



Fullerton College Program Review and Planning Self-Study for Instructional Programs Fall 2021

Statement of collaboration

The program faculty members listed below collaborated in an open and forthright dialogue to prepare this Self Study. Statements included herein accurately reflect the conclusions and opinions by consensus of the program faculty involved in the comprehensive self-study.

Participants in the self-study

This department only has one full-time faculty member.

Authorization

After the document is complete, it must be signed by the Principal Author, the Department Coordinator, and the Dean prior to submission to the Program Review and Planning Committee.

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Executive Summary

1.

This report, submitted by the Health Education Department in the Natural Sciences Division, is to convey available information regarding Health Education 140, an introductory general education course, that is offered through the Division of Natural Sciences. During the 2020/2021 academic year approximately 510 students were enrolled. The majority of these students were comprised of the following categories: Non-Majors, Low-Income status, Latina females, who were consistently working throughout their academic time while at Fullerton College. The course has been offered on campus and online and during the pandemic, on campus courses were transitioned to a “Zoom” format. Lecture classes are offered both early am, and once per week, in a 3 hour evening course. Success rate is generally in the mid sixty percentile and the challenges that exist for students are typically related to competition for time, that is required to fulfill obligations of their families. These include employment time to contribute to household finances, care time for siblings, children, and the elders, all from their extended family network. Achievement gaps can start to be addressed by outreach to the feeder high schools and providing academic insight, to the value that a college education can provide to a student and their families. Learning Objectives may need to be modified to address the demographics of the diverse student body that we are serving. Furthermore, Health Education 140 will continue to serve as a foundational course as it becomes a vital part of new Public Health degrees that the Division of Natural Sciences will soon be offering. This will enable students to expand their educational opportunities by having more choices for a career.

Mission

2. As Health Education 140 is integrated into the curriculum of Public Health degrees, this will focus its direction to helping develop flexible career pathways in the sciences, for students to select. However, this will also require some modified thinking from the part of the campus faculty and staff, to address the challenges that exist, in the lives of these students. We will require more outreach and so that we can reach and inform more of them, regarding our offered programs. It should be our goal to properly exploit the strengths that exist in their familial bonds, in such a way that the students may apply these strengths to the skills of a proposed career in public health.

3.1.1

SLO Performance Reports were acquired dating back to 2017, but since that time, there have been no data recorded from any Health Education 140 course. However, during the 2020/2021 academic year, there were approximately 510 enrolled students, and the average success was approximately 64%.

3.1.2

Although data has not been recently compiled regarding HED 140, the only full time HED 140 Instructor also teaches a similar level Human Biology 102 course. The instructor can confirm that both the biology and health course, cater to the same entry level students and therefore, are comprised of similar demographics.

Utilizing OIE data describing students that our biology courses cater to reveal definitive trends. Eighty percent (80%) of our transfer students are Non-Majors, which may also imply un-informed students. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of these Non-Majors and of Low-Income status. Roughly fifty-seven percent (57.6%) of these Non-Majors are females and approximately fifty-seven (57.3%) are Latinx students. Fifty-two percent of these Non-Majors are between the ages of 20-24 and moreover, approximately forty-six percent (46.1%) of all students in 2020, reported working every semester that they were attending school. **In summary, the majority of students related to this program review are uninformed Non-Majors, of Low-Income status, and are young Latina females, who are consistently working throughout their academic time at Fullerton college.**

3.1.3

Outside of COVID, during normal operations, Health Education 140 is offered in a face-to-face classroom setting, and completely online. The “on-campus” classroom setting has temporarily transferred to a “Zoom” format but is still offered during the same time slots and continues to serve a significant portion of the course population. The course is offered on Monday and Wednesdays at 7:00am for two, 90 minute lectures, and on Thursday evenings at 6:00pm for a 3 hour lecture. This course appears to serve much of the student body entering from high school and those younger students not quite accustomed to an on-line learning format, while the online courses serve well for working head-of-household students, carrying many hours of outside employment. Single parents, returning students, and veterans have also taken advantage of the more open schedules that are provided with online instruction. These “sub-populations” of Health Education are well-served and continue to enroll every year. Though they are small groups, they continue to elicit the success from this general education health course.

3.1.4

Health Education 140 (HED 140) is an introductory course which is designed to study modern medical concepts, including mental health, nutrition, weight control, sexuality, immunity, addiction, and health care services. Basic concepts are presented to inform students of health issues which affect their lives and society. The course fulfills degree credit and is CSU and UC transferrable. It can be applied as a pre-requisite for an AA degree, fulfillment as a GE, and fulfillment as a CSU general education course.

