

Faculty Response to Site Visit and Program Review June 2021

The Department of Health Sciences wishes to express appreciation to everyone who was involved with our self-study and site visit. The feedback we received has been exceptionally valuable. We recognize the sacrifice, time and effort involved in thoroughly evaluating our program and providing constructive feedback. Your insightful recommendations will be looked at frequently as we work to implement changes to address your points. Below is our response to the HTHS Review Team Report.

Standard A – Mission Statement

Recommendation Summary: Make the current mission statement available somewhere on our department website

Response: We are in the process of updating our online resources and page designs and will include the new, updated mission statement in a place that is easy to find.

Standard B – Curriculum

Recommendation Summary: Space is a critical issue. Look at what the college might be able to do in terms of classroom and lab space. Explore alternative teaching methodologies to continue to reach the high number of students we have in our program.

Response: We were able to convert a portion of our lab space that was not used as much to make a faculty office for our professor who did not have an office in our department. We were also able to work with the college to free up storage space in a large closet located off our labs. These changes will allow us to make better use of the space we currently have.

We have increased our online offerings and have scaled back our campus course and lab offerings for the Fall 2021 semester. We hope this approach will allow us to critically look at the need for large labs and the number of offerings we have had in the past. As we continue to redesign courses we will explore options of blended classrooms, alternative lab formats, flipped classes and similar teaching approaches that might alleviate some of the demand on the physical space in our building. We will continue to promote our course offerings at the Davis campus and those offered in the evenings as these sections tend to have lower enrollments.

Standard C – Student Learning Outcomes and Assessments

Recommendation Summary: The committee identified four specific areas of improvement. 1. An exit and alumni survey would help inform what happens to the students who move through our program, especially those who are not accepted into their health profession program of choice. 2. A BS or BAS in Health Sciences would help capture some of the students who are not

accepted into a health profession program. 3. A clear sequence of courses should be presented to students to help prevent confusion and allow for better class planning. 4. Quiz and exam questions should be evaluated to verify congruence between learning objectives, course content and assessment questions.

Response:

1. Students passing through our program need better follow up and encouragement. An exit and/or alumni survey would be very helpful to identify what happens to our students after they complete classes in our program. We will work with the advising office to see if there is a way we can better track students after they have completed the Health Sciences courses required by the various health profession programs. We will work to gather contact information that we can use to send out a survey to allow us to identify the obstacles faced by students applying for their respective programs or seeking some kind of alternative degree option.
2. We feel the BS/BAS degree is still a great option and would provide students with an appealing alternative to the other programs in our college, however the space, faculty and financial limitations that currently exist in our college make the development of such a program almost impossible. We will continue to explore options for the development of such a degree, but without strong support at the college and university level, it will be challenging.
3. We will develop a course sequence flier that can be distributed to potential students, students who seek advising, as well as students who are already enrolled in HTHS courses. This kind of informational flier could be added to an "Other Resources" page that exist in almost all of our courses and could be added to a resource page linked to from our department webpage.
4. We will establish a clear process for evaluating assessment materials and will pay special attention to the connection between learning unit objectives and assessment items. We have done this to a certain degree already, but recognize it should be an ongoing process. The transition from Chitester to Canvas Quizzes will give us an additional opportunity to verify congruence between course content and delivery and our assessment of learning.

Standard D – Academic Advising

Recommendation Summary: Students need to receive advising not just as they begin taking classes towards the program they intend to apply for, but also closer to the application period. Students need to be better instructed about the application process. More advisers are needed to manage the quantity of students seeking help.

Response: We will work more closely with the advising office to identify ways that we can better communicate to students about the need to seek advising help early on, but also regularly as they complete courses and work towards application. We will explore what options exist for students to get more specific program advising. We will continue to support the advising office's requests for more help as well as more space to house new advising team

members. It is important that the college and university understands that it is simply not possible for the Health Sciences Department, with its limited faculty and staff, to advise the thousands of students it teaches without the help of the advising office.

Standard E – Faculty

Recommendation Summary: Physical space and high student numbers are a challenge. Look into hiring more adjuncts or offer more courses or labs in the evening.

Response: We were able to construct a faculty office this summer. It is possible and may even be required to hire adjuncts to teach additional online sections of our courses to manage the student demand. Providing more sections of labs or classes in the evening is not a viable solution as the courses and labs that we currently offer (taught primarily by adjuncts and lab instructors) in the evenings do not typically fill to capacity. The demand for lab sections and classes is highest online and during the day. We will continue to explore other options for class and lab days, times and delivery methodologies.

Standard F – Program Support

Recommendation Summary: We make good use of the support staff that we currently have, but the lab manager and administrative specialist are burdened by the sheer number of students in our department. Hiring part time or student help to manage the labs or help with the advising that often falls to the administrative specialist would help shoulder the workload. More equipment for the lab would give more students access to needed learning tools.

Response: Hiring additional help for lab management or advising within the department is a great idea, but there is currently no physical space for a person in such a position. We have been told by the college administration that it isn't wise to hire individuals without already having a place for them to work. It is a great idea and would be a benefit to the department, but it is not practical at the current time.

We were able to secure almost \$20,000 in grant money to purchase new lab models and equipment in April/May of this year, in addition to the grants we were awarded during the last year. We were required to make a change to the position status of the lab manager, which should help to free up some of the lab budget that was previously designated for her salary. This will allow us more opportunities to update our current equipment and obtain new learning tools.

Standard G – Relationship with External Communities

Recommendation Summary: Establish an advisory committee with representatives from professional programs outside of WSU to increase relevancy and obtain feedback from outside partners and other programs.

Response: We will work to establish what an appropriate advisory committee would look like for a program such as ours and will approach community partners with an invitation to be on such a committee. It seems logical to include a representative from each program in our college. We will meet with this committee and seek feedback on the current state of our program and what we could do to better prepare our students for the various health profession programs and eventual work in health care settings.

Standard H – Program Summary

Recommendation Summary: See the above summaries. Overall, space and personnel are the most needed additions to the Health Sciences Department.

Response: We support the idea of a new building to support the expanding needs of health profession students. Obviously, this is not an easy solution or something that is readily doable, but would be a tremendous benefit to our department as well as the entire college. Anything that can be done to free up more space for our expanding student population or to accommodate an increase in faculty or staff in our department would open a lot of possibilities for future program development and improvement.