



**NATIONAL
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
SCIENCE AND PROTECTION
ACCREDITATION COUNCIL
(EHAC)**

EHAC Annual Meeting Minutes

July 11th-July 12th, 2015

The Renaissance Orlando at SeaWorld Hotel
Orlando, FL

July 11th, 2015

1.0 Call to Order and Introductions 8:30 am(Murphy)

Present: Staff: Yalonda Sindé, Executive Director; Kaitlin Underwood, EHAC Accreditation Coordinator

Council Members: Alan Dellapenna, Anna Jeng, Carolyn Harvey, Chuck Treser, David Gilkey, Jason Lewis, Jim Dingman, Lal Mian, Lynn Burgess, Milton Morris, Patrick Bohan, Priscilla Oliver, Roy Kroeger, Sandra Long, Sharron LaFollette, Tania Busch, Thomas Turco, Timothy Murphy, Tom Deem, Wil Hayes

1.3 Approval of Agenda (Murphy) Sharron moves to approve, Seconded by Jim, motion carries

3.4 Annual Update of Programs (Sindé) Yalonda gave a highlight of the 2014-2015 academic year EHAC Annual Report. The full report is available on the home page of the EHAC website: www.ehacoffice.org. Anna asks what the reason is for the drastic increase in programs? Yalonda answers AEHAP Outreach. Tom Deem asks how many programs are unaccredited in the US that could become accredited? There are 210 potential programs, meaning that there are a lot of possibilities to grow

David Dyjack, the new director of NEHA, attended EHAC annual meeting: There is a groundswell of interest in public health, and David asks, how does that translate to environmental health? NEHA is interested in working with EHAC to advance opportunities in the profession. Their aim is to create opportunities to remove invisibility from environmental health. NEHA will be assertively moving to the public domain. Chuck states that we have always been concerned that there isn't a strong tie in between NEHA and the outside professional world. There is a shortage of leadership and the field is dependent on young people to move in. David Gilkey states that an initiative to enhance the relationship between public health and environmental health needs to be created. We have to do more or else public health will overtake environmental health. Folks working in public health forget that environmental health is the foundation of public health and the history of public health began with environmental health. Milton states that he is the director at Benedict College and states, even though it is a relatively small college, other programs are required to take course from their EH program. What are ways that we can encourage students in other majors to become part of NEHA? Often students think of NEHA as strictly environmental health. He would like some sort of



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collaboration at NEHA's level. David Dyjack says we need to create some sort of excitement to bring students to NEHA. Registration cost is very low, but students still are not coming. Alan said NEHA used to have student chapters, and we need to again create a tighter relationship with students so that they are interested in becoming a part of NEHA. Lynn states that he needs funding to get students to NEHA. If NEHA can create a poster session, then Lynn can get funding to bring them. There was also a discussion about making abstracts for poster submission to NEHA for students due later in the academic year. David said this was something that could be implemented immediately.

3.2 Financial Reports (Sindé) Yalonda presented the proposed budget for 2015-2016. Yalonda suggested that we think about getting back our ASPA membership. It is \$5000 and we do have some money in reserves. There being no further questions on the budget, Sharron moved to approve budget, Tania seconded motion. A discussion ensues regarding whether or not we should rejoin ASPA. While it was generally agreed that EHAC benefitted from ASPA membership, Chuck proposed that we approve the budget as submitted and that Yalonda can write a proposal detailing what we could get out of ASPA membership. The Board could then consider adding this to the budget at one of our meetings. Tim called for a vote. Motion carried unanimously.

4.0 Dual Enrollment and Integrated Bachelor's and Master's Policy Discussion There was a discussion of dual enrollment courses and integrated bachelor's and master's programs. Tim stated that some universities are looking at dual enrollment. From the university standpoint, what would we say as an accreditation body if we took courses at the master's level and allowed undergrad students to take them for their EHAC accredited program? Should we leave this up to programs? Sharron states the question needs to be "what in our accreditation guidelines needs to be changed in order to allow these programs to have dual enrollment classes?" Sharron gave her presentation for UIS's accelerated or integrated BS/MS degree guidelines. Chuck stated that this is more of an issue for the graduate programs. If they are in a 4+1 program, do they meet our criteria for accreditation as a master's program? Tim stated we are not looking for a vote today, just a discussion. Sharron asks, should we pursue this further? Tim asks if the grad and undergrad chairs should look into this and make up suggestions? It was agreed that this is worth the time and effort to look into this.

