

DATE: May 17, 2018

SUBJECT: New Academic Program
 East Tennessee State University
 Rehabilitative Health Sciences, Bachelor of Science
 (CIP 51.2314—Rehabilitation Sciences)

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Approval

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

East Tennessee State University proposes a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Rehabilitative Health Sciences designed to train students as entry level rehabilitation professionals or to enter graduate school. This multidisciplinary program will assist public and private agencies by providing entry level rehabilitation professionals who understand normal aging, neurogenic diseases, psychosocial function, physical injuries, and rehabilitation and health care systems with the increasing aging population in Tennessee and the nation.

The program is designed for community college graduates and adult learners to complete their education or change professions. Specifically, this program provides an avenue to a bachelor’s degree for students who have completed an Associate of Applied Science in Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy or Speech-Language Pathology. It also provides a pathway for adult learners currently employed in the health field.

INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNING BOARD APPROVAL

The proposed Rehabilitative Health Sciences BS program was approved by the East Tennessee State University Board of Trustees on April 27, 2018.

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION DATE

Fall 2018

RELEVANCE TO INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND STRATEGIC PLAN

The program aligns with East Tennessee State University’s mission to “provide strong, comprehensive educational, research, and service programs in the health sciences that advance the health and wellness of people throughout Tennessee and Southern Appalachia and of rural populations around the world.” This degree also aligns with the State Master Plan to increase the educational attainment levels of Tennesseans by addressing these major needs: degree completion for community college students and previously enrolled adult learners, increased need for

rehabilitation workforce, and career paths for support staff and rehabilitation professionals.

CURRICULUM

The Rehabilitative Health Sciences (BS) will consist of 120 total credit hours, of which 49 semester credit hours within the major incorporating 150 clinical observation hours as well as an 18 semester credit hour minor. This proposed degree fosters the application of the four core competencies of interprofessional collaborative practice (roles and responsibilities of health professions, teams and teamwork, ethics, and interprofessional communication). Additionally, the curriculum is framed within the World Health Organization’s International Classification of Health, Disability and Function (WHO ICF) which focuses on the whole person in providing patient care. The faculty in the newly established Department of Rehabilitative Sciences intend to use this framework throughout the entire curriculum.

Potential minors for students will be selected from the following programs: Communicative Disorders minor and the proposed American Sign Language minor in the Department of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology, the psychology minor in the Department of Psychology, the culture and health minor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, and the public health minor in the Department of Community and Behavioral Health.

PROGRAM PRODUCTIVITY

The program will offer coursework year-round and students may enroll full-time or part-time. The program projects normal attrition rates to be 10 percent or 5 students each year.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Enrollment	26	50	70	72	73
Graduates	--	--	20	21	23

PROGRAM DUPLICATION

No other public or private institutions in Tennessee offer an undergraduate program in Rehabilitative Health Sciences. Nationally, 11 programs have been established over the past 10 years to address the supply and demand of rehabilitation health care workers.

EXTERNAL JUDGEMENT

External review of the proposed program was conducted during an institutional site visit on February 13, 2018. Dr. Alex Johnson, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at the MGH Institute of Health Professions, a graduate school founded by Massachusetts General Hospital, served as the external reviewer. He recommended approval and stated “when implemented [the program] will be unique in the state and the region. The developers of the ETSU program have identified very clear curricular goals, clarified opportunities for minor areas of study, and positioned the curriculum to advantage students.”

STUDENT DEMAND

East Tennessee State University sought input from community college students, graduate students, allied health program directors at community colleges in Tennessee and other states that were within a 250 mile radius (North Carolina, Virginia, and South Carolina). The results of these efforts indicated the proposed program will provide a valuable alternative health care pathway in order to accommodate these students if they are not admitted to their graduate program of choice. Graduate students identified specific coursework in the proposed program that would have been helpful to them in their current graduate programs. Overall, the interest from these various stakeholders were very positive of the proposed program.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROGRAM GRADUATES

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the national employment rate of rehabilitation professionals is expected to grow faster than average through the year 2024. Specifically, rehabilitation health care professions are expected to grow 21% - 34% over the next 10 years. Admission to these graduate programs is highly selective, and graduates from this program are expected to have a competitive edge with their coursework in neurogenic diseases, psychosocial function, physical injuries, and rehabilitation and health care systems within interprofessional health care teams.

INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO DELIVER THE PROGRAM

As an institution focused strategically on health sciences, East Tennessee State University is uniquely positioned to offer the proposed Rehabilitative Health Sciences BS program. Within the College of Clinical and Rehabilitative Health Sciences, a new Department of Rehabilitative Health Sciences is being proposed for this program and will also include faculty in Nutrition and Foods. The current faculty members who have been identified to teach a course within the proposed program have expertise and interest in teaching courses in interprofessional practice. To meet program teaching requirements, two additional full time faculty members will be added over two years to the current list of 4 faculty involved in the program. After the program is fully mature, the student to faculty ratio will be 30 to 1. They also have good working relationships within the community which will facilitate clinical observation opportunities in a wide variety of settings.

The proposed program will be housed in the new health building (projected date: spring 2021) along with other allied health and public health programs. The library and information technology resources are adequate for this type of program. The program will be supported through tuition and fees as well as institutional reallocations from the Provost's Office.

ASSESSMENT AND POST-APPROVAL MONITORING

An annual performance review of the proposed program will be conducted for the first five years following program approval. The review will be based on benchmarks established in the approved proposal. At the end of this period, the campus, institutional governing

board, and Commission staff will perform a summative evaluation. The benchmarks include, but are not limited to, enrollment and graduation, program cost, progress toward accreditation, and other metrics set by the institution and Commission staff. If benchmarks are not met during the monitoring period, the Commission may recommend that the institutional governing board terminate the program. If additional time is needed and requested by the institutional governing board, the Commission may choose to extend the monitoring period.