

**School of Human Kinetics and Recreation
Academic Program Review Report
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM.....	4
Overview	
Undergraduate Programs	
Recommendations	
CO-OP PROGRAM.....	6
Recommendations	
GRADUATE PROGRAM.....	7
Overview	
Recommendations	
WORKLOAD	9
Overview	
Recommendations	
FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT	10
Overview	
Recommendations	
COMMUNITY SERVICE AND RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES.....	12
Overview	
SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING COMMENTS.....	12

Introduction

To begin the review of the Human Kinetics & Recreation Program at Memorial University of Newfoundland, all review members received the Self-study Report from the School of Human Kinetics & Recreation. At the first meeting upon arrival on Wednesday afternoon the committee members shared their comments of the review document and prepared for the site visit itinerary provided by Joan Bessey. Wednesday evening panel members had a working dinner meeting with Dr. Eddy Campbell and acting Dean of Graduate Studies, Dr. Noreen Golfman. Thursday and Friday the review panel members followed the site visit itinerary (appendix 1) including an exit interview with the Academic Vice President and an exit interview with the Director of the School, faculty students and staff.

Based on the review document and the meeting with Dr. Campbell and Dr. Golfman, the approach the review committee would take in reviewing the School was established. The Self-study Report prepared by various sub committees was divided into five major sections; the Undergraduate Program including Co-operative Education, the Graduate Program and research involvement, Community service by faculty members and a discussion of facilities and equipment. Comments and recommendations from the Review team are under the same headings as those presented in the Self-study Report.

As indicated in the Self-study Report, the committee agrees that the timing of this academic review is positive for the future direction of the School. The University is in the middle of a strategic planning process, Dr. Mary Bluechardt has been appointed as Director of the School and there is a new Director of Athletics position.

School of Human Kinetics & Recreation

It is the review panel's opinion that the School of Human Kinetics & Recreation presents a strong commitment to teaching, research and publication, and community service. The school has evolved from offering a single Bachelor of Physical Education degree, established in 1961, to now offering undergraduate degrees in Recreation, Kinesiology, Physical Education and Graduate Programs at the Masters level in all three areas. Much of this growth has occurred at a rapid pace in the last decade. This increased size of the program, although welcomed and encouraged by all stake holders, presents problems which are

addressed in this report. Also, the service component offered by the School to the wider University Community has increased markedly.

Relative to other institutions in Canada which offer undergraduate degrees in Human Kinetics, Physical Education and or Recreation, the Kinetics and Recreation degrees at Memorial are current, but we believe the Physical Education degree needs to be updated at both the graduate and undergraduate levels.

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

Overview

The three degree offerings in the School of Human Kinetics and Recreation (HKR) provide prospective students with a wide range of options regarding their interest in pursuing an education. According to recent statistics provided in the Self-Study Report, applications to Kinesiology and Physical Education programs are adequate. The review panel has some concern about current enrollment in the Bachelor of Recreation degree.

Although the Self-Study Report of the School of Human Kinetics and Recreation includes a model with a vision statement and mission statement the review panel believes the Undergraduate Program needs to perform an internal review of the curriculum offered in all three degree areas: Physical Education, Kinesiology and Recreation with a view to updating their present curriculum. The recommendations follow from discussions with faculty, students and staff and the Self-Study Report. It is unclear to the review panel if the mission statement is being achieved.

Programs

The Physical Education stream has not experienced real change in a number of years. According to faculty, professionals in the field, and officials from the Department of Education, the program is no longer aligned with the present thinking by practitioners in the field or with the goals of this and other provinces education systems. The latter is critically important as the majority of graduates of Physical Education eventually become teachers in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador or elsewhere in Canada.

In addition, this program has not been maximally efficient within its present parameters. Some components of the program are redundant For example; the

same or similar courses taken at the undergraduate level are repeated later when students enter the Faculty of Education. Approximately ten years ago the Faculty of Education changed their degree program for these students from a conjoint program to a one year Bachelor of Education after Degree program. Faculty who teach in Physical Education, unlike faculty in many other academic areas in the University, view their role as twofold, preparing students in a professional subject area and preparing students to teach. In this way they are similar to the Faculty of Music where pedagogy is considered to be a crucial element. Therefore, when Education changed their program Physical Education faculty sought to retain program elements thought to be crucial to teachers. Because the Education Faculty view their degree as independent, many teaching components included in the Physical Education program are repeated for students who go on to complete a Bachelor of Education after their first Degree.

