EHAC Annual Meeting of the Council*

July 14, 2024 - Hybrid Meeting Minutes

*__Abbreviations used in these minutes:__ Association of Environmental Health Academic Programs (AEHAP), Board of Global Health Credentialing (BGC), National Environmental Health Science and Protection Accreditation Council (EHAC), Environmental Health (EH), Environmental Health Officer Professional Advisory Committee (EHOPAC), Graduate (G), Graduate Environmental Health Certificate (GEHC), Junior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (JRCOSTEP), Program Director (PD), National Environmental Health Association (NEHA), National Environmental Health Internship Program (NEPHIP), Undergraduate (UG)

Table of Contents

7.0 Call to Order: Chair Tania Busch Isaksen. 3
4.5 Accreditation Action: University of Georgia, Athens - Undergraduate 3
4.6a Accreditation Action: University of Findlay - Undergraduate 4
4.6b Accreditation Action: University of Findlay - Graduate 5
4.7a Accreditation Action: University of Washington - Undergraduate 5
4.7b Accreditation Action: University of Washington - Graduate 5
8.0 Graduate Guidelines Revisions 6
9.0 EHAC Policy Updates and EHAC Policy and Criteria Alignment Effort 6
10.0 Strategic Planning and Grant Writing 7
11.0 Board Officer Vote 8
12.0 New Business 8
13.0 Board Elections 8
14.0 Certificate of Acknowledgement of 2 Term Council Members and 2023-2024 Board Members 9

7.0 Call to Order: Chair Tania Busch Isaksen called the meeting to order at 9:05AM EST.

4.5 Accreditation Action: University of Georgia, Athens - Undergraduate

Strengths:

- Faculty expertise
- A wide range of courses offered
- Class topics included navigating the regulations
- Skills for finding, evaluating and understanding the primary literature, and the ability to communicate content with community members
- The close-nit department for students and faculty
- Faculty mentoring
- Transferable skills to the real-world practice of EHS and/or research needs
- Internship experiential learning opportunities
- Strong connections with industries in the area
- Professional networking opportunities
- Two tracks – Practice vs Research and/or Professional School
- 4+1 BS/MPH dual degrees
- Scholarships
- Excellent preparation for the future
- Research experiential learning
- Academic concentration tracks
- Certificates/Certifications
- Summer classes (more available for students)
- Access to research experiences
- Promising career opportunities
- Employment-ready graduates
- Multiple recruiting initiatives
- Addition of Bio 1101 and ECH 1000

Recommendations:

- Add members to the EAC from both public and private sectors.
- Relocation to the new facilities
- Added space for new faculty, expanding research programs, and the addition of an ERC
- Increased space for centralized classrooms for EHS courses
- Fill both faculty lines to meet teaching needs and research goals.
- Use professionals from industry to teach some classes and bring field experiences into the classroom.
- Add the internship coordinator responsibilities to the new lecturer position.
- Upgraded laboratory equipment would better match the expectations of industry.
- Add a foreign language requirement in the program to enhance student skills.
- Establish and maintain consistency in course-level requirements and rigor.
- Provide more opportunities for certifications/certificates such as the HAZWOPER 8-hour refresher.
- While some courses provided skills for navigating EHS laws, they would benefit from more content on health-related policy.
- List opportunities in EHS careers on the department website.
- Offer all required EHS courses each year (alleviate interference or delay in graduation).
- More summer courses (alleviate interference or delay in graduation).
- Consider adding more policy information in EHS courses.

Program Director Comments: Dr. Anne Marie Zimeri

- Zimeri reported already acting on some of Site Visitor recommendations:
  - Foundations of EH very important
  - Working to create Spanish for EH course
  - Adding career modules to all classes
  - Adding certificates to accredited degree
  - Have already added an EH law class

Motion: The Site Visit Team moved to grant the University of Georgia Athen's Bachelor of Science in Environmental Health Degree Program full accreditation for 6 years with no conditions.
Vote: Unanimously Approved
Letter:

- Encourage them to include 40 HAZWOPPER certification.
- Letter will exclude recommendations that have already been addressed.

4.6a Accreditation Action: University of Findlay - Undergraduate

Strengths:

- High Visibility + Leadership Support
- Capital Improvement Project
- Faculty Professionalism/Knowledge/Engagement
- Student Satisfaction
- Alumni Support & Involvement
- Increasing Research Activity
- Outreach Efforts
- Connection with Employers + High Job Placement
- BCSP QAP + IHMM ST/CHMM
- All Hazards Training Center
- Graduate Bridge Courses

Challenges and Recommendations:

- Enrollment Stability
- Teaching Loads
- Impending Faculty Retirements
- New Funding Model
- Environmental PH Career Pathways
- Recommended Alignment + Resolution - EHAC General Chemistry Requirements

Program Director Comments: Dr. Kim Lichtfeld
Motion: The Site Visit Team moved to approve the Undergraduate Environment, Health, Safety & Sustainability degree program at the University of Findlay for 6 years of full accreditation with the recommendation to pursue an alternative chemistry path or meet with chemistry department to verify (in writing) that the combination of Chemistry 111 and Chemistry 130 equals one full year of general chemistry.
Vote: 13 in favor, 3 against
Letter:

- Emphasize the concern about having a general chemistry course that meets EHAC requirements for one year of general chemistry.
- Ensure that Chemistry 111 is adequate as a general chemistry course (one year) or figure out how to address the EHAC chemistry requirement.

