

REVIEW FOR ACCREDITATION  
OF THE  
STANDALONE BACCALAUREATE PROGRAM  
AT  
SUNY COLLEGE - OLD WESTBURY

COUNCIL ON EDUCATION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

SITE VISIT DATES:  
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CRITERIA:  
Accreditation Criteria for Standalone  
Baccalaureate Programs, amended  
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## **1.0 LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE**

**Criterion 1.1:** The program maintains an organizational description and organizational chart(s) that define the program's administrative structure and relationships to other institutional components. The organizational chart presents the program's relationships with its department(s), school(s), college(s) and other relevant units within the institution.

**Finding:**

Met

**Team Comments:**

**Observations from the Self-Study**

The program offers a BS in health and society, which is the only degree offered by the Department of Public Health within the School of Arts and Sciences. The department chair/program director reports directly to the dean of the school. The self-study narrative clearly explains the organizational structure of the BS degree in health and society, its leadership, staffing, and relationship with other departments in the school and at the university. Organizational charts depict the program's reporting lines and the program's placement within the department, school, and university. The department chair reports to the dean of the School of Arts and Sciences who reports to the vice president for enrollment services, which is similar to the reporting lines for the other schools at the university. The vice president reports to the provost & senior vice president for academic affairs who reports to the president of the university.

**Observations on Site**

Site visitors learned that the BS in health and society is one of the fastest growing academic programs in the school and, according to the dean and provost, the program enjoys a prominent role in the institution's plans for growth and development. Co-located with other science departments in the Natural Sciences building, it has dedicated support staff and is able to draw on other resources of the school when needed.

**Institution Comments:**

**Council Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Criterion 1.2:** The program demonstrates administrative autonomy that is sufficient to affirm its ability to fulfill its mission and goals and to conform to the conditions for accreditation. Administrative autonomy refers to the program’s ability, within the institutional context, to make decisions related to the following:

- allocation of program resources
- implementation of personnel policies and procedures
- development and implementation of academic policies and procedures
- development and implementation of curricula
- admission to the major

**Finding:**

Met
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**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

<p>The self-study describes a program that has the autonomy to meet its mission and satisfy accreditation requirements. The Department of Public Health, in which the program is located, enjoys the same degree of autonomy as all other departments in the school to implement academic and personnel policies, request resources, and develop and implement curricula. Admission standards for the program are consistent with admissions criteria for the school. The standard policy in the Public Health Department is that a student is not permitted to repeat a core course more than once, and all courses in the major must be completed with a minimum grade of C. Additionally, a prerequisite for program enrollment in courses in the major is completion of two required English courses with a grade of C or better.</p> <p>The department’s faculty have sufficient autonomy to design the program curriculum and set program-specific degree requirements. Department faculty review the curriculum every five years, as part of the university’s departmental review, and make changes to maintain its currency. Full-time faculty vote to approve changes and submit them to the university’s Curriculum and Academic Planning (CAP) Committee for final approval.</p> <p>The department chair, who is elected to a three-year term by full-time, tenure-track faculty, has the authority to recruit and recommend hiring of full-time faculty to the school dean and has final authority to hire adjunct faculty. Faculty pay and benefits are set by terms of a collective bargaining agreement with the university. The self-study describes in detail how the university allocates resources to the department. The university considers assessment information,</p>
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changes in SUNY initiatives and guidelines, state funding, and admission and retention trends to make budget allocations.

The chair is responsible for observing and evaluating faculty teaching and the development of a schedule assigning full-time faculty as student advisors.

**Observations on Site**

Departmental budget allocations are centralized in the provost's office, with some discretionary funds allotted to school deans for distribution among academic departments for faculty development and travel at the request of department chairs. The program has been able to make the case successfully for funding to support the recruitment of a sixth full-time faculty member to help the program meet the demands of expected, continued growth in enrollment.

**Institution Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Council Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Criterion 1.3:** Faculty have clearly defined rights and responsibilities concerning program governance and academic policies. Program faculty have formal opportunities for input in decisions affecting curriculum design, including program-specific degree requirements, program evaluation, student assessment and student admission to the major. Faculty have input in resource allocation to the extent possible, within the context of the institution and existing program administration.

**Finding:**

Met

**Team Comments:**

**Observations from the Self-Study**

Faculty bylaws define curriculum design and assessment as a faculty responsibility to be initiated at the department level and approved by the Curriculum and Academic Planning (CAP) Committee and Faculty Senate. The department chair works in consultation with program faculty to develop or revise local policies for the program, e.g., for retention of students with deficient GPAs. Faculty discuss programmatic resource needs with the department chair. The dean is responsible for advocating for resources with the university provost.

**Observations on Site**

Interviews with four of the five full-time faculty (the fifth member was on sabbatical) confirmed that they frequently engage in discussion and efforts to improve core courses in the curriculum and develop electives that meet the needs of their students. They monitor and discuss strategies to assist and retain students who are struggling to maintain academic progress toward their degrees.

**Institution Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Council Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Criterion 1.4:** The program ensures that all faculty (including full-time and part-time faculty) regularly interact and are engaged in ways that benefit the instructional program (eg, instructional workshops, curriculum committee).

**Finding:**

Met with Commentary

**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

Full-time faculty regularly interact through monthly department meetings and serve as a committee of the whole for faculty recruitment, curriculum development, and planning student activities, such as the Health Disparities Institute.

The self-study reports that part-time faculty meet with the department chair, may present at faculty development meetings, and are afforded faculty development funds from the college and faculty union. Both part-time and adjunct faculty are members of the same collective bargaining unit as full-time faculty.

Observations on Site

It was evident to site visitors that the small faculty size enables frequent and regular interaction in the department in ways that benefit the program. When asked on site, however, part-time and adjunct faculty could not clearly describe how their observations and suggestions for course improvement were gathered and considered by full-time faculty.

**Commentary:**

*(if applicable)*

The commentary relates to the level of engagement of part-time faculty in curriculum review and improvement. Part-time faculty were not able to explain how they are involved in providing input to improve the courses they teach for the department.

**Institution Comments:**

The Public Health department values the insights and contributions of our part-time faculty, some of whom have been with the department for several years. As we do with our full-timers, we routinely observe our part-timers' classes, review their syllabi and other course materials, and engage with them to provide the support they need to succeed in their work. Part-timers/contingents at Old Westbury develop their course materials based on our needs, our suggestions and their own expertise. When they teach in succeeding semesters, our use and appreciation of their contributions is manifest in our collaborative work improving courses based

on their experiences and student feedback. We conduct exit interviews to summarize the strengths and areas for improvement in their courses, and to learn from their experiences how to improve the program as a whole. In addition, we invite and welcome our part-timers' input and expertise in continuously improving our program offerings. Going forward, we will more explicitly request their input.

**Council Comments:**

[Click here to enter text.](#)



**Criterion 1.5:** Catalogs and bulletins used by the program, whether produced by the program or the institution, to describe its educational offerings accurately describe its academic calendar, admission policies, grading policies, academic integrity standards and degree completion requirements. Advertising, promotional materials, recruitment literature and other supporting material, in whatever medium it is presented, contains accurate information.

**Finding:**

Met

**Team Comments:**

**Observations from the Self-Study**

The self-study included a paper copy and links to the undergraduate catalog, and the university's website includes up-to-date information about the BS in health and society program, the Department of Public Health, and its faculty. Faculty develop and update all program-related content in the catalog and create all written promotional materials for the university's Office of Public & Media Relations.

**Observations on Site**

Site visitors visited the program website and observed that it included links to relevant information for students considering enrollment in the program. All materials accurately describe the academic calendar, requirements, and other relevant policies.

**Institution Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Council Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

## 2.0 RESOURCES

**Criterion 2.1:** The program has **sufficient faculty resources** to accomplish its mission, to teach the required curriculum, to oversee extracurricular experiences and to achieve expected student outcomes. Generally, the minimum number of faculty required would be 2.0 FTE faculty in addition to the designated leader's effort each semester, trimester, quarter, etc., though individual circumstances may vary. The FTE calculation follows the institution or unit's formula and includes all individuals providing instruction in a given semester, trimester, quarter, etc.

