The Graduate School — University of Utah

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

September 25, 2006

The Graduate Council has completed its review of the Health Promotion and Education Department. The external reviewers were:

Richard Papenfuss, Ph.D (Chair)
Department of Health Promotion
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Mohammad Torabi, Ph.D.
Chancellor’s Professor and Chairperson
Department of Applied Health Sciences
Indiana University

Robert Gold, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Health and Human Performance
University of Maryland

The Internal Review Committee of the University of Utah included:

Robert D. Hill, Ph.D,
Professor and Chair
Department of Educational Psychology

A. Peter Catinella, M.D., M.P.H.
Associate Professor (Clinical)
Department of Family & Preventive Medicine

Nicola J. Camp, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Medical Informatics
This report by the Graduate Council’s ad hoc review committee is based on the Department of Health Promotion and Education’s self-study, the report of the internal review committee, the report of the external review committee, and the responses of the Chair of the Department of Health Promotion and Education and Dean of the College of Health.

DEPARTMENTAL PROFILE

Overview

The Department of Health Promotion and Education (DHPE) resides in the College of Health. The department offers both undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Rankings based on the productivity of its faculty and the activities of doctoral students suggest that the department enjoys some level of national recognition.

Faculty

The DHPE numbers 8 as core faculty. Of this number, 5 are tenure-track (2 untenured), and 3 are non-tenure but are described as “senior.” In addition, the department reports 2 full-time instructors, 1 research assistant professor, 13 adjunct faculty, and 57 part-time instructors. Of the 11 full-time faculty, 5 are female. One faculty is a Native American. The DHPE does not have a formal mentoring or development program for faculty. Faculty report declining tensions between non-tenure and tenure-track faculty, but unresolved issues remain around concerns such as who should control the curriculum, voting rights, work balance, and professional support.

Research productivity has historically been concentrated in a few faculty. The department reports that publications have increased in recent years. Faculty regularly present their research at national conferences. External reviewers suggested that the research of the faculty is spread over a broad range of phenomena. External funding for research in the department, while historically the highest in the College of Health, has declined dramatically in the last three years. National funding for health promotion and education grants has declined during this time. The department reports an increase in grant submissions and has incentives in place to encourage faculty to seek external funding.

Teaching is a high priority for the faculty. Average scores on the University’s teaching evaluations are consistently above 5 on the 6-point scale. Faculty employ a variety of technologies in their instruction such as WebCT and distance learning. The DHPE goals for teaching loads are 4 courses per year for tenure-track faculty and 6-8 for non-tenure-track faculty.
The Chair of the Department is an auxiliary faculty member. While he is widely commended for his performance in this role, there is consensus that a full professor would be desirable as department chair.

Students

The DHPE currently has over 200 undergraduate majors, up from 70 at the last Graduate Council Review. The number of graduate students has also increased from 41 to 53 with most of the increase coming in the Ph.D. Program, which now numbers 32. The DHPE currently provides full funding for 4 Ph.D. students and has a goal of funding one student per core faculty member through scholarships and external funding. Lack of resources for Ph.D. students is a concern, particularly a lack of funding to support research presentations at conferences. Graduate applicants are required to have a 3.0 GPA for the master’s program and a 3.2 GPA for the Ph.D. Graduate students teach in the undergraduate program, but often do so without adequate faculty supervision. Finding appropriate matches between student and faculty research interests also appears to present a challenge.

Programs

The department awards a B.S. degree in five emphasis areas or tracks: 1) Community Health, 2) Emergency and Medical Services (EMS), 3) School Health, 4) Provider Health, and 5) Consumer Health. Credit hour requirements range from 32 (School Health) to 60 hours (EMS).

The department also offers graduate programs that are designed to qualify students in the systematic development and implementation of health education programs. Students complete core courses and then specialize under the direction of a faculty committee. The department is in the process of redesigning its graduate curriculum to a format that includes the elimination of specialty tracks and the implementation of an article-based dissertation for Ph.D. students. Questions were raised by the internal reviewers about how well informed students were about curriculum issues, particularly those related to changes, and student tensions about the curriculum were noted. The DHPE currently does not systematically track the post-graduation placement of its graduates. External reviewers expressed the concern that the doctoral program has been declining. The number of Ph.D. students per core faculty member may be a concern as well.

Facilities and Resources

The department is physically located in the Annex, which allows all faculty to be located together. Office and classroom facilities are reported to be satisfactory. Library and computing resources also are adequate.

