

A & G COMMITTEE
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

MANUAL
AND
BYLAWS

UAB
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

February 26, 2015

A & G POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

1. **Purpose of the Admissions and Graduation Committee** (excerpted from committee bylaws approved by Faculty Assembly, August 11, 1999, see Appendix I)

The A&G committee is responsible for monitoring compliance with established rules and procedures for admission and graduation for all degree programs that are the responsibility of the School of Public Health including MPH, MSPH and DrPH. (The Graduate School has responsibility for the PhD and MS degree programs). This responsibility includes but is not limited to conducting reviews and developing recommendations for admission status for individual applicants who do not meet approved admissions guidelines, and developing general admission and graduation guidelines that the committee deems necessary or prudent.

The A&G Committee shall be responsible for soliciting nominations and selecting winners for the School of Public Health Outstanding Student Awards. Two awards are given annually, one to a master's student and one to a doctoral student. The A&G committee shall review selection criteria and modify as necessary.

2. **Operation of the A & G Committee** (excerpted from the A & G Committee bylaws, August 11, 1999).

In discharging its responsibilities, the A & G committee serves as an advisory committee to the Faculty Assembly of the School, which is the final decision-maker on educational policy. To ensure timely discharge of its responsibilities the A & G acts as a surrogate for the Faculty Assembly.

Applicants to MPH, MSPH and DrPH degree programs who have been recommended for admission by departmental admissions committee or admissions coordinators, but who do not meet established review criteria for admission, shall be referred by the Associate Dean to the A & G for review. A letter justifying the recommendation and outlining the mechanism by which the student's success shall be facilitated must accompany such recommendations.

For each application submitted to A & G for review, the departmental recommendation is approved or disapproved, either during A & G meetings or by mail ballots as needed. (Appendix II) Mail ballots will be sent out to all committee members with application and letter explaining rationale for recommendation attached. This letter should be addressed to the Associate Dean and signed by the Department Chair or his/her designee. A majority decides the result of the vote except if a member votes to meet concerning the application. A meeting of the A & G committee will then be scheduled to discuss the application. In the event of a tie, the Associate Dean will vote on the admission request. If the A & G committee disapproves a department's recommendation, the A&G may provide an alternative recommendation regarding an applicant's admission status. The A & G shall reconsider applications upon receipt of a written request from the department, which shall include a statement by the departmental admissions committee or coordinator indicating the justification for reconsideration. The results of the ballot vote will be posted before a final decision is made. A copy of the results is sent to the Department Chair.

To provide faculty oversight of the compliance with admissions criteria, the Office of Student and Academic Services shall once a year provide a list indicating the disposition of each completed application for admission to the degree programs that are the responsibility of the School of Public Health. This list shall not include applicant's names but shall include standardized test scores (GRE verbal, quantitative, and analytical; or equivalent) and grade-point averages, if available, and admissions status (admitted, admitted on probation, or rejected).

The A & G committee shall provide the Faculty Assembly with a quarterly report of their activities. The A & G Chair will serve as an ex-officio member of the EPC, attend EPC meetings, and provide reports as appropriate.

To ensure that the faculty is aware of issues under consideration by the A & G committee, agendas for meetings will be distributed one week in advance to all faculty. Each faculty member has the right and responsibility to express his/her opinion to the A&G either through his/her department's A & G representative prior to the meeting, by written communication to all members of the A & G committee prior to the meeting, or by his/her own attendance at the meeting. As the A & G committee is an advisory committee to the Faculty Assembly, every faculty member has the right to attend any and all A & G meetings.

A policy decision by the A & G committee will become accepted policy of the School one month after distribution of the minutes unless a primary full-time faculty member requests a review of the decision. A review of the decision is a request for open discussion of the decision during the next school-wide faculty meeting. A request for a review of the decision automatically suspends an A & G decision from becoming policy until after the faculty has voted on the issue. A request must be made in writing to the Chair of the A & G and to the Chair of the Faculty Assembly and must be co-signed by at least two primary full-time faculty members. After review of the decision at the faculty meeting, a vote of the faculty will be taken to either reject or accept the A & G committee's decision. This vote may be polled at the faculty meeting or by mail ballot. If rejected by the majority, the decision is overruled. No further action is required by the A & G on the issue unless new proposals are submitted for review.

Solicitation for nominations for the Outstanding Student Awards shall begin at the earliest feasible date following the Application for Degree deadline for the Spring semester, and will close no later than one month prior to convocation. After the close of nominations, a meeting will be scheduled to select the winners. A & G Committee members will be given a copy of all nominations one week in advance of this meeting.

