

**MEZCOPH Education Committee Meeting**

**Final Meeting Minutes**

**December 6, 2023**

2:00 – 3:00 pm, DRACH-A326 and Zoom: <https://arizona.zoom.us/j/86255483666>

**Committee Members Present:** Anaiz Acosta, Mariah Albertie, Kim Barnes, Luis Benitez, Chris Cutshaw\*, Lyn Durán\*, John Ehiri (ex-officio), Danielle Embry, Courtney Faryab, Joe Gerald\*, Laura Gronewold, Paul Hsu\*, Beth Jacobs\*, Nicole Johnson, Monica Muñoz, Velia Leybas Nuño\*, Kristen Pogreba Brown\*, Amanda Sokan\*, Derek Smith\*, Michael Tearne, Terry Urbine\*, Gabriela Valdez\*, Yevheniia Varyvoda\*, Makele White, Nicole Yuan\*

**Committee Members Absent:** Lauren Erdelyi\*, Katie Lupo, Niraly Patel\*, Ashleigh Pendleton, Abba Versace

\* voting member

**Meeting Recording:** <https://arizona.zoom.us/rec/share/0JWazz32IWjd4mnkxTs7bqWjgHDVttFTi2m6qFI-m6pz-dC4rXONLEmyzkiNo6w.ROgkmanLw9FNz6Ah?startTime=1701895468000>

- **Announcements:**

- **MEZCOPH Fall Convocation (Monica Muñoz)**

The 2023 Fall Convocation will be on Saturday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am in Centennial Hall.

The event will be live-streamed. Monica shared demographic details about the graduating class.

- **Consent Agenda:** *(All voting members)*

- **Minutes Approval:** November 1, 2023 meeting



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Education Committee

- **New Course Proposals:**

- CPH/GHI 230 Climate-Smart Food Security (Yevheniia Varyvoda)



CPH\_GHI

230\_Climate Smart F



CPH\_GHI

- EPID 4xx/5xx Women's Health Epidemiology Across the Life Course (Beth Jacobs)



EPID 4xx5xx

Women's Health Ep



EPID 4xx5xx

Women's Health Epi

**The Consent Agenda was seconded and approved by a vote of 12-0.**

- **New Business:**

- Discussion Item: Guaranteed admission to MPH (*Beth Jacobs*)

Beth invited discussion on guaranteed admission to the MPH for any AZ resident that meets pre-determined criteria (i.e 3.0 gpa and undergraduate STEM major)

Comments from the committee:

- It was asked if MD/MPH students must apply. Perhaps we can waive the application for students that meet the criteria. MD/MPH students currently apply through SOPHAS and GradApp.
- The SOPHAS application is important for data collection purposes. Students could still apply with a guarantee of admission once completed.
- The Grad College formally admits students to UA while the college can only recommend admission. There are concerns about guaranteeing admission when the college does not make the final decision.
- Would letters of recommendation still be required for students who meet the criteria? Reference letters rarely contribute to an admission decision. The professional practice of obtaining letters may have value. We could require only one letter for these students or teach more professionalism in our curriculum. Alternatively, students could choose between submitting a letter or a professional reference, which might be beneficial for first generation students.
- Guaranteed admission is an attractive marketing opportunity. Rolling admissions reviews and timely decisions have also been helpful in encouraging students to apply.
- We should proceed carefully and have a fully formed proposal before approaching the Graduate College.
- Preference should be given to qualified AZ residents as they are more likely to matriculate.
- John and Chris will research UA graduate admissions policy and report back in January.\*

Discussion was tabled until next meeting.

- Discussion Item: Adding question to TA application form about interest in second TA assignment (*Chris Cutshaw, Gabriela Valdez, Nicole Yuan*)

Several doctoral students have requested a second TA position this semester. HPS proposed adding the following question to the TA application: "If you are a doctoral student and have a compelling need and interest in a second TA assignment, please check this box." Students will then be asked to provide additional information in support of their request. The TA application goes out to all students in the college so the question would impact all programs.

Comments from the committee:

- Students are expected to work 20 hours per week during 7.5-week sessions and are paid for the full 15-week semester. Perhaps doctoral students could be assigned to two 7.5-week courses.
- The wording of the question is directed toward doctoral students. It may be perceived as unfair by master's level students. There are already several questions related to student funding as well.

- A .5 FTE TA assignment will cover 100% of tuition costs.
- TA funding is not intended for students with financial difficulty. There are alternative sources of funding through the college and UA for this. Some students are more comfortable asking for funding than others. Adding this question may impact how TAs are uniformly and fairly awarded.
- The initial intention of the question was to promote transparency and equity by allowing all doctoral students to ask for a second TA assignment.

HPS Program Directors will continue the discussion within their department and may reconvene with the Education Committee if necessary.

- **Future Business:**

It was proposed that Program Directors have more flexibility to assign department allocated TAs to courses that do not meet the enrollment threshold. For example, a TA may be assigned to a large course but the instructor denies the support. Can the TA be assigned to another class with a lower enrollment?

Comments from the committee:

- Currently, college policy does not allow TAs to be transferred to other courses. Due to the cost of tuition waivers and stipends for TAs, there are financial implications for assigning TAs to low-enrolled classes. Hiring a grader for a few hours per week is a better option financially.
- If a department has already generated enough enrollment to qualify for the TA, the expense to the college would be the same regardless of which class the TA was assigned to.
- The college determines the criteria for TA assignments. It's possible the budget is planned with the assumption that some TAs will not be needed.
- It is recommended that Program Directors engage Department Chairs in the discussion.
- If a TA is reassigned, how would the process be handled, especially if more than one instructor can utilize the TA?

The discussion was tabled until the January meeting to give Program Directors more time to evaluate and discuss the proposal.

- **Other Business and Reminders:**

- January meeting date (*Danielle Embry*)  
Danielle asked if the committee was willing to move the January meeting from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup>. Attendees agreed.

Meeting adjourned at 3:01 pm.

***Next Scheduled Meeting Date: January 10, 2024 2:00 – 3:00 pm, DRACH-A326 or Zoom***

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

**\*Action Items:**

- John and Chris will research UA graduate admissions policy and report back in January. (*John Ehiri, Chris Cutshaw*)