinent sections to the institutional QA templates, to the Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) for use in the QA review process. If specific content required by the QA process is missing from the accreditation documents, the Faculty is required to submit additional material to address the missing content.

The Occupational Therapy program completed all crosswalk documents demonstrating alignment between accreditation and institutional QA requirements.

### Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine Response

**Strengths:** The ACC On-site committee report dated March 21-28, 2022, acknowledged "the program's resiliency, tenacity, and resourcefulness given the uncertainty they have faced and are facing given the pandemic, budget changes, and significant university restructuring." Key program strengths were identified as:

- Faculty, staff, students – passionate, collegial, committed, respected, valued.
- Curriculum renewal, and related integrated frameworks and document, is innovative, aspirational, and forward-looking.
- Your leadership and innovation in EDI, Indigenous focus, and IP are aspirational across faculty and college.
- Initial steps to integrate Competencies for OTs in Canada.
- Integration of faculty research into the curriculum.
- Creative, cohesive, and innovative fieldwork team.
- Space and resources are exceptional and consistent between sites.

**Areas for consideration were:**

- Department Chair to be appointed
- Faculty Dean to be appointed
- Faculty to student ratio needs to be addressed
- Reduced staffing needs to be addressed
- Renewed curriculum to be implemented fully
- Curriculum Evaluation plan finalized and implemented
- Program Evaluation plan finalized and implemented
- Finances -- given the current restructuring and creation of the college, ensuring this does not adversely impact the department chair to have autonomy and redress over their budget.

**Recommendations were as follows:** (Source: letter from the Chair of the Academic Credentialing Committee dated June 22, 2023)

The Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists, (CAOT) granted the Master of Science in Occupational Therapy (MScOT) program at the University of Alberta a seven-year accreditation award from March 2022 to March 2029. During the seven-year accreditation period, the MScOT program is required to submit two progress reports putting emphasis on the unmet indicators as follows:

Progress report 1, due April 1, 2023: Unmet indicators: 2.72, 2.73, 4.24, 5.32, 5.51, 5.91 (submitted April 1, 2023)

Progress report 2, due April 1, 2025: Unmet indicators: 8.11, 8.12, 8.13, 8.21, 8.22, 8.23, 8.24, 8.41, 8.42

**If a substantive change occurs during the accreditation period, please submit notification as per the Substantive Change Policy.**

**Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine Response to Unmet Indicators and Areas for Consideration**

<b>Teaching and Learning Environment</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Department Chair to be appointed</li><li>• Faculty Dean to be appointed</li></ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Renewed curriculum to be implemented fully</li></ul>	<p>Interim chair Dr. Esmail was appointed as Chair effective July 1, 2022, following a formal selection process. Interim Dean Dr. Tammy Hopper was appointed as the Dean of the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine effective July 1, 2022, following a formal selection process.</p> <p><b>Unmet ACC unmet indicators 2.72 and 2.73:</b> As of August 1, 2023, co-coordination of curriculum renewal and implementation was assigned to two senior academic staff members, one tenure track and one ATS. The latter was also concurrently appointed as Associate Chair. From June 2023 to the present (October 2, 2024) the established curriculum working groups continue to update/revise/integrate content, assessment/evaluation methods, pedagogical approaches and learning outcomes to align with the</p>