Internal and external reviewers noted that the operational budget is a concern. The Department projected a deficit in the last fiscal year.
COMMENDATIONS

1. The department enjoys a national reputation. Department graduates have had a significant impact on the profession. Addition of new faculty has improved the image of the department and its opportunities to increase its visibility.

2. The chair and faculty are committed to the success of the department and its students. This commitment is reflected in the revision of curricula at the graduate and undergraduate levels. The faculty has also become more unified in the last four years.

3. Individual faculty members are involved in significant collaborations with the Health Sciences Center and the College of Health.

4. Faculty and staff are committed to serving students well. Faculty and staff capably provide academic advising and guidance on recruitment and related activities.

5. The college has offered incentives for faculty to seek external funding. New performance standards in the department also encourage an increased emphasis on external funding as well as research output more generally.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Identify a long-term strategic plan. The plan should establish priorities for curriculum focus and resource allocation and provide guidance for potential faculty and chair searches. Specifically, the strategic plan should identify a focus on fewer undergraduate tracks and more focus in the research areas that the faculty pursues. The department should consider the optimal size of its programs given its faculty resources. Given the size of the faculty and the broad scope of the field, it may be advisable for the department to identify areas where they can establish a national reputation and have the greatest impact on research and practice. The strategic plan should also address the role of auxiliary faculty, particularly the appropriate scope of their voting rights.

2. Appoint or hire a tenured faculty member to serve as department chair.

3. Emphasize obtaining external funding. Provide more support to faculty in identifying sources of potential grant funding and in the administrative support needed to submit grant proposals. Distribution formula for indirect costs from external funding should be clearly communicated to faculty.

4. Institute formal and informal mentoring for untenured faculty.
5. Explore ways to increase the resources devoted to the doctoral program. One possible means to consider is converting auxiliary faculty positions into assistantships. Adopt a more systematic approach to mentoring doctoral students both in teaching and research. Provide resources for doctoral students to present research at conferences.

6. Institute mechanisms that involve and inform students more in curriculum issues. Organize the undergraduate curriculum committee as a standing committee of faculty and student representatives. The committee should meet to discuss all aspects of the undergraduate program and should consider student feedback as it evaluates and revises the curriculum. Mechanisms should also be identified and implemented that involve students more in graduate curriculum design. The department should also institute processes to keep students better informed about the curriculum and department events.

7. Initiate a systematic outcome assessment effort. Evaluate students' post-graduation outcomes (job placement, publications, certifications, post-graduate education, etc.). Systematic data collected from surveys of students and employers should be used to evaluate programs.

**ACTIONS TAKEN SINCE INITIATION OF THE REVIEW**

1. The department has established priorities for: 1) securing funding for a new department chair, 2) completing a strategic plan, 3) obtaining resources for doctoral students, and 4) obtaining funding for faculty travel.

2. A timetable has been established for hiring a department chair to be in position by the fall of 2008.

3. The department has addressed the organization of the faculty to clarify responsibilities for undergraduate and graduate programs.

4. The department has initiated a strategic planning process and established timelines for that process. A new mission statement has been adopted as well as new department goals.

5. Funding inequities are being evaluated across departments and divisions by the dean and a College of Health fiscal committee.

6. The department has identified external grants and services funding as a strategic planning goal and has established expectations for all graduate faculty.

7. The undergraduate curriculum has been revised and an undergraduate committee has been formed. Inclusion of students is being considered.
8. A committee has been formed to expand evaluation of the department and is implementing steps to provide ongoing feedback to ways to better serve students and the profession.

Submitted by the Ad Hoc Review Committee of the Graduate Council:

William Hesterly (Chair), Department of Management
Steve Bealer, Pharmacology and Toxicology
Kevin Rathunde, Family and Consumer Studies
Ryan Smith, Architecture + Planning
Memorandum of Understanding
Department of Health Promotion and Education

This memorandum of understanding is a summary of decisions reached at a wrap-up meeting on Tuesday, 5 June 2007, concluding the Graduate Council Review of the Division of Nutrition. A. Lorris Betz, Senior Vice President for Health Sciences; James E. Graves, Dean of the College of Health; Les Chatelain, Chair of the Department of Health Promotion and Education; 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 recommendations contained in the Graduate Council review completed on 25 September 2006, which addressed the following issues:

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

A general issue emerged from the discussions and that is that a major challenge for the Department of Health Promotion and Education is to establish and support and sustain a healthy faculty. At present, the Department is chronically stressed because of the ongoing departure of junior faculty and high student demand. The Dean of the College of Health and the Chair of the Department are urged to create an infrastructure that supports faculty development and satisfaction.

