

UMBC'S DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY HEALTH SERVICES
ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW 2017
UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL REPORT

The Department of Emergency Health Services offers a B.S. in Emergency Health with Management and Paramedic tracks, as well as an Emergency Management Post-Baccalaureate Certificate. Other degree programs include an M.S. in Emergency Health Services with tracks in Administration, Planning, and Policy; Preventive Medicine and Epidemiology; and Education and an Emergency Services concentration within the Public Policy Ph.D. with Emergency Health and Emergency Management pathways. The department also offers a Professional and Continuing Education (PACE) program for allied health providers. At the time of the review, there were 3 tenured faculty, 1 senior lecturer, 1 additional full-time non-tenure-track faculty, and 3 clinical faculty with part-time or shared appointments. The department served an average of 101 undergraduate majors annually during the review period, with ~80% in the paramedic track. Because the paramedic track was reviewed by a national accreditation body at the time of the APR, it was not a focus of the self-study. The study instead focuses on the management track and other programs within the department.

A. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The department has clearly articulated learning outcomes for students in the Management track, and they are committed to assessment and curriculum revision, as needed, to attain these outcomes. Student learning outcomes are assessed through the CAHSS Student Assessment Plan and other mechanisms, both while students are enrolled in the program and after students graduate. Assessment of undergraduates in the paramedic track are consistent with those of the national program accreditation body, the Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the Emergency Medical Services Professions. Assessment of undergraduates in the management track occurs during a capstone management internship (EHS 450). Because demonstrating effective oral and written communications is a key learning objective for the program, clinical observational assessment tools have been used to evaluate students' communication skills in the field, along with direct feedback from field supervisors. The assessment tools are being modified to better reflect the communication skills required in a clinical setting. Surveys of EHS program alumni show that most graduates are employed in fields related to emergency health with some graduates pursuing further education in graduate or professional schools. The reviewers found the assessment of student learning outcomes satisfactory with "evidence of stated educational goals, learning outcomes, and the department's actions of assessments, alignments, and revisions." The reviewers and the Dean praise the department's "use of student learning outcomes assessment, including closing the loop with appropriate curriculum revision." The post-APR Action Plan indicates that the department will continue to evaluate and improve the student learning outcome assessment in collaboration with the Dean's office and the Faculty Development Center.

B. STATE OF THE DISCIPLINE; PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS; PROGRAM CHANGES

The reviewers describe the EHS department as “one of the premier emergency health education programs in the country.” They praise the “talented and highly credentialed faculty,” as well as the “quality and accomplished graduates.”

The reviewers highlight a shift in the emergency health field toward interdisciplinary/interprofessional education and suggest that a focus in this area could enhance the EHS program. The Dean highlights collaborative relationships between EHS and other UMBC departments and recommends further exploration of potential interdisciplinary/interprofessional opportunities both within UMBC and with UMB.

In collaboration with the Department of Public Policy, the department added a new Ph.D. in Public Policy, Emergency Services concentration in Fall 2017. The reviewers were “excited” about the new program that “will hold exceptional value to the profession.”

C. UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM

There are minor discrepancies between information in the self study (page 25), the university catalog, and the EHS website. These discrepancies should be reviewed by the department to ensure all information is consistent.

The self-study lists the following EHS courses as requirements for the Management track: EHS 115, EHS 200 or 200Y, EHS 202, EHS 203, EHS 301, EHS 311, EHS 320, EHS 351, EHS 360, EHS 400, EHS 430, and EHS 450. The self-study also mentions that students are required to take courses in sociology, psychology, political science, and economics.

In addition to the EHS courses listed in the self-study, the catalog includes EHS 350 as a required course and specifies the following courses in sociology, psychology, political science, and economics: SOCY 101, SOCY 351, PSYC 100, POLI 100, POLI 250, POLI 354, ECON 101, ECON 121, and ECON 122. The catalog also lists STAT 121 or 350 and ENGL 393 as required courses.

In addition to the courses listed in the catalog, the EHS website lists EHS 352 and MATH 115 or MATH 100 as required courses for the Management track.

D. RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES FOR UNDERGRADUATES

All EHS undergraduates complete a senior capstone project, EHS 430, Research Methods. A limited number of students also complete independent study with mentoring from the EHS faculty. The self-study identifies a need for faculty to find additional

funding for Undergraduate Research Assistant positions. The Action Plan specifically cites increasing the number of applications from EHS students for Undergraduate Research Awards as a mechanism for funding. The Action Plan also specifies a goal of each faculty member to include at least one student in their research.

E. UNDERGRADUATE ADVISEMENT

The paramedic track and management track each have a dedicated academic adviser who meets with students in the spring and fall to discuss registration. Other members of the faculty serve as informal advisers, available to students throughout the year.

F. COUNCIL OF MAJORS; UNDERGRADUATE HONORS; AWARDS; RECOGNITION

At the time of the self-study, two students were preparing manuscripts describing their research and planning to present at the Undergraduate Research and Creative Achievement Day (URCAD). Increasing student participation in URCAD is a goal in the Action Plan.

No mentions of a Council of Majors or departmental honors and awards are made in the self-study, the reviewers' report, or the EHS website.

G. FACULTY DEVELOPMENT; TEACHING QUALITY

The faculty demonstrate a strong commitment to teaching and student success. SCEQ/SEEQ scores are above the UMBC mean for the six semesters preceding the self-study. However, the reviewers express strong concerns about the department's ability to maintain teaching quality given the small number of faculty and several looming retirements. The Dean reports that action has already been taken on this matter with searches for two tenure-track positions to ensure these positions are filled by Fall 2018. One of these positions will replace a retiring tenured faculty member, while the other is a conversion of a clinical faculty position that will increase the number of tenured/tenure-track faculty in the department. The Action Plan indicates an additional search will be considered next year, as a second tenured faculty member is scheduled to retire in 2019. The self-study and the reviewers' report also highlight needs for additional teaching space and equipment to maintain teaching quality. The Dean indicates support for conversion of an available space in Sherman Hall to be used as an EHS lab, pending approval by the Space Management Committee and the Provost. The Action Plan also includes items for departmental assessment of both space and equipment needs. The Dean addresses potential funding sources to meet equipment needs, including funds from the Dean and Provost for capital equipment and increased lab fees for disposable equipment.

H. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS; SUMMARY EVALUATION

The external reviewers' and the Dean's reports agree that the EHS program is a premier program with a strong reputation in the emergency health field. The self-study, the reviewers' report, and the Dean's report all address pressing needs in the department, including faculty replacement, space limitations, and inadequate equipment. Action has already been taken to replace one retiring professor and to convert a clinical teaching position with a tenure-track position. The Dean has identified one additional space that could be allocated as an EHS lab, but long-term space planning will be ongoing. Assessment of equipment needs is ongoing and will require additional funding sources.