



School of Education and Professional Studies



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SOEPS NEWSLETTER

Education

Education has received the final approval for a new stand-alone B.A. in Early Education. With the recent national focus on quality education for America's youngest children, new legislation outlining new teacher qualifications for West Virginia's Universal PreK, and the lack of such a program in the tri state area, the proposed program was enthusiastically approved by the state in June. Drs. Laura Porter and LeAnn Johnson have been working towards this end for the past two years and the department is excited to see the first new classes being offered this fall at the Martinsburg Center. Dr. Karin Spencer will be serving as the new director of early education.

During the Spring semester of 2014, the Literacy Leaders Conference was expanded. Using money obtained through a NASA grant, internationally recognized astrophysicist, Dr. Jeff Goldstein, conducted two pre-conference sessions open to the public on Friday before giving a keynote address and a follow-up workshop on Saturday. Workshops scheduled throughout the day involved 29 different presenters including several individuals from the education and HPERS departments. A record number of teachers and teacher candidates attended these workshops focusing on the importance of content area literacy for preK, elementary, and secondary classrooms.

In October, ten faculty members attended the TPA (Teacher Performance Assessment) Test Pilot Retreat at Stonewall Jackson Resort. The grant funded retreat concentrated on a new evaluation tool for teacher education. This new tool will help in the field with students and with SPA reporting. The students were busy in the Fall as well. Kappa Delta Pi, the International Honor Society in Education had their Fall Professional Development Day on November 11th in which over 65 students participated. The student workshops included, *LinkedIn, Smart Boards, Motivation: Getting Students to Buy in is Half the Battle, Who's the Boss: Classroom Management with a twist, Hire Me: Resume and Interview Advice for Teachers, and Stay Out of Jail*. Kappa Delta Pi recognizes scholarship and excellence in education.

Nursing Education

We are so excited to be moving forward with the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program. We have a sight visit from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) planned for the beginning of March and are looking forward to "wowing" our reviewer at that time. This will be one of the final steps toward approval. We hope to begin the program in the fall of 2015 by offering a DNP with specialties in education, administration and clinical - this focus will have students graduating and sitting for their national certification to practice as a Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP).

The Nursing Department began a new tradition in the fall of 2014; The White Coat Ceremony. This will be a ceremony that occurs at the beginning of each semester for first year nursing students. The ceremony is a symbolic entry into the profession of caring. This has been an honored tradition for medical physicians for about 20 years. This year's White Coat Ceremony for nursing students is a pilot program with Shepherd being the only university selected in West Virginia to participate. The Arnold P. Gold Foundation and American Association of Colleges of Nursing plan to expand it to more schools in 2015.

In November, the Nursing Department held its annual Research Day in collaboration with the Veteran's Administration (VA) in Martinsburg, WV. This event is always a huge success with more than 140 nursing students participating. The conference gives our students the opportunity to network with nursing professionals in the field, as well as learn the importance of evidence-based practice. The lobby of Erma Ora Byrd was filled with Senior Nursing Students presenting their research poster projects. The research conference also featured many workshops from outside speakers as well as many faculty.

Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Sport

The HPERS department is proud to announce our new program, Health Promotion and Exercise Science, beginning Fall of 2015. The Bachelor of Science degree (B.S.) in Health Promotion and Exercise Science will provide a professional baccalaureate experience in applied health and exercise science. The degree will provide the appropriate theory and skills for undergraduate students whose intent is to work in the health and fitness industry. Opportunities for skilled professionals exist in education, corporate wellness, cardiac rehabilitation, health care, sport medicine, and research environments. In addition, this program will provide students with the knowledge and required skills to become successful in a variety of graduate programs in health, exercise and allied health care professions. Finally, this program will also prepare students for advanced certifications from the most respected and well known health and fitness organizations such as the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) and the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NCSA).

Also, in October, the Council on Accreditation for Park, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions conferred academic accreditation to the Shepherd University Recreation and Leisure Studies program.

