



# National Environmental Health Science and Protection Accreditation Council (EHAC)

## EHAC Board Meeting Minutes – January 28, 2020 – 10am Pac. Time

**Board Members Present:** Tania Busch Isaksen, Don Williams, Chyla Hunter, Mike Fletcher, Jason Finley and Sharron LaFollette

**Board Members Absent:**

**EHAC Staff:** Leslie Mitchell

**1.0 Meeting Called to order at:** 10:06am

**2.0 Standing Items**

**2.1 Approval of Agenda:** Agenda approved

**2.2 Approval of Dec. 5, 2019 Meeting Minutes.**

- December 5, 2019 meeting minutes approved.

**3.0 Reports**

**3.1 Chairperson's Report:**

- Dean Sheila Pressley's passing: should EHAC respond/acknowledge her death/EH contribution in some way?
  - Williams commented that a number of ideas for how to honor Dr. Pressley are floating around including naming the AAS scholarship for NEHA participants after her. Williams suggested waiting to see how memorials develop to make a decision on how EHAC will respond.
  - Finley will be attending the visitation and will let Mitchell know what kinds of ideas for honoring her legacy are being considered.
  - Possibilities to consider are a contribution to ECU's EH department or a scholarship fund or the AAS scholarship if they end up naming it after her.
  - **ACTION: Mitchell will research the outward facing materials that ECU is using to announce Dr. Pressley's passing and determine if there is a desire to share the announcement of her passing more broadly. Other options for acknowledging her contribution to the EH field will be considered and decided upon at the next EHAC Board meeting, or by email.**

**3.2 Treasurer's Report:** Mike Fletcher

- **Current financials:**
  - Balance Sheet – no questions
  - Revenue and Loss Sheet – one outstanding dues payment from UW Osh Kosh, which mistakenly wrote their check to AEHAP.
  - Revenue and Loss Comparison Sheet:
    - Current financials reflect budgeted amounts. Finley observed that it appears that EHAC will barely break even for 2019-2020 and expressed concern that the Board and Council need to work proactively to address increases in the cost of operations (related to EHAC's new employer status). Finley suggested doing an analysis of current and future financial status in

order to project the need for additional funds to support EHAC well into the future. Busch Isaksen commented that this is a valid concern and that Mitchell had stressed the importance of raising annual fees in order to allow these fees to support the organization and for the reaccreditation and initial application fees to act as a buffer. She also pointed out that reaccreditation fees will change from \$500 to \$1000 dollars in Oct. 2020.

- LaFollette submitted that EHAC is a nonprofit and therefore only has to balance the budget – not make a profit. Finley emphasized the need for consistency and ability to address inevitable cost increases.
- If adjustments to fee/dues are deemed necessary, Council will need to be appraised of the situation and Program Directors prepared well in advance for changes.
- **Action: For next Board meeting:**
  - Mitchell will prepare budget projections against current spending – adjusting for what is known as of March 2020 (e.g. there will be no fee related to an initial accreditation application, annual meeting registration cost and hotel stay).
  - Mitchell will prepare some projections that include cost of living increases (employee costs) increases over next 5 years, to support a budgeting discussion and determine whether dues/fees need to increase to mitigate increased costs.

### 3.3 Undergraduate Program Report – Vice Chair Finley

- **East Central University** – Finley thanked Board members for participation and explained that while a number of issues have been highlighted in ECU's Self-study, EHAC accreditation review process is well prepared to address the situation. Fletcher asked if ECU has been provided with the Self-study or alerted to concerns regarding the Self-study. Mitchell replied no and Finley explained that Fletcher as Site Visitor would be the one to communicate these concerns in the preparatory period prior to the Site Visit. Finley emphasized that this is a team effort as well, and Fletcher should feel free to ask for help with the process if needed. Finley suggested that Fletcher should communicate problems with the Self-study to PD Dr. Bay as they determine Site Visit logistics.
  - This issue sparked a conversation regarding the need to formalize communication between Site Visitors and Program Directors. It was pointed out that LaFollette does a great job of communicating needs and concerns to Program Directors during the logistics and prep. process of arranging the Site Visit schedule.
    - Busch Isaksen also pointed out the necessity for Site Visitors to read the Self-study reviews far in advance of conducting Site Visits in order to address any concerns prior to the Visit and suggested that Visitors should agree to have read reviews by the end of January.
    - LaFollette pointed out that communicating concerns with Self-studies should be standard operating procedure for the Site Visitor during the preparation and Site Visit logistics phase. Sharron's list of preparation for going to the site visit team. Board will formalize this process and add this to the Site Visit process. Busch Isaksen suggested that formalizing this operating procedure would be particularly helpful for reaccrediting programs that have been accredited for a long time and may inadvertently receive more superficial review.
    - **ACTION – Mitchell will work with LaFollette to formalize communication between Site Visitors and Program Directors during the preparatory period between Self-study Review submissions (Dec. 31) and development of Site Visit dates and schedules.**

### 3.4 Graduate Program Report – Vice Chair LaFollette

- **University of Illinois – Dr. Egbe Egiebor (new Program Director)**
  - **Motion:** LaFollette motioned to approve Dr. Egbe Egiebor as the new Program Director at University of Illinois, Springfield's MPH EH Program.