3. Membership of the A & G Committee (excerpted from the A & G Committee bylaws, August 11, 1999).

The A & G shall consist of one representative and one alternate from each of the departments of the School of Public Health, and one student representative appointed by the PHSA President. The student representative serves as a voting member on discussions regarding admission and graduation policies and procedures but is not involved in discussions of individual applicants. Each departmental representative and alternate member shall be a primary full-time faculty member elected for a term of three years by a vote of the primary full-time faculty in the department. Terms are to be staggered such that about one-third of the A & G membership changes each year,

although members can serve more than one consecutive term as decided by their department.

The A & G chairman position will be rotated alphabetically among the departments for a term of two years. Alphabetical rotation begins in 2014 with the Biostatistics representative as Chair.

4. Minimum Criteria for Admission

In reviewing applicants for admission to the School of Public Health, Departments shall consider the following minimum criteria established by the committee:

- Clearly written and relevant career goals statement.
- Credible and supportive letters of reference.
- Previous grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale).
- Master's applicants, a recommended GRE verbal score in the 35th Percentile and quantitative score in the 40th Percentile. The analytical writing minimum score is variable by department preference. Both the score and the percentile on all sections of the GRE will be evaluated. Comparable scores on other admissions tests (MCAT, GMAT, LSAT, etc.) are considered at the discretion of the department.
- Doctoral applicants, a recommended GRE score in the 70th Percentile on each of the verbal and quantitative sections. The analytical writing minimum score is variable by department preference. Both the score and the percentile on all sections of the GRE will be evaluated.
- Foreign trained medical graduates must submit a GRE score.
- For non-English speaking applicants, a TOEFL score of at least 550 (PBT), 213 (CBT), and 80 (IBT) or an IELTS score of at least 6.5
- International transcripts must be submitted to World Education Services (WES) or Educational Credential Evaluators (ECE) for an official course-by-course credential evaluation.
- International applicants with a minimum of 2 years of public health experience will be given preference. Work during clinical training does not count toward public health experience.
- Applicants should be highly encouraged to have an undergraduate statistics course. Epidemiology and Biostatistics applicants are encouraged to have a calculus sequence.

Departments may impose stricter standards, but may not admit students below these minimum criteria without petitioning the Associate Dean.

5. Applications Below Minimum Criteria

Regarding applications with lower GRE and/or GPA than the minimum:

For candidates 2 points below GRE requirements (verbal 146 or 145, quantitative 149 or 148), departments can exercise holistic admission without further requirement.

For candidates with GPA 2.8 or greater, departments can exercise holistic admission without further requirement.

For candidates with less than a 2.8 GPA, and/or less than a 145 Verbal GRE, and/or less than a 148 Quantitative GRE, the department has two options:

Option 1: Departments should make specific recommendations to applicants. Examples of recommendations include retaking the GRE, taking MA 102 Intermediate Algebra for low quantitative score, GRD 727 Writing and Reviewing Research for low verbal score, and/or other courses that the department deems appropriate. Once the applicant follows through on the recommendations set forth by the department and the department still wishes to admit the applicant, the department will present a rationale for the recommendation for admission at the next A&G committee meeting. The A&G committee will vote to admit or reject applicant.

Option 2: Departments present a rationale for the recommendation for admission at the next A&G committee meeting. The A&G committee will vote to admit or reject applicant.

A&G will hold monthly meetings to review these requests.

6. Requests to waive GRE or TOEFL

A GRE waiver may be considered for MPH or MSPH applicants with any of the following terminal degrees from an accredited U.S. institution: • MD

- PhD
- JD
- PharmD
- DO
- DVM
- DDS (doctor of dental surgery)
- DPT (doctor of physical therapy)
- EdD (educational doctorate)
- DMD (doctor of medicine in dentistry)

A GRE waiver may be considered for MPH or MSPH applicants if the applicant is enrolled in or has been admitted to a US residency program and passed steps 1 and 2 of the USMLE.

The TOEFL requirement can be waived for international applicants with a degree from an accredited U.S. institution, or if the foreign institution's Registrar provides a letter stating the medium of instruction was English. The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is accepted as an alternative to the TOEFL, with the TOEFL remaining as the preferred exam.

7. Application Deadlines

Deadline for MPH and MSPH applications is April 1. International applicants will be encouraged to apply early to avoid visa delays. Deadline for DrPH and PhD applications vary by department. Individual departments and the Admissions Coordinator may exercise discretion in accepting late applications.

The application deadline for all applicants seeking merit award or scholarship in any School of Public Health program is February 1.

8. Application Deadline for Spring and Summer Semesters

Applicants for Spring or Summer semesters must have a completed application in the Office of Student and Academic Services 8 weeks prior to the beginning of the term for which they wish to begin.

