

Assessment Report HESC Major 2020-2021 Academic Year

Overview of 2020-21

In the 2020-21 academic year, the Health Science program faced numerous challenges that made effective assessment difficult to attain. Our goal for this year was to address learning goal #1 which states that students who graduate with a Health Science major will be able to “describe, interpret, and integrate fundamental principles that underly human anatomy and physiology, human behavior and development, common diseases, and statistics.” As stated in our Cycle of Assessment, Learning Goal #1 is supposed to be assessed through the capstone exam given to all seniors. Several factors have made it difficult to develop that tool and as of now, no exam exists.

Since Brenda Houck departed, we do not have any staff dedicated to the Health Sciences major. Current duties are being maintained by work from various faculty members, with Assistant Professor Dr. J.D. Gantz as the primary contact person for majors. The department had planned on a retreat in September of 2020 to develop an exam, but the pandemic and remote learning made that a prohibitively difficult process.

Furthermore, the departure of Dr. George Harper in late 2020 caused significant issues. Dr. Harper was in the professor of record for the senior seminar for majors in Fall 2020, but he departed without providing any feedback as to the students’ performance in the class. We were able to retrieve all of their written papers, but there was no record of their presentations or other class activities. We did have expected evaluation tools for the spring semester senior seminar students who were taught by Dr. Gantz, but basically, we are missing any meaningful information for more than ½ of our graduating seniors. Finally, the papers and presentations were not the planned assessment vehicle for assessment goal #1.

Plans for 2021-22

The department recognizes that the Health Science major requires substantial reorganization and development. We had a search for a two-year visiting position in the spring of 2021 that failed to produce a hire, so we remain without dedicated staffing to the major. Nevertheless, the departmental retreat for early fall consisted of re-imagining the Health Science major, in part with potential collaborations with the Department of Psychology. We also plan to petition the Committee on Faculty to allow for a chair of the HESC major instead of the Department chair overseeing both majors, as is currently the situation. The Health Sciences major has grown very large over the last few years in spite of the staffing and resource deficiencies. By the spring of 2022, we should have an effective assessment process in place. Our priority for the Fall of 2021 is the development of a comprehensive exam given to seniors.

The Hendrix College Assessment Team has given permission for the department to move the evaluation of learning goal #1 to this year’s assessment plan. Therefore, the development of an effective comprehensive exam this year will allow us to complete that process.