

**Major Field Assessment Report
M.A. in Health and Kinesiology
Spring 2003**

GOAL 1: M.A. in Health and Kinesiology graduates will demonstrate the ability to communicate high levels of knowledge, and the application thereof, in specific areas of study. These data are collected from the Oral Comprehensive Exam by the department.

- A. Expected Outcome: Graduates will demonstrate competence in oral communication.
Assessment: 90% of graduates will score satisfactory or better on the average scores on the Graduate Oral Comprehensive Exam item(s) focusing on “communication skills.”
- B. Expected Outcome: Graduates will demonstrate an ability to synthesize, apply, and interpret/evaluate research and literature in their respective specialized areas of study.
Assessment: 90% of graduates will score satisfactory or better on the average scores on the Graduate Oral Comprehensive Exam item(s) focusing on “thinking skills.”
- C. Expected Outcome: Graduates will demonstrate an adequate knowledge of statistics and research methods applied to studies in their respective specialized areas.
Assessment: 90% of graduates will score satisfactory or better on the average scores on the Graduate Oral Comprehensive Exam item(s) focusing on “statistics and research.”
- D. Expected Outcome: Graduates will demonstrate the ability to integrate and synthesize knowledge content acquired from courses taken in his/her individualized M.A. program of study.
Assessment: 90% of graduates will score satisfactory or better on the average scores on the Graduate Oral Comprehensive Exam item(s) focusing on “knowledge of specific content areas.”

Summary of data: On the oral comprehensive exam, the outcome-based assessment used as the culminating event for the masters degree, over 90% of graduates met the goal criterion of scoring adequate or better for each outcome, except for the area of “knowledge of research and statistics,” where 87% met the criterion.

Changes to program: In recent years, faculty have expressed dissatisfaction with the oral comprehensive exam and procedures associated with it. Initially, the scoring form used by faculty to evaluate the student’s performance was modified, yet still dissatisfaction remained. The primary concerns about the exam focused on its variety from student to student. That is, students were not tested on a set of standard questions, but rather the examination was free to flow along with the conversation and questions tended to build on, or relate to, previous questions. In addition, faculty attending the exam were free to ask questions on all topics, and often questions varied from topics covered in courses or provided for the students for preparation for the exam. This past year, the KHS Graduate Faculty formed a subcommittee to make recommendations for the exam. The result was a change from using an oral format to a written format where students would answer a set of questions written by the faculty who taught the courses. In addition, students often expressed the opinion that graduate program did not adequately prepare them for the oral format of the exam. In recent years, students have been encouraged to prepare for the exam in groups using an oral question-answer format, and students have had the opportunity to engage in oral question-answer sessions with faculty in preparation for the exam.

GOAL 2: M.A. in Health and Kinesiology graduates will evaluate aspects of their graduate program and preparation favorably on the Exit Survey, Alumni Survey, and Graduate Student Opinion of Program survey (collected by the department).

- A. Expected Outcome: Graduates will express satisfaction with the preparation they received relative to specific items pertaining to the quality of instruction and experiences.

Assessment

1. On the exit survey, 75% of graduates will express satisfaction with the preparation they received (indicate 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale) on the following items:
2. 75% of graduate students who complete the Survey of Graduate Alumni will express satisfaction (indicate 4 or 5 out on a 5-point scale) on the following items:
 - Effectiveness of the faculty as teachers
 - Quality of instruction in advanced courses
 - Practicum, internship, clinical, or other hands-on experiences outside the classroom
 - Overall quality of your degree program
3. 75% of students who complete the Survey of Graduate Alumni, and who indicate pursuing further education, will express satisfaction with the effectiveness of the experiences at SLU in preparing them for graduate/professional school (indicate “effectively” or “very effectively”).

NOTE: This assessment was added to our MFA plan in response to MFA procedures and our understanding that an item would be included in the Survey of Graduate Alumni specifically focusing on it. However, the two most recent summaries of the Alumni Survey available for this report did not provide this data. It is our understanding that this item was added to the survey and will be included in future reports.

4. On the “Student Opinion of Program Survey,” 75% of students will favorably evaluate the program (indicate a score of 3 or 4 on a 4-point scale) on the following items:
 - Adequacy of the graduate curriculum in preparing me for career advancement
 - Adequacy of the graduate curriculum in preparing me for further education
 - Availability of opportunities for me to have meaningful participation in research projects
 - Overall quality of my graduate degree program

Summary of data:

Assessment 4: Upon immediate completion of the degree, students expressed high opinions of the program in terms of its adequacy for preparing them for career advancement and further education, opportunity to participate in research projects, and overall quality (100% of graduates responding to these items with a value of 3 or better on a 4-point scale).

Assessments 1 and 2: By comparison, responses to the Exit Survey and Survey of Graduate Alumni were less positive, specifically for certain items. Students rated the effectiveness of the faculty as teacher highly on both instruments (averaging 91% indicating positive opinions). However, values for the three other items used in this report failed to reach the goal of 75% positive responses (when averaging both instruments). This was particularly evident on the

Survey of Graduate Alumni where only approximately 50% reported positive opinions of the quality of practicum, internship, clinical experiences, and the overall quality of the degree.

