

Health Science Graduate Newsletter



Winter 2008

Volume 39, No.2

November, 2008

Happy Fall:

Time is evaporating. Summer was only yesterday and already, we're thinking about minimester and spring courses. But that's life in graduate school. Happily, that life includes a considerable number of good things. The Master's in Health Science continues to experience more enrollment growth relative to other departments in the College of Health Professions. We are fortunate to have two energetic additions to the faculty in the form of Niya Werts and Theresa Jackson. Casey Fisher, our new graduate assistant, is impressively organized and motivated. In the tradition of previous graduate assistants, Casey is a valuable resource for everyone, and a person all students would benefit from knowing. The Department also continues to add classes to the array of curriculum choices that are both interesting and relevant. Where possible, the Department incorporates in those classes, expertise from practitioners in the field. This semester, for example, we have two highly respected health care professionals teaching in the graduate program. Lewis LeBrun and Jeff Richardson bring expertise, knowledge of the health care landscape and grounding in the real world that benefits all of us.

To facilitate our students' launch into life-after-Towson, the Department has moved forward in its efforts to link students with professional opportunities for both experiential learning and actual employment. Indicative of this effort, the Department recently sponsored a community health Professional Networking Event. An article in this Newsletter describes this highly successful event. If you've other ideas for further networking possibilities, please let me know. I also continue to direct the Health Science Master's Students' email distribution list. Beyond facilitating communication about courses, registration, and the like, this list has been a wonderful resource both to students and to the community. Agencies interested in hiring students send me their job descriptions. I then pass the information to you. With more of our graduates occupying leadership positions in the community health network, I'm finding that an increasing number of job opportunities comes from graduates of our program. What a perfect flow – to move from student to employer of one's fellow graduates. Indeed, the Baltimore area is well-represented by graduates of the Master's in Health Science. Whether you're in the Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, Baltimore City Health Department, one of the area's many voluntary health organizations, hospitals or other settings, you're likely to meet an alum of the Master's in Health Science. A small and very gratifying world. And one I know you'll soon be joining.

I hope you have a wonderful semester. As you have questions or discover areas where some outside support would be appreciated, by all means let me know. Take care.

Sincerely,

Dr. Susan Radius

FACULTY PROFILE

Lillian Carter is an Associate Professor of Health Science at Towson University. She has been a member of the Department since 1987. Originally from Lake City, South Carolina, Dr. Carter spent six years in Manhattan prior to moving to Baltimore. Her educational experiences include a BA in Health Education and a Master's of Arts in Teaching Health Education from the University of South Carolina. She also has a PhD in Health Education and Counseling from Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Since coming to Towson University, Dr. Carter has taught many classes including Instructional Methods, Nutrition, and an introductory graduate course. This semester, she is teaching Sexuality in Diverse Societies, Mental Health, Stress Reduction, and Crisis Intervention. She says of the courses she teaches and has taught in the past, "I am fortunate to be able to teach courses that reflect areas of my greatest interest. I am very interested in the topic of sexuality and teaching the skills needed for healthy loving relationships." According to Lillian Carter, "Sexuality is always a hot topic in health."

In addition, Dr. Carter enjoys working with students and helping them to develop the skills necessary to live fully the lives they choose for themselves. She is also passionate about environmental issues and living well with the environment. During her spare time, she enjoys traveling, reading, exercising, and spending time at the beach.

Her greatest accomplishment is becoming a teacher. Dr. Carter's professional goal is to be an excellent teacher, who can help students develop skills for positive health behavior change.

MEET THE NEW GRADUATE ASSISTANT

Hello! My name is Casey Fisher and I am the new graduate assistant for the Health Science Department. I am in my first year of the Health Science program and my concentration is Administration. You probably recognize my name from the *Program of Study* reminder emails I sent earlier this semester.

