REVIEW FOR ACCREDITATION

OF THE

BS AND BA IN PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM

AT

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

COUNCIL ON EDUCATION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

SITE VISIT DATES:
March 27-29, 2019

SITE VISIT TEAM:
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CRITERIA:
Accreditation Criteria for Standalone
Baccalaureate Programs, amended
July 2016

Table of Contents

1.0 LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Criterion 1.1: The program maintains an organizational description and organizational chart(s) that define the program's administrative structure and relationships to other institutional components. The organizational chart presents the program's relationships with its department(s), school(s), college(s) and other relevant units within the institution.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

The self-study clearly describes the organization and defines the program structure. The institutional components are clearly delineated. The university organizational chart is clear, well-defined and describes the program, college and university hierarchy appropriately. Administrative and supporting units are well-defined and represented. The program includes a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Sciences degree, both of which are campus-based. The program director reports to the department chair. The Department of Health Studies (DHS) chair reports to the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, who reports to the interim provost. In addition to the public health program, the DHS also includes health promotion and nutrition programs. The provost reports to the university president, who reports to the Board of Trustees.

Observations on Site

The site visit confirmed the details from the self-study document regarding the program relationship to the department, college and university.

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Criterion 1.2: The program demonstrates administrative autonomy that is sufficient to affirm its ability to fulfill its mission and goals and to conform to the conditions for accreditation. Administrative autonomy refers to the program's ability, within the institutional context, to make decisions related to the following:

- allocation of program resources
- implementation of personnel policies and procedures
- development and implementation of academic policies and procedures
- development and implementation of curricula
- admission to the major

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

The self-study describes a program that has the autonomy to meet its mission and satisfy accreditation requirements. The program's budget is included in the overall departmental budget. The DHS budget is requested biannually by the department chair and is allocated by the College of Arts and Sciences.

At the department level, the implementation of personnel policies and procedures is the responsibility of the department chair, with guidance from the Department Bylaws and Faculty Manual. The dean of the College of Arts and Sciences appoints the department chair to a three-year term after receiving a recommendation from the department faculty. The faculty manual, available online, outlines the personnel policies and procedures. Staff policies and procedures are available online in the Staff Personnel Policies Manual.

Departmental-level academic policies are developed by the DHS Bylaws Committee and are reviewed and approved by the department faculty and the chair. Program faculty have defined roles in developing academic policies and curricula.

The self-study describes, in detail, the program's curriculum development process. Faculty members submit curricular proposals, the department reviews them through the Curriculum Committee, and the faculty implements changes.

The department has defined a process for admission to the major. The public health major declaration requirements include a minimum 2.67 cumulative GPA and department approval. If the GPA is between 2.50 and 2.67, students may be admitted after the completion of 15 credit hours with a minimum of 3.0 cumulative GPA.

Observations on Site

University leaders discussed support for the growing public health program during the visit. Additional tenure-track positions, diverse hires, and program administrative support were all topics discussed and supported. The dean emphasized the need for additional senior faculty and outlined budget requests already submitted.

During on-site meetings, faculty indicated that they have the opportunity to thrive and that the department chair encourages collaboration and communication.

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Criterion 1.3: Faculty have clearly defined rights and responsibilities concerning program governance and academic policies. Program faculty have formal opportunities for input in decisions affecting curriculum design, including program-specific degree requirements, program evaluation, student assessment and student admission to the major. Faculty have input in resource allocation to the extent possible, within the context of the institution and existing program administration.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

The program, department, and college all foster opportunities for faculty input. The program director is charged with program development and execution, including recruitment, curricular development, marketing, course scheduling, and hiring faculty. In addition to teaching public health courses, the director coordinates all aspects of program assessment and preparation of materials for accreditation. Faculty provide input regarding curriculum design, changes and additions. Program faculty serve rotating two-year terms on the DHS Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. The self-study also contains an exhaustive matrix of program governance, resource distribution, faculty hiring/appointment, advising personnel, and program specific requirements for awarding degrees. This matrix includes a summary, responsible parties and relevant online links to policies, and the matrix demonstrates appropriate roles for program faculty.

Observations on Site

The site visit team confirmed information presented in the self-study document relating to faculty input in program design and curriculum development. Faculty use assessment data, student feedback, and enrollment growth as drivers for program changes. For example, students indicated that the HLTH 340: Fundamentals of Epidemiology focused more on qualitative data versus quantitative. Faculty members incorporated quantitative components in order to address student demand.

Institution Comments:

Council Comments:

Criterion 1.4: The program ensures that all faculty (including full-time and part-time faculty) regularly interact and are engaged in ways that benefit the instructional program (e.g., instructional workshops, curriculum committee).

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

The self-study provides numerous examples of faculty interaction and engagement. Full-time faculty have participated in multiple experiences relating to curriculum design, policies, and procedures and have participated in administrative committees and service opportunities. The director of the public health program chairs the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, with four additional DHS faculty serving as committee members. Additionally, both full-time and part-time faculty have served on department-level committees including the Strategic Planning Committee, Consultative Committee, and the Target of Opportunity of Hiring Committee. Faculty members have also served on the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) committees including the Dean's Advisory Committee. The self-study describes faulty engagement is demonstrated at the program and college level.

Observations on Site

Faculty confirmed their engagement serving on committees, implementing curriculum changes based on student feedback, and participating in community service opportunities. Faculty members confirmed departmental and university support for service in membership organizations, conference participation, and continuing education opportunities.

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Criterion 1.5: Catalogs and bulletins used by the program, whether produced by the program or the institution, to describe its educational offerings accurately describe its academic calendar, admission policies, grading policies, academic integrity standards and degree completion requirements. Advertising, promotional materials, recruitment literature and other supporting material, in whatever medium it is presented, contains accurate information.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

Online catalogues are current, calendars are readily available, and policies are posted online. Academic standards, grading policies, and degree completion requirements are all referenced online and publicly available. The self-study notes the director of the program is ultimately responsible for the publication and currency of program information.

Observations on Site

Program faculty provided marketing materials and advertising examples during the site visit. The information contained in those materials was current, descriptive, and germane to the public health program. Students confirmed that catalogs were clear and accurate.

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

2.0 RESOURCES

Criterion 2.1: The program has **sufficient faculty resources** to accomplish its mission, to teach the required curriculum, to oversee extracurricular experiences and to achieve expected student outcomes. Generally, the minimum number of faculty required would be 2.0 FTE faculty in addition to the designated leader's effort each semester, trimester, quarter, etc., though individual circumstances may vary. The FTE calculation follows the institution or unit's formula and includes all individuals providing instruction in a given semester, trimester, quarter, etc.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

The program is supported by 12 full-time teaching faculty and five adjunct instructors. For the full-time faculty, there are seven term faculty and five tenured/tenure-track faculty. Adjunct faculty members teach a maximum of three courses in a calendar year. Full-time-equivalent allocation is based on the number of courses each faculty member teaches per semester. For example, teaching three courses in a semester is equal to 1.0 FTE. Full-time faculty members dedicate 1.0 FTE to the department. At a minimum, each full-time faculty member dedicates .33 FTE to the program per semester.

There are different responsibilities related to teaching, scholarship, and service for each faculty category. The tenure-line faculty in the public health program typically have a workload distribution of 40% teaching, 40% research, and 20% service. Tenure-line faculty are expected to teach four courses per academic year.

Term faculty members typically have a workload distribution of 80% teaching and 20% service, although this may be modified for those faculty who have administrative responsibilities (e.g., program directors). Full-time term faculty members on nine-month contracts are expected to teach six courses per academic year, unless they have release time for administrative duties.

