



National Environmental Health Science & Protection Accreditation Council

*Enhancing the education and training of students
in environmental health science and protection*

EHAC Board Meeting Minutes – February 23, 2023 - 8:00am Pacific time

Board Members Present: Tim Murphy, Cindy Weckwerth, Jason Lewis, Rania Sabty, Kai Elgethun

Board Members Absent: Dave Gilkey

Others attending: Anne Marie Zimeri, Chad Brown, Welford Roberts, Mike Quinn

EHAC Staff: Leslie Mitchell

1.0 Meeting Called to order at: Murphy called the meeting to order at 1:04 PST

2.0 Standing Items

2.1 Approval of Agenda: Cindy Weckwerth moved to approve February 23, 2023, agenda. Second from Jason Lewis and agenda was approved unanimously.

2.2 Approval of January 30, 2023 Meeting Minutes: Lewis moved to approve the January 30, 2023 minutes. There was a second from Sabty and the minutes were approved unanimously.

3.0 Reports

3.1 AEHAP Update: Dr. Kim Lichtveld – President - absent

- No Report

3.2 Treasurer's Report: Sabty and Mitchell provided a brief overview of the budget documents.

- Current Balance sheet - checking: \$6,225.26 as of February 16, 2023
 - Savings: \$101,954.66 as of February 16, 2023
- Current Income and Expenses - Net Income: \$55,497.17 as of February 16, 2023
- Cal. State University San Bernardino: has not paid October 2022 invoice. Mitchell is in close contact with PD at CSU SB and with the accounts payable dept. This will hopefully arrive in the next week. Mitchell will provide the Board with an update if there are further payment issues.
- Murphy enquired about the level of costs in New Orleans for the Annual Meeting as compared to Spokane and earlier meeting locations. Mitchell replied that lodging and networking dinner costs will be lower than Spokane.

3.3 Chairperson's/ED Report: Murphy/Mitchell

- **BGC follow up:** February 2023 informational meeting update (BGC, EHAC, AEHAP representatives)
 - Mitchell briefly summarized the meeting – take aways:

- BGC is creating 2 new generalists’ credential – Env. Health Safety Associate/Env. Health Safety Professional (EHSA/EHASP). Based on BGC research conducted with EHS “employers”, they found that employees are wearing many different hats and need a more inclusive credential.
Weckwerth submitted that the acronyms are much too close to NEHA’s REHS/RS which creates a great deal of confusion in an already confusing situation. Weckwerth pointed out that BGC kept referring to “employers” and what employers “want”. BGC cited that “employers” see a lack of a need for air, water, other EH related attributes and are more focused on management around HAZMAT/industrial hygiene type of needs. Weckwerth and Sabty felt like they were completely leaving out public environmental health while claiming they are certifying environmental health practitioners. Weckwerth expressed confusion, along with Sabty, regarding what type of “employers” BGC had questioned in their research.
- Sabty added that she sees a threat in BGC’s pursuit of a generalist type of credential – potential for watering down (diluting of profession) and as an avenue for income through selling preparatory materials for exam. Sabty was concerned about how they are verifying and gauging levels of experience. Concern about what qualifies as experience. Sabty also pointed out that they are moving forward with EHAC idea from the past for NEHA to create a recognition level for recent graduates to “hook” students and get them into the credential and professional development pipeline. They’re also interested in creating “stackable credentials”.
- Murphy agreed that EHAC should remain vigilant regarding the development of the new credentials. Employers must 1) value credentials and 2) there must be a regulation to require the credential for there to be any value.
- Mike Quin suggested that BGC is trying to carve out a niche for themselves.
- **ACTION: EHAC will maintain a vigilant relationship with BGC.**
- **EHAC Strategic Planning update**
 - Environmental scanning/SKEPTIC methodology/Survey
 - Mitchell explained that EHAC is starting down a Strategic Planning process that will hopefully culminate in short- and long-term strategic frameworks for the next 3-5-10 years to discuss during a significant portion of the July 2023 EHAC Annual Meeting. Wendell Moore has agreed to facilitate the process and Murphy, Moore, and Mitchell are working on an Environmental Survey/SWOT analysis that will be sent to the Council, PDs and other stakeholders in March 2023.
 - Murphy explained that a primary component of the planning process will be determining if the Council is interested in focusing on program recruitment. Murphy explained that AEHAP used to be the program recruiting arm for EHAC but is no longer able to shoulder this responsibility. Should EHAC be doing this or is that a conflict of interest?