The HED 140 course has no pre-requisite. It is typically recommended to new entering students, those of which generate the summary of criteria describing our served students. However, much of the newly entering student population (from high school) comes from lower socio-economic households. These individuals are essential workers in their homes and contribute to a household income. They come from marginally funded high schools and arrive at Fullerton College with minimal skills in reading, writing, and comprehension.

When assignments are presented, these students have very weak reading comprehension, and when in doubt, they do not further question the material but rather, simply place their efforts on actions that present quicker and more reliable returns, such as investing more hours at work, for a salary, or simply contributing more time in maintaining as much cohesion as possible, in a home life.

It has been notable, that as far as 5 weeks into a semester, these students still do not submit homework, whether it be in a face-to-face course (before the pandemic), or online. This is due to not purchasing the needed textbook or course material. Therefore, as one third of the course is passed, the students are already establishing a path to academic failure.

3.1.5

Enrollment from Fall to Spring does not appear to suggest any discernable difference in student numbers.

3.2.1 – 3.2.2

Since before the inception of the pandemic, students had a choice of on-campus scheduled lectures, or coursework completely online. These students are divided into a few different schools of thought. A “sub-population” mentioned before, including single parents, returning students, and veterans, and are typically well-prepared in academic acumen, and from the first

day of class, strive to perform well. However, many of the newly entering students sign up, to merely be enrolled. Upon discovery of the amount of reading, homework, and related costs of books and online materials that the course requires, these students either **drop immediately**, attempt assignments blindly (without related texts or required resources), or simply remain in the course without any academic effort at all. These last students either earn a failing grade or are dropped, due to lack of participation.

3.2.3

Regardless of whether encouragement, or additional information is provided to the students for added benefit, via syllabus or other delivered pathway, is often a moot point. The students do not have the skills set to carrying out additional academic tasks, nor do they allot extra time for additional assistance, due to time constraints generated by their employment, family, or both.

Addressing achievement gaps from the student populations of Fullerton College is merely a recapitulation of the societal issues that exist in the same communities, the students call home. Additional or advanced education can be a desirable commodity, so long as it does not interfere with the familial network.

For example, the goal for a young Latina adult with a marginal education and a menial skills set is to take care of their immediate world and that usually means those familial members that live in the same residence. The nuclear family can often include an extended family, and is held together by strong bonds, which are maintained by the family members who contribute to it.

3.2.4

Achievement gaps have existed before and will continue to persevere, especially as we continue through the age of COVID. Income, time constraints, and mere survival, will continue to be major issues when pertaining to these students, their families, and the struggles that they already carry.

As we continue with this virtual distance education, the usual method of communication is even fragmented more. The digital and computerized formats needed to maintain quality academic communication is often un-attainable, due to cost of required technology therefore, these students will remain at a distance and almost unreachable.

However, I find that as a Latino instructor, a few students find greater comfort and are willing to question my academic and personal background. These few students desire to know what choices I made and why I did so. They wish to compare situations of life and determine if I really know what they are experiencing and the familial pressures that are placed upon them. When they discover that our backgrounds are similar, then they often reach out with confidence, to

share personal and professional, desires and goals, that have caught their attention. The students often require role models that they can relate to and confide with, regarding their home life issues.

It is my suggestion that a post-pandemic plan of action include reaching out to the feeder high schools, with science faculty, and potentially meeting with Health Education/Science oriented high school students, who will be the incoming Fullerton College Freshman class. At that time, conversations can be generated with them regarding their interests, and the academic requirements, that will be expected of them, as incoming students.

The proposal of a STEM center, for the Division of Natural Sciences has been on the table for some time now. Integrating STEM staff members to reach out to these potential incoming students to foster the pathway to the sciences, could be invaluable. Having access to students on their high school campus, could assist in the preparation of, or even generate a student's academic game plan, and express the value of a college education to them and their families.

These staff could serve multiple roles and bridge some of the communication gaps that are often left open by faculty, already pressed for time. Outreach will only enhance the grasp of the incoming student, and as they arrive on the Fullerton College campus. These same staff members would continue to cater to the immediate needs of students such as tutorial, academic advice, and further mentoring. This communication would only facilitate the task of teaching, better prepared students, for our Fullerton College faculty.