The removal of these redundant components with Education is complicated by the fact that not all Physical Education students aspire to do their Education degree. Some students prefer to work outside of the regular school system and believe the Education degree to be of no benefit, while still others are unable to gain admittance to the Faculty of Education. Therefore, these students may require components that are redundant for those students selected into the Faculty of Education.

A review of the Kinesiology stream has not occurred recently. Few faculty or students commented on program design and curriculum content. The recent increases in the number of students applying to graduate programs in this area suggest that program content is appropriate. However, in light of the suggestion for an internal review of the Human Kinetics curriculum, reviewing the curriculum of Kinesiology is recommended as it relates to the other two streams.

The Recreation stream recently changed to include therapeutic recreation and a required Co-op element. These changes were made partly to attract clientele and partly to provide more shared course elements. These shared courses serve to provide more efficient delivery as well as to give all students a shared identity within HKR. It is too early to ascertain the effect of these changes on the program. Students commented that the transfer of credits to this program from recreation programs at the College of the North Atlantic was difficult, leading to a possible reduction of entrants.

Interviews with undergraduate students indicated some dissatisfaction with professional program advising. Students complained about the quality of information available on programs and careers. Most felt that formal contact with Faculty would be helpful. It is not clear that these complaints originate in a lack of independence on the part of students, in poor information given to students, or other extenuating factors. A comparison of student feedback regarding an initial course that included short presentations from many faculty from each stream of

HKR indicated a high level of satisfaction and that these presentations were highly valued.

Recommendations

1. Under the direction of Dr. Mary Bluehardt an internal Academic Curriculum Review Committee be established with members from each degree stream, and any other members that will enhance the review process.
2. Areas to be examined should include the course content in each related program, number of courses offered in each degree area, faculty available, course enrollments, use of Graduate students as instructors, student to faculty ratio, use of per course instructors, collaborative courses, facility use, lab space, classroom space, timetabling, equipment needs and other areas as deemed necessary by the Internal Curriculum Review Committee.
3. Examine the present structure for professional program advising at the Departmental level.
4. Prioritize the review process with the intent of reviewing the Bachelor of Physical Education stream first.
5. Continue to monitor the impact of recent changes in the Bachelor of Recreation program.
6. Engage in discussions with the Faculty of Education regarding conjoint/collaboration on the Bachelor of Education after Degree Program. Investigate direct entry at the Undergraduate level for students wanting degrees in Physical Education and Education. A working committee should be established with one member each from Physical Education, Faculty of Education and the Provincial Department of Education and others deemed necessary to examine options and to make recommendations.

Co-op Program

A Co-operative Education program is offered for all three streams in HKR. This program is intended to give both work experience specific to a degree program and general, non-specific work experience. The work experiences of students are intended to be progressive in that work in later semesters is more specific and requires additional responsibility by the student. In Kinesiology and Physical Education, students apply for either Co-op or Non Co-op experiences, and need permission to change experiences. The program description indicates that Recreation students may either complete the Co-op or Non Co-op experience. However, because the only students who are allowed the Non Co-op route are those with at least five years relevant work experience, there is effectively only the Co-op experience with a waiver for those with work experience. . Many students who complete these Co-op work terms give them high ratings.

Recently, however, many Physical Education students have been transferring out of the Co-op experience.

It is clear that the Co-op experience for students in the Physical Education stream is failing. The “summers only” provision of the present Co-op Physical Education experience allows neither appropriate specific experience nor the progression of experiences as required in a Co-op program. As a result of these weaknesses many students are transferring out of the Co-op experience. This has resulted in an excessive use of faculty time in dealing with the transference of students out of the Co-op experience. This is presently caused due to a rule which requires a committee waiver for students who change from Co-op to Non Co-op.

Recommendations

1. The Co-operative program should remain as offered for Kinesiology and Recreation Programs, including the option of either a Co-op or a Non Co-op route for students.
2. For students in Physical Education, either:
 - a. The Co-op program be offered with work terms in all three semesters, or
 - b. Work terms for Co-op should remain in the summer but there should no longer be three summer Co-Op opportunities.
 - c. If 2.b. is the choice of the Faculty, more opportunities for work experience should be included within the curriculum.
3. The working committee struck to investigate the conjoint/collaboration of a Bachelor of Education after Degree with Physical Education also investigate practicum and internship experiences in lieu of Co-op as part of the stream in Physical Education.

