

Program Performance Review: Culmination Meeting Memo Public Health, MPH

The 2019-2020 Program Performance Review (PPR) process for the Master's in Public Health, MPH program concluded with a culmination meeting on October 15, 2021. The MPH program is accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), and the program submitted the accreditation documents in lieu of program review documents.

The following people attended the meeting: Carolyn Thomas (Provost), Elaine Frey (AVP for Graduate Studies, AVPGS), Cindy Greenberg (Dean, HHD), Michele Wood (Department Chair), and Su Swarat (AVP for Institutional Effectiveness, AVPIE).

The Provost thanked the Chair and faculty for a well-designed and well-run program that has made significant contributions to the students and the university. She appreciated how seriously the program is working on the areas for improvement raised through the accreditation process. She specifically highlighted the following accomplishments:

- The program has clear and publicly available information on MPH educational offerings, which are current and accurate.
- The program has defined a complete set of guiding statements to direct and frame program efforts to promote student success and advance the field of public health.
- The needs of working students are thoughtfully addressed by offering courses at 4pm or later, and offering online elective courses.
- The program exceeds the CEPH-defined graduation rate threshold of 70%; the program's low attrition rate ensures high graduation rates.
- The program achieves high rates of positive post-graduation outcomes among its graduates.
- The program incorporates diversity, equity, and cultural competence into its core curriculum.
- It is evident that service is central to the program's relationship with its stakeholders and its aspirations.

Major recommendations and issues raised through the accreditation process were discussed as follows:

1. Students' plans of study:
 - The external reviewers recommended the program to continue to track individual student's plan of study to ensure that the students build an appropriate depth in the concentration area through the courses chosen.
 - The AVPGS mentioned that the current TDA improvement should help resolve this issue. The Chair agreed. She acknowledged that a lot of work has been done on the undergraduate program since the department changed from Health Science to Public Health, and it is now time to focus on the MPH program. More progress will take place in this regard.
 - The AVPGS also recommended the program to consider certificates as ways to build pipeline into the master's program. The Chair reported that there is a lot of local competition for the MPH program, and the program is actively working to expand the pipeline, including having a dedicated lecturer working with local high schools to develop and disseminate a public health curriculum.

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2. Program assessment:

- The external reviewers recommended the program to develop an assessment plan that is streamlined, and collects actionable assessment data that reflect the defined community of interest.
- The Chair acknowledged the need to improve MPH program assessment, citing leadership transition and changes within the accreditation agency as past obstacles. She reported a few steps that are taking place to address this issue:
 - o A new assessment coordinator is in place and working well.
 - o More efforts are spent on transition planning.
 - o Working to strengthen connections with the community by showcasing students' mastery of practical skills, and bringing back the graduate conference to connect experts in the field, alumni, current MPH students and undergraduate students.

3. Workforce and career development activities:

- The external reviewers asked the program to continue to collect and provide evidence of workforce development activities.
- The Chair reported that several steps are being taken to support local workforce development. Examples include the use of data to mobilize the community advisory board, surveying community members to engage with the local organizations, seeking the input from community partners to inform program activities, and staying connected with alumni through social media and other means to get their input.
- The AVPIE encouraged the program to utilize the university's resources provided through [Emsi](#) on information regarding alumni and workforce outcomes. Emsi provides program-specific data on alumni success, skill needs, and job trends in relevant fields. This information is available via a CSUF internal dashboard and customized reports.

4. Leadership development opportunities:

- The Chair reported that the program faculty are very engaged, teaching in most of the classes. They work closely with public health agencies to provide opportunities for students to connect with field experts. One noted area for growth is to infuse more leadership training into the curriculum. The Provost expressed support for this idea.
- The Chair mentioned the possibility of collaboration with a Vice President at St. Jude's to develop a leadership certificate program. She also expressed desires to create more classes on public health administration and leadership.
- The Dean concurred, and emphasized that students need more help to understand what leadership means, which includes "informal" leadership skills reflected through policy work, self-leadership, and team leadership.

The Provost concluded the meeting by thanking the program for its excellent performance. The Dean expressed praises for the Chair's ability to engage faculty, and to take the lead in completing the rigorous accreditation process.