

REVIEW FOR ACCREDITATION
OF THE
PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM
AT
EASTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY

COUNCIL ON EDUCATION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

SITE VISIT DATES:

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Introduction

This report presents the findings of the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) regarding the Public Health Program at Eastern Kentucky University (EKY). The report assesses the program's compliance with the *Accreditation Criteria for Public Health Programs, amended June 2011*. This accreditation review included the conduct of a self-study process by program constituents, the preparation of a document describing the program and its features in relation to the criteria for accreditation, and a visit in April 2013 by a team of external peer reviewers. During the visit, the team had an opportunity to interview program and university officials, administrators, teaching faculty, students, alumni and community representatives and to verify information in the self-study document by reviewing materials provided in a resource file. The team was afforded full cooperation in its efforts to assess the program and verify the self-study document.

The university traces its beginning to 1906 when it began as the Eastern Kentucky State Normal School for teacher education. In 1930, the school was renamed Eastern Kentucky State Teachers College. The college attained university status in 1966, and the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky sanctioned the awarding of graduate degrees in academic fields other than education.

Today the university offers associate, bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees with an enrollment of over 17,000 students. The university is made up of five colleges: (1) arts and sciences; (2) education; (3) business and technology; (4) health sciences; (5) justice and safety and the Graduate School. The university is governed by the Board of Regents, a bipartisan group appointed by the governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

The MPH program is housed in the College of Health Science (CHS), and is a collaborative effort between Environmental Health Science (EHS) and Health Promotion and Administration (HPA), two departments within the college. This college also contains eight other departments: (1) associate degree nursing; (2) baccalaureate and graduate nursing; (3) exercise and sport science; (4) family and consumer science; (5) health information; (6) medical laboratory science; (7) occupational therapy; and (8) recreation and park administration.

The first class of MPH students entered the program in fall 2000. The first students graduated from the MPH program in fall 2002. The program added a bachelor's degree in public health to the unit of accreditation in 2011.

This is the program's second review for accreditation. The program first received accreditation in spring 2008 for a term of five years with interim reporting due in spring 2010.

Characteristics of a Public Health Program

To be considered eligible for accreditation review by CEPH, a public health program shall demonstrate the following characteristics:

- a. The program shall be a part of an institution of higher education that is accredited by a regional accrediting body recognized by the US Department of Education or its equivalent in other countries.**
- b. The program and its faculty and students shall have the same rights, privileges and status as other professional preparation programs that are components of its parent institution.**
- c. The program shall function as a collaboration of disciplines, addressing the health of populations and the community through instruction, research and service. Using an ecological perspective, the public health program should provide a special learning environment that supports interdisciplinary communication, promotes a broad intellectual framework for problem solving and fosters the development of professional public health values.**
- d. The public health program shall maintain an organizational culture that embraces the vision, goals and values common to public health. The program shall maintain this organizational culture through leadership, institutional rewards and dedication of resources in order to infuse public health values and goals into all aspects of the program's activities.**
- e. The program shall have faculty and other human, physical, financial and learning resources to provide both breadth and depth of educational opportunity in the areas of knowledge basic to public health. At a minimum, the program shall offer the Master of Public Health (MPH) degree, or an equivalent professional degree.**
- f. The program shall plan, develop and evaluate its instructional, research and service activities in ways that assure sensitivity to the perceptions and needs of its students and that combines educational excellence with applicability to the world of public health practice.**

These characteristics are evident in the public health program at EKY. The university has been continuously accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) since 1928. All degrees offered by the program are structured with an ecological perspective. The use of professional adjunct faculty and the affiliation agreement with a local health department are evidence of the program's aims to promote collaboration and foster professional public health values. The program's funding consists of state appropriations, university funds and grants and contracts. The program continues to develop and implement new evaluation methods to ensure the professional preparation of its graduates. The program faculty, EKY leadership and current students all emphasized their support for the program's practical nature and for students' ultimate goal of attaining employment in the field of public health.

1.0 THE PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM.

1.1 Mission.

The program shall have a clearly formulated and publicly stated mission with supporting goals, objectives and values.

This criterion is met. The program has a mission statement encompassing the three aspects of public health education: instruction, research and service. The mission statement of the MPH program is as follows:

To prepare competent public health practitioners who are able to, through creative and critical thinking and effective communication skills, enhance the health status and quality of life in local, state, regional, and global communities.

This mission is directly aligned with the mission of the university as well as the CHS. The mission statement is accessible on the university website and promotional materials provided to prospective and current students.

The program is centered on 12 values, which guide the direction of the program's goals and objectives. These values were developed and reviewed by a representative group of faculty, students, external advisory council members and other stakeholders. The values are:

1. Education, Scholarship and Service
2. Learner Focused-Educational Excellence
3. Compassion
4. Cultural Sensitivity
5. Inspirational-Motivational
6. Ethical-Professional-Integrity and Consistency
7. Continuing Quality
8. Teamwork-Collaboration-Cooperation
9. Effective Measurable Outcomes
10. Technical Expertise/ Hands On
11. Specific Career Tacks and Career Advancement
12. Program Accreditation

The program delineates four goals, each with a series of objectives to assist in measuring and accomplishing these goals.

Site visitors observed that the definition of "active involvement," mentioned in goal 3, varied among several groups with which the site visit team met during their time on campus. To some individuals, membership in a professional organization met this objective, while for others "active involvement" also encompasses participation in conferences, planning groups and other events.

Objectives identified for all goals include metrics, by which student performance will be evaluated by faculty as well as students' and alumnus' self-assessments on various aspects of the program. Because assessments occur at various intervals, data points are not listed for every year, but rather for the years in which evaluation is conducted.

The mission, goals and objectives of the program were developed collaboratively through an initial needs assessment and from input from faculty, students' perspective employers, and alumni constituencies when the MPH was first introduced. In a visioning retreat in 2004, these groups came together to create the foundation for the mission, goals and objectives. The Self-Study Steering Committee in 2005 and 2007 reviewed and revised the mission, goals and objectives. The Program Curriculum and Assessment Committees are responsible for ongoing monitoring of the missions, goals and objectives; however no changes have been made since the program's inception.

Faculty, staff, alumni, students, Advisory Committee members and other stakeholders review the mission, goals and objectives annually at the program meeting after the program director's presentation of the program's annual assessment and evaluation. The dean and/or associate dean participates in this meeting and reviews the final product. The program then posts the statements on the website.

1.2 Evaluation and Planning.

The program shall have an explicit process for monitoring and evaluating its overall efforts against its mission, goals and objectives; for assessing the program's effectiveness in serving its various constituencies; and for using evaluation results in ongoing planning and decision making to achieve its mission. As part of the evaluation process, the program must conduct an analytical self-study that analyzes performance against the accreditation criteria.

This criterion is partially met. The program evaluates its mission through the outcome measures and targets that are identified for each goal. Processes to evaluate the program's efforts in achieving its mission, goals and objectives are included the development of an assessment plan. The program director and chair of the department of HPA, with advisement from the program Advisory Council, have primary responsibility for the assessment plan. In addition, the program's standing committees provide program oversight, planning, implementation and evaluation. The MPH Assessment Committee (MPH-AC), one of the program's standing committees monitors progress against objectives for the MPH program, and the Community Health Education Curriculum Committee (CHE-CC) monitors progress against objectives for the Bachelor of Public Health (BSPH) program. Other processes, utilized to evaluate the program's efforts in achieving its mission, goals and objectives, include alumni surveys, student surveys, exit interview questions, student evaluation of instruction, annual evaluation of the culminating experience presentation, and the annual retreat (during which survey summaries for the previous academic year are reported). The utilization of these instruments invariably produces substantial data for analysis and reporting in the

assessment of success in meeting program targets. Despite the potential magnitude of data generated, the program has not yet developed a centralized database. The program has begun to monitor performance and progress in attaining its mission, goals and objectives, and has delineated specific benchmarks for outcomes to date. Several of these outcomes are measured by responses to surveys for which the response rates were very low.

The MPH-AC and the CHE-CC met during the self-study period and developed the survey instruments. The self-study document indicates that these committees met at least once a month during the self study period and will meet a minimum of twice a semester. The MPH-CC and the CHE-CC are primarily involved with curriculum assessment and analyzing data related to curriculum quality and effectiveness (eg, course syllabi).

The Program Advisory Committee provides ongoing consultation and advisement to the program director regarding program effectiveness in meeting program mission, goals and objectives. Several stakeholders are represented including option coordinators, department chairs, community representatives, field preceptors, current students and alumni, who serve a two-year term and are appointed by the director. The Advisory Council meets at least once each academic year on-site and communicates also by phone and email. At least one student Advisory Council member participates in the MPH-AC and CHE-CC meetings.