3.3.1 -3.3.4

As mentioned earlier, at this writing Health Education 140 does not serve as a major, nor is it included in a certificate program. However, a present undertaking of a Public Health Degree AS-T is in the final stages of completion. Given the fact that many of our faculty are educated academically in Public Health and the fact that Health Education 140 is, and already has been a transferable and articulating course with CSU Fullerton, CSU Los Angeles, and CSU San Bernardino, its value as a foundational course within the Division of Natural Sciences is historical and well placed. This next step for the application and utilization of Health Education 140 will be to enable students to transfer on and further complete either a B.S. in Public Health or a B.S. in Health Science with an option in Community Health Education, depending on which of the CSU campuses they select to attend. Regardless of academic direction, HED 140 will maintain a vital niche within the Natural Sciences curriculum.

3.5

Regarding the COVID pandemic, for the students involved with this course, a pandemic crisis is not the abnormal for their lives. Rather, it is merely another avenue for adaptation. There is no normal for the many Latinx students that this course caters to, rather Latinx students are generally taught in the household, not to quit in life, and family is first and foremost. Due to societal inequities, much of life's decisions are made to maximize immediate familial benefit, meaning food on the table, and a roof over their head. The onset of COVID simply provided more hurdles and forced further adjustment. The inability to access on-line education with adequate technology, along with the costs of college enrollment, tended to sway prioritization toward maintenance of the family rather than attempting to solve even more academically related dilemmas, than what they were used to. For what benefit a college education might have meant, the prioritization of the family still holds higher value. Ironically, one of the most advantageous academically related benefits resulting from the pandemic was the "Excused Withdrawal" option for every course. Realizing the level of technology needed to academically succeed during the onset of the COVID crisis, made learning very challenging and therefore, the allowance to "test the waters" of a class, knowing that that there would always have an escape, without repercussions, provided a safeguard. It facilitated the option of leaving the "classroom" without regret and focusing more on the "familia".

4.1 – 4.4

Student Learning Objectives for a college course such as Health 140 are supposed to serve as a platform of minimal criteria acquired and are the desired accomplished goals upon a successful completion of the course.

The following are the Student Learning Objectives for Health 140:

- Explain basic health concepts
- Explain basic health concepts to make logical decisions concerning the health of their body
- Employ electronic media resources to investigate health issues

These are well suited for Health Education 140 course. Serving as an introductory general education course, with no prerequisites, the expectation that students will have the ability to acquire these basic concepts appears reasonable however, there is obviously much curriculum associated and geared toward each of these objectives. Speaking with our students, they appear to desire this information, but fail to fulfill the numerous assignments geared toward

applying them. If time is required to complete academic tasks such as homework, reading, written essays, and studying for exams, then competition is generated for time originally allocate for familial survival.

Furthermore, attempting to meld Health 140 SLO's with the Fullerton College ISLOs can be further challenging.

The ISLO stating "rational thought to communicate effectively", does not serve the family as well as desired, due to that fact that most family members, outside of the student, have little to no exposure to this thought process. Emotional strength and bonding tend to outweigh rational thinking. Rational thinking may include that the student sacrifice personal time, to gain knowledge and apply it towards a lucrative professional future. However, a tight-knit nuclear family could find "rational thought" as a threat to the immediate family structure, rather than as any form of future enhancement.

The ISLO stating that "Global Awareness" is a goal, would also present its challenges. The family and only the family, are the entire world for many of these students, and any other conversation that presents broadening the horizons of the student, are often viewed as mere distractions, that take away from the importance of the familial support.

It appears as if the academic institution and Fullerton College in particular, may need to adjust its academic goals and objectives, to embrace the demographics that we serve and will continue to face, in the 21st century. We serve a diverse population, and we will continue to do so, for the years to come therefore, it is our obligation to serve these students better. The proposal of a STEM center with staff focused on outreach, as listed in section 3.2.4, could be the first step to fostering success.

5.1 -5.2

The incorporation of Health Education 140 into the curriculum of Public Health Degrees will continue to maintain its foundational role for the foreseeable future. Although it will maintain its status as an introductory general education course, it also remains a vital link to furthering a and expanding the educational opportunities for our students.

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Regarding the planning for the future Health Education 140, I will ask that you refer to the Public Health Degrees that are being generated by some of the other faculty who hold advanced degrees in Public Health. This course will be housed in the Health Sciences Department, within the Division of Natural Sciences. They will be taking on the new role of generating the HED 140 pathway to the future.