

Eastern Wyoming College

Instructional Program Review 2018-2019

Program: Pre-Professional

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EASTERN WYOMING COLLEGE Pre-Professional Program Review

Program Name: Pre-Professional

Part I: Statistical Data from the past three years:

	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	5-Year Average
Annualized FTE Enrollment	Not tracked	Not tracked	Not tracked	Not tracked
Annualized FTE Faculty	Not tracked	Not tracked	Not tracked	Not tracked
# Majors	96	84	85	86.6
# of graduates	4	10	2	5

FTE = Full-time equivalent

Pre-Professional Majors Headcount by category	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	5 year average
Medical Technology	1	0	0	.8
Pre-Allied Health (DH, RAD, MT, etc.)	31	23	21	18.8
Pre-Dentistry	2	0	2	1.4
Pre-Pharmacy	1	0	1	1
Pre-Medicine	9	5	9	8.8
Pre-Nursing	47	50	46	48.8
Pre-Veterinary	8	6	9	8.8
Total	96	84	85	86.6

Modes of Delivery:

online

Zoom

face-to-face

Budgets: Educational Supplies _____ Travel _____

Student Access Points:

The majority of our Pre-Professional students enter as traditional freshmen, some of whom have completed concurrent enrollment courses in Biology, Math, or English. Pre-Nursing students tend more to be non-traditional and they may or may not have completed previous college course work.

Part II Narrative Analysis

Description of Community Need/ State and National Trends:

Professional health careers are popular areas of study for traditional as well as non-traditional students. EWC offers A.S. Degrees in Pre-Medicine, Pre-Dentistry, Pre-Veterinary Medicine, Pre-Pharmacy, Pre-Medical Technology, and Pre-Nursing. A new Pre-Allied Health Degree (for

pre-dental hygiene, pre-radiology tech, pre-physical therapy assistant, etc. students) was created in 2014 to allow students taking course work in those areas to map out and complete an associate's degree if they wished to do so before transferring on to a professional program. The number of Pre-professional students has remained steady the past three years with 85-87 students declaring these majors per year.

There continues to be a need for nurses (and other health care professionals) nationally as well as locally. In response to the need for nurses in our Converse County service area EWC has established a new Associate Degree R. N. (ADN) program at our Douglas Campus which will started its first twelve-student class in August 2016. A newly established ADN program for the Torrington Campus has accepted eight students that scheduled to start in August 2019. Also the Douglas Campus has accepted students for an evening ADN program starting in August 2019. Many of the nursing students completed all or most of their Pre-Nursing courses at EWC. Pre-Nursing majors account for approximately 56% of our pre-professional majors.

EWC is committed to providing the necessary pre-nursing course work for all levels of nursing programs (including LPN, ADN, and BSN), and also provides advising and prerequisite course work for a great variety of health careers in areas EWC does not offer specific degrees (such as pre-chiropractic, pre-mortuary science, pre-physical therapy, etc.)

After completing their courses at EWC, those students aiming for doctoral degrees transfer to four-year institutions to complete additional coursework and/or a Bachelor's degree before applying to Pharmacy, Medical, or Veterinary Schools. Our Pre-Med and Pre-Dentistry students ultimately apply to their professional schools through the WWAMI and WYDent programs administered through the University of Wyoming.

Activities in Support of Student Learning:

Recruiters have been made aware that EWC is a good starting point for students interested in health careers, and are working to recruit more pre-professional students.

Science Division scholarships are also used as recruiting tools – they are primarily awarded to incoming freshmen, but each year some are awarded to returning students, which aids in retention of students who have been very successful in their freshmen course work.

The Pre-Professional outcomes assessment is rubrics based and evaluates each graduating student individually in core competencies as well as discipline-specific knowledge in science courses specific to the major. Science faculty members assess students in each area. Average scores for each student are compiled, and results of the assessment are then provided to each student individually. Outcomes scores and scoring trends are evaluated by the science faculty members with an eye to where our program could improve student outcomes. The objective of the assessment process is to identify areas within the Pre-Professional program that may need additional emphasis to more adequately prepare students for entry into and success in the various professional programs.

Strengths of the Program and Faculty:

Program Strengths:

In general, Pre-Professional programs require students to take Biology, Chemistry, and Microbiology courses, as well as Pre-Calculus Algebra and Trigonometry. Some of the programs also require courses such as Organic Chemistry, Anatomy & Physiology, Calculus, or Statistics. Science labs are taught by the lecture instructors (rather than teaching assistants), so lab instruction is of high quality and reinforces lecture topics. In addition, Pre-Professional students must also complete the General Education courses required for any A.S. degree, and those courses are taught by capable, caring faculty.