Featured Professors

Dr. Rebecca Mercado is a newly tenured Associate Professor and Elementary Specialization Coordinator in the Department of Education. She currently teaches the Integrated Reading/Language Arts Pedagogy I & II courses and Foundations of Literacy. Dr. Mercado is originally from Texas, where she earned a BA at the University of Texas at Austin, taught 17 years in elementary classrooms, and served as a K-5 Title One Reading Specialist after completing her masters degree at the University of Houston. "Being a first-generation college graduate in my own family, I feel a strong connection to many Shepherd students who are just figuring out what it takes to complete a degree program." Before coming to Shepherd in 2008, she completed her Ph.D. in Curriculum & Instruction with an emphasis in Literacy Education at the University of Maryland, College Park while teaching as an adjunct professor and managing the federally funded PA State GEAR UP grant at Shippensburg University. "I was thrilled to join the teacher education program at Shepherd because of its strong reputation for excellence." She is a member of Kappa Delta Pi and Phi Kappa Phi Honor Societies. Dr. Mercado shares a love of cooking, reading, music, travel and "always learning something new" with Ted, her husband of 45 years. She has two married daughters, and her first grandchild was born last fall. "I feel as much honor and pride participating in the development of excellent new teachers as I did bringing up my own children. My mother, who was unable to go to college back in the 1930's, instilled a love of reading and the value of education that remains with me today."



Professor Kathy has been a cornerstone of the Nursing Department for 25 years. Kathy is retiring after the Spring 2015 semester, she will be deeply missed in the department. Kathy graduated from Shepherd College in 1976 with an Associate Degree in Nursing, in 1984 she graduated from West Virginia University with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Nursing, and finally obtained her Masters of Nursing degree in 1989 from Marymount University. Kathy's certifications include ANCC American Nurse credentialing Center Nurse Executive, NE-BC. This certification identifies expertise in nursing leadership, management and administration. Kathy has taught most classes offered by the department. She is currently overseeing the capstone experience for senior nursing students. Kathy is the first educator in the department to coordinate this program. She has made capstone run like a smooth machine and has paved the way for the person who follows her, although to those of us who work with her daily, she can never be replaced! Kathy is an outdoor enthusiast, a Master Naturalist and volunteers for PVAS. She completed courses sponsored by Potomac Valley Audubon Society in areas of geography, land management, bird, reptile and wildlife habitat, plants tree and wildflower identification. Kathy is looking forward to retirement and has downsized to a small 1940's colonial, fixer-upper in Charles Town. Retirement activities will include hanging dry-wall and finishing the renovations on her new, old home.



Mrs. Jessica Graham was raised in Martinsburg, WV to two farming families. She attended Hedgesville High School and was a four-year cheerleader and gymnast. As part of her high school accomplishments she was a member of the National Honor Society, Pep Club, and Senior Key Club. Jessica was the first in her family to attend college. Mrs. Graham attended Shepherd College (University) and graduated in 3.5 years with a Bachelor's Degree in Recreation and Leisure Studies. She was a McMurran Scholar, as well as graduating with Magna Cum Laude honors in the year of 2002. Mrs. Graham was hired at City Hospital (now University Healthcare) during her internship as a Health Fitness Instructor in The Wellness Center of City Hospital. Upon graduation, she was promoted to full time and her career started to develop. She became a very active member of the hospital's cancer committee as the Community Liaison. Jessica worked directly with oncologists, surgeons, and administrators to develop programs that met the community's cancer and wellness needs. She was also in charge of developing, planning, and implementing the hospitals health fairs and community screenings. In October 2002 she enrolled Mountain State University to earn her Master of Science Degree. In April 2004, she graduated from Mountain State University with her Master's Degree in Strategic Leadership with a 3.3 G.P.A. all while working full-time at the hospital and undergoing chemotherapy for cancer she had battled since 2002. In April 2008, Jessica took on another position at the hospital as the Employee Wellness Specialist. In 2011, she attended training in Charleston, WV to become an ACS Bridges Provider for the Eastern Panhandle. All of these duties she maintained until July 2014 when she changed her career path and became a Shepherd Ram...again! Now, Mrs. Graham is the Director of the Human Performance Lab and a clinical teacher. She is ecstatic about her new position and has high hopes for the lab and its' possibilities. Jessica is a NSCA-CPT (National Strength and Conditioning Association Certified Personal Trainer) and has been certified since 2004. She is certified in reading basic heart dysrhythmia's, and is CPR and AED certified for adults and children. Jessica is also a certified Fresh Start facilitator for the ACS. Away from her teaching responsibilities here at Shepherd, Jessica is a gymnastics coach to her daughter's team, a long distance runner, and cross-fitter. She has completed 5 marathons and hopes to do another full this year. She is married with two children (8yr old son and 6yr old daughter) and two twin cocker spaniel boys who occupy most of her time. She enjoys intense exercise, baking, being active in her church, and most of all being a mom.



