

**Jerry and Vickie Moyes College of Education**  
**Health Promotion Program Review**  
**Site Visit: February 22, 2019**

**Program Goals and Mission:**

The mission of the Health Promotion Program (HPP) is two-fold: (a) to prepare students to work as health education specialists in health-related settings (e.g., hospitals, community health agencies, worksites, schools, etc.); and (b) to assist students to acquire knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to adopt and maintain health behaviors. In pursuit of this mission, the program has identified three primary goals: (1) to provide students with academic training based on the standards of professional preparation and practice in health education/promotion forwarded by the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing (NCHEC); (2) to provide Weber State University (WSU) with a general education course, HLTH 1030 (Healthy Lifestyles), that counts as a social science elective for students; and (3) to provide students with supervised internship experiences that benefit both the student (in terms of professional growth and work experience), and the organization (in regard to student assistance with key tasks and services). (Executive Summary, p.1)

**Standards:**

The review team carefully considered the standards listed below in identifying the strengths, challenges, and recommendations of the Health Promotion Program (HPP). Data were collected from site interviews with faculty, staff, department leadership, students, program stakeholders, and the self-study to inform the review team recommendations.

**A. Mission**

Strengths: The HPP is clearly fulfilling their mission of providing students training based in the NCHEC responsibility areas, a university-wide elective, and a valuable internship experience for the HPP majors.

Challenges: Faculty seemed to lack a clear program vision for the future of the program. Students interviewed were unaware that NCHEC was the basis for program mission.

Recommendations:

- While the HPP is clearly meeting its current mission, the focus is more on university and department deliverables rather than the future and goals of the HPP.
- We recommend that HPP faculty work together to create a strategic plan for the program
- We suggest this plan include a program vision, mission, objectives, strategies, and action plan to achieve these.

**B. Curriculum**

Strengths:

We commend the HPP for their intentional curriculum mapping of NCHEC responsibility areas to process courses. The related data collection and evaluation is impressive.

The additional program resources allocated to CHES prep for students is noteworthy. The recent hiring of highly qualified faculty, along with the expertise of existing faculty, will likely strengthen the program curriculum in the coming years.

Challenges: There is a need for the program to deliver more professional development courses to better meet the needs of students in the HPP major. Additionally, the HPP should find a balance between the number of content courses offered and the number of professional development courses, especially given the limited number of faculty within the HPP program and the desire to limit adjunct teaching assignments. Students expressed a need for more

professional preparation coursework and community stakeholders indicated that students are not always prepared with needed skills to succeed. Data provided indicate WSU students who sit for the CHES exam score consistently below national averages in NCHEC responsibility areas 4, 5 and 6. Benchmark data indicate that HPP students who take the CHES mock exam show similar trends. The focus of online delivery of professional development courses brings with it instructional and pedagogical challenges.

Recommendations:

- Students desire more authentic learning experiences that apply directly to workplace skills. HPP faculty are encouraged to incorporate work with health agencies into class projects and to increase the number of professionals as guest speakers in courses.
- Course content areas that should be considered for inclusion in the HPP curriculum include: health policy development, grant writing, practical application of technology, budgeting, health data query methods, and program administration.
- Information about recommended scaffolding of courses is needed. Senior students could provide input on which courses should be offered when and what courses should be considered required vs. electives (e.g., theory course).
- Consider offering a program planning and evaluation course over two semesters instead of one.
- In order to accommodate students with more content-oriented interests as well as those seeking a career in professional health education, consider multiple tracks within the HPP (e.g. holistic health, community health).
- Consider offering a face-to-face section and an online section of professional development courses to better meet the needs of students.

### **C. Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment**

Strengths: Benchmark data are collected and reviewed annually based on program goals.

Challenges: It is unclear how data are used to address curriculum weaknesses or create program changes.

Recommendations: The policies, procedures, and outcomes of annual benchmark reviews should be documented.

### **D. Academic Advising**

Strengths: A new advisor is in place with a clear plan to follow HPP curriculum and reduce program exceptions for students. A plan is in place for review of advising performance benchmarks by faculty and students.