	<p>department's educational framework document, Education for Capability (2022), and with the most recent Competencies for Occupational Therapists in Canada (2021). The working groups come together in regularly scheduled retreats to address both practical/logistical issues associated with development and implementation of the renewed curriculum, as well as to share knowledge and resources for enabling innovation, creativity, collaboration and scholarship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Calendar changes reflecting / enabling the new curriculum were proposed and approved at the Spring FRM Faculty Council meeting on May 17, 2023, for effect as of September 2024.</li><li>• Year One courses were prioritized for redevelopment for dissemination / deployment / implementation in September 2024, with the first cohort admitted to study under the Education for Capability Framework.</li><li>• Redevelopment of the Year Two courses is on track for implementation in 2025.</li><li>• Concurrently, the pre-existing curriculum is being maintained for the year 2 students (2023 cohort) and year 3 students (2022 cohort).</li></ul> <p>• Curriculum Evaluation plan finalized and implemented</p> <p>• Program Evaluation plan finalized and implemented</p> <p><b>Unmet ACC indicators for Standard 8 (program evaluation):</b> Beginning in 2019, the department undertook a comprehensive review and renewal of its educational philosophy and curriculum framework, the outcome of which was its new Education for Capability curriculum framework document (March 2022). The department then embarked on the process of up-dating learning outcomes, pedagogy, course content and student evaluation methods to align with the new curriculum framework. In January 2024, responsibility for design of a program evaluation process aligned with the Education for Capability curriculum framework was assigned to a tenure track staff member with a specialty in program evaluation, supported by a contract for services with an experienced program evaluation designer/technician/data analyst. A draft report, including a proposed program evaluation plan, was submitted to the Chair on September 24, 2024, and will undergo a process of comprehensive review, discussion consultation, and revision. Implementation is proposed for December 2024; full details will be included in Progress report 2 to the ACC, due April 1, 2025.</p>
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## Resources

- Faculty to student ratio needs to be addressed

**ACC unmet indicator 5.51:** Despite not meeting the CAOT target of 8:1 ratio of students to core academic staff, the MScOT program has consistently provided students with a comprehensive curriculum that prepares them for entry to practice. Over the years, the MScOT program has fulfilled its mandate as evidenced by its research productivity, program performance, and certification exam results. The program's relatively large cohort of 125-130 students provides economies of scale, and enables students' exposure to a cadre of core academic faculty with a wide range of clinical and research expertise. The department's student to staff ratio has varied between 13.19 to 1 (2022) and 12.03 to 1 (projected for 2024).

The Government of Saskatchewan (GSK) recently ([June 14, 2024](#)) announced funding for a new Masters of Occupational therapy program at the University of Saskatchewan with the first cohort planned for September 2026. The current AB/SK interprovincial agreement will end when the last cohort (to be admitted in September 2025) has completed their MScOT program at the UofA. At that time, the department's enrolment will be reduced by the 25 seats currently contracted by the GSK. [Note that this reduction is partially offset by the Augustana Expansion program, comprising two cohorts of 15 students each, graduating by fall 2027; see Substantive Change below.]

**ACC unmet indicator 5.32**, specifying that at least 75% of the core academic faculty should hold doctoral-level credentials, will remain unmet over the near future, with all tenure track and ATS positions currently filled by appropriately qualified candidates in accordance with the University's budget and hiring procedures and provisions of AASUA collective agreement.

- Reduced [support] staffing needs to be addressed

**Regarding unmet ACC indicator 5.91**, the (dedicated) departmental support staff complement remains unchanged at 1.0 FTE, with the hiring in August 2023 of an applicant into the new position of Department Coordinator which replaced the redundant Executive Assistant position. The increased skill level of the Department Coordinator position has notably enhanced the capacities and capabilities of the support staff services within the department. Efficiencies may also be realized by deploying AI strategies. In addition, to mitigate

	the gaps left by SET, in June 2024 the FRM Dean's office hired a Manager of Administrative Services who is responsible for overseeing the HR and financial transactional activities of the Faculty, including the OT, PT and CSD departments.
<b>Substantive Change reported to CAOT on May 3, 2023</b>	In response to a request for proposals from the Government of Alberta (GOA), the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine submitted a proposal on March 15, 2023, for Master of Science (MSc) expansion programs in occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT) and communication sciences and disorders (CSD) to be offered at the Augustana Campus. The expansion program was formally announced by the GOA on April 13, 2023. Funding for the Augustana Campus program is based on a Targeted Enrollment Expansion (TEE) grant from the provincial government that will support two cohorts (30 students) to graduate by fall 2027. The first intake of 15 MScOT students took their seats at the Augustana Campus in September 2024. The Augustana Campus expansion of the MScOT program is currently undergoing the CAOT ACC accreditation process, with the next progress report due on April 1, 2025.