Relative to practica/internship/clinical experiences, graduate students in our program have the option of engaging in practica/internship experiences as part of their degree, but few actually include this in their degree plan (approximately 1 in 20 students). As a result, most students complete their programs by taking 36 hours of coursework, or taking coursework and completing a thesis. It is possible that many fail to evaluate the practical aspects of their program highly simply because it is not present in their degree plans.

Relative to “overall quality of the degree program,” 100% of students completing the Exit Survey indicated positive responses, whereas only 56% of those who completed the Survey of Graduate Alumni responded positively.

Changes to the program: We have recently made several changes to the program in response to these data as well as events in recent years. One major change is the requirement of students in the graduate program to be advised prior to registering for courses for upcoming semesters. Prior to this change, students were expected to conform to graduate program regulations and policies regarding the selection of a committee, creation of a degree plan, completion of the GRE and achieving an acceptable score, taking courses approved/indicated on the degree plan, etc. However, we have had many students who have failed to follow the guidelines, and as a result, have difficulties completing the degree in the expected time, or have run into problems continuing their program.

It is not surprising that some students evaluate the program less positively as a result of the problems they have had matriculating through the program. In addition to changing the advising process, a renewed emphasis has been placed on strict adherence to the graduate program guidelines. It is expected that these changes will reduce the number of students who find themselves at a point where they, for example, can no longer take courses because they have failed to achieve the GRE score, have taken more than the 12 hours allowed before completing the GRE, have taken more than the 12 hours allowed prior to completing a degree plan, etc. In addition, the new advisement process should ensure that more students are aware of practica/internship opportunities as part of their graduate program.

Other changes to the program, which may be reflected in higher perceptions of the program include the deletion of courses from the SLU catalog which are no longer taught (some entering students have examined the catalog and are disappointed that certain courses they had hoped to take are not offered); and the addition of new courses to the program in response to student feedback and expertise of faculty. These curricular changes are expected to improve the overall quality of the program and student opinion of it.

Future MFA plans

- With the modification of the comprehensive examination format, the MFA plan will need to be revised to reflect the scoring of the new exam format.
- At present, students who complete a thesis are scored pass/fail at their defense. The assessment tools used to evaluate theses need to be revised to reflect a variety of factors (e.g., quality of professional writing, quality of the oral defense, quality of responses to questions following the defense), and this assessment added to the MFA plan.
- Assessments for graduate level practica experiences need to be revised, and added to the MFA plan.
- Creation of a set of questions to be added to the Exit Survey and Survey of Graduate Alumni for graduates of the M.A. program, with at least one item on each instrument addressing GOAL 3.
- We also plan to explore surveying employers of our graduates, with a survey being sent to employers identified by graduates on the Alumni Survey.

GOAL 1: M.A. in Health and Kinesiology graduates will demonstrate the ability to communicate high levels of knowledge, and the application thereof, in specific areas of study. These data are collected from the Oral Comprehensive Exam by the department.

Expected Outcome A: Graduates will demonstrate competence in oral communication.

Percent of graduates who score satisfactory or better on the average scores on the Graduate Oral Comprehensive Exam item(s) focusing on "communication skills."

GOAL	OBS
90%	100%

Expected Outcome B: Graduates will demonstrate an ability to synthesize, apply, and interpret/evaluate research and literature in their respective specialized areas of study.

Percent of graduates who score satisfactory or better on the average scores on the Graduate Oral Comprehensive Exam item(s) focusing on "thinking skills."

GOAL	OBS
90%	100%

Expected Outcome C: Graduates will demonstrate an adequate knowledge of statistics and research methods applied to studies in their respective specialized areas.

Percent of graduates who score satisfactory or better on the average scores on the Graduate Oral Comprehensive Exam item(s) focusing on "statistics and research."

GOAL	OBS
90%	87%

Expected Outcome D: Graduates will demonstrate the ability to integrate and synthesize knowledge content acquired from courses taken in his/her individualized M.A. program of study.

Percent of graduates who score satisfactory or better on the average scores on the Graduate Oral Comprehensive Exam item(s) focusing on "knowledge of specific content areas."

GOAL	OBS
90%	100%

GOAL 2: M.A. in Health and Kinesiology graduates will evaluate aspects of their graduate program and preparation favorably on the Exit Survey, Alumni Survey, and Graduate Student Opinion of Program survey (collected by the department).

Expected Outcome: Graduates will express satisfaction with the preparation they received relative to specific items pertaining to the quality of instruction and experiences.

Exit Survey	GOAL	OBS
Effectiveness of the faculty as teachers	75%	92%
Quality of instruction in advanced courses	75%	92%
Practicum, internship, clinical, or other hands-on experiences	75%	71%
Overall quality of your degree program	75%	100%

Survey of Graduate Alumni	GOAL	OBS
Effectiveness of the faculty as teachers	75%	89%
Quality of instruction in advanced courses	75%	56%
Practicum, internship, clinical, or other hands-on experiences	75%	45%
Overall quality of your degree program	75%	56%

Student Opinion of Program Survey	GOAL	OBS
Adequacy of the grad curriculum in preparing me for career advancement	75%	100%
Adequacy of the grad curriculum in preparing me for further education	75%	100%
Availability of opportunities for me to have meaningful partn in res projects	75%	100%
Overall quality of my graduate degree program	75%	100%

Average	83%
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