Due to the large number of math and science courses required, it is often advantageous for students pursuing Pre-Professional degrees to begin their education at Eastern Wyoming College, where class sizes in these fields of study are smaller. The individual attention that students receive in the rigorous courses is very beneficial to most students' success. In particular, students from small high schools seem to feel more comfortable at Eastern Wyoming College. Eastern Wyoming College, with its smaller size, cost-effective tuition, and highly qualified instructors can provide students with a great start towards a professional career.

Advisors encourage Pre-Professional students to complete an Associate's Degree, but most of EWC's pre-professional students (particularly our Pre-Nursing students) choose to simply concentrate on taking those courses which are pre-requisites for their particular professional programs.

Our non-traditional pre-professional majors often take only one or two classes a semester (particularly those in our outreach areas), and are in the program for several years. EWC has made many of the courses needed as pre-requisites for area professional programs available as online or Zoom courses to reach our site-bound pre-professional students.

Our pre-nursing and pre-allied health graduates are readily accepted into area professional programs (e.g. nursing, radiology technology, dental hygiene) and do well if they have achieved a GPA ≥ 3.3 .

Transfer-student data show that EWC's pre-professional transfer students do well as juniors at area four-year institutions. We hear back from many who are then accepted into Medical, Dental, Pharmacy, or Veterinary Medicine Schools.

Faculty Strengths:

The Science Division at EWC is very fortunate to have highly qualified, dedicated faculty members who instruct and advise the Pre-Professional students. Two of EWC's science faculty members have professional degrees; one R.N. and one D.V.M. In addition, one science faculty member has a Ph.D. in Chemistry.

Personalized advising by EWC's knowledgeable pre-professional advisors is a key to students' success in applying and gaining admission to professional programs. Pre-Professional Advisors participate in advising conferences conducted by some of the area professional schools.

Part III Recommendations

Faculty Recommendations:

EWC needs to continue to offer a wide range of courses for students in Pre-Professional programs to facilitate our students' entry to, and success in, professional programs. Also, to best serve our students' needs, the faculty needs to be able to continue professional development activities and maintain articulation with the area professional programs.

Labs for the Science courses which make up the core of the Pre-professional program need to have regular equipment/technology upgrades. Supply budgets need to increase to keep up with rising costs of materials and shipping.

Recruitment of quality "math & science ready" students continues to be an important goal. Additional numbers of academically well prepared pre-professional students at EWC would benefit the college in a variety of ways. Their increased numbers would improve enrollment in our second year science and math courses. Since many of these students are high-achieving students, they are generally available to serve as our tutors in the Student Success Center and their presence in EWC's General Education classes raises the overall quality of classroom interaction.

Division Chair Recommendations:

Faculty has done a great job of working together on scheduling courses to assist the new Nursing program. This needs to continue to be a priority because the Nursing students boost all the lab science course enrollments.

Faculty in this area need to consider more flexible scheduling of some of the high demand courses.

EWC needs to continue to offer lab science courses and the labs, in particular, in the face-to-face format.

This is an area in which workload issues are critical. With the low number of majors (not including Nursing), decisions will need to be made about the viability of these degrees. If the degrees are valuable, students need to be able to get courses like Organic Chemistry on our campus even if they are low-enrolled. And, faculty need to be paid fully for those courses.

Vice President's Recommendations:

The faculty from the Pre-Professional Department and the Department head provide an accurate representation of the various programs that make up this area. While each of these entities remain separate degree programs at the current time, it may be advantageous for the department to consider combining the programs into a reduced number of degree programs with varied elective offerings that meet the needs of students entering a multitude of professional fields.

The Department Head's perspective on low-enrolled classes is valuable, but logistic and budgetary obligations require us to consider the issue more carefully. Continuing to offer courses with 2-3 students without additional attempts is not a good use of both our financial and personnel resources. While each of our students are valuable, we are challenged to adequately meet their needs if we do not make effective and efficient decisions. My recommendation is that the departments impacted by these enrollment challenges and administration work collaboratively and engage in open and frequent communication in order to seek solutions that meet the needs of both students and the institution. The Department Head's recommendation to consider flexibility in scheduling is an idea that is encouraged. While my additional suggest may contradict the perspective of the department, I also encourage seeking opportunities to offer their courses in varied delivery options in order to recruit additional enrollment.

The department has recently experienced a change in personnel due to resignations and a transfer of a faculty member to another department. A new Biology instructor with community college teaching experience provides an opportunity for the department to continue to shape itself and brings fresh ideas and perspectives to the institution.