

**Outcomes Assessment Plan and Report
Department of Health Science
New Mexico State University**

Undergraduate Program

**Academic Year 2006-2007
(Fall 2006, Spring 2007, and Summer 2007)**

Prepared by:

**Satya P. Rao
Associate Professor
Chair - Outcomes Assessment Committee**

**Other Members of Outcomes Assessment Committee
Charles Kozel, Associate Professor
Sue Forster-Cox, Assistant Professor
Department of Health Science**

January, 2008

Introduction

The current outcomes assessment plan and report provides the following information:

1. Outcomes Assessment Plan
2. Methods of assessment used
3. The performance measures or criteria used to determine student learning
4. Results and anticipated use of the results of the outcome assessment activities
5. Dissemination of results

The report will discuss the department's undergraduate program first and then the graduate program offered by the department and will cover the five points listed above. The outcomes assessment plan, methods of assessment used, and the direct performance measures/criteria used to determine student learning (1, 2, 3) are compiled and presented together in a tabular form first for the undergraduate program and then for the graduate program.

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

1,2,3) Stage 3: Outcomes Assessment Plan.

Direct measures of Undergraduate Student's Learning	Performance Measures: Methods of Assessment and Activities
<p>A. Percentile scores on the English Writing Assessment test/exam offered in HLS 100.</p> <p>B. Field Experience Evaluations by Agency Preceptors.</p>	<p>Students take the English writing test/exam in HLS 100 and are required to score 37 percentile or greater.</p> <p><i>Performance Measures Used:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of students who were enrolled in HLS 100 (Fall 2006, Spring 2007, Summer 2007) • No. of students who took the test/exam • No. of students who scored a passing grade of 37 percentile or greater <p>Each undergraduate student is enrolled in a 6-credit hour field experience course (320 clock-hours) to gain practical/hands-on experience in Community Health. Students are required to receive adequate/positive evaluations from their field preceptors, receive a "C" or higher overall grade for the course, make an oral presentation of their work at the end of the semester faculty/students meeting, and submit a portfolio of their work to be maintained in the Department library.</p> <p><i>Performance Measures Used:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of students enrolled in Field Experience for (Fall 2006, Spring 2007, Summer 2007) • No. who received positive preceptor evaluations • No. who received a "C" or higher grade • No. who presented • No. who submitted their portfolio
<p>C. Student Grades and Evaluations from Outside reviewers in the Capstone course HLS 499.</p>	<p>HLS 499 is the department's undergraduate Capstone course that requires students to receive a "C" or better overall grade and 'good – excellent' evaluations on their projects from external reviewers.</p>

	<p>Performance Measures Used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of students enrolled in HLS 499 in the academic year 2006-2007 • Grades received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. of A's No. of B's No. of C's • External reviews (if applicable): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent Very Good Good Fair Needs improvement
<p>D. Pass rate on the professional certification Examination for "Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES)."</p>	<p>Undergraduate students are encouraged to take the national professional certification examination ('Certified Health Education Specialist'-CHES) either in the last two semesters before they graduate or immediately after graduation. Summaries of examination results are sent directly to the department annually.</p> <p>Performance Measures Used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of students who took the CHES preparation course and those who appeared for the exam in the academic year 2006-2007) • No. of students who passed the exam • Pass rate

4a. Results of Outcomes Assessment Activities

The following section describes the results related to the direct measures used to assess student learning outcomes in the undergraduate program:

A. Percentile scores on the English writing assessment test/exam offered in HLS 100:

One of the important undergraduate students' learning measures is the percentile scores in the department's English writing test/exam. Students are required to score 37 percentile or greater to be successful. During Fall 2003, Spring 2004, Summer 2004 semesters (course not offered in the summer), a total of 27 students took the writing test/exam with the following results.

Number of students who were enrolled in HLS 100 during Fall 2006, Spring 2007, and Summer 2007: 27

(Course was offered only in Spring 2007)

Number of students who took the test/exam: 23
(NOTE: Not all students enrolled are required to take the exam, only those pursuing a major in the Department of Health Science)

Number of students who scored a passing grade of 37 percentile or greater: 21

PASS RATE: 91%

Note: Typically, each academic year some students choose to take the alternate exam, primarily in those situations in which they are not successful in the ‘Conventions of Written English Exam.’ Additionally, some of the enrolled students are not potential health science majors and therefore do not take the exam or the alternate one because the other departments do not have the same requirements as the health science department.