Student Spotlight

When first arriving on Shepherd's campus, Jesse Johnson was unsure what career path he wanted to pursue. He took classes in many different programs trying to find that "just right" fit, something he would feel satisfaction in doing. However, it wasn't until his brother returned to Shepherd to complete a Master of Teaching degree, that he discovered the education program. As he began taking Physical Education courses, he quickly discovered that he had finally found the right place to be. As a future teacher, Jesse's ultimate goal is to inspire other individuals to enjoy being active as much as he does. Not only does he try to model a healthy active lifestyle for his students, he is also a model for his fellow colleagues. His example to others was recently recognized when he was awarded with a certificate of appreciation for his "dedication and leadership within the School of Education and Professional Studies." Jesse will be student teaching fall of 2014 and plans to enter graduate school at JMU after graduation.



Heidi Fraley, a senior at Shepherd University, will be graduating this May 2015 with her Bachelor of Science degree in Recreation and Leisure Studies, with a concentration in Fitness and Exercise Science. During her time at Shepherd, Heidi initiated the reactivation of Shepherd's Phi Epsilon Kappa - Gamma Mu chapter and currently serves as president of this professional fraternity. She spent two years in the Ram Marching Band and three years as a student employee of Shepherd's Police station - serving as a student security guard. Heidi was named Student Employee of the Year for the 2013-2014 school year. Currently, she is finishing up her degree by doing her internship with Jefferson Physical Therapy. With her new degree, Heidi plans on applying to physical therapy graduate programs and attending school to become a future Doctor of Physical Therapy.



Rebecca Swick is a December 2014 graduate of the Shepherd University Nursing Program. Rebecca was one of the first in her class to pass her national licensure exam (NCLEX) and is now a Registered Nurse (RN). Rebecca was inducted in the Shepherd University Honor Society in May, 2014. While a student Rebecca also chose to marry her sweetheart, Troy. Rebecca's journey is remarkable because in the Fall of 2014 she was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma. One of Rebecca's goals was to finish her nursing degree in December, so putting nursing school on hold during this time was not an option. Rebecca was completely supported by her professors and peers. They rallied together to raise money and help her during this difficult time. When talking to Rebecca about her journey and how she accomplished all this during such a difficult time, she will give the credit to God, her family and her friends. Rebecca has completed her chemotherapy and has accepted a position at Valley Health (Winchester Medical Center) on the Oncology Unit as a Registered Nurse.



Dean's Corner

I am very proud of what each department has accomplished over the last year. Your hard work and dedication to the school's strategic priorities has been invaluable. We have now completed 3 years of our strategic five year plan and I am confident that we will meet all of our priorities by December 2016. Have a great semester.

VISION STATEMENT	MISSION STATEMENT
"To be recognized as a School of nationally accredited programs that inspires exemplary leaders."	"The School of Education and Professional Studies embraces a strong liberal arts foundation while preparing students to be leaders in their respective professions."

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES COMPLETED

- #1. Incorporate "LEAP" goals into all curriculum (II-1)
- #2. Be a strong advocate in promoting university wellness initiatives (VI-1)
- #3. Acquire and/or maintain credentials as three Nationally Accredited Programs (II-2)
- #7. All three departments develop a defined faculty mentoring program for new faculty and adjuncts (I-5)
- #10. Maintain communication and cooperation among departments in SOEPS (III-1)
- #11. Encourage participation in department and school meetings (III-2)
- #13. Develop and enhance departmental advisory boards (V-1)
- #14. Increase the percentage of faculty who publish in peer-reviewed journals by 5% (IV-1)
- #15. Increase the percentage of faculty who participate in external grants by 5% (IV-2)
- #17. Host at least one state or regional conference (V-2)
- #19. Encourage online form-sharing for curriculum and program changes (III-4)
- #20. Improve aesthetic appearances and create a welcoming environment in all three departments (I-4)

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES ALMOST COMPLETE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> #12. Develop and enhance new Graduate Programs in all three departments (II-5) #16. Develop and implement programs to provide international opportunities and/or multi-cultural and diverse opportunities for students, faculty and staff (II-4) #18. Enhance the SOEPS website (III-3)

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES IN PROGRESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> #4. Increase the number of faculty, staff and students with diverse backgrounds (I-2) #5. Develop a comprehensive marketing plan (I-1) #6. Improve retention rates for students, faculty and Staff (I-3) #8. All three departments develop student recruitment programs (I-6) #9. Continually improve assessment plans (II-3)

Shepherd
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