The program director is responsible for assimilating the data collected by the curriculum and assessment committees and the advisory council to form a draft report that is submitted to program faculty, students, administrators, public health practitioners and advisory board members at the MPH program retreat. Stakeholders respond to the report and recommend follow-up action and set priorities for the coming year.

In summary, the program director, MPH-AC and CHE-CC implement the data collection phase of the program assessment plan, and the MPH-AC assists the director in aggregating and summarizing the data. However, the first concern relates to the challenge of pulling together multiple sources of data from multiple groups and the current potential for disconnect between data sources and groups. Currently there is no centralized program-specific database to track progress towards the attainment of program targets and serve as a repository for data entry. During the site visit, the existence of a university database was described (TracDat) as well as the production of multiple spreadsheets by the CHE option coordinator for program-specific data; however, neither of these options are workable data sources and do not provide a program-specific, systematic repository or database that can serve as a centralized tool for tracking. The development of a program-specific database will become even more critical as the program expands and potentially offers more degree offerings (eg, Doctor of Public Health degree). Also,

there is no pivotal, dedicated data coordinator, within the curriculum and/or assessment committees to input, maintain, or track data as part of a program-specific centralized database for subsequent analysis and annual reporting.

The final concern is that, to date, there are a minimal number of examples that indicate a “closing of the loop” from data collection to changes and reporting, as well as subsequent impact on program operations. The provost and vice president for academic affairs emphasized the need for informed evaluation and subsequent planning resulting from sound data collection efforts.

1.3 Institutional Environment.

The program shall be an integral part of an accredited institution of higher education.

This criterion is met. EKY is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). The university has been accredited since 1928. The university completed its most recent re-accreditation in 2007, with its next reaffirmation in 2017-2018. The university traces its beginning to 1906 when it began as the Eastern Kentucky State Normal School for teacher education. In 1930, the school was renamed Eastern Kentucky State Teachers College. The college attained university status in 1966, and the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky sanctioned the awarding of graduate degrees in academic fields other than education.

Today the university offers associate, bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees with an enrollment of over 17,000 students. The university is made up of five colleges: (1) arts and sciences; (2) education; (3) business and technology; (4) health sciences; (5) justice and safety and the Graduate School. The university is governed by the Board of Regents, a bipartisan group appointed by the governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

The MPH program was developed as a result of the Kentucky Council on Post-Secondary Education tasking the state universities to collaborate to develop graduate programs in public health. Under leadership of the CHS dean, the core faculty in the departments of EHS and HPA developed an MPH course of study, gained approval through university processes and began offering the MPH degree through both departments. The first class of MPH students entered the program in fall 2000. The first students graduated from the MPH program in fall 2002.

The president is the university's chief executive officer and has responsibility for the operation of the university in conformity with the policies determined by the Board of Regents. The MPH program is housed in the CHS, and is a collaborative effort between EHS and HPA, two departments within the CHS. This college also contains eight other departments: (1) associate degree nursing; (2) baccalaureate and graduate nursing; (3) exercise and sport science; (4) family and consumer science; (5) health information;

(6) medical laboratory science; (7) occupational therapy; and (8) recreation and park administration. The program is headed by the MPH director, who is also the interim department chair of EHS and medical laboratory science. The MPH director reports to the dean of the CHS, as does the chair of the HPA department. The dean of the CHS reports to the provost/vice president for academic affairs.

Every department in the CHS formulates its unit budget needs based on faculty, staff and capital requests. These budget requests are evaluated and ranked according to priority by the CHS Administrative Council, with leadership from the dean and staff. The Administrative Council and dean must agree on budget priorities before the dean forwards the budget to the provost's office and subsequently presents the budget to the University Budget Advisory Council. This council creates the university budget for academic affairs based on priority requests from the various academic colleges of the university. The academic budget is part of the total budget for all units within the entire university, which then is presented to the president and finally Board of Regents.

Department chairs and committees evaluate a faculty member for promotion and tenure and solicit input from the MPH director regarding the faculty member's teaching, service and scholarship activities related to public health. The MPH director provides feedback via forms. Staff advancement follows university guidelines per job descriptions and pay grades, but all recommendations come from the department chair. The MPH director serves as a member of the search committee for hiring new faculty for the MPH program. Department chairs are required to consult with the MPH director regarding recruitment notices and procedures used for MPH faculty positions.

Course or curriculum revisions begin with the MPH director and the MPH Curriculum Committee and are reviewed by the EHS and HPA Curriculum Committees and the CHS's Curriculum Committee, which is chaired by the associate dean, who oversees all curriculum concerns. The Graduate Council and Council on Academic Affairs, which includes all academic deans, must approve course or curriculum revisions. New program proposals or policy changes follow the above review structure but must also be reviewed and approved by the Faculty Senate, president of the university and Board of Regents.

1.4 Organization and Administration.

The program shall provide an organizational setting conducive to public health learning, research and service. The organizational setting shall facilitate interdisciplinary communication, cooperation and collaboration that contribute to achieving the program's public health mission. The organizational structure shall effectively support the work of the program's constituents.

This criterion is met. Program faculty are housed within two departments EHS and HPA. The program director has the support of the EHS and HPA department chairs. The program director currently serves as interim EHS department chair. In regards to monitoring policies and procedures, the program has autonomy within the CHS, regarding its operation and strategic planning.

The program has developed an academic plan that “embraces a spirit of interdisciplinary coordination, collaboration, and cooperation.” The director maintains consistent and close communication with the option coordinators and department chair. The university, college and program supports collaboration for teaching, scholarship and service.

1.5 Governance.

The program administration and faculty shall have clearly defined rights and responsibilities concerning program governance and academic policies. Students shall, where appropriate, have participatory roles in the conduct of program evaluation procedures, policy setting and decision making.

This criterion is met. The program has a well-defined governance structure that supports faculty, staff and student involvement in review and decision-making. The program has five standing committees: four relate to the MPH and one focuses solely on the Bachelor of Science in Public Health in Community Health Program. Each committee supports the infrastructure and helps actualize the mission, goals and objectives of the program. All current standing committees, and the genesis of any new standing committees, are approved by the program director. In addition, as needed, the formation of any ad hoc committees or task force groups are also formed and appointed by the program director. Each committee meets two to three times per semester in person as well as by phone and email. Public health students are represented on each standing committee. The student member is non-voting and serves a two-year term, and is appointed by the director, in consultation with the department chairs. Selections are based on academic performance, leadership skills and availability to meet during the day for meetings. Over the last three academic years, the majority of student representatives have been students matriculating within the EHS option.

The MPH Admission and Recruitment Committee (ARC) is a standing committee charged with advising the program director, reviewing and making recommendations regarding policy and procedures that direct program standards, policies, and activities regarding recruitment and admission to the MPH program. The ARC includes the program director, the EHS and CHE option coordinators and one student member.

The MPH Curriculum Committee (CC) is a standing committee charged with curricular oversight to ensure that the educational program, field experiences, and other activities adequately prepare public health practitioners while adhering to established public health competencies and CEPH accreditation guidelines. The responsibilities of the committee include, review and approval of any proposed curricular changes or revisions, review and approval of appropriate course sequencing, and assurance that all curricula and course syllabi are consistent with instructional program goals and public health competencies. New courses are reviewed every year for three years. CC membership includes the EHS and CHE option coordinators, three faculty members from each option, one student member and one

member from the External Advisory Council. Additional faculty may be appointed by department chairs via consultation with the program director.

The MPH Assessment Committee (AC) is a standing committee charged with providing support to the director by monitoring program assessment activities and design. The AC assists the director in assessment oversight of the program to ensure that the didactic and practice elements of the program adhere to established public health competencies and CEPH accreditation guidelines. Specifically, the AC oversees and prepares elements of the program assessment report for the semi-annual program and external advisory meeting, and oversees and coordinates the program assessment and evaluation plan. They also review input from course evaluations and student exit interviews, review student performance in the practicum and culminating experience each year and make follow-up recommendations, as well as work with other program committees. AC membership includes both EHS and CHE option coordinators. The chair of the AC is the CHE coordinator and the committee also includes one faculty member from EHS and four from CHE. Likewise, additional faculty members may be appointed by the department chairs upon discussion with the program director and students (non-voting) must be in good academic standing and available during the day.