Challenges: Students may be unfamiliar with sequencing of classes that is most effective for student learning. Students desired more career options and related advice from the advisor.

Recommendations:

- The advisor should work closely with the HPP program director to develop a plan and a means to disseminate information to students concerning the suggested sequencing of courses as well as the alignment of courses to NHCEC areas.
- If not already in place, the advisor should consider developing career opportunities in the field of HPP for student advisees.
- A student advisory board could be established to provide feedback on curriculum sequencing and other student needs not currently being met (or perceived as not being met).

## **E. Faculty**

Strengths: New faculty have recently been hired to better meet the needs of the HPP and their students. Teacher training is available at WSU to improve teaching as needed. Students felt supported and mentored by HPP faculty during their time at WSU and after graduation.

Challenges: The prevalence of online delivery of some advanced courses is challenging for some students. Additional training in creating online courses using best practices is needed for new faculty. Engaging and mentoring students in online courses needs to be addressed. Students reported feeling isolated and less supported and/or mentored in online courses.

Recommendations:

- Conduct peer reviews of online courses to ensure best practices are followed, provide recommendations, and share ideas about effective teaching in an online classroom.
- Develop recommended strategies for online HPP courses to engage students.
- Provide opportunities for students who may not be on campus often to be mentored by HPP faculty.
- Develop a plan for equitable faculty input into the direction and decision-making related to the HPP program.

## **F. Program Support**

Strengths: The HPP seems well supported with the addition of the internship coordinator, additional faculty, advisor, and office support.

Challenges: None identified

Recommendations: None

## **G. Relationships with External Communities**

Strengths: The HPP has well-established relationships with multiple community and health-based organizations to place students for their internships. Data are being collected by the HPP from stakeholders and alumni to evaluate the satisfaction of these relationships. WSU conducts site visits while students are completing internship hours, a rare practice at most universities. Having an internship coordinator ensures HPP students receive standardized information and evaluations concerning internship expectations. Stakeholders reported that WSU students were professional, passionate, understood prevention, and were able to multi-task. Stakeholders believed CHES was important and desirable for students.

Challenges: Stakeholders reported that at times students seemed disengaged and burnt out. The skill set students possessed was inconsistent and they often did not have even basic skills necessary for a successful internship (e.g, computer skills).

Recommendations:

- Require students to have completed advanced level coursework prior to internship placement.
- CHES competencies are currently not part of the evaluation tool used for students completing internships.
- We recommend that the internship expectations be revised to require specific deliverables that directly correlate to CHES responsibilities. These expectations should be the basis for the student's final grade. Such ratings could replace or supplement current evaluations of generic professional behaviors (e.g, timeliness, professional attire).

## H. Results of Previous Program Reviews

Strengths: Recommendations that were reported in the past program evaluation and were directly observed or inquired about during this review were:

- Additional CHES preparation for students
- Additional faculty
- Continued focus on internship and collaboration with community stakeholders
- Curriculum mapping of CHES in HPP courses  
Creation of program benchmarks in courses that align with CHES

Challenges: A few areas still need to be addressed. These include:

- Early exposure to the health promotion field and career opportunities
- Emphasis on the importance of CHES and how the HPP coursework prepares them for CHES
- With new faculty and decreased reliance on adjuncts, both course rigor and alignment between NCHEC criteria and course content are expected to improve. No data supports this at present.

Recommendations:

- Students expressed a desire for more exposure to working professionals and authentic learning in courses.
- We recommend incorporating guest speakers in *lower level* courses that address career opportunities.
- Similarly, students should be exposed to the importance of CHES early in their program of study.
- HPP should continue to collect benchmark data to monitor improvements in course rigor and the extent to which NHEC responsibilities are being adequately covered in coursework.

## Conclusions:

It is an exciting time for the HPP with the addition of three additional full-time faculty. The relocation of Exercise and Sport Science yields support staff who are able to focus more exclusively on the HPP. We look forward to seeing the program evolve with these changes. This is an ideal time to clarify the HPP vision and involve faculty, staff, and students in the implementation of that vision. The HPP is clearly an impactful program at WSU and one that serves the needs of students, campus, and community and beyond.

## Review Team:

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