

Program Review Report Summary

1. **Reporting Institution** Eastern Illinois University
2. **Program Reviewed** MS in Kinesiology & Sports Studies
3. **Date** January 7, 2020
4. **Contact Person** Mark Kattenbraker
 - 4.1 **Telephone** 217-581-2215
 - 4.2 **Email** mskattenbraker@eiu.edu
 - 4.3 **Fax** 217-581-7973

5. Overview

The mission of the graduate program in the Department of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation is to prepare students to be leaders in their chosen field by integrating scholarly activity, experiential learning, and a challenging curriculum. The program provides opportunities for students to network and explore the career path that fits their passion. The graduate program offers degree concentrations in two areas: Exercise Science and Sports Administration.

The program's mission is related to EIU's mission statement in that students are engaged in free and rigorous inquiry and are provided opportunities for student-faculty scholarship as they explore and engage in applied learning experiences.

The program is similar to other graduate programs in Illinois, yet has its own distinguishing characteristics. A primary difference is that we offer a 3-semester program with experiential opportunities in each area of study. Within exercise science, students apply learning through direct contact with community members in the EIU Adult Fitness Program and through a clinical experience at Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center. The sports administration program offers a sport industry study abroad program with the University of Winchester in England. In addition, students have the opportunity to complete up to two internships for credit. Student learning objectives are focused on in-depth content knowledge, critical thinking skills, and effective oral and written communication skills.

Graduates continue to be successful at securing meaningful employment in a variety of settings including corporate health clubs/fitness centers, intercollegiate athletic departments, clinical rehabilitation facilities, and sport organizations at various levels of competition.

6. Major Findings and Recommendations

6.a.1 Changes in the overall discipline or field

Both degree concentrations have national accrediting bodies. These organizations continue to provide best practice guidelines that are used to inform curricular changes in the respective programs.

The Committee on Accreditation for the Exercise Sciences (CoAES) was established in 2004 and continues to provide standards and guidelines for academic programs that prepare students for employment in the

health and fitness industry. Although the exercise science program is not accredited by the CoAES, the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) for graduates, as currently published by the American College of Sports Medicine, are used to guide curriculum changes and instructional practices.

Since its formation in 2008, the Commission on Sport Management Accreditation (COSMA) continues to be the primary governing body for professional preparation programs. Although the sports administration program is not accredited by COSMA, its standards continue to guide curriculum and instruction within the program.

6.a.2 Student Demand

The graduate programs in exercise science and sports administration have maintained relatively stable enrollments since the last review. The range in total enrollment has been 50-65 students. Currently there are students in the program from multiple states, and six countries. Many student applications for the program, since the last review, were denied full admission for having less than the prerequisite 3.0 undergraduate GPA.

6.a.3 Societal Needs

Exercise Science: There exists an ever-increasing societal emphasis on personal health and well-being. Current Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) employment projections for exercise physiologists include a 10% growth in employment from 2018-2028 with particular emphasis in exercise and preventive care for cardiovascular and pulmonary disease patients to improve overall health.

Sports Administration: This is a broad field with varying occupational specialties including marketing, management, promotions, sales, statistical analyst, and facilities expertise. BLS information about the field is limited to coaches, scouts, agents and marketing managers. Nonetheless, competitive sport continues to be a multi-billion dollar form of entertainment in America with no indication of slowing down. The general prediction, according to the BLS, is that broad-based growth will continue with varying percentages of incline depending on the area of specialty.

6.a.4 Institutional Context for Offering the Degree

The Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation Department is housed in the newly-created College of Health and Human Services. With access to a variety of on-campus and local opportunities for students to apply learning, the programs are able to provide valuable, non-traditional classroom learning experiences. Sports administration students serving as graduate assistants are regularly engaged with operational aspects of EIU's Division I athletics department while exercise science students have both clinical and non-clinical learning opportunities through Sarah Bush Lincoln Health System and local fitness facilities.

6.a.5 Other

As of September 27, 2019, the graduate program in Kinesiology and Sports Studies, as previously identified under the old department name, has elevated its offerings to two stand-alone programs respectively identified as the MS in Exercise Physiology and the MS in Sports Administration. The official catalog change will take effect with AY 20-21. Additionally, the graduate faculty voted to change the cumulative undergraduate GPA admission requirement (from 3.0 to 2.75) to align with the EIU Graduate School criteria. Lastly, there remains ongoing conversation about the potential to move the Sports Administration degree to a fully online program to accommodate market demand.

6.b Description of major findings and recommendations, including evidence of learning outcomes and identification of opportunities for program improvement.

Graduate students are primarily assessed via exams, presentations, and written papers. Such assignments reflect the learning objectives and core content of each course. The program-level assessment focuses on two measures: an oral assessment and a written assessment.

