

**STRATEGIC PLAN
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND EXERCISE SCIENCE
2008-2009 Academic Year**

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in consultation with departmental faculty**

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SECTION ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The department of Health and Exercise Science consists of eight faculty members. Three departmental faculty members are currently tenured, four are tenure track and one is adjunct. The department is currently in the process of hiring a new program director for the Athletic Training Education Program (ATEP). We hope to fill this non-tenure track position for the 2009-2010 academic year. Three additional part-time faculty assist with teaching anatomy and physiology lectures and labs, or teach within the general education program (FIT and ACT). The department also relies on several other full-time professionals who combine coaching, athletic training, and other responsibilities with teaching general education courses. Nine individuals are on these types of administrative contracts often called coach-teacher or athletic trainer-teacher contracts.

The department offers four majors and one minor, which include over 145 students. The number of students pursuing the coaching minor varies but we graduate about 22 coaching minors each year. Far more students than this take courses toward completion of the minor but not all students satisfy all requirements for the minor.

All students who graduate from the College complete one .5 course to satisfy the FITNESS requirement, and all complete the equivalent of .5 course of LIFETIME ACTIVITY.

1.1.1 DEPARTMENTAL MISSION STATEMENT

The department prepares individuals as scientists, educators, and practitioners. Students prepare for K-12 teaching in physical education and health education, a career in athletic training, or a career in health fitness/exercise science. Many of our students pursue graduate study within the discipline and/or allied health sciences, and are admitted to excellent graduate programs across the country.

The department provides an excellent learning experience for students that includes setting high expectations for student learning, writing, and critical thinking; providing a sound foundation of knowledge and skills required for a career in health or exercise science; encouraging students to explore cross-

disciplinary issues such as service, community, justice, and faith; and preparing students for graduate study.

Additionally, opportunities for students to engage in research and service learning are integrated across programs and majors.

In addition to the preparation of students within the major and minor, the department is committed to helping each student at Gustavus improve his or her knowledge and commitment to lifetime activity and wellness. The general education program offered by the department challenges students to engage in physical activity, improve fitness, and acquire the knowledge and skills needed to establish a healthy lifestyle.

Yet another important element within the mission of the department of Health and Exercise Science is to support the mission of the college by addressing global issues, vocation, service, justice, community, and excellence within the majors, and other courses offered by the department. As models, teachers, mentors, and members of the community, we encourage students to fully explore intellectual, physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and cultural dimensions of wellness, and to become life long learners.

And finally, the department values its role in providing service to the College. By offering FTS courses, writing courses, courses designed for students enrolled within elementary or secondary education, anatomy and physiology courses for students in other majors and allied health programs, the department illustrates a deep commitment to service.

1.1.2 DEPARTMENTAL VISION

As a department, we hope to continue the process of strengthening each program. Exploring ways to broaden opportunities for majors will ensure that students are well prepared for careers in health and exercise science, and graduate study. In a world in which technology, global issues such as health care and environmental stewardship, and commitment to community necessitates cross-disciplinary knowledge and skills, the department must continue to seek ways to extend learning opportunities beyond the major and the classroom. By encouraging students to study abroad, participate in service learning opportunities, and reflect on vocation, we can better prepare students for life beyond their majors and careers.

To support student learning and achievement both in the classroom and through research, the department will maintain a classroom and departmental environment that focuses on the open exchange of ideas, positive and supportive relationships with students, and exploration of cross-disciplinary subject matter.

We hope to further expand student research opportunities across all majors and seek ways to financially support student research.

Furthermore, expanding the anatomy and physiology program through cadaver study and redefining laboratory experiences will be possible once the renovation of Lund Center is completed. The renovation of facilities is essential to ensure

that students have access to appropriate technologies, laboratories, and classrooms, and to promote student and faculty research.

1.1.3 DEPARTMENTAL GOALS

Goal 1. Provide majors and a minor that effectively prepare students for a career within the discipline and for graduate study.

Goal 2. Facilitate student-faculty research, and provide mentoring to students who apply for graduate school admission.

Goal 3. Integrate within the majors and minor liberal learning skills including reading, writing, and speaking; appreciation of diversity and global issues; commitment to service; and critical thinking.

Goal 4. Facilitate exploration of personal and professional values that enable students to recognize the importance of lifelong learning and commitment to community and discipline.

Goal 5. Continue to support the College by offering courses that support majors within other departments and pre-professional programs.

Goal 6. Provide a quality general education program that includes opportunities for students to enhance personal fitness and health through acquisition of knowledge and skills needed to establish an active lifestyle that promotes wellness and prevents disease.

Goal 7. Secure appropriate funding to support further development of departmental programs and to purchase essential equipment.

