

Argosy University
Name of College: Health Sciences
Name of Program: Public Health (Master)
Assessment Year: 2016-2017

To support program quality and integrity, Argosy University’s Master of Public Health program underwent a Comprehensive Program Review (CPR). Below are some statistics, findings, interventions and outcomes related to the review.

By The Numbers	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Annual Enrollment (Total Headcount)	225	196	172
Annual Enrollment Demographics: Race and/or Ethnicity			
White	29	30	27
Black/African American	152	130	115
Hispanic	5	2	3
Hispanic or Latino	3	6	6
Other Pacific Islander	2	5	6
Two or More Races	4	3	3
Unknown	12	10	4
Gender			
Female	225	162	136
Male	50	34	36

Comprehensive Program Review:

The Master of Public Health (MPH) program conducted its Comprehensive Program Review (CPR), led by the Dean and lead faculty during the 2016-17 academic year.

The analysis focused on 5 areas: Curriculum (Program Outcomes, Syllabi, Courses, etc.), Assessment (LASAs, Plans, etc.), Faculty (All adjunct at this point), Marketing (Materials, Websites, etc.), and Support Services (Admissions, Student Services, Library, IT, etc.). Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities will be offered for each area.

Strengths

- The team found the diversity of the student body to be impressive and the admissions process to be holistic and inclusive of all learners.
- The diversity and experience of the faculty were identified as strengths by the students and the review team. The faculty reported feeling supported when holding students accountable and that there are good supportive services around writing and providing the research tools.

- Students appreciate the requirement to apply what was being learned in the field experience. The team recommended that the program consider ways to further support the career aspirations of the students by providing online career mentoring sessions, small grants to travel to conferences such as APHA and other networking opportunities for students to achieve career growth. Further, to consider creating opportunities for career networking for students with preceptors or sites.

Recommendations from the external review team

- Invest in retention efforts and increase connectedness between students and the program. Consider virtual weekly synchronous sessions in each course (requested by a few students in the evaluations), twice a year asynchronous check-ins, etc. Paid peer mentoring, tutoring, online student groups, or other retention strategies listed in the report will provide additional support.
- Although 75% of program graduates are satisfied or very satisfied with the program, 25% responded they were dissatisfied. Follow-up should definitely be sought to understand why and inform the program moving forward.
- Admissions are inextricably linked to retention so close attention to evidence-based persistence indicators should be investigated and implemented to increase graduation rates.
- The team highly recommends CEPH accreditation. In order to pursue this, the program will need to meet the staffing requirements. In addition, as CEPH no longer identifies five knowledge areas, but rather competencies, the program may need to realign its assessments to competencies as well as program outcomes.
- For those in internship and ready for their careers, consider online career mentoring sessions, small grants to travel to conferences such as APHA and other networking opportunities for students to achieve career growth. Ensure the internship coordinator or teacher is creating opportunities for career networking for students with preceptors or sites.

During the Comprehensive Program Review, several key areas were identified as action items for the MPH program over the next three years, some of which align with the recommendations of the external review team. They are as follows:

- 1) Update all courses to reflect more contemporary events in the public health sector: Courses must reflect the pertinent and current issues of public health. While the material in most of the classes is relevant to the learning outcomes, there is dated content in some and need to be updated. In addition, using Brightspace functionality to make courses more engaging and interactive will be key.
- 2) Revise the benchmarking goals for assessment purposes and explore other assessment options: Benchmarks set at 90 percent may be more realistic for a traditional research program, not a generalist MPH program. Pass rates for most professional examinations sit around the 80th percentile. Additional attention needs to be paid to establishing more reasonable performance benchmarks. In addition, there is interest in introducing qualitative

measurements to provide a more robust view of student learning. These could include student interviews, open-ended surveys, and other qualitative measures.

- 3) Improve instructor presence in the classroom environment to improve the student experience: Students have expressed concerns about some inconsistent quality of instruction and instructor engagement in the online environment. Providing a series of instructor webinars could help faculty improve the quality of their instruction and enhance their presence in the classroom.
- 4) Conduct a return on investment analysis on adding specializations to the program: There are several major tracks of study: general public health, epidemiology, health education, health informatics, public health administration, and environmental health. Currently, the MPH program is a generalist degree. In order to increase enrollment and attract more students into the MPH program, there is a proposal to create two tracks: a generalized public health track (the present program) and an epidemiology track. This will involve replacing 3-4 of the existing generalist courses with epidemiological studies for students to create the epidemiology focus.
- 5) Pursue Council for Education in Public Health (CEPH) programmatic accreditation: Pursuing specialized accreditation will be important for the longevity of this program. Many graduate students expect that programs that can be accredited should be accredited.