Observations on Site

During on-site meetings, reviewers had clarification questions related to faculty FTE. The program director stated that faculty FTE can vary each semester based on teaching load. The program director further explained that the teaching load for tenure and tenure track faculty is 2:2 and that the term faculty teaching load is 3:3. The department chair also indicated that the decision of hiring a term faculty member versus a tenure-track faculty member is based on the department's budget and university approval.

The program is currently seeking to hire an additional full-time faculty member to accommodate the growth in the student body. In the near future, upon approval, the program is also seeking to hire two additional tenure-track faculty.

The full-time faculty mix includes 40% tenured/tenure-track and 60% term faculty members. College and university leaders reported that this mix is atypical and skews high on term faculty. Last year, the department had a failed search for a senior tenured faculty member. The search has been re-opened. Program leaders acknowledged that there is a need to hire more senior or tenured/tenure-track faculty and are actively seeking to add at least one to two more additional faculty members with advanced rank to make the tenure/term balance more aligned with other units in the college.

Institution Comments:

The department recently received university approval to conduct searches for two tenure-track faculty members: one associate or full professor and one assistant professor. These searches will commence in Fall Semester 2019, with hiring dates of August 2020.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Criterion 2.2: The mix of **full-time and part-time faculty** is sufficient to accomplish the mission and to achieve expected student outcomes. The program relies primarily on faculty who are full-time institution employees.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

The majority of courses in the program are taught by full-time faculty. During the 2017-2018 academic year, 75% of core course sections required for the major were taught by full-time faculty members. The department added a new teaching faculty member for AY 2018-2019. The faculty member was originally brought on as an adjunct faculty member and transitioned into a full-time term faculty member.

Observations on Site

Students indicated that adjunct faculty in other colleges within the university were sometimes delayed in responding to inquires due to their limited campus availability but expressed satisfaction with class sizes and full-time faculty responsiveness within in the program. Some students indicated that they understand the delay in faculty response because they are non-traditional students and also have full-time jobs.

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Criterion 2.3: The program tracks student enrollment to assist in gauging resource adequacy. Given the complexity of defining "enrollment" in an undergraduate major or baccalaureate degree program, the program uses consistent, appropriate quantitative measures to track student enrollment at specific, regular intervals.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

Enrollment data are tracked by the university registrar, in partnership with the Office of Information Technology and the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. The program director, department chair, and personnel from the College of Arts and Sciences also track and review enrollment data for the program each semester. American University uses the Business Intelligence data management system, and enrollment data are updated weekly throughout the academic year. The Business Intelligence platform provides insights into all aspects of student's enrollment and academics. The application is designed for a variety of users across multiple AU organizational units. Access to student enrollment reports is controlled by the university registrar.

Observations on Site

Faculty indicated that they have been able to advocate for additional faculty to support the program based on enrollment data (i.e., the number of students who have declared the major during the current annual year)

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Criterion 2.4: The program's **student-faculty ratios (SFR) are sufficient** to ensure appropriate instruction, assessment and advising. The program's SFR are comparable to the SFR of other baccalaureate degree programs in the institution with similar degree objectives and methods of instruction.

Finding:

Partially Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

Student FTE is determined by using the university's formula of full-time student head count plus total part-time credit hours divided by 12. The student FTE in fall 2018 was 290. The FTE for the previous four semesters was 243, 236, 230, and 228, demonstrating consistent growth.

Student-faculty ratio (SFR) is calculated by dividing the student FTE by the faculty FTE. The SFR was 33 in spring 2018, 35 in fall 2017, 29 in spring 2017, and 33 in fall 2016. The program's average class size has ranged from 23 to 26 (for spring 2018, the most current data available in the self-study document).

The self-study document reports the advising load as consistent across DHS, with 330 students to one, full-time dedicated staff advisor.

The program provides data for the bachelor's degree in psychology for comparison. The program's rationale for the choice is that the psychology program has a similar mission and number of undergraduate degrees awarded.

The undergraduate psychology SFR was three times lower than that of the public health program each semester: ranging from 10 (spring 2018, the most current data available) to 13. The psychology program's average class size, however, ranged from 34 to 36. The advising load is identical with 330 students to one advisor.

The psychology program is supported by a greater number of faculty including the tenure/tenure-track faculty (e.g., 16). In total, the psychology program has 20 full-time and four term faculty members.

Observations on Site

| During an on-site meeting, the dean explained that the college's senior director for advising, retention, and recruiting seeks to have comparable advising loads for each undergraduate staff advisor. He also stated that after freshman year, students are encouraged but not required to see an advisor.

Students explained that they use the program advising services on an as-needed basis. They stated that both the program director and the staff advisor share formal responsibilities for advising. The staff advisor is also responsible for multiple departments including the public health program. Students indicated that if they have questions related to advising, they can go to the program director and the staff advisor. Students also indicated that both the program director and staff advisor are always responsive and knowledgeable.

In reference to the program's SFR, faculty stated that by advocating for more departmental faculty hires, they hope that the SFR will be lowered. Students discussed the availability of faculty stating that the program faculty were instrumental in helping them determine post-graduation plans (e.g., graduate school and prospective job opportunities). Some students stated that departmental faculty were accessible and available; however, they explained that it takes time for students to get to know the professors. |
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Institution Comments:

Since the site visit, the department continued to advocate for additional faculty hires and we were delighted to learn that the Provost has approved two new tenure-track faculty positions for our department. The searches will commence this fall, with the new faculty beginning their appointments in Fall Semester 2020. One position will be advertised as a Public Health faculty at the rank of Associate or Full Professor and the other will be advertised as an Epidemiology or Infectious Disease faculty at the rank of Assistant Professor. We will intentionally market the senior position broadly and will seek to cultivate candidates who would be interested in taking on administrative duties (such as department chairperson) in time. The junior position will help to strengthen our faculty expertise in Epidemiology and / or Infectious Disease. Both positions will benefit the Public Health Program immensely, as the faculty will teach courses in the Public Health curriculum. The addition of these two tenure track positions will also reduce the program's SFR, thus further benefitting our students.

Council Comments:

The Council reviewed the self-study, team's report, and program's response and acted to change the finding from met to partially met, based on the issue identified by the team.

The concern relates to the program's higher student-faculty ratio than the comparable program. The program's response describes plans to hire two new faculty members in fall 2020 to reduce the program's student-faculty ratio.

Criterion 2.5: The program has access to financial and physical resources that are adequate to fulfill its operating needs, accomplish the mission, teach the required curriculum and provide an environment that facilitates student learning, including faculty office space, classroom space and student gathering space.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

The program budget has increased substantially from 2014 to present ($50,000 to $392,745) and has grown in direct proportion to enrollment.
The self-study notes that tuition revenue is a key factor in determining budget allocations to the program within the department, so the growing enrollment and corresponding growth in tuition have resulted in more financial resources available to the program.
The self-study notes that physical resources have improved in recent years, with the permanent housing of the program within the newly acquired McCabe Hall. The program notes that consolidation in a single building has improved coordination and engagement between faculty and students. All tenure-line faculty and program directors have their own offices; term faculty members share an office with one other term faculty member. The department also has a faculty lounge, student lounge, and a conference room. One of the designated departmental rooms (Room 123) is used for small classes, department events, student events, and meetings. The majority of classrooms are equipped with projection and sound equipment.

Observations on the Site Visit

Faculty members and program leaders confirmed that they had the financial and physical resources to meet the mission and vision of the university, college, department, and program. Faculty emphasized the opportunities for grant writing stipends, travel funds available for conference attendance, and other small financial incentives for scholarship are available from both the department and the university. Students expressed satisfaction with student meeting space.

