



National Environmental Health Science & Protection Accreditation Council

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

EHAC Board Meeting Minutes - April 24, 2023 – 1pm Pacific time

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

Board Members Absent:

Others attending: Kim Lichtveld

EHAC Staff: Leslie Mitchell

1.0 Meeting Called to order at: Murphy called the meeting to order at 1:05pm PST

2.0 Standing Items

2.1 Approval of Agenda: Sabty moved to approve the April 24, 2023, agenda. Second from Gilkey and agenda was approved unanimously.

2.2 Approval of February 23, 2023 Meeting Minutes: Lewis moved to approve the February 23, 2023 minutes. There was a second from Weckwerth and the minutes were approved unanimously.

3.0 Reports

3.1 AEHAP Update: Dr. Kim Lichtveld – President

- There was no AEHAP Board meeting in April
- 3rd annual Student Seminar - presentation from students and Vonja Grabeel
- Murphy added information about a recent meeting with Dave Dyjack re: NEPHIP and establishing better communication among NEHA, EHAC, AEHAP. NEHA has been asked for a monthly meeting with NEPHIP administrators. Both EHAC and AEHAP have concerns about:
 - application timelines
 - when recruiting webinars are being scheduled
 - not knowing about these things ahead of time
 - and lack of opportunity for collaboration.

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

- Current Balance sheet:
 - Checking: \$5,421.44
 - Savings: \$85,956.25
- Credit Card fee for EHAC dues and fee payments?
 - Mitchell explained that the cost and complexity of accepting credit card payments have lowered significantly in the last few years. Based on the amount of time and effort that

- Mitchell is spending wrangling dues and fees, her recommendation is to begin accepting credit card payments via QuickBooks as of October 1, 2023
- Board members were in favor of accepting credit card payments with the final caveats and actions:
 - **EHAC will add the cost of accepting credit cards to the cost of program dues and fees (currently 3% per transaction – will not be concerned with .25 cent handling fee).**
 - **Mitchell will send an email to Program Directors alerting them to the opportunity to pay by credit card beginning on October 1, 2023, and letting them know they will also be responsible for the credit card charging fee (currently 3%)**

3.3 Chairperson's/ED Report: Murphy/Mitchell

- **Meeting with Dave Dyjack re: NEPHIP**
 - **Recent NEPHIP related article in the JEH:** Great article, but there was no mention of EHAC in the article. This was apparently an oversight, but it provided the opportunity for EHAC to voice concern related to the lack of communication among NEHA/NEPHIP, EHAC, and AEHAP. Coordinating efforts, particularly in the NEPHIP arena, is key to creating a thriving program. We are most concerned with the timing of application deadlines, which, in its current form, does not maximize student involvement, the timing of recruitment and other webinars - after school is out, and lack of communication about ongoing efforts. If EHAC and AEHAP support are desired by NEHA, we need to be in the loop.
 - **Mini grant idea for HBCUs interested in EHAC accreditation:** Participants discussed the potential to provide mini grants/funding from NEHA via CDC to HBCUs, and other MSI schools to support EHAC accreditation application preparation and accreditation maintenance. Cost seems to be a major hurdle for some HBCUs, based on recent HBCU oriented recruiting efforts. Support for the cost of applying for accreditation, preparing Self-Studies, traveling to EHAC's Annual Meeting for program reviews, and maintaining accreditation are major needs. Dyjack requested talking points supporting the need for this kind of funding so that he can raise the issue in a potential upcoming meeting with CDC Director Walensky. Murphy pointed out that Dyjack recently heard a comment from a Dean of the School of Public Health (SPH) at Brown that he felt that SPHs are not preparing students for Environmental Health positions.
 - **EH workforce development bill update:** This bill is currently dead. However, what is going forward is an option at HRSA to fund student loan repayment for those who graduate from EHAC accredited (?) and other EH programs and go onto to a job in public health. This effort is different than the current public service nonprofit loan forgiveness program, apparently.
- **2023 - Strategic Planning Update:** There have been 35 responses to the SWOT survey with three volunteers to join the current planning committee. Mitchell will compile the data for the committee in preparation for their next meeting on May 8, 2023.
- **2023 - Group of 5 Update:** Murphy and Mitchell reported that the last meeting consisted of getting a "lay of the land" and observations about the future of EH from some key practitioners and/or academicians (Leon Vinci, Bob Powitz, Hank Koren, and Marketing Director for NEHA Chana Goussetis), as the Group works to assess the current state of EH in

the Nation. Welford Roberts will be compiling the data amassed thus far and proposing a way forward for the Group between now and the middle of May 2023. Next steps will evolve from this laying of the foundation.

