

Board Meeting
May 14, 2014

ESTABLISH THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN REHABILITATION SCIENCES,
COLLEGE OF APPLIED HEALTH SCIENCES, CHICAGO

Action: Establish the Doctor of Philosophy in Rehabilitation Sciences, College of Applied Health Sciences

Funding: No New Funding Required

The Chancellor, University of Illinois at Chicago, and Vice President, University of Illinois with the advice of the Chicago Senate, Graduate College, and the College of Applied Health Sciences, recommends the establishment of the Doctor of Philosophy in Rehabilitation Sciences.

Rehabilitation Sciences encompasses the scientific study of the rehabilitation, assessment, reduction, and adaptation to physical, cognitive, and psychosocial aspects of disability, chronic health conditions, and functioning. A relatively new and rapidly growing area of doctoral study, the Doctor of Philosophy in Rehabilitation Sciences is designed to educate students to become translational and applied scientist-educators. The overarching purpose of the degree is to address the significant and increasing faculty shortage in rehabilitation-related disciplines: particularly, Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy which have professional practice doctorates, but not research-intensive doctoral degrees.

Currently Rehabilitation Sciences exists as an informal course of study within the existing Ph.D. in Kinesiology, Nutrition, and Rehabilitation. Since its inception in 2008 three students have completed and graduated, and twelve students are currently enrolled. However, there are no programs structured and no corresponding degrees titled in this way at peer institutions. An independent program in Rehabilitation Sciences will assist in the recruitment of prospective students and increase the ability of faculty to apply for certain types of funding.

The Doctor of Philosophy in Rehabilitation Sciences includes coursework that addresses the intersection between physiology, biomechanics, technology, and the psychological and social aspects of disability, including critical issues of human diversity and cultural competency in health and rehabilitation. The degree will require a minimum of 96 hours beyond the baccalaureate, including 22 to 28 hours of theoretical, statistics and data analysis, and methodological courses in rehabilitation science and practice; and a minimum of 18 hours of interdisciplinary courses that focus on the intersection between rehabilitation science research and the broader domain of applied health sciences. In addition, the degree has a mentoring model approach that offers opportunities for intensive apprenticeship experiences in preparation for what is required for the doctoral dissertation, at least 32 hours of dissertation research.

The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes, the General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs concurs with this recommendation. The University Senates Conference has indicated that no further Senate jurisdiction is involved.

The President of the University recommends approval. This action is subject to further review and approval by the Illinois Board of Higher Education.