- **Second:** Fletcher
- **Discussion:** none
- **Vote:** Approved unanimously
  
- **Graduate guidelines: Sharron LaFollette**
  - LaFollette is heading the Graduate Guidelines Committee and reported that she is having difficulty getting any response from Committee members. LaFollette had the following updates/questions/comments for the Board:
    - Should the Graduate Guidelines title be changed “Requirements” rather than “Guidelines”? Finley enquired as to the original reason for changing UG Guidelines to “Requirements”. This was due to objections from University program that questioned the authority/weight of “guidelines” vs. “requirements”. Finley also strongly emphasized the importance of consistency and noted that there is inconsistency in entitling UG criteria “Requirements” and Grad criteria “Guidelines” – this breeds confusion. Finley enquired as to whether it would be advisable to use either one or the other – guidelines or requirements.
    - Graduate competencies: LaFollette strongly urged the Board to move to requiring graduate programs to specifically identify how identified Graduate Guidelines competencies are being met. (E.G. outline program learning objectives, how students are being taught/learning the objectives and how student knowledge of objectives is being evaluated and assessed. LaFollette pointed out that this is required for CEPH accreditation. Busch Isaksen agreed that while the CEPH process is onerous, it is also helpful and important. Moreover, as LaFollette pointed as well, once this process has been established, it is not difficult to maintain. Busch Isaksen explained that in CEPH accreditation, all competencies claimed in curriculum must have an assessment tool. LaFollette added that programs also need to evaluate whether some or all of their students are meeting the competencies and if not all, they must develop a way to address this deficiency. Bush Isaksen commented that EHAC can definitely learn from CEPH’s practices.
      - LaFollette suggested creating a document that outlines, up front, standards and exactly how and programs will be evaluated – an expectations document. This will include the identification of competencies and learning objectives conveyed by course syllabi. Course mapping will be a requirement in the Self-study to satisfy curriculum competencies. EHAC will provide an example of how to demonstrate competencies as well as a proper course mapping effort.
      - Finley offered to assist LaFollette on the committee if necessary and noted that he will emphasize consistency in policy documents in any of his efforts. Steve Johns is on the committee and LaFollette will try to contact him again in the near future. Mitchell suggested Tom Deem might be helpful, as well.
    - Eliminating redundancy: LaFollette recommend taking anything out of Guidelines document that is redundant with UG Requirements and using the Governing Policy Document to be the residence of items applicable to both UG and Graduate programs. There is no need for repetition as it causes headaches when multiple documents have to be updated.
      - Finley objected to having only a master document, proposing that the more and different ways that information is available, the stronger the likelihood that it will be read and absorbed. Also Finley reiterated that consistency is crucial.
      - Busch Isaksen suggested having one web page that has all necessary accreditation documents in one place for easy access and to remove duplicate documents from other pages to avoid unnecessary updating and create foster consistency. She also suggested putting all pertinent accreditation documents into a booklet form that can be emailed to Council as well as Program Directors and Degree Programs interested in Accreditation.

- **Action: LaFollette will connect with Steve Johnson and Jason Finley and Tania Bush Isaksen to begin reviewing the Grad. Guidelines and developing proposed revisions for Board and Council consideration.**

- **Fort Valley State University:**

- FVSU met conditions by providing a live link to their current course catalog with updated information that addresses the conditions placed on their program in 2015. They are up for reaccreditation (end of their 6-year term) in 2021.
- Mitchel has sent a letter of congratulations to FVSU as of January 2020.

### 3.5 Office Report:

- **Accreditation/Recruitment:**

- Programs Interested in Accreditation:
  - Worcester State colleges via Worcester Dept. of Public Health – Board members have met with WDPH representatives and will get back to them with a mentor(s) recommendation to help with development of an accredited curriculum that could be shared across three local/state schools in Worcester.
  - CSU Dominguez Hills – they have submitted a proposed program (that meets EHAC Graduate Guidelines) to their administration. I have asked for an update as of Jan. 27, 2020.
  - Salish Kootenai College ?
  - Jamaica Inst. of Tech. ?
  - Tuskegee ???
- Re-accreditation:
- Extensions:
  - None requested for 2019-2020
- Site Visits:
  - East Central University – April 9-10 – Mike Fletcher and Tom Deem
  - Missouri Southern State U. – March 5-6 – Gary Brown and Don Williams
  - Old Dominion University – March 18-19 – Sharron LaFollette and Mark Houser
  - West Chester University – March 26-27 – Tim Murphy and Wendell Moore
  - California State University, Northridge – March 5-6 – Tania Busch Isaksen, Jason Lewis and Swat Kethireddy (trainee).
- Conditions:
  - East Tennessee State U. (UG) – conditions due to be reviewed in 2020. I have sent a request for an update to Kurt Maier and he is working on a reply as of Jan. 25, 2020.
- Extensions:
  - None requested for 2019-2020