4.6b Accreditation Action: University of Findlay - Graduate

Strengths:

- Support for International Students & Working Professionals
- Safety Leadership Emphasis Course Offerings

Recommendations:

- Improvement of Course Syllabi + Traceability of Learning Outcomes/Competencies

Program Director Comments: Dr. Kim Lichtveld

- Faculty are updating syllabi to be comprehensive and include competencies and learning objectives.

Motion: The Site Visit Team moved to grant the University of Findlay's Master of Science in Environmental Safety and Health Management degree program full 6 years accreditation with no conditions .
Discussion: none
Vote: Unanimously approved
Letter: No recommnedations

4.7a Accreditation Action: University of Washington - Undergraduate

Strengths:

- No inconsistencies with Undergraduate criteria
- Exceptionally well-developed internship structure, including forms and evaluation process
- Longevity
- Office of Academic Services provides stellar support
- Actively engaged external advisory committee

Recommendations:

- Impending faculty departures: Program has approximately seven faculty members actively teaching at or near retirement age.
- Increasing student enrollment.
- Multiple accreditations: In addition to maintaining an EHAC accreditation, the program must balance addressing competencies required for the School's CEPH accreditation.

Program Director Comments: Dr. Tania Busch Isaksen

- Great Site Visit
- Have hired 12 faculty within the last 12 years and a Chair search is ongoing.
    - Have moved from predominantly white male faculty to diverse and female oriented
- Increase enrollment from 60+ to 90+ students
- Changed their Department name to Environmental Public Health = immediate increase in enrollment
- Moving to be a qualified academic program so students can qualify for GSP via Board of Certified Safety Professionals (BCSP).

Motion: The Site Visit Team moved to grant the Bachelor of Science in Environmental Public Health Degree Program at the University of Washington full 6-year accreditation with no conditions.
Vote: Unanimously Approved
Letter:

- Emphasize importance of maintaining EHAC accreditation along with CEPH.
- Continue to increase enrollment.
- Be aware and plan for impending faculty retirements.

4.7b Accreditation Action: University of Washington – Graduate

Strengths:

- No inconsistencies with Graduate criteria

- Thoughtful MS-Applied track with well-developed learning objectives
- Rigorous study
- Industry experienced faculty
- Well-developed internship pipelines/Reputation of program

Recommendations:

- Impending faculty departures: Program has approximately seven faculty members actively teaching at or near retirement age.
- Increasing student enrollment.
- Multiple accreditations: In addition to maintaining an EHAC accreditation, the program must balance addressing competencies required for the School's CEPH accreditation.

Program Director Comments: Dr. Tania Busch Isaksen

Motion: Site Visit Team recommended full accreditation for 6 years with no conditions for University of Washington's Master of Science - Environmental Health Sciences: Thesis, Master of Science - Environmental Health Sciences: Applied, and Master of Public Health - Environmental Health Sciences.

Vote: Unanimously Approved

Letter:

- Emphasize importance of EHAC in addition to CEPH accreditation.
- Would appreciate Busch Isaksen doing a presentation on their internship program for PDs and kudos for the program.

8.0 Graduate Guidelines Revisions: Elgethun reviewed the revisions and Council made edits and suggestions that Mitchell recorded in real time.

Motion: Elgethun moved to approve the revised Graduate Guidelines as modified today.

Second: Morrone

Discussion: recorded in changes to document

Vote: Unanimously Approved

Crosswalk - Council applauded the crosswalk as great concept and very comprehensive.

Motion: Move to accept this format of the crosswalk with current edits from today's revision of the draft Guidelines.

Discussion: none

Vote: Unanimously passed

[Note: Morrone will reach out to graduate programs to see what their AI policies are (if available.]

9.0 EHAC Policy Updates and EHAC Policy and Criteria Alignment Effort

- New Board Member Position (Program Growth and Mentorship Chair)
  - **Motion: Morrone motioned to approve the new Program Recruitment Chair position.**
  - **Second: Sabty**
  - **Discussion:**
    - Newman asked about funding for this position
      - Grant writing will probably be part of this position.
    - Sabty suggested changing title to include "international" as well as national recruitment.
    - Eggers suggested including development 2+2 agreements with MSIs
      - Busch Isaksen suggested a committee could discuss how Egger's suggestion could be operationalized.

- **Eggers would be interested in Chairing an ad hoc committee to address 2+2 agreements but maybe next year.**
  - **Vote: Unanimously Approved**
- Site Visit Expense Reimbursement - via per diem (rather than receipts)
  - **Motion: Morrone motioned to change Site Visit reimbursement policy to per diem rather than receipt-based reimbursement.**
  - **Second: Sabty**
  - **Discussion:**
    - Lodging and flight costs will still be recorded with receipts
  - **Vote: Unanimously approved**
- Accreditation criteria and Policy alignment
  - Mitchell briefly summarized efforts to consolidate and reduce redundancy among policy, criteria and Site Visitor explanation documents.

