

F1. Community Involvement in School Evaluation and Assessment

The school engages constituents, including community stakeholders, alums, employers and other relevant community partners. Stakeholders may include professionals in sectors other than health (e.g., attorneys, architects, parks and recreation personnel).

Specifically, the school ensures that constituents provide regular feedback on its student outcomes, curriculum and overall planning processes, including the self-study process.

- 1) *Describe any formal structures for constituent input (e.g., community advisory board, alum association, etc.). List members and/or officers as applicable, with their credentials and professional affiliations.*

Dean’s Advisory Council

Dean Goldman has a select group of external advisors who provide feedback on the school’s strategic plan, program curricula, assessment and evaluation activities, and other academic items.

Member	Affiliation
Fred Brown	Health Care Advisor, Chairman, Fred L. Brown & Associates, LLC
Peggy Hamburg	Foreign Secretary, National Academy of Medicine
Michael Klowden	Milken Institute, Executive Vice Chairman of the Board
Peter Kovler	Chairman, Blum-Kovler Foundation
Esther Krofah	Milken Institute, Executive Vice President, Health
Kenneth Moritsugu (Chair)	CEO, First Samurai Consulting, LLC
Norma Ramsey	Director, The Ramsey Foundation
Diane Rowland	Executive Vice President Emerita, Kaiser Family Foundation
Ellen Sigal	Chairperson and Founder, Friends of Cancer Research
Richard Southby	Executive Dean and Distinguished Professor of Global Health Emeritus, George Washington University
Ann Walker Marchant	CEO, The Walker Marchant Group

The GW Office of Development and Alumni Relations is responsible for officially communicating with the Dean’s Council and coordinating meetings. During the COVID-19 pandemic, meetings were postponed. Official communications restarted in October 2022 regarding updates on the school’s 25th anniversary and inviting members to attend the Health, Equity, and Law after Dobbs Conference in February 2023. Additionally, Esther Krofah was invited to be the school’s commencement speaker in the spring of 2023.

Dean Goldman informally confers with, seeks advice from and has a two-way open-door relationship with members of the Council. While these communications do not occur through the official Dean’s Council mechanism, they still provide significant feedback for the Dean and school.

Practice Partners and Employers

GWSPH Career Services and the Office of Applied Public Health actively engage employers and practicum preceptors throughout the year at fairs and panels. Event attendees are surveyed and asked to participate in focus groups to gain insights into the preparedness of our students for the public health workforce. For example, the December 2022 Community Partner Appreciation Event celebrated the historic and ongoing partnerships with 2,500+ practicum partners who have supported our students over the last 25 years. The event included keynote speakers, Wanda Nicholson, Amita Vyas and an alum, plus a student panel sharing their practicum experiences. Each department honored a practicum partner with an Outstanding Partnership Award. During the event, GWSPH staff engaged practice partners in a table focus group exercise. Topics discussed included students’ professionalism, interprofessional communication skills and public health knowledge and skills.

MHA Advisory Boards

The principal advisory group for both the residential and online MHA programs is the Community Advisory Committee (CAC). The 10-member CAC is composed of industry leaders in hospitals and health systems, information technology, post-acute care, Veterans Administration health care and consultancy. CAC meets twice annually to advise on the MHA programs’ strategic planning process, changes in the field and curricular updates. In addition to CAC, the MHA programs also rely on the GWU MHA Alumni Association and the Student Advisory Council, the latter of which was formed to encourage input from current students about their perceptions and interpretations of potential needs of the programs.

Research Community Advisory Boards

Many of the GWSPH chartered research centers and institutes have community advisory boards that provide feedback (see ERF > Criterion F > Criterion F1 > F1.1: Constituent Input). The [Sumner M. Redstone Global Center for Prevention and Wellness](#) is one such center. Not only does the Redstone Center accept requests from community organizations seeking research support, policy analysis and legislative development, they also have a community advisory board that contributes to the center’s research foci.

Workforce Equity Advisory Board

The [Mullan Institute Advisory Board](#) contributes to the Fitzhugh Mullan Institute for Health Workforce Equity’s vision of a diverse health workforce that has the competency, opportunity and courage to ensure that all people attain their full health potential. The Mullan Institute calls this Health Workforce Equity.