I moved to Baltimore two years ago from South Florida, where I received my Bachelor's Degree in Exercise Science from Barry University. Currently, I am working as an Exercise Physiologist in Cardiac Rehabilitation at Union Memorial Hospital. Most of my healthcare experience comes from various positions in the hospital arena. I am also a certified personal trainer, which has taken a back seat to my graduate studies at the moment. So, if you have any questions about exercise, I would be glad to offer advice. Free of charge, of course!

In my limited spare time, I enjoy running (i.e., marathons and half-marathons) and a wide variety of other outdoor activities. I am also a big sports fan -- football and baseball in particular, but I also enjoy the Tour de France and other endurance events.

I hope this brief statement has given you an idea where I am coming from and what experiences I have had. I look forward to keeping you informed about the Health Science Program and answering any questions that you may have as you complete your graduate education at Towson.

ASK THE VIRTUAL ADVISOR

What's the point of the three-course requirement? Why can't I retake those courses if I don't like my grade?

The purpose of the three-course requirement is to establish students' competence in areas central to their field of study, as well as their probable ability to succeed in the Master's program. The Department of Health Science has no mandatory comprehensive examination. We have no mandatory thesis. Instead, the faculty – with approval of the University Graduate School – decided that the three-course requirement was a more meaningful and useful indicator of competence than either of those alternatives. Not all students are test takers. Not all students benefit from conducting a research project as intense as a thesis. The three course requirement, in contrast, provides students an opportunity to develop mastery in areas critical to success in their chosen concentration. And it does so without adding hours, money or time to the student's Master's Program of Study. Because these courses are academic filters, re-enrollment would be illogical. Where students' performance is suggestive of competence but not yet fully developed (i.e., one 'C' grade), a three-credit remediation comes into play. Students unclear about their specific three-course requirement should contact their advisor or the Program Director.

I'm pregnant. The baby is due in six months. My Program of Study was planned for continuous enrollment. With the baby's coming, everything is up in the air. What do I do??

Most importantly, you need to take care of yourself and the baby. Programs of Study are made to be changed. Students are never obligated to enroll in the exact courses at the exact point in time indicated on their Program of Study. You need only inform your advisor of the change. You also should not worry about taking a break in your coursework. The Graduate School will not remove you from its books, nor do we remove your Departmental file, just because you have a semester or two without active registration. All Master's students have seven years in which to complete their degree. That seven-year clock begins ticking with the date of the first class used toward your degree. The overwhelming majority of students in our Master's program complete their Master's well in advance of the seven-year limit. Indeed, most finish the degree in approximately two to three years while also maintaining active professional and personal lives. In short, happy baby. And don't worry.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

It's not unusual for prospective students – and even those already in the program – to ask how they might use their Master's degree. To provide some information in that regard, we thought you might enjoy some “Where are they now” information about recent graduates of the Master's Program in Health Science. As will become

apparent, we have students who are hugely talented, creative, and making their Master's degrees work for them. Something, I'm sure, you'll be doing as well.

Yelena Shnyder, '03 Master's Graduate

I work at the Office of Global Health Affairs (OGHA), the office created to support Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Secretary Leavitt in his bilateral and multilateral international engagements. This includes meetings with foreign Health Ministers and Presidents when they visit Washington, D.C., the Secretary's visits to foreign countries, as well as US involvement and membership in International Organizations such as WHO, PAHO, US-Mexico Border Health Commission, Global Health Security Initiative, and other programs. Also, OGHA provides leadership and coordination for bilateral programs with selected countries, such as the U.S.-Russia and U.S.-South Africa Health Committees, in support of Presidential and Vice-Presidential initiatives.

My job includes a combination of duties. I am a health analyst, investigator, travel agent, meeting coordinator, translator, and a project manager. I coordinate bilateral meetings between foreign officials and the Secretary, draft briefing documents for these meetings, participate at the meetings, provide meetings' summaries, and conduct any follow-up activities that might be required. I am also involved in preparations for the DHHS officials' travel abroad. In that capacity, I assist with logistics; participate in the development of briefing books for DHHS leaders; and participate in all travel's follow-up activity. My work also includes participation in several bilateral programs with Mexico, Central America, and Russia.