1.2 PROGRAMS – MAJORS, DESCRIPTIONS, MISSION, GOALS

1.2.1 ATHLETIC TRAINING EDUCATION PROGRAM (ATEP)

DESCRIPTION

Gustavus Adolphus College offers a comprehensive curriculum program for students that are interested in the athletic training field. As only one of two athletic training education programs in Minnesota liberal arts institutions, we offer students the advantages of a liberal arts education along with the ability to earn national certification. Gustavus Adolphus College is Minnesota's second oldest accredited program, through the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education. Through a combination of core athletic training classes, clinical laboratory courses, and clinical experiences with 25 collegiate athletic teams at Gustavus, sport teams at St. Peter High School, outpatient rehabilitation clinics, Gustavus Student Health Services, and local clinics, students acquire knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in the profession of athletic training or other allied health care fields. After completion of the program students are well prepared to begin careers as athletic trainers in the multitude of settings utilizing certified athletic trainers to provide healthcare. Students are also well

prepared for graduate study in athletic training or related fields.

MISSION

Parallel to the Mission of Gustavus Adolphus College, the mission of the Athletic Training Education Program is to provide students with a comprehensive learning experience that leads to a mastery of athletic training educational competencies. Within the context of an interdisciplinary and broad general undergraduate education, the ATEP prepares students for a career within their chosen field and/or graduate study.

ATEP-GOALS

The graduate will:

Become a life-long learner and leader in athletic training.

Become a highly effective team member, critical thinker, decision maker, and problem solver.

Possess the knowledge and skills needed to contribute to the health and wellness of society.

Develop the knowledge and skills to successfully achieve national certification.

Acquire the basic knowledge, skills, and experience to understand and present current health related research.

Develop a commitment to community and professional service and the skills of leadership.

1.2.2 PHYSICAL EDUCATION MAJOR

DESCRIPTION

Physical Education majors prepare for careers related to the study of human movement. This major is generally combined with a second academic major such as health education, teaching licensure, and a minor in coaching. Many graduates teach at the elementary or secondary level and some pursue graduate study in physical education or kinesiology related fields such as exercise physiology, adapted physical education, sports pedagogy, and sports management.

MISSION

The primary mission of the Physical Education major is to provide quality academic professional preparation for students in areas related to the study of human movement, especially as it supports the pursuit of life-long physical activity and well being. The program aims to prepare future leaders who will positively impact the health behaviors and physical well being of individuals and of society through the education and promotion of life-sustaining and life-enhancing pursuits. Study is broad based, with emphasis on motor skills, fitness, scientific principles, teaching strategies, and program development. The balanced program provides students with numerous experiences to enhance their professional development. The successful completion of the Physical Education major integrates the liberal arts and sciences with thorough professional preparation for students who are pursuing a career in teaching. The major embeds national and state competencies and standards to achieve on-going accreditation

through NCATE, the Minnesota Board of Teaching, and the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE).

PHYSICAL EDUCATION MAJOR -GOALS

The graduate should:

1. Develop the knowledge and possess the skills needed to demonstrate mastery of professional competencies required by NASPE.
2. Participate in research endeavors related to physical education theory and practices both within and outside of the classroom.
3. Develop a professional disposition that exhibits excellence in relation to ethical behavior, community engagement, service to and advocacy for the physical education profession.
4. Integrate current trends and pedagogical practices into research-based philosophy, curriculum and program design as they apply to principles of life-long physical activity and well-being.
5. Develop cultural and social competence through an awareness and understanding of social justice issues and be able to effectively apply principles to future pursuits.

1.2.3 HEALTH EDUCATION MAJOR

DESCRIPTION

Majors in health education are preparing for secondary teaching, career opportunities with community health service organizations, and adult health education. The majority of students combine the health education major with a second major in a related field such as physical education, health fitness, or athletic training and complete the sequence of courses for teacher licensure. Students who go on to graduate school select programs in community or public health, school health, nutrition, or health promotion.

MISSION

The health education major prepares students to be life-long learners with a deep commitment to both individual and community health. They develop knowledge across the ten learning indicators established by Healthy People 2010, and can clearly articulate the need for balance among physical, emotional, social, mental, vocational, and spiritual well-being. In addition to a sound foundation of health-related knowledge, students acquire communication, decision-making, problem solving, critical thinking, technology, program planning, and other essential skills fundamental to teaching health education in varied settings. Students are well prepared for a career in public school teaching, community or public health, and/or graduate study in a related field.

HEALTH EDUCATION GOALS

The graduate should:

Know current health-related research and concepts within the discipline, and value lifelong learning as a means to stay current within the field of health education.

Demonstrate proficiency related to the competencies for professional preparation within the discipline.

Develop skills such as critical thinking, decision-making, problem solving, and communication skills, and be able to apply these skills in varied health education settings.

Develop a research-based health education curriculum/program that is appropriate for school and community settings.

Develop a personal health education philosophy that reflects theory, research, and ethical behavior.

Effectively use technology as a teaching and planning tool.

Know how to work effectively with individuals and communities to improve health status and reduce risk behaviors.