B. Field experience evaluations by agency preceptors:

Each undergraduate student enrolls in a 6-credit hour field experience course and completes 320 clock hours of internship to gain practical/hands-on experience in the fields of public health and community health education. The following results were recorded on the direct students’ learning measures.

Number of students enrolled in the field experience course during Fall 2006 (14), Spring 2007 (18), Summer 2007 (32): 64

Number of students who received an adequate/positive evaluation from their field experience preceptors: 62

Number who received an overall course grade of “C” or better: 62

Number of students who presented their work as an oral presentation: 62*

Number of students who have submitted their portfolios: 62

** Two students received an incomplete grade (I) and had not completed their presentations and their portfolios at the time of the report.*

Overall, students who were enrolled and completed the field experience course received adequate/positive evaluations from their field experience preceptors. All but two students (97%) presented their work in front of their peers, preceptors, and faculty and submitted their portfolios to the department. These students received a grade of “C” or better. The field experience course is an essential component of the undergraduate program and reflects students’ learning, integration, and abilities to apply classroom knowledge and learning to practice settings and community based public health and health education projects and interventions.

C. Student's overall course grades and evaluations from external reviewers in HLS 499:

HLS 499, the departmental undergraduate Capstone course requires students to receive an overall course grade of "C" or better and receive a "Good-Excellent" evaluation from external reviewers on their class assignments/projects when applicable. This course is designed to be a comprehensive overview and integration of the content covered in the undergraduate program and its application to community-wide public health and community health education projects.

Number of students who enrolled in HLS 499 during spring 2007: 57

Overall student grades:

<i>Number of A's:</i>	<u>30 (53%)</u>
<i>Number of B's:</i>	<u>10 (18%)</u>
<i>Number of C's:</i>	<u>11 (19%)</u>

One student received a failed grade (F), 4 students received D's, and one student had a 'W' in the course.

D. Pass rate on the professional certification examination for the "Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES):"

Undergraduate students in the department are encouraged to take the certification exam during the final two semesters of their study. Practitioners in the community indicate the relevance and utility of this certification exam. Potential employers indicated that the certification provides a standard to evaluate job applicants. The undergraduate program curriculum integrates the content included in the CHES certification examination throughout the various courses. The following results were obtained for this student-learning measure.

<i>Number of students who took the certification exam:</i>	15
<i>Number of students who passed the exam:</i>	14
<u>*PASS RATE:</u>	93%*

Overall, approximately 10-20% of the eligible undergraduate students take the certification exam before they graduate from the BCH program. Busy schedules, work and school issues, and cost of the exam have served as barriers to students taking the exam in the final semester or two of their study. However, students indicate their intention to take the exam after they graduate and/or become employed.

* These numbers represent ALL individuals who attempted the certification exam, including former students, alumni, undergraduates, graduates, and any other individual currently or previously affiliated with NMSU.

4b. Anticipated Use of Results

The results from the outcomes assessments related to direct student learning measures will help guide the undergraduate program coordinator and other faculty in making

decisions and changes in course content, course offerings and schedule, inclusion of field experience sites, and in offering special courses such as the CHES preparatory course. One of the areas for improvement is to find ways to reduce the perceived barriers to help students successfully prepare and complete the CHES exam while enrolled in the program. The outcome assessment results have and will also continue to influence the department's hiring of new tenure-track and/or full time faculty and/or adjunct faculty. The results of past assessment's reports have been crucial in the successful re-accreditation of the Bachelor of Community Health program.

The outcomes assessment data have lead to the following changes in the undergraduate program that have direct impact on undergraduate student learning:

- Offering of an alternative English exam/assignment that students can take in their HLS 100 course
- A systematic review of field experience sites, preceptors, requirements, and expectations
- Integration of a new format for field experience presentations and more involvement of the external field experience preceptors
- Course offerings (in particular core courses) are scheduled on a regular cycle
- HLS 485, the CHES preparatory course is now being offered
- New tenure track faculty have been hired
- Dedicated full-time instructors for teaching general education courses have been hired
- A new field experience brochure has been developed detailing the key aspects for students and field experience preceptors. Additionally the number and types of sites have been expanded
- The BCH oversight committee with current student, alumni, and community representation has been instituted to serve in an advisory capacity to the undergraduate program coordinator
- Availability of application and other forms on the departmental web-site
- An ongoing assessment of course offerings and how to include courses in gerontology as well as web-CT courses to enhance the quality of the undergraduate degree program offered by the Health Science Department

5. Dissemination of Results

The results of the assessment of direct student learning measures will be disseminated in the following ways:

1. Distribution of the written report to all full time faculty.
2. Sharing of a summary of the findings and results with all faculty (full time, part time, and adjunct).
3. Submission of the written report to the College Dean and University Provost.