While some students work in a federal or international arena, others have a more distinctly Maryland focus to their work. They also have fairly clear feelings about their life at Towson! Our next student report provides clear testimony on that reality.

Holly Walter, '06 Master's Graduate

Currently, I am working as a health educator at an elementary school in Carroll County. The students in kindergarten through fifth grade receive one hour of instruction in health education each week. Each lesson is aligned with the National Health Standards and our Voluntary State Curriculum.

The health program offered at Towson provided me with the flexibility of teaching during the day and taking classes in the evenings and weekends. Some classes were offered as independent studies, allowing me to complete the course work in between chasing my two young sons. The professors were wonderful at making each course applicable to me and my profession. Each assignment was something I could use in my career which made my experience in the Master's program seem like my time spent there was valuable.

I felt overly confident in my writing ability before attending Dr. Radius's graduate seminar class. Boy, was I in for a rude awakening! Although I struggled and blessed her on many occasions, I learned that there is always room for improvement in one's abilities -- a great life lesson. I can still recite the topic of my paper on demand. Whenever I had a question or needed clarification on an assignment, I could email any of the professors and always be certain to receive a prompt response.

I was provided with many opportunities to network with other health educators in class. Dr. Wengert encouraged the students to become involved in professional organizations such as MAHPERD (Maryland Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance). I currently am serving a three year term as Secretary of MAHPERD. Through Dr. Wengert's encouragement and the connections I have made within that organization, I joined AAHPERD and presented a session entitled "Video Gaming in Health Education" in Fort Worth, Texas. My goal was to find a fun way of encouraging sedentary students to get up and move while at home or in the classroom setting.

I can't say enough about the positive experience I had while attending the Master's program at Towson University. Though I have not attended classes there in almost three years, I still receive updates on current job opportunities in our field and information on upcoming seminars and conventions. Thank you to all of the professors for their dedication to the students.

STUDENT PROFILE

Melissa De Jesús is currently enrolled in the Master's in Health program with a concentration in Community Health Education. More specifically, she is in the process of finishing her final semester! Some courses Melissa enjoyed and learned a great deal from are Introduction to Health Behavior and Health Promotion, Qualitative and Quantitative Elements, Research Methods in Health, and Graduate Seminar. According to Melissa, "These courses established the foundation that we need as Health Science professionals."

Melissa earned her undergraduate degree in Biological Anthropology and Anatomy with a focus on Primate Behavior from Duke University. During her undergraduate career, she was able to satisfy a childhood interest in primates by helping to conduct research on lemurs at Duke, as well as studying Howler Monkeys during an internship in Costa Rica.

One of her most cherished and memorable accomplishments was her service in the United States Peace Corps (2003-2005). Melissa volunteered in Kyamukudumi Village, Masindi District, Uganda where she was able to witness the effects of HIV/AIDS in Africa. That experience prompted Melissa to be a part of the prevention efforts. Her Peace Corps work also was key in her decision to pursue a Master's of Health Science and to complete her next personal accomplishment -- earning a Master's Degree from Towson University!

Melissa plans on using her personal, professional, and educational experiences to work in the field of international health within an organization or program that focuses its efforts

on HIV/AIDS prevention in developing countries. In order to accomplish this goal, she will be exploring opportunities with the federal government and large nonprofit and faith-based organizations, which have an established presence in the field. Melissa is also interested in mental health issues, specifically the way that different populations are affected and the strategies they use to cope with these issues.

For leisure, Melissa enjoys attending theatre productions and the opera. She also likes to read, travel, and sample different types of cuisine. Melissa hopes to impact the health field by being instrumental in HIV prevention for youth and women through community work, program management, and volunteering.

