June 28, 2005

A. Lorris Betz  
Senior Vice President for Health Sciences  
5th Floor, Moran Bldg.  
Campus

RE: Graduate Council Review - Department of Exercise and Sport Science

Dear Vice President Betz:

Enclosed is the Graduate Council's review of the Department of Exercise and Sport Science. Included in this review packet are the report prepared by the Graduate Council, the Department Review Sheet, and the Memorandum of Understanding resulting from the review wrap-up meeting.

Please forward this review to the Academic Senate to be placed on the information calendar for the next meeting of the Senate.

Sincerely,

David S. Chapman  
Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies  
Dean, The Graduate School

Encl.

DSC/dh
The Graduate School - University of Utah

GRADUATE COUNCIL REPORT TO THE SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND THE ACADEMIC SENATE

May 10, 2004

The Graduate Council has completed its review of the Department of Exercise and Sport Science. The External Review Committee included:

Nicholas J. Cutforth, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Curriculum and Instruction
College of Education
University of Denver

Christine Wells, Ph.D.,
Professor Emerita of Exercise Science and Physical Education
Arizona State University

The Internal Review Committee of the University of Utah included:

John Bowman, Ph.D.
Professor
Geology and Geophysics

Susan Morrow, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Educational Psychology

Marianna DiPaolo
The following information and recommendations from the Graduate Council are based primarily upon the reports of the external reviewers, the internal review committee, and the response made by Dr. Patricia A. Eisenman, Chair of the Department of Exercise and Sport Science.

DEPARTMENT PROFILE

The Department of Physical Education was formally established in 1982 within the College of Health. The department’s name was changed to the Department of Exercise and Sport Science to reflect the shift in student career opportunities. The mission of the Department of Exercise and Sport Science (DESS) is to use science as a strategy to enhance health and quality of life through regular physical activity.

The Department completed its follow-up to the 1994-95 Graduate Council review in May 1999. Since the last Graduate Council review, the Department has responded to the recommendations of the review committee at that time by (1) receiving accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) in summer 2002, (2) funding the academic advisor position, (3) expanding course evaluation by including all activity courses, (4) enhancing access to the physical facilities, and (5) eliminating the Ed.D. degree option.

Faculty

At the time the Department was reviewed, there were 13 tenured or tenure-track faculty (2 Professors, 6 Associate Professors, 5 Assistant Professors). In terms of faculty makeup, the regular tenured or tenure-track faculty are comprised of 7 women and 6 men, with one ethnic minority faculty member. Women are fairly represented at each rank. Faculty represent a variety of educational backgrounds and areas of specialty. Faculty are made up of a large number of younger professionals, who bring energy and vitality to the program. Students see faculty as top-rate.

Despite unfilled faculty lines, the DESS faculty have demonstrated considerable scholarship productivity. Faculty publications have increased to a high of 22 in the 2002-03 academic year. Faculty also are productive in obtaining internal and external funding. A primary goal of the Director of Graduate Studies is to enhance the level of research in the Department. The department as a whole has made significant progress in research activities while still maintaining its commitment to quality teaching and mentoring of students.
DESS faculty are active in the service arena at every level, including serving as reviewers and editors for professional journals, leadership in professional organizations, and service on university committees. The department has few standing committees, which is intentional and designed to enhance scholarly productivity. RPT standards and guidelines appear to be fair and clearly stated.

**Students**

The Department offers the B.S. degree in Exercise and Sport Science, with five undergraduate tracks enrolling over 500 majors. The creation of this track system accommodates well the large number of ESS majors and their various career interests. The undergraduate tracks include: Athletic Training Education Program (ATEP), Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE), Fitness Leadership, Exercise Physiology, and Exercise Science. The Department also offers M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Exercise and Sport Science, with about 65 students enrolled.

The students are very positive about the quality of education they receive in the department. They stated that the faculty use a variety of teaching approaches to create a rich diversity of learning experiences, including traditional lectures, laboratories in advanced courses, and practical research and service activities in the community.

Undergraduate students expressed concerns regarding their needs for additional mentoring, as well as having graduate students as instructors. Graduate students are concerned that because of the University’s current budget paradigm they feel they are discouraged from taking courses outside of ESS.

**Curriculum**

The curriculum was extensively revamped during the semester conversion a few years ago to reflect health and performance rather than just performance and to update the curriculum with respect to the growing fields associated with health issues. However, the external reviewers found that there still appear to be too many courses and too many undergraduate tracks (five), which may be reduced to at least three (i.e., athletic training, pedagogy, and exercise science; the latter to include psychosocial and biological tracks).

The commendations and recommendations listed below represent a synthesis of key conclusions of the external and internal reviewers.

**COMMENDATIONS**

1. The faculty of the DESS have demonstrated a high degree of commitment to excellence in teaching and research. The DESS has succeeded in making significant progress in research activities while still maintaining the high quality of its research.
2. The DESS faculty are active in the service arena at every level, including serving as reviewers and editors for professional journals, leadership in professional organizations, and service on university committees.

3. The Department has upgraded the rigor of its curriculum in Exercise Physiology by expanding background “hard science” requirements.

4. The DESS has a harmonious staff that works hard and is very committed to the students.

5. Students have the opportunity to participate in the University Research Opportunity Program and undertake paid research placements in hospitals and other community settings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is essential that the Department receive more support from the administration in the form of the operating budget and staff support to carry out vital administrative functions (support for grant writing, payroll paperwork, and basic administrative tasks).