**Finding:**

Met
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**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

<p>The program is supported by five full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty who are fully dedicated to the program. Additionally, in the fall 2018 semester, the program was supported by one part-time faculty member and three adjunct faculty members.</p>
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<p>The college considers 12 credits per semester to be a full-time load, and courses are four credits each. The full-time tenure-track teaching load is three and three. FTE is calculated based on number of courses taught, (e.g., one course x 2 semesters=.33). Full time lecturers (non-tenure track and no research expectation) are expected to teach four courses per semester and an adjunct course is considered to be 0.125 FTE. Part-time faculty teaching load is .5 FTE.</p>
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Observations on Site

<p>The program is currently seeking to hire an additional full-time faculty member to accommodate the growth in the student body. The program indicated that it hopes is to employ an individual with expertise in food systems/food justice or health education. The program is also hoping that the future faculty hire will have a background in biostatistics in order to increase the number of classes being offered to students. However, the program leader and faculty indicated that they are not solely looking at individuals with the preferred backgrounds. They instead, are open to hiring the individual who is the best fit for the program.</p>
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<p>In conversation with the students, there was also a demand for additional faculty to facilitate offering additional sections of courses, thereby making course scheduling more amenable to students who are seeking evening courses.</p>
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**Institution Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Council Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Criterion 2.2:** The mix of **full-time and part-time faculty** is sufficient to accomplish the mission and to achieve expected student outcomes. The program relies primarily on faculty who are full-time institution employees.

**Finding:**

Met

**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

The Public Health Department relies chiefly on its five full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty to provide the majority of teaching and advising students and to accomplish the department's goals. The department uses the expertise of part-time and adjunct faculty as needed, often in order to "enrich [the] curricular offerings." In the past, the program hired specialists in fields not represented by the full-time faculty's expertise (e.g., health law and occupational health).

As a growing department, the program has been able to hire additional full-time tenure-track faculty in recent years, and the program is currently in search of an additional faculty line to start in September 2019.

Observations on Site

During an on-site meeting, the program explained the distinction between part-time faculty and adjunct faculty as one of teaching load. Adjunct faculty are responsible for teaching one to two classes a semester. In comparison, part-time faculty are lecturers with salary proportional to the number of classes that they teach.

**Institution Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Council Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Criterion 2.3:** The program tracks student enrollment to assist in gauging resource adequacy. Given the complexity of defining “enrollment” in an undergraduate major or baccalaureate degree program, the program uses consistent, appropriate quantitative measures to track student enrollment at specific, regular intervals.

**Finding:**

Met

**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

The program regularly tracks student enrollment, progress, and graduation based on institutional data provided each semester by the university’s Institutional Research and Assessment Office. Every semester, the program analyzes the following:

- enrollments by semester and by year
- annual six-year (150% of expected time to graduation) graduation rates for
  - all students
  - by race/ethnicity
  - by full-time and part-time status
  - by first-time-to-college students and transfer students
  - by residence on/off campus
  - by gender
  - by Pell Grant eligibility
- Student-faculty ratios
- Workload distributions by rank and course level
- Grade distributions, including GPA trends, and rates of D’s, F’s, and W’s by semester

Observations on Site

The program monitors student enrollment with a specific interest in overall growth. Program faculty indicated that they have been able to advocate for additional lines to support the program and its growing student population.

**Institution Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Council Comments:**

**Criterion 2.4:** The program's **student-faculty ratios (SFR) are sufficient** to ensure appropriate instruction, assessment and advising. The program's SFR are comparable to the SFR of other baccalaureate degree programs in the institution with similar degree objectives and methods of instruction.

**Finding:**

Met
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**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

<p>Student FTE is equal to the number of full-time students plus 1/3 the number of part-time students. The student FTE in fall 2018 was 175. The student FTE in spring 2018 was 203, 208.7 in fall 2017, and 194 in spring 2017.</p> <p>Student -faculty ratio (SFR) is calculated by dividing the number of majors by full-time tenure-track faculty. The SFR in fall 2018 was 40.2. The SFR was 45.8 in spring 2018, 46.4 in fall 2017 and 42.8 in spring 2017. The program's average class size increased from 29 in spring 2017 to 30 in fall 2017 to 41 in spring 2018. The program's average class size returned to 29 in fall 2018 due to students graduating.</p> <p>The self-study states that not all students receive advising every semester, which reduces faculty workloads. Instead, students must be advised when they first declare the major and when their grades fall below 2.0 GPA. However, the self-study indicates that many students seek advisement each semester. The program's average advising load was 40.2 in fall 2018. Like the overall SFR, this number shows a decrease over past terms: the average load was 45.8 in spring 2018, 46.4 in fall 2017, and 42.8 in spring 2017.</p> <p>The program provides data for the bachelor's degree in psychology for comparison. Both programs require their students to complete a research sequence and an internship. The only major difference is that the psychology program is the largest major in the college, with an estimated 500 majors.</p> <p>The psychology SFR was lower than that of the public health program each semester: 35.5 in fall 2018, 36.5 in spring 2018, 42.3 in fall 2017, and 38.2 in spring 2017. The psychology program's average class size was 24 in spring 2018, 35 in spring 2018, 27 in fall 2017, and 25</p>
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in spring 2017. The comparable average class size was 24 in fall 2018, 35 in spring 2018, 27 in fall 2017, and 25 in spring 2017.

**Observations on Site**

Prior to the site visit, reviewers had questions concerning the student FTE definition and the decline in student enrollment for the fall 2018 semester. Faculty indicated that the student FTE definition is standard across the university. Additionally, faculty stated that the fall 2018 student enrollment number presented in the self-study may be inaccurate since the program continues to grow. However, during the meeting with university leaders, the Institutional Research Office representative indicated that the fall 2018 enrollment number was accurate and stated that a large number of the program’s students graduated in spring, leading to the decline in enrollment. He also stated that all students are counted toward enrollment until they graduate.

**Institution Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Council Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Criterion 2.5:** The program has access to financial and physical resources that are adequate to fulfill its operating needs, accomplish the mission, teach the required curriculum and provide an environment that facilitates student learning, including faculty office space, classroom space and student gathering space.

**Finding:**

Met
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**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

<p>The self-study presents a detailed, line-item budget of revenue and expenditures for the five-year period of 2014-2019. Program revenue is dependent on student tuition and fees. Revenue has increased steadily over the five-year period from \$1,283,715 to \$1,638,208, with a slight decline in year five, commensurate with the small decline in enrollment in 2018-2019. Faculty salaries account for 26 percent of program expenditures, with the remainder of expenditures allocated among several line items for fixed and variable indirect costs such as utilities, postage, and non-salary payroll costs. The program is housed in the Natural Sciences building with the departments of biology, chemistry and physics; faculty have office space and classrooms there, and additional classroom and meeting space is also available in nearby buildings. There is available student gathering space in the Natural Sciences building, as well.</p>
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Observations on the Site Visit

<p>Interviews conducted on site confirmed that the program has access to adequate financial and physical resources to meet its current needs and planned growth; the program has strong support from the provost, who is responsible for budget allocations among the academic departments. The provost indicated an expectation of continued growth in the public health program as well as other academic programs that could serve as a pipeline into clinical professions.</p> <p>As previously noted, the program is recruiting a sixth full-time faculty member to meet its teaching obligations. Anticipating continued growth, program leaders identified the need for an additional faculty or staff member to oversee the internship program, as well as additional administrative support. Although current facilities are adequate, and would even allow for the program to share additional space, e.g., lab space with biology or chemistry, plans for construction of new buildings is already underway to accommodate the expected growth in a number of programs.</p>
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**Institution Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Council Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Criterion 2.6:** The academic support services available to the program are sufficient to accomplish the mission and to achieve expected student outcomes. Academic support services include, at a minimum, the following:

- computing and technology services
- library services
- distance education support, if applicable
- advising services
- public health-related career counseling services
- other student support services (eg, writing center, disability support services), if they are particularly relevant to the public health program.

**Finding:**

Met with Commentary

**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

The program has adequate student supports and resources, including computer services, library services, advising, and career counseling. The Career and Planning Development Center provides assistance to all students in the college including public health students and sponsors public health events annually. Students have access to an extensive array of resources and services at the SUNY Old Westbury Library as well as the Writing Center, the Math Learning Center and the Arts and Sciences Tutoring Center. The advising support services are centrally located at the university, rather than in the program, with the exception of public health-specific advising.