4. Make available the current and previous outcomes assessment reports to all department personnel by having copies available in the departmental library and on the departmental website at:

<http://www.nmsu.edu/~hlthdpt/faculty.html>.

**Outcomes Assessment Plan and Report
Department of Health Science
New Mexico State University**

Graduate Program

**Academic Year 2006-2007
(Fall 2006, Spring 2007, and Summer 2007)**

Prepared by:

**Satya P. Rao
Associate Professor
Chair - Outcomes Assessment Committee**

Other Members of Outcomes Assessment Committee

**Charles Kozel, Associate Professor
Sue Forster-Cox, Assistant Professor
Department of Health Science**

January, 2008

<p>D. Final thesis or non-thesis option</p>	<p><i>Performance Measures Used:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of students who enrolled in the preparation courses and the number who took the CHES exam for the academic year 2006-2007 • No. of students who passed the exam • Pass Rate <p>Departmental graduate students have the option of completing comprehensive exams (written and oral, non-thesis option) or a research-based thesis and its defense (thesis option). Both culminating events are open to all students and faculty. Each exam/student thesis committee is chaired by a departmental faculty (of students' choice), a departmental faculty member, and a dean's representative (from another department).</p> <p><i>Performance Measures Used:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of students who graduated in the Academic Year 2006-2007 • No. of students who selected the comprehensive exam option (non-thesis option) • No. of students who were successful in the comprehensive exam (non-thesis) option • No. of students who selected the thesis option • No. of students who successfully defended their thesis
---	--

4a. Results of Outcomes Assessment Activities

The following section documents the results obtained from the direct measures used to assess graduate students' learning in the MPH program.

A. A grade of "B" or better in MPH core courses:

The graduate (MPH) students are required to take 10 courses that are considered core courses in the program. Student learning was assessed by documenting the number of students who received a "B" or better in each of these courses. The data compiled in the table below is based on the courses that were offered and the available data:

Course No.	No. of students enrolled	“B” or better grade
MPH 500 (Fall 2006)	17	15 (88%)
MPH 510 (Fall 2006)	No class was offered during this semester	
MPH 520 (Fall 2006)	09	07 (78%)
MPH 530 (Sp.2007)	13	13 (100%)
MPH 550 (Sp.2007)	26	23 (88%)
MPH 570 (Sp.2007)	No class was offered during this semester	
MPH 572 (Sp.2007)	21	21 (100%)
MPH 573 (Fall 2006)	14	14 (100%)
MPH 574 (Fall 2006)	17	17 (100%)
MPH 579 (Sp.2007)	11	10 (91%)

As the table above indicates, a majority of the students had received a “B” or better grade in the core courses. A student may receive a “C” grade in a course but has to maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 in the program. Thus far all MPH students have met this requirement.

B. Field experience evaluations by agency preceptors:

An essential ingredient of student learning is their ability to apply and integrate classroom and theoretical knowledge to practice. The field experience course provides this unique opportunity and is a required course in the MPH program. The program has been flexible to allow for students to serve as interns in either local or state/national agencies that meet their interests and needs.

Each graduate student enrolls in a 3-credit hour field experience course and completes 160 clock hours of internship to gain practical/hands-on experience in the fields of public health and community health education. The following results were recorded on the direct students’ learning measures.

<i>Number of students enrolled in the field experience course during Fall 20006 (4), Spring 2007 (6), and Summer 2007 (3):</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Number of students who received an adequate/positive evaluation from their field experience preceptors:</i>	<i>11*</i>
<i>Number who received an overall course grade of “B” or better:</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Number of students who presented their work as an oral presentation:</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Number of students who submitted their portfolios:</i>	<i>11</i>

**Two students received an “I” (incomplete) grade during the academic year and completed their field experience in the subsequent semesters.*

The field experience course is an essential component of the graduate program and as indicated previously reflects students' abilities to apply and integrate classroom knowledge and learning to practice settings and community based public health and health education projects and interventions.