1.2.4 HEALTH FITNESS MAJOR

DESCRIPTION

The health fitness major is a broad-based major designed to prepare students for a variety of careers in health and wellness such as corporate fitness, cardiac rehabilitation, health promotion, and public health. Students may also continue in a number of graduate study programs including human performance, community health, health promotion, sports management, dietetics, and recreation studies. Requirements for the major include knowledge and skills necessary for professional certifications from the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) and the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA). Preparation for these certifications requires application of knowledge and skill through written examinations and hands-on laboratory and practicum evaluation activities. This major is often combined with a second academic major such as athletic training, business, psychology, communication studies, or health education. Other students choose to combine health fitness with a pre-professional health program such as occupational therapy or physical therapy. Research experience is an important piece of the program. Students develop research proposals, engage in data collection, reduction, and statistical analysis, and present projects at regional and national professional venues. Opportunities for research are provided through curriculum requirements and independent projects. Each student also must complete a fulltime, 12 to 15 week internship. These experiences are typically in the settings such as corporate fitness, clinical, health promotion, or rehabilitation.

MISSION

The mission is to help students develop their full potential as scholars, citizens and future leaders of our profession and our society. Students also explore all of the dimensions of human health. The nature of the material in all health fitness core courses encourages diversity of thought, action and social involvement. Students will be challenged to apply these concepts to their profession and to their lives and to become effective advocates for healthy lifestyles.

The health fitness major offers students the possibility to achieve their highest academic potential by providing a rigorous and innovative curriculum and the opportunity to master all necessary skills to achieve success within the profession as a whole. Following the

tenets of our profession, the department is committed to seeking out ways of developing the physical, social, mental and spiritual wellness of all of our students.

HEALTH FITNESS MAJOR - GOALS

The Graduate will:

1. Understand and apply the basic principles of exercise science, health promotion and aspects of human wellness and lifelong health as evidenced by their coursework, presentations and performance of course exams.
2. Demonstrate an understanding off all the materials required to sit for the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) Health Fitness Specialist or Personal Trainer Certification Exams and/or National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (CSCS) or Personal Training (CPT) Certification Exams upon graduation.
3. Critically read and apply current research principles in the field of exercise science and health promotion and to present personal research at appropriate venues.
4. Understand the responsibilities and ethical issues of the fitness/health professional and to prepare students for post graduation opportunities in exercise science and health promotion.
5. Understand the principles and develop the skills to work with diverse populations, including individuals with health conditions such as cardiac disease, diabetes, obesity, etc.

1.2.5 PROGRAMS: COACHING MINOR

DESCRIPTION

The coaching minor is offered for students who are interested in pursuing a coaching position in a variety of private or public settings. The minor satisfies standards created by the Minnesota Department of Education and competencies identified by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education.

MISSION

The mission of the Coaching minor is to adequately prepare students to become successful coaches at youth, interscholastic, and intercollegiate levels. The curriculum is designed to provide a solid background in exercise physiology and injury care and prevention. Additional opportunities include the exploration of varying coaching styles, teaching sport skills, tactics, and strategies, the discussion of current coaching and sport-related ethical issues, and reaching peak performance through motivation, confidence building, goal setting, and mental imagery. Second only to parents, coaches have been found to hold considerable influence over their athletes in areas related to socialization, individual development, and the transmission of cultural values and social expectations. Therefore, coaches are very influential in the lives of student athletes.

COACHING MINOR- GOALS

The graduate should:

Develop a coaching philosophy.

Know the legal duties of a coach.

Understand how basic physiological principles are used to develop a sport specific conditioning program.

Understand and utilize various psychological strategies specific to sport.

Prevent and care for athletics injuries and become certified in first aid and CPR.

Design a master and daily practice plan based on seasonal objectives.

Teach sport skills, concepts, and strategies utilizing effective pedagogical methods.

Gain practical experience in coaching.

Reflect upon the impact of current coaching and sport-related ethical issues.

1.2.6 PROGRAMS: GENERAL EDUCATION

DESCRIPTION and MISSION

The department of Health and Exercise Science recognizes the importance of offering a sound program for students that emphasizes all dimensions of wellness, stress management, commitment to establishing a healthy lifestyle, and the opportunity to engage in regular physical activity. Exploration of lifetime activity is equally important as it enables students to experience a diverse range of activities such as yoga, pilates, tai chi, and racquet sports that can provide activity and exercise throughout the lifespan.

According to the 2008 *Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee Report* published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, regular physical activity builds and maintains healthy bones and muscles; helps reduce the risk of developing obesity and chronic diseases such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease; reduces feelings of depression and anxiety and promotes psychological well being. Additionally, various studies support the positive connection between participation in physical activity and academic achievement, including improved GPA and higher standardized achievement scores (Active Living Research, 2007; Ratey, 2008). Even though the benefits of exercise and lifetime activity are clearly essential to good health, national reports and studies continue to suggest that adolescents and young adults are frequently inactive and overweight. For example, nearly half of young people in America, aged 12-21, do not engage in vigorous physical activity on a regular basis (The U.S. Department of Health, 2008; Shape of the Nation Report, 2006; SHPPS study, 2006).

