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Introducing “Preservice Pipeline”—Why This Column, Why Now

Bob Knipe

Preservice teachers are the lifeblood and the future of health education and physical education. In a world that often tells those seeking the next step in life to shy away from a career in education, the stewards of the field—including those operating in universities, professional organizations, and in K-12 schools—are recruiting the next generation into the best profession there is. Once hooked, it is then up to the field to not just retain preservice teachers but to anoint them as ambassadors of the field. This process needs a clear pipeline of formal preparation programs, but it also requires agents and opportunities outside of the curriculum that open preservice teachers’ hearts and spirits to fully commit to the profession, their future students, and the field as a whole.

SHAPE America – Society of Health and Physical Educators, as an organization (as well as individuals operating in official and unofficial capacities), has a rich tradition of fostering and modeling both a love for our field and for the undergraduate students it serves. Some SHAPE America examples of supporting college students include awards like Major of the Year; the SHAPE America Student Special Interest Group; sessions each year at the annual National Convention; the production and promotion of the National Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) and Health Education Teacher Education (HETE) Standards (SHAPE America, 2017, 2018); the establishment of the Undergraduate Student Leadership Network; inclusion in the annual SPEAK Out! Day; and the opportunity to be a student representative at the district level. One of the most intense efforts from the past was the National Student Leadership Summit held each year with undergraduates from around the country. These opportunities have socialized students into the

profession not as passive consumers but as active members in the co-construction of our organization’s and the field’s future.

Purpose of the Preservice Pipeline Column

Future professionals learn to lead through a variety of professional opportunities, and it is time that we provide a forum here in *JOPERD* dedicated to their development and an opportunity for them to lead as authors and coauthors. In the past, initiatives to publish preservice teacher-oriented content, as well as provide a less daunting entry point to authorship, was part of the *JOPERD* tradition. In both the Students Speak and Speaking of Students standing columns, column editors, faculty, and students authored articles that sought to support the development of preservice teachers. These two initiatives have not graced the pages of *JOPERD* in quite a while. More recently, articles with preservice teachers as the intended audience were published, but it is hoped that formalizing this focus on a more frequent basis will create a more solid pipeline for future professionals to become avid consumers of professional journal articles as well as contributors through writing with classmates and faculty. Future professionals will know that they have at least one article per issue that will be written just for them, both in content and writing style.

This space will address ways in which PETE and HETE programs and preservice teachers can maximize professional preparation opportunities, as well as be successful. As the column progresses, we will have a compilation of experiential and evidence-informed articles that students can read and put into practice right away. As the number of voices expands, the diversity of perspectives and contexts will allow college

students to see themselves and their future in these articles.

Intended Audience and Authors

Preservice teachers are the primary audience for the Preservice Pipeline column. Many times, undergraduates (from freshman to seniors) undervalue what they have to offer. The value of college students writing articles is that fellow college students from around the country can relate to and learn from the ways they see and approach their growth as a future teacher. Those in support roles, like university faculty and state organization leadership, will also be able to better understand the lived experience of today’s college students, which will inform them on how they can best support their students’ development. College students should keep in mind that they are the only experts on what it means to be a preservice teacher in this moment in history. Therefore, the more that is shared, the more those in support roles can learn to be responsive to the desires and needs of college students as they navigate the complexities of becoming educators. The secondary audience for this column is those who participate in serving these future professionals, including PETE and HETE faculty members, field supervisors and cooperating teachers, state and district leaders, and national and state affiliate organizations’ leadership.

Submissions to this column will fall into two main categories that parallel the intended audience. The first category follows a “for-us-by-us” format in which preservice teachers will work with their classmates and/or faculty to share their lived experiences. Within this category some potential topics could include taking advantage of coursework and field experiences, building relationships with

university faculty, participating in majors clubs or advocacy, professional involvement, professional communication, and other aspects of the day-to-day experience of being a college student.

The second category would come from those who have the privilege of working with preservice teachers in the roles just mentioned. These articles can address a wide variety of topics including, but not limited to, professional identity; access, belonging, and community; taking advantage of the sciences (i.e., anatomy, physiology, biomechanics, motor learning); and other topics that can help preservice teachers tap into the potential of their preparation programs. One example can be translational in nature, whereby research findings on professional preparation can be boiled down to actionable strategies that future professionals and their faculty can put into practice. Another article type could be sharing about potential opportunities for professional growth within school districts and professional organizations.

Finally, this column opens the opportunity for current professionals to share about their lived experience as undergraduates, with actionable steps to avoid common pitfalls or to take advantage of aspects of their preparation that helped set them up for success during college and into their early career.

Call to Action

To bring this new column to life, please share it with preservice teachers and PETE/HETE faculty. Furthermore, we invite *you* to submit articles—whether as a solo author or in collaboration with a faculty member, colleague, or fellow preservice teacher. Authors are encouraged to keep their manuscripts (article drafts) brief (no more than six double-spaced pages, excluding references), written in a professional yet conversational tone—which is less formal than the academic writing often seen in professional journals. To execute this type of writing you can

imagine that you are speaking to preservice teachers or faculty in a professional setting, such as at a conference or at a university. Therefore, when you are writing you will connect what you are sharing to “evidence” (professional knowledge), but it is secondary to your voice and lived experience.

We look forward to reading your contribution to the Preservice Pipeline, with hopes that submissions will represent both small and large colleges and universities, as well as preservice teachers and seasoned professionals. Your contributions have the potential to spark a fire within future professionals and to help them affirm their calling as health education and physical education teachers. Here is to the start of a *JOPERD* tradition that has the potential to reach deep into the present and far into the future of our field!

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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Bob Knipe (kniper1@southernct.edu) is an assistant professor in the Department of Health & Movement Sciences at Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven, CT, and the column editor of JOPERD's new Preservice Pipeline department.

Submissions Welcome!

Preservice Pipeline features brief (no more than six double-spaced pages, excluding references) papers with preservice teachers or teacher educators as the intended audience. Possible authors can include, but are not limited to, current preservice teachers, physical education teacher education (PETE) and health education teacher education (HETE) faculty, a combination of faculty and student, and others who work with preservice teachers. Submissions should merge experiential and evidence-based knowledge, and topics covered should address ways in which PETE/HETE programs or preservice teachers can maximize professional preparation opportunities. Submissions should be sent directly to the department editor, Robert Knipe, via email at kniper1@southernct.edu. Please include “JOPERD (Author Name)” in the subject line.