GRADUATE PROGRAM

Overview

It is the opinion of the review committee that the Graduate program in Human Kinetics and Recreation is a vibrant program with solid teaching, good research and scholarship, and appropriate community involvement.. The shift to create a Master of Science in Kinesiology (MSck) was warranted given the realities associated with faculty interest, research funding and graduate student perception.

The Master of Physical Education (MPE) program is primarily part-time and this offers challenges. The review panel did not interview any students from this program.

Office space for graduate students and appropriate lab research space is a constant problem.

Although the exact structure of advising and placement of graduate students is not completely clear to the committee, it appears that both advising and placement go through one faculty member. Faculty and graduate students appear pleased with the results. This may not, however, be the best use of a faculty member's time.

Many students within this program teach courses for undergraduates. While this is entirely appropriate, Master's students should only undertake teaching assignments when they have been carefully prepared and are mentored. This has not always been the case in the past. Efforts in place to ensure appropriate preparation of graduate students for teaching assignments should continue.

The MPE is a very small program which mostly services the needs of teachers. Although it is not apparent from the Calendar, Recreation students may also avail of this degree. Few students in the program result in small classes and inefficiencies. Overlap occurs between courses and course content in the Master of Education (ME) and the MPE. Many of the courses with shared content are offered in Education by distance delivery. It is possible that a shared program between the School of Human Kinetics and Recreation and Education would attract added students and lead to greater efficiency.

Faculty and graduate students were divided on the idea of introducing a Ph.D. program. Most liked the idea, but many indicated that the resources of time and expertise were not available. It is the opinion of the committee that considerable time could be made available by shifting priorities. However, the small faculty member base would still make mounting a Ph.D. completely within HKR an unreasonable task. We believe that a better option would be exploring the possibility of a PHD in cooperation with the other health sciences.

Recommendations

1. Establish an internal administrative structure for selection and assigning of Graduate students to work with faculty.
2. Cooperation with the Faculty of Education and the School of Graduate Studies should be established for a more coherent set of course offerings.
3. Continue to improve office space for Graduate students.
4. Continue to improve appropriate lab research space.
5. Realign the current calendar description of the MPE to make it clear that a Recreation stream degree is available. This degree could be called a Master of Physical Education in Recreation (MPER).

6. Create an independent graduate recreation degree to be called a Master of Recreation (MREC) if the above mentioned #5 is not conducive to the workings of the School and its faculty.
7. At this time, considering the limitation in the Department and the current workload issue, the review committee does not recommend the establishment of a Ph.D. degree.
8. A committee should be struck to investigate the establishment of a collaborative Ph.D. degree with the Health related schools/faculties.
9. Teaching by Graduate students in the School of Human Kinetics and Recreation should continue. However, procedures for the selection of Graduate students for teaching, and monitoring and evaluation of them while teaching should be formalized and made transparent.

WORKLOAD

Overview

Current workloads within the School of Human Kinetics and Recreation do not align with Memorial University norms for other Faculties nor with other Canadian University norms and should be reduced.

The review panel recognizes that in a university setting the composition of workloads may vary from unit to unit and from faculty member to faculty member. Equity in required workload, however, is an essential principle. Fairness should apply both across University units and to individuals within units. The present workload in HKR reflects a history as a professional school where the balance between teaching, research and service differed from that in the more traditional, academic faculties. Since this is clearly not the case presently, external fairness requires similar norms for course loads in HKR, and that those course loads should be equated with the current practices in Arts and Science.

Internal fairness requires the balancing of small or large classes, lab or non-lab courses, new preparations or established courses, and other factors. Some of these factors are presently accounted for in workload formulas within HKR and others are not. For example, a single graduate student in a reading course gives a one quarter course adjustment, a class of 48 has the same weight as a class of 8, and a lab appears to count one half unit whether the

professor is present or not. Formal reduction of workload would provide an excellent opportunity to also adjust internal fairness.

Recommendations

1. Reduce workload to the equivalent of five courses.
2. Weighting of courses, labs, activities, etc., for course equivalency should be established and made transparent. Calculation of workload should include at least class size, preparations, teaching assistance, lab assistance, markers, multiple sections, and enrollment caps.
3. Continue to offer an orientation program for new faculty and where possible a mentor should be assigned.

FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Overview

The School of Human Kinetics is housed in a building that is old and outdated. The facility lacks academic and research capacity in many areas. Some office spaces, classrooms and labs are inadequate, poorly maintained and exist in noisy, high traffic areas. Locations of some office and classroom space is very inconvenient. The present floor of the gymnasium needs to be replaced. The control of academic and varsity space is a problem as is the relationship between the Memorial University Recreation Complex (MURC), the School of Human Kinetics and Recreation, and Varsity Athletics.

The crowded condition of offices and laboratories is readily apparent following the most casual inspection. This is also true of the dilapidated classrooms. The addition of the field house has led to both much increased foot traffic and activity class noise outside of offices.

Many of the coaches in the varsity program do their work on a part time basis. Although there is presently no office space for these part time coaches, it is clear that they need space for various aspects of their work, including meeting with and counseling athletes.

Interestingly, very few people who were interviewed complained about the obviously poor facilities. Instead, vehement complaints from many people were directed toward MURC and its relationship with HKR. These complaints

are definitely rooted in a history of disappointed expectations by people in HKR as they worked long and hard to see the building of new facilities only to see the loss of control of academic and athletic space to MURC. The complaints are maintained partly as a result of differing mandates of HKR and MURC, but mostly by a desire for a rigid schedule of facility use on the part of MURC managers contrasted with a felt need for flexibility on the part of HKR academics and coaches.

In the view of the review committee both sides share fault here. Clearly a large facility intended for the use of diverse groups with concomitant expectations demands somewhat rigid scheduling. Faculty and coaches need to realize this and plan accordingly. At the same time, some flexibility is required for both teaching and coaching. Coaches in particular require the space and time to work with individual athletes as the need arises. Although conflicts are inevitable for these groups, neither "side" seems to have been sufficiently aware of the needs of the other.

MURC has a policy that requires a regular review of scheduling for varsity teams. On the surface this review policy appears to be something that would reduce problems. An unstated, underlying assumption that gym space must always be available for recreation use, however, keeps the review policy from functioning to increase flexibility. The effect of this is to prevent two varsity basketball teams from practicing at the same time, and means that review of varsity times, as stated in the policy, can never include this crucial variable. No matter what is done, some varsity teams will practice at very unfortunate times.

If real fault is to be assigned, however, it should be given to an administrative structure which does not encourage conflict resolution and to a social structure that keeps the parties involved removed from each other. A first step here should be a review of MURC policies to ensure more flexibility while preserving MURC's central mandate. Effective and efficient communication between MURC, HKR and Varsity Athletics is paramount.

Recommendations

1. The most appropriate action at this time would be the construction of a new building.
2. Architectural plans for a new building should be established in consultation with the Director of the School.
3. Short term actions that are being taken such as improvements to the Graduate student space and research labs are welcomed but are inadequate over the long term.
4. Office space for part-time instructors and coaches should be established.

5. A review of the MURC scheduling policy within the operation manual is required. The committee for this review should include the WORKS Manager of Fitness, HKR Undergraduate Advisor and the new Athletic Director. If necessary the Director of HKR and the Director/General Manager may be included in this review.
6. Organize the current working relationships and space between the Director, Academic Advisor for Undergraduate and Graduate Programs and office staff to enhance communication.
7. The exterior signs identifying the name of the School of Human Kinetics and Recreation be updated to reflect the correct current name of the School and its Programs.

COMMUNITY SERVICE AND RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES

Overview

Considering current workloads within the School of Human Kinetics and Recreation, Community Service and Research and Scholarly activities are exemplary. It is readily evident that Faculty continue to ensure that they recognize the importance of these respective areas and maintain their commitment. Of particular importance is the focus of their work in these respective areas for the betterment of the people and the geographic regions of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Summary and Concluding Comments

The committee would like to thank the many interested students, staff, and faculty who gave input during the site visit. We apologize in advance to those people interested in areas that we may have overlooked. For some of these areas, such as the place of Athletics in the Faculty, the existence of recent reports makes additional work redundant. Other areas were ignored as the extremely busy and tight schedule brought only more pressing concerns to our attention.

We think that the faculty is in an excellent position to move forward. The present mix of experienced and new faculty along with a new director provides a climate for

improvement. We did hear a concern that the move to a more academic and professional faculty has led to isolation of members of the HKR family, and advise care in maintaining a community identity.