9. Deadline for Completion of MPH Applications

Applicants should have their applications complete (all required documents received) by May 1 in order to be considered for Fall admission.

10. Admission Decision Deadline

Applications for admission will be sent to departments with a suggested due date of 2 weeks from delivery for master's applicants and 3 weeks for doctoral applicants. This is suggested in order to speed up processing of applications and allow our school to be more competitive.

11. Admission Acceptance Deadline

Admitted applicants will be urged to accept, decline, or defer admission by July 1. Recognizing the existence of communication problems of international students, exceptions can be made.

12. Completion of DrPH Program

The existing time limit of seven years for completion of a DrPH program will be enforced. If an extension is allowed it will be contingent upon students either retaking their comprehensive exams or retaking some core courses.

13. Term of Graduation

A student must be enrolled for 3 credit hours during the term they are to graduate.

14. Outstanding Masters and Doctoral Student Awards

Solicitation for nominations for the Outstanding Student Awards shall begin at the earliest feasible date following the Application for Degree deadline for the Spring semester, and will close no later than one month prior to convocation. There will be periodic reminders sent to faculty until nominations close.

Copies of all nominations given to the committee must also include transcripts.

The A&G Committee will have the option of not awarding one or both of the awards if no qualified student is nominated.

15. Expedited Re-admission Policy

Students who do not matriculate during the term in which they were admitted may request a deferral of matriculation for up to one academic year from that term. A student who does not matriculate, and does not request a deferral may submit an Application for Readmission (www.uab.edu/graduate) within one academic year of the term for which they were originally admitted. After that time, the student must submit a full application in accordance with the process defined for that purpose, and submit the associated fees.

Students who have been administratively withdrawn within the past 5 years may submit an Application for Readmission (www.uab.edu/graduate).

16. Inter-departmental Change of Program for New Students

New students must be enrolled one full term in the department to which they were admitted before requesting a transfer to another department. During the application process, if an admission decision has not been made, the student may request their application be reviewed by a different department.

17. Procedures for Grade Appeal

The only legitimate basis for appealing a grade assigned for School of Public Health courses are:

- A belief that an error was made in the determination of the grade; or
- A belief that a grade was arrived at unfairly or on the basis of inconsistent application among students of the stated evaluation standards.

Should a student believe that either of these circumstances applied and that an appeal is warranted, the following procedures are to be followed:

1. Clarification should be sought from the course instructor in an attempt to resolve the disagreement without further appeal.
2. If the matter cannot be resolved in consultation with the course instructor, the student may submit a written appeal to the Academic Dean requesting consideration of the appeal. Appeals must be submitted within four weeks after the end of the semester when the disputed grade was received. This request should include a description of the basis for the appeal and the failed attempt to resolve it with the instructor. Upon receipt of such a request, the Academic Dean will bear responsibility to solicit information relevant to the situation from the student and the course instructor, and on the basis of that information to make a determination for or against the appeal. If in the judgment of the Academic Dean there is a legitimate basis for the appeal, the chair of the course instructor's department will ensure that the assigned grade is appropriately changed.
3. If the Academic Dean determines that there is an insufficient basis for a grade change and rules against the appeal, the student may submit a final written appeal to the Academic Dean requesting him or her to convene a panel of three faculty and one student to consider the appeal and make a recommendation to him or her on its disposition. Similarly, if the Academic Dean rules for the appeal, the Instructor may appeal the decision by going through the same process. Based on the recommendation of the panel, the Dean will issue a decision. This decision will be final.

4. Appeals of grades in courses taken outside the School of Public Health will be handled according to the policies and procedures of the schools within which the courses reside. Final disposition of grade appeals for courses in Graduate School programs resides with the Dean of the Graduate School.

18. Applicants with International transcripts

International transcripts must be submitted to World Education Services (WES) or Educational Credential Evaluators (ECE) for an official course-by-course credential evaluation.

APPENDIX I

ADMISSIONS AND GRADUATION COMMITTEE BYLAWS
UAB School of Public Health

Prepared by: Susan Davies, PhD
Heather Cecil, PhD
H. Michael Maetz, VMD, MPH
Ronald Rahn, PhD
Karan Singh, MSc, MS, PhD
Aaron Stinnett, MSPH, PhD
Donna Petersen, MHS, ScD

Approved by the Faculty Assembly: August 11, 1999
Resubmitted and approved: February 23, 2002

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this committee shall be the Admissions and Graduation Committee (A&G) of the School of Public Health, University of Alabama at Birmingham.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The A&G committee is responsible for monitoring compliance with established rules and procedures for admission and graduation for all degree programs that are the responsibility of the School of Public Health including MPH, MSPH and DrPH. (The Graduate School has responsibility for the PhD and MS degree programs). This responsibility includes but is not limited to conducting reviews and developing recommendations for admission status for individual applicants who do not meet approved admissions guidelines, and developing general admission and graduation guidelines that the committee deems necessary or prudent.