3.4 Undergraduate Program Report: Vice Chair Dave Gilkey

- **Colorado State University (Mitchell)**
 - 50th Anniversary Celebration of EHAC accreditation – April 13-14, 2023 – plaque review
 - Remove “College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences” and use different font sizes to highlight that this is an award.

- **Action: Mitchell will work with Weckwerth on a final mock up.**
- **UG Revisions update** - Board review of final Program Director and Committee revisions:
 - **Data literacy and computer literacy:**
 - Murphy noted the need to have a way of assessing these requirements. Site visitors can assess literacy requirement from epidemiology and statistics and any risk class syllabi and products.
 - **Action: Add an interpretation for “data literacy” that includes management of data sets and terms like generate, interpret, apply. The idea is that “data literacy” is an overarching term for working with data.**
 - **Approved**
 - **6. Course/Credit Equivalency** - Site visitors need to be able to verify paper work for previous credits and work experience equivalencies.
 - Mitchell explained that the Committee felt it is important to be able to review how programs verify academic credit and professional experience credit related to EHAC accreditation criteria.
 - **Action: Quinn will confer with a colleague in accreditation to see how this topic is generally handled in the academic transfer credit world. Board will make a decision based on recommendations.**
 - **C. Environmental Health Technical Areas: Interpretations: addition of**
 - 5. Exposure = at least 3 instructional hours (single course or multiple courses)
 - 6. In depth = at least 20 instructional hours (single course or multiple courses)
 - **Approved**
 - **D. Environmental Health Practice**
 - **Remove: Alternatives to a professional/field experience may be considered by the Council. Programs shall petition exemptions to the Vice Chair for Undergraduate Programs prior to event. (in interpretations).**
 - **Replace with:** Documentation must be provided for tracking hours and type of work performed during the internship.
 - **Approved**
 - **Interpretation change:**

The Council strongly encourages professional/field experiences outside of the university, so that the student gains field experience, unless within the university environmental health control facilities (non-academia). **Environmental Health related research-specific** projects may be included in the professional/field experience but may not be the only component of the experience. Alternatives to professional/field experience may be considered by the **Institution. Council. Programs shall petition exemptions prior to event. Programs considering an alternative should contact may contact the Council if for further clarification. is necessary. prior to the event.**

 - **Approved**
 - **VI. Program Evaluation Report**
 - The **completed** Self-study document shall be **submitted electronically**
 - **Approved**
 - **VII. Policy Statement on Conflict of Interest in the Accrediting Process**
 - In order to identify potential **or actual** conflicts of interest. Individual with

probable reasonable cause.

- **Approved**

○ **Next Steps re: UG Requirements Revisions Process:**

1. Add to interpretations where needed
2. Acknowledge/answer first round of Program Director comments
3. Send final revised Requirements (with final interpretations) to Program Directors for comment

3.5 Graduate Program Report: Vice Chair Elgethun

- **Graduate Guidelines Revision update** – a draft has been sent to Sharron LaFollette for review. Next Committee meeting is February 27, 2023.

3.6 Committee Reports

- **Nominations Committee (Mitchell)**
 - Candidates update – there is one more candidate than needed for each category – Practitioner and Academic.

4.0 Old Business:

5.0 New Business:

- Murphy asked Board Members to think about potential Board candidates for 2023-2024
- Chad Brown asked if anyone was familiar with states moving away from the NEHA REHS/RS exam and creating their own. Murphy pointed out that California has their own REHS exam. Weckwerth pointed out that MN will except the NEHA or the MN state REHS exam - most people take the NEHA REHS because it is more versatile and more useful throughout the nation. Murphy cited that 23 states use NEHA exam for REHS.

6.0 Next Board Meeting: March 29, 2023 at 8am Pacific 1.5 hours

7.0 Adjournment at 2:10pm Pacific.