

ABET

Applied Science Accreditation Commission

Summary of Accreditation Actions
for the
2013-2014 Accreditation Cycle

**Hunter College of the City University of New York
New York, NY**

Environmental and Occupational Health Science (MS)

Accredit to September 30, 2020. A request to ABET by January 31, 2019 will be required to initiate a reaccreditation evaluation visit. In preparation for the visit, a Self-Study Report must be submitted to ABET by July 01, 2019. The reaccreditation evaluation will be a comprehensive general review.



Applied Science Accreditation Commission

Final Statement of Accreditation
to

Hunter College of the City University of New York
New York, NY

2013-14 Accreditation Cycle

Assuring Quality • Stimulating Innovation

**HUNTER COLLEGE OF
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**

**ABET
APPLIED SCIENCE ACCREDITATION COMMISSION**

**HUNTER COLLEGE OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
New York, NY**

**FINAL STATEMENT
Evaluation under Applied Science Criteria
and Accreditation Policy and Procedures of 2013-2014
Visit Dates: October 20 – 22, 2013**

Introduction

The Applied Science Accreditation Commission (ASAC) of ABET has evaluated the masters program in Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences (MSEOHS) at Hunter College of the City University of New York. The statement that follows consists of two parts: the first deals with the overall institution, its applied science operation and the relationships between institution administration and the applied science program under evaluation; the second is an evaluation of the individual applied science program. This Draft Statement reflects information provided by Hunter College of the City University of New York after the 7-day response period and before 30-day due process.

ABET's accreditation action will be based upon the findings summarized in this statement. That action will be dependent upon the program's range of compliance or non-compliance with the ASAC/ABET criteria, including both general criteria and Industrial Hygiene program criteria, and with the provisions of the ABET Policies and Procedures Manual. This range can be construed from the following definitions:

- **Deficiency:** A deficiency indicates that a criterion, policy or procedure is not satisfied. Therefore, the program is not in compliance with the criterion, policy or procedure.
- **Weakness:** A weakness indicates that the program lacks the strength of compliance with a criterion, policy or procedure to ensure that the quality of the program will not be

**HUNTER COLLEGE OF
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**

compromised. Therefore, remedial action is required to strengthen compliance with the criterion, policy or procedure prior to the next evaluation.

- **Concern:** A concern indicates that a program currently satisfies a criterion, policy or procedure; however, the potential exists for the situation to change such that the criterion, policy or procedure may not be satisfied.
- **Observation:** An observation is a comment or suggestion that does not relate directly to the accreditation action but is offered to assist the institution in its continuing efforts to improve its programs.

Hunter College was founded in 1870 as a teachers' college and the institution has steadily expanded in size and scope and now is a comprehensive teaching, research and service institution and one of the largest urban universities in the nation. Hunter is a public college and became part of the City University of New York (CUNY) when this system was established in 1847. It is the largest unit of the 11 senior colleges within the CUNY system and has five schools – Arts and Sciences, Education, the Health Professionals, Nursing, and CUNY School of Public Health at Hunter College. The College offers a wide range of undergraduate and graduate degree programs within each of its four schools. University enrollment is over 22,000 with more than 17,000 undergraduate and 5,000 graduate students, mostly from the metropolitan New York City area. The College has many student organizations and a full spectrum of student support services and is accredited by the Board of Regents of the State University of New York and the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

Program Evaluation

Environmental and Occupational Sciences (MSEOHS) Program
Masters of Science

Evaluation under the ASAC Program Criteria
for Industrial Hygiene
and Similarly Named Applied Science Programs

Introduction

The evaluation described in this report was conducted under the criteria established for all Applied Science programs and the Program Criteria for Industrial Hygiene and Similarly Named Programs, as published in the current ASAC criteria document. The provisions contained in the ABET Policies and Procedures Manual were also used in the evaluation of this program. The definitions of shortcomings described earlier also apply here, and the strengths and weaknesses at the institutional level are applicable to the program, as well.

