



Fairmont State University
Board of Governors

Board Action Item Approval

Date: 05/05/2022

Action Item: Approval of M.Ed. in Exercise Science Program Review

1. Approve above action item as presented.

2. Approve above action with the following stipulation:

3. Table the above action item until _____
(next Board of Governors' meeting)

FSU President

5/5/2022

Date

FSU Board of Governors' Chair

Date

5/5/22

ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Fairmont State Board of Governors

Program with Special Accreditation Program without Special Accreditation

Date Submitted November 14, 2021

Degree Program Master of Education in Exercise Science

INSTITUTIONAL RECOMMENDATION Approved by the Board of Governors (§ 5.2.8)

The institution is obligated to recommend continuance or discontinuance of a program and to provide a brief rationale for its recommendation:

- X 1. Continuation of the program at the current level of activity, with or without specific action;
- 2. Continuation of program with at a reduced level of activity (e.g., reducing the range of optional tracks) or other corrective action
- 3. Identification of the program for further development; or
- 4. Development of a cooperative program with another institution, or sharing courses, facilities, faculty, and the like.
- 5. Discontinuation of the Program

Rationale for Recommendation:

Affirm the recommendation of the Graduate Program Review Council. This program has maintained stable enrollment and graduation rates, as a face-to-face graduate program through the pandemic. Recent curriculum and facilities improvements have been implemented to enhance viability and attractiveness to students. We will continue to monitor and invest as opportunities become available.

Julia M. dos Santos
Signature of person preparing report:

11/13/2021
Date

Amanda Metcalf
Signature of Dean

11-14-21
Date

Devin Phillipin
Signature of Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs:

3/10/22
Date

Signature of President:

Date

Signature of Chair, Board of Governors:

Date

Executive Summary for Program Review

(not to be more than 2-3 pages)

Degree Program:	Master of Education in Exercise Science
College or School/Department:	College of Education, Health and Human Performance/Health and Human Performance
Chair/Program Coordinator	Jan Kiger/Dr. Julia M. dos Santos
External Reviewer:	Dr. Stephen LoRusso
Reviewer Email:	slorusso@francis.edu

A. Synopses of significant findings, including findings of external review (include the external reviewer(s) information).

The Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Exercise Science is one of three on-campus graduate programs at Fairmont State University. The program is a 33-credit hour degree program where students acquire and apply the knowledge and skills necessary for advanced-level exercise science positions and/or further graduate-level education. The program consists of face-to-face (91%) and online courses (9%). The program has small classes sizes, increasing the opportunity for interaction between the instructor and student, which gives more hands-on opportunities. Moreover, 60% of the program alumni attributed as the main strength the small ratio between faculty and students (Appendix D: survey data).

The number of students enrolled and completing the program has been stable over the 2016-21 academic period. The average of the 5 years was 4.4 students graduated and 6 students enrolled every year. In total 22 students graduated of the 30 students that enrolled over the last 5-years. The program graduation rate is 73.4%, and students mainly withdraw or fail a course in the first semester. Together, the data obtained in this 5-year review will be used to further improve the program.

The purpose of this review is to determine the following:

1. Is the program advancing the state of the discipline or profession?
2. Is the program teaching and training its graduate students effectively?
3. Does the program help to achieve the university’s goals and is it aligned with the strategic plan?
4. Does the program respond to the needs of the profession?
5. How is the program assessed by experts in the field?

The program will be reviewed by Dr. Stephen LoRusso from St. Francis University (Loreto, PA). Dr. LoRusso is the Executive Director of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the American College of Sports Medicine and has over 30 years of experience in the field of exercise science.

B. Plans for program improvement, including timeline

Recent changes to the program include a reduction in admissions requirements and the number of required credit hours for completion of the degree. In 2019, the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) and Miller Analogies Test (MAT) were removed as a requirement for admission to the M.Ed. program. The Exercise Science program was modified from 36-credit hours to 33-credit hours in 2020. This change was made to improve marketability and competitiveness when compared to similar programs in West Virginia. Moreover, the program has a new facility (Health and Human Performance Laboratory) and equipment that directly impacts the learning environment and increases hands-on

opportunities for students. Beginning in the Spring 2022 semester, a survey will be implemented at the conclusion of one of the last courses of the program (*PHED 6417: Exercise in Health and Diseases*) to monitor how modifications have affected student success and professional opportunities as they prepare to graduate. The results of the survey will be analyzed at the conclusion of each semester and programmatic changes will be made as needed.