PERSONAL FITNESS (FIT) REQUIREMENT

Based on research and a sound philosophy of health and fitness, the department offers a strong general education component that is part of the overall college graduation requirements. The Personal Fitness requirement consists of a required .5 course titled, HES 100, Personal Fitness. Discussion of health promotion, risk reduction, stress management, principles of exercise and fitness, and other contemporary health issues have been integrated into the Personal Fitness course. This course also provides students with an opportunity to participate in vigorous physical activity. If a student has special health needs or a disability, the department works with that individual to maximize their participation and success. Based on current health-related trends and research, the Department of Health and Exercise Science is committed to providing a

strong general education program for Gustavus students that improves health-related knowledge and skills needed to promote wellness and prevent disease.

LIFETIME ACTIVITY (ACT) REQUIREMENT

In addition to the Personal Fitness course, students must select a combination of other courses (equivalent to .5 course) that focus on lifetime activity and health. These courses are normally .25 credit courses that meet two days per week for one semester. Popular courses include relaxation, tai chi, social dance, outdoor education, and some of the more traditional lifetime activity courses such as golf, badminton, and tennis. These courses provide respite for students by offering them an opportunity to engage with other students in physical activity. Students also discover activities that can be continued throughout the lifespan and they develop a social support system while engaging in health-promoting activity.

PERSONAL FITNESS AND LIFETIME ACTIVITY - GOALS

Students will:

Explore personal and professional values and recognize and appreciate the importance of lifelong learning and fitness.

Enhance personal fitness and health through acquisition of knowledge and skills.

Learn how to establish a lifestyle that promotes health and prevents disease.

1.2.7 PROGRAMS: CONTRIBUTIONS OF HES DEPARTMENT TO GENERAL EDUCATION

In addition to offering the Personal Fitness and Lifetime Activity general education program, department faculty intentionally reflect upon the five core values of Gustavus Adolphus College, and address those goals within each of the majors and individual courses where appropriate. We provide opportunities to explore vocation and service learning within a number of courses taught within the department, and encourage majors to study abroad either during the regular semester or January Term.

The department also contributes to the general education program of the College in other ways.

Departmental faculty members offer at least two FTS courses each fall semester, courses that are highly regarded by students.

Examples include:

- Leisure Quest
- The History of Humor in America
- Ready, Set, Relax!
- Women's Health Issues
- Food for a Nation

In addition to offering FTS courses, HES faculty members teach five WRITD courses across all four majors. These courses include:

- The School Health Program

Health Fitness Seminar
History and Philosophy of Physical Education
Athletic Training Techniques II
Personal and Community Health

HES faculty members offer both on-campus January Term classes and study abroad programs.

On-campus courses include:

Food for a Nation
The Meaning of Leisure
Women's Health Issues
Stress Management and Complementary Therapies
Contemporary and Historical Perspectives on the Winter Olympics
Scotland and Curling
The Coming Plagues
Emotional Health of Children in Sport

January Term study abroad courses include:

Olympic Quest
Scotland and Curling
Sport and the Modern Olympics in Germany, France, and Spain

1.2.8 PROGRAMS: SERVICE COURSES FOR OTHER DEPARTMENTS

The department offers three service courses for the Department of Education.

These courses are offered both fall and spring semesters each year.

Elementary Physical Education Content and Methods
Elementary Health Education Content and Methods
Adolescent Health Issues

HES department also offers a two-semester sequence of Anatomy and Physiology courses for departmental majors, nursing majors, some majors in Biology, and students in a variety of pre-professional programs such as medicine, physical therapy, occupational therapy, chiropractic, dentistry, and many more. Approximately 160 students enroll in anatomy and physiology lectures and labs each semester.

1.3 SUPPORT RELATIONSHIPS

Natural Sciences

Students pursuing the Health Fitness major must complete one course from either the Biology or Chemistry departments.

Gustavus Technology Services

HES department, along with other departments within the Education Division, rely on Joyce Aarsvold, division technology coordinator, for assistance with instructional technology planning and training, lab support, and resolution of problems with desktop machines. Joyce continues to help faculty and students within HES to refine technology skills and embed use of technology within courses and programs. She also team-teaches HES 237, Information Technology in Health Education and Physical Education, a required course for students pursuing those majors.

Additionally, funding for computer hardware is provided by the college through the IIAC.

Athletic Training Room and Other Clinical Settings

Students completing the Athletic Training Education Program (ATEP) must complete a series of clinical rotations based on competencies required by the national accreditation agency. These rotations include settings such as the athletic training room at Gustavus, the Gustavus Health Service, and the Orthopedic and Fracture Clinic in Mankato. These settings provide opportunities for students within the ATEP to gain real world experience and skill development in sports medicine.

