

Academic Program Review of the School Health Education
Program
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Prepared by the Academic Review Subcommittee:

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BACKGROUND:

The School Health Education (SHE) Program resides in the Department of Health Education and Health Promotion (HEHP) in the College of Science and Health. The program is also part of the School of Education (SOE). Three faculty members teach in the program, which offers a minor, a major and a MS in SHE. The Department also offers a major and a MS in Community Health Education (CHE), and a Master of Public Health in Community Health Education (MPH-CHE). This is the first Academic Program Review addressing the School Health Education Program in isolation.

The SHE Program submitted its self-study to the Dean's office in Fall of 2005. The external reviewer (Marlene K. Tappe, Ph.D., C.H.E.S.) visited and submitted an external review in Spring 2007. The Departmental response to the external review was completed in Spring 2007. The Dean's comments were completed in Fall 2007.

SUMMARY OF THE SELF-STUDY:

APR's summary of how the academic program attempts to reach its goals and objectives and the extent to which those goals and objectives have been achieved.

As a preK-12 teacher preparation/licensure program, the SHE Program shares the mission of the School of Education. Based in the HEHP Department, the SHE Program goals are:

- 1) To prepare entry level health educators to function in a variety of health settings (i.e., school, community, clinical);
- 2) To provide a graduate program to those seeking advanced knowledge and skills in health education;
- 3) To prepare students in the professional roles and responsibilities of a health educator; and
- 4) To provide educational experiences that enable these pre-service, as well as graduate level, professionals to describe the parameters of the profession and exhibit the skills necessary to function as a health educator.

These goals are achieved by rigorous courses in both content and pedagogy. The faculty of the Program is dedicated to the most current trends in their field, to national

educational initiatives, to clinical experience and to state wide teaching standards (the Wisconsin Teacher Standards, WITS). The Program has strong assessment procedures based on the WITS. The SHE undergraduate and graduate programs are the only school health education programs in the state of Wisconsin.

Notable Strengths and Weaknesses of the Program:

The Program is committed to excellence in teaching. Most notably, the Program (1) has implemented a system of ‘Teacher Candidate Portfolio Presentations’ that traces the development of students and allows them to be self-critical of their work while adhering to the WITS; (2) has implemented a detailed Clinical and Teaching Evaluation Rubric; and (3) offers three levels of clinical experience, allowing students to work in a school setting. 93% of students in the program pass PRAXIS II (a test required by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction) in the first attempt; this is a much higher rate than that of other schools (which offer minors in SHE) in the UW system. The Program responds adequately to exit surveys by implementing curriculum changes based on program evaluations.

Areas of concern for the SHE Program include (1) resources for professional development and instruction, (2) advising, (3) adequate institutional support for the graduate program, (4) faculty release time for strategic planning and administrative functions; and (5) the need for one more faculty line.

APR comments on particular components of the self-study:

Curriculum: The SHE Program is to be commended for its curriculum. The Program succeeds in reaching the standards of the HEHP Department, the School of Education and the College of Science and Health. The curriculum reflects both the health and the education components of the program. In addition, the Program’s emphasis on clinical experience requires a high level of strategic planning on the part of the faculty.

Assessment: The SHE Program has a detailed assessment of both the Program and student learning that correspond to the standards of the WITS. There is a lack of comparable program specific standards, but this lack is typical in the field.

Degree of Program Success: (1) The students identified the need for more advising, as well as for careful planning of their clinical experience. (2) There is a marked disparity between the enrollment of the undergraduate program and graduate programs. The main issue is that students seeking a graduate degree are not traditional students, and the program needs to cater to their time restrictions and geographical proximity to La Crosse. This puts additional pressure on the faculty to deliver an adequate curriculum for graduate students during the summer.

Previous Academic Program Review and New Program Initiatives:

This is the first time the SHE Program is reviewed as a separate entity. The SHE Program has developed partnerships with local schools to enrich the Clinical III component. Ideas and options are currently being explored to improve the curriculum for the Masters degree in SHE.

COMMENTS ON THE EXTERNAL PROGRAM REVIEW:

In addition to reviewing the SHE Program, the external reviewer was asked to assess the possibility of merging the SHE Program with the Physical Education Teacher Education Program and to evaluate the location of the School of Education within the College of Liberal Studies.

The external reviewer found the SHE Program outstanding. She made particular mention of the syllabi, which remain within the contemporary practice of the discipline. The reviewer supported the full integration of the WITS and called the assessment of both the Program and students 'exemplary.' The reviewer pointed out that graduate level programs in SHE are not common nationally, and praised the MS in SHE at UW-L for serving the state of Wisconsin.

The external reviewer noted that the faculty has a substantial record of teaching, scholarship and service. The reviewer showed concern for the dissolution of the partnership with Onalaska school district, but this problem has been solved since then.

In addition to curricular recommendations, the external reviewer's recommendations address the lack of resources and the need for release time for faculty to fulfill administrative responsibilities. The reviewer emphasized that the SHE Program needs the support of the College of Science and Health in addition to that of the HEHP Department as a whole.

Notable specific recommendations included (1) the accessibility of information regarding the total amount of professional development funds and the total amount of instructional resource funds; and (2) a transparent system for the distribution of these funds from the Department, College and SOE.

The external reviewer recommended (1) not to pursue a dual Program in SHE and Physical Education; and (2) to structure the School of Education as an entity separate from the College of Liberal Studies.

COMMENTS ON THE DEAN'S RESPONSE:

The Dean of the College of Science and Health agreed with the External Program Review. She is impressed by the performance of the program and by the commitment of the faculty. She noted that at the moment it is unrealistic to consider an additional faculty line in the SHE Program.

The Dean has three specific recommendations: (1) the HEHP Department needs to develop a five year strategic plan based on sustained conversations among the health education faculty; (2) to improve the utilization of existing resources, such as the School of Education Office of Field Experience; and (3) the establishment of the School of Education as a separate entity from the College of Liberal Studies.

APR'S RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Academic Program Review committee finds no serious issues to address and recommends that the SHE program should be reviewed next according to the standard review cycle. During this period the following items should be addressed:

1. The Program should review advising procedures to address student concerns.
2. The Department should organize a faculty retreat to address concerns of both the SHE and CHE Programs, and to develop a five-year strategic plan.
3. Clarification is needed regarding the funds available (from the Department, College and SOE) for faculty development and instruction resources. Also, the Department needs to establish transparent and detailed guidelines for the distribution on funds.
4. The Program should try to redesign the graduate program so that it meets the needs of non-traditional students. Related to this, the College should support the graduate program by providing adequate pay to faculty during the summer and by giving release time to faculty for administrative roles.
5. The University should explore the possibility of establishing the School of Education as a separate entity to simplify its administrative relation with the SHE and CHE Programs.