

TO: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair
Riverside Division

FR: Richard M. Carpiano, Chair
Executive Committee, School of Public Policy

RE: [Campus Review] (Proposed Degree Program) Bachelor of Arts Degree Program in
Global and Community Health (B.A in Global and Community Health [GCH])

Date: November 22, 2023

The Faculty Executive Committee of the School of Public Policy reviewed the document “[Campus Review] (Proposed Degree Program) Bachelor of Arts Degree Program in Global and Community Health (B.A in Global and Community Health [GCH]).”

In the course of our review and discussion, the following issues arose about the proposed curriculum—issues very similar to the comments we submitted for the Environmental Studies BA degree:

1. Given the stated learning objectives that indicate the importance of students understanding health and environmental issues locally, nationally, and globally, it is crucial for students to have a thorough grounding in natural science to comprehend the interplay between the environment and human health. A significant concern raised with the current curriculum proposal is its apparent lack of foundational science. Without a robust understanding of environmental and health science or human biology, discussing the scientific underpinnings of environmental impacts and health inequities becomes challenging.

It is noteworthy that this degree program lacks upper-level or advanced courses in the natural sciences and no required lower division in the natural sciences (only a few courses that are among a larger list of many other course options they can choose from). The present focus seems to be predominantly on the social science and humanities aspects of health issues, without sufficient emphasis on the natural science aspects. Given that global health and community health are two established substantive subareas in public health and medicine that also rely heavily on biological/environmental science knowledge in addition to social science and other disciplines (e.g., education, ethics) in addressing communicable and non-communicable disease threats (in the case of the former, [transnationally](#)) via population interventions and clinical care approaches, this imbalance could lead to a skewed perspective and training experience among students.

Overall, the curriculum could be more effectively designed to integrate both natural sciences and social sciences, providing a comprehensive educational experience. The current structure risks limiting the depth and breadth of education students receive, thereby hindering their ability to fully understand and address complex health problems, particularly in this concerning era of science denialism, politicization of best evidence, and less than optimal data literacy. It also has implications for student preparation in terms of the proposal's stated goal of creating a student pipeline to the eventual MPH program in SOM (p. 10).

2. Page 15: Under the section header "Chairs' approval to include their courses in the new curriculum (in 2021 or 2023)," SPP Associate Dean Bruce Babcock is listed. The phrasing of this header can be read in more than one way, so, just to be certain, this approval only pertains to the PBPL courses cross-listed with other units that are listed in this proposed curriculum document (i.e. ENGR 171/PBPL 171) and not any other PBPL courses. This specificity is indicated in the email exchange between SEHE representative Ellen Reese and SPP Associate Dean Bruce Babcock included in the appendix of this document (p. 78 of the pdf document).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard M. Carpiano". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" being the most prominent part.

Richard M. Carpiano, Ph.D., M.P.H.
Professor of Public Policy