PROPOSAL FOR CLOSURE OF THE BACHELOR OF PHYSICAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMS

SCHOOL OF KINESIOLOGY AND HEALTH STUDIES
QUEEN’S UNIVERSITY AT KINGSTON

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1. PROGRAM UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR CLOSURE

Bachelor of Physical and Health Education (Honours) (BPHEH)
Bachelor of Physical and Health Education (General) (BPHE)
A direct-entry, multidisciplinary program focused on physical education, physical activity, and sport.

2. PREAMBLE

Over the past ten years, the School of Kinesiology and Health Studies has undergone a period of considerable development and change, largely in response to broader changes in the research and professional fields represented in the School’s undergraduate programs. In 2004-2005, the School launched a Bachelor of Arts in Health Studies program (BAH, BA), a multidisciplinary social science-oriented program focussed on the physical, mental and social dimensions of health and well-being. In 2006-2007, the School replaced its concurrent BA-BPHE and BSc-BPHE degrees with the current honours degrees of specialization: a Bachelor of Science Honours in Kinesiology (BScH) and a Bachelor of Physical and Health Education Honours (BPHEH). At an institutional level, these programmatic changes were reflected in the renaming of the School to the School of Kinesiology and Health Studies (formerly known as the School of Physical and Health Education) and in its formal separation from Athletics and Recreation in 2010. Due to the popularity of the Kinesiology program, and in order to assist Queen’s in meeting enrolment demands, admission in the School has more than doubled since 2006. The Health Studies program has also experienced a significant growth over the years, resulting in a doubling of the number of students in the Major plan (approx. 60 students intake each year), and strong pressure on HLTH courses from students in other programs in Arts & Science (most dramatically evident in the growth in HLTH 101 over the past 5 years from an enrolment of 400 to 725 in 2015-2016). In contrast, demand for the Physical and Health Education program has gradually declined over the past few years, and the School has maintained an incoming cohort of 50-55 first year students. With nearly 900 students in the three undergraduate programs, physical education students represent an ever-decreasing fraction of the overall undergraduate enrolment in the school.
3. RATIONALE FOR CLOSURE

There are a number of reasons for considering program closure to the BPHE program at this time:

- The number of opportunities for physical education teachers within the school system is falling dramatically; furthermore, the BEd program that provide the option of a specialization in physical education have been closed at Queen’s leaving significantly fewer pathways for students graduating in physical education (Appendix A – Faculty of Education Consultation; Appendix B – Industry Trends);
- There has been declining interest in physical education programs throughout Canada while at the same time increasing demands for degrees in Kinesiology and Health Studies (Appendix C – Program Applications);
- Across Canada, physical education programs are being replaced by kinesiology programs with very minor changes to the curriculum (e.g. University of Toronto, University of Alberta). This is largely due to broader changes in the professions of physical education and kinesiology. More particularly, Kinesiology became a regulated health profession in Ontario in the Spring of 2013 under the Regulated Health Professions Act (1991) (Appendix D – University Program Comparison);
- The BPHE & KIN programs in SKHS have considerable overlap in curricular content (Appendix E - Task Group report);
- The BPHE program in SKHS did not achieve the Canadian Council of University Physical Education and Kinesiology Administrators (CCUPEKA) accreditation in 2015. While insufficient numbers of tenure-track faculty members teaching the program was one reason cited, fundamentally the teaching philosophy of the CCUPEKA and the School differ. The CCUPEKA requires physical education practicum courses that include a focus on formalized games, sport and physical activities. (Appendix F - CCUPEKA reviewer report) The School wishes to pursue practica that emphasize community outreach, support of those with disabilities, personal fitness, and the promotion of personal fitness and wellness within society;
- None of our current PhD-level faculty members hold doctoral degrees in physical education / pedagogy, conduct research in the pedagogy of physical education, or are qualified to teach core physical activity courses that require instructional strategies and analysis of movement. Furthermore, very few PhD-level personnel are now being trained in this field as it is felt to be of increasingly marginal importance to the discipline. Therefore it would be extremely difficult to find high quality scholars with an active programme of research that can contribute significantly to the teaching and research in the discipline of physical education;
- Our staffing finds it challenging to administer three undergraduate programs, and our high student/faculty ratio means we rely heavily on term adjuncts and teaching fellows to deliver many of our core undergraduate courses; and
- The urgent need to develop a more robust model for the sustainability and integrity of the School’s undergraduate programs. This is best summarized in a key recommendation made by the external reviewers of the School’s Cyclical Program Review:
The most challenging recommendation would be one of possibly restructuring the programs in the School. Briefly, from the review, it appears that no current full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty member would self-identify as a PE faculty member. Interest in the field is diminishing among the faculty and incoming student interest is decreasing as noted in the lower number of applications. Furthermore, the quality of applicants to the PE program is lower based on minimum grade requirements for admission. Moreover, as currently delivered, the PE program does not meet the CCUPEKA accreditation standards for re-accreditation. The students in the Kine program, after graduation, could pursue a B.Ed. with their current degree if they selected specific courses as electives in their program. Because, the necessary resources to maintain and strengthen the PE program would be significant and the Queen’s Faculty of Education has eliminated the PE teachable, it may be time for the SKHS to review their efforts in this area. In this context, therefore, it is recommended that the SKHS explore phasing out the PE program and focus their efforts on the thriving Kine program and the popular Health Studies program. This would allow for rationalization of some courses and allow for more alignment between the Kine and Health Studies programs. Should this restructuring occur, because of the different BIU between PE and Kine students, the unit could see a reduced enrolment at no net decrease in revenue allowing the School to maintain a smaller overall enrolment, thus achieving some of the needs to retain the small school feeling and the quality of teaching/ interaction/ program that can only be achieved in smaller cohorts. (Appendix G - CPR external review report)