Observations on Site

In addition to the services described in the self-study, site visitors received additional information provided on student support for counseling and mental health support. The university has dedicated staff support for students who are experiencing mental health issues and require assistance. There are also peer educators to conduct counseling for substance use/abuse and anger/stress management. The Office of Counseling and Psychological Wellness offers counseling and psychological assessment for students; university leaders are reviewing data to better understand student needs and demand and develop a plan moving forward.

**Commentary:**

*(if applicable)*

The commentary relates to the consideration of adding additional resources to support the department's administrative needs. The faculty noted that when administrative functions fall to them, this takes away from time that could be committed to research or scholarship. In addition, the faculty noted that there are times when administrative support is sought out on an ad hoc basis from other administrative assistants such as the dean's assistant.

**Institution Comments:**

The Public Health department appreciates CEPH's understanding of the limited administrative supports currently available to our department. We would be grateful for additional administrative support of our and our students' needs in this rapidly-growing program.

**Council Comments:**

[Click here to enter text.](#)

### **3.0 FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS**

**Criterion 3.1:** The program meets the requirements of regional accreditors for faculty teaching baccalaureate degree students. Faculty with doctoral-level degrees are strongly preferred and, in most cases, expected. A faculty member trained at the master's level may be appropriate in certain circumstances, but the program must document exceptional professional experience and teaching ability.

**Finding:**

Met

**Team Comments:**

**Observations from the Self-Study**

All five of the full-time faculty hold PhD degrees in health-related or social science fields including social/health psychology, health behavior and health education, social work, political science, medical anthropology, and geography. Of the four adjunct faculty members, three have masters-level degrees in urban affairs, healthcare administration and chemistry and environmental and occupational health. One of the adjunct faculty members has a doctoral degree in bioethics and law in addition to a master's in public health degree.

**Observations on Site**

Site visitors confirmed that the program's faculty meet the requirements for faculty teaching baccalaureate students. In total, the nine faculty members are committed to the program, and all are trained at the doctoral or master's level.

**Institution Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Council Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Criterion 3.2:** The designated leader of the program is a **full-time faculty member** with educational qualifications and professional experience in a **public health discipline**. If the designated program leader does not have educational qualifications and professional experience in a public health discipline, the program documents that it has sufficient public health educational qualifications, national professional certifications and professional experience in its primary faculty members. Preference is for the designated program leader to have formal doctoral-level training (eg, PhD, DrPH) in a public health discipline or a terminal professional degree (eg, MD, JD) and an MPH.

**Finding:**

Met
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**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

<p>The designated leader of the program is the department chair. Her duties include teaching two courses per semester, participating in monthly faculty meetings, hiring and supervising part-time and adjunct faculty, and overseeing the work of full-time faculty members.</p> <p>The chair has a PhD in social/health psychology and has been at the university since 1990. She has a significant record of teaching, research/scholarship, and professional service to the field of public health, including serving on public health journals' editorial boards (e.g., Journal of Public Health Policy) and serving as the chair and program co-chair of the Socialist Caucus in the American Public Health Association.</p> <p>The other primary faculty have doctoral graduate degrees in health behavior and health education, dual degree in social work and political science, and geography. One faculty member has a PhD in Cultural Applied Medical Anthropology and an MPH in Community and Family Health.</p>
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Observations on Site

<p>Although the designated leader does not have a public-health related degree, site visitors confirmed that faculty teaching in the program have relevant backgrounds. Of the four full-time faculty members, one has a doctoral level degree in a public health area. Additionally, one holds an MPH. Furthermore, one of the faculty members has completed graduate coursework in Biostatistics and Epidemiology and has published in multiple public health journals including the American Journal of Public Health. Also, one of the faculty members served as a postdoctoral scientist at the New York University Institute of Community Health and Research (ICHR).</p>
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**Institution Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Council Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Criterion 3.3:** Practitioners are involved in instruction through a variety of methods (eg, guest lectures, service learning, internships and/or research opportunities). Use of practitioners as instructors in the program, when appropriate, is encouraged, as is use of practitioners as occasional guest lecturers.

**Finding:**

Met
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**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

The self-study identifies 12 practitioners from governmental agencies, health care systems, non-profits, and other agencies who serve as guest lecturers, field placement supervisors, and course instructors. The table provided in the self-study for this criterion does not indicate when or how often these practitioners have been involved in instruction or service learning.
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Observations on Site

<p>Faculty stated that practitioners have lectured on a myriad of topics including urban gardening, women’s health, environmental justice and healthcare administration. Community members interviewed during the site visit reported a high level of engagement with students and faculty. Several stakeholders who met with site visitors were program alumni who are currently supervising multiple interns from the program; they and other alumni observed that students have been well prepared for a successful internship by the faculty member responsible for field placements. One of the community members interviewed, also an alumna, is a part-time faculty member who teaches a course in health care administration.</p> <p>Notably absent from the group of practitioners present during the site visit was a representative from any of the county health departments on Long Island; program leaders alluded to a problem with completing a site agreement with the Nassau County Health Department, which has created a barrier to placing students in this important local public health setting for more interaction with local public health professionals. Although the self-study narrative mentions field placements in the two county health departments on Long Island, the electronic resource file contains no examples of such placements. Generally, site visitors noted that the program’s engagements with the practice community focused more on local hospitals and non-profits, rather than on state and local health departments.</p>
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**Institution Comments:**

The Public Health department is working diligently, with the participation of our campus administration, to enhance our relationships with local Departments of Health, and we hope to have more frequent internship opportunities available to our students in the near future.

**Council Comments:**

The team did not identify any issues warranting a finding of met with commentary, so the Council acted to change the finding to met.



**Criterion 3.4:** All faculty members are informed and current in their discipline or area of public health teaching.

**Finding:**

Met

**Team Comments:**

**Observations from the Self-Study**

All of the full-time faculty are engaged in service and scholarship to help them remain current in their respective disciplines. Faculty participate in editorial boards including the Social Science and Medicine: Culture, Health & Sexuality and the American Journal of Public Health. Current faculty also present research at conferences including the American Public Health Association, the Society for Applied Anthropology, the Society for Medical Anthropology, and the American Anthropological Association. Faculty research topics include sexual health, the Affordable Care Act, and international health systems.

**Observations on Site**

The faculty provided additional details on site regarding financial resources to support faculty research and scholarship. Two faculty members applied for and received funding from the university's faculty development grant program for their research needs. One faculty member used the funds to pay for students to assist with a literature review for a publication. A second faculty member used the funds to pay undergraduate students for data transcription and coding for a book project; this faculty member also received the funds a second time to develop a study abroad trip in Bolivia. The faculty union has recently introduced \$1,000 grants to supplement faculty development grants when more than \$3,000 is needed. One faculty member is already planning to apply for these funds for research.

In addition to the funds that are available through the provost to support faculty scholarship and research, the dean also has funds for conference travel to help faculty build the program's reputation and disseminate their research. Faculty members stated that both full-time and part-time including adjunct faculty members are eligible to apply for research funding.

**Institution Comments:**

**Council Comments:**

**Criterion 3.5:** Course instructors who are currently enrolled graduate students, if serving as primary instructors, have at least a master's degree in the teaching discipline or are pursuing a doctoral degree with at least 18 semester credits of doctoral coursework in the concentration in which they are teaching.

**Finding:**

Not applicable
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## **4.0 CURRICULUM**

**Criterion 4.1:** The overall undergraduate curriculum (eg, general education, liberal learning, essential knowledge and skills, etc.) introduces students to the following domains:

- the foundations of scientific knowledge, including the biological and life sciences and the concepts of health and disease
- the foundations of social and behavioral sciences
- basic statistics
- the humanities/fine arts

The curriculum addresses these domains through any combination of learning experiences throughout the undergraduate curriculum, including general education courses defined by the institution as well as concentration and major requirements or electives.