The External Advisory Council is charged with reviewing program data and issues and giving advice and support to the director. The inculcation of public health practice into the curriculum is a key role of the Council. The council meets at least twice per year with the program committee to remain updated about program function and activities. The External Advisory Council consists of a minimum of five or more public health professionals currently practicing in the field, a faculty member, and a student from each option. Appointments are made by the director. The majority of External Advisory Council members are public health practitioners with the Marion County Health Department and the Kentucky Department of Public Health.

The BS in Public Health, Community Health, Curriculum Committee (CHE-CC) is responsible for the curricular oversight and monitoring assessment activities associated with the BS degree in public health, community health concentration. This committee ensures that the educational program, field experience and other activities adequately prepare entry-level public health practitioners while adhering to established public health competencies and CEPH accreditation guidelines. All curricular enhancements and revisions for the bachelor's degree are made by this committee. Membership consists of the CHE chair and all primary faculty in the CHE division.

In addition, department committees (eg, curriculum, academic practices, promotion and tenure) also inform program operations. Faculty are active members of departmental committees

The program director oversees program policy development. Feedback and recommendations on policy issues are provided to the director by program committees, student representatives and the External Advisory Council. The director is also responsible for processing all program assessment data for evaluation to distribute to program and college administration and the External Advisory Council. In reference to budgeting and resource allocation, the director works closely with the associate dean, dean and department chairs. The director discusses fiscal needs with the department chairs and is solely responsible to the Office of the Dean for proposal and management of the budget for action agenda monies designated specifically for the program. Student recruitment and admission are handled by the above referenced committee and the awarding of degrees is the responsibility of the university Graduate School. Program faculty and the director are responsible to inform the graduate school that students have met graduation requirements. The director provides feedback to the department chairs regarding faculty performance.

The program adheres to the university constitution and bylaws as governed by the ECU Faculty Handbook, ECU Staff Handbook, ECU Student Handbook, MPH Student Handbook, Policies and Procedures Manual and the Practicum Manual for the program.

Students are a part of shared governance at the university and are represented on all program committees. The Kentucky Public Health Association (KPHA) Student Chapter serves as the club for program students. The president of the ECU Chapter serves also as a delegate to the KPHA student section and serves as a voting member of the Board of Directors for the student chapter of KPHA. Students also complete an exit interview and make recommendations for change, evaluate required courses every three years, evaluate program professors, regarding instruction each semester and respond to a student survey as part of the assessment plan.

1.6 Fiscal Resources.

The program shall have financial resources adequate to fulfill its stated mission and goals, and its instructional, research and service objectives.

This criterion is met with commentary. The primary budget for the program is embedded in the funding allotted to the two program options, EHS and CHE. The program operates within the budgets of each department, which includes monies for the graduate and undergraduate programs within each department. This budget allocation is primarily faculty salaries from each department for the program's teaching, research, service and committee work. University support for the program remains strong and funds have been consistent over the past four years, despite college cuts, illustrative of the priority of the program to the college and university. The program also received legislative funding (action agenda funds) which have been used to support faculty and students. Action agenda funding is a discretionary source of funds awarded to support faculty scholarly pursuits and student professional development (eg,

attendance at professional workshops and conferences). In 2012-2013, there was a noted decrease in these funds. Site visitors learned that this decrease was due to a required 5% budget cut at the college level.

Over the past three years, the program has obtained four new tenure-track faculty as a result of an enrollment increase. This increase is particularly evident for MPH students enrolling in the EHS option.

One significant observation is the consistent over-expending of the budget for three of the last five academic years (2009-2010, 2010-2011 and 2011-2012). For three of the last five academic years, the program operated at a budget deficit. The magnitude of this deficit increased each year from \$542 (2009-2010), to \$9,943 (2010-2011) to a deficit of \$28,763 (2011-2012). There was no deficit in the 2012-2013 academic year. In addition, in 2012-2013, there was a significant decrease in staff salaries and benefits. During the site visit, program staff indicated that college and university administration compensated for this loss by securing those dollars or decreasing the overrun amount in the subsequent budget year.

The program's funds and expenditures are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Sources of Funds and Expenditures by Major Category, 2009 to 2013					
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Source of Funds					
Tuition & Fees					
State Appropriation*	\$43,000	\$41,280	\$41,280	\$41,280	\$37,152
University Funds	\$593,870	\$451,087	\$687,315	\$891,752	\$990,951
Grants/Contracts	\$426,704		\$35,410	\$18,711	\$24,848
Total	\$1,063,574	\$492,367	\$764,005	\$951,743	\$1,052,951
Expenditures					
Faculty Salaries & Benefits	\$593,870	\$451,087	\$666,634	\$871,074	\$970,273
Staff Salaries & Benefits	\$7,786	\$8,301	\$33,554	\$37,594	\$14,183
Operations**	\$4,935	\$10,854	\$52,949	\$55,758	\$23,506
Travel	\$10,598	\$21,247	\$18,744	\$13,614	
Student Support***		\$1,426	\$2,067	\$2,466	\$1,500
University Tax					\$27,794****
Total	\$617,189	\$492,915	\$773,948	\$980,506	\$1,035,271

*Action Agenda Funds

**Operations money does not include new laptops for all faculty.

***Additional Student Support - GA's (funded by Graduate School).

****Carry forward funds that were taken by the university.

Student support has remained constant over the last four years, and the EKU Graduate School funds a total of five need-based graduate assistantships (\$10,500 each and 12 credit hours per academic year

free) to the departments. These assistantships specifically funds MPH students in the CHE and EHS concentrations.

The university budgetary process is clearly defined. The Kentucky Legislature makes an appropriation to EKU based on university requests. The amount of the appropriation is informed by the tuition generated through student enrollments and external funding sources. All full-time faculty are fully state supported. The overall request from the university is based on departmental, college and support service requests. The university Budget Committee creates the budget for academic affairs based on the priority requests of the colleges. The university budget is approved by the EKU president and the Board of Regents. There is no formula to inform the distribution of funds. Most of the program budget is generated at the department level based on the mission and goals of the program as communicated by the program director and department chairs. The requests are evaluated and prioritized by the CHS Administrative Council including chairs, dean and associate dean. The dean presents the budget to the university Budget Committee of which she is a member. The director can also send additional requests, outside the department's purview by working directly with the dean. Examples have included funds for the self study process and for memberships in APTR.

The commentary relates to the consistent and increasing deficit evident within three of the last five academic years. While the college and university have been supportive in providing compensation to offset the deficit and/or adjusted the program budget for the following academic year, there is no standard, systematic procedure to address budget deficit scenarios. Currently, the program has the full support of the college dean and university provost and vice-president for academic affairs. However, the program is potentially disadvantaged and at risk, particularly if there is a leadership change, and the factors or systems contributing to budget overruns are not identified and remedied.

1.7 Faculty and Other Resources.

The program shall have personnel and other resources adequate to fulfill its stated mission and goals, and its instructional, research and service objectives.

This criterion is met. The current MPH program faculty complement is 14 primary faculty. Eight of these faculty teach and advise students in the CHE option, and six teach and advise students in the EHS option. Over the last three academic years, the program has consistently had sufficient primary faculty for these two specialty areas. In addition, the current adjunct/part-time faculty complement is 13 faculty, with the majority of the faculty teaching and advising within the CHE option. The majority of adjunct faculty are public health practitioners and assist with the mentoring and teaching of students. Student headcount generally increased over the last three years, particularly in 2011-2012. The vast majority of MPH students, in the last two academic years chose the EHS option. The student-faculty ratio for the MPH ranged from 3-4:1. Thus, the total faculty complement has consistently been sufficient for the instruction

and advising of all MPH students. Within the self-study and validated during the site visit, it was noted that three primary faculty would be retiring by 2016. However, the dean of the CHS and the provost and vice-president for academic affairs verified and committed that these positions would be retained within the program for filling once vacant.

The program has two administrative assistants (one in each department EHS at .50 FTE and HPA at 1.0 FTE), one administrative assistant in the Office of the Dean (.20 FTE) and one budget specialist in the Office of the Dean (.10 FTE) for a total of 1.80 FTE available to administratively support the program.

The program has sufficient space for conducting activities necessary to fulfill its mission. The offices of the MPH program and the EHS Department are housed in the Disney Building, and the Department of HPA is located in the Begley Building. During the site visit, faculty expressed a desire to be in closer proximity. Faculty believe that closer proximity would enhance collaboration across the disciplines and provide further continuity for internal program collaborations and partnerships. In addition, the program utilizes classrooms, an auditorium, and computer labs in the Rowlett Building. The majority of the classrooms, utilized for the teaching of MPH and BS courses, are smart rooms with the requisite multimedia projectors and computers. Each program faculty member has office space. There is also space in both the Disney and Begley buildings for graduate assistants to work, relax or study with their peers. Each graduate assistant has a workstation and a computer and printer to use. Lounging areas are also provided in each building.