1. Identify a long-term strategic plan. The plan should establish priorities for curriculum focus and resource allocation and provide guidance for potential faculty and chair searches. Specifically, the strategic plan should identify a focus on fewer undergraduate tracks and more focus in the research areas that the faculty pursues. The department should consider the optimal size of its programs given its faculty resources. Given the size of the faculty and the broad scope of the field, it may be advisable for the department to identify areas where they can establish a national reputation and have the greatest impact on research and practice. The strategic plan should also address the role of auxiliary faculty, particularly the appropriate scope of their voting rights.

The Department is taking a multi-pronged approach to address this recommendation. First, the Chair reports that the Department is moving toward defined graduate and undergraduate responsibilities. Tenure track faculty oversee and participate in the graduate program and auxiliary and clinical faculty oversee and participate in the undergraduate program. The Chair has established an undergraduate committee to direct undergraduate planning and curriculum decisions. This committee will review undergraduate tracks to the number while being attentive to the contingencies of the SCH formula. Second, the Chair has contracted with a consultant to provide guidance as they prepare a strategic plan for department. A draft of the strategic plan will be available by the end of fall semester, 2007. Third, the Department is reducing the number of Ph.D. students in order to have more manageable and higher quality mentoring between graduate faculty and students. Through reduced admissions in 2007 the number will be reduced to 20 or less students. The Department has identified 12 as the optimal number of students and will work to achieve that number over the next several rounds of admission.
2. Appoint or hire a tenured faculty member to serve as department chair.

The Department is submitting a formal request to the College to fill one of its vacant tenure lines with a senior scholar who would serve as chair. The tentative plan is to search during the 2007-08 academic year and have the person in residence at the beginning of Fall, 2008.

3. Emphasize obtaining external funding. Provide more support to faculty in identifying sources of potential grant funding and in the administrative support needed to submit grant proposals. Distribution formula for indirect costs from external funding should be clearly communicated to faculty.

The Department has made external funding a strategic planning goal and is identifying funding expectations for all regular faculty. The Chair notes that number of grant applications increased last year over recent years. The Dean is reviewing returned overhead distributions within the College as one source of increased support. In addition, he intends to redirect distribution of state funds to the Department within the guidelines of the mission based funding formula.

4. Institute formal and informal mentoring for untenured faculty.

The Dean has made junior faculty mentoring a college wide initiative. He has appointed an Associate Dean for Academic Affairs who has oversight in this area. The College now holds regularly scheduled meetings (twice a year) for junior faculty. The Department is focusing its faculty recruiting on those individuals who are explicitly committed to a research career in order to promote an atmosphere of research and scholarship as a core value.

5. Explore ways to increase the resources devoted to the doctoral program. One possible means to consider is converting auxiliary faculty positions into graduate student assistantships. Adopt a more systematic approach to mentoring doctoral students both in teaching and research. Provide resources for doctoral students to present research at conferences.

Responsibility for supporting and mentoring graduate students has been given to the newly created graduate committee who will assign teaching assistantships and monitor student progress. The faculty is assessing the feasibility of transferring classes taught by adjunct faculty to graduate teaching assistants and tenure track faculty. The goal of strengthening the doctoral program will be a focus of the strategic plan.

6. Institute mechanisms that involve and inform students more in curriculum issues. Organize the undergraduate curriculum committee as a standing committee of faculty and student representatives. The committee should meet to discuss all aspects of the undergraduate program and should consider student feedback as it evaluates and revises the curriculum. Mechanisms should also be identified and implemented that involve students more in graduate curriculum design. The department should also institute processes to keep students better informed about the curriculum and department events.

Both the undergraduate and graduate committees are exploring ways to include student input and representation on the respective committees. The Department has established a graduate student email distribution list to facilitate communication with students.
7. Initiate systematic outcome assessment effort. Evaluate students’ post-graduation outcomes (job placement, publications, certifications, post-graduate education, etc.) Systematic data collected from surveys of students and employers should be used to evaluate programs.

The Chair has created a committee to expand and improve current evaluation procedures within the Department. Specifically, the committee will track course evaluations to evaluate changes in the undergraduate curriculum. The Department will offer more opportunities for student feedback including end of year on-line and in-class surveys.

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

A. Lorris Betz
James E. Graves
Les Chatelain
Frederick Rhodewalt

[Signature]
David S. Chapman
Associate VP for Graduate Studies
Dean, Graduate School
### Department Review by Academic Year

#### College of Health: Health Promotion and Education

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