

MEZCOPH Education Committee Meeting
“Final Meeting Minutes”

January 5, 2022

2:00 – 3:00 pm, Zoom: <https://arizona.zoom.us/j/86894771259>

Program Directors / Voting Members Present: Chris Cutshaw, John Ehiri (ex-officio), Kacey Ernst, Aminata Kilungo, Velia Leybas Nuño, Amanda Soka, Terry Urbine, Nicole Yuan

Program Directors / Voting Members Absent: Ed Bedrick, Andre Dickerson, Joe Gerald, Magdiel Habila, Gabriela Valdez

Other Members Present: Mariah Alberty, Kim Barnes, Gisela Cardenas, Jen Deschenes, Danielle Embry, Elsa Loya, Tanya Nemec, Samantha Pierce, Michael Tearne

Meeting Recording: https://arizona.zoom.us/rec/share/A3u-PLLFg4MI8NKYCgyoUwYq6-kGi28c4_2n1cL5ZsobMu_2jH60sj12XWh56u6g.ITg5IOCvKfFI-lmE?startTime=1641415939000

- **Announcements:**

ASPPH PhD Council Update (Nicole Yuan)

Dr. Yuan represents MEZCOPH on the ASPPH PhD Council. The purpose of the council is to enhance the quality of PhD programs in public health and provide networking opportunities for its members. The council provides an opportunity to address topics of shared concern and discuss how ASPPH can address them. There are DrPH and MPH Councils as well, however MEZCOPH does not have representation on these councils.

At the November 29th meeting, ASPPH announced a new initiative, *Framing the Future 2030*, with three main areas: Inclusive Excellence through an Anti-Racism Lens, Transformative Educational Models and Pedagogy, and Expanding the Reach, Visibility and Impact of Academic Health. They are developing a framework for dismantling racism that will be launched this month, with a number of resources tied to this initiative. Dr. Yuan will share the information once it becomes available. *

The remainder of the meeting was spent discussing how to keep our PhD programs viable and relevant, funding challenges, and the changing market needs for PhD students.

Consent Agenda: (All voting members)

- Minutes Approval: December 1, 2021 meeting



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Education Committee

- New Course Proposals:
 - EHS 1xx Foundation of Disasters Management and Response (Aminata Kilungo)

- EHS 3xx Fundamentals of Public Health Emergency and Epidemic Response (*Aminata Kilungo*)

Comments from the Committee:

- Aminata provided an overview of how the courses fit into the proposed certificate programs. It was asked how the two courses are different. The 100-level course offers a broad foundation on how we integrate public health tools in emergency response. The 300-level course is more in-depth and builds on the foundation from the 100-level course, exposing students to more advanced emergency response methods.
- It looks like the 300-level course focuses more on disasters rather than epidemics/pandemics. Epidemics/pandemics will be covered in the 300-level course, especially when discussing epidemiological tools. The undergraduate certificate has a broad focus on all types of disasters, including pandemics and epidemics. The graduate certificate will place a stronger emphasis on pandemics and epidemics.
- Naqib Safi will teach both the 100 and 300 level courses. Dr. Safi has a background in disaster/emergency management for the UN, WHO and other governmental agencies.
- AZ Online is supportive of both programs and are underwriting the course development. The certificates will be offered fully online through AZ Online and Main Campus.
- The Epidemiology department would like to create a gen ed course focused on epidemics and pandemics. There was some concern expressed about overlapping content. The proposed 100-level emergency management course will be 7-weeks, with the epidemiology component being just one module within the curriculum. Epidemiology is encouraged to create a gen ed course with more focus on pandemics/epidemics. The certificates are college-wide programs and it is beneficial to work together in order to maximize opportunities across the college.
- The certificates will offer certification in FEMA and Contact Tracing.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Consent Agenda.

The motion was approved by a vote of: 7-0

- **New Business:**

- Action Item: Proposed Undergraduate and Graduate Certificates in Public Health Emergency and Epidemic Preparedness (*Aminata Kilungo*)

Aminata gave an overview of the proposed certificates in Public Health Emergency and Epidemic Preparedness. These programs address a nationwide educational gap for programs in emergency response that include public health skills. The undergraduate certificate addresses a broad scope of disaster management while the graduate certificate has a stronger focus on pandemics specifically. The graduate certificate requires a 500-level capstone course (still under development) that will give

students specific, applicable skills to help them produce a well-developed emergency response plan.

Comments from the committee:

- It was asked why an anthropology class was included in the electives. Emergency response is interdisciplinary and it is helpful to offer students a wide range of electives depending on the area they want to focus in. The course is developed and taught by Tim Finan and his colleagues who have extensive experience in disaster response. The anthropology class will only be included if the department can offer it fully online. Suggestions for additional electives may be directed to Dr. Ehiri.
- It is preferable to use existing courses for our new programs but, in this case, there were very few MEZCOPH undergraduate courses teaching applicable skills in emergency response from a public health perspective. This gap led to the development of the 100, 300, and 500-level courses.
- The FEMA certifications are embedded in the courses as an assignment.
- It was asked how many of our students would be interested in adding this credential to their plan of study. Students are generally unaware of opportunities in this field. Some MPH grads are getting the FEMA certification after graduation and looking for jobs in emergency response. There is demand from the field and potential funding opportunities for students to complete these certificates as a professional development credential.
- It is ideal to keep program fees aligned with our current graduate programs so there is no financial barrier for our current students to pursue the certificate.
- Risk communication is one of the core competencies in the undergraduate certificate. This is addressed in Dr. Safi's classes as well as PHP 308.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposed Undergraduate and Graduate Certificates in Public Health Emergency and Epidemic Preparedness.

The motion was approved by a vote of: 7-0

- Discussion Item: Climate Survey Results –Action Planning (*Kacey Ernst*)



Education
Committee_CIE slide

Kacey shared highlights from the Climate Survey (see slides for details) and asked the committee to identify action items that would be viable and effective to address some of the student related concerns in the survey. *

Comments from the committee:

- 62% of our graduate students are satisfied with the quality of advising and mentoring in their department. The expectations for advising/mentoring master's students versus doctoral students are different. Professional development mentoring training for faculty would be helpful.
- It would be useful to create a strategy where no student is left behind. Some students are more proactive and maximize mentoring opportunities while others have very little contact with faculty. It is important to recognize that some students may not know how to navigate higher education systems. Any strategy we develop must acknowledge this or we risk continuing to lose sight of these students.
- Faculty bandwidth is limited. It would be helpful to focus on areas where we need the most improvement and can have the most impactful outcomes.
- There may be ways to integrate resources into our core curriculum.
- It is important to set specific, attainable goals. By the end of the semester, it would be helpful to have a list of action items. Once they are developed, we may be able to secure funding from the

dean to support the agenda.

Meeting adjourned at 3:07pm.

Next Scheduled Meeting Date: February 2, 2022 , 2:00 – 3:00 pm, Zoom

*** Action Items:**

- Nicole Yuan will share ASPPH resources for dismantling racism with Education Committee when they become available. *(Nicole Yuan)*
- Send Kacey Ernst feedback and ideas for action items that would be effective in addressing student related concerns in the survey. *(All Committee Members)*

Changes or corrections to the minutes may be submitted to: *Danielle Embry, Coordinator, Academic Curriculum and Faculty Affairs*