**Finding:**

Met
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**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

<p>All majors at SUNY-Old Westbury are grounded in liberal arts education with a social justice framework. A baccalaureate degree from SUNY-Old Westbury requires the completion of 120 credits, including the fulfillment of SUNY-wide liberal education requirements (minimum of 40 credits), college requirements (math and English proficiency, a diversity domain course), and major requirements. SUNY general education requirements include at least one course in each of the following domains: 1) basic communication (also satisfying English proficiency), 2) creativity and the arts, 3) western tradition, 4) American experience, 5) major cultures, 6) foreign language, 7) natural sciences, 8) humanities, 9) social sciences, and 10) mathematics.</p>
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<p>Completion of these requirements ensures that students address two of the required domains: foundations of social and behavioral sciences and humanities/fine arts. Students complete additional coursework in social and behavioral sciences in the major coursework. The major coursework ensures coverage of biological and life sciences through a requirement that students take one of the following courses: biology, anatomy and physiology, or basic biological sciences. The major coursework also includes a biostatistics course.</p>
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Observations on Site

Site visitors confirmed the general education requirements and associated program courses with faculty and students.

**Institution Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Council Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Criterion 4.2:** The requirements for the public health major or concentration provide instruction in the following domains. The curriculum addresses these domains through any combination of learning experiences throughout the requirements for the major or concentration coursework (ie, the program may identify multiple learning experiences that address a domain—the domains listed below do not each require a single designated course).

- the history and philosophy of public health as well as its core values, concepts and functions across the globe and in society
- the basic concepts, methods and tools of public health data collection, use and analysis and why evidence-based approaches are an essential part of public health practice
- the concepts of population health, and the basic processes, approaches and interventions that identify and address the major health-related needs and concerns of populations
- the underlying science of human health and disease including opportunities for promoting and protecting health across the life course
- the socioeconomic, behavioral, biological, environmental and other factors that impact human health and contribute to health disparities
- the fundamental concepts and features of project implementation, including planning, assessment and evaluation
- the fundamental characteristics and organizational structures of the US health system as well as the differences in systems in other countries
- basic concepts of legal, ethical, economic and regulatory dimensions of health care and public health policy and the roles, influences and responsibilities of the different agencies and branches of government
- basic concepts of public health-specific communication, including technical and professional writing and the use of mass media and electronic technology

If the program intends to prepare students for a specific credential, then the curriculum must also address the areas of instruction required for credential eligibility (eg, CHES).

**Finding:**

Partially Met

**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

Students complete 48 credits of required major coursework. All students complete the following courses: introduction to the social determinants of health, introduction to the US health care system, biostatistics, epidemiology, field placement, research methods, and senior seminar. The major also requires students to complete one of three defined life sciences courses, as noted in Criterion 4.1.

The self-study provides a grid documenting the courses through which each domain is introduced or covered. The program has a definition for “introduction” as a topic that is mentioned in learning outcomes or as a course topic area, or offered as part of a course lecture/activity or assessment. The program defines “covered” as a topic that addresses the

following requirements: included in the learning outcomes, a full lecture/activity or a major component of an assessment, course topic outline includes the domain, topic is the subject of least one full course lecture or activity and/or is assessed as a major component of a course assignment (e.g., final paper, project, or a major part of an exam).

The self-study's template mapped the project implementation domain, which includes planning, assessment, and evaluation to only one course: Research Methods; however, reviewers could not locate a reference to this topic in the course syllabus.

Site visitors noted that the program offers a program planning and evaluation course, but this course is an elective, and there is no guarantee that all students will take the course. Given that program planning and evaluation are mentioned in the departmental mission statement, this appears to constitute a disconnect. Discussion with students confirmed this point, and students and alumni also expressed a desire to see this become a required course. The community preceptors echoed this sentiment and also suggested including coursework on grant writing.

Additionally, the self-study documentation shows that the introduction to the US health care system addresses the required topic of ethics, but site visitors could not locate the topic in the syllabus.

#### Observations on Site

Reviewers noted that program planning and evaluation are not a core part of the program. When asked on site, faculty indicated that students experience an array of concepts in their core coursework and electives including program planning and evaluation. Faculty stated that students learn the foundation of program planning in the research methods class. Students also have the opportunity to delve more into the concept if they opt to take the program planning elective. Students and alumni indicated that they would have preferred having a core course that primarily focuses on program planning and evaluation. Students and alumni who completed the program planning elective stated that the material was very challenging to learn due to the short class length.

Additionally, site visitors discussed the project implementation domain and ethics topic area with faculty during the site visit, and faculty were able to identify several courses that addressed ethics, providing examples of appropriate coverage. Faculty indicated that the research

methods class was designed to provide students with the foundation of program planning including implementation.

**Compliance Concern:**

*(if Partially Met or Not Met)*

The concern with the curriculum is that the students do not fully cover the required domain of areas of project implementation, including planning, assessment and evaluation. On-site discussions with faculty and students confirmed this observation.

**Institution Comments:**

We agree wholeheartedly with these comments regarding Program Planning and Evaluation, and have developed a plan which we will be implementing starting next semester. We will integrate a module introducing program planning and evaluation methods in our Research Methods (PH 5900) class, and will reinforce it in our Senior Seminar class (PH 5920). Students in PH 5920 will develop a program and an evaluation plan based on data they collect themselves. We plan to assess the effectiveness of this plan at the end of the Spring, 2020 semester, when the first cohort of seniors will have completed the revised courses. Depending on the success of this approach, we will then determine whether the courses successfully integrated these new learning outcomes, or whether we should require an additional core course of Program Planning and Evaluation.

We appreciate the site visitors' recognition that we are appropriately and adequately covering ethics in the US Health Care System class.

**Council Comments:**

**Criterion 4.3:** If the program intends to prepare students for a specific credential, then the curriculum must address the areas of responsibility required for credential eligibility (eg, CHES).

**Finding:**

Not Applicable
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**Criterion 4.4:** Students must demonstrate the following skills:

- the ability to communicate public health information, in both oral and written forms and through a variety of media, to diverse audiences
- the ability to locate, use, evaluate and synthesize public health information.

**Finding:**

Met with Commentary
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**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

<p>The program requires that students demonstrate communication and information skills in required courses. For instance, in PH 3600: Introduction to the Social Determinants of Health, students write reaction papers, synthesize and present public health information in the news, and lead course discussions. In PH 3610: Introduction to the U.S. Health Care System, students are required to write critical analysis papers.</p>
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<p>In PH 5900, Research Methods, students begin by analyzing the background, methods, and findings of peer-reviewed articles, and reporting, in written form, the strengths and weaknesses of the design approach. Students then practice design, collection, input, analysis and dissemination of data through written reports. Lastly, students design their own individual research project, and the project proposal is submitted in oral presentation, PowerPoint, and written forms. In PH 5920: Senior Seminar, students perform the research project based on the proposal designed in PH 5900. Students gather and evaluate data, write a final paper following the format of a peer-reviewed manuscript, and present their findings in an oral presentation, with an executive summary designed to reach a diverse public health audience.</p>
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### Observations on Site

Reviewers had questions prior to the site visit concerning how students demonstrate a) communication with diverse audiences and b) communication through a variety of media. During the site visit, faculty stated that the students' research presentations must be tailored to specific, diverse audiences. However, reviewers were unable to deduce how the students' existing materials were designed for diverse audiences. Reviewers noted that assignments were solely intended for academic audiences, including the student population (e.g., the production of an oral presentation or research paper). Faculty suggested that a future assignment might be for students to create a PowerPoint presentation that can be presented to populations in community centers, churches, and/or food pantries, for example. In PH 3600, faculty also indicated that students currently participate in mock interview scenarios where they play either the interviewer or a first-generation student.

Faculty also stated that in a women's health elective, they plan to incorporate the option of presenting public health information in one of two ways: a) traditional PowerPoint presentation or b) in a children's book format. The future goal would be to translate health information to the appropriate health literacy level of the target audience. Students do appear to communicate using a variety of media. Faculty clarified that in PH 3600, students use both LinkedIn and Photovoice for assignments.

### **Commentary:** *(if applicable)*

The commentary relates to the need for additional opportunities for students to demonstrate the skill of communicating with different types of audiences.

### **Institution Comments:**

Prior to the site visit, the faculty considered "diverse audiences" to relate to diversity in race, ethnicity, social class, gender and sexuality. As one of the most diverse schools in New York, we believed we met this criterion. As a result of the site visit, we now recognize that "diverse audiences" should include a diversity of public and community members and stakeholders. The department will as a result incorporate these communication strategies in PH 3600 and PH 3610. In each course, students will create an advocacy tool for a non-academic audience. This tool can be, to name a few possibilities, a PowerPoint presentation for a community audience, a children's book incorporating health education information, a white paper, a video letter to a community leader advocating for a public health issue. We appreciate this opportunity to further improve students' learning outcomes.

