

Assessment procedures

The Environmental Health Program utilizes a variety of assessment approaches (Table 1) including the Department of Health Sciences assessment program, professional accreditations, program faculty meetings, strategic planning, various professional practice & student teaching assessments, certification exams, advisory meetings, and faculty evaluations.

Table 1: Summary of EH Program Assessment Activities

Evaluation Programs	Responsible Authority	Evaluators	Evaluation Techniques	Frequency
ISU Assessment Program	Department Chairperson	Students Graduates Employers	Survey Questionnaires	Annually
Program Accreditation	Program faculty	National Environmental Health Accreditation Council	Accreditation	Every six years
Program Faculty Meeting	Program Faculty	Faculty	Open Discussion	Weekly
Strategic Planning	Program Faculty	Faculty	Planning	Annually
Professional Practice Assessments	PP coordinator	Cooperating site supervisors and Students	Performance & program evaluations	Every semester
REHS (national) and LEHP (state) Examinations	National Environmental Health Association and state assessment	National Environmental Health Association and state assessment	Professional Certification Examination	As available information (information not formally accessible)
CIH (international)	American Board of Industrial Hygiene	American Board of Industrial Hygiene	Professional Certification Examination	As available information (information
Advisory guests	EH Program Director	Employers Graduates Students	Discussions	annually
Faculty Evaluations	Department Chairperson	Students	Performance evaluations	Every Semester

What follows are more details on each of these assessment processes and how they have informed and affected practice within the program.

Department of Health Sciences (HSC) Assessment Program

In 1996, the Department of Health Sciences (HSC) Assessment Program was created to implement uniform department-wide quality management program. The department chairperson formed the HSC Assessment Committee, a multidisciplinary committee with faculty representatives from each of the five programs in the Health Sciences Department. The goal of the HSC Assessment Committee was to develop assessment tools to capture feedback from groups with a vested interest in the program graduate performance. Targeted groups included students, graduates, employers, and the institution itself.

In 1998, the Program began using the assessment tools to collect program performance data. The data is collected annually, but typically includes responses from too few students to be of use. In 2011, the University Assessment Office took over the graduate assessment program. In 2012, 10 of 46 EH alumni from classes of 2007 and 2011 responded to questions from the assessment office. We received assessment data from the Environmental Health Accreditation Council. There were 26 alumni responses but we have not analyzed the data as of this writing.

Program faculty and the department chairperson review the program performance data regularly. Additionally, intradepartmental comparative analyses of each program's assessment data are performed at the departmental chair level to identify opportunities for improvement across the five programs in the department.

Professional Accreditations

Accreditations by professional organizations are a stringent review of the program's merit.

As part of the ongoing EHAC accreditation review, the Environmental Health Program received notice from EHAC of being in compliance with guidelines, and was granted full approval, a six year designation, in 2012

Copies of the accreditation/approval reports are posted in our departmental shared drive.

Program Faculty Meetings

The Program faculty meets weekly to discuss ongoing Program management and curricular issues. Issues are identified and recommendations are presented for modification or correction. Most of the issues discussed in these meetings are addressed at the Program level.

Strategic Planning

Each year the program faculty reviews our programmatic vision, mission and goal statements and selects and prioritizes objectives for the coming year(s) into discernible action items. As with typical strategic planning, we consider the strengths and weaknesses of our own program and the opportunities and threats external to the program.

The current strategic plan for the program is posted on the departmental shared drive.

Professional Practice Assessments

Every student who graduates with a degree in Environmental Health completes a 9-12 credit hour professional practice experience. As part of this experience students are assessed in a variety of ways and they assess their preparation for professional practice, the university supervisor, site supervisor and practice site.

Environmental Health faculty identify areas and trends where student performance is unsatisfactory or has potential for improvement. The faculty reviews provide an ongoing opportunity to evaluate the current curricular content through student performance in the “real world.” It also provides the faculty with the opportunity to develop new instructional strategies to improve student performance.

A copy of the professional practice assessment instruments appears in departmental shared drive.

National Registered Environmental Health Specialist (REHS) Certification Examination

Two major organizations have typically provided examinations for students in the Environmental Health Program at the state and national level. The National Environmental Health Association (NEHA), the primary professionally organization for Environmental Health Professionals in the U.S., designs and administers the Registered Environmental Health Specialist (REHS) certification exam. Graduates of the Environmental Health Program at ISU are immediately eligible to take this exam, while graduates from other disciplines must demonstrate their commitment to the profession for two years before being eligible to take this certification exam.