2. A formal system of mentoring junior faculty by senior faculty should be instituted. In particular, junior faculty members need to be aware of university-wide and college opportunities for applying for faculty research funds.

3. The curriculum should be examined and streamlined. A strategy should be developed to provide laboratory experiences, particularly in biomechanics and exercise physiology. This curriculum examination should also assess the use of graduate students in teaching major undergraduate courses.

4. Continued research collaboration across program areas should be encouraged. Senior faculty should play a greater role in such collaborations, and small grants should be provided to enable faculty to receive teaching buy-outs and overload salary.

5. The department can benefit from promoting its mission and purpose both within the College of Health and the wider Salt Lake City community. Consideration should be given to hiring an individual at the department and/or college level who would increase the level of media attention given to the contribution of the department to the health and well being of the city’s residents.

Submitted by the Ad Hoc review committee of the Graduate Council:

Michael Zhdanov (Chair), Geology and Geophysics
Memorandum of Understanding  
Department of Exercise and Sport Science  
Graduate Council Review 2003-04

This memorandum of understanding is a summary of decisions reached at a wrap-up meeting on October 5, 2004, concluding the Graduate Council Review of the Department of Exercise and Sport Science. A. Lorris Betz, Senior Vice President for Health Sciences; James E. Graves, Dean of the College of Health; Patricia A. Eisenman, Chair of the Department of Exercise and Sport Science; David S. Chapman, Dean of the Graduate School; and Frederick Rhodewalt, Associate Dean of the Graduate School were present.

The discussion centered on but was not limited to the following recommendations contained in the Graduate Council review completed on May 10, 2004: (1) The department should receive more support from the administration in the form of operating budget and staff support; (2) A formal system of mentoring junior faculty by senior faculty should be instituted; (3) The curriculum should be examined and streamlined; (4) Continued research collaboration across program areas should be encouraged; and (5) The department can benefit from promoting its mission and purpose both within the College of Health and the wider Salt Lake City community.

At the wrap-up meeting, the working group agreed to endorse the following actions:

**Recommendation 1:** It is essential that the Department receive more support from the administration in the form of the operating budget and staff support to carry out vital administrative functions (support for grant writing, payroll paperwork, and basic administrative tasks).

The Dean of the College of Health is exploring budgeting formulas for increasing support for operating expenses within all college departments. Decreasing SCH in the department restricts some options for funding. The department recognizes that it must be more active in generating funds through research funding and development activities. The Dean provides grant writing assistance to faculty through the support of a college grant writing specialist. The Dean and Chair will generate a plan to increase operating budget and staff support by the end of the Fall 2005 semester.

**Recommendation 2:** A formal system of mentoring junior faculty by senior faculty should be instituted. In particular, junior faculty members need to be aware of university-wide and college opportunities for applying for faculty research funds.

The chair states that the department's current practices effectively address this recommendation. The chair indicates that the department encourages all faculty to participate in the Dean's Incentive Grant
program and university sponsored grant writing seminars. The department also uses "peer teaching evaluation strategies" to provide support for junior faculty with little experience in the classroom.

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Recommendation 3: The curriculum should be examined and streamlined. A strategy should be developed to provide laboratory experiences, particularly in biomechanics and exercise physiology. This curriculum examination should also assess the use of graduate students in teaching major undergraduate courses.

This recommendation refers to a group of recommendations offered in the report of the external reviewers. Specifically, the department now tries to cover five undergraduate concentrations whereas the reviewers believe that three concentrations (athletic training, pedagogy, and exercise science) would be sufficient and would serve to strengthen and reinvigorate the department. They encourage the department to provide laboratory experiences in core courses. They discourage the use of graduate students, even advanced ones, to teach core undergraduate courses. Advanced students should teach these courses only when teamed with faculty and only when the student instructor has acquired necessary expertise.

The chair states that the department is working with the University Honors Program to develop an ESS Honors Program. It is possible that as a result of this activity the number of undergraduate tracks will be adjusted. With regard to laboratory exercises, the department has made the decision to invest its limited resources into laboratory experiences for those tracks designed to prepare students for laboratory intensive graduate work. Other tracks without such a focus do not offer laboratory exercises. In general, laboratory courses are labor and resource intensive and the department does not have the operating budget to support laboratory exercises across all tracks. The chair contends that graduate student instructors are adequately prepared and supervised. The faculty tracks student teaching evaluations and requires graduate student instructors to take the college teaching course before teaching classes.

Recommendation 4: Continued research collaboration across program areas should be encouraged. Senior faculty should play a greater role in such collaborations, and small grants should be provided to enable faculty to receive teaching buy-outs and overload salary.

The Dean of the College of Health has instituted several programs including the Dean's Incentive Program and the Dean's Areas of Excellence Program which address these concerns.

Recommendation 5: The department can benefit from promoting its mission and purpose both within the College of Health and the wider Salt Lake City community. Consideration should be given to hiring an individual at the department and/or college level who would increase the level of media attention given to the contribution of the department to the health and well being of the city's residents.
This recommendation was deemed "not doable" at the department level. However, the College provides a public relations office which is available to departments for publicizing its activities, offerings, and accomplishments.

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This memorandum of understanding is be followed by annual letters of progress from the Department Chair to the Dean of the Graduate School. Letters will be submitted each year until all of the actions described in the preceding paragraphs have been completed.

A. Lorris Betz
David S. Chapman
Patricia A. Eisenman
James E. Graves
Frederick Rhodewalt

David S. Chapman
Assoc. V.P. for Graduate Studies
Dean, The Graduate School
June 28, 2005