

UNH Faculty Senate
Motion # IX-M19

Ad Hoc Committee Report on Pre-Medical, Pre-Dental and Pre-Veterinary Education

1. Sponsoring committee: the Ad Hoc Committee on Pre-Medical, Pre-Dental and Pre-Veterinary Education
2. Motion Presenter: Jeff Salloway
3. Date of Faculty Senate discussion: May 2, 2005
4. Motion:

that the Faculty Senate accept the committee's report and forward it to the provost for action.

6. Senate Action: passed, on May 2, 2005

Vote: unanimous

Senate Chair's signature:



Forwarded to: President Ann Hart, on 6-8, 2005

Forwarded to: Bruce Mallory, on 6-8, 2005

Forwarded to: Mark Rubinstein, on 6-8, 2005

Forwarded to: Jeff Salloway, on 6-8, 2005

Attachment: Executive Summary of the Final Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Pre-Professional Education. (The full report was sent to the people above and is available at the Faculty Senate office.) *in this notebook under 4/18/05*

Senate's General Charge: To review the quality and function of pre-medical, pre-dental, and pre-veterinary education at UNH and to report to the Faculty Senate.

Specific Charges:

1. Assess the function and quality of pre-professional advising as above;
2. Assess the adequacy of course offerings at UNH for the preparation of pre-professional students in the programs above;
3. Compare performance of UNH students on national tests such as MCATs, pre-dental and pre-veterinary exams with selected comparator universities and with national averages;
4. Compare grade performance of UNH students in the pre-professional programs above with the performance of students at comparator universities and national averages;
5. Compare rates of successful admissions, rejections, and drop-outs from pre-professional studies at UNH and comparator universities;

6. Compare the process of providing letters of recommendation at UNH and comparator universities;
7. Assess the role of faculty in advising students;

Pre-Veterinary Education:

The charge to the committee included attention to pre-veterinary studies and to pre-dental studies. Early attention was focused on pre-vet, and it was concluded that the committee ought not to pursue this vigorously because:

Pre-veterinary education is administered on a totally different basis at UNH than pre-medical, pre-dental or other pre-health-care-professional programs. Where others are advising programs, pre-veterinary education is a defined major within the department of Animal Sciences and Nutrition.

Pre-vet is very popular and attracts many out-of-state students. This implies a tuition bonus for the university. Also, because it is a departmental major, it fills seats within the department and COLSA and is a source of revenue for that college.

Secondly, numbers of pre-dental students are quite small. Review of pre-dental studies was included with pre-medical studies.

Conclusions:

Several aspects of the advising process as it is administered by the Advising Center are quite excellent, in particular the web pages. In other areas, it seems to function well and to meet the needs of current pre-professional students. The committee recommended no specific changes in this area.

The committee recommended the organization of three courses to strengthen the curriculum:

1. Health Professions 400 - a freshman course for students considering careers in the health professions, which would orient them to their choices and provide both student-to-student exposure, student-mentor exposure, and student-professional exposure.
2. A human systems course along the lines of the course currently taught by Professor Lockwood, which would be useful as a biology review for MCATs to be taken in the junior year.
3. A senior capstone course which would review issues of health care systems, ethics, the role of technology, etc. and which would be integrative of the undergraduate experience.

There is no data which suggests that UNH students perform better on standardized national tests than do other students from Rhode Island, Maine, or Vermont. Speaking generally, acceptances over the last three years have run fifty percent or better. MCAT scores are not as high as we might like. However, it appears that the professional schools find that a high UNH GPA is an indicator of acceptability. In those cases where GPA is

low, medical schools then turn to the MCATs as a check on acceptability. What this would seem to indicate is that the medical schools look upon the UNH grading system as having some integrity.

The process of generating letters of recommendation seems appropriate.

The committee had concerns that faculty mentoring for pre-medical students was not adequate on either of two dimensions. Students do not get professional mentoring from practitioners, because UNH does not have a medical school and there is not a systematic way to insure that the students are exposed to professionals in the community. Second, students do not necessarily get the science mentoring which they need, especially if they do not get into professional schools and seek an alternative science career.

Recommendations:

The committee recommends no changes to the Advising Center components of pre-professional education at this time.

The committee recommends the creation of a Pre-Health Professions Program with a core of perhaps three or four courses. This would constitute the core of a Pre-Med/Pre-Dent Program - perhaps not locked in a college, but nevertheless receiving RCM distributions.

Such a program could productively be composed of at least three courses such as:

1. Health Professions 400 - a freshman course for students considering careers in the health professions, which would orient the students to their choices and provide student-to-student exposure, student-mentor exposure, and student-professional exposure.
2. A human systems course along the lines of the course currently taught by Professor Lockwood, which would be useful as a biology review for MCATs to be taken in the junior year.
3. A senior capstone course which would review issues of health care systems, ethics, the role of technology, etc. and which would be integrative of the undergraduate experience.

Coincidental with the development of such a program, faculty need also to be organized and in communication with one another. Further, UNH needs to create science application experiences for pre-meds akin to science experiences for science majors. The committee calls for a program of high quality, but not a high pressure sales job advertising the program as a premier offering of UNH.

The committee recommends that this report be forwarded to the provost for action.