Institution Comments:

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Criterion 2.6: The academic support services available to the program are sufficient to accomplish the mission and to achieve expected student outcomes. Academic support services include, at a minimum, the following:

- computing and technology services
- library services
- distance education support, if applicable
- advising services
- public health-related career counseling services
- other student support services (eg, writing center, disability support services), if they are particularly relevant to the public health program.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

Multiple academic support services exist to support the program. At the institutional level, these services include the Office of Information Technology; the American University Library, which also supports distance education; the Career Center; the Academic Support and Access Center (ASAC); and the Office of Campus Life (OCL).

Computing and technology services, in addition to being supported by the institution, are also supported by the College of Arts and Sciences, which employs three staff members, including a webmaster, IT manager, and technical services coordinator. The American University Library provides support for Blackboard, which is the learning system used by the university. The Center for Teaching, Research, and Learning supports faculty development for the use of online learning tools and offers additional support for face-to-face and hybrid courses.

The library holds collections and provides research support through a variety of services, including access to librarians, online tutorials and research guides, subject-specific resource lists, and additional support through the Research Commons.

The program director and faculty provide career advisement to students. The public health capstone course includes integrated discussion on post-graduation topics, and students and faculty provide reviews of resumes, cover letters, applications, and other associated documents. The program also hosts a Public Health Career Night in conjunction with the AU Career Center. All faculty serving the program mentor public health majors. The Public Health

Program Director and the Director of the Public Health Scholars Program also work closely with the college level advisor to address any academic questions or issues that arise for individual students.

The ASAC works with students with disabilities, and it also works with all students for other academic support, including writing, tutoring, student athlete support, and supplemental instruction. The OCL supports students in engagement beyond campus and assists students in finding service learning and other projects.

Observations on Site

Students reported that they feel adequately supported by the services provided by the department, college, and university.

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

3.0 FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS

Criterion 3.1: The program meets the requirements of regional accreditors for faculty teaching baccalaureate degree students. Faculty with doctoral-level degrees are strongly preferred and, in most cases, expected. A faculty member trained at the master's level may be appropriate in certain circumstances, but the program must document exceptional professional experience and teaching ability.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

American University is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education through 2024, and faculty qualifications were reviewed during the most recent reaccreditation process.

The DHS has 12 full-time faculty members, 10 of whom hold doctoral degrees. Seven additional faculty from other departments teach required courses in public health, all of whom hold doctoral degrees. Additionally, five adjunct faculty have taught courses in the program over the past two years, of whom three hold doctoral degrees, one holds a JD/MPH, and one holds a master's degree in counseling psychology.

All full-time faculty hold either doctoral or master's degrees that are relevant to public health. Faculty from other AU departments hold appropriate degrees to deliver public health content, including in anthropology, sociology, applied mathematics, biology, philosophy, and health behavior. Adjunct faculty hold degrees in molecular genetics/cell biology, public health law, health communication, counseling psychology, and health policy and management, all of which are applicable to public health.

Faculty who do not hold doctoral degrees have strong relevant experience in public health. One instructor holds an MPH degree and CHES certification. She has experience as a senior health communications specialist with the American Institutes for Research. She has also worked as a senior technical assistance specialist with Northrup Grumman/CDC Office of Smoking and Health. Another instructor holds an MPH and has served as a senior HIV/AIDS prevention technical advisor with USAID Vietnam and as an HIV/AIDS prevention program

advisor with the CDC in Kenya. One of the adjunct faculty members holds a MEd in Counseling Psychology and serves as the university's wellness director.

Observations on Site:

Full-time faculty members who do not hold doctoral degrees are among the longest-serving in the department, and they are involved in multiple functions, including internship coordination and supervision. Both are experienced practitioners and educators.

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Criterion 3.2: The designated leader of the program is a **full-time faculty member** with educational qualifications and professional experience in a **public health discipline.** If the designated program leader does not have educational qualifications and professional experience in a public health discipline, the program documents that it has sufficient public health educational qualifications, national professional certifications and professional experience in its primary faculty members. Preference is for the designated program leader to have formal doctoral-level training (eg, PhD, DrPH) in a public health discipline or a terminal professional degree (eg, MD, JD) and an MPH.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

The designated program leader is a full-time faculty member who holds a PhD in Community Health Studies from The Ohio State University, and she has previous experience coordinating a public health studies program. She holds a CHES certification. She is active in the public health field through scholarship and service, and she teaches courses in the program, including the capstone and introduction to public health.

The program also has an accelerated program for the bachelor's degree. This program allows students to complete the degree in three years, which is accomplished by students completing course and program requirements in the summer term. This program is led by another full-time faculty member in the department. This program includes approximately 50 students. The accelerated program lead holds a PhD in maternal and child health from Johns Hopkins University.

Observations on Site

Institution Comments:

Council Comments:

Criterion 3.3: Practitioners are involved in instruction through a variety of methods (eg, guest lectures, service learning, internships and/or research opportunities). Use of practitioners as instructors in the program, when appropriate, is encouraged, as is use of practitioners as occasional guest lecturers.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

The self-study lists multiple examples of guest lectures and notes that service learning is integrated within the curriculum. Local health agencies, federal public health institutions, non-profit organizations and other educational entities are all included in instructional activities. The program cites practice partners as helpful to the inclusion of data analytics, policy, environmental health, and wellness as topics within the curriculum. The self-study highlights speaker names, affiliations, topics presented, and courses with practitioner involvement.   This list includes guest speakers and practitioners serving as instructors (with credentials listed), demonstrating relationships with current public health practice.

Observations on Site

Students and alumni confirmed the value and significance of practitioner involvement within the program. Many of the adjunct faculty begin as guest lecturers or preceptors for internships and are drawn to be more involved in the program. Students and faculty alike emphasized the value practitioners continue to add to the program. Broad experience, educational and occupational diversity, and existing professional networks are all advantages that were cited.

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Criterion 3.4: All faculty members are informed and current in their discipline or area of public health teaching.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

Faculty members stay informed and current in the field through a number of activities, including scholarship via publications and presentations (e.g., National Network of Arab American Communities Action Day). Faculty research topics include "Men who engage in both Objective and Subjective Binge Eating Have the Highest Psychological and Medical Comorbidities" and "Low-income adults' perceptions of farmers' markets and community supported agriculture programs."

Faculty members also hold professional memberships with the American Public Health Association, the American Heart Association, and the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE). Faculty also participate in committee service and attend, present, and facilitate workshops related to faculty development. Faculty members are active in research and professional development activities.

Observations on Site

Funding is provided for faculty development. Faculty may apply for small grants to support needs (up to $2000 a term; a $10,000 faculty research award is also available). Each faculty member has a professional development allocation (tenured/tenure track faculty receive $2,000; term faculty receive $1,000 annually; program directors receive an additional $500). Professional development money can be carried over to a subsequent year. Professional development funds may be used for a variety of activities, including conference attendance, professional dues, certificate programs, or resources for classes. Currency in the field is required in faculty guidelines. The adjunct faculty are unionized, and the union provides professional development funding for professional development.

Onsite, faculty members provided examples of how they remain informed and current. For example, some faculty members have used the funding for research projects. One of the departmental faculty members used the funding for an adolescent sexual health research project and presented her findings at the annual SOPHE conference. Additionally, some faculty

members have had their research published in public health journals (e.g., Eating Behaviors, Health Promotion Practice, and American Journal of Public Health). Faculty members have also attended National Institutes of Health (NIH) professional development workshops.

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Criterion 3.5: Course instructors who are currently enrolled graduate students, if serving as primary instructors, have at least a master's degree in the teaching discipline or are pursuing a doctoral degree with at least 18 semester credits of doctoral coursework in the concentration in which they are teaching.

