

APPENDIX L

Request for Authorization to Establish a Master of Science in Clinical Exercise Physiology Degree at The University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Introduction

UNC-Charlotte notified the UNC Office of the President of its intent to plan a Master of Science degree in Clinical Exercise Physiology (CIP 51.2311) in November 2003. The university requests authorization to establish the program in January 2005.

Program Description

A Clinical Exercise Physiologist is an allied health professional trained to use exercise as a therapeutic modality. The UNCC Department of Kinesiology has been preparing health care professionals through the MS in Health Promotion's Clinical Exercise Physiology concentration area. Growth of enrollments in this concentration and changes being made to the MS in Health Promotion program support a request to make Clinical Exercise Physiology a separate degree program. The proposed interdisciplinary degree program will follow closely the current concentration area in objectives, course requirements, and faculty needs. Unlike traditional MS programs in Exercise Physiology/Science, which are based on laboratory measurement of exercise performance with athletic and general populations, the proposed program will focus on application of exercise as a therapeutic modality for disease and pathological conditions.

Program Need

A growing number of individuals are entering the health care system due to a variety of diseases and conditions caused by inactivity. These hypokinetic diseases run the gamut from obesity, cardiovascular and pulmonary diseases to metabolic disorders such as diabetes and some forms of cancer. Exercise prescription and programming is used as a therapeutic modality to prevent and ameliorate the effects of these diseases and other conditions such as aging and neurological disorders as well as to increase the quality of life. Additionally, NC law requires that a certified exercise specialist be associated with each cardiac rehabilitation program in the state, and 39 percent of hospitals surveyed indicated that they would be adding 1-4 clinical exercise physiologist positions within the next two years. It is anticipated that by the program would have 36 full-time students and 7 part-time students by its fourth year.

Resources

No additional state resources are required. Program needs will be addressed through internal reallocations and enrollment increase funds.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve the request to establish a Master of Science in Clinical Exercise Physiology degree at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte effective January 2005.