

ABSTRACT

A Study of Effective Remediation Techniques for Physician Assistant Students Placed on Academic Probation in Institutions Offering Master's Degrees

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Purpose: The purpose of this study was to identify perceived effective remediation techniques for Physician Assistant (PA) students placed on academic probation in institutions offering a master's degree and to identify any changes or modifications to remediation methods instituted by PA programs that have transitioned from a nonmaster's degree (bachelor's, associate's, or certificate) to a master's degree program.

Methodology: The study's design was descriptive qualitative/quantitative and 105 physician assistant programs offering master's degrees were surveyed. Participants in seventy-nine programs (70 percent) responded to an online survey which centered on types of remediation used by PA programs that started at the master's level, PA programs which had changed from a nonmaster's to a master's level, standards used that qualified a student to be placed on academic probation, types of remediation programs used, criteria describing a successfully remediated student, the number of students on academic probation, and what types of remediation techniques had been changed or modified, if any, since making the transition from a nonmaster's to a master's level.

Findings: Examination of data demonstrated that the majority of the responding programs had some form of remediation for students on academic probation. Numerous remediation techniques and their frequency were identified indicating the preferred methods of PA programs and their perceived effectiveness. Findings also indicated that students were most frequently placed on academic probation after failing a course. The highest ranked reason considered by participants as to why a student was placed on probation was lack of academic preparation.

Conclusions: This study demonstrated that personal contact with faculty for academic advising/counseling was utilized and considered most effective overall as a type of remediation technique. Early intervention is advisable for students with learning difficulties so that remediation can be tailored to the individual need.

Recommendations: (1) Long-term study should be conducted to discover the learning style differences between successfully and unsuccessfully remediated students, (2) a study should be conducted to further investigate specific causes of lack of academic preparation discovered in this research, and (3) this study should be replicated with students on academic probation as participants to discover their perceptions of effective remediation.