Online Courses Policy Discussion There was a discussion regarding whether universities should be able to "borrow" online courses from accredited programs in order to become accredited themselves. Tania asked, what if a university folds? How are we going to assure that the quality is what we expect from when we signed the MOU? Tim stated, from an accreditation body standpoint, do we need to change policies? Sharron stated that we



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already have quality control in place. Lynn stated that the problem is, do we as an organization want to come in and help these schools by giving them these programs for free to get them up and running? Tim stated this is not the issue; the issue is whether or not they can take courses from other EHAC accredited programs. Tim asked, is it the consensus of the body that our guidelines allow this? Most of the council said yes. Tim asked, do we want AEHAP to tell programs that if they are missing a certain course, they could borrow the course from EHAC accredited programs? We want to foster program building. We don't want to advertise this necessarily, but if a program asks if this is possible, we could offer it. We don't want them to piece together entire programs from different schools. Programs should use this as a stepping stone, not a solution. Jim moved to appoint the graduate chair and undergraduate chair(s) and any other council members to research this and come back to us at the next meeting, seconded by Wil, motion passed

5.2 University of Wisconsin-Stout (UG)

Site Visit Report: Priscilla and Lynn give their presentation, Dr. McGovern attempted to address these concerns. Sharron asks, "Do you have an introduction to environmental health course?" Dr. McGovern states that every year they list suggestions for change and make changes. They are open to suggestions and have added courses for this year. Sharron asks, "When will these changes show in the catalog?" Dr. McGovern states it should be available now. They do have students in the new courses now. Pat stated that the guidelines call for the program administrator to have an advanced degree in a relevant academic discipline, pertinent experience relevant to environmental health science and be full time. Dr. McGovern answers that UW-Stout has a concentration coordinator that acts as a program director. Right now it is a physiologist on sabbatical. Dr. McGovern is currently standing as the concentration coordinator. Pat asks if they have a full time faculty member who is 100% appointed to environmental health. Dr. McGovern is that faculty member, it is determined that he should be our program contact. Alan asks if UW-Stout is committed to address these issues outlined by the site visit team? Dr. McGovern states that they really want accreditation and want their program to take off. Tom Deem asks for him to speak on enrollment and the competition between UW Stout and UW Eau Claire. Dr. McGovern states that they will need to cooperate with Eau Claire. UW-Stout is a growing program for Environmental Health. Since they are growing, they are not concerned about the viability of their program.

The council went into closed session

Action: The Council took a vote there were no abstentions. The motion passed unanimously.



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3.4.2 AEHAP Update (Sindé) Yalonda gave the update on AEHAP (please see attached PDF)

7.0 Nomination Committee Report/Slate for Officers (Long)

Sandra Long presented the new and re-elected Board of Directors

Practitioners: Jim Dingman (Treasurer)

Academics: Tim Murphy (Chair), Anna Jeng (Secretary), Lynn Burgess (Co-Undergraduate Chair), David Gilkey (Co-Undergraduate Chair), Sharron LaFollette (Graduate Chair)

Sandra Long agreed to serve as the chair of nomination committee

4.1 Undergraduate and Graduate Report (Treser, Burgess, and LaFollette) Chuck gave the update on undergrad programs, Sharron gave the graduate program update. (Please see attached PDFs)

7.1 Visit from NEHA President (Bob Custard): Incoming NEHA President Bob Custard gave his perspective on what lies ahead for NEHA. There is a lot of transitioning at NEHA and NEHA reinventing itself. EHAC is important in this because students are very important to NEHA. NEHA has an unwavering commitment to the scholarship program and is very committed to the internship program. Bob stated that every student should be a member of a student environmental health association, every graduate should be a NEHA member, and every student should take the REHS exam.

7.2 COSTEP Update (Jill Shugart) Jill Shugart gives COSTEP Presentation (Please see attached PDF)

8.0 Fort Valley State University

Site Visit Report: Tim gave the site visit presentation. Dr. McCommon responded by stating that technically they are a Master's in Science program. Sharron asked how the program dealt with the research methods prior to the research methods class? Dr. McCommon said it was done in individual classes but they wanted to standardize it. They want everyone to have the same quality of research methods. Milton stated, FVSU has a strong online component, and asked Dr. McCommon to speak to that issue? Dr. McCommon stated they are web hybrid, not fully online. They come in for several days throughout the semester and for the final exam. It enables students to get a degree without disrupting their lives. Milton asked if they have to maintain a certain GPA? The answer was yes, they have to maintain a 3.0 GPA. Sharron stated that the catalog doesn't imply that students have to have a science background to get into the



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program, while EHAC accreditation requires it. Dr. McCommon stated that they can address that. Every applicant is reviewed and most students have a science background. Sharron asks if all faculty have environmental health experience. Dr. McCommon does and Dr. Samples does. There is a faculty member who is a microbiologist but that faculty member will not be the chair. Anna asked about the backgrounds of the advisory committee and if they have a background in Environmental Health? Almost everyone on the board has a public health background and several members have an environmental health background.