C. Pass rate in professional certification examination "CHES:"

Like the undergraduate students, departmental graduate students are encouraged to take the certification exam during the final two semesters of their study. Practitioners in the community indicate the relevance and utility of this certification exam. Potential employers indicate that the certification provides a standard to evaluate job applicants. The graduate program curriculum covers the content included in the CHES certification examination. Additionally, the department offers a 1-credit CHES preparation course.

Overall, fewer graduate students (an average of 5%) have taken the CHES exam as compared to the number of undergraduate students. Additionally, fewer graduate students have expressed interest or intent to take the certification exam before they graduate from the MPH program as compared to the number of undergraduate students. Busy schedules, work and school issues, and cost of the exam have served as barriers to students taking the exam in the final semester or two of their study. In the future, the department will have to find better ways to highlight the relevance of the certification exam and its utility in public health and community health education practice. Additionally, the department is working on finding better ways of reducing barriers to taking the CHES exam and better integrating the CHES preparatory course into the MPH program.

<i>Number of students who took the certification exam:</i>	2
<i>Number of students who passed the exam:</i>	2
<u>PASS RATE:</u>	100%

D. Thesis or Non-thesis option:

MPH graduate students have the option of selecting one of two options available for their culminating event. The events are open to all students and faculty and are designed to evaluate students' overall knowledge, understanding, and skills in core public health and health education topic areas as well as their special area of interest. The following results were compiled for the 2006-2007 academic year (Fall 2006, Spring 2007, Summer 2007).

<i>No. of students who graduated in the academic year 2006-2007:</i>	<u>15</u>
<i>No. of students who selected the non-thesis option:</i>	<u>15(100%)</u>
<i>No. of students who were successful:</i>	<u>15 (100%)</u>

Despite efforts to encourage more students to select the thesis option it appears that the department has not been successful in reducing the barriers and fears of students appear to encounter. This despite the fact that more students after graduation from the MPH program have been selecting doctoral studies and/or medical school.

The outcomes assessment efforts have lead to the following changes in the graduate program that have direct impact on graduate student learning:

- Course offerings (in particular core course) are scheduled on a regular cycle
- New tenure track faculty have been hired including a fulltime senior level faculty to teach research and biostatistics courses
- Streamlining of biostatistics requirements and prerequisites among new admits
- The MPH oversight committee with current student, alumni, and community representation has been instituted to serve in an advisory capacity to the undergraduate program coordinator
- Continuation of the graduate student organization (MPHSO)
- Review of all MPH core courses and field experience sites and requirements on an ongoing basis
- A current review of admissions standards and requirements and implementation of new MPH admission standards and requirements
- Expansion of field experience sites to those located out-of-state including federal internships for a total of over 140 sites
- Offering of graduate and teaching assistantships to a larger cohort of graduate students
- Development of a better tracking data system on current and prospective MPH students
- Availability of all application and other related forms on the department web-site
- The project option has been phased out with students having a choice between thesis /non-thesis option
- Development of a MPH student manual
- Training and regularly scheduled meeting between Department Head and research and teaching assistants
- Development of the MPH online degree program in 2008
- Planning and development of the doctoral program

4b. Anticipated Use of Results

The results from these outcomes assessment efforts will guide the graduate program coordinator and other departmental faculty in making useful and effective decisions and changes in:

- a) Course content
- b) Course offerings and schedule
- c) Field Experience sites
- d) Hiring of faculty (full time and adjunct)

- e) Better integration of CHES preparation into the MPH curriculum
- f) Greater support and promotion of the thesis option
- g) A more appropriate admissions standards and requirements for incoming students
- h) Development of the MPH online and doctoral program

In fact, these activities helped the department make a successful and rational case for new faculty lines and/or fill existing vacant lines, and successfully apply and receive accreditation for its MPH program and a new minor in Border Health. In addition, the results from the outcomes assessment were also helpful in receiving full reaccreditation for the MPH program.

4c. Dissemination of Results

The results of the outcomes assessment activities will be disseminated in the following ways:

1. Distribution of the written report to all full time faculty.
2. Sharing of a summary of the findings and results with all faculty (full time, part time, and adjunct).
3. Submission of the written report to the College Dean and University Provost.
4. Make available the current and previous outcomes assessment reports to all department personnel by having copies available in the departmental library and on the departmental website at:

<http://www.nmsu.edu/~hlthdpt/faculty.html>.