Students with the EHS option have access to air, industrial hygiene soil and water sampling equipment. This access contributes to their ability to apply public health and environmental health science concepts in practical settings. All student computer labs have a sufficient number of desktop computers, six printers, and audiovisual equipment for presentations such as PowerPoint. The computer lab in Begley has 18 desktop computers, one main LaserJet printer, a multimedia projector, a Smart Board and a dry-erase board. Additional computer labs are available in the library and the Student Services Building, which offers 24-hour access. The university also offers computer support through the Division of Information Technology and Delivery Services (ITDS). Several MPH courses are offered online and supported by Blackboard. All tenure-track faculty and librarians are given a laptop to use for university work, and a three-year replacement plan is in place.

The EKU main library houses the public health and environmental health science collections. This library is a wireless hotspot and houses 77 public access computers plus 48 laptops that are available for check-out. One of the current MPH students serves as an EKU librarian. The main library is open 101.5 hours per week and provides the following services: library instruction program, two classrooms, "How-to" tutorials, distance and online services, library express, Encompass Digital Archive – preservation of

scholarly research and creative activity of the members of the Eastern Kentucky University Community, the Noel Studio for Academic Creativity, and the de-selection of outdated holdings. EKU libraries subscribes to 147 online databases, several of which support environmental health science research. In regards to public health, there are a total of 707,212 volumes, 6,615 databases, eBook and eJournal collections, 8,856 health science monographs and public health/health education serials, 3,463 public health monographs, and 507 serials and monographs pertinent to environmental health. Students were quite pleased with library public health holdings and access as well as access to computer facilities and databases.

1.8 Diversity.

The program shall demonstrate a commitment to diversity and shall evidence an ongoing practice of cultural competence in learning, research and service practices.

This criterion is met with commentary. The university and program have guidelines and requirements for annual diversity and harassment training to address non-discrimination and retaliation for faculty and staff, offered online or through the Equal Opportunity Office. The MPH program director participated in a diversity seminar sponsored by the Office of the Associate Provost for Diversity Planning. Site visitors heard that there are plans for MPH faculty and staff to also attend this seminar in the next year.

The university's definition of diversity includes, but is not limited to equal opportunities and treatment, mutual respect and the inclusion and celebration of diverse people and ideas. Diversity is further defined to include race, ethnicity, religion, social-economic status, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities and cultural or national backgrounds in pursuit of common unity. The program has defined diversity based on the university's comprehensive diversity plan which identifies the following groups as under-represented (diverse) populations and focused recruitment efforts based on this definition.

1. Black or African-American, Non-Hispanic, undergraduate and graduate students
2. Hispanic or Latino, regardless of race, undergraduate and graduate students
3. International undergraduate and graduate students
4. Black or African American, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Hispanic or Latino, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander and/or Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Transgender faculty

The university's strategic plan further outlines its goals to increase diverse faculty recruitment and retention and diverse student enrollment and increase international student enrollment.

The program's current faculty complement has a balanced representation of male and female faculty members of various ages. The faculty complement includes one African American and one faculty member identifying as LGBT. The site review team considered this to be representative of the population of Kentucky.

The program follows the university's comprehensive diversity plan, the 2011-2015 Kentucky Public Postsecondary Education Diversity Policy and Framework for Institution Diversity Plan Development. The university's comprehensive diversity plan addresses four areas: 1) student body diversity that reflects the diversity of Kentucky or the institution's service area; 2) student success/achievement gaps; 3) workforce diversity; and 4) campus climate.

After analysis of each area, the site review team noted that the program has successfully met its Black/African American student goal of 7.3% recruiting 9.4% and 18.0% respectively into the undergraduate and graduate programs. This was partly attributed to the availability of minority graduate assistantships and African American Fellowships. The program has been unsuccessful in recruiting Latino students into its undergraduate program since it began its efforts in 2009, reporting a 0% representation of this group in the past four years. Program faculty identified this as a growing population in the state and a priority area for recruitment. The program continues to identify steps it will take to actively recruit students from this community.

The commentary relates to the creation of an environment which embraces and encourages diversity. Inquiry into this issue confirmed that program admission is not influenced by race and that all qualified applicants have equal opportunity to enter the program. There were, however, no formal efforts to incorporate working with diverse communities into the program curricula. While the associate provost for diversity planning will be holding a diversity convocation in the spring of 2013 to highlight and celebrate the diversity of the university, no additional efforts are being made to promote inclusion within the program's curricula.

While the state itself is predominantly Caucasian, students and faculty can contribute to diversity measures by working with protected or vulnerable populations in their research, in service and in student culminating experiences. These efforts will better prepare the workforce in working with the rural and underrepresented populations of Kentucky and beyond.

2.0 INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS.

2.1 Degree Offerings.

The program shall offer instructional programs reflecting its stated mission and goals, leading to the Master of Public Health (MPH) or equivalent professional master's degree. The program may offer a generalist MPH degree and/or an MPH with areas of specialization. The program, depending on how it defines the unit of accreditation, may offer other degrees, if consistent with its mission and resources.

This criterion is met. The program offers professional MPH degrees in two concentrations. The curricular requirements for the community health education concentration include 15 credit hours of core public

health courses, six credit hours of research and health planning courses, 12 credit hours of concentration-specific courses, three credit hours of electives, three credit hours of research, three credit hours of practicum experience and one credit hour of culminating experience. The curricular requirements for the environmental health science concentration include 15 credit hours of core public health courses, six credit hours of research and health planning courses, nine credit hours of concentration-specific courses, six credit hours of electives, three credit hours of research, three credit hours of practicum experience and one credit hour of culminating experience. A review of the curricular requirements shows a sufficient depth and level of required coursework for the MPH concentrations. The program also offers the undergraduate Bachelor of Science (BS) in public health. Table 2 presents the program's degree offerings.

Table 2. Degrees Offered		
	Academic	Professional
Bachelor's Degrees		
BS in Public Health		
Master's Degrees		
Community Health Education		MPH
Environmental Health Science		MPH

2.2 Program Length.

An MPH degree program or equivalent professional public health master's degree must be at least 42 semester-credit units in length.

This criterion is met. The program of study for both MPH concentrations requires the completion of 43 credit hours. The program follows a semester academic year with courses offered fall, spring and summer. A three-credit hour semester course has contact time of three fifty minute periods each week for approximately 16 weeks. Courses that meet fewer than three times per week or deviate from the 16 week schedule are scheduled to provide the same total number of contact hours.

Over the last three years, four MPH degrees were awarded for fewer than 42 credit hours of coursework. The MPH degree in the community health concentration, prior to 2005, consisted of 36 credit hours. MPH faculty in academic years 2009 – 2012 worked diligently with the 36 credit hour program students to facilitate degree completion. There are no more students remaining in the 36 credit hour MPH program.

2.3 Public Health Core Knowledge.

All graduate professional public health degree students must complete sufficient coursework to attain depth and breadth in the five core areas of public health knowledge.

This criterion is met. All MPH students are required to complete five core courses. The core courses address the five core knowledge areas in public health and total 15 credit hours. The five core discipline courses are listed in Table 3.

Core Knowledge Area	Course Number & Title	Credits
Biostatistics	HEA 830 Biostatistics	3
Epidemiology	HEA 855 Principles of Epidemiology	3
Environmental Health Sciences	EHS 850 Introduction to Environmental Health	3
Social & Behavioral Sciences	HEA 810 Human Behavior Change	3
Health Services Administration	HEA 816 Public Health Organization and Administration	3

The site visit team reviewed syllabi, and core courses are appropriate for master's level study.

2.4 Practical Skills.

All graduate professional public health degree students must develop skills in basic public health concepts and demonstrate the application of these concepts through a practice experience that is relevant to students' areas of specialization.

This criterion is met with commentary. The MPH program requires a field experience that places students in a practice-based situation. Sites for practicum experiences include county departments of health, community-based public health organizations, non-governmental organizations and US-based companies. Field placement sites are located domestically. The self-study indicates that over 90% of the environmental health science practica are paid, and MPH community health education students receive a \$3,000 stipend from KAPHTC if they complete their practicum in an underserved county health department. Students, in consultation with the MPH option coordinators, identify potential field experience sites. Field experiences may only be conducted at approved sites. A list of pre-approved sites is posted on the MPH website. Students may locate a site for a field experience that has never hosted a student before and have a desire to complete their field work at this location. In this situation students must discuss this site with the appropriate MPH option coordinator and complete an articulation agreement.

