

UCC Program Review Committee - Summary of Review

Program – Office Administration Technology

This program includes the following degrees, minors, and certificates:

- Office Administration Technology (A.A.B.)

Recommendation

This program is found to be in jeopardy.

A follow up review of this program has been requested for the 2021-2022 academic year.

Date of this review – AY 2019

This review has been sent to program director and respective RHE deans. The responses from the director and dean have been attached.

Ohio University Curriculum Committee
External/Internal Academic Program Review

Office Administration Technology A.A.B.

Deborah Peairs, External Reviewer, Associate Professor, Office Administration and ITS,
Clark State Community College

Fuh-Cherng Jeng, Associate Professor, Communication Sciences and Disorders

Lauren McMills, Associate Professor, Chemistry and Biochemistry

March 7, 2019

The Office Administration Technology program underwent an external/internal program review in March 2019. The Academic Program Review committee was comprised of Deborah Peairs, External Reviewer, Office Administration and ITS, Clark State Community College and two internal reviewers, Fuh-Cherng Jeng (Communication Sciences and Disorders) and Lauren McMills (Chemistry and Biochemistry).

The committee met with Executive Dean of Regional Higher Education William Willan, Dean of the Chillicothe campus Martin Tuck, Dean of the Southern campus Nicole Pennington, Assistant Dean of Regional Higher Education Carissa Anderson, Interim Associate Dean of the Chillicothe campus Dywayne Nicely, faculty, staff and students of the Office Administration Technology program. The committee also toured the facilities in Bennett Hall and Stevenson Center.

This report is divided into seven sections, directly organized as requested by the Ohio University Academic Program Review effort.

1. The program as a whole:
 - a. Is the current number and distribution of faculty sufficient to carry out the broad overall mission of the program?

Due to the reduction in the number of students in the program and overall enrollment numbers, the current number of faculty is able to meet the teaching needs of the program.

The Office Administration Technology (OAT) program currently has one Group I faculty, one Group II faculty and six Group III faculty. The program has had a reduction in faculty as there were an additional eight adjunct faculty in the program during the 2011-2012 academic year. The Group I faculty member is based on the Chillicothe campus and is currently the coordinator of the OAT program. The Group II faculty member is based on the Southern campus and is teaching primarily in the Applied Management program as

there are no current OAT offerings on the Southern campus. The six Group III faculty members are adjunct who teach part-time for the OAT program.

- b. Is the level of the program's RSCA appropriate for the program given the size of the faculty and the resources available to the program? Is the program's level of external funding at an appropriate level?

The program's RSCA activities are appropriate. The Group I faculty member received tenure in 2016. She has published five papers and presented 14 times at local, regional and national conferences during the 2011-2018 review time period. She has been awarded several Faculty Travel Awards from the Chillicothe campus. The Group II faculty member published one paper in 2016 and made several in-person and online presentations. She earned a PhD degree in 2016 and received an Outstanding Research Award from the Southern campus in 2016.

- c. Is the level of service, outside of teaching, appropriate for the program given its size and the role that it plays in the University and broader communities it interacts with? Is the program able to fulfill its service mission?

The program is able to fulfill its service mission. The program coordinator (Group I faculty) has a high level of service. She has served as a reviewer for several publications including the Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Journal of Teaching and Learning with Technology, Disabilities Studies Quarterly and the American Education Research Association. She has also served on the CTAGs committee for the Ohio Department of Higher Education, the CETE committee and the Secondary Career Technical Alignment Initiative for the Ohio Board of Regents. In addition to service outside the university, she has served on many internal committees including Faculty Senate, RHE Leadership Committee, Technology Committee, OU-C Budget Priorities Committee, University Curriculum Committee, and OU-C Curriculum Committee.

- d. Does the program have an appropriate level of financial resources, staff, physical facilities, library resources, and technology to fulfill its mission?

The program has an appropriate level of financial resources, staff, physical facilities, library resources and technology assistance to fulfill its mission, with a few exceptions.

Currently, there are no funds available to offer students for testing (e.g., the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) test can cost \$100 or more for each student) and there is no on-site testing available at the Chillicothe campus. Students who were interviewed during the program review site visit stated that none of them had taken any of the MOS certification tests due to financial constraints. Although the program can request funds from the regional campuses on an as-needed basis, starting in AY2019 all programs will

be required to submit applications and compete for funding. It may be more difficult for the program to obtain funds in the near future.

The current Group III faculty have been with the program for a number of years and the program heavily relies on their availability to meet teaching load. The program will have difficulty providing content should their availability change.

On-site OIT staff provide technological help for the online classes and have been very helpful to the program coordinator (Group I faculty member). The campus facilities (library, computer labs, student services, and student success center) provide excellent services to the students.

2. Undergraduate Program:

- a. Is the program fulfilling its service role, adequately preparing non-majors for future coursework and/or satisfying the needs for general education?