Congratulations to our recent Graduates

Takeshia Campbell

Nancy Willard



Tentative Spring 2009 COURSE SCHEDULE

CLASS	TITLE	INSTRUCTOR	TIME	LOCATION
HLTH 505	Drugs in our Culture	Donna Cox	Thursday 4:00PM-6:40PM	Burdick 111
HLTH 601	Cont. Issues in School Health Education	Deitra Wengert	Thursday 7:00PM-9:40PM	Burdick 110
HLTH 615	Qualitative and Quantitative Elements	Susan Radius	Tuesday 7:00PM-9:40PM	Burdick 112
HLTH 625	Research Methods	Daniel Agley	Monday 7:00PM-9:40PM	Burdick 119
HLTH 637	Leadership in the Health Care Setting	Wayne Nelson	Wednesday 7:00PM-9:40PM	Burdick 112
HLTH 639	Intro to Health Behavior and Promotion	Niya Werts	Monday 7:00PM-9:40PM	Burdick 112
HLTH 643	Health Education: Curriculum Dev. and Supervision	TBA	TBA	TBA
HLTH 645	Health Care Policy	Patricia Alt	Wednesday 7:00PM-9:40PM	Burdick 108
HLTH 649	Program Evaluation	Daniel Agley	Tuesday 7:00PM-9:40PM	Burdick 108
HLTH 651	Planning and Marketing Health in Business and Industry	Susan Casciani	Wednesday 7:00PM-9:40PM	Burdick 111
HLTH 691	Directed Readings in Health	TBA	TBA	TBA
HLTH 695	Independent Study	TBA	TBA	TBA
HLTH 785	Graduate Seminar	TBA	TBA	TBA

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SCIENCE
PROJECTED SCHEDULE OF GRADUATE COURSES**

No.	Course	Spr '09	Sum '09	Fall '09	Spr '10	Sum '10	Fall '10
501	Teaching about Sex and Drugs		X			X	
505	Drugs in Our Culture	X		X	X		X
511	Health & Later Maturity			X			X
517	Long-Term Care Ethical Problems (HCMN)	X			X		
519	Long Term Care Administration (HCMN)			X			X
541	Legal & Ethical Issues in Health Admin (HCMN)	X			X		
551	Ecological Aspects of Health			X			X
601	Problems in School Health	X	X		X	X	
603	Emerging Issues in the Health of the Nation	X			X		
615	Community Health Q & Q	X		X	X		X
617	Health Administration			X			X
618	Intro to Public Health			X			X
625	Research Methods in Health	X		X	X		X
631	Program Planning in Health Education			X			X
633	Health Care System			X			X
636	Intermediate Statistics for the Health Sciences		X			X	
637	Skills Development: Leadership in Health Care	X			X		
639	Introduction to Health Behavior	X		X	X		
643	Health Education-Dev & Sup			X			X
645	Health Care Policy	X			X		
647	Health Care Financial Management			X			X
649	Program Evaluation	X			X		
651	Plan. & Mktg. in Health Business and Industry	X			X		
530	Community Planning for an Aging Society (GERO)			X			X
567	Death, Dying & Bereavement (GERO)	X		X	X		X
559	Sociology Gerontology (SOCI)	X			X		
785	Graduate Seminar in Health	X	X	X	X	X	X

Courses that may be offered all sessions: 570-579-Health Workshops, 591/691-Health Science-Directed Readings, 695-Health Science Independent Study, 670-679 Special Topics, 689 Field Experience, 785 Graduate Seminar in Health, 880 Graduate Project, 897 Master's Thesis.
HLTH 619 "Organizing Systems of Care" will be offered during minimesters using an online format.

Fall 2008 HEALTH SCIENCE NETWORKING EVENT

In September, the Department of Health Science hosted the *Health Science Community Professional Networking Event* for graduates and undergraduates pursuing majors in health science, gerontology and health care management.

There were a total of 40 different agencies/organizations in attendance and over 50 representatives present from local hospitals, health related non-profits, elder care advocates and educators, and other health care managers and professionals.