C. *Identify weaknesses or deficiencies from the previous review and describe how these have been addressed.*

The most recent program review and report were carried out for all non-licensure graduate programs of the College of Education, Health and Human Performance together, not specifically for the M.Ed. in Exercise Science. This is the first review and report that focuses only on the M.Ed. in Exercise Science. However, some items can be discussed from the previous review.

Improvement in Faculty Development: The previous program review recommended increasing the number of workshops to improve the quality of online class instruction. This issue has been addressed, with several course delivery workshops and professional development sessions offered by the University at the beginning of each semester. Several faculty members have become Quality Matters certified to improve course delivery. Professional development is a continued focus of the institution, college, and department.

Diversity: Overall, on the faculty profile, it was pointed out the lack of diversity. It was recommended that a better effort be made to provide for diversity in the hiring process. This has been addressed in the department as there are currently faculty of more than one race and ethnicity in the program.

Admission to Graduate Program: It was pointed out in the previous review that official transcripts were not being required from all institutions that the students attended upon application for admission in the graduate program, only baccalaureate degree. Official transcripts are now required from all institutions that prospective students have attended.

Student Productivity: It was pointed out that not all the faculty had research and scholarship in the previous program revision. In addition, it was recommended that further program review mentioned the process of revision by the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for projects developed using human subjects. Students who choose the thesis track (12.4%) have an opportunity to engage in a research project. At the end of the program, they defend their thesis for a committee. The majority of the findings have been published in a full article format or as a conference abstract. Faculty in the M.Ed. in Exercise Science program have the opportunity to be part of those projects that will lead to a publication. All projects occurring within the program undergo revision by the University's IRB for human research.

Establish and Monitor Graduate Faculty Standards: Now there is a faculty graduate application process, and every five years, faculty from the graduate program are being evaluated to improve teaching excellence and scholarship. The application includes course evaluation, service to the university, and research productivity.

Program Level Assessment: In the previous program review it was recommended that there be implementation of program level assessment of learning outcomes, student satisfaction, or gainful employment.

D. *Five-year trend data on graduates and majors enrolled (Data will be provided by the Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness).*

			HEPC Series 10		
AY	*Enrollment	***Degree Awarded	Productivity Standards Programs are required to meet at least one of the indicators listed below.		
2020-21	13	5	Average of Five Most Recent Years		
2019-20	13	5			
2018-19	11	5			
2017-18	13	5			
2016-17	10	2			
5-YR AVG	14.4	5.2	Degree Level	*Enrollment	***Degree Awarded
			Baccalaureate	155	35.8
			Masters	14.4	5.2

E. *Summary of assessment model and how results are used for program improvement (A full Assessment Report is in TaskStream and can be downloaded or viewed by academic year for summation).*

The majority of outcomes have at least two measurements completed in different courses within the program. Each learning outcome is measured every year. Currently, all full-time faculty who teach in the program measure at least one outcome in the courses they teach. The majority of learning outcomes (92%) have been exceeded. The pre-requirements for program admission (undergraduate of overall GPA of 2.75 or higher; along with C or better in Anatomy and Physiology, Biomechanics, and Exercise Physiology) play an important role for student success within the program since only qualified students are admitted into the program.

The faculty meet annually to discuss and review the data during regularly scheduled departmental assessment meetings each semester. Any changes in assessment or program delivery are discussed at this time.

F. *Data on student placement (e.g., number of students employed in positions related to the field of study or pursuing advanced degrees).*

Data from a survey (See Appendix D Survey Data) performed during the months of May-September 2021, including 64% of the M.Ed. in Exercise Science graduates, demonstrated that 63% are working in the exercise science field. Professions include exercise physiologist, injury and prevention specialist, wellness director, and athletic trainer. In addition, 21% of the enquired students have graduated or are enrolled in professional schools such as physical therapy and physician assistant.