Health Fitness Internship Settings

As discussed earlier within this document, all students who major in Health Fitness must complete a fulltime 12-15 week internship. These internships include settings such as the Mayo Clinic, American Heart Association, and Mankato Orthopedic and Fracture Clinic. These organizations provide important opportunities for students to apply knowledge and skills in clinical settings, and to acquire additional skills through opportunities to work directly with clients.

SECTION TWO

2.1 STRATEGIC ISSUES

We have chosen to blend strengths, limitations, and barriers because these seem interrelated.

2.1.1 GENERAL STRENGTHS, LIMITATIONS, BARRIERS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT

2.1.1.1 FACULTY

A clear strength of the department is highly qualified faculty with excellent teaching skills who are deeply committed to scholarship, student achievement, and the mission and goals of the college. At least two departmental faculty coordinate each major with several faculty offering courses required for completion of one of the majors or minor. In some cases, however, only one faculty member has particular expertise for course content. For example, only one faculty member is a nutrition specialist. This could be viewed as a limitation. We also lack sufficient faculty if the department would at some point like to offer multiple tracks within majors such as health education (school health education and community health education), or physical education (teaching, sport management, or adapted physical education). At this point we do not have an adequate number of faculty to make any significant changes within the majors program. We have strong majors but to achieve the vision of allowing tracks within majors, additional staff would be needed. Given departmental interest in and commitment to programs such as FTS and January Term, we would also like to offer additional courses within those programs. Currently, HES can offer no more than two FTS courses and the occasional January Term course given the heavy teaching load related to majors and general education.

2.1.1.2 ENROLLMENT

Enrollments might also be considered both a strength and weakness within the department. Coordinators of the Health Fitness major are currently dealing with very

high enrollments in courses required for the major. Over 90 students are currently pursuing this major. The department may need to hire an additional faculty member if this major continues to grow, or adopt a selective admission process to limit enrollments. To maintain reasonable class size that allows students opportunities to develop and demonstrate skills, additional staff may be needed. Equipment needs, budgetary considerations, and the inadequate size of the Human Performance Lab are other factors affected by high enrollments. Enrollments within the Physical Education and Health Education majors, typically completed as double majors by students pursuing education licensure, are stable but the department would like to see enrollments increase within these two programs, and the ATEP. These enrollment trends are typical at liberal arts colleges who offer these kinds of majors yet our vision would be to further increase enrollments in these three majors.

2.1.1.3 THEORY COURSES, .5 course

Another necessity, and yet it could be considered a weakness, is the need for .5 theory courses. These courses meet for 14 weeks, two or three times per week. Most faculty members within HES believe that any .5 course could be strengthened by making it a full course requirement but given staffing and the need to control total courses required for completion of a major, it is simply not reasonable to make all .5 courses into full courses. External accreditation of our majors drastically affects types of courses required and course content. To satisfy external competencies, ensure that majors remain fully accredited, allow students to double major when this decision is desirable given the job market, and enable students to graduate in four years, .5 courses must be offered.

2.1.1.4 TEACHING LOAD WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT

Related to the above weakness is faculty teaching load in HES. HES faculty members often teach several .5 theory courses in addition to some full courses and some .25 lifetime activity/.5 personal fitness courses. This means that to achieve the 6.0 teaching load for all college faculty, several HES faculty often have six or more preparations per semester. Most faculty in HES teach a limited number of fitness and activity courses since coach-teachers and athletic trainer-teachers help with those programs. Although we certainly recognize that .25 lifetime activity courses require less preparation, they still involve two hours per week of contact time with students plus whatever preparation is needed for each course. Half (.5) theory courses require extensive faculty preparation, grading of papers and assignments, and meetings with students. Without doubt, the teaching load assigned to HES faculty is simply too heavy. Not only does this affect preparation for teaching and advising, but it also makes it difficult to find blocks of time for research and writing. Hiring additional non-tenure track faculty to teach all fitness and lifetime activity courses might be a solution to this problem. HES faculty could then normalize teaching loads and numbers of preparations, and have teaching loads that would allow changes within majors if warranted, offer new majors/new tracks within majors, or increase contributions to college-wide programs such as FTS and January Term.

2.1.1.5 ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY PROGRAM

Although the department would certainly not consider the full year anatomy and physiology sequence as a weakness, in fact it is a very strong departmental program with large enrollments, but it is a challenge. The limitation is that we do not have adequate staffing within the program. The department already needs to hire a full-time person to help with lectures and labs, and coordinate labs. We currently rely on one full-time faculty member to staff the anatomy and physiology program, a part-time person to

teach two lectures per year, a part-time person to teach several lab sections per year, and a person within the Biology department to teach four labs per year. Lecture enrollments are far too large (45-50 per section), labs are too large (20-22 per section), and we are still not meeting student enrollment demands. At this point we average 160 students per semester in anatomy and physiology. An additional hire to support this program is essential. Another major concern within the anatomy and physiology program is facility-related. The plan for the renovation of Lund includes a large lecture space and A/P lab space in addition to a storage facility for cadaver. Until the renovation takes pace, the department must utilize laboratory space within Nobel Hall. This creates difficulties for the departments who normally use those labs, and we cannot move to cadaver study given that there is no suitable storage facility in Nobel. Other limitations relate to inadequate office space for part-time teachers, lack of storage space for models, and budgetary needs for models, software, and other resources that will further strengthen the anatomy and physiology program.