As a result of these considerations, and particularly considering the research direction the School wishes to head and the improvements to the student learning experience it would afford, faculty members in the School of Kinesiology and Health Studies have unanimously agreed that the Bachelor of Physical and Health Education Program should be closed and focus on its strengths and resources within the remaining programs.

4. REVIEW OF POSSIBLE IMPACTS

IMPACTS ON CURRENTLY ENROLLED STUDENTS INCLUDING TIME-TO-COMPLETION
Students currently enrolled in the Phys Ed program will be able to complete their degree as intended as long as completion occurs within a reasonable timeframe. No time-to-completion hindrances are anticipated. Those students needing to complete their degree outside of the reasonable timeframe will be accommodated - provisions have been developed for course equivalences within the Health Studies and Kinesiology programs to ensure no disruption to the students’ path to graduation.

IMPACTS ON COGNATE PROGRAMS
The closure of Phys Ed will have no anticipated negative effects on other academic programs. Positive impacts may include increased enrolment and increased research output in other cognate disciplines such as Health and Kinesiology.
**IMPACTS ON STAFF AND FACULTY INCLUDING EQUITY GOALS OF THE UNIT / UNIVERSITY**

The Dean analyzed the impact a closure might have on the equity goals of the Academic Unit / Faculty / University and ensured that these goals would continue to be met since no tenured or tenure-track faculty members or staff members in SKHS will lose their positions as a result of a program closure; all full-time employees will continue to work in support of the School’s growing Kinesiology and Health Studies programs.

**IMPACTS ON SHARED SERVICES**

There will be little to no anticipated negative impact on shared services if the program were closed as the number of faculty, students and staff will not change significantly, if any and the number of teaching and research spaces allocated for the unit will remain the same.

**IMPACTS ON THE ACADEMIC MISSION OF QUEEN’S UNIVERSITY**

The mission as outlined on the Senate webpage states:

The University will build on the strength that is Queen’s - students, faculty, staff and alumni - to be among the best of internationally known universities in Canada, recognized for:

- the exceptional quality of undergraduate and graduate students and programs in the arts, sciences and professions;
- the intellectual power and value of research and scholarship by faculty members and students;
- the exemplary service of the University and that of its graduates to the community and the nation and the community of nations.

The closure of Phys Ed does not have any foreseeable negative impacts on the mission, but rather has potential for positive impacts in that resources may be allocated for future-focused research, scholarship in teaching in fields that are emerging and growing in the areas of health and kinesiology.