The council went into closed session.

Action: The Council took a vote there were no abstentions. The motion passed unanimously.

7.3 Acknowledgements (Murphy) Tim distributed certificates as a thank you to outgoing

council members and council members who served as site visitors and program reviewers. Thank you gift cards to the Board of Directors were distributed as well.

7.4 Announcements: Priscilla asked for everyone's support of her run for second vice president of NEHA.

Other announcements:

- a. We are going to plan on 3 days for the EHAC Annual Meeting next year due to a large number of programs up for accreditation. If we only need two days, then we will change accordingly after the site visits.
- b. Central Michigan University currently has conditional accreditation. They were supposed to have met their conditions by the 2015 EHAC Annual Meeting. The council feels that CMU has not adequately addressed the conditions. Lynn states that he proposes to give them one more year to prove they met their conditions. We will send them a letter detailing what they need to become accredited and they will have until the 2016 annual meeting to meet these conditions.
- c. The undergraduate co-chair asked all council members to provide information in the tables indicating their availability for site visits during the coming year cycle.

9.0 Adjournment

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The Council reconvened on 12 July as the Undergraduate program guidelines review conference. President Murphy opened the conference with a welcome to members just joining the meeting and a few announcements. He then turned the meeting over to the Undergraduate program co-chairs.

Council Proposal Forms: UG Review Committee responded to the 6 proposal forms submitted by other members of the council

1.0 Review of pages 1-2 (Treser & Bohan): Chuck gave suggested changes in presentation, no issues with suggested changes

2.0 Table 1 Review (Treser & Bohan): Chuck went over suggested changes in presentation. Tom Deem asked if we have a checklist for interviewing members of external advisory committee? No, we do not, but this may be a good idea. We need to make sure that the program is speaking with the external advisory committee and looking into their suggestions.

3.0 Review of Pages 3-6 (Treser & Bohan) Chuck went over his suggested changes. There were no questions, comments or suggestions

4.0 Rewrite of Table 2 (Treser & Bohan)

Table 2.A:

Discussion: Tim asked if we would be better off taking off 6 courses and mandating specific areas? Chuck responded that the reviewers, site visitors and the council have the flexibility and responsibility to determine whether a specific course falls within the definition of each science. We cannot dictate to a university what they call their courses. Sharron says that microbiology doesn't need to be on the list, but we could add geology or soil sciences. Sharron reads the definition of "natural sciences" which states these are: physics, chemistry, biology, and geology. Chuck says he has no problem taking out microbiology and putting in geology.

A major issue for the natural sciences requirement is clarifying whether we are talking about credit hours or courses. Programs must meet the minimum number of credit hours in each of natural science, but remaining credit hours can be made up of additional hours beyond the minimum. We need to make sure not to penalize universities by making them count credits in a way that would be a disadvantage to them. Lynn asked, do we want to expand the definition of natural sciences to additional sciences? Lynn also doesn't see why we can't have an additional physics course as well. Chuck stated that programs can decide what they want to include

Council takes a 15 minute break



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Tim states that he and Sharron were speaking outside, the goal of EHAC is to put out the best professionals we can. Sharron's comment was, "Do we want breadth of natural sciences or do we just want to count credits?" Tim asked to hear from practitioners about the breadth of the foundational courses. Is this good? What are the students missing? Students are lacking in communication skills. Tania is concerned that we continue to make Environmental Health a less science based degree. How much do we want to continue to decrease the sciences? We need to make sure that students come out of the program with the ability to get credentials and certifications. Jim suggested making the REHS exam part of the curriculum so that students come out of their program with a certification. The consensus is that people think this would be great, but their universities don't have the budget to pay full price for administering the REHS exam. Tom asked what the impact of accreditation guidelines retroactively to programs? Chuck responded that programs are accredited with the guidelines in force when they became accredited. When programs go up for reaccreditation after new guidelines have been officially adopted by the Council, the reaccreditation will be according to the new guidelines. By a vote, everyone approved the changes up to this point

Discussion: Jim stated that we shouldn't use the word "shall" if we are wanting to call it guidelines. Replace it with should or will. Tania stated that we should change the word guidelines to criteria.