2.1.2 STRENGTHS. LIMITATIONS, BARRIERS – MAJORS

2.1.2.1 ATEP

A very clear strength within the department is having fully accredited majors in Health Education, Physical Education, and ATEP. There is no accrediting body for the Health Fitness major but we have earned national endorsement as an excellent program based on an in-depth self-study in 2005. Currently, ACSM in collaboration with other exercise science organizations, is in the process of creating a Commission on Accreditation for Exercise Science (COAES). The department will further explore this option as more details become available.

The department believes the ATEP is a very strong program given that it is fully accredited and produces quality majors who successfully complete the national certification exam and pursue graduate study and careers in or related to athletic training. Historically, for Gustavus students the first-time passing rate on the national exam averages 80%, while nationally, the average is 40%. The inclusion of practical experiences for students in varied professional settings, and the opportunity to learn from mentors who possess extensive knowledge and skills represents yet another strength of the program. Students also have the opportunity to work with the United States Olympic Committee medical staff, certainly a unique learning experience, and one graduate was recently placed in a position with the United States Fencing Association medical staff.

One potential concern, however, is that the department has been unable to complete a tenure track hire to serve as program director for the ATEP with expertise in anatomy and physiology. The department is, however, in the process of advertising a new position for a non-tenure track hire with a completed masters degree to serve as program director within ATEP. Although the department would have preferred to hire an individual with the Ph.D. this is difficult within the field of athletic training. Some courses within the ATEP are taught by athletic trainer-teachers, or by the director of the program, while other required courses are taught by tenure/tenure-track faculty members. All of these individuals are highly skilled teachers with extensive practical experience within the discipline. Other limitations relate to modest enrollments within the program, the need to focus on competency-based education given national accreditation standards, and the need for lab and classroom space for teaching, learning, and research.

The department also seeks to further expand student research opportunities for majors within ATEP. Two majors presented papers at professional conferences during 2007-2008, and the department hopes to encourage more students to engage in research over the next several years. These are on-going challenges that are being addressed by the program director and staff.

2.1.2.2 HEALTH EDUCATION AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The health education major and physical education major are excellent programs within the department with the vast majority of students finding positions in K-12 education, and/or going on to graduate school. Majors in both physical education and health education have a 100% success rate over the last five years on the national PRAXIS exams both for the two majors and the education pedagogy test. Other strengths include faculty with considerable expertise in both programs who are deeply committed to cross-disciplinary integration of concepts and research. More students in these majors are completing January Term courses abroad, whether taught by departmental faculty, or other faculty members. Our majors are also student teaching abroad in places such as Spain, and beginning spring 2009, our first major will student teach in Alaska working with children from diverse cultural groups.

Possible limitations include the rather narrow focus on school health education and school-based physical education without other tracks within the majors. (This issue was discussed in earlier paragraphs.) Other limitations might include modest but stable enrollments within the two majors which reflects the cyclical nature of K-12 education, the need for more school-based practicum experiences, and the desire by some students to do advanced study in adapted physical education. We also hope to extend opportunities for student-faculty research for students within these majors. Over the last three years, at least 19 research projects have been completed by students in health education and physical education. The department hopes to explore ways to further promote student research within these majors.

2.1.2.3 HEALTH FITNESS

Yet another very clear strength within the department is the Health Fitness major. Students within this program are well prepared for careers and graduate study. Virtually every student pursues a research project, and the majority present at state and regional conferences and professional meetings. The internship program mentioned earlier is also a major strength within the major. Our majors are often invited to apply for internships around the country, which certainly speaks to the reputation of the program. Students view the internship as a very positive experience that challenges them to apply the knowledge and skills acquired during their four years at Gustavus. For many, the internship is also a means to explore career options and develop new skills.

Limitations within the health fitness major relate to very high enrollments (discussed earlier), and the fact that many students pursue the major intending to attend graduate school in an allied health science such as physical therapy. This presents a challenge for faculty who teach within the major given that some students may devalue knowledge and skills associated with the major knowing that they will pursue a pre-professional program. Skills-based assessments, which require extensive faculty time and commitment, and the need for specialized equipment and facility space are other limitations. This requires adequate budget to replace aging equipment and given the very small size of the existing human performance lab, renovation of the facility is also a necessity.