- **2022-23 Outcome Assessment Report:** Mitchell brought the OA Report to the Board's attention, highlighting the fact that those graduates employed in EH found most of their EHAC accredited education to be pertinent to their current EH employment, as did their supervisors.
 - **Mitchell also pointed out the need to review questions regarding graduate job-related tracking. We want to be sure we are tracking the number of graduates that get EH jobs after graduation - so that EHAC can point to a hard number regarding % of graduate getting jobs post-graduation.**
- **Program Status Summary:** Mitchell provided a summary of program status related to the 2022-2023 Annual Update Survey. Summary below:
 - **Main findings:**
 - **3 Undergraduate Programs Closing in 2023 and 2024**
 - **3 Undergraduate Programs have had closure discussion with administration**
 - **There is Program Director Enrollment Concern for the majority of UG accredited programs and Administration concern at 16-degree programs**
 - **Factors impacting enrollment include mainly:**
 - Impact of COVID - move to online course structure and decline in international students due to closure of education visa program (open again)
 - Difficulty of EHAC criteria requirements
 - Lack of familiarity with EHS among high school, community college, and university students
 - Competition with public health degree programs (some programs being lumped in with biology as well)
 - Overall decreases in enrollment university wide
- **EH NEXUS Conf. Summary:** Mitchell summarized the 2-day conference, reporting on NEXUS' desire to assist with student enrollment and engagement with EHAC accredited programs and EH programs Nationwide. They also presented numerous websites available from the CDC to gain access and analyze data collected by the CDC. The [Public Health Tracking Network](#) system is amazing.
 - **Public Health Tracking Education Kit:** this is a project that is slated for release in Spring 2023. It is an education tool for college faculty that aligns the Public Health Tracking Network with CEPH criteria. Mitchell is meeting with NEXUS representatives to ensure that EH topics are incorporated into the tool, since CEPH criteria revision removed emphasis on EH in 2016. **Mitchell will provide reps. with EHAC UG and Graduate criteria.**

3.4 Undergraduate Program Report: Vice Chair Dave Gilkey

- **Univ. of Washington name and curriculum changes:**
 - Gilkey recommended acceptance of changes which do not impact their accreditation at all.

- The Board accepted the changes at UW, with no further comment (appreciative of clarification) - no vote was necessary.
- **Colorado State University - 50th Anniversary of EHAC Accreditation Celebration**
 - Gilkey attended and presented a commemorative plaque from EHAC
 - 75 students are currently enrolled in the program - down from well over 100 in the past
 - Many former students attended the celebration
 - Weckwerth suggested obtaining any photos of the plaque presentation for promotion on EHAC's webpage and social media.
 - Murphy suggested finding the photo of East Tennessee's commemoration of their 50th anniversary of accreditation and posting that as well.
 - **Mitchell will request photos from Erin and/or Josh.**

3.5 Graduate Program Report: Vice Chair Elgethun

- **Graduate Guidelines Revision update**
 - Elgethun reported good progress and is hoping to have a draft by the end of the month.

3.6 Committee Reports

- **Nominations Committee (Mitchell)**
 - Newly Elected Council Members: those who have agreed to serve as of 4/24/2023 are highlighted in green.
 - **Academics:**
 - **Dr. Tania Busch Isaksen** - Associate Teaching Professor, EHAC Program Director at University of Washington
 - **Dr. Michele Morrone** - Professor, EHAC Program Director at Ohio University
 - **Dr. Lee Newman** - Associate professor, Chair of Chemistry, and EHAC Program Director at State University of New York Environmental Science and Forestry
 - **Dr. Laura Suppes** - Associate Professor at University of Wisconsin Eau Claire
 - **Practitioners**
 - **Sandra Long** - Environmental Health Manager, Town of Addison, TX
 - **CAPT Mike Quinn** - Operations Chief, US Department of Interior
 - **Chris Sparks** - Bureau Chief, Houston (TX) Health Department

4.0 Old Business:

5.0 New Business:

6.0 Next Board Meeting: May , 2023 at Pacific 1.5 hours

7.0 Adjournment at 2pm Pacific.