- **Program Director Changes:**

- University of Illinois, Springfield Egbe Egiebor
- East Central University – Michael Bay
- IUPUI – Max Moreno

- **Newsletter:**

- Feb. 15 Publish Date

- **New Topics for Consideration:**

- Sharing/creating a Sharing Network for accred. EH programs to go to classes they need to meet accreditation requirements but do not have the capacity to host in their program.
  - The company name is Acadeum – <http://www.acadeum.com>
- EH Career Path Model – similar to what the ARMY provides for its people.

- **NEHIP Applications** – conducted review of 10 applications for NEHA

- **EH Coalition Report:**
  - I am working with the EH Workforce and Education Committee to develop a Survey to determine if EH employers are
- **AEHAP Board Meeting Rpt.**
  - **Graduate Credential –**
    - discussion and 2 volunteers for Committee to create the credential
    - this is basically an effort to raise the visibility and illuminate the value of an EHAC accredited graduate. As written now, there are no requirements suggested other than a 2.0 GPA. It is simply a recognition of graduation from an EHAC program. BUT – this certificate would also be backed by AAS
    - **AEHAP would like 2 volunteers from EHAC to serve on a committee to develop this effort.**
    - There was suggestion that AEHAP should focus efforts on developing training programs/education that would help EHAC graduates pass the REHS exam upon graduation
  - **SEHA –** programs that attend the webinar
    - Montana State U.
    - Univ. of Washington
    - Baylor University
    - East Carolina University (UG/G)
    - Western Carolina Univ.
- **NSF Scholarship:**
  - Only 1 NSF applicant – Clint and Derek decided to award the scholarship this year to the line applicant. They changed the internship a bit this year putting the onus on the student to create an internship with a local public health dept. – rather than just completing research on an NSF related topic. They feel this may have deterred students from applying and will likely go back to a version of the historic format for 2021.
- **Vonage Phone Line to Google Voice?**
  - In order to port number to Google – the phone line might be down for 10+ days \
  - Alternatively - could simply start a new Google Voice number and simply cancel the current Vonage number/account.
  - **ACTION: Mitchell will discontinue Vonage and switch to Google Voice with a 10 day or so down time for the office phone number while the port is made from Vonage to Google Voice.**

#### 4.0 Old Business:

- Worcester Dept. of Health update on December 17, 2019 conference call – Tania Busch Isaksen, Sharron LaFollette, Jason Finley, Leslie Mitchell and Kelsey Hopkins and Intern Sushant Bajracharya attending):
  - Tania Busch Isaksen and Sharron LaFollette will mentor the Worcester effort toward accreditation.
  - **ACTION: Mitchell will communicate with Kelsey Hopkins to let her know of the mentor(s) assigned and to see if Worcester DPH will have any representatives attending the July 2020 NEHA AEC and if so, will suggest scheduling a face to face meeting (LaFollette will only be available on Saturday and Sunday and early Monday morning of July 11-13).**
- Board Succession Plan:
  - **Action: Mitchell will summarize current discussion and put the topic higher on the agenda to make sure it is discussed in time to prepare the topic for a recommendation at the Annual Meeting – particularly if the Board wants to make structural and, thus, policy changes to the Board.**

- EHAC Response to UNCOVER EH Dec. 2019 article and Dyjack op ed. in Oct. 2019 JEH – discussion postponed.

#### **5.0 New Business:**

- AEHAP - Graduate Environmental Health Specialist Certificate
  - **Action: EHAC will provide to Council members for AEHAP Committee to serve along with AAS and AEHAP members.**
- Course share option for smaller programs needing one or two additional courses in order to be accredited. **Discussion postponed.**
- Eh Career Model idea – UG Report for February 2020. **Discussion postponed.**
- UG Requirements – Table 2 - % course time corresponding to EH requirements discussion. **Discussion postponed.**
- Potential Change in Self-study Review submission deadline. **Discussion postponed.**

#### **6.0 Schedule Next Board Mtg. - Mitchell will distribute a Doodle Poll for Feb. 24 and March 3**

#### **7.0 Adjournment Mtg. adjourned at 11:14pm**