**IMPACT ON THE GREATER QUEEN’S COMMUNITY**

Some concern has been expressed by the PHEKSA Executive that a program closure would have a negative impact on the Queen’s and broader Kingston community since there is a perception that BPHE students more actively contribute to the School, Queen’s, and the Kingston community via extracurricular groups (e.g. Winter Adapted Games, Motionball, QJump, etc.) and through course-based community placements (i.e. PACT courses), than do Kinesiology or Health Studies students. There is no evidence, though, to support the perception that Phys Ed students more actively contribute to extracurricular groups as compared to their peers in Kinesiology and Health Studies. The SKHS has also initiated discussions with students about redesigning the PACT courses, currently restricted to BPHE students, and integrating them into the Kinesiology and Health Studies programs, as appropriate. This proposed change would help sustain existing community partnerships and expand experiential learning opportunities for Kinesiology and Health Studies students.

Further, the SKHS wants to emphasize its strong commitment to not only maintaining existing experiential learning opportunities in the School, but expanding these as well.
Specifically, SKHS offers:

- a series of placement-based ‘mini-streams’ in which students apply the knowledge gained in the classroom to earn credit for experiential learning in an applied setting. These include three mini-streams (*Athletic Therapy, Strength and Conditioning, and Exercise, Disability and Aging*), which are comprised of a foundation course completed in second or third year, a field placement completed in third year, and an internship completed in fourth year. The Athletic Therapy and Strength and Conditioning mini-streams are offered in collaboration with Queen’s Athletics and Recreation in support of their varsity programs and are open to all BPHE and KIN students. The Exercise, Disability and Aging mini-stream is open to all students in SKHS (PHE, KIN and HLTH);
- a third year Research-Based Internship for all students (PHE, KIN and HLTH) in which students are placed in a research laboratory or with the research program of a faculty member. These internships permit students to gain valuable knowledge and skills in a research environment, and often lead to a fourth year independent project. A regular seminar series that focuses on the research methods used across Kinesiology, Physical and Health Education, and Health Studies supplements the lab-based learning;
- a capstone Health Studies course (HLTH 415) in which students work with community organizations to conduct program design and evaluation;
- a growing suite of disability related courses. With a new faculty member in the School with expertise in physical activity and disability (Dr. Jennifer Tomasone), SKHS has enhanced our course offerings to include a new foundational course in disability studies (HLTH 332), open to PHE, KIN & HLTH students, which will lead to more specialized upper year courses. The additional capacity to grow this area of specialization in the School will enable more opportunities for students to complete disability related placements and/or independent projects. This growth will also create complementary links to existing student-run co-curricular groups (e.g. WAG and Motionball, in particular); and
- through the recent appointment of a new Internship Coordinator staff position in SKHS, a new one-term Community Based Internship course is being offered in Winter 2017. This opportunity is open to all SKHS students, on a competitive basis, who complete a placement in a community-based workplace setting relevant to their program of study and career goals.

All programs in SKHS are guided by the School’s mission to research, teach and promote physical, mental and social well-being from the level of the individual to society. Across our undergraduate and graduate programs, our students are highly engaged within the School, the Queen’s community, within the Kingston and surrounding communities, and nationally and globally as well. We are confident that the closure of the BPHE program will not impact our students’ contribution to these communities.
5. Procedure Followed to Date

Between April 2015 and January 2017, SKHS along with the Dean have gathered evidence of trends, conducted extensive consultations and analyzed available data to come to the recommendation for closure. The Dean ensured that there were opportunities for affected individuals and groups to provide input into the decision; both the Dean and the Director of SKHS discussed the possible options with students, and donors and alumni; the Dean reviewed all external and internal review reports (Appendix E, F, and G) and prior to coming to this recommendation the Dean and SKHS reviewed alternatives to closing the program such as increasing advertising, hiring faculty that meet the accreditation requirements and changing curriculum to meet the needs of the industry.