2.1.3 ACT and FIT PROGRAM – STRENGTHS, LIMITATIONS, BARRIERS

As described earlier within this Strategic Plan, the department views the FIT and ACT general education program as a critical part of the College's overall general education program.

Strengths of the program include:

- excellent teachers and faculty who are committed to the program.
- a wonderfully diverse range of fitness and lifetime activity courses that appeal to students and address the criteria for the requirement.
- opportunities for students to improve level of knowledge and fitness.
- opportunities for students to explore ways to relax and meet other students.

Limitations include:

- the challenge of staffing the number of courses required.
- expertise and ability to teach a variety of courses is affected by multiple responsibilities assigned to most coach-teachers/athletic trainer/teachers
- facility space is very limited so scheduling can be problematic
- the scheduling format of two 50 minute classes per week

2.1.4 EXTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

2.1.4.1 CHALLENGES

- External accreditation and competencies (e.g. affects course content and objectives, assessment, costs of maintaining accreditation, faculty workload during times of self-study, need for .5 theory courses, etc.)
- Fluctuations in job market for graduates
- State and federal legislation that affects teacher education
- Difficulty in obtaining grant funding for projects and programs
- Difficulty in attracting faculty with appropriate experience and terminal degree
- Increasing number of students pursuing allied health science programs

2.1.4.2 OPPORTUNITIES

- The renovation of Lund Center will enhance teaching, learning, and research opportunities for majors and students within the general education program, and provide needed office and classroom space.
- New hires will allow the majors in Health Education and Physical Education to offer multiple tracks designed to meet student needs and interests.
- Additional funding from the College or Endowed Funds will support student and faculty research and presentation in professional and organizational venues.
- Additional funding will also permit purchase of new equipment for laboratories and spaces included within the renovation plan for Lund Center.
- By hiring additional staff to coordinate anatomy and physiology lectures and laboratory experiences, the department will better be able to meet the needs of our majors, majors within the sciences and nursing departments, and students in pre-professional programs.

- To further support and expand the network of internship opportunities within the Health Fitness major and ATEP.

(2.2 BARRIERS – EMBEDDED WITHIN STRATEGIC ISSUES)

SECTION THREE

3.1 STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Dept. Goal 1. Provide majors and a minor that emphasize excellence and effectively prepares students for a career within the discipline and for graduate study.

Strategic Initiative 1.1

Maintain appropriate state and national accreditation of the physical education and health education majors, and the athletic training education program (ATEP). Within the health fitness major, continue to follow the guidelines for knowledge, skills, and abilities established for ACSM certification as a Health Fitness Specialist and for National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) certification.

Strategic Initiative 1.2

Annually review course requirements and content for each major and departmental program.

Strategic Initiative 1.3

Maintain 100% success rate for majors in physical education and health education who take the national PRAXIS exam.

Work to improve the percentage of majors in ATEP who successfully pass the national certification exam.

Strategic Initiative 1.4

Begin a review of requirements for admission to quality graduate program typically completed by our majors, and compare to current course content and goals for each major.

Strategic Initiative 1.5

Hire at least two additional tenure track faculty to allow development of tracks within the physical education and health education majors, meet the needs created by the increasing enrollment within the health fitness major, and adequately staff the anatomy and physiology program.

Strategic Initiative 1.6

Continue to create, administer, and reflect on student course evaluations administered by faculty members within the department to ensure program excellence.

Strategic Initiative 1.7

Annually review the requirements and course content for the minor in coaching to ensure the program continues to satisfy the NASPE requirements for preparation of coaches.

Strategic Initiative 1.8

Continue to administer and reflect upon student course evaluations to ensure student input regarding the minor.

Dept. Goal 2. Facilitate student-faculty research, and provide mentoring to students who apply for graduate school admission.

Strategic Initiative 2.1

Create and distribute a brochure that explains departmental commitment to student-faculty research and provides information to majors about how to secure a mentor and explore research opportunities.

Strategic Initiative 2.2

In the fall of each year, the department's research coordinator will speak to the majors about research opportunities.

Strategic Initiative 2.3

Explore ways to fund student-faculty research and presentation at professional venues through pursuit of endowed funds.

Strategic Initiative 2.4

Continue to explore ways to embed student research within courses required for each major.

Dept. Goal 3. Integrate within the majors and minor liberal learning skills including reading, writing, and speaking; appreciation of diversity and global issues; commitment to service; and critical thinking.

Strategic Initiative 3.1

Schedule a departmental retreat every two years to discuss individual courses and majors, and ways to further integrate the liberal learning skills included within goal three.

Strategic Initiative 3.2

Create a set of questions that could be included within course evaluations that inquire about the types of liberal learning skills included within each course and the degree to which students value those skills.

Strategic Initiative 3.3

Include questions about the development of liberal learning skills during the senior exit interviews for each major.

Strategic Initiative 3.4

Secure funding to annually sponsor a speaker who will discuss service, critical thinking, diversity, or community within the context of departmental disciplines.