Students are required to complete several forms before beginning their field work. First, students complete a practicum placement information sheet which records their personal contact information along with all needed contact information for the field site and their preceptor. Second, students complete a student activities/learning objectives/competencies contract which is between the student, preceptor and faculty supervisor. This contract details the projects, duties/responsibilities, learning objectives and

competencies that the student will accomplish and develop during the field activity. All three individuals review the contract and sign it before the practicum begins. The faculty supervisor is a faculty member in the student's area of MPH concentration. Third, students review and complete an agreement to safeguard confidential information while conducting their field experience at the site and a student affiliation agreement.

Working students may complete their practicum in their primary place of employment as long as it is above and beyond their normal work duties and does not include reporting to their regular supervisor. This type of practicum also must align with the five core areas of public health and offer students a new learning experience. Students must be an employee of their place of employment for at least six months and have satisfactory employee evaluations in order for the practicum to be considered for approval. Students must discuss this placement option with the appropriate MPH option coordinator and the director of practicum placement must approve the request.

The practicum experience consists of a total of 240 hours, with a minimum of 180 hours completed at the practicum site under the direction of a preceptor. The program does not grant waivers for the field experience. Students must meet the following requirements to begin their field experience: (1) the completion of a minimum of 30 semester hours of graduate study in the MPH program; (2) successful completion of the core MPH courses; and (3) an overall 3.0 grade point average.

Practicum preceptors should possess the following: (1) master's degree in public health or a related field and three to five years of experience as a public health professional; (2) five years of experience in the specific field the student will be working in if they do not have a graduate or professional degree; (3) ability to serve as a role model; (4) good understanding of the educational needs of students; (5) willingness to provide support to student; and (6) ability to answer questions regarding student's career goals and area of concentration.

The faculty supervisor and preceptor work closely to evaluate student performance. This evaluation process includes: (1) emails and phone calls between the faculty supervisor and preceptor; (2) portfolio of activities completed during the field experience that are linked to the student activities/learning objectives/competencies contract; (3) final field practicum report linked to the portfolio; (4) meeting between the student and faculty supervisor near the end of the practicum where the faculty supervisor assesses the student's understanding related to the contract; and (5) preceptor evaluation form. The faculty supervisor, in consultation with the preceptor assigns the final grade for the practicum experience.

Preceptors spoke enthusiastically about student field experiences and the knowledge that students bring to their field experiences. Site visitors learned from alumni and students that their practice experiences

reinforced their knowledge of public health and expanded their knowledge and abilities to work in the field of public health.

The commentary refers to the fact that a standard rubric in both concentrations for the evaluation for the final grade calculation by the faculty supervisor does not exist. Although field experiences vary greatly in location and project completion, it would be beneficial for both students and the faculty supervisor to have some degree of standardized evaluation of the field experience that was not student or preceptor assessed.

2.5 Culminating Experience.

All graduate professional degree programs identified in the instructional matrix shall assure that each student demonstrates skills and integration of knowledge through a culminating experience.

This criterion is met. All MPH students are required to complete a culminating experience which consists of three requirements: (1) successful completion with a passing grade of a scholarship/research project in a research course; (2) completion of the MPH 895: the MPH capstone course; and (3) successful completion and presentation with a passing grade of the scholarship/research project. Students must include some element of originality in their culminating experience which may be the topic, an analysis of newly collected or extant data, the reinterpretation of others' findings or the design and completion of a community project.

Students in the community health education concentration complete their research project in HEA 880: Scholarship in Community Health for a total of three credits. Students in the environmental health science concentration complete their research project in EHS 890: Graduate Project in Environmental Health for a total of three credits. Both classes require students to complete the following elements: (1) online NIH tutorial on the protection of human subjects (CITI); (2) institutional review board forms and documentation related to the research project; (3) IRB approval if required; (4) identification of MPH program objectives and core and concentration competencies which have been improved by the course instructor; (5) identification of an independent study project committee consisting of the course instructor and one additional faculty member (either from the EHS or HPA Departments or another department if approved by the course instructor); (6) research proposal; and (7) final written report.

Students meet regularly with their faculty instructors to review progress on the project and to discuss and solve any difficulties that may arise during the project. The final written report must contain the following sections: introduction, literature review, methods, results, discussion and conclusions and appendices (if needed) and references. Students receive a letter grade (A – C) for the research course.

Students complete three requirements in MPH 895: the MPH capstone course. First, students complete a self-assessment of the MPH core and concentration-specific competencies. This assessment requires

students to provide a written summary for each competency which should include evidence where appropriate and needed. Evidence can include a written paper, a PowerPoint presentation designed for presentation to a specific audience, etc. If students are not able to demonstrate a competency he/she is required to indicate how, when and where he/she plans to develop the competency in the future. Students are not evaluated based on the number of competencies demonstrated, but rather the evaluation is based upon the explanation and documentation of the competencies met/not met. Second, students prepare and practice their capstone presentation. Finally, students present their scholarship/research project at the end of each semester to three or more faculty members (and at least one from each concentration area) and students and peers. The audience uses a standard rubric to evaluate the culminating experience and presentation. The MPH director collects and summarizes the evaluations. The supervising faculty member receives copies of all the evaluation forms and meets with the student to review and discuss the overall evaluation. A pass or fail grade is assigned to the presentation, however, course credit is not given in MPH 895 but instead in GRD 888a (oral comprehensive exam). Therefore, students must also register for GRD 888a during the same semester. Students who do not receive a passing grade are not cleared for graduation. Students who fail are allowed a second attempt to pass, failure of which is considered a failure of the MPH program. Students receive a letter grade A – F for the first two requirements of MPH 895.

Site visitors reviewed several capstone projects, and they showed rigor, professionalism and creativity.

2.6 Required Competencies.

For each degree program and area of specialization within each program identified in the instructional matrix, there shall be clearly stated competencies that guide the development of degree programs. The program must identify competencies for graduate professional, academic and baccalaureate public health degree programs. Additionally, the program must identify competencies for specializations within the degree program at all levels (bachelor's, master's and doctoral).

This criterion is met with commentary. The program has implemented an iterative process to define competencies and assessment methods. The program began with a list of 68 competencies, which were identified by the Council on Linkages. As faculty evaluated their ability to effectively measure competency attainment, they decreased the number to 36 in 2010 and then further decreased the number to 24 in 2011. Further analysis was conducted in spring 2012, and faculty decided to incorporate concepts from the ASPH core competencies. This analysis reduced the list to 11. All decisions were jointly made by the Assessment and Curriculum Committees through a series of meetings and were then approved by the MPH Advisory Council.

A similar process was used to identify the EHS option competencies. Faculty analyzed the CDC's 10 Essential Services but decided that the EHS competencies outlined by ASPH were more closely aligned with the program's goals and so decided to utilize the ASPH EHS competencies.

The MPH-CHE option competencies were developed by first examining the list of advanced level health education specialist competencies from the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing. Faculty ranked those competencies for which they thought were most important and a final faculty vote was taken to represent the final competency selection.

For the CHE concentration area of the BS program, the Curriculum Committee met regularly and evaluated a number of options in which the faculty then selected the National Commission of Health Education competencies. Faculty were then charged with taking the new competencies for each area and incorporating them into the syllabi of their designated classes. All competencies were then shared with students through advising sessions, in the course outline and syllabi.

The commentary relates to the current implementation of these competencies and future plans to evaluate the extent to which they were incorporated into the curricula. Competencies will be measured within each course through syllabi review, and successful demonstration of these competencies by students in both their class success as well as self-report of confidence. Faculty are currently updating their syllabi with completion scheduled for fall of 2013. Evaluation data will need to be collected to ensure successful implementation. Review of current syllabi does not yet reflect complete incorporation of new competency areas.

2.7 Assessment Procedures.

There shall be procedures for assessing and documenting the extent to which each student has demonstrated achievement of the competencies defined for his or her degree program and area of concentration.