Timeline:

- Apr 2015 – Initial Environmental Scan
- 7 May 2015 – SKHS Faculty Strategic Planning Session
- 14 May 2015 – Initial Consultation with Faculty Office
- 16 Sep 2015 – SKHS Director and UGC meet with PHESKA Executive
- 16 Sep 2015 – Email sent to all BPHE and KIN students and invited feedback
- 16 Sep 2015 – Email sent to SKHS alumni and invited feedback
- 17 Sep 2015 – Follow up email sent to all BPHE & KIN students
- 17 Sep 2015 – PHEKSA forum and discussion
- 23 Sep 2015 – Email and telephone outreach to key alumni
- 25 Sep 2015 – Request to consider Temporary Suspension of Admissions brought forward by SKHS to Faculty Board (Appendix H – Proposal to suspend admission of the BPHE: Background and Rational)
- 30 Sep 2015 – UGC discussion with PHEKSA Executive
- 7 Oct 2015 – Teaching Adjuncts Info Session and Discussion
- 22 Oct 2015 – Town Hall for PHE / KIN students with Dean Mumm
- 24 Oct 2015 – Alumni Breakfast & Outreach
- 2 Nov 2015 – Webpage posted for student feedback and outlining the process
- 3 Nov 2015 – Dean Mumm email to all BPHE students encouraging feedback
- 5 Nov 2015 – Town Hall f/u discussion with SKHS Director, UGC and PHEKSA executive
- 30 Nov 2015 – UGC meeting with Career Services
- Dec 2015 – Associate Dean meeting with Faculty of Education
- 11 March 2016 – 1 Year Temporary Suspension of admission announced at Faculty Board (with discussion)
- 22 March 2016 – 1 Year Temporary Suspension of admission announced to Senate
- 30 March 2016 – SKHS Student Visioning Exercise #1
- 4 April 2016 – One-on-One Consultation meetings with the Dean (Appendix I – Student and Parent Feedback)
- 8 April 2016 – One-on-One Consultation meetings with the Dean (Appendix I)
- 14 April 2016 – SKHS Student Visioning Exercise #2
- May 2016 – SKHS Staff and Faculty discussion and update
- May 2016 – Alumni newsletter included an update regarding the suspension of the Physical and Health Education program.
6. HIGHLIGHTS FROM CONSULTATIONS:

**Faculty and Staff within SKHS**

All SKHS faculty members, continuing adjuncts, and staff members who have curriculum responsibilities held a strategic session with an external facilitator to review the major elements of a strategic plan for 2015-2020. The group began by conducting a current state of analysis by identifying external opportunities and threats. The group then revisited the mission and long-term objective of the School created in 2010. Five long-term objectives were identified for 2015-2020 including 1) improve undergraduate teaching balance among faculty members, 2) enhance collaborations throughout the university, community, and country 3) support strong and diverse research portfolio and funding opportunities, 4) improve the student culture, and 5) enhance SKHS undergraduate offerings through a realignment of our Kinesiology, Physical Education, and Health Studies programs. These long-term objectives emerged from information collected through our last strategic plan, recommendations from our 2014-2015 CPR and CCUPEKA reviews, and SKHS undergraduate and graduate committee reports.
From these long-term objectives, the group decided to focus on 4 priorities for 2015-16: 1) improve undergraduate teaching balance among faculty members, 2) realign our undergraduate programs to enhance experiential learning and align courses with faculty members’ research and interest, 3) promote a student culture of learning, respect, equity, and inclusivity, 4) start a consultative process to merge the Kinesiology and Physical and Health Education programs. In regards to priority 4, the group unanimously agreed to begin the consultative process required by the Senate to request for a temporary suspension of admissions to the BPHE degree program effective Sep 2017, with the plan being to seek the eventual closure of the BPHE program and to review the Kinesiology program in light of the BPHE closure. (Appendix K - SKHS Strategic Plan 2015-2020)

All SKHS teaching adjuncts (8 in total) were invited to attend an information session about the proposed suspension of admission to the BPHE. Three Adjuncts attended the session (2 who teach HLTH courses, 1 who teaches a PACT course restricted to BPHE students). One Adjunct wondered what the broader changes to the field of physical education implied about society, especially at a time when there is much discussion about lack of physical activity among children and a public health focus on addressing childhood obesity. This sentiment was echoed by another Adjunct who expressed concern about not training the next generation of educators to promote and support physical activity among children. He emphasized that this doesn’t have to be limited to traditional sports, but could include a broader focus on movement, physical activity and/or sport. He also proposed that SKHS consider including a teaching stream within the Kinesiology plan, if PHE is phased out. The Adjunct who teaches the PACT course asked for clarification about whether these courses would continue to be offered. Côté emphasized the School’s commitment to experiential and applied learning opportunities, including the PACT courses, demonstrated by the recent creation of a new Internship Coordinator staff position who will oversee such experiences. He further stressed that across our programs (including Health Studies and Kinesiology), we have expertise in the science of human movement, physical activity and sport, as well as in health promotion and sociology. Fergus reiterated that our Health Studies program, in particular, draws from social science experts in public health and health promotion, and increasingly we have opened KNPE courses with a focus on physical activity to our Health Studies students, which may appeal to students if PHE was no longer an option at Queen’s.