State Licensed Environmental Health Professional (LEHP) Certification Examination

The State of Illinois also designs and administers the Licensed Environmental Health Professional exam. Graduates of the Environmental Health Program at ISU are immediately eligible to take this exam, while graduates from other disciplines must demonstrate their commitment to the profession for two years before being eligible to take this certification exam.

Other Professional Certification Examinations

A wide variety of other certifications are available for specialization areas in the field of Environmental Health, including the Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP), Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH), Hazardous Materials (CHMM), and many others. Pass rates serve as one indicator for how well prepared graduates are on the professionally defined responsibilities and competencies. Graduates may not sit for the CIH exam until they have completed at least 4 years of experience in industrial hygiene.

Student/alumni certification rates

Unfortunately, due to concerns about the distribution of sensitive information, certification rates for students or alumni in the Environmental Health Program are not currently available. However, informal feedback from alumni indicates that ISU EH graduates do very well on these professional exams, which is supported by other assessment techniques implemented.

EH Advisory Committee

The program has hosted advisory committee meetings on an annual basis. As part of the curriculum revision since the last program review meetings were held with a panel of alumni and another with students. We have also solicited feedback from alumni during state professional association meetings.

Faculty Evaluations

The program faculty are evaluated through student, peer, and self-assessment.

Student Evaluations

Students complete faculty evaluations at the completion of every course. CAST uses a nationally normed evaluation system called IDEA. An individual who is not associated with the course administers the evaluations to the students. This assessment process is “blind” to promote student honesty on the evaluation. Individual faculty data are compared to aggregate faculty data from a national bank of similar courses. From these data, faculty then identify opportunities for improvement in their individual courses and instructional approaches. Faculty then respond to potential areas for improvement in their annual DFSC documents.

Peer and self-assessment Evaluations

Annually, each faculty member is required to develop a self-assessment document or portfolio for review by the department chairperson and the Department Faculty Status Committee. Faculty are also encouraged to have an annual external peer review of their teaching. The portfolio includes the reflections on the student, peer, and self-assessment.

Curricular/objective consistency and currency

The current EH curriculum is consistent with the program objective and up-to-date with current professional standards and expectations. The current EH Program curriculum is fully approved by the National Environmental Health Accreditation Council (EHAC).

A summary of some of the major changes is included in table 2 and student outcomes can be found in table 2.1.

Table 2: Curriculum changes since last EHAC program review

<p>1. Based on feedback from Environmental Health Advisory Committee, the number of courses required to complete the minor should be increased, and there should be sub-tracks within the minor to enhance the quality and marketability of the minor.</p> <p>2. MAT 120 was a pre-requisite for many required courses. However, it is designed for Business students and does not prepare science students.</p> <p>3. HSC 322 – pollution prevention used to be a 3 credit hour course. However, content on solid and hazardous waste management which is required by EHAC is added to HSC 322.</p>	<p>1. For EH minor, required hours has been increased from 6 to 9 hours. Students can choose either an environmental community health sub-track or occupational health subtract.</p> <p>2. Added MAT 118 to replace 120 because it is tailored to meet the needs of science students.</p> <p>3. HSC 322 is changed into a 4 credit hour course with a lab component.</p>
--	---

Table 2.1: Environmental Health Program IBHE student outcomes

Outcomes	Courses	Activities (internal)	Application (external)
<i>Anticipate hazards</i>	All required and elective EH courses	Exams, term project, group work, etc.	Professional Practice and Advisory Council evaluation, etc.
<i>Recognize hazards</i>	All required and elective EH courses	Exams, term project, group work, etc.	Professional Practice and Advisory Council evaluation
<i>Evaluate hazards</i>	All required and elective EH courses	Exams, term project, group work, etc.	Professional Practice and Advisory Council evaluation
<i>Identify interventions</i>	All required and elective EH courses	Exams, term project, group work, etc.	Professional Practice and Advisory Council evaluation
<i>Implement interventions</i>	All required and elective EH courses	Exams, term project, group work, etc.	Professional Practice and Advisory Council evaluation
<i>Evaluate interventions</i>	All required and elective EH courses	Exams, term project, group work, etc.	Professional Practice and Advisory Council evaluation
<i>Professional attributes</i>	All required and elective EH courses	Exams, term project, group work, etc.	Professional Practice and Advisory Council evaluation
<i>Professional communication</i>	All required and elective EH courses	Exams, term project, group work, etc.	Professional Practice and Advisory Council evaluation