Member	Affiliation
Leana S. Wen, MD, MS (Chair)	Emergency Physician and Professor of Health Policy and Management, GWU; Nonresident Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution
Shannon Brownlee	Essayist, Writer, and Speaker; Former Senior Advisor, Lown Institute
Geoffrey Cowan, JD	Professor, School for Communications and Journalism, USC Annenberg
Irene Dankwa Mullan, MD, MPH	Strategic Advisor and Chief Health Officer, Marti Health; Affiliate Professor, GWSPH
Peter Darrow, JD	Senior Counsel, Clearly Gottlieb
Robert Graham, MD	Former national program director, Aligning Forces for Quality; Research Professor of Health Policy, GWSPH
Christopher Oeschli, JD	Former President and CEO, The Atlantic Philanthropies

Alum Engagement

Every two to three years, GWSPH reaches out to recent alums to complete a brief survey and participate in an interview. The survey link is shared in emails to alums, at organized alum events, via social media and by "word of mouth." At the end of the survey, alums sign up for an interview date with a member of the accreditation team to discuss program curricula, post-graduation activities and trends in the public health field that can be incorporated into the school's curricula.

The GW Office of Development and Alumni Relations engages with GWSPH alums encouraging them to participate in university and school events, read GW newsletters, attend networking events and career panels, and sign up to be a Giving Day advocate. Recent events where alums have been invited include:

- [950 Awards Ceremony](#)
- Milken Institute School of Public Health Dean's Breakfast (as part of Alumni and Families Weekend)
- [Annual Southby Lecture](#) (as part of National Public Health Week)
- [Gibbs Oration/Coile Lectureship](#)
- [APHA Alumni and Friends Reception](#)

The Office of Development and Alumni Relations routinely meets with Dean Goldman to keep her updated on alums' engagement score, which is calculated based on some of the activities mentioned above. If alums are interested in volunteering or mentoring, their contact information is forwarded to the appropriate GWSPH staff or faculty.

GWSPH's local chapter of Delta Omega, the honorary society in public health, maintains connections between inducted students and alums. The society occasionally holds webinars and chapter leadership has expressed interest in organizing service activities for inductees.

MHA alums are one of the more active graduate groups at GWSPH. They respond to surveys, participate in school events, and often reach out with residency and/or fellowship opportunities for current students. The MHA program hosts a reception annually at the American College of Health care Executives (ACHE) meeting. While catching up with alums, faculty use the opportunity to talk of the latest trends and needs of the health care industry.

- 2) *Describe any other groups of external constituents (outside formal structures mentioned above) from whom the unit regularly gathers feedback.*

Academic Program Reviews

Every seven years, departments are required to undergo a performance review and write a report (see ERF > Criterion F > Criterion F1 > F1.5: External Contribution). As part of this report, departments rely on feedback from alums, practicum preceptors and employers to identify strengths, challenges and plans for improvement in each of their degree programs.

Distinguished Visitors

The [Geiger Gibson Program in Community Health Policy](#) selects a [distinguished visitor](#) every year to guest lecture and consult on ideas. These visitors are experts in the community health center field, often running health centers across the country. Distinguished visitors serve as informal advisors to the Geiger Gibson Program on issues related to their area of expertise. The Geiger Gibson Program collaborates with the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) to recognize young leaders with [Emerging Leader Awards](#). The awards celebrate young leaders whose specific work has helped further the health center mission of health care and better health for medically underserved patients, communities and special populations. A group of former distinguished visitors work together to develop criteria, review nominations and select awardees every year.

Public Health Experts

We invite guest lecturers and speakers, who talk about their public health work and the current (and future) state of the field. Such speakers have included Anthony Fauci, MD (former Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases); Georges Benjamin, MD (APHA Executive Director), Kirsten Bibbins-Domingo, PhD, MD (JAMA editor); and Jerome Adams, MD, MPH (former US Surgeon General). In addition to schoolwide functions, departments also invite specific topic experts to speak. For example, the Department of Prevention and Community Health hosts PCHats throughout the academic year. Invited speakers for fall 2023 included Andrea Mantsios, PhD, MHS (Founder and Principal Consultant of Public Health Innovation and Action), and representatives from DC Education Research Collaborative and School-Friendly Health Systems (a partnership between Children's National Hospital and nonprofit RESOLVE). While these individuals don't provide direct feedback on our curricula, they do provide us with insights on the direction of the field and changes we may make.

- 3) *Describe how the school engages external constituents in regular assessment of the content and currency of public health curricula and their relevance to current practice and future directions.*

The school engages alums and employers regularly for feedback on the content and currency of the public health curricula and their relevance to current practice and future directions.

Alums

Through the Alum Survey and Interviews with graduates, GWSPH collects actionable data. Recent graduates (≤ 3 years) provide information on the strengths and weaknesses of the current curriculum and how it has impacted their post-graduation plans. Not-so-recent graduates (>3 years) act as public health experts and provide information on the future of the public health field and how GWSPH can incorporate such knowledge and skills into the curricula.

