

SECTION V—USE OF ASSESSMENT RESULTS TO IMPROVE CANDIDATE AND PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

These are exciting times at Keene State College as its entire curriculum is about to undergo a major transition. Beginning with the Fall 2007 semester, new General Education (that will be called Integrative Studies) requirements will be implemented. The college is also moving from a 3-credit course model to a 4-credit course model. These significant changes, coupled with a new President in 2005-06 and a new Provost (formerly Vice President for Academic Affairs) in 2006-07, will impact all programs, including physical education. In preparation for these changes, the physical education/teacher certification (PETC) faculty has thoroughly reviewed both the content and delivery of its program. Coupled with data derived from assessments within the program (eight of which have been presented here), the following steps have been (or are being) made to improve both candidate performance and the program.

Content Knowledge

As noted, New Hampshire does not require PRAXIS II for certification in physical education, and at this point, Keene State College does not require PRAXIS II for completion of teacher certification programs. To date, the PETC faculty has decided not to require PRAXIS II for the completion of the physical education/teacher certification program, primarily based on expense. Any, or all, of these conditions may be different in the future.

While the PETC faculty is satisfied that the courses in the program give candidates the content knowledge needed to be effective physical education teachers, there are changes that have been recently implemented or will be implemented when the 4-credit model goes into effect. Two examples are the addition of PE 261: Fitness Curriculum for K-12 Learners and the upcoming change in the delivery of PE 200: Kinesiology and PE 201: Physiology of Exercise.

The PETC faculty found, through feedback from cooperating teachers and college supervisor observation, that because candidates took PE 260 in the fall of their first year, the content and activities from Total Fitness were not being used when candidates were in their practicum courses. Since PE 260 was taken so early in the program, candidates did not make the necessary connections when they were enrolled in practicum. A new course, PE 261, was added to the curriculum and is taken in the second year, just prior to the junior level practicum courses. This has helped candidates be more prepared to teach fitness activities as well as integrate the use of technology (from a teaching perspective).

In the current 3-credit model, there is no time specifically devoted to laboratory experiences in PE 200 and PE 201. This has had an impact on the candidates' ability to understand the material. While the faculty members teaching these courses have tried to incorporate hands-on experiences within the constraints of meeting time, more can, and should be, done. Therefore, more class time for laboratory experiences is being built into PE 200 and PE 201 as they move from 3-credit to 4-credit courses.

Finally, there is no data available from the Physical Education Content Knowledge Exam designed by the PETC faculty. Certainly as data begins to be collected, other changes may need to be made.

Professional and Pedagogical Knowledge, Skill, and Dispositions

Most of the PETC candidates attain the acceptable level when reviewing the data collected. This is also seen in anecdotal evidence from PETC faculty and cooperating teachers in the field. Much of this is due to the

admission process to the PETC major and the setting of high expectations right from the beginning of the program.

However, the data shows (and the faculty) agree there are areas of the program that need attention to give candidates the knowledge, skill, and dispositions needed to be effective teachers and to align more closely with AAHPERD/NASPE standards. These areas include growth and development, diverse students, technology, and collaboration.

Knowledge of growth and development primarily comes from courses candidates take in the ESEC (Education, Special Education, Early Childhood) department. In physical education courses they are expected to apply this knowledge. Since the courses required for all candidates in teacher education programs are changing, the PETC faculty need to carefully monitor what will be taught in the “new” courses and make sure the PE candidates still get the necessary information related to growth and development. If not, then new ways to infuse that information in PE courses will be necessary.

Most of our candidates are from small, mostly white, New England communities. That description can also be applied to Keene, NH. While candidates are exposed to some forms of diversity, there is limited practical experience with cultural diversity. Ways to remedy this are being explored.

While PE candidates are expected to use technology (computer, internet) in many courses for research and writing, the application of technology as applied to teaching is in its beginning stages. The addition of PE 261 (with its accompanying Technology A profile and reflection) is one of the first (and quite successful) attempts at the application of technology. Adding the use of the computer for assessment design and grading in PE 362 and for the Student Teaching Assessment project are examples of other ways candidates will now be expected to apply technology. Plans are also being made to have the Advocacy Project in PE 362 be done as a power point presentation rather than a paper.

Collaboration is one of the more difficult standards to address at the undergraduate level. The PETC faculty is looking at ways to infuse collaboration in at least the practicum courses and student teaching more consistently.

Student Learning

Student assessment is the area that has received a great deal of attention in the PETC program. PETC faculty consistently found that candidates had difficulty when assessing students. While candidates are required to take PE 460: Measurement and Evaluation in Physical Education (a traditional tests and measurement course), this was not enough. The following steps have been taken to date: 1. candidates start collecting assessment tools from the first year, 2. the Individual Child Project in PE 361 focuses on assessment and student learning, 3. assessment is a significant part of PE 362: Administration of Physical Education Programs, and 4. projects related to assessment have been added to PE 361, PE 362, and student teaching. However, the desired results have still not been achieved.

Therefore, the PETC faculty will be implementing additional changes. First, there will be a closer relationship between the summative evaluation section in the unit plan and what is expected when candidates complete the Student Teaching Assessment Project. PE 460 will no longer be required in the program, and in its place a new course, PE 363: Evaluation of K-12 Physical Education will be added. This course is designed to overview the purpose of evaluation in K-12 physical education programs, examine program standards and various methods of evaluation. Emphasis will be placed on the assessment of student learning through designing effective assessment tools that are aligned with program objectives as well as methods for using and reporting results.