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master's student and one to a doctoral student. The A&G committee shall review selection criteria and modify as necessary.

ARTICLE III – OPERATION

In discharging its responsibilities, the A&G committee serves as an advisory committee to the Faculty Assembly of the School, which is the final decision-maker on educational policy. To ensure timely discharge of its responsibilities the A&G acts as a surrogate for the Faculty Assembly.

Applicants to MPH, MSPH and DrPH degree programs who are recommended for admission by departmental admissions committee or admissions coordinators, but do not meet established review criteria for admission, shall be referred by the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs to the A&G for review. A letter justifying the recommendation and outlining the mechanism by which the student's success shall be facilitated must accompany such recommendations.

For each application submitted to A&G for review, the departmental recommendation is approved or disapproved, either during A&G meetings or by mail ballots as needed. Mail ballots will be sent out to all committee members with application and letter explaining rationale for recommendation attached. This letter should be addressed to the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and signed by the Department Chair or his/her designee. A majority decides the result of the vote except if a member votes to meet concerning the application. A meeting of the A&G committee will then be scheduled to discuss the application. In the event of a tie, the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs will vote on the admission request. If the A&G committee disapproves a department's recommendation, the A&G may provide an alternative recommendation regarding an applicant's admission status. The A&G shall reconsider applications upon receipt of a written request from the department, which shall include a statement by the departmental admissions committee or coordinator indicating the justification for reconsideration. The results of the ballot vote will be posted before a final decision is made. A copy of the results is sent to the Department Chair and the Dean.

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A policy decision by the A&G committee will become accepted policy of the School one month after distribution of the minutes unless a primary full-time faculty member requests a review of the decision. A review of the decision is a request for open discussion of the decision during the next school-wide faculty meeting. A request for a review of the decision automatically suspends an A&G decision from becoming policy until after the faculty has voted on the issue. A request

must be made in writing to the Chair of the A&G and to the Chair of the Faculty Assembly and must be co-signed by at least two primary full-time faculty members. After review of the decision at the faculty meeting, a vote of the faculty will be taken to either reject or accept the A&G committee's decision. This vote may be polled at the faculty meeting or by mail ballot. If rejected by the majority, the decision is overruled. No further action is required by the A&G on the issue unless new proposals are submitted for review.

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ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

The A&G shall consist of one representative from each of the departments of the School of Public Health and one student representative appointed by the PHSA President. The student representative serves as a voting member on discussions regarding admission and graduation policies and procedures but is not involved in discussions of individual applicants. Each departmental representative shall be a primary full-time faculty member elected for a term of three years by a vote of the primary full-time faculty in the department. Terms are to be staggered such that about one-third of the A&G membership changes each year.

The A&G chair is elected by the members of the A&G for a term of two years.

ARTICLE V – MEETINGS

Regular A & G meetings will take place quarterly, on the second Friday of the months of September, January, March and June. Any faculty member can attend these meetings. In addition to these regularly scheduled meetings, the Chair of the A & G shall call meetings as needed to discuss specific issues as they arise. These meetings to discuss School of Public Health applicants and students will not be announced. The Chair of the A & G serves as a spokesperson for the committee. There must be a quorum present to conduct a vote. For all meetings, at least 50 percent of the primary members of the A&G must be present to constitute a quorum. All decisions are to be determined by a majority vote.

ARTICLE VI – PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the A&G unless the Chair specifies otherwise.

ARTICLE VII – APPROVAL OF AND AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

Approval of any amendment to these bylaws requires submission to and subsequent affirmative vote by the Faculty Assembly of the School of Public Health.

APPENDIX II

ADMISSIONS & GRADUATION COMMITTEE MAIL BALLOT Date:

Applicant:

	ADMIT	MEET	REJECT
Dr. Ela Austin Biostatistics elaustin@uab.edu	_____	_____	_____
Dr. Claudiu Lungu Environmental Health Sciences clungu@uab.edu	_____	_____	_____
Dr. Huifeng Yun Epidemiology yunn@uab.edu	_____	_____	_____
Dr. Dori Pekmezi Health Behavior dpekmezi@uab.edu	_____	_____	_____
Dr. Kari White Health Care Organization & Policy kariwhite@uab.edu	_____	_____	_____

Fax your response to Angela Sullivan at 5-5484.