

PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Bachelor's Degree

1. What was the Physical Education program created to do?

The physical education program was designed specifically to prepare students to become physical education teachers. The program is aligned with state and national competencies for physical education educators and continues to prepare students to become physical education teachers. The program also provided a variety of activity courses designed to meet general education requirements.

The data shows that the number of students taking physical education courses outside of the major has dramatically dropped in the last 10 years. This drop coincides with the removal of physical education as a general education requirement. Additionally, approximately 8 years ago, the Dean of the School of Education was told that she needed to decrease the number of sections being offered as activity courses. Courses which in the past could fill six or more sections were limited to one section. This also contributed to the decline in students taking physical education courses. Additionally, with the VPSA office providing video courses for free, with no qualified instructor in attendance, the enrollment in these courses has continued to drop.

2. What is the program doing now?

Prior to the addition of instructor free classes hosted by the VPSA, participation in activity courses which had stabilized and had been on the rise, is again decreasing. Participation in specific courses was even increased with the focus that this administration placed on creating a space for students to participate in physical activities.

The number of students majoring in physical education (PE and MVSC K-12 Pedagogy) has remained rather constant over the last 10 years, coinciding with the removal of a full-time faculty member who was qualified to teach Physical Education as a teaching field. The department of Kinesiology used to be named Movement Science and that department oversaw both the Kinesiology program and the Physical Education program with faculty who were qualified to teach Physical Education professional courses. Without that support, completion rates have remained rather stable over the last 10 years, with one to two students completing the program each year.

Physical Education (MVSC K-12 Pedagogy) Completers	
2013-2014	2
2014-2015	2
2015-2016	1

Since the university opted to not replace retiring faculty in the physical education program prior to 2007, the degree has suffered. Without a full time faculty member specializing in physical education, recruitment has been limited. Without the support of the institution, it is amazing that we graduate the number of students that we do. With support and a full time faculty member with a terminal degree in physical education, this program could and would grow. According to physical education teachers in the Grant County area, the need for physical education and health science education teachers is increasing.

3. Should it be doing what it's doing now?

A revision of the Physical Education degree plan was completed 2015-2016, creating a degree plan where majors would be licensed to teach Physical Education and Health Education. The major was also reduced to meet the 120 credit hour limit recommended by the state. This has resulted in an increase of students declaring a major in Physical Education, with 5 new students declaring it as a major since January 1, 2017. Which according to the Major Counts provided by the VPAA's office, should grow the program from a total of 5 majors in Fall 2016 to a total of 10 majors Spring 2017.

4. If not, what should it be doing?

The program has been strengthened by reducing the number of credit hours and developing a program plan which would prepare graduates to be licensed to teach Physical Education K-12 and Health Science Education. This program and others could be strengthened further by working on partnerships which would combine the Physical Education courses with coursework in Outdoor Education and Business which would prepare students interested in Physical Education and Kinesiology for a broader set of career options in businesses focused on athletics and outdoor education. By collaborating with Outdoor Education and Business, I believe a program could be developed which would introduce and prepare students for fields which incorporate skills obtained from each of these individual fields. Currently students choose one field, and are essentially locked out of pursuing a career incorporating the skills encompassed in these other programs, without pursuing a second degree. With open collaborative minds we would be able to develop a program that would not only prepare a student to be a physical education teacher, but also a trainer, coach, athletic director, manager for physical education programs such as outdoor leadership, recreational director, small business owner, and many more specializations. This would open the options for students pursuing a degree in each of the three programs, and allow them to selectively focus on specific concentrations within the degree. Students could look toward developing the skills within one or more fields, or complete the coursework necessary to pursue a master's in a related field.

5. How should it do what it should be doing?

We should move many of the physical education and kinesiology courses, as we have the coaching courses managed by the School of Education, to online learning. This could also

increase the program's enrollment as it has done for the Coaching minor. An increase in enrollment in these courses and the number of students successfully completing a minor in coaching has occurred. A similar approach would also benefit the physical education program, allowing us to effectively reach a broader audience.