Beginning academic year 2014-2015 the graduate faculty approved the program-level evaluation procedure using standardized rubrics for oral presentations and written assignments to replace the evaluation procedure of a comprehensive exam. These university-approved rubrics are utilized to ensure a consistent and high standard of achievement for each student. Each graduate student must complete two oral examination rubrics and two written rubrics during the course of their program of study. This expectation is explained at the beginning of each academic year, and progress towards this goal is discussed with each student during their advising appointments.

Graduate faculty complete each rubric at the request of a graduate student; it is the student's responsibility to ensure they have two of each rubric completed by their graduation date. Graduate faculty complete each rubric using an online format that submits the score to a centrally-managed database. The graduate coordinator is notified when a rubric has been submitted. The graduate coordinator tracks overall progress towards the four required assessment rubrics. Although it is the student's responsibility to ensure completion of all four rubrics, the graduate coordinator is the one responsible for certifying with the EIU Graduate School that all four rubrics have been completed. Thus, the graduate coordinator is responsible for keeping a running tally to help ensure students are making adequate progress towards this goal.

One oral presentation and the accompanying rubric serves as the capstone experience for the program. The presentation is evaluated by three graduate faculty serving as a capstone committee. The oral rubric assesses the following categories: organization, language, material, analysis, nonverbal delivery, and verbal delivery with a maximum score of 48 (38/48 is the minimum passing score for the capstone experience). The most recent assessment data indicates that 94% (34/36) passed on the first attempt.

The second oral presentation is evaluated by an instructor alone in a graduate course selected by the student. The same rubric is used with a maximum score of 48 (30/48 is the minimum passing score). The most recent assessment data indicate that 99.5% (216/217) of student submissions received at least an overall score of 30/48 on their oral rubrics.

The written rubric includes evaluation categories on content, organization, style, and mechanics with a maximum score of 32 (20/32 is the minimum passing score). The most recent assessment data indicate that 99.3% (157/158) of student submissions received at least an overall score of 20/32 on their written rubrics.

6.c Description of actions taken since last review, including instructional resources and practices, and curricular changes.

A new assessment measure implemented on a trial basis for 2019-2020 is an exit survey for graduate students. The goal of this exit survey is to better understand the program’s strengths and weaknesses from a graduating student’s perspective. Questions for this survey include:

1. What are your overall impressions of the Exercise Physiology/Sports Administration graduate program?
2. What do you feel are the greatest strengths of the graduate program?
3. What do you feel are the greatest weaknesses of the graduate program?
4. What suggestions do you have for improving the Exercise Physiology/Sports Administration graduate program?

Data from these exit surveys will be collected, compiled, and shared with graduate faculty. The goal with this data will be continued improvement in the program, including highlighting and building upon strengths while simultaneously addressing weaknesses and other areas for improvement.

Since the last review, several graduate courses have transitioned to an online or hybrid format to improve student access. A previously offered course, KSR 5710 – Sociological Aspects of Sport in America, was resurrected as a means to satisfy the need for an additional elective course in the Sports Administration program. Additionally, the graduate faculty recently voted to separate the fields of study into two stand-alone degree programs: Exercise Physiology and Sports Administration. After local approval, the IBHE also approved the change.

6.d Description of actions taken as a result of this review, including instructional resources and practices, and curricular changes.

The graduate coordinator and the department chair have initiated conversation with the graduate faculty about the disparity between the acceptable passing score on the capstone oral presentation versus the other three required rubrics. Conversation continues with graduate faculty in the sports administration program about the potential move to a fully online graduate degree program.

7. Responses to Institution-Assigned Issues

N/A

8. Outcome

8.1 Decision

Program in Good Standing

Program Flagged for Priority Review

Program Enrollment Suspended

8.2 PROVOST FEEDBACK

The master's degree program is solid and exceeds all productivity benchmarks for the IBHE. As the program has been revised through a RME to create two standalone programs based on the existing options, this will be the final IBHE review for this program per se. As the program phases out, I am confident that faculty commitment to academic excellence will continue to be the hallmark for the new programs.

With respect to the assessment of students, the program ensures compliance with the graduate school rubrics (see 6.b.). In the areas of "program assessment" and "continuous improvement", the program assessment framework is less clear. While the creation of two independent programs was clearly a response to exit and workforce surveys (6.c.), the broader context of the curriculum and the degree to which learner outcomes identified under 6.b. inform the lived curriculum is uncertain. Going forward, I would encourage the program to consider how the data from 6.b might be used to enhance courses, change program requirements, and so on. Additionally, I would encourage the new programs to determine if the four basic rubrics are sufficient to document content specific learner outcomes and/or are truly useful for informing curricular change. In the end, I do not have any concerns per se—but urge the program to reflect on current assessment practices and objectives. Consequently, my comments are not intended to be a critique; but to encourage the new programs to more explicitly link student outcomes/assessments with continuous improvement.