***Board Officer Slate of Candidates opened**

10.0 Strategic Planning and Grant Writing

- **Busch Isaksen summarized history of strategic planning process to date.**
- **Discussion about vision and mission statement:**
  - Discussion about vision statement evolution at 2023 annual meeting to make vision statement succinct. Did not vote on vision in 2023. Welford suggested getting everything else done and then voting on a whole/single document.
    - Tania suggested at Cindy's prompting to add "- focused" after health in 2023 Vision statement suggested = **Promoting a health and sustainable world by accrediting quality Environmental Public Health - focused academic degree programs**
  - **Mission statement -** Anne Marie suggested making the following changes for consistency and grammar (in yellow) - **The National Environmental Health Science & Protection Accreditation Council (EHAC) develops and applies accreditation criteria for institutions of higher education providing quality education and training ~~to~~ for students pursuing Environmental Public Health – focused careers.**
- **Committees:**
  - **Workforce: Chair Jason Lewis - DeBrena , Kim Hall, Matt Albright, Cindy Weckwerth**
  - **Accreditation: Chairs Rania Sabty/Tania Busch Isaksen - Clint Pinion, Lok Pokhrel, Mari Eggers, Mike Quinn**
  - **Partnerships: Chair - Welford Roberts, Lee Newman, Michele Morrone, Chuck Treser, Kai Elgethun, Sandra Long**
  - **Financial and Organizational Capacity: Chair - Anne Marie/Tim Murphy, Laura Suppes, Priscilla Oliver**
  - **Moore will serve as overall chair and attend all of the meetings that he can.**

- **Focus Area: Organizational Sustainability**
  - Goals #1 and #2 are similar - combine
- **Focus Areas: Accreditation**
  - Goal #2 - put under Operational Sustainability Focus Areas
- **Committees met briefly to:**
  - establish timelines

- review initial goals

Action: Mitchell will ask if there is potential for an intern for EHAC via NEPHIP – marketing for recruitment focused.

11.0 Board Officer Vote - slate of candidates for 2024-2025 Board

- **General Chair: Tania Busch Isaksen**
- **Secretary: Clint Pinion**
- **Vice Chair for Graduate Programs: Mike Quinn**
- **Vice Chair for Undergraduate Programs: Jason Lewis**
- **Vice Chair for Program Recruitment: Kai Elgethun**
- **Director-at-Large: Lee Newman**
- **Treasurer: Cindy Weckwerth**

Motion: Busch Isaksen moved to approve the 2024-2025 slate of Board candidates.
Second: Sabty
Vote: Unanimously Approved

12.0 New Business

- **EHAC UG Chemistry Requirement:**
  - Chemistry requirement is necessary but onerous (and causes students to leave the major) – how can EHAC criteria ensure students obtain the chemistry knowledge they need to be successful in the EH field?
  - Many students are entering college having had chemistry in high school, are able to test out of general chemistry, or have AP credit, etc. Again, EHAC wants to ensure students obtain the chemistry knowledge they need to be successful in the EH field. This applies to math requirements, as well.
  - Oliver pointed out that general chemistry and organic chemistry are requirements for many jobs and also positions with the USPHS. EHAC has to bear that in mind in this discussion.
  - Suggestions:
    - Newman - create community of mentorship and tutoring among EH students to help with these types of challenging classes. Must retain rigor of accreditation standards.
    - Busch Isaksen and Zimeri - need to ask advisory committees and hiring officers to determine exactly what math and chemistry topics are necessary to variety of EH practice jobs. Quinn pointed out that many of the entry level chemistry and math classes are used as weed out classes and are not controlled by the EH departments - e.g. they teach many topics not relevant to EH.
    - **Action: Morrone will survey UG Program Directors to determine what chemistry classes are covering based on their syllabi.**
      - **What are the standards for an organic chemistry class?**
      - **Scan organic chemistry syllabi to see what they are including in the course.**
    - **Action: Elgethun will provide math and chemistry credit hour requirements from USA jobs for GS 11s at EPA and ATSDR.**

- **EHAC UG Math Requirement**
  - The same challenges exist for math as in chemistry (discussed above). This subject needs to be investigated as well (like above action items).

13.0 Board Elections

- Council Vote Results for New Board Members
  - **General Chair: Tania Busch Isaksen**

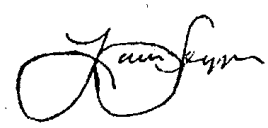
- **Secretary: Clint Pinion**
- **Vice Chair for Graduate Programs: Mike Quinn**
- **Vice Chair for Undergraduate Programs: Jason Lewis**
- **Vice Chair for Program Recruitment: Kai Elgethun**
- **Director-at-Large: Lee Newman**
- **Treasurer: Cindy Weckwerth**

14.0 Certificate of Acknowledgement of 2 Term Council Members and 2023-2024 Board Members

Meeting Adjourned 4:54pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura Suppes, 2023-2024 EHAC Secretary



Leslie D. Mitchell, Executive Director