

Program Review Form

This report is to be filed with the Board of Regents Office within a year of the final report of a review. All departments or schools undergoing an accreditation review by an outside agency of a periodic institutional program review are to complete this form. The form is available in electronic format from the Office of the Academic Vice President so that its size can be adjusted to fit responses of varying lengths. The dean or department chair is responsible for completing this report and submitting it to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for approval and submission to the Board of Regents.

Institution: Dakota State University

Department or School: College of Education

Program Reviewed: Exercise Science

Date of Review: Spring 2010

Please identify the program reviewers and any external accrediting body: Dr. Scott Drum, Ph.D., FACSM, Associate Professor of Exercise & Sport Science at Western State College of Colorado in Gunnison, CO.

Questions A & B below should address the following issues: curricular offerings/program structure; enrollment demand; graduates/placement; financing; and, other indicators of program quality and viability.

A. Describe the strengths and weaknesses identified by the reviewer.

The review designated the following areas of strength in the Exercise Science program:

- The exercise science curriculum is thorough, challenging, flexible and engaging. A great strength of the curriculum and its personnel is the awareness of preparing exercise science students to enter allied health paths, such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, and physician assistant programs locally or nationally upon graduation.
- Exercise science students perceive their area of study to be rigorous, interesting and hands-on.
- Academic advising meets the needs of individual students to ensure the completion of suitable prerequisites prior to students applying for advanced programs of study.
- Development of the Human Performance Lab to provide “hands-on” experiences as well as opportunities to learn advanced exercise assessment techniques.
- Relationships being cultivated with outside external sites for internship opportunities.
- The exercise science program is aligned with DSU’s designation as an information technology university. The program is growing and offers research opportunities for students, effective communication, unwavering support for student success, and other strategies. The exercise science faculty and leadership personnel have chosen appropriate program goals relative to the institutional mission, values, and commitments (as stated in DSU’s Strategic Plan, 2007-2012). The exercise science program, its faculty, and administrative leadership are closely aligned with institutional goals, such as optimizing

on-campus student enrollment, enhancing program quality, increasing student retention, advancing applied research possibilities, developing new revenue strategies, and promoting increased exercise science visibility locally, nationally, and internationally.

- The exercise science program is nicely aligned with current trends in the field. The exercise science program is seeking endorsement by the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) and has structured an exit exam to reflect knowledge, skills, and abilities related to the NSCA's Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (CSCS) certification.

B. Briefly summarize the review recommendations.

- Tweak the curriculum to include additional electives, so that students can pick and choose additional exercise science electives or other courses outside the major.
- Consider hiring an additional faculty member to complement current faculty. This person may be more strength- and conditioning-oriented with an eye for sport performance. A sport-specific faculty member may serve to add depth to the NSCA endorsement of the exercise science program.
- Expand efforts to better assess exercise science graduates (within a year of graduation and/or employment) and employer perceptions of hands-on skills in the "real world."
- Include a clear mission statement related to the exercise science program on the exercise science website with easy access to faculty profiles (specifically on the exercise science program website).
- Possibly institute a minimum 2.75 GPA for entrance into the exercise science program.
- Continue on the path to implement an NSCA-endorsed exit exam and be sure to address knowledge, skills, and abilities related to this exam throughout the curriculum or in the form of a senior-level seminar.

C. Indicate the present and continuing actions to be taken by the school/college or department to address the issues raised by the review.

- Curriculum – the curriculum was revised for Academic Year 2010-2011. A 4-credit human anatomy/lab course was added so students now have separate anatomy and physiology courses. This was particularly important for students who plan to attend physical and occupation therapy fields. Three course titles were changed: EXS 405 Methods of Training to Physiological Methods of Training; EXS 335 Program Design & Administration to Administration of Exercise Science; and EXS 420 Facility Risk Management to Risk Management. A 2-credit EXS 490 Senior Seminar was also added to the core requirements per the reviewer's suggestion. Students now have 25-28 free elective credits, as recommended by the reviewer. Prerequisite requirements were also added to a number of courses to prevent students from taking courses out of sequence. For example, EXS 350 Exercise Physiology and EXS 400 Exercise Testing & Prescription are now prerequisites for EXS 395 Practicum. The final change included adding a prerequisite of a grade of C or better in a number of major core courses.

- New faculty member – while adding an additional faculty member is not financially possible at this time, we will certainly continue to request the addition during the annual budget hearings. If we receive permission to advertise, we will emphasize motor learning and development, kinesiology, and biomechanics, with preference for a candidate who has CSCS certification or the ability to obtain that certification within a calendar year of being hired.
- Graduate assessments -conversations have begun in the department and will continue as we develop a 1-year-out graduate and employer survey appropriate for exercise science. We are also in discussion about developing an exit survey that our students would complete their final semester of the exercise science program.
- Develop a clear mission statement – discussions have also begun in this area but we will continue this discussion in Fall 2011. Upon completion of this and other areas that may evolve, we will up-date the exercise science website to include the mission statement, outcomes, and faculty profiles.
- Instituting a 2.75 grade point for admission to exercise science program – discussion on this topic will continue as well. As noted above, we did incorporate a “minimum grade of C” for 5 content courses including EXS 180 Foundations of HPER; EXS 350 Exercise Physiology; EXS 353 Kinesiology; EXS 400 Exercise Testing & Prescription; and EXS 454 Biomechanics.
- NSCA endorsed exit exam – while work has begun regarding the exit exam and the format it should take, further discussion is needed to align course content to the NSCA knowledge, skills, and abilities which will then make the exit exam more relevant and applicable.