### **Council Comments:**

**Criterion 4.5:** Students have opportunities to integrate, synthesize and apply knowledge through cumulative and experiential activities. All students complete a cumulative, integrative and scholarly or applied experience or inquiry project that serves as a capstone to the education experience. These experiences may include, but are not limited to, internships, service-learning projects, senior seminars, portfolio projects, research papers or honors theses. Programs encourage exposure to local-level public health professionals and/or agencies that engage in public health practice.

**Finding:**

Met with Commentary

**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

Students integrate, synthesize, and apply the knowledge they have gained in the degree program by completing a capstone sequence of three courses: research methods, senior seminar, and field placement. In the first two of these courses, students learn how to review literature, formulate research questions, design a study, and analyze the results; in the second (PH 5920: Senior Seminar), they carry out the research project they have designed. In the field placement course, students complete a 90-hour internship in a community agency, keep a weekly journal of their activities, and write a final essay analyzing their experience.

Observations on Site

Some employers, field placement supervisors, and alumni suggested that the research methods and senior seminar sequence was too research-oriented, and that this requirement for cumulative and experiential activities would benefit from more exposure to program planning and evaluation, perhaps in a series of courses. Some of the field placement experiences described by field placement supervisors were assignments in direct patient care. The 90-hour internship is not always aligned with length-of-internship requirements of some field placement sites, but the program has decided that the internship length is at the optimum for its many working students who commute from some distance to campus.

**Commentary:**

*(if applicable)*

The first area of commentary relates to the research focus of the capstone sequence of courses; students, employers and field placement supervisors suggested that this component of the curriculum might benefit from a stronger reorientation toward practice skills.

The second area of commentary relates to the opportunity to more consistently ensure that practice experiences expose students to a variety of public health settings. Some of the program's field placements are in clinical, not public health settings, thus depriving the students of that valuable exposure.

**Institution Comments:**

Regarding the first commentary, that students need to develop more practice-based skills in our Senior Seminar class, we are integrating program planning, development and evaluation into the Research Methods (PH 5900) and Senior Seminar (PH 5920) classes. See more details in 4.6. Regarding the second comment about student exposures: we believe that we are providing our students with optimal exposures and opportunities to move forward in the direction of their future career goals, and guide them in that way. While their experiences are diverse, students are required to connect their experiences back to the core components of public health learned throughout their coursework in a weekly journal during the internship, and to reflect this relationship in the final paper summarizing the experience and public health lessons learned therein.

**Council Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Criterion 4.6:** The overall undergraduate curriculum and public health major curriculum expose students to concepts and experiences necessary for success in the workplace, further education and life-long learning. Students are exposed to these concepts through any combination of learning experiences and co-curricular experiences. These concepts include the following:

- advocacy for protection and promotion of the public's health at all levels of society
- community dynamics
- critical thinking and creativity
- cultural contexts in which public health professionals work
- ethical decision making as related to self and society
- independent work and a personal work ethic
- networking
- organizational dynamics
- professionalism
- research methods
- systems thinking
- teamwork and leadership

**Finding:**

Met
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**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

<p>The program exposes students to the required concepts through its curriculum. The self-study indicates that students are exposed to advocacy in each departmental course, but site visitors had difficulty verifying this coverage through written materials. For example, the self-study lists PH 3600: Introduction to Social Determinants as a course that provides exposure to advocacy through reflection assignments; the assignments ask students to reflect on issues where change is needed, but the students are not actually advocating or making a case for why and how the change should occur. Similarly, an assignment example was provided from the research methods course on the campus food pantry. While the issue of hunger on campus is an issue for advocacy, the assignment itself was focused on research and did not provide any points or discussion on how to address the issue and move forward to make the change.</p>
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<p>Similarly, site visitors noted that the self-study indicates that students are exposed to teamwork and leadership through multiple required and elective courses that require work in groups and require students to lead in-class discussions. However, this description did not provide assurance to site visitors that concepts of teamwork and leadership are discussed or applied in their own right.</p>
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Some required courses address multiple concepts. In addition to advocacy, the self-study indicates that PH 3600 provides opportunities for exposure to critical thinking, cultural contexts in which public health professionals work, and systems thinking. PH 5900: Research Methods provides opportunities for exposure to research methods, community dynamics, ethical decision-making as related to self and society, independent work and a personal work ethic, and professionalism. PH 4900: Field Placement provides opportunities for exposure to networking and organizational dynamics.

#### Observations on Site

Prior to the site visit, reviewers had questions related to students' exposure to cross-cutting concepts of systems thinking, teamwork and leadership, and advocacy. Faculty indicated that they defined systems thinking as the way in which structure shapes health. Faculty stated that in several courses, students look at health by using different public health models to identify health outcomes from the individual, social, and political levels. The team concluded that exposure to the concept of systems thinking was integrated in the curriculum.

For the concepts of teamwork and leadership and advocacy, the site visit team was not convinced that the exposure to the topics in the curriculum or co-curricular experiences was adequate or deliberate.

#### **Compliance Concern:**

*(if Partially Met or Not Met)*

The concern relates to the need for the program to provide opportunities for student exposure to the cross-cutting concepts of 1) teamwork and leadership and 2) advocacy. Site visitors could not validate appropriate opportunities for exposure to these concepts.

#### **Institution Comments:**

Regarding the first concern about advocacy, we have more explicitly created an advocacy component in PH 3600 (Social Determinants of Health) to address this concern. This new assignment, we believe, will enhance our students' ability to explain and practice how to advocate for their chosen issue in the final PH 5920 (Senior Seminar) paper. Both were required as of Spring 2019 (see Attachment A for a revised syllabus for PH 3600, and Attachment B for a revised syllabus for PH 5920).

Regarding the second concern about teamwork and leadership: we have often incorporated student team projects in PH 5900, Research Methods. Since the majority of our students work and could not meet outside of class, we started to allow for students to conduct the research individually. In order to meet this criterion, we've decided to reintegrate group projects, but focus on in-class activities. Students will conduct research, analyze it, and present it together, and then evaluate each other's performance anonymously. Prior to beginning this course segment, we will provide readings and lecture materials on how to develop strong teamwork and leadership. Using the aggregate of the peer evaluation data, we will devote one class meeting at the end of the semester to a review and discussion of strategies for creating and developing strong team membership and leadership. Regarding leadership, students are also required to reflect on their role in their field placement course, and how they would lead the team for which they worked if they were the leader. This leadership reflection is a component of their final paper for the class (PH 4900).

**Council Comments:**

The Council reviewed the team's findings, self-study, and program's response. Based on the totality of the evidence, the Council concluded that the program has demonstrated compliance with this criterion and acted to change the finding from partially met to met.

**Criterion 4.7:** Syllabi for required and elective courses for the major include objectives that are sufficient to demonstrate that they address the domain(s) identified in Criterion 4.

**Finding:**

Met

**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

The program provided syllabi for all required and elective courses in the electronic resource file except PH 4920, which is an “open elective” course that can focus on a variety of topics. Syllabi were appropriately descriptive in general, though, in some areas noted in previous criteria, reviewers sought additional clarification during the site visit.

The program recently received approval to cross-list its environmental health course (BS/PH 4680) so that the faculty may teach it as an elective public health course. The program does not have a syllabus created for the course yet, and did not include it in assessing domain coverage, as it will be taught in the near future.

Observations on Site

Faculty provided examples of a future “special topics” class that is due to begin in spring 2019. The future class will focus on offering intercultural and comprehensive healthcare to culturally diverse and low-income populations in Bolivia.

**Institution Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Council Comments:**

Click here to enter text.



## **5.0 PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS**

**Criterion 5.1:** The program defines a mission statement that guides program activities and is congruent with the mission statement(s) of the parent institution(s).

### **Finding:**

Met with Commentary

### **Team Comments:**

#### Observations from the Self-Study

The department has a mission statement that is aligned with the college and the university, all of which are focused on social justice, respect for diversity, and community engagement. The Public Health Department's mission is to "educate students with a social determinants perspective on health; identify the economic and social context within which individuals make behavioral choices; examine social forces (e.g., social class, gender, etc.) that shape individuals' destinies; and plan, implement, evaluate and advocate health programs and policies both in the United States and throughout the world."