Finding:

Not Applicable

4.0 CURRICULUM

Criterion 4.1: The overall undergraduate curriculum (eg, general education, liberal learning, essential knowledge and skills, etc.) introduces students to the following domains:

- the foundations of scientific knowledge, including the biological and life sciences and the concepts of health and disease
- the foundations of social and behavioral sciences
- basic statistics
- the humanities/fine arts

The curriculum addresses these domains through any combination of learning experiences throughout the undergraduate curriculum, including general education courses defined by the institution as well as concentration and major requirements or electives.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

Students pursuing either the Bachelor of Arts or the Bachelor of Science degree are required to complete American University's general education program titled, "the AU Core Curriculum." The core curriculum requirements were implemented in fall 2017 and include three components: foundation courses, Habits of Mind courses, and integrative courses.

The foundation courses of the AU Core (i.e., AU Experience I, AU Experience II, Written Communication and Information Literacy I, Quantitative Literacy I, and Complex Problems) are typically taken in the first year. The AU Core also includes five Habits of the Mind Requirements (Creative-Aesthetic Inquiry, Cultural Inquiry, Ethical Reasoning, Natural-Scientific Inquiry, and Socio-Historical Inquiry). The self-study indicates that the classes can be taken at any time in the degree program. The integrative courses bring together the inquiry-based values of the AU Core with major-related work, and include Diverse Experiences, Written Communication and Information Literacy II, Quantitative Literacy II, and the capstone. These courses are taken in the major.

For the CEPH requirement, there are multiple classes that can be mapped to each of the domains. For example, HLTH 210: Health and Human Disease was mapped to the science domain and the coursework includes topics such as sexually transmitted diseases, nutrition, and the cardiovascular system.

For the social and behavioral domain, the program includes HLTH 245: Multicultural Health that covers topics such as ethnocentrism and cultural competence. For the math/quantitative domain, the program listed STAT 202: Basic Statistics and HLTH 340: Fundamentals of Epidemiology. For the humanities/fine arts domain, the program includes ARTS 100: Art, The Studio Experience and LIT 121: Sexuality and Literature.

Observations on Site

Site visitors confirmed the general education requirements and associated program courses with faculty and students and by reviewing the syllabi.

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Criterion 4.2: The requirements for the public health major or concentration provide instruction in the following domains. The curriculum addresses these domains through any combination of learning experiences throughout the requirements for the major or concentration coursework (ie, the program may identify multiple learning experiences that address a domain—the domains listed below do not each require a single designated course).

- the history and philosophy of public health as well as its core values, concepts and functions across the globe and in society
- the basic concepts, methods and tools of public health data collection, use and analysis and why evidence-based approaches are an essential part of public health practice
- the concepts of population health, and the basic processes, approaches and interventions that identify and address the major health-related needs and concerns of populations
- the underlying science of human health and disease including opportunities for promoting and protecting health across the life course
- the socioeconomic, behavioral, biological, environmental and other factors that impact human health and contribute to health disparities
- the fundamental concepts and features of project implementation, including planning, assessment and evaluation
- the fundamental characteristics and organizational structures of the US health system as well as the differences in systems in other countries
- basic concepts of legal, ethical, economic and regulatory dimensions of health care and public health policy and the roles, influences and responsibilities of the different agencies and branches of government
- basic concepts of public health-specific communication, including technical and professional writing and the use of mass media and electronic technology

If the program intends to prepare students for a specific credential, then the curriculum must also address the areas of instruction required for credential eligibility (eg, CHES).

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

The curriculum consists of clearly articulated curricular requirements for the BA and BS degrees. Students are required to complete 120 credit hours for either degree. For the BA, 52 credit hours are required in the major, and for the BS, 60 credit hours are required in the major. Faculty revised the previous curriculum in 2015 and implemented a new curriculum in 2016. The new curriculum used CEPH accreditation standards as a guide.
Students are required to take coursework including introduction to public health, human health and disease, multicultural health, health program planning, fundamentals of epidemiology, research methods, health communication, health policy and behavioral change, bioethics and basic statistics.

Students must take elective credits from one of four clusters, including global health; health science; policy, program planning, and evaluation; and social and community health. The majority of the classes are appropriate for both BA and BS of Public Health students. In addition, students in the Bachelor of Science degree program are required to take a general biology class and an introduction to infectious disease class.

The self-study includes a detailed matrix of the curricular review within each domain area. For most domains, learning is spread across multiple classes within the curriculum. For example, the core concepts domain is covered in introduction to public health, introduction to health promotion, multicultural health, fundamentals of epidemiology, research methods, health communication, and health policy and behavioral change classes.

Observations on Site

When asked onsite, program leadership indicated that there was deficiency in some of the coverage of the listed domains. The leadership indicated that through the accreditation review process, they have determined that there are some areas for improvement in their present curriculum. They are hoping to address the gaps in the near future.

Compliance Concern:
(if Partially Met or Not Met)

The concern relates to the coverage of specific domains in the curriculum. Four domains (public health history, global functions of public health, societal functions of public health, and comparative health systems) are introduced but not covered in the required curriculum.

Institution Comments:

Since the site visit, the program has received university approval for a change in our curriculum. A new course, HLTH 370: Local to Global: Health Policy and Systems will replace HTLH 470: Health Policy and Behavior Change in our curriculum (HLTH 470 will become an elective) for both the Bachelor of Arts and the Bachelor of Science degrees. This course will facilitate more detailed coverage of the domains of public health history, global functions of public health, societal functions of public health, and comparative health systems. The course approval forms are provided in Attachment A and the syllabus is Attachment B.

Additionally, the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee met on April 16, 2019 to review the verbal comments shared by the CEPH site visit team. The committee reviewed Template L and discussed curricular alignment with CEPH domains. Syllabi of core Public Health courses were also reviewed and discussed, and relevant courses providing detailed coverage of the domains of public health history, global functions of public health, societal functions of public health, and comparative health systems were identified. An updated Template L is also included as Attachment C, and the minutes from the April 16 UCC meeting are included as Attachment D.

Council Comments:

The Council reviewed the program's response to the team's report and the attachments provided by the program. Based on the updated documentation, the Council verified appropriate coverage of all curricular domains. The Council acted to change the finding from partially met to met.

Criterion 4.3: If the program intends to prepare students for a specific credential, then the curriculum must address the areas of responsibility required for credential eligibility (eg, CHES).

Finding:

Not Applicable

Criterion 4.4: Students must demonstrate the following skills:

- the ability to communicate public health information, in both oral and written forms and through a variety of media, to diverse audiences
- the ability to locate, use, evaluate and synthesize public health information.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

The program requires that students demonstrate communication and information literacy skills in multiple required courses. For instance, for the oral communication component, in HLTH 470: Health Policy and Behavior Change, students work on a public service announcement project. In HLTH 110: Introduction to Public Health, students are expected to do oral presentations.

For the written communication skills component, in HLTH 441: Health Communication, students create a brochure and infographic. Furthermore, in HLTH 335: Health Promotion, Program Planning, students are required to write a program plan. In HLTH 470: Health Policy and Behavior Change, students are responsible for creating a policy and advocacy project.

For the communication with diverse audiences, in HLTH 245: Multicultural Health, students are required to complete a public service announcement (PSA).

For communication through a variety of media, students create social media templates in HLTH 470 and create a social marketing project in HLTH 441.

Students demonstrate that they can locate information in the final project in HLTH 480: Public Health Capstone, the final report in HLTH 491: Health Studies Internship, and in a disease reports assignment in HLTH 210: Intro to Human Health and Disease. Students demonstrate use of information in the quantitative reasoning report in HLTH 340: Fundamentals of Epidemiology, and the research proposal and report in HLTH 350: Health Research Methods.