This criterion is met with commentary. The MPH program uses various methods of assessing student performance: exams, quizzes, research papers, class presentations, participation, group activities, projects, practicum and culminating experience. All MPH students are required to complete a planned program form before starting their coursework. This form is signed by the student's faculty advisor and the MPH program director and lists the completed courses to date with grade. MPH students are required to maintain a 3.0 grade point average (on a four-point scale) at all times. Students whose grade point average falls below the required standard are placed on academic probation and notified in writing by the Graduate School. Students are given one semester to improve their grade point to the standard. Students whose grade point average remains below a 3.0 are only allowed continued enrollment beyond the probationary semester with the recommendation of the faculty advisor and the department chair/program coordinator to the Office of Graduate Education and Research. Students who remain on academic

probation may be dismissed from the program. If this occurs students may appeal the dismissal decisions to the for review and final decision. Site visitors learned that in the last three years seven students were placed on academic probation and two students were expelled from the program.

The program assesses student progress in achieving competencies: (1) during core and concentration coursework; (2) portfolio of activities completed during the field experience that are linked to the student activities learning objectives competencies contract; (3) student self-assessment of core and concentration competencies in the field practicum report linked to the portfolio; and (4) student self-assessment of core and concentration competencies in the MPH 895: Capstone Course.

The MPH program has both full and part-time students. Full-time students are expected to complete their degree requirements in two and half years, and part-time students have up until seven years to complete their program. The self-study provides graduation rates for academic years 2004 – 2011 with rates ranging from 85%, 82%, 59%, 70%, 78%, 59% and 45%.

The first commentary relates to the graduation rates for the academic years of 2006-2007, 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 which are below 70%. The MPH program clarified that it was unsure of the reason for the below 70% graduation rate for academic year 2006-2007 and clarified that the below 70% graduation rate for academic years 2009-2010 and 2010-2011, was caused by part-time students taking four to six years to complete the MPH degree requirements due to tuition costs or workload or family responsibilities that meant students were taking a lower number of credits during the semester causing a longer period of time to be needed to complete the degree. The site visit team noted that the maximum time to graduation currently utilized is not realistic and when maximum time is used rates are above 70%.

The self-study provides graduation rates for undergraduate students for academic years 2007 – 2012 with rates ranging from 75%, 56%, 70%, 70% and 24%. The self-study notes that the undergraduate program did not meet the 70% required graduation rate for the 2008-2009 cohort of students. The cohort contained nine students, of which five graduated and four did not. Follow-up of these students indicated that three of the four students switched their major to a bachelor's degree in general studies in health sciences, and one student was lost to follow-up. The program has learned that students elect the general studies in health sciences degree since they can graduate one to two semesters sooner. The program now reinforces the value of a degree in a discipline and explains the types of jobs available in public health to students so that they may be less likely to change majors. A change in degree objectives but retention by the university does not count against the program in completion rates, given that only one of nine students did not complete the program.

The self-study presented graduate employment data for the years 2011 and 2012. The MPH program utilized two methods to collect employment data. A formal survey of alumni was utilized in spring 2011 and direct faculty/advisor communication with students was used in 2012. Fourteen of 37 alumni completed the survey for a response rate of 37.8%. Survey results showed that 78.6% of alumni were employed. Direct faculty/advisor communication showed that 85% of alumni were employed.

Undergraduate employment data was captured via a spring 2012 survey of undergraduate graduates. The survey was emailed to the seven graduates with a 100% response rate. Survey results showed that 57% of graduates were employed and 43% were continuing education/training.

The spring 2011 alumni survey, in addition to asking for employment information, also asked alumni to provide professional development information, to respond to a question about if they would choose the MPH program at ECU again and to self-report an appraisal of the MPH competencies they attained while in the program.

The program sent a survey to undergraduate alumni in order to assess the program spring 2012. The response rate was only 25% and so a detailed analysis was not performed.

The second commentary relates to the low response rate for the undergraduate and MPH alumni surveys. The self-study notes that this is due to the poor contact information that is maintained by the university's alumni relations office since the information contains errors and is often confusing. The MPH program plans to implement contact information collection in the MPH capstone course and internship undergraduate course for all students. This information will be organized, entered and maintained in a database in the respective departments.

At the time of the site visit no students had taken any national examinations.

A focus group in spring 2012 was convened to assess current workforce needs in the public health field and to provide guidance in curriculum development for the MPH program. Participants of the focus group included members of the ECU MPH Advisory Committee and six other practitioners/employers. Focus group participants acknowledged that both graduate and undergraduate students of public health at ECU have a broad knowledge of public health, experience through internships and the ability to work well in groups. Participants cited that the most important competencies learned through the MPH program are around the field of epidemiology, health policy and management and systems thinking. Focus group results showed that areas of improvement needed were: writing skills, grant writing and public speaking skills. Also, the MPH curriculum should be strengthened in the areas of applied epidemiology and statistical analysis and more experience with SPSS or SAS should be made available in the MPH

program. The site visit team heard from current students that a stand-alone SPSS class should be developed and implemented so that students may have a deeper learning experience and more practical examples and assignments that would reinforce learning and aptitude regarding SPSS.

The final commentary relates to the practice of gathering feedback from employers of MPH graduates every five years or one time each self-study cycle. A more frequent method (ie, survey, focus group) should be designed and implemented so that the MPH program is receiving a greater frequency of feedback to identify potential changes or additions that are needed in the MPH curricula in order to maintain relevant and current learning experiences for students.

2.8 Bachelor's Degrees in Public Health.

If the program offers baccalaureate public health degrees, they shall include the following elements:

Required Coursework in Public Health Core Knowledge: students must complete courses that provide a basic understanding of the five core public health knowledge areas defined in Criterion 2.1, including one course that focuses on epidemiology. Collectively, this coursework should be at least the equivalent of 12 semester-credit hours.

Elective Public Health Coursework: in addition to the required public health core knowledge courses, students must complete additional public health-related courses.

Public health-related courses may include those addressing social, economic, quantitative, geographic, educational and other issues that impact the health of populations and health disparities within and across populations.

Capstone Experience: students must complete an experience that provides opportunities to apply public health principles outside of a typical classroom setting and builds on public health coursework. This experience should be at least equivalent to three semester-credit hours or sufficient to satisfy the typical capstone requirement for a bachelor's degree at the parent university. The experience may be tailored to students' expected post-baccalaureate goals (eg, graduate and/or professional school, entry-level employment), and a variety of experiences that meet university requirements may be appropriate. Acceptable capstone experiences might include one or more of the following: internship, service-learning project, senior seminar, portfolio project, research paper or honors thesis.

The required public health core coursework and capstone experience must be taught (in the case of coursework) and supervised (in the case of capstone experiences) by faculty documented in Criteria 4.1.a and 4.1.b.

This criterion is met. The program offers a Bachelor of Science (BS) in public health degree with a concentration in community health. The department also offers a BS degree with a school health concentration but this degree is not included in the CEPH accreditation unit. Students must complete 12 core courses for a total of 36 credits. Knowledge areas in these courses consist of public health, safety and first aid, drugs (individual and society), mental health education and human sexuality.

Students complete 16 hours of community health required courses. Study areas in these courses include global health, public health, health education, community health, women's health, death and grief and alcohol abuse and dependency. Students must complete five supporting courses for a total of 15 credit hours. Knowledge areas in these courses consist of public health, human anatomy, human physiology, essentials of nutrition, instructional technologies and computer information systems. Finally, students complete 13 hours of electives outside of the public health major and community health concentration. Students complete six individual courses located within the undergraduate coursework that provide a basic understanding of the five core public health knowledge areas including one course that focuses on epidemiology. The commentary relates to the two classes (HEA 316 Introduction to Public Health and POL 376 Public Human Resources) that are to address the public health core knowledge area of health services administration. The review of the HEA 316 syllabus shows a minimal amount of coursework that applies to the health services administration area. A review of the POL 376 syllabus, designed to provide certain learning objectives for the undergraduate political science program, shows coursework relevant to human resource policy management in the public section in the United States and does not pertain to the core knowledge area of health services administration.

All bachelor's degree students must complete a capstone experience, which is HEA 463 Internship in Health Promotion and Administration for a total of six credits. Students are required to complete 320 hours at an internship site. Students perform activities and projects during their internship experience that affords them the opportunity to perform in the role of a health educator. All public health undergraduate students receive guidance and assessment from an university supervisor and preceptor during their field experience. Students are required to complete a daily log (which includes an assessment of self and activities experienced), final report, professional portfolio and capstone presentation to successfully meet the requirements of the internship. The preceptor and university supervisor during the field experience communicate via phone and email or site visit to discuss the progress of the student. Students are required to attend three meetings at the university to review and discuss the internship with the university supervisor. Students receive a final evaluation from the agency preceptor. Students complete their capstone presentation at the third meeting with the university supervisor which is conducted during the last week of the semester in which the student registered for the internship. The presentation is evaluated by the coordinator of the undergraduate degree program via a rubric. The coordinator assigns a letter grade (A-F) based on the preceptor evaluation and the presentation rubric.