During the SKHS faculty retreat May 2016, the faculty revisited this discussion and affirmed that the closure of the program will allow them to focus on strengthening their existing programs to meet the demands of the industry, their partners and needs of their students.

**Faculty Board and Other Academic Units**

The request from SKHS to the Dean to consider temporary suspension of admissions occurred at the September 2015 Faculty Board meeting. One student and one adjunct faculty member voiced concerns about the temporary suspension citing there were still applicants to the program even if it is declining. One student spoke was upset that the students were not included in previous conversations about this until then not realizing that this was step one in the process. One tenured professor in SKHS spoke in favour citing that it has one of the highest student-faculty ratios in the Faculty of Arts & Science and that all members have been working creatively over those years to keep the Physical Education program going, but that the School
has finally run out of options, as it is an issue of resources. The full Faculty Board minutes from September 25th, 2015 includes both student and Faculty comments (Appendix L – Faculty Board Minutes).

The dean announced the temporary suspension of admissions at Faculty Board on March 11, 2016 (Appendix L) and provided a notice of intention to consider closure at the Faculty Board on October 28, 2016. The notice of intention received only one comment from the President of PHEKSA about the importance of ensuring that students remain part of the discussion going forward.

**STUDENTS AND PARENTS**

Coinciding with the Faculty Board Agenda meeting on September 16, 2015, Côté and van der Meulen met with the PHEKSA executive to make them aware of the proposal that would be announced at the upcoming Faculty Board meeting to suspend admissions into the BPHE program beginning in September 2017. Côté and van der Meulen provided the rational and context for the decision made by faculty members at the Spring Meeting retreat in May, and shared a copy of the letter that would be sent later that day to all students. The PHEKSA executive voiced their disappointment and did not make any specific suggestions regarding the content of the letter. They agreed with Côté and van der Meulen that it would be helpful to have an open forum to discuss the proposal with students.

PHEKSA organized a discussion forum for students in order to answer questions and gauge their reaction to the announcement. A letter from PHEKSA outlining the results of that meeting is included in Appendix I.

In addition to the letter, two emails from parents and 1 from a student were received. The student email encouraged the School to keep the PHE program, but did not specifically address any of the rationale provided by faculty for their decision and did not include any questions. One parent of a 2nd year BPHE student expressed concern that if the program were to be suspended, resources would not be allocated to it and this could diminish the quality of the program for current students.

The Faculty of Arts and Science, along with SKHS, held a town hall for students to provide feedback on the temporary suspension (Appendix I). The student sentiment at this meeting was apprehensive and emotional. Students voiced concerns over the loss of the PACT courses, the loss of an arts or non-science entry into the school (not recognizing Health Studies as part of the school because it is not direct entry), and the impact on their own degrees upon graduation. Students also sought clarification about the process. Several students also spoke in favour of the process which they saw as positively seeking student input. The PHEKSA Executive acknowledged that the town hall was quite emotional and that although students are very passionate about their program and their community of students and alumni, this is not grounds for an academic decision. PHEKSA was pleased with how many students made the time to attend the town hall, and they noted their appreciation for having a venue to share their thoughts and concerns.
The Dean’s office in partnership with SKHS held two visioning exercises with students to discuss what the future could look like for the school looking at all the options; opened an online forum for feedback and offered one-on-one consultations with the Dean. The general themes noted from all of these activities were (more details are available in Appendix I):

- there is value in activity-based courses such as the PACT courses perhaps as a ministream within other programs;
- students inclined to a phys ed program are not an exact match to kinesiology students nor health students and therefore, consideration would need to be made in those programs to ensure that the school still appeals to such a student; and
- the importance of maintaining applied learning and community-based learning opportunities with the school.