Students are expected to evaluate information by completing an article critique in HLTH 340, the final project in HLTH 480, and the social marketing project in HLTH 441.

Observations on Site

Prior to the site visit, reviewers noted that some of the courses associated with this criterion had multiple sections taught by different faculty members. When asked on site about the process for ensuring consistency, faculty members indicated that the course description, learning outcomes, textbooks, and the acquired skills must be the same. Faculty have autonomy to be creative and use different assessment opportunities in their designated classes. When a faculty member takes over teaching a class, he or she meets with the former professor and they collaborate to ensure that the skills mapped to the former class continue to be covered in the current faculty member's class.

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Criterion 4.5: Students have opportunities to integrate, synthesize and apply knowledge through cumulative and experiential activities. All students complete a cumulative, integrative and scholarly or applied experience or inquiry project that serves as a capstone to the education experience. These experiences may include, but are not limited to, internships, service-learning projects, senior seminars, portfolio projects, research papers or honors theses. Programs encourage exposure to local-level public health professionals and/or agencies that engage in public health practice.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

> The self-study details numerous examples of experiential activities. These activities synthesize and apply knowledge while meeting course objectives. Non-profit agencies are commonly used for experiential student learning, broadening the educational experience as well as contributing to community service. For example, in HLTH 480: Public Health Capstone, all student teams complete organization overviews. Overviews may include mission and vision statements, SWOT analyses, goals and objectives, and logic models for their projects. Students' culminating experiences include internships, capstone projects, and portfolios.
>
> The self-study provides ample evidence and detail of experiential and culmination opportunities through the capstone and internship to demonstrate public health knowledge and opportunities to engage in public health practice. The program also includes a one-hour Community Service-Learning Project (CLSP) credit that can be added to any course, allowing students an option to pursue a topical interest (e.g., maternal and child health research). The required public health internship provides the student with the opportunity to pursue an applied practice experience with a public health agency. The internship is a minimum of 210 internship hours over the course of a semester. For the internship, students must prepare a portfolio that includes the organizational context; project description; intern's role, application of knowledge and skills; outcomes and recommendations; and self-assessment. Students are also responsible for addressing the CEPH-required public health skills. The public health internship professor is responsible for reviewing the materials.
>
> The capstone course gives seniors in public health the opportunity to work in teams to complete semester-long projects for public health organizations. During the semester, students are divided into teams of three to six to accomplish the semester-long projects for the partner

organizations. The capstone portfolio includes the agency requested deliverables (e.g., measurable outcomes and evaluation plan). The capstone professor is responsible for reviewing all materials.

Observations on Site

Students and alumni confirmed the value and satisfaction with the capstone process and internship experiences. Preceptors and community partners emphasized the effectiveness of both internships and culminating experiences in the field.

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Criterion 4.6: The overall undergraduate curriculum and public health major curriculum expose students to concepts and experiences necessary for success in the workplace, further education and life-long learning. Students are exposed to these concepts through any combination of learning experiences and co-curricular experiences. These concepts include the following:

- advocacy for protection and promotion of the public's health at all levels of society
- community dynamics
- critical thinking and creativity
- cultural contexts in which public health professionals work
- ethical decision making as related to self and society
- independent work and a personal work ethic
- networking
- organizational dynamics
- professionalism
- research methods
- systems thinking
- teamwork and leadership

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

The program exposes students to the required concepts through its curriculum. For instance, for the advocacy component, students complete an advocacy project in HLTH 470: Health Policy and Behavior Change. The department also sponsors at least one event highlighting a public health issue (e.g., Flint water crisis, public health in the developing world) per semester, and these events address the methods they may have to access to advocate for these issues.

For the community dynamics concept, the self-study provides multiple examples of exposure including the Community Service-Learning Project (CSLP), a one-credit add-on project that can be attached to any course.

For the critical thinking and creativity concept, all AU students are required to take a complex problems course during the first year. The course introduces students to the process of university-level inquiry through the analysis of one or more complex problems.

For the cultural contexts concept, students are exposed in several courses including HLTH 245: Multicultural Health. This course provides an introduction to gender and cultural issues affecting health.

For the ethical decision-making concept, all public health students are required to complete PHIL 241: Bioethics. Topics include human subject research, patients' rights, medical rationing, and public and global health issues.

For the independent work and personal work ethic component, all public health students complete an independent internship in HLTH 491: Health Studies Internship.

For the networking concept, the Department of Health Studies offer multiple networking opportunities for students. A weekly newsletter is mailed to all students highlighting professional events, internships, jobs, and other opportunities for networking.

For the organizational dynamics concept, the public health capstone course, HTLH 480: Public Health Capstone required of all public health majors, also provides opportunities for students to gain insights related to the concept. The students work in teams to complete a project for community partner organizations.

Professionalism is prominently featured in the HTLH 480 and HLTH 491. Students are required to collaborate with community partner agencies. The self-study states that professionalism expectations are described in the syllabi, discussed in the beginning of the semester, and reinforced throughout the semester.

All public health majors are required to take a research methods course. All bachelor of science majors complete HLTH 350 Health Research Methods. Bachelor of Arts majors may take either HLTH 350 or SOCY 320: Introduction to Social Research.

For the teamwork and leadership concept, these themes are prominently found in HLTH 480. Each team creates a team contract at the beginning of the semester, and at the end of the course, each student evaluates all of his or her team members as does the community partner.

Observations on Site

Site visitors reviewed syllabi and validated appropriate exposure opportunities for each of the listed concepts.

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Criterion 4.7: Syllabi for required and elective courses for the major include objectives that are sufficient to demonstrate that they address the domain(s) identified in Criterion 4.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

The program provided all syllabi for the public health coursework. Syllabi were appropriately descriptive. The syllabi included a list of all designated learning objectives, course readings and assignments.

Observations on Site

The site visit team was able to use the syllabi to identify all relevant course content coverage of each of the domains with no additional assistance.

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

5.0 PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

Criterion 5.1: The program defines a mission statement that guides program activities and is congruent with the mission statement(s) of the parent institution(s).

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

The program has a clear mission statement, which is as follows: "The mission of the Public Health Program is to prepare students to pursue professional endeavors, informed by a social justice approach, dedicated to protecting and promoting the health of entire populations. These populations can be as small as a local neighborhood or as large as an entire country or region of the world."

The mission of the program is congruent with those of the department, the college, and the university. Thematically, all of the mission statements focus on social justice, the inclusion of multiple lenses/perspectives, community connections, team-based approaches, and critical and creative thinking.

Observations on Site

Program leadership indicated that they wanted the mission to align with the mission of the department, college and the university. Program leadership also indicated that the themes (e.g., social justice, inclusiveness, connecting to community) identified in the mission are also listed in the department's strategic plan and relates to the department's goal of strengthening community bonds.

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Criterion 5.2: The program defines expected student learning outcomes that align with the program's defined mission and the institution's regional accreditation standards and guide curriculum design and implementation as well as student assessment.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

The program defines five overarching objectives and eleven student learning outcomes. The learning outcomes are guided by the CEPH domains. The five learning objectives include:

- Program objective 1 is "explain the philosophy and essential services of public health.

- Program objective 2 is "apply and utilize an epidemiological approach through engagement in collaborative public health research."

- Program objective 3 is "evaluate and compare healthcare systems and public health initiatives in the United States and across the world."

- Program objective 4 is "convey an understanding of the determinants of health and health disparities".

- Program objective 5 is "plan, implement and evaluate public health programs."