Action: Tania moved to change Undergraduate Guidelines to Undergraduate Criteria, but then she withdrew the motion. Jim moved to change the title from Undergraduate Guidelines to Undergraduate Requirements, David seconded the motion, motion carries unanimously

Table 2.A. Foundation Courses No change in the communications, mathematics, general education, or electives

Table 2.B. Core EH Knowledge Areas: Everyone was in favor of no change and the listed interpretation. For Criterion 2 there was a change in title to "cross cutting knowledge areas". Tom asks why it states "community Environmental Health Program"? Council made the decision to drop the word "community"

Environmental Health Technical Areas: What do we mean by most? No minimum number of courses or hours are specified. Tania asks why they flipped technical area list with in depth study list? The council thinks of this as a major change which could hurt programs. Chuck stated the rationale behind it was that the 6 areas were the traditional areas of EH practice. There is some flexibility that a program can petition to have another area added. This would make sure they came out with in depth study in four of the major areas and they are potentially being more prescriptive. Sharron states we should keep the new definition but reverse the charts.



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Tom Turco says that the language is all “should”. We need to change this to “shall”. Jim states that we should just put everything together in a long list, say that the programs need 4 in depth, and exposure to the majority of the other areas. Then we would need to define in depth. The in depth interpretation would be the definition that is in the working edits. Tania asked to further discuss adding climate change as a topic, not just a parentheses in global environmental health. She stated that it is much larger than this. The council decided to add global climate change and health impact as a separate topic. Council decided that for the description of environmental health technical areas, we will write “students shall have been exposed to at least 11 of the following 20 and the students shall, at a minimum have in depth study of at least 4 additional areas of the 20.”

Table 2.D EH practice: Alan asked how problem-based learning works? It opens it up to students doing research in house, rather than actually going out with practitioners, which is an issue because they aren’t getting the real world experience. While this can be beneficial to certain students, we need a caveat that encourages the student to go outside the facility. The changes were approved

5.0 Review of pages 9-13 (Treser & Bohan): No change

6.0 Review of pages 13-15 (Treser & Bohan): Changed address to EHAC’s current address

Next steps: Workgroup will make any necessary changes agreed upon here to the draft. Staff will distribute the revised draft to the council and give them 30 days to respond. Staff will distribute the guidelines to the programs and give them 30 days to respond. If there are no objections, the revised guidelines will be placed on the agenda for the 2016 meeting and if adopted go into effect for the next review cycle. Pat asks, is there a need for a conference call where the programs can join and ask questions if they want to? We could make a survey monkey question and let the programs answer if they want to discuss it via conference call. Tim asks what we should do if we start going internationally? Chuck states we haven’t gone down this road in a while. It is worth considering and we should possibly get a committee who could propose changes. A signup sheet was passed around, committee members are Lal Mian, Tania Busch Isaksen, Priscilla Oliver, Jim Dingman.

7.0 Conference was adjourned



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To Do List:

1. Office will send Sharron's Accelerated Master's presentation to everyone in the group
2. Undergraduate Co-chairs and Graduate Chair will look into integrated Bachelor's and Master's degree programs and discuss what in our guidelines need to change to make this type of degree one which could be accredited
3. Graduate Chair and Undergraduate Co-Chairs and any other council members who are interested will research online courses and the ability for other schools to "borrow" these courses for the purpose of accreditation, and come back with their findings at the next meeting
4. Office will need to update the accreditation schedule on the front page of the EHAC website
5. Send letters to the 8 programs up for re-accreditation and ask if they will be reapplying
6. Write a letter for University of Wisconsin-Stout detailing everything that they need to do in order to go from pre-accreditation to reapply for full accreditation in two years.
7. Write a letter for Tim giving CMU another year to meet conditions. State that if they do not meet those conditions by 2016, they will lose accreditation.
8. Send Jill Shugart's presentation
9. Create a checklist for interviewing members of external advisory committee
10. Create a survey on SurveyMonkey asking programs if they would like a conference call to discuss changes to the guidelines
11. Create a committee to create a glossary for the Undergraduate Guidelines