Students were able to stroll the isles of tables of information about internship and employment opportunities, and speak one on one with representatives about their career goals and employment options. The event gave students an opportunity to network with health professionals who are actively practicing in their field of interest and who gave suggestions and guidance to students about continuing education and career building.



Overall positive feedback was received about the event from representatives, students and department faculty. Events of this type give students at all levels in their education the opportunity to observe classroom knowledge and learning as actively practiced within the community and professional environment. In addition, future employers benefit from listening to ideas and expectations of new graduates. Networking events of this type provide organizations with an incentive to make internal changes to better meet the needs of new employees, and to provide improved opportunities for organizational, personal and professional growth.

NEWS FROM THE SOCIETY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION (SOPHE)

SAVE THE DATE! 12th Annual Health Education Advocacy Summit

February 21-23, 2009 L'Enfant Plaza Hotel Washington, DC whether you're a first-time advocate or have been involved in health policy for years, there never has been a more critical time to promote the public's health. Let the Health Education Advocacy Summit help you polish your advocacy skills in just 48 hours. For more information go to www.healtheducationadvocate.org/Summit/.

SAVE THE DATE! 20th National Conference on Chronic Disease Prevention and Control, Cultivating Healthy Communities

Mark your calendars now to join us for the 20th National Conference on Chronic Disease Prevention and Control, Cultivating Healthy Communities, on February 23-25, 2009. This conference will celebrate two decades of extraordinary progress in the prevention and control of chronic diseases and offer attendees opportunities to learn about successful chronic disease prevention efforts, best practices, etc. For more information go to www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/conference/

NEWS FROM THE AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION (APHA)

HHS Answers Need for Parent-focused Adolescent Obesity Prevention Program

Valerie Scott
VScott@hagerssharp.com

Childhood and adolescent obesity rates have tripled over the last three decades. Many different physical activity, nutrition and weight loss programs are now available to address the problem.

With public health professionals and parents in mind, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office on Women's Health (OWH) developed a free, community-based adolescent obesity prevention program and toolkit called *BodyWorks*. Designed to improve family eating and activity habits, the program focuses on **parents** as role models and provides them with hands-on tools to make small, specific behavior changes to help the whole family maintain a healthy weight and prevent obesity.

The free *BodyWorks* toolkit includes how-to guides, food and fitness journals, a DVD on healthy shopping and cooking, a recipe book, weekly meal planner refrigerator magnet, and healthy shopping lists.

The BodyWorks program uses a train-the-trainer model to distribute the toolkit through community-based organizations, state health agencies, non-profit organizations, health clinics, hospitals and health care systems. Public health professionals can get trained to implement the program in one six-hour training.

Preliminary evaluation results show that *BodyWorks* has a positive effect on parents' nutrition and physical activity and that parents are bringing this back to their families.

To learn more about *BodyWorks* and the evaluation, stop by booth 1224 at APHA's 2008 Annual Meeting & Exposition in San Diego, go to www.womenshealth.gov/bodyworks or e-mail Valerie Scott at bodyworks@hagerssharp.com.

Nutrition and Cancer Prevention Research Practicum

Elaine Trujillo, MS, RD
trujille@mail.nih.gov

It is my pleasure to inform you about the 2009 "Nutrition and Cancer Prevention Research Practicum" scheduled for March 16-20 at the National Cancer Institute facility at 6130 Executive Boulevard in Rockville, Md., the NIH Clinical Center and the USDA Beltsville Human Nutrition Center. This week-long educational offering provides specialized instruction about the role of diet and bioactive food components as modifiers of cancer incidence and tumor behavior. The intent of the Practicum is to introduce participants to research currently being conducted in the field, expose them to research opportunities available in the field, and lay the foundation for future researchers in diet and cancer prevention. The Practicum is provided at no cost. No travel, hotel or per diem funds are available for participants. Since space is limited, application must be submitted by Dec. 31, 2008. Please share with those who may be interested. For additional information please Elaine Trujillo at trujille@mail.nih.gov.