The program objectives and associated student learning outcomes align with the mission of the program. The curriculum for the program aligns with the mission, program objectives, and student learning outcomes. It also aligns with regional accreditation standards. The student learning outcomes includes both the CEPH-required nine domains and two program created learning outcomes that focuses on 1) the application of evidence-based approaches to public health and 2) the appraisal of cultural differences among populations.

Observations on Site

The program indicated that the new curriculum and assessment plan were implemented three years prior. Reviewers discussed ways in which faculty ensure that the curriculum aligns with the learning objectives. For instance, during the assessment plan phase, the program surveyed senior students in the capstone course. Student feedback indicated that subjects of policy and global health should be covered for future cohorts. The program piloted a course named "Local and Global Public Health Systems Policy" and created a proposal to make the course

permanent. The course replaces HLTH 470: Health Policy and Behavior Change in the public health curriculum. The course addresses learning objective 3.

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Criterion 5.3: The program regularly revisits its mission and expected student outcomes to ensure their continuing relevance.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

The program reviews its mission via the DHS Undergraduate Curriculum Committee annually. Student outcomes are assessed each semester by their professors through selected exam questions or projects from courses in the curriculum, as well as surveys from students, employers, and alumni.

Program mission and outcomes are reviewed annually. The program director is a permanent member of the committee, and she is currently the chairperson. The DHS Department chair appoints other members to serve two-year terms. The committee meets monthly during the academic year and is responsible for making recommendations to the full DHS faculty regarding findings from assessments.

Observations on Site

During the site visit, alumni and preceptors indicated that they have had opportunities to provide both formal and informal feedback to the program related to the student learning outcomes. One preceptor indicated that as a result of the feedback provided to the program, the capstone project is now different. The preceptors stated that students now have an active role in implementing the agency's needs including evaluation (e.g., logic model) which relates to learning objective 5.

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Criterion 5.4: The program defines and implements a plan that determines the program's effectiveness. Methodologies may vary based on the mission, organization and resources of the program, but whatever the approach, assessment processes are analytical, useful, cost-effective, accurate and truthful, carefully planned and organized, systematic and sustained.

At a minimum, the plan includes regular surveys or other data collection (eg, focus groups, key informant interviews, data from national exams (eg, CHES) from:
- enrolled students
- alumni
- relevant community stakeholders (eg, practitioners who teach in the program, service learning community partners, internship preceptors, employers of graduates, etc.)

Data collection must address student satisfaction with advising.

The program collects quantitative data at least annually on 1) graduation rates within the maximum time to graduation allowed by the institution and 2) rates of job placement or continued education within one year of graduation. The program defines plans, including data sources and methodologies, for collecting these data, identifies limitations and continually works to address data limitations and improve data accuracy. The program's plan does not rely exclusively on institution- or unit-collected data, unless those data are sufficiently detailed and descriptive. Data collection methods for graduates' destinations are sufficient to ensure at least a 30% response rate.

The program collects qualitative data on the destination of graduates related to both employment and further education, such as type of graduate degree pursued and sector of employment, as defined by the program.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

> The program evaluates its effectiveness each semester through qualitative and quantitative data collected from stakeholders.
>
> The department chair and program director reviews assessment reports, which are compiled each semester. Assessment reports include data from course-based assessments, information from the capstone survey, and feedback from internship supervisors and the capstone liaison. The program also uses the alumni survey and employer survey to assess its effectiveness annually. Other surveys are completed every semester (e.g., capstone survey) and include questions related to available research opportunities for students, recommended areas of improvement, skill attainment, and satisfaction with the program.

Over the past three semesters, (e.g., fall 2017 – fall 2018), alumni respondents indicated they achieved a rate of 74%-100% for their success in achieving program objectives and learning outcomes. The program indicated that their targeted goal is 80%.

For the 2017 and 2018 alumni surveys, 79% of respondents stated that they either "agree" or "strongly agree" that they have achieved the program objectives.

Employers were first surveyed in 2018. The survey was sent to twenty-three current or former supervisors, with a response rate of 74%. Employers were asked about alumni's critical thinking and communication skills. 94% of participants stated that they "strongly agree" that alumni use critical thinking in the workplace. 82% of respondents explained that they "strongly agree" that the alumni communicate professionally.

Observations on Site

During an on-site meeting, community stakeholders and alumni indicated that they do provide feedback regarding the program in both informal and formal methods. Stakeholders praised program leaders for their responsiveness, flexibility, and open-door policy.

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Criterion 5.5: The program demonstrates that at least 70% of students for whom data are available graduate within six years or the maximum time to graduation as defined by the institution, whichever is longer. The program demonstrates that at least 80% of graduates for whom data are available have secured employment or enrolled in further education within one year of graduation. If the program cannot demonstrate that it meets these thresholds, the program must document 1) that its rates are comparable to similar baccalaureate programs in the home unit (typically a school or college) and 2) a detailed analysis of factors contributing to the reduced rate and a specific plan for future improvement that is based on this analysis.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

The maximum time to graduate is six years. Since the program launched in 2011, two of the three cohorts have reached 70% by the maximum time to graduation. The inaugural program cohort (2011-2012) had a graduation rate of 50%. The cohort consisted of four students. The 2012-2013 cohort had a graduation rate of 84%. This cohort consisted of 25 students. For the third cohort listed (e.g., 2013-2014), the graduation rate is already at 80%. This cohort includes 30 students. The cohort calculation is determined by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA).   In terms of post-graduation outcomes, for the 2016-2017 cohort, 48% were employed and 10% were in continuing education/training. There were 52% unknown. For 2014-2015 class of 53 graduates, 60% of graduates with known outcomes were employed and 25% were in continuing education/training. Forty percent (21 students) had unknown outcomes. For the 2015-2016 cohort of 44 graduates, 30% (13 students) had unknown outcomes. For those with known outcomes, 66% were employed and 23% were continuing education/training.

Observations on Site

Prior to the site visit, reviewers had questions related to the calculations displayed in the post-graduation outcomes table. The department chair stated that because some alumni were both employed and were continuing their education, the program chose to double count these individuals for each category. The program indicated that they were seeking to determine how to appropriately demonstrate their alumni's post-graduation outcomes.

Reviewers had additional questions about the outcome of the other two students in the inaugural cohort. The program stated the outcome is unknown. The inaugural program cohort graduated prior to both the department and program leadership being hired.

Compliance Concern:
(if Partially Met or Not Met)

The concern relates to the post-graduation outcomes data. The data is not presented accurately, and the reviewers were unable to validate that at least 80% of program graduates have secured employment or enrolled in further education within one year of graduation.

Institution Comments:

The program re-surveyed program alumni to discern their post-graduation professional activities. In this new survey, alumni were asked to indicate their primary professional endeavor in their first post-graduation year. This eliminated the option to claim simultaneous employment and enrollment in graduate study. The survey was sent to 235 alumni who graduated from our program in years 2015 – 2018. One hundred forty-eight alumni responded to this survey, yielding a 63% response rate. To track those alumni who did not respond, the Public Health Program Director reached out to all program faculty, asking them to provide employment and further education information for nonrespondents with whom they may be in contact. This yielded information regarding an additional 46 alumni. Thus, of the 235 graduates of our program, we were able to obtain first-year post-graduation employment and further education information regarding 194, which represents 82.6% of our program alumni. Of these 194, 178 (91.8%) indicated that they were either employed or enrolled in further education within one year of graduation. An updated Template S is included as Attachment E. A copy of the alumni survey is included as Attachment F.

We will continue to survey program alumni on a yearly basis and will also continue to encourage faculty to report any updates they may receive from former students. As for the alumni whose status is "unknown," we will contact them in the future via a personal email from the Program Director and will also seek contact information from our Office of Alumni Relations and professional networking sites such as LinkedIn.

