

Miami University

Review of the Advanced Pedagogy in Physical Education and Sport (APPES)

Post Graduate (Med) Online Program

University of Wollongong and Kent State University

1. Academic Quality

The Advanced Physical Education and Sport, Post Graduate (MEd) Online program proposed by Kent State University (KSU) and The University of Wollongong (UOW) looks to be a unique collaborative program for Physical and Sport Educators. The program is different from undergraduate degree programs as the courses outlined focus on greater development of skills particularly in the areas of curriculum, planning, analyzing teaching/coaching skills and leadership development. This content will build and add to the basic knowledge learned at the undergraduate level. Courses also focus more on some of the theory and problem solving skills associated with curriculum development, methods of inquiry and leadership. The curriculum provides advanced knowledge in physical education and sport pedagogy and will provide a solid base for students to attain an advanced professional license.

The program curriculum suggests that students will also have the opportunity to explore many of the major issues related to pedagogy and curriculum. Research evaluation and opportunities as well as course work centered on working with students with disabilities are a few examples. The course focused on critical issues from an international perspective will provide students with an opportunity to analyze many issues from a global context. I'm glad to see that the proposal now includes a course with this international focus.

The program identifies a capstone experience using action research focused on teaching and coaching. The faculty at the two institutions have appropriate training and experience to adequately guide and oversee these culminating projects and to instruct research methods included in the program.

2. Need

The online and international collaboration will give the program a unique niche. Physical Education teachers and sport educators enrolled in the program at the respective institutions and likely across the world will have the opportunity to earn a master's degree which often leads to a chance to move up the career ladder. It's also an opportunity to follow a pathway to leadership positions within school districts. The online focus and international perspective should be attractive to a wide array of professionals in the field. In particular, the online format will allow students from countries who don't have ready access to advanced degrees in Physical Education and sport pedagogy, an opportunity to obtain a master's degree. The program also gives KSU and UOW a chance to grow their graduate programs in the field.

3. Access and Retention of Underrepresented groups.

The program proposal outlines a fairly comprehensive plan to recruit and potentially retain underrepresented groups. While the current master's program has a limited enrollment, the new program proposed would suggest that it will draw a more diverse student population.

4. Statewide Alternatives

There appears to be little overlap with other programs available in Ohio. The online format and international collaboration does position the program differently. The collaboration between KSU and UOW should provide an environment conducive to collaboration on other projects including grants and research projects. It seems that it may be feasible for students to be able to take an elective course from another institution as well.

The proposal indicates that the program is supported by the central administration. There are a combined nine full time faculty from the two institutions to conduct the program. This would seem more than adequate to sustain the program.