The OAT program is fulfilling its service role, offering appropriate classes to those students wishing to take program offerings. Enrollment numbers, however, have been on a downward trajectory since Fall 2012. Currently OAT courses do not satisfy any general education requirements, however, the program coordinator is currently redesigning OAT 2260 (Applications in Spreadsheets) so that it meets Tier 2 Social Sciences requirements.

- b. Is the program attracting majors likely to succeed in the program? Is the number of majors appropriate for the program? Is the program attracting a diverse group of students?

Although the enrollment is decreasing, the program is still able to recruit students who are likely to succeed in the program. The review committee met with three current and three former students who had nothing but praise for the program.

The current number of majors is 14, down from 25 in 2016. The demand nationwide for graduates in OAT programs has decreased and trends indicate the demand will continue to decrease.

The diversity of the students in the program mirrors the diversity of students on the regional campuses with the exception that the large majority of students are females. The students tend to be non-traditional with full-time jobs.

- c. Does the undergraduate curriculum provide majors with an adequate background to pursue discipline-related careers or graduate work following graduation?

The OAT program is a two-year program leading to an Associate's degree. Most of the students we met with were able to finish the program in 2 years. Some students may take longer than 2 years to complete this degree, due to family and full-time job requirements. Students completing the program were finding discipline-related employments. Students wanting a four-year degree often choose to go on to complete either the Bachelor of Technical & Applied Studies (BTAS) or Bachelor of Science in Applied Management (BSAM) degree following completion of the OAT degree.

All of the core OAT courses can now be offered online. Currently a mix of hybrid, face to face and online courses are being offered. It would be optimal if every course within the OAT program was offered online.

A more diverse program curriculum would better prepare students for advanced degrees in HR, marketing, or business administration. Currently the program offers a heavy concentration of software applications and business office related course work.

- d. Are the resources and the number of and distribution of faculty sufficient to support the undergraduate program?

The current number of faculty is sufficient to support the number of students taking the courses, however, the program heavily relies on adjunct faculty. Should changes be made to the program that would result in increased enrollments, number and distribution of faculty would need to be revisited.

- e. Are pedagogical practices appropriate? Is teaching adequately assessed?

From the information received and the interviews conducted during the program review process the program coordinator, Allison White, applies appropriate pedagogical practices. The program coordinator meets regularly with RHE Executive Dean and Assistant Dean to review the program. The inclusion of an internship course and seminar course is a definite strength of the OAT program since it provides real-world experience for students and an opportunity for them to apply their skills.

- f. Are students able to move into discipline-related careers and/or pursue further academic work?

Students are well prepared to move into discipline-related careers upon completing the OAT program. There are intensive application software offerings within the curriculum as well as several options of appropriate relatable topics. (See 2c above regarding the pursuit of further academic work.)

3. Graduate Program:

The Office Administration Technology program is an Associates level program; therefore, this section is not applicable.

4. Areas of Concern.

The primary area of concern is the decreased number of majors and decreased enrollment in OAT courses since the last program review. The decline in majors is a nationwide trend.

Another area of concern is the overlap in technical programs' content across RHE. Resolutions should be explored that would enhance programs curriculum without encroaching upon them.

Lastly, the review committee has noted that it has a band-aid approach to keeping computer labs operating efficiently at the Chillicothe campus. It seems that there is no regular computer replacement cycle. This should be a high priority for any program that depends on technology for the majority of its courses to have up-to-date and reliable technology for its students' success.

5. Recommendations

Medical Office Administration jobs are expected to increase substantially in the following years. The program coordinator is cognizant of this fact and has added elective courses in this area in order to prepare students for the workforce. However, a few classes in Medical Office Administration is most likely insufficient. Thus, it is recommended that the OAT program be updated to include a Medical Office Administration Technology (MOAT) Associates program, as there would likely be interest in this program, due to the large number of health providers locally and nationwide. It should be noted that, when the committee asked what suggestions the students had for improving the program, the addition of medical related courses in coding, office billing, medical insurance billing and medical terminology were mentioned in addition to a Level 2 Excel course were brought up by students.

It is recommended that a formal consistent supervisor evaluation document be used for students during their internship. Currently, each supervisor creates their own evaluation tool which leaves too much room for subjectivity.

Should the current OAT program be replaced by a MOAT program, embedded certificates within the MOAT program should be offered for students to complete as they pursue an Associate's degree. It has been proven that students feel an increased

sense of accomplishment when they are able to achieve milestones along the way to an end goal. Certificates have also been shown to increase retention. Both short-term and long-term certificates are options to consider (short term comprised of three-four courses, and long-term comprised of six-seven courses). A one-year embedded OAT certificate could be offered as a way of capturing those students not interested in a MOAT degree. The second year of the MOAT degree would have a concentration of medically related course work (a meta major).

A virtual office certificate could be another means of attracting more OAT students.