After the announcement at Faculty Board in October 2016 regarding the intentions for seeking program closure several student consultation initiatives were conducted including a career planning discussion with Career Services, three curriculum visioning sessions, open office hours with PHEKSA executive, office hours with the Dean, and open discussion at Faculty Board in October. PHEKSA prepared a report summarizing student opinion (Appendix I). The sentiment for all of these discussions was much more optimistic about the future of SKHS and an interest in seeing curriculum updates to match with industry trends. Students, although emotional and passionate about their love of the Phys Ed program, showed understanding for the need for program changes. They showed a keen interest in exploring ideas such as expanded opportunities for students outside of SKHS to participate in courses, additional and new credential opportunities, greater differentiation between programs, and maintaining a science and arts point of entry for health related study.

ALUMNI

An email was sent to all alumni with a direct email sent to key alumni who were identified by the Office of Advancement. All alumni contacted through this email responded. Five of the six people contacted understood the change being proposed and one concisely expressed his disagreement.

A few additional emails were received from alumni with mixed reaction. Similar to current students, they conveyed their passion for the program and sadness/disappointment about its possible loss. Some stressed that the BPHE has not solely been a pathway to a BEd/teaching professions and that its multidisciplinary focus has prepared students for a range of careers (Appendix M – Alumni Feedback). They mentioned the activity courses (sports-skills based for alumni) as key to preparing them for postgraduate opportunities and concern that future students will not benefit from such experiential learning. This group viewed the change as having a negative impact on the teaching profession, in particular. Many of these alumni perceive the kinesiology degree as much more narrow in its focus – the perception being that kinesiology emphasizes clinical treatment rather than a broader approach to health promotion and preventative health that the physical and health education degree is known for. None of the alumni seemed aware that the School offers a Health Studies degree that also includes an emphasis on health promotion, community health, and the social determinants of health. Two
alumni, in particular, expressed support for the decision and noted relevant changes in the fields. One of these alumni was the Chair of the Department of Kinesiology (now the School of Health and Human Performance) at a College in the US and noted similar changes in their School whereby declining interest in traditional physical education/teacher preparation programs led to the discontinuation of these programs to meet increasing demands for exercise science, athletic therapy and community health programs. One alumni who graduated with a concurrent science PHE degree shared her support for the proposal and wondered whether she could refer to her degree (from 1992) as kinesiology.

Côté and Dean Mumm attended homecoming events for alumni to garner feedback in October 2015. Côté had an opportunity to discuss with at least five different alumni the SKHS plan to suspend admission to the PHE program. Generally, the alumni were disappointed but appeared to understand the proposed change. The same morning, Côté met in his office with two prominent alumni for about one hour to explain the SKHS decision. The alumni asked for a copy of the Town Hall presentation and assured Côté that they will continue to advocate for the School and support its initiatives.

In June 2016, SKHS circulated an e-newsletter to all alumni with information about the approved suspension of admission into the BPHE. A follow-up newsletter was circulated in November 2016, which informed alumni about the proposal to consider a program closure. The SKHS Director received no emails from alumni in response to these notices.

**Career Services Highlights**

Van der Meulen met with the Director of Career Services (Cathy Keates) to ask for her perspective on whether there is any risk or possible negative outcome of a program suspension (or program closure) on the future employability of BPHE students and/or their chances of success in postgraduate applications. Keates stressed that employers and graduate programs rarely have any knowledge of specific degrees. Both review candidates’ applications to assess their knowledge, skills and relevant experiences and it is the responsibility of applicants to showcase these. For graduate programs, in particular, they will also assess eligibility based on specific prerequisite courses, which may or may not be associated with a particular undergraduate degree. Where an employer/graduate program may have heard of a program suspension or closure, students should be prepared to provide an explanation (e.g. changes in the field more broadly) that explicitly address any potential perception that the suspension resulted due to quality issues. Keates offered to address students concerns directly through a public forum in Winter term 2016 and/or through offering targeted career coaching sessions for BPHE students. (Appendix N – Career Implications letter from Cathy Keates)

Cathy facilitated a Career Implications discussion for students in Phys Ed in November 2016. Students responded well to this and appeared comforted by the fact that the closure will have little to no impact on their career plans.