Council Comments:

The Council reviewed the program's response to the team's report and the attachments provided by the program. Based on the updated documentation, the Council verified that the

program has obtained sufficient data to document compliance with this criterion. The Council acted to change the finding from partially met to met.

Criterion 5.6: The program establishes a schedule for reviewing data on student outcomes and program effectiveness. The program uses data on student outcomes and program effectiveness to improve student learning and the program.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

The self-study document includes several examples of review and deliberations on student outcomes data and program evaluation information. The self-study documents minutes from student-led and involved meetings. The self-study includes sample reports that illustrate the assessment process for courses, student performance and curricula changes. In addition to the report, the self-study highlights changes from 2012 and 2016 derived from prior assessment efforts. These changes are in alignment with CEPH criteria and demonstrate curriculum revision. For example, when the program compared its curriculum to the CEPH domains, faculty realized that the domains were not sufficiently addressed. Feedback from the students via the capstone survey echoed the concern. Specifically, students noted a lack of instruction in health policy issues, research methods, and the science of human health and disease. To address the concerns, the DHS Undergraduate Curriculum Committee reviewed the public health curriculum and proposed revisions in 2016. As a result, two new courses (introduction to human health and disease and health research methods) were developed.

Observations on Site

Program faculty provided minutes from an annual review of student assessments during the site visit. These minutes documented faculty discussion regarding data points and program changes based on the data reviewed. Site visitors learned that the program director coordinates the collection of all assessment data from faculty, compiles the data and then reports it to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and then, to the full faculty.

Institution Comments:

Council Comments:

Criterion 5.7: The program maintains clear, publicly available policies on student grievances or complaints and maintains records on the aggregate number of complaints received for the last three years.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

The self-study includes links to publicly available policies on student grievances and complaints. The program and college maintain and promote comprehensive policies to protect students, assure academic integrity, and provide a means of response and recourse for alleged disputes, violations, or concerns. The policies are visible and easily accessible. The program notes that two grievances have been filed in the last three years. The grievances are currently being addressed by the department chair and the program director.

Observations on Site

The department chair provided a form tracking aggregate grievance records over time. This form identifies the timeframe, issue, and status. This document is current and supplements the information in the self-study. Additionally, college leaders confirmed the process of reporting and investigation during the site visit.

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

6.0 ADVISING

Criterion 6.1: Students are advised by program faculty (as defined in Criterion 2.1) or qualified program staff beginning no later than the semester (quarter, trimester, term, etc.) during which students begin coursework in the major and continuing through program completion. Advising includes academic planning and selection of courses as well as public health-related career counseling.

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

All students enroll in a two-course sequence to orient them to the university and college experience. After the declaration of public health as a major, students are assigned to a professional advisor in the College of Arts and Sciences. The advisor assigned to public health majors also advises students in health promotion and literature majors, for an overall advising load of approximately 330 students. Faculty, particularly the program director, work with the academic advisor to address academic or other issues that arise with students. Faculty also provide student mentorship. Student advising is also provided through various channels at the university, college, and department levels.

Observations on Site

The professional advisor is trained to guide students through the academic process, and students reported that the program director meets with students for academic advising as well.   The university recently adopted a new system in which students are assigned a general advisor for their first year and subsequently assigned to the appropriate advisor in each college at the beginning of their second year. Students reported that they regularly receive career counseling from faculty.

Institution Comments:

Council Comments:

7.0 DIVERSITY

Criterion 7.1: The program demonstrates a commitment to diversity and provides evidence of an ongoing practice of cultural competence in student learning.

Aspects of diversity may include, but are not limited to, age, country of birth, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, language, national origin, race, refugee status, religion, culture, sexual orientation, health status, community affiliation and socioeconomic status. This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

Cultural competence, in this context, refers to skills for working with diverse individuals and communities in ways that are appropriate and responsive to relevant cultural factors. Requisite skills include self-awareness, open-minded inquiry and assessment and the ability to recognize and adapt to cultural differences. Reflecting on the public health context, recognizing that cultural differences affect all aspects of health and health systems, cultural competence refers to the skills for recognizing and adapting to cultural differences. Each program defines these terms in its own context.

Programs can accomplish these aims through a variety of practices including the following:

- incorporation of diversity and cultural competency considerations in the curriculum;
- recruitment/retention of faculty, staff and students; and
- reflection in the types of research and/or community engagement conducted.

(For evidence, see DR 7-1 and DR 7-2)

Finding:

Met

Team Comments:

Observations from the Self-Study

The self-study documents examples of curricular cultural competence and diversity. Descriptions of university diversity policies and goals are mentioned throughout the document, including the university-wide AU Experience II course. Introductory courses and ethics courses also contain substantial cultural diversity content. University plans and policies are included in the document, specifically with university-wide goals listed for diversity, equity and inclusion. Goals include a focus on campus climate, culture, and community safety. One goal specifically states that access and equity are to be emphasized in recruitment, hiring, training, and evaluating staff and faculty members.

Research and community engagement examples provided in the self-study highlight the cultural competence focus. The service-learning opportunities, practice partnerships and guest lecturers all reflect the program's emphasis on diversity and cultural competence. Also, the

program's curriculum focuses on themes of diversity, equity, and cultural competence. For instance, social determinants are introduced in HLTH 110 and all students are complete the case study assignment that requires them to assess the impact of multiple determinants. All public health majors take HLTH 245: Multicultural Health, a course that focuses on how gender, identity, ethnic, and cultural indicators affect behavioral risk. Faculty service is also diverse. Faculty members serve as peer reviewers for academic journals in the subjects of sociology, psychology, nutrition, and health policy research.

Observations on Site

The program provided a breakdown of race/ethnicity categories for the student body. The documentation tracked the diversity of the student cohorts for the prior three years and demonstrated the ability to trend over time. The data demonstrated that there is an increase in student enrollment among minority populations.

University leaders discussed a future focus on diversity as a factor in recruitment, hiring, and retention of students, faculty and staff. University leadership indicated that they are looking to diversify the faculty body to include a range of ethnicities/races, gender, methodology and field.

Institution Comments:

Click here to enter text.

Council Comments:

Click here to enter text.

8.0 DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Criterion 8.1: A degree program offered via distance education is a curriculum or course of study designated to be primarily accessed remotely via various technologies, including internet-based course management systems, audio or web-based conferencing, video, chat, or other modes of delivery. All methods used by the SBP support regular and substantive interaction between and among students and the instructor either synchronously and/or asynchronously and are:

   a) consistent with the mission of the program and within the program's established areas of expertise;
   b) guided by clearly articulated student learning outcomes that are rigorously evaluated;
   c) 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 online learners.

(For evidence, see DR 8-1 and DR 8-2)

Finding:

Not Applicable

Criterion 8.2: The university provides needed support for the program, including administrative, communication, IT and student services.

(For evidence, see DR 8-2)

Finding:

Not Applicable

Criterion 8.3: There is an ongoing effort to evaluate the academic effectiveness of the format, to assess learning methods and to systematically use this information to stimulate program improvements. Evaluation of student outcomes and of the learning model are especially important in institutions that offer distance learning but do not offer a comparable in-residence program.

(For evidence, see DR 8-2)

Finding:

Not Applicable

Criterion 8.4: The program has processes in place through which it establishes that the student who registers in a distance education course or degree is the same student who participates in and completes the course or degree and receives the academic credit. Student identity may be verified by using, at the option of the institution, methods such as a secure login and pass code; proctored examinations; and new or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identity. The university notifies students in writing that it uses processes that protect student privacy and alerts students to any projected additional student charges associated with the verification of student identity at the time of registration or enrollment.