#### Observations on Site

The concept of social determinants is prominent in the program's curriculum and is recognized by students and faculty, but there was no evidence to show that the mission statement guides decision-making in the department. During on-site discussions, faculty were not able to provide clear examples of how the mission statement guides program activities.

### **Commentary:**

*(if applicable)*

The commentary is related to the opportunity to better use the mission statement to guide program activities and set priorities. The faculty may wish to develop processes to keep the mission statement central in discussions and strategic planning.

### **Institution Comments:**

Our mission statement reflects our strong commitment to the social determinants of health model, and is a primary driver of our program's activities and planning. Full-time faculty review and discuss the program's mission statement at our annual faculty retreat. We are committed to further aligning our curriculum with our mission statement in, for example, requiring as of Spring 2019 a robust program planning and evaluation component of our Research Methods and Senior Seminar sequence.

### **Council Comments:**

**Criterion 5.2:** The program defines expected student learning outcomes that align with the program's defined mission and the institution's regional accreditation standards and guide curriculum design and implementation as well as student assessment.

**Finding:**

Met with Commentary

**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

The program provides a set of student outcomes and states that the outcomes are in alignment with regional accrediting requirements. Student outcomes focus on population health perspectives and, specifically, social determinants.

The program's expected learning outcomes are as follow:

1. Understand the philosophy, beliefs, history, core values, and fundamental concepts of public health
2. Demonstrate and apply an understanding of the social determinants of health framework to public health research, practice, and prevention efforts
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the key components of health care systems, with a particular focus on the U.S.
4. Demonstrate the ability to define and use key epidemiological concepts and principles to identify and assess the causes of health problems
5. Communicate public health information and ideas in oral and written formats to diverse audiences using a variety of media
6. Conduct literature review on the health needs of a community as well as collect and analyze data to address the needs
7. Endorse and integrate ethical practices and social justice in public health practice and action
8. Demonstrate the ability to develop and carry out independent research to understand and assess the health status and needs of the community

Observations on Site

Reviewers discussed ways in which faculty ensure that the curriculum aligns with the learning objectives. For instance, students complete a myriad of research related assignments, including secondary data analysis, which relate to learning objectives 6 and 8. Faculty explained that they ensure that there are appropriate assessments for all learning objectives.

**Commentary:**  
*(if applicable)*

The commentary has to do with the opportunity to better align the mission statement and the learning outcomes. The mission refers to ensuring that students can “plan, implement, evaluate, and advocate [for] health programs and policies,” but the learning outcomes do not address these areas. Second, the mission statement does not address research, but the learning outcomes do address research. The program may wish to revisit the mission statement and learning outcomes to ensure alignment between the two program elements.

**Institution Comments:**

We appreciate the opportunity to consider how better to align our mission statement with our program activities and learning outcomes. As mentioned in 4.5 above, we plan to integrate program planning into our Student Learning Outcomes as we incorporate program planning and evaluation into our PH 5900, Research Methods, and PH 5920, Senior Seminar, courses.

**Council Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Criterion 5.3:** The program regularly revisits its mission and expected student outcomes to ensure their continuing relevance.

**Finding:**

Met

**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

The program recently revisited the mission and student outcomes at the annual retreat held in September 2018. The self-study notes that the periodic review is completed by all five full-time faculty. There is a two-person committee that reviews and edits the mission and outcomes and presents the modifications to the departmental faculty for discussion.

Observations on Site

During the site visit, the faculty made references to the mission statement and the student outcomes. The alumni and community preceptors explained that they were not aware of formal mechanisms for providing feedback to the program about the mission or student outcomes to ensure relevance to the practice of public health; some alumni or preceptors expressed comfort with sharing feedback informally with the chair. The faculty also did not describe a timeline for the next update, but this may be due to the fact that the mission statement was reviewed so recently.

**Institution Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Council Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Criterion 5.4:** The program defines and implements a plan that determines the program's effectiveness. Methodologies may vary based on the mission, organization and resources of the program, but whatever the approach, assessment processes are analytical, useful, cost-effective, accurate and truthful, carefully planned and organized, systematic and sustained.

At a minimum, the plan includes regular surveys or other data collection (eg, focus groups, key informant interviews, data from national exams (eg, CHES) from:

- enrolled students
- alumni
- relevant community stakeholders (eg, practitioners who teach in the program, service learning community partners, internship preceptors, employers of graduates, etc.)

Data collection must address student satisfaction with advising.

The program collects quantitative data at least annually on 1) graduation rates within the maximum time to graduation allowed by the institution and 2) rates of job placement or continued education within one year of graduation. The program defines plans, including data sources and methodologies, for collecting these data, identifies limitations and continually works to address data limitations and improve data accuracy. The program's plan does not rely exclusively on institution- or unit-collected data, unless those data are sufficiently detailed and descriptive. Data collection methods for graduates' destinations are sufficient to ensure at least a 30% response rate.

The program collects qualitative data on the destination of graduates related to both employment and further education, such as type of graduate degree pursued and sector of employment, as defined by the program.

**Finding:**

Partially Met
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**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

<p>The program assesses programmatic effectiveness on an annual basis. The program evaluates its effectiveness through qualitative and quantitative data collected from students and alumni through various mechanisms.</p> <p>The program uses course-specific assessments (e.g., exams, field placement evaluations, research proposal, NIH ethics training, oral presentations, and capstone research paper) derived from the required courses to examine students' competence in the student learning outcomes and to track trends in student performance. The program also uses both the Graduating Senior Student Survey and the Alumni Survey to assess program effectiveness.</p> <p>The program also created and revised a survey related to student satisfaction with advisement. Over time, the program has added questions and changed the survey method to increase response rates. This survey is administered once a year.</p>
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The program has methods to collect and track data on both graduation rates and student post-graduation outcomes (employment or enrollment in additional education). The program collects the latter set of data through the SUNY Old Westbury Alumni Office and Office of Career Planning and Development (CPD).

#### Observations on Site

Community stakeholders indicated they do not provide feedback regarding the program in either an informal or formal method. Faculty stated that they do not collect data from employers or practitioners. The program did provide a field placement evaluation that preceptors complete at the end of the internship. However, the site visit team determined the evaluations assess students individually, and the program has not aggregated them to provide meaningful feedback on the program's overall effectiveness.

#### **Compliance Concern:**

*(if Partially Met or Not Met)*

The concern relates to the need for the program to implement data collection methods to collect data from relevant community stakeholders (e.g., practitioners who teach in the program, service learning community partners, internship preceptors, and employers of graduates).

#### **Institution Comments:**

We agree that we need to collect data from relevant community stakeholders. Toward this goal, we will, starting immediately, A) conduct an annual focus group with supervisors of recent graduates to assess the job readiness of recent graduates from our program; B) introduce an "exit" survey for adjunct instructors who teach core and required courses to examine their overall perceptions of our students' ability to meet the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and to evaluate our program; and C) add questions about the SLOs to the surveys completed by our internship preceptors. The data will be compiled on a rolling three-year cycle to assess the program's effectiveness.

#### **Council Comments:**

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**Criterion 5.5:** The program demonstrates that at least 70% of students for whom data are available graduate within six years or the maximum time to graduation as defined by the institution, whichever is longer. The program demonstrates that at least 80% of graduates for whom data are available have secured employment or enrolled in further education within one year of graduation. If the program cannot demonstrate that it meets these thresholds, the program must document 1) that its rates are comparable to similar baccalaureate programs in the home unit (typically a school or college) and 2) a detailed analysis of factors contributing to the reduced rate and a specific plan for future improvement that is based on this analysis.

**Finding:**

Met

**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

The university has a maximum time to graduate of six years.

The 2010-2011 cohort had a graduation rate of 56%. This cohort consisted of 34 students. The cohort entering in 2011-2012 had a graduation rate of 75%. This cohort consisted of 51 students. Both of the cohorts have reached the maximum time to graduate. Recent cohorts, from 2012-2013 to 2016-2017, have graduation rates that exceed 70%.

