

**Visit to The University of Arizona  
College of Public Health (MEZCOPH)**

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**Summary comments are based on consultants' observations and individual sessions:**

The consultants were impressed by what MEZCOPH has been able to build and accomplish in a very short time. The faculty/staff seem connected, engaged, and very committed for a young college. Other institutions are just trying to figure out how to begin, but MEZCOPH already has a lot of community partnerships.

Within the College, faculty and Academic Professionals expressed some of the usual tensions of “qualitative vs. quantitative research, pure research vs. applied research, and real scientific research vs. social research.” It is important to look for points of commonality across these different areas, find the links and build on interdisciplinary research, instruction, and outreach. Continued support of both the importance and value of community based participatory research is important to the work of the mission of the College.

In the community session it was rewarding to see so many people there. Many partners spoke very favorably about their relationship with the College. It was a reinforcing session in that there were no complaints voiced, but the reality of community partnerships is that there is always more that can be done and the College needs to determine how best to approach this.

The meeting with representatives of other colleges at U of A raised the potential of multidisciplinary opportunities and how these can be useful for students but also for faculty and staff. A real challenge is how to collaborate across the campus given geographic dispersion.

With regard to the P and T process, a lot of progress has already been made in creating the guidelines to support community engaged scholarship. Now it is necessary to follow through on implementing them and changing the culture to support their implementation and application.

Overall, MEZCOPH is well along in this work and has a much stronger foundation than other institutions but there is always more to do. Some specific observations and recommendations follow.

*Mentoring:*

There is a request for mentoring from both faculty and the A/APs in the College. A first challenge is creating a common definition of mentoring – what is it, what is involved, what are the roles and expectations for both the mentor and the mentee. Perhaps there could be some sort of generic “role description” for each. There were also issues raised around the College’s rule of who could be a mentor and this may need to be changed, since it seemed that the College rule does not fit the reality.

Mentoring systems need to be very individual. Assignment of a mentor often does not work because of a mis-match between mentor and mentee, so it may be advisable to encourage that the mentee be the one to initiate the relationship and approach the mentor for the mentorship. It is also important that the mentor agree to the relationship. It would be very helpful if the mentee specified what the mentoring was needed for.

For faculty, the College would need rule-based guidelines and an advisor for P and T purposes. For things that were applicable to all, there could be College-wide mentoring session or brown bags, for example, on grant writing, teaching, balancing different work responsibilities as well as academic and personal life, etc.

A point was raised regarding the importance of multiple mentors for a single individual. This should be encouraged where appropriate, but an individual needs to consider how many mentor/mentee relationships they can personally commit to (whether the mentor or mentee).

One consideration is to investigate what mentoring opportunities exist elsewhere on campus, i.e. outside of MEZCOPH and potentially outside of the health sciences faculties. The College should tap into existing resources across campus.

### **Partnerships:**

A comprehensive set of recommendations are included in the notes from the January meeting. The College leadership should prioritize these and begin by addressing those that are a) easy, b) respond to high priority needs, and c) reflect opportunities that will provide leverage for future work and other opportunities.

### ***Specific notes from partnership session***

**Goal** - The goal was to discuss with our community partners the strengths and challenges to our past partnerships and envision an ideal partnership and the steps towards building it.

### **What was gained by the community via the project/partnership? What was gained by the College?**

- Research projects advance the field of public health
- Internships/other exchanges of personnel address project needs
- Ability to share resources
- Research agreement(s) with Arizona tribes under way
- Support helps to meet tribal needs via students, technical assistance, and grants
- Opportunities for Native American interns to work in Indian Country
- Tenacity and compassion provided state-wide
- Development of interagency service agreements using “creative” financing
- Trust of individuals/project focus/ and developing relationships

### **What were the challenges/barriers during the project?**

- Missions of College and practice partners are not aligned; further, goal of proposed project needs to be agreed upon
- Funding restrictions/mandates required – What value will be left in the community?
- Projects are time limited

- Partners and College are, at times, on different time lines. i.e., the academic calendar is not in sync with state/federal grant calendar
- Geographic distances from College to partners
- Potential abuse of power and privilege as it relates especially to Native American tribes; mistrust exists between Native Americans and Universities
- Other commitments/competing demands of College
- Lack of time to build sustainable partnerships
- Data collection concerns as it relates to tribal sovereignty; must understand that data collected is owned by tribes not universities
- Many communities are tired of being “measured”
- Academic world misses the people who are behind the numbers/statistics
- Lack of awareness that communities/tribes do differ; tribes, especially are sovereign and each have their own culture/traditions
- Too focused on publications

### **Recommendations**

- Organize/sponsor Faculty/Academic Professionals “boot camp” in communities to observe, learn and become immersed in the “life of the real world”
- For local partners, have people shadow others in organization
- Increase cross communications to better appreciate each other; understand what motivates an organization and identify what one can give to the relationship
- Understand each others’ barriers, history, culture, experience, resources
- Promote mutual respect – How can we give/take to meet each others’ needs?
- Develop a set of criteria for sustainable partnerships
- Establish a long term view for outcomes
- Share promising practices in partnerships
- Create realistic vision/timelines; include the federal government in this discussion because they are even farther removed on what is most realistic
- Increase funding for College by doing more outreach to other institutions within the University
- Develop a database/search engine on public health projects occurring within the State
- Develop a proactive approach to increase tribal nation engagement (policies, principles, MOUs, MUAs, etc.
- Become community driven
- Develop effective models for other to replicate
- Create a shared vision and outcome
- Host seminars/brown bag events on site and/or distance education in state and local health departments; propose to share costs/identify presenters
- Provide more training for Public Health professionals especially focused on data
- Share information through sponsorship of webcasts (note: local/state agencies want more training opportunities)
- Build more organizational capacity/infrastructure to improve the quality of services
- Explore possibilities for the expansion of services focusing on “electronic” options
- Create better “link” to college – identifying the “go to” person(s) who can identify who is doing what, where, and with whom