Dept. Goal 4. Facilitate exploration of personal and professional values that enable students to recognize the importance of lifelong learning and commitment to community and discipline.

Strategic Initiative 4.1

Design a component/assignment to be included within the introductory course for each major that explores professional values, ethics, and commitment to discipline and community.

Strategic Initiative 4.2

Designate a senior capstone course for each major that includes continued discussion and reflection on the elements of goal four.

Dept. Goal 5. Continue to support the College by offering courses that support majors within other departments and pre-professional programs.

Strategic Initiative 5.1

Hire additional staff to coordinate anatomy and physiology laboratories, and provide additional sections of lecture.

Strategic Initiative 5.2

Secure additional funding for models, software, and other instructional equipment needed for anatomy and physiology labs.

Dept. Goal 6. Provide a quality general education program that includes opportunities for students to enhance personal fitness and health through acquisition of knowledge and skills needed to establish an active lifestyle that promotes wellness and prevents disease.

Strategic Initiative 6.1

Appoint a general education (FIT/ACT) review committee to regularly review the program and suggest needed changes and updates.

Strategic Initiative 6.2

Department chair reviews all FIT/ACT course evaluations to ensure quality.

Strategic Initiative 6.3

Support the College's fund raising and planning efforts to ensure renovation of Lund Center as soon as possible to ensure adequate space for fitness and lifetime activity courses. The renovation may also allow expansion of the types of courses offered within the FIT and ACT programs.

Strategic Initiative 6.4

Hire additional staff to support the FIT/ACT program, and reduce class size within the FIT program.

Dept. Goal 7. Secure appropriate funding to support development of departmental programs and to purchase essential equipment.

Strategic Goal 7.1

Explore possible grant funding to support departmental programs and equipment purchases and upgrades.

Strategic Goal 7.2

In consultation with the Office of Institutional Advancement, explore the possibility of an endowed fund to support departmental programs and equipment needs.

Strategic Goal 7.3

Support the College's fund raising and planning efforts to ensure the earliest possible renovation of Lund Center, given the importance of addressing classroom, office, and laboratory space needs.

SECTION FOUR

4.0 ASSESSMENT of GOALS and INITIATIVES

Goal 1:

Maintain national accreditations and/or certifications of the majors

Continue the process of annual review of the majors

Monitor the results of the national PRAXIS exam

Monitor the results of the national exam for graduates of the ATEP, and solicit student feedback regarding preparatory experiences for the exam

Every three years, coordinators of each departmental major will review requirements/competencies established by the top graduate programs that offer the major.

Secure two new hires mentioned in Strategic Initiative 1.5.

Continue using and analyzing results of student evaluations for all courses required for the majors, minor, and general education courses

Goal 2:

Add a research and mentorship section to the departmental brochure

Each fall the departmental research coordinator will speak to the HES student organization for majors in physical education, health education, and health fitness, and to majors within the ATEP.

Request from the Dean of Faculty additional funds to support student-faculty research, and meet with the Director of Institutional Advancement about the possibility of expanding endowed funding for student research and professional presentations at appropriate conferences.

Each faculty member will include a statement about research opportunities related to that class in the course syllabus.

Goal 3:

Schedule a departmental retreat spring of 2010 to examine ways faculty members are addressing liberal learning within their classes and majors.

Department chair in consultation with faculty creates and distributes a set of open-ended questions related to the liberal arts that may be included in each course evaluation for the majors and minor.

Continue to conduct senior exit interviews and include questions about liberal learning.

Request funding from the Dean of Faculty, or use endowed funds if available to bring an appropriate speaker to campus to address the majors and other students.

Goal 4:

Faculty members who teach the entry-level course for each major will be encouraged to design and include an assignment or lecture that addresses professional values, ethics, and commitment to the discipline and community.

Each major has a designated capstone course that includes discussion of values, lifelong learning, and commitment to community and discipline.

Goal 5:

Hire a coordinator for anatomy and physiology labs who assists with lecture.

Budget for anatomy and physiology resources, models, software, and other instructional materials is increased by 30%.

Goal 6:

General education (FIT/ACT) committee meets annually to review the program and suggest needed changes and updates.

Department chair is included on the Lund Center planning and renovation committee.

New faculty member hired to support general education program (FIT and ACT).

Goal 7:

Department chair annually meets with the Grants Coordinator to explore grant opportunities appropriate to HES department, and reports results to the faculty.

Department chair annually meets with the director of Institutional Advancement regarding ways to secure endowed funds for departmental programs and equipment.

Department chair serves on the Lund Center planning and renovation committee to ensure academic needs are addressed.

SIGNATURE PAGE

All members of the department were provided with opportunities to participate in the preparation of the departmental strategic plan through department meetings and review of documents. A committee of three department members served as the final reviewers for the document. These individuals included Karl Larson, Bruce Van Duser, and Jeanne Herman.

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