In terms of post-graduation outcomes, for the 2014-2015 cohort, 84.6 % were employed and 15.4% were in continuing education/training. For the 2015-2016 cohort, 53.3% were employed and 46.7% were continuing education/training. For the 2016-2017 cohort, 66.7% were employed. 26.7% were in continuing education/training, and 6.6% were actively seeking employment. There were no unknown outcomes in any of the cohorts.

Observations on Site

For the 2010-2011 cohort, some students had continued beyond the maximum time to graduate. During the site visit, faculty provided an updated graduation rate table to reflect the number of students who graduated in the 2010-20, bringing the graduation rate to 59%.

**Institution Comments:**

**Council Comments:**

**Criterion 5.6:** The program establishes a schedule for reviewing data on student outcomes and program effectiveness. The program uses data on student outcomes and program effectiveness to improve student learning and the program.

**Finding:**

Met

**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

The department conducts a comprehensive review of its public health program every five years as required by the college and for continuing Middle States accreditation purposes. The next review will take place in 2019. In the interim, the faculty utilize results from the graduating senior and alumni surveys, student course and instructor evaluations, peer review of instructor performance, and biennial reappointment reviews of pre-tenured faculty to make program improvements. This ongoing evaluation takes place at monthly faculty meetings and an annual retreat.

Program evaluation data has been used to make specific improvements in recent years, including the creation of a Public Health Student Club in response to low student ratings of outside classroom experiences, allowing students to begin their senior seminar research during the prerequisite research methods course, thus giving them more than one semester to complete their research, and, in response to student requests, placing greater emphasis on evaluating professionalism during the field placements.

Observations on Site

Site visitors learned that an emphasis on continuous improvement is an ongoing activity for the program. The small size of the faculty allows the program to be responsive to performance feedback and addressing specific problems or issues brought forth by students, such as the examples cited in the self-study document.

**Institution Comments:**

**Council Comments:**



**Criterion 5.7:** The program maintains clear, publicly available policies on student grievances or complaints and maintains records on the aggregate number of complaints received for the last three years.

**Finding:**

Met

**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

The self-study summarizes the process for student grievances and complaints and contains links to relevant university policies and procedures. The student complaint process includes steps for first attempting to resolve the complaint informally with the faculty or staff member, appeal to the department chair if this informal step is unsuccessful, then, if unresolved, filing a formal complaint with the Faculty Senate. No formal complaints have been filed in last three academic years.

The college requires its departments to have procedures for handling non-academic complaints. No complaints have been received since the department implemented its procedure in 2017.

Observations on Site

Site visitors confirmed that no formal student grievances were received in the last three years.

**Institution Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Council Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

## **6.0 ADVISING**

**Criterion 6.1:** Students are advised by program faculty (as defined in Criterion 2.1) or qualified program staff beginning no later than the semester (quarter, trimester, term, etc.) during which students begin coursework in the major and continuing through program completion. Advising includes academic planning and selection of courses as well as public health-related career counseling.

**Finding:**

Partially Met

**Team Comments:**

**Observations from the Self-Study**

The program offers adequate advising support through centralized advising services and tailored support from department faculty. Initially, students receive advising from professional staff and then move to faculty advisors within the department once they have reached upper division courses. Incoming freshman also participate in a first-year experience during summer orientation; returning students and faculty attend and provide advising support. The college hosts career counseling events for students. Recently, a public health-specific career counseling event was held in collaboration with the department. Additionally, every semester career counseling events are held that students are welcome to attend.

**Observations on Site**

The students spoke very highly of the faculty and their accessibility, availability, and responsiveness; there were multiple examples of faculty responding to emails in the evening and on weekends. The students noted that the faculty are willing to meet with them outside of posted office hours.

The chair provided an overview of advising and noted that all faculty advise the students and that there is not a formal system for tracking or assignment of advisees. The faculty also provided a good description of early intervention for students who may be struggling by looking at mid-semester grades. The Student Success Center (a centralized university-level resource) monitors mid-semester grades and will reach out to any students in jeopardy of not passing. The Student Success Center is in regular contact with the chair to ensure that ongoing monitoring occurs.

The chair also briefly described the new Educational Advisory Board (EAB) system that helps with tracking student data, recording advising notes, and developing retention models. The faculty have access to EAB to record any comments from advising students.

**Commentary:**  
*(if applicable)*

The commentary relates to the lack of formalized policies and procedures for advising. While the advising system currently works for the students, there are no set policies or procedures for assigning advisors or remediation if a faculty member is not an effective advisor. If the program intends to grow, the distribution of the workload may be important to monitor. Thus, the program may consider establishing a documented process for assigning advisors and for tracking which student is assigned to which adviser. The chair described paper advising sheets to assist with tracking advice over time but also noted that students often forget their advising sheets.

Secondly, in discussions with faculty and in separate conversations with the current students and alumni, discussions of advising focused on course selection but there was little to no discussion of career planning and advising. The students talked about speaking with preceptors, alumni, or other individuals in their networks for advice about career planning, but not with faculty advisors. Faculty indicated that their primary focus is to advise students on academic matters.

**Institution Comments:**

To date, our open-advising policy has been successful, but we agree that as the Department grows, we may need to assign advisors.

One aspect of our advising process includes discussing career planning (see our ERF for a copy of this form). Our advising sessions very often include discussions of career goals. As students prepare for the PH 4900, Field Placement internship course, there is a thorough discussion of possible career goals.

The advising form has been very helpful in identifying our students' needs, and we will digitize it for ease of future advising.

**Council Comments:**

Criterion 6.1 has two major components: academic advising and future career planning. The program has described in detail the extensive focus on informal academic advising. While the

advising form does invite a discussion of career goals, the Council concluded that, in totality, the program's system of advising is not sufficient to comply with this criterion. Based on the Council's assessment of the severity of the issues, the Council acted to change the finding from met with commentary to partially met.

The first area of concern relates to the need for the program to implement a more thoroughly documented system of advising that ensures that all students have regular contact with a faculty member to provide mentorship. Advising may take a variety of forms, including group sessions, but it should be structured to ensure that all students, by the time they are enrolled in the final four semesters of major coursework, receive regular advice and mentorship from a faculty member.

The second area of concern relates to the need for the program to develop and implement a more structured system to ensure that all students have the opportunity to receive public health-specific career advising.

## **7.0 DIVERSITY**

**Criterion 7.1:** The program demonstrates a commitment to diversity and provides evidence of an ongoing practice of cultural competence in student learning.

Aspects of diversity may include, but are not limited to, age, country of birth, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, language, national origin, race, refugee status, religion, culture, sexual orientation, health status, community affiliation and socioeconomic status. This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

Cultural competence, in this context, refers to skills for working with diverse individuals and communities in ways that are appropriate and responsive to relevant cultural factors. Requisite skills include self-awareness, open-minded inquiry and assessment and the ability to recognize and adapt to cultural differences. Reflecting on the public health context, recognizing that cultural differences affect all aspects of health and health systems, cultural competence refers to the skills for recognizing and adapting to cultural differences. Each program defines these terms in its own context.

Programs can accomplish these aims through a variety of practices including the following:

- incorporation of diversity and cultural competency considerations in the curriculum;
- recruitment/retention of faculty, staff and students; and
- reflection in the types of research and/or community engagement conducted.

*(For evidence, see DR 7-1 and DR 7-2)*

**Finding:**

Met
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**Team Comments:**

Observations from the Self-Study

SUNY Old Westbury is the most diverse campus in the SUNY system, and the department reflects that diversity; 61% of students are Black or Hispanic, and almost half of students in the program receive tuition grants for low and middle-income students. Furthermore, the department's faculty complement includes Black and Asian-American members. Four department courses are cited for their emphasis on cultural competency, including PH 3600: Introduction to the Social Determinants of Health, a course that is designated by the college as meeting the college's general education requirement for coursework in diversity. In addition to coursework, the department's Health Disparities Institute provides opportunities for student involvement in diversity-related programming and research.
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Observations on Site

The college's chief diversity officer and program faculty described the college's new (2017) diversity and inclusion strategic plan and their efforts to seek gender and ethnic diversity within faculty search committees when these committees are composed.

**Institution Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

**Council Comments:**

Click here to enter text.