- Initiate the “ultimate connections” approach via the development of an external stakeholder directory
- Increase the sharing of “best practices” and expertise through a more formalized structure; currently do not know how relationships have been formed
- Must compromise when coming to the table; what are the important issues, what can be shared, and where to draw the boundaries? No one side should have total domination – share in the identifying the proposed outcome.
- Ensure community is involved with any approach!

Collaboration/partnerships with other colleges should also continue to be explored. Through conversations with others on the broader U of A campus, MEZCOPH can identify opportunities, be broad and expansive in its thinking, and look for possible new collaborations where partners have multiple contributions and multiple benefits. Extension and Education both offered several examples, and others may exist across the University and should be explored.

### **Promotion and Tenure/Related Faculty Development:**

As MEZCOPH pursues an increasing number of community-based partnerships that provide opportunities for teaching and scholarship, it needs to ensure that the P and T process supports, encourages, and rewards this. There appears to be particular importance for the candidate for review to understand how to prepare documentation that is responsive to the guidelines and tells the candidate’s story, and to preparing reviewers to understand how to evaluate community-based activities.

Part of the P and T discussion is linked to the earlier discussion of mentoring, and attention needs to be paid to finding better ways to mentor, coach and educate faculty members in general professional development, let alone for preparing for P and T. The P and T committee may want to change the type of paperwork that is required for the college that will be better structured for evaluating participation in scholarly activities and other areas of academic work.

One issue heard repeatedly during the sessions had to do with faculty/AP development to support the work that they are doing. Requests were made for additional resources to provide training such as writing grants, managing grants, being a PI, and teaching. A recommendation would be to put energy into such faculty development in the future. Faculty need support for the tenure and promotion process, and it appears that individuals on the AP track also want support for career development.

One aspect of productivity assessment will be to show how scholarly work is disseminated. There was considerable discussion of the need to weigh dissemination and the various forms of dissemination differently now than in the past given that many different avenues are now available.

All of these efforts related to P&T will help faculty to understand how to show how their case is relevant and important; frame it in the context of the institution’s mission; show the work they do and how it contributes to that mission; and demonstrate how the work is relevant and important to the institution and the College, and what is the nature of community impact.

### ***Specific Notes from P and T Session***

**Goal** - The goal of this session is to facilitate a discussion with the P and T committee regarding the issues that arise when evaluating faculty who are heavily involved in community work and community engaged scholarship, as well as to provide the group with any models, suggestions, etc. for this evaluation.

#### Meeting with Promotion and Tenure Committee

1. We should review Boyer model of Scholarship of Engagement
2. Pervasive theme needs to be that scholarship is scholarship
3. What is missing within P&T is not that community engagement is valued, but how does one present this information within a P&T packet and show its scholarship.
4. P and T committee may want to change the type of paperwork that is required for the college that will be better for evaluating participation in scholarly activities and other areas of academics.
5. Portland State University requires that faculty members are interviewed by the P and T committee to provide the faculty member an opportunity to explain details about their dossier.
6. No matter what happens with engagement, faculty members have to show productivity.
7. One aspect of productivity will be to show how scholarly work is disseminated. We need to weigh dissemination and the various forms of dissemination differently now than in the past given that many different avenues are now available.
8. Determining workload with regard to community engagement is important to use as a factor with measuring productivity.
9. We need better advising of faculty on how to put together packets. Examples of dossiers should be made available.
10. We need to find better ways to mentor, coach and educate faculty members.
11. P and T guidelines are available for all faculty members and the P and T committee. They need to be reviewed and implemented.
12. Dr. Gelmon's presentation will have a lot of the details that relate to P and T.

#### **Questions on Community-engaged Scholarship:**

It is not recommended to set up a second track with a different clock for those doing community-engaged scholarship; this makes CE scholars a set of second-class citizens. You need a single way of evaluating scholarship in a college or institution. There are many different topics and methods that can be addressed by faculty, but they must be judged in the same way. To do this, you need a good program of faculty development. If faculty are going to engage in CES they need help to know how to show the nature of the impact of their scholarship. Early in their work they need to think about the dissemination plan, potential products, what should be submitted where and when with who in the leadership role. Faculty should be encouraged to think about what is important locally, and therefore what to study, what to measure/observe, and where and how to report and disseminate. From a P and T review perspective, you may want to reconsider how you measure scholarship, and what are the important indicators of collaboration and productivity that reflect your mission and strategies.

#### **Community-based Learning and Research:**

In a field such as public health with such a strong emphasis on application, it does not seem wise to leave community interaction for students until the final internship. The College needs to find

ways to involve students throughout the curriculum, whatever their level of study. It can encourage an approach that whenever possible faculty create community-based learning opportunities. For research, faculty can be encouraged to build in support for students in every grant so that there are lots of opportunities to start to get experience in community-based projects early in the academic program through research projects. Given the focus of some of the projects at a distance from Tucson, it will be important to identify local opportunities that can be integrated into regular activities, with distance-based work on special timing, breaks, summers, etc.