



College of Health Sciences

DEPARTMENT OF  
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & NUTRITION

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**Kathy Matt, Dean, College of Health Sciences**

**Michael Peterson, Interim Chair, Dept Behavioral Health and Nutrition**

**Subject: M.S. Health Promotion**

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The Masters of Science program in Health Promotion has been in existence at the University of Delaware since 1998. Initially started as a College-wide program it was moved to the Department of Health Nutrition and Exercise Sciences in 2007, and now resides in the Department of Behavioral Health and Nutrition. Over the past 10 years approximately 90 students have enrolled in the program, 66 have graduated to date, and 21 are currently enrolled. Graduates of this program are highly skilled and highly valued by businesses, non-profits, and government organizations. They specialize in the ability to facilitate individual and population-based health behavior change, and are grounded in behavioral, psychological, sociological, and ecological aspects of health and disease. The program has also successfully prepared students for doctoral work in the areas of epidemiology, behavioral health, and community health. Graduates are highly sought after by local organizations such as Nemours Health and Prevention Services, and the Delaware Division of Public Health. Over its tenure, faculty within the program have also brought in significant external dollars to the college, and have worked with a wide variety of community organizations. By all academic accounts, the program has a stellar track record of success.

As current Chair of the Department I view this graduate program as a keystone to our current and future teaching, research, and service efforts. The program is flexible enough to engage a wide variety of our faculty, and meet the needs of a dynamic health care environment. Demand for the program has continued to grow. TJU has adopted one of the HLPR courses as part of their MPH curriculum, our students are being increasingly asked to be part of new behavioral health initiatives on-campus, be part of research grant proposals, and MSHP faculty and students are being actively sought out by DHSA members for collaborative work. All of these trends point to a strong future for this graduate academic program. Many of the program's alumni are providing internship opportunities for our undergraduate programs, and some are teaching at the post-secondary level. Given its longevity the program has now developed a sizeable alumni presence in the area that is beginning to "give back" to the program.

I fully endorse its permanent status. In fact, it can only be said, "it is about time." As Chair, I am committed to providing the resources the program needs to continue its success, improvement and growth.

Sincerely,

Michael Peterson