(For evidence, see DR 8-3)

Finding:

Not Applicable

<p style="text-align: center;">**Standalone Baccalaureate Program (SBP) Agenda**</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">**American University**</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">**Council on Education for Public Health Site Visit** [1]</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">***March 28 – 29, 2019***</p>

Day 1: Thursday, March 28, 2019

8:30 am   **Site Visit Team Request for Additional Documents**

Jolynn Gardner, Ph.D., CHES
Director, Public Health Program
Department of Health Studies

8:45 am   **Team Resource File Review**

9:15 am   **Break**

9:30 am   **Meet with Program Leader and Faculty/Staff with significant roles relating to the following criteria:**

Discuss Criterion 1: Leadership, Management and Governance (1.1-1.6), Criterion 2: Resources (2.1-2.6), Criterion 3: Faculty Qualifications (3.1-3.5), Criterion 7: Diversity (7.1)

Stacey Snelling, R.D., Ph.D.
Chairperson and Professor
Department of Health Studies

Jolynn Gardner, Ph.D., CHES
Director, Public Health Program
Department of Health Studies

Melissa Hawkins, Ph.D.
Director, Public Health Scholars Program
Department of Health Studies

10:45 am   **Break**

11:00 am   **Meet with Program Leader and Faculty Related to Curriculum and Degree Programs**

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[1] All sessions, unless otherwise noted, will take place in McCabe Hall Room 123.

Discuss Criterion 4: Curriculum (4.1-4.5); Criterion 5: Program Effectiveness (5.1-5.11); Criterion 8: Distance Education Program (8.1-8.4)

Stacey Snelling, R.D., Ph.D.
Chairperson and Professor
Department of Health Studies

Jolynn Gardner, Ph.D., CHES
Director, Public Health Program
Department of Health Studies

Melissa Hawkins, Ph.D.
Director, Public Health Scholars Program
Department of Health Studies

Elizabeth Cotter, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Health Studies

Jess Young, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Health Studies

Jody Gan, MPH
Professorial Lecturer
Department of Health Studies

12:15 pm　　　**Break**

12:30 pm　　　**Lunch with Students**

Discuss Criterion 2: Resources (2.5-2.6); Criterion 3: Faculty Qualifications (3.3-3.4); Criterion 4: Curriculum (4.1-4.5); Criterion 5: Program Effectiveness (5.1-5.2, 5.4, 5.11); Criterion 6: Advising (6.1); Criterion 7: Diversity (7.1)

Abigail Thomas, BS, Public Health, 2020, Member, DHS Student Advisory Committee
Quinn Anderson, BS, Public Health, 2020, Member, DHS Student Advisory Committee
Kendell Lincoln, BA, Public Health, 2019
Giselle Rodriguez, BA, Public Health, 2019
Andrew Miller, BS, Public Health, 2021
Taylor Sabol, BS, Public Health, 2021
Adrian Bertrand, BS, Public Health, 2019

Forrest Holcombe, BS, Public Health, 2020
Sophie Hathaway, BA, Public Health, 2023
Frances Smock, BA, Public Health, 2019
Kelechi Ezealaji, BA, Public Health, 2019

1:30 pm   **Break**

1:45 pm   **Meet with Faculty and Staff with Significant Responsibilities related to the following criteria:**

Discuss Criterion 1: Leadership, Management and Governance (1.4, 1.5), Criterion 2: Resources (2.4-2.6), Criterion 3: Faculty Qualification (3.4), Criterion 6: Advising (6.1), Criterion 7: Diversity (7.1)

Elizabeth Cotter, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Health Studies

Katie Holton, MPH, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Health Studies

Ethan Mereish, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Health Studies

Jess Young, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Health Studies

Jody Gan, MPH
Professorial Lecturer
Department of Health Studies

Cynthia Ronzio, Ph.D.
Professorial Lecturer
Department of Health Studies

Elissa Margolin, MPH
Professorial Lecturer
Department of Health Studies

Celeste Davis, JD, MPH
Professorial Lecturer

Department of Health Studies

Lynne Arneson, Ph.D.
Premedical Programs Advisor
College of Arts and Sciences
Adjunct Faculty

Valerie Rauenzahn
Academic Advisor
College of Arts and Sciences

Nabina Liebow, Ph.D.
Professorial Lecturer
Department of Philosophy and Religion
Director, CAS Leadership Program

Lauren Carruth, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
School of International Service

Beth Malloy, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Mathematics and Statistics

2:45 pm   **Break**

Stacey Snelling, R.D., Ph.D.
Chairperson and Professor
Department of Health Studies

3:00 pm   **Resource File Review and Executive Session**

3:45 pm   **Break**

4:00 pm   **Meet with Alumni, Community Representatives, Preceptors**

Discuss Criterion 2: Resources (2.5-2.6); Criterion 3: Faculty Qualifications (3.3); Criterion 4: Curriculum (4.3-4.5); Criterion 5: Program Effectiveness (5.1-5.2, 5.4, 5.11); Advising (6.1); Criterion 7: Diversity (7.1)

Amanda Nesher
Food Security Programs Manager
Montgomery County Food Council

Amy York
Executive Director
Eldercare Workforce Alliance

Rachel Browning, MPH
Manager of Education
Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington

Ronnie Webb
Executive Director
The Green Scheme

Sara Beckwith MS, RDN, LD
SNAP-Ed Program Manager
Community Health Administration (CHA)
D.C. Department of Health

Katie Lu Clougherty (2017 AU graduate; BA, Public Health; BA, Sociology)
Monitoring and Evaluation Manager
DC Scores

Claire Karlsson (2016 AU graduate; BA, Public Health)
Program Assistant
United States Agency for International Development

Michael Engler, MPH (2016 AU graduate; BS, Public Health)
Data Analyst
Salient CRGT
(MPH, Epidemiology, 2018; George Washington University)

Mary Pavia (2018 AU graduate; BS, Public Health)
Post-Baccaulaureate Intramural Research Training Awardee
National Institutes of Health

Liliana Zigo (2018 AU graduate; BS, Public Health)
Education and Outreach Coordinator
Cancer Support Community

Gabrielle Kean (2017 AU graduate; BS, Public Health)
Consulting and Learning Associate
BoardSource

Quinn Hirsch (2015 AU graduate; BA, Public Health)
MPH, Health Law, Bioethics and Human Rights, 2017, Boston University
Policy Analyst
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget

Anya Pforzheimer (2018 AU graduate; BA, Public Health)
Master of Science Candidate, Sustainability Management
American University

Jenna Brownrout (2018 AU graduate; BA, Public Health)
Clinical Research Fellow
National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
National Institutes of Health

Courtney Tolbert
Program Manager
IONA.org

Courtney Baucher

5:00 pm   **Adjourn**

Day 2: Friday, March 29, 2019

8:30 am   **Meet with Institutional Academic Leadership/University Officials**

Discuss Criterion 1: Leadership, Management and Governance (1.1-1.6); Criterion 2: Resources (2.5, 2.6); Criterion 3: Faculty Qualifications (3.2); Criterion 5: Program Effectiveness (5.1)

Peter Starr, Ph.D.
Dean
College of Arts and Sciences

Monica Jackson, Ph.D.
Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education
College of Arts and Sciences

Mary Clark, J.D.
Dean of Academic Affairs and Senior Vice Provost

Jessica Waters, J.D.
Dean of Undergraduate Education and Vice Provost for Academic Student Services

9:15 am   **Break**

9:30 am   **Executive Session and Report Preparation**

12:30 pm   **Exit Briefing**