All undergraduate students have access to several support services designed to help students succeed in the program. First, students have access to tutoring services in math, statistics, chemistry and accounting. Second, students can interact with GURUs who are upperclassmen who serve as mentors to undergraduate students. GURUs act as informational resources and either can answer any question asked of them or has direct access to a person that can provide the answer. Finally, the Noel Studio for

Academic Creativity hosts events and workshops designed to help undergraduate students improve writing, communication and research practices.

Site visitors heard positive comments from several undergraduate students regarding their coursework and learning opportunities and experiences while enrolled in the undergraduate program. Site visitors learned that students were enrolling and completing the undergraduate degree with plans to enter the public health workforce upon graduation with the undergraduate degree and pursue further study in an MPH program.

2.9 Academic Degrees.

If the program also offers curricula for graduate academic degrees, students pursuing them shall obtain a broad introduction to public health, as well as an understanding about how their discipline-based specialization contributes to achieving the goals of public health.

This criterion is not applicable.

2.10 Doctoral Degrees.

The program may offer doctoral degree programs, if consistent with its mission and resources.

This criterion is not applicable.

2.11 Joint Degrees.

If the program offers joint degree programs, the required curriculum for the professional public health degree shall be equivalent to that required for a separate public health degree.

This criterion is not applicable.

2.12 Distance Education or Executive Degree Programs.

If the program offers degree programs using formats or methods other than students attending regular on-site course sessions spread over a standard term, these degree programs must a) be consistent with the mission of the program and within the program's established areas of expertise; b) be guided by clearly articulated student learning outcomes that are rigorously evaluated; c) be subject to the same quality control processes that other degree programs in the university are; and d) provide planned and evaluated learning experiences that take into consideration and are responsive to the characteristics and needs of adult learners. If the program offers distance education or executive degree programs, it must provide needed support for these programs, including administrative, travel, communication and student services. The program must have an ongoing program to evaluate the academic effectiveness of the format, to assess learning methods and to systematically use this information to stimulate program improvements. The program must have processes in place through which it establishes that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence education course or degree is the same student who participates in and completes the course and degree and receives academic credit.

This criterion is not applicable.

3.0 CREATION, APPLICATION AND ADVANCEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE.

3.1 Research.

The program shall pursue an active research program, consistent with its mission, through which its faculty and students contribute to the knowledge base of the public health disciplines, including research directed at improving the practice of public health.

This criterion is partially met. Program faculty research is typically described as “scholarly pursuits.” Program faculty have scholarly interest in such topics as health risk behaviors, vector borne diseases, infection control, stakeholder involvement, occupational exposures, environmental and public policy, strategic planning, school health and public health systems research. Scholarly activities are primarily focused on the drafting and submission of publications and presentations at local, state and national meetings. While faculty have been relatively prolific in the drafting and submitting publications, the writing and submission of products related to extramural research funding have not been a priority. A total of three research projects were submitted and funded since 2009. ECU faculty is required to teach 12 hours/semester. Participation in scholarly activities is an essential component of the promotion and tenure criteria for faculty and is also assessed during faculty annual review. However, it was noted and discussed, during the site visit, that scholarly pursuits, as a tracked objective, required that at least one area: publication record, presentations or submission of research proposals, be fulfilled in order to meet the specific objective. During the site visit, faculty confirmed that this flexibility is not consistent with the requirements, relative to scholarly pursuits required for promotion and tenure.

Some financial support for faculty research and other scholarship is allocated at the university level, through faculty application to the University Research Committee. The committee reviews and prioritizes requests for funding and offers ‘seed money’ aimed at ultimately attracting substantial external funding for faculty scholarship. In addition, faculty can apply for research funds with the ECU Foundation. The MPH program budget can accommodate scholarly activity through use of the action agenda monies. Faculty are encouraged to present research and other scholarly activities at local, state, and national professional conferences and are also given professional development monies from sources within the university and college to support travel and conference-related expenses.

The ECU CHS and the Marion County Health Department (MCHD) began an initiative in spring 2012 to establish a formal affiliation agreement to establish an Academic Health Department. This agreement was vetted by the MCHD Board of Health and legal staff, dean of ECU CHS and the ECU legal counsel and approved in February 2013. A portion of the agreement is dedicated to collaborative research. Given the recent vetting and approval of this initiative, there is no active program at the current time.

Of the three funded research proposals listed in the self-study, only one project appears to be a research activity (gastrointestinal illness and public perceptions of drinking water disinfection in western Kenya). The remaining projects on coordinated school health and the bringing together of doctors and environmental workers, appear to be more training (conference support) and service oriented projects.

Students are involved in scholarship in a number of ways, primarily through their MPH student research projects. A Health Education Research Fund was established in 2006 to encourage graduate and undergraduate students to participate in research projects, and small mini-grants may be awarded. Involvement of students in faculty-led research is also minimal. In addition to the Kenyan water project and the physician/environmental health project, there was some student involvement on limited non-funded research projects in the area of sexual assault prevention on college campuses in Ohio and Kentucky and the behavioral impact of a required college health course.

The first concern relates to the fact that there is little to no demonstrated faculty research (funded or non-funded). Although a 12-hour per semester teaching load is relatively heavy, it should not preclude the submission of small, less intensive grant proposals.

The second concern relates to low levels of student involvement in faculty-led research. Students have minimal opportunity to be mentored by faculty on faculty-led research initiatives.

The final concern relates to the fact that students have been successful, in their research methods courses, in writing and obtaining extramural funding; however, faculty mentors have not been equally incentivized to be proactive in seeking extramural funding, even on a smaller scale, to increase their respective research enterprise. Increase in the submission and securing of research funding will become increasingly critical if the program develops and actualizes doctoral programs. A DrPH program is currently being actively discussed at the program, college and university levels. In addition, during the site visit, a community representative expressed strong interest in faculty-led community-based research that would begin to address local public health concerns.

3.2 Service.

The program shall pursue active service activities, consistent with its mission, through which faculty and students contribute to the advancement of public health practice.

This criterion is met with commentary. Service is encompassed in the program's mission and goals to include participation in partnerships and collaborative endeavors.

Service is listed as one aspect of the tenure and promotion and is encouraged by the university and college. Limited funding is available through the action agenda funds to support conference and other

service initiatives. Faculty and staff have demonstrated a spectrum of service activities from membership to professional organizations to leadership on boards and committees. Student service also demonstrates variation from attendance at conferences to poster and other conference presentations. Students and faculty also participate in health fairs and other community events throughout the year both at the graduate and undergraduate level.

The commentary relates to the current level of service in regards to partnerships and collaborations. The site visit team noted that collaborations are limited to local and state public health departments. This was further confirmed by the very limited participation of community partners at the site visit. Representatives present in the interview shared examples of faculty providing consultation to their teams on environmental health topics. They expressed regret at the limited participation by students in these consultation activities. Representatives also identified a shared need to have faculty regularly visit and spend time at their offices to gain a better understanding of their needs.

3.3 Workforce Development.

The program shall engage in activities other than its offering of degree programs that support the professional development of the public health workforce.

This criterion is met. MPH program faculty have a collaborative relationship with the Kentucky Institute of Public Health Practice Enhancement (KIPHPE) and the Kentucky-Appalachian Public Health Training Center (KA-PHTC). KIPHPE conducted an assessment of the communities served by the MPH program and it was discovered that a need to offer a certificate in public health for public health practitioners was needed. A certificate was designed and implemented for completion of an undergraduate version of the core public health courses. The ECU MPH program offered the biostatistics, behavioral health and epidemiology courses. Several staff members from the Three Rivers District Health Department completed the certificate program. Preliminary data from the KA-PHTC workforce assessment showed a need for capacity building for rapid response to outbreaks or emergencies. This information was presented at a Building Epidemiologic Capacity in Kentucky (BECKY) group meeting in November 2012. As a result of this meeting an ECU public health faculty member developed a plan to host a one-day training in which students, staff and faculty will be trained on how to provide telephone coverage, gather information, conduct interviews and perform data entry during an outbreak investigations. This training will be held in spring 2013.

The EHS department offers technical training courses in the summer or winter break between semesters for both undergraduate and graduate students. Undergraduate students receive academic credit for the courses and graduate students and practitioners enroll and complete the courses for continuing education credit, and receive certificates indicating the course is an OSHA training course.