The MS-EOHS was one of the original programs established at the Hunter College Institute of Health Sciences in 1971. The EOHS-MS program has also been a part of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) – New York/New Jersey (NY/NJ) Educational Resource Center (ERC) since the late 1970s and receives federal government support to train and develop industrial hygienists, and was first accredited by ABET in 2002. In 2010, CUNY approved a governance and administrative structure and bylaws that allow the School of Public Health (SPH) to function in its environment. As part of these changes, the Hunter College School of Urban Public Health (UPH) was established, as the ‘home’ of the bachelor’s and master’s programs in public health at the Hunter Campus. UPH is one of the four consortial campuses within the CUNY SPH. The EOHS Track was renamed the EOHS Program. In the summer of 2011, UPH and its EOHS program moved to a new eight-story, 147,000-square foot green building in East Harlem, which is shared with the Hunter College School of Social Work.

The focus of the MSEOHS program is to train students in the field of industrial hygiene. All the classes are offered in the early evening and over 70 percent of the students pursue the degree on

a part-time basis. The majority of students are employed in the industrial hygiene field within the greater New York area and the MSEOHS program is seen as a vehicle to receive academic industrial hygiene training that will aid them in advancing their careers.

Program Strengths

MSEOHS program's efforts and its engagement with the community, for example during the Hurricane Sandy recovery, is commendable. Faculty members have a strong practice orientation locally, nationally, and internationally and provide a solid foundation for education and training. The OEHS program enjoys strong support of administration such as new, robust marketing and assessment strategies to help with student recruitment, retention, and graduation. This has been demonstrated by recent expansion and allocation of resources. Most of the students accepted into the program have good relevant work experience and these experiences add to the overall learning experience. Graduates of the program strongly believe that they benefited from the degree and that their academic training greatly aided them in career advancement. Many of the program graduates work in the greater New York area and they are very supportive of the program. The current students greatly benefit from these contacts, including opportunities for internships, recruitment, and employment placement. The program has a long history of graduating well-prepared students to continue work in the field.

Program Deficiencies

- No deficiencies are cited for this program.

Program Weaknesses

1. Criterion 4, Continuous Improvement, requires that “the program must regularly use appropriate, documented processes for assessing and evaluating the extent to which the student outcomes are being attained. The results of these evaluations must be systematically utilized as input for the continuous improvement of the program....”

A number of tools exist for assessment of student outcomes. The exit survey for near-graduating students is conducted annually and explicitly addresses student outcomes. The

professionals and employers' survey (which includes a number of graduates) was last carried out in 2009-2010, and explicitly addresses how that group sees the readiness of Hunter graduates regarding the program outcomes. Moreover, some changes were proposed and implemented following that assessment.

However, the Self-Study states this survey will be made every six years. As of the date of the Self-Study, it had been 3.5 years since the last such survey. Six years is too long to go without some reassessment of employers' feedback on insuring achievement of student outcomes. A more timely assessment of employers is needed with a frequency sufficient for the needs of the program.

- 7-Day Response: No response was provided.
- Due Process Response: “An electronic survey was sent to approximately 200 NYC area employers and potential employers of EOHS graduates on February 25, 2014. The survey utilizes the same methods and asks essentially the same questions as our 2010 survey, which was reviewed by the site visit team. We will allow approximately three weeks for data collection, after which time the EOHS faculty, in consultation with the School of Public Health Assessment Committee will analyze the results and prepare a report of the findings and recommendations. The scope of the recommendations will determine the appropriate next course of action to be taken, which may range from seeking additional input from students, faculty, employers and other stakeholders; to making course or curriculum changes, to strengthening student administrative services.”
- Status after Due Process: The finding of Weakness has been reduced to a Concern after additional information provided by the program during the Due Process period. The employers' survey sent on February 25, 2014 is a positive action to solicit feedback from constituencies. This action partially addressed the Weakness. However, the Self-Study states this survey will be made every six years, which was the cause for the initial Weakness. As indicated in the Draft Statement, six years is too long to go without some reassessment of employers' feedback on insuring achievement of student outcomes. A

more timely assessment of employers is needed with a frequency sufficient for the needs of the program should be considered.