## **8.0 DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

**Criterion 8.1:** A degree program offered via distance education is a curriculum or course of study designated to be primarily accessed remotely via various technologies, including internet-based course management systems, audio or web-based conferencing, video, chat, or other modes of delivery. All methods used by the SBP support regular and substantive interaction between and among students and the instructor either synchronously and/or asynchronously and are:

- a) consistent with the mission of the program and within the program's established areas of expertise;
- b) guided by clearly articulated student learning outcomes that are rigorously evaluated;
- c) subject to the same quality control processes that other degree programs in the university are; and
- d) provide planned and evaluated learning experiences that take into consideration and are responsive to the characteristics and needs of online learners.

*(For evidence, see DR 8-1 and DR 8-2)*

**Finding:**

Not Applicable
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**Criterion 8.2:** The university provides needed support for the program, including administrative, communication, IT and student services.

*(For evidence, see DR 8-2)*

**Finding:**

Not Applicable
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**Criterion 8.3:** There is an ongoing effort to evaluate the academic effectiveness of the format, to assess learning methods and to systematically use this information to stimulate program improvements. Evaluation of student outcomes and of the learning model are especially important in institutions that offer distance learning but do not offer a comparable in-residence program.

*(For evidence, see DR 8-2)*

**Finding:**

Not Applicable
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**Criterion 8.4:** The program has processes in place through which it establishes that the student who registers in a distance education course or degree is the same student who participates in and completes the course or degree and receives the academic credit. Student identity may be verified by using, at the option of the institution, methods such as a secure login and pass code; proctored examinations; and new or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identity. The university notifies students in writing that it uses processes that protect student privacy and alerts students to any projected additional student charges associated with the verification of student identity at the time of registration or enrollment.

*(For evidence, see DR 8-3)*

**Finding:**

Not Applicable
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SUNY Old Westbury

**COUNCIL ON EDUCATION FOR PUBLIC  
HEALTH SITE VISIT**

December 6-7, 2018

**Day 1: Thursday, December 6, 2018**

8:30 AM **Site Visit Team Request for Additional Documents**

8:45 am **Team Resource File Review**

9:15 am **Break**

9:30 am **Meet with Program Leader and Faculty/Staff with significant roles relating to the following criteria:**

- *Criterion 1: Leadership, Management and Governance (1.1-1.6)*
- *Criterion 2: Resources (2.1-2.6)*
- *Criterion 3: Faculty Qualifications (3.1-3.5)*
- *Criterion 7: Diversity (7.1)*

Usama Shaikh, M.Ed., Vice President for Student Affairs and Chief Diversity Officer

Barbara Hillery, Ph.D., Dean, School of Arts and Sciences

Martha Livingston, Ph.D., Designated Leader and Chair, Public

Health Shijian Li, Ph.D., MSW, Assistant Professor, Public Health

Sarah Smith, Ph.D., MPH, Assistant Professor, Public

Health Chris Hartmann, Ph.D., Assistant Professor,

Public Health

10:45 am **Break**

11:00 am **Meet with Program Leader and Faculty Related to Curriculum and Degree Programs**

- *Discuss Criterion 4: Curriculum (4.1-4.5); Criterion 5: Program Effectiveness (5.1-5.11);*
- *Criterion 8: Distance Education Program (8.1-8.4)*

Barbara Hillery, Ph.D., Dean, School of Arts and Sciences

Martha Livingston, Ph.D., Designated Leader and Chair, Public

Health Shijian Li, Ph.D., MSW, Assistant Professor, Public Health

Sarah Smith, Ph.D., MPH, Assistant Professor, Public

Health Chris Hartmann, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Public

Health

12:15 pm      **Break**

12:30 pm      **Lunch with Students – in Campus Center, Room H-311**

- *Discuss Criterion 2: Resources (2.2.5-2.6); Criterion 3: Faculty Qualifications (3.3-3.4);*
- *Criterion 4: Curriculum (4.1-4.5); Criterion 5: Program Effectiveness (5.1-5.2, 5.4, 5.11);*
- *Criterion 6: Advising (6.1); Criterion 7: Diversity (7.1)*

Biana Bernard

Sara Billoo

Michelle Caputo

Shannen Duffy

Regina George

Diana Hughes

Ambra Jones

Mariam Konate

Julieanne Palumbo

Roha Quershi

Alicia Singh

Luis Solano

Aaliyah White

1: 30 pm      **Break**

1:45 pm      **Meet with Faculty and Staff with Significant Responsibilities related to the following criteria:**

- *Criterion 1: Leadership, Management and Governance (1.4, 1.5)*
- *Criterion 2: Resources (2.4-2.6)*
- *Criterion 3: Faculty Qualification (3.4)*
- *Criterion 6: Advising (6.1)*
- *Criterion 7: Diversity (7.1)*

Martha Livingston, Ph.D., Designated Leader and Chair, Public Health  
Shijian Li, Ph.D., MSW, Assistant Professor, Public Health  
Sarah Smith, Ph.D., MPH, Assistant Professor, Public Health  
Chris Hartmann, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Public Health

Health

2:45 pm      **Break**

3:00 pm      **Resource File Review and Executive Session**

3:45 pm      **Break**

4:00 PM      **Meet With Alumni, Community Representatives, Preceptors – In  
Campus Center, Room H-311**

- *Discuss Criterion 2: Resources (2.5-2.6); Criterion 3: Faculty Qualifications (3.3); Criterion 4:*
- *Curriculum (4.3-4.5); Criterion 5: Program Effectiveness (5.1-5.2, 5.4, 5.11); Advising (6.1);*
- *Criterion 7: Diversity (7.1)*

**Alumni:**

Brandon Baah '14, Instructor, Code for Life

Caryn Ann Brown '17, Financial Coordinator, Carillon Nursing and Rehabilitation

Center Kadijah Caban '17, Youth Programs Manager, Kingsbridge Heights

Community Center

Naomi Cunningham '09, MA, Comprehensive Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention (CAPP) Program Manager, Planned Parenthood of Nassau County; Outreach Coordinator, Breast Health Initiative, Sisters United in Health; Adjunct Instructor, First-Year Experience, SUNY Old Westbury

Katherine Fix '94, MHA, Assistant Vice President, Finance, Northwell Health

David Ganim '15, District Manager, Nassau County Soil and Water Conservation District

Richard Kugblenu '10, MPH, DrPH candidate, Senior Healthcare Analyst, Healthcare Association of New York State

Adebukola Oluyole '11, MPH, Data Specialist, Capital District Child Care Council

Meaghan Schurr '15, Senior Research Administrative Assistant, Guttmacher

Institute

Duddley Zephir '10, MHSA, Administrative Manager, Northwell Health Physician Partners, Pulmonary and Sleep Medicine

**Community Partners/Preceptors:**

Doreen Cohen, Volunteer Coordinator. North Shore University Hospital

Louis Marzella, Public Affairs Coordinator, Planned Parenthood of Nassau County, Inc. Denice Romero, Director of Volunteer Services, Long Island Jewish Medical Center

Jessica Snyder, Regional Family Planning Benefit Program Coordinator, Planned Parenthood of Nassau County, Inc.

5:00 pm      **Adjourn**

**Day 2: Friday, December, 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

8:30 am      Executive Session

Meeting with Sarah Smith, Ph.D, MPH, Assistant Professor, Public Health

9:30 Am      **Meet with Institutional Academic Leadership/University Officials**  
*Discuss Criterion 1: Leadership, Management and Governance (1.1-1.6); Criterion 2: Resources (2.5, 2.6); Criterion 3: Faculty Qualifications (3.2); Criterion 5: Program Effectiveness (5.1)*

Patrick O’Sullivan, Ph.D., Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Jacob Heller, Ph.D., Institutional Research

10:00 am      **Break**

10:30 am      **Executive Session and Report Preparation**

11:30 am      **Working Lunch, Executive Session and Report Preparation**

12:30 pm      **Exit Briefing**

Patrick O’Sullivan, Ph.D., Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Barbara Hillery, Ph.D., Dean, School of Arts and Sciences  
Martha Livingston, Ph.D., Designated Leader and Chair, Public Health  
Shijian Li, Ph.D., MSW, Assistant Professor, Public Health  
Sarah Smith, Ph.D., MPH, Assistant Professor, Public Health  
Chris Hartmann, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Public Health

1:15 pm      **Team Departs**