The program director works with the HPA department of provide continuing education experiences designed to prepare individuals for the Certified Health Education Specialists (CHES) examination. The program director also works within the EHS department to help provide continuing education opportunities for individuals to take the exam to become a registered sanitarian in Kentucky or the NEHA REHS nationwide exam.

The MPH program director and faculty members work with the KAPHTC to identify public health education needs in Kentucky. The KAPHTC was established in 2010 when the University of Kentucky received the award from HRSA.

Community partners identified that the openness of the program to implement their recommendations was well respected. Proactive assessment of current public health needs will further prepare students to be able to address these needs in a timely manner and possibly carve a niche for themselves in the state.

4.0 FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS.

4.1 Faculty Qualifications.

The program shall have a clearly defined faculty which, by virtue of its distribution, multidisciplinary nature, educational preparation, practice experience and research and instructional competence, is able to fully support the program's mission, goals and objectives.

This criterion is met. The program's faculty complement is multidisciplinary and has members who are well qualified to teach in these respective disciplines. This complement is augmented with other faculty who have substantial public health practice and private sector experience. For instance, the program director has 29 years of experience in the private sector (environmental and occupational health). Four new faculty lines were provided and hired in the last three years. The majority of the faculty have the DrPH degree or the PhD degree.

The program also frequently involves community-based public health practitioners through its External Advisory Council and other collaborative relationships with sister institutions in the state (eg., University of Kentucky, University of Louisville, and Western Kentucky University). Thus, students get invaluable training in the application of the didactic work through public health practice.

The self-study document notes three primary faculty will retire by 2016. EKU senior administration has committed to retaining the positions in the program and filling those positions. Thus, the total number of faculty will not be compromised and comparable qualifications will be sought.

4.2 Faculty Policies and Procedures.

The program shall have well-defined policies and procedures to recruit, appoint and promote qualified faculty, to evaluate competence and performance of faculty, and to support the professional development and advancement of faculty.

This criterion is met. Program faculty are governed by institutional faculty rights and responsibilities as detailed in the ECU Faculty Handbook.

Faculty receive faculty development funds (\$600) annually for meetings, training courses and additional instructional tools. A faculty member may also carry over the funds for up to three years. Faculty receive new laptop computers every three years and large screen monitors. In addition, faculty are encouraged to serve on national boards or committees of their discipline and are given time off to travel when necessary to these meetings. In addition, adjunct faculty also are given laptops to use off-site for class preparation and may purchase, through the department, any additional needed equipment for classroom purposes.

Faculty competence and performance, regarding teaching, scholarship and service is assessed by annual evaluations of non-tenured faculty utilizing standard forms and reporting of self evaluations, peer review, student evaluation and data from surveys addressing teaching effectiveness, as well as a comparative analysis with previous evaluations, student evaluation of instruction and chairperson evaluations. Tenured faculty receive student evaluations (questionnaire) administered in at least one class each semester. Tenured faculty may also be subject to post-tenure review. Promotion and tenure policies and guidelines are outlined in the faculty handbook and govern the promotion and tenure process. Merit pay decisions are based on evaluation by department chairs. The program director can provide feedback to give input to the respective department chair of the faculty member regarding merit pay and the annual performance evaluation. Department chairs meet with the faculty member to discuss the evaluation and any needed plans for remediation.

4.3 Student Recruitment and Admissions.

The program shall have student recruitment and admissions policies and procedures designed to locate and select qualified individuals capable of taking advantage of the program's various learning activities, which will enable each of them to develop competence for a career in public health.

This criterion is met with commentary. Recruitment and admissions are conducted year-round with students admitted into both the fall and spring semesters. Current recruitment efforts include outreach to undecided students or students in complementary degree programs, exposing them to public health and encouraging them to join the program. Outreach regarding the bachelor's and master's degree programs is also done at career fairs and other university recruitment activities to college and high school students.

Word of mouth was identified as the most successful recruiting process as many students during the student session attesting that they heard about the program through someone they knew. MPH

recruitment is often done directly to the undergraduate students, with many opting to earn both degrees at ECU.

The first commentary relates to word of mouth being the primary method of recruitment. This primary mode of recruitment does not allow for a broader range of recruitment and growth for the program. The second commentary relates to feedback from students indicating the need to brand the program and educate more on the profession as a whole. This will elevate the profession and expose more to the field of public health.

Adequate admissions processes are in place to review and accept applicants, with cost often being a factor in the decision to attend the university.

4.4 Advising and Career Counseling.

There shall be available a clearly explained and accessible academic advising system for students, as well as readily available career and placement advice.

This criterion is met. Students are introduced to the advising services upon entry into the program at a new student orientation luncheon. Program expectations and proposed schedules are shared with students as they are linked to a faculty advisor. Students in the MPH program hear about the different program options and receive a student handbook as well as information on course, practicum and comprehensive exam requirements. Upon entry into the program, they are each assigned a faculty advisor who can assist them with any questions or concerns they have about the program and can assist them in successfully navigating through the program. They meet to create a planned program of study which is shared with the chair of the department and also goes into their record. Students are encouraged to meet with their advisor each semester.

Students in the undergraduate program receive a similar experience, but are required to meet with their advisor each semester during which they receive a number required to register for their classes. Career Counseling is available at both the university and program level and occurs throughout the program and after as alumni are encouraged to stay in touch with their faculty advisor. Job opportunities are frequently sent through student and alumni list serves, connecting students and alumni with prospective jobs and resources.

Evaluation of student advising and counseling services was conducted in 2011 to both students and alumni. Thirty-four of 35 students responded to the MPH Student survey (97%) reporting scores of 8 or higher on a scale of 1-10 for all measurements, including: faculty knowledge, faculty willing to meet student needs, faculty relating concepts to the real world, and quality of the academic advising. While still

receiving scores above an 8, scores were lower for items related to library resources, career information/job search and prepared to work in public health.

A similar survey was completed by MPH alumni with a response from 14 of 37 alumni (37.8%). A similar range of scores were reported with a slight dip in all responses, with a notable dip (7.1) reported for career information/job search. Students have a process in which they can raise concerns about the program either directly to an instructor or through their student representative at the various committees students sit on. Both undergraduate and graduate students and alumni attending the information visits report high satisfaction with the accessibility of advisors and faculty for program and career advising.

Agenda

COUNCIL ON EDUCATION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH ACCREDITATION SITE VISIT

Eastern Kentucky University MPH Program

April 15 – 16, 2013

Monday, April 15, 2013

- 8:00 am Site Visit Team Pick-Up from Hotel
Carolyn Harvey
- 8:30 am Site Visit Team Request for Additional Documents
Carolyn Harvey
Michael Ballard
Michelyn Bhandari
Gary Brown
- 9:00 am Team Resource File Review
- 9:30 am Break
- 9:45 am Meeting with Program and Department Administration
Carolyn Harvey
Michael Ballard
Michelyn Bhandari
Gary Brown
- 11:15 am Break
- 11:30 am Meeting with Faculty Related to Curriculum and Degree Programs
Carolyn Harvey
Gary Brown
Michael Ballard
Michelyn Bhandari
Phyllis Bryden
Karen Hunter
Laurel Mills
- 12:30 pm Break
- 12:45 pm Lunch with Students
Meredith Lamb
Brooklyn Lewis
Corina Singleton
Stephanie Smith
Myron Douglas
Jon Vorbeck
Suresh Sah
Ashley Scott
Karen Gilbert
Chris Duckworth
Nicholas Sexton
Morgan Riley
Steven Chapman
Jimmy Hamm
- 1:30 pm Break
- 1:45 pm Meeting with Faculty Related to Research, Service, Faculty Issues
Derek Holcomb
Laurie Larkin

Molly McKinney
Jason Marion
Joe Beck
Sheila Pressley
Darryl Barnett

2:30 pm

Break

2:45 pm

Meeting with Alumni
Jon Vorbeck
Stephany Whitaker
Nancy Crewe
Lauren Reno

3:30 pm

Break

3:45 pm

Meeting with Institutional Academic Leadership/University Officials
Janna Vice
Deborah Whitehouse

4:30 pm

Resource File Review and Executive Session

5:30 pm

Adjourn

Tuesday, April 16, 2013

8:00 am

Site Visit Team Pick-Up from Hotel
Carolyn Harvey

8:30 am

Meeting with Community Representatives and Preceptors
Ruth Hawkins
Kelly Owens
Douglas Thoroughman

9:30 am

Break

9:45 am

Executive Session and Report Preparation

11:30 am

Working Lunch, Executive Session and Report Preparation

12:30 pm

Exit Interview