

The University of British Columbia  
**School of Population and Public Health**

Minutes of Faculty Meeting held on Friday, March 15, 2024  
at 10:30 am to 12:15 pm in Room B104/Zoom

**Present:** Please see the attached attendance list of those who attended the meeting in person or via Zoom and signed/checked out their names.

**1. Welcome and Land Acknowledgement (A. Anis)**

Aslam acknowledged the significance of the land on which the meeting took place and recognized the indigenous peoples as the rightful custodians of the territory.

**2. Approval of Agenda**– approved.

**3. Approval of Minutes of January** – approved.

**4. Director's Report**

a) Change of Membership for Future Faculty Meetings

- A restructuring of future monthly Faculty Meetings was proposed to include only tenure, tenure-track (grant tenure and grant tenure track) and partner faculty. Additionally, senior staff members in Administration (Shermila), Communication (Gabrielle), and Education (Lisa) were designated as mandatory attendees.
- The clinical, associates, affiliates, sessional instructors, adjuncts, post-docs, staff, and student representatives a few times a year. This broader forum will facilitate collaboration and ensure diverse perspectives are considered.
- Minutes of the monthly full Faculty meetings will be on the website after the minutes have been approved.

b) Changes to leadership positions

- MPH Program Director Transition:  
Paul Kershaw's tenure as MPH Program Director will conclude in June with gratitude expressed for his 6 years of leadership. Mike Marin will be appointed as the new MPH Program Director effective July 1, 2024.
- Associate Director of MPH, PhD, and MSc Programs:  
Eva Oberle accepted the interim role of Associate Director, with Susan Cox mentoring her for one year before Eva assumes full directorship.
- Susan Cox will take on the leadership of Applied Ethics, succeeding David Silver.
- Division Head Appointments: Health Services and Policy – still pending.

A barbecue event was proposed to honor outgoing leaders and celebrate their contributions.

**5. Update & presentation on Leadership Retreat held on January 26<sup>th</sup>** - Louise Masse, Ameer Manges and Jason Sutherland

Associate Director Louise Masse, Division Head Ameer Manges, and Program Director Jason Sutherland presented an update on the outcomes of the Leadership Retreat held on January 26<sup>th</sup>. The discussion primarily revolved around strategic planning to align curriculum offerings with faculty strengths, optimize teaching assignments, and explore potential restructuring of divisions to enhance program effectiveness. Key points raised included:

- a) Identification of gaps in curriculum offerings and potential realignment of divisions to better address program needs.
- b) Discussion on the role of program heads in strategic planning and curriculum development.
- c) Concerns raised regarding the budgetary implications of hiring term instructors and the need to leverage core faculty resources.
- d) Recognition of potential tensions between divisional responsibilities and program objectives, emphasizing the importance of collaboration and communication.
- e) There was discussion about setting a minimum enrollment threshold for courses, with suggestions that courses with fewer than five students might not be offered or could be offered once every two years. This was proposed to address the issue of courses being cancelled due to low enrollment, particularly in light of faculty members potentially taking more sabbaticals under new policies.
- f) courses with small enrollments were noted to be high-value despite their size. However, sustaining such courses without a new funding formula from the university was seen as challenging.
- g) Alternative Solutions: Alternative solutions were proposed, such as offering directed study courses or ensuring communication with enrolled students if courses are cancelled. However, it was acknowledged that changes to how directed study courses are credited may be necessary.
- h) Commitment to integrating student feedback into program development and decision-making processes. Questions were raised about considerations for international applicants, especially to Global Health Program who hold government positions, to complete their studies or maintain connections with their home countries.

Next Steps:

- a) It was agreed upon that further discussions and planning sessions would be necessary to implement the proposed changes effectively.
- b) Division heads and program directors were tasked with developing strategies for course allocation and faculty realignment.
- c) The importance of faculty engagement and input in the decision-making process was highlighted, with a commitment to transparency and collaboration moving forward.

**6. Artificial Intelligence and Comprehensive examinations** – Susan Cox and Charlyn Black  
 Susan Cox and Charlyn Black led a discussion regarding the inclusion of generative AI in the comprehensive exams for PhD students scheduled for the end of May. They provided an overview of the current approach to the comprehensive exams process, highlighting changes made in the past few years to focus more on key competencies rather than just examining content. The committee discussed concerns about the use of AI in exams, including academic integrity issues, potential shifts in focus, equity considerations, and the lack of clarity on AI usage policies. Despite some concerns, there was also interest in supporting the use of AI for its potential benefits, particularly in aiding non-native English speakers and enhancing the exam component.

No decision has been made, please email Charlyn at [charlyn.black@ubc.ca](mailto:charlyn.black@ubc.ca) if you have any concerns/questions and Charlyn will bring all comments to the committee meeting.

7. **Associate Directors Updates** – report attached
8. **Advisor to the School Director**– report attached
9. **Program Directors, Centre Directors, and Division Heads** – report attached
10. **Administration (Operations, HR & Finance)** – none
11. **Communications** – none
12. **Announcements/Celebrations**
  - a) Black cohort – Dr. Khumbo Kalua received his official letter of appointment as an Associate Professor with tenure from the President effective Jan. 1, 2024.
  - b) Global Environmental Health – Mike Brauer, Chair – The top two candidates turned down the offer. The job posting will be re-posted at a later date.
  - c) Global Health Ethics – Dan Steel, Chair – Included the Assistant Professor with tenure track/Associate Professor (tenure) in the posting, and it has been reposted until April 8th.
  - d) Translational Medicine –Jason Sutherland, chair. The first meeting of the committee was on March 7. The second meeting is scheduled for March 28th to go through the long list.
  - e) Public Health Ethics – David Silver, Chair. The Candidates' On-campus Visits took place.
  - f) Indigenous Health Science (Data Science/Data Sovereignty) – Craig Mitton, Chair. The first committee meeting was on February 19th. The committee agreed to have the position exclusive to Indigenous recruitment. FoM has been informed to request approval from the Human Rights Commission.
  - g) Indigenous Health Services Research – Boris Sobolev, Chair – recruitment pending committee composition.
  - h) CRC Chair Tier II, Anti-racism – Committee meeting with the Director *pro tem* is scheduled for next week.
13. **Other Business Arising** – None.

There being no other business the meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

**Next SPPH Faculty Meeting: Friday, April 26, 2024**