Given that all of the OAT core courses are available online, one possibility is to market the classes to high school students and those in adult educational programs. Alternatively, it may be feasible to promote the OAT program to an online degree, with an attempt to boost enrollment for this program.

Pursuing accreditation for either the OAT or MOAT program (if one is created), will make the program(s) more competitive state-wide and nationally.

It appears that the OAT advisory committee is convened in an informal way at present. It is recommended that a formal process be established in which the advisory committee meet once or twice annually to discuss issues related to the OAT program. Receiving regular input on the curriculum from local business employers will help to keep the program relevant for students and will alert the program coordinator to communicate needs in a timely manner.

Including data from both local and state job related statistics, in addition to nationwide statistics, in a program review provides a more realistic overview of labor market projections for the local community. This information should be included in future program reviews.

6. Commendations

The students we spoke with were extremely enthusiastic about the program. They were extremely satisfied with the courses in the program and with the level of instruction they received. The students were very satisfied with the number and variety of the courses in the program with the exception of the dictation class which they felt was not as necessary now as it had been in the past due to the availability of transcription programs. The students that were currently employed or in an internship stated that the courses related well to their current positions.

The students were also unanimous in their commendation of the program coordinator as an instructor and advisor. The program coordinator is doing an exemplary job given the resources she has to work with. She is extremely knowledgeable, motivated, and

enthusiastic concerning both the OAT program and its students. She is well thought of and liked by her peers and her students alike. The students value the internship requirement and the feedback from the employers is extremely valuable as an assessment tool.

7. Overall judgment: Is the program viable as a whole?

The program as it currently stands is in jeopardy. Every institution of higher learning in the state is experiencing the same challenges of low enrollment in their office administration programs. Fresh ideas will need to be explored, discussed, and implemented in order to continue to attract students in today's economic and ever-changing climate. The availability of an option, such as a Medical Office Administration Technology program, would likely help the program maintain viability.

From: [White, Allison](#)
To: [Cotton, John](#); [Tuck, Martin](#); [Pennington, Nicole](#)
Cc: [Barr, Patrick](#)
Subject: RE: Office Administration Technology Review
Date: Thursday, April 18, 2019 4:55:30 PM

Hello John,

I want to thank you and the committee for your patience. Here is where we are. The deans discussed the review report and their recommendations were shared with me last Wednesday, April 10. It is their recommendation that I pursue the design of a medical office administration program as per one of the recommendations of the program reviewers. The deans would like to see OAT as it stands to continue accepting students into the major through the next academic year. Once the new design is complete, they would like to see the old OAT program suspended with a teach out plan put through UCC by the end of the year.

As the program coordinator, I am investigating all of the review information. I was very pleased with the many positive outcomes and comments from the review. With low enrollments cited as the single most important factor leaving the program in jeopardy and in light of the One OHIO implementation and changes coming to RHE, I am hesitant to suspend the program right away. I am currently conducting some research into medical office programs including medical coding. I am also looking into some of the other recommendations made by the reviewers. I have already started to share this information with my division chair and some OAT advisory board members. I plan to discuss this information and the deans' recommendation with our campus curriculum committee faculty, the OAT program advisory committee, and the faculty in my division. Once I have their feedback, I will make an exact plan of action. I should know that plan by the end of this spring term.

Perhaps another review could be scheduled in fall 2021. Is that enough information or do you need something more specific? If a formal letter is needed, please let me know.

Thank you again for your patience.

Allison



From: [Tuck, Martin](#)
To: [Cotton, John](#); [White, Allison](#); [Pennington, Nicole](#)
Cc: [Barr, Patrick](#)
Subject: Re: Office Administration Technology Review
Date: Friday, April 19, 2019 8:18:44 AM

Dear Dr. Cotton:

The Regional campus deans, in particular Dean Pennington and myself (Dean Martin Tuck) are in full agreement with the Program Reviewer's conclusion that the Office Administration Technology (OAT) program is "In Jeopardy" due to low student enrollment.

We also agree with the reviewer's recommendation that the curriculum of the program should be revised to focus on medical office administration. With career opportunities in the health care field increasing and predicted to further increase in the future, it appears to be sound advise by the reviewers to focus the curriculum of the program on medical office clerical administration.

We also feel the curriculum revisions should be completed by Allison White, the OAT Regional Program Coordinator, in a timely manner and would suggest they be submitted for university curriculum approval by the end of the 2019 calendar year at the latest.

We also suggest that admission of new students to the current OAT program be suspended until the curriculum revisions are made.

We appreciate the reviewers thoughtful and complete review of the program.

Sincerely,

Martin Tuck, Dean Ohio University Chillicothe
Nicole Pennington, Dean Ohio University Southern

Martin T. Tuck, Ph.D.
Dean
Ohio University - Chillicothe
tuck@ohio.edu

"If I were giving a young man advice as to how he might succeed in life, I would say to him, pick out a good father and mother, and begin life in Ohio.

~Wilbur Wright