The most recent round of data collection began in September 2023 with an email to alum. Later that fall, QR codes linked to the survey were distributed at the GW's Alumni Weekend and the 2023 APHA Alumni and Friends event in Atlanta, Georgia. Results are discussed at GWSPH Curriculum and Executive Committees.

Employers and Practicum Preceptors

Attending employers are surveyed at every GWSPH Career Services career fair and recruiter informational session. They answer questions related to the curriculum such as qualitative and quantitative analysis skills, interpersonal communication skills, interprofessional teamwork and public health knowledge specific to the field.

APEX and DAPEX preceptors provide feedback after each practicum experience on the students' readiness to enter the public health workforce. Their responses are actionable data on what skills and knowledge to include in our curriculum.

- 4) *Describe how the school's external partners contribute to the ongoing operations of the school, including the development of the vision, mission, values, goals and evaluation plan and the development of the self-study document.*

External stakeholders contributed to the development of the 2020 strategic plan through both formal and informal mechanisms. The Dean's Council met formally once during the development of the strategic plan to provide feedback and the Dean consulted stakeholders in person and via phone and email to informally accept feedback. As part of this strategic planning process, the school's mission, vision and goals were discussed. When GWSPH embarks on a new strategic plan in 2024-2025, stakeholders will be engaged again.

The Dean's Council met on January 29, 2024, to update members about the state of the school and the reaccreditation process. Overall, Council members were impressed with the breadth and depth of information detailed in the preliminary self-study. They had no further comments or feedback regarding the school's mission, values, goals and vision, which was expected as they previously supplied feedback during their creation as part of the strategic plan. Several Council members felt strongly that GWSPH needed to do a better job of highlighting graduates and the amazing public health work they have accomplished. The Council recommended more storytelling efforts to boost the school's profile and potentially recruit more applicants. While not applicable to the self-study, we have taken this feedback under advisement and will be looking for additional ways to feature graduates on our website. At least one of the Council members hires GWSPH graduates and commended the school on their knowledge of public health skills and ability to jump right in, learning on the job. Last, there was a discussion on how best to continue to engage external stakeholders in the school's operations.

- 5) *Provide documentation (e.g., minutes, notes, committee reports, etc.) of external contribution in at least two of the areas noted in documentation requests 3 and 4.*

Documentation for the following external contributions is in the ERF:

- Academic Program Reviews (APR)
- Alum Surveys and Interviews
- Employers and Practicum Preceptors

See ERF > Criterion F > Criterion F1 > F1.5: External Contribution.

- 6) *Summarize the findings of the employers' assessment of program graduates' preparation for post-graduation destinations and explain how the information was gathered.*

Employers were surveyed in spring 2023 about their recent hires (either as employees or interns). As evidenced by the table below, most employers indicated that their hires were strongly skilled in a variety of public health skills. Interpersonal communication skills and being knowledgeable, professional and growth-oriented were listed as strengths of GWSPH hires. This was the first time these questions were asked. Additional data from spring 2024 is being

collected and will be available to site visitors. Based on preliminary self-study feedback, the spring 2024 survey was adjusted to allow for responses to be segregated by hires' degree level.

Skills	% rating strong or very strong (N)
Analytical skills, qualitative and quantitative	85% (11/13)
Communication	92% (12/13)
Culturally aware	75% (9/12)
Knowledgeable about the structure and function of the US public health system	67% (8/12)
Implementing and managing a project	67% (8/12)
Working successfully on an interprofessional team	85% (11/13)
Proposing strategies to resolve challenges	77% (10/13)

Focus groups of attending practice partners were held at the December 2022 Community Partner Appreciation Event to discuss student preparedness for the public health workforce. Overall, practice partners thought GWSPH students exhibited strong or very strong professionalism. They stated that students were ready to take on tasks, reliable, dedicated and enthusiastic. Of the students who were more hesitant to speak up if they had questions or experienced a barrier, most seemed to quickly learn how to speak up, problem-solve on their own and apply supervisor feedback. One focus group felt that students were able to connect work activities to lessons learned in the classroom and that GWSPH students were more "data ready" and thus able to dive in quicker compared to students from other area schools. Practice partners' feedback on students' interpersonal communication skills was mixed. Some felt that students had strong academic writing skills and worked well within teams, while others felt that professional communications (e.g., emails, presentations), interview skills, group organization and policy writing were lacking. Another Community Partner Appreciation Event is planned in 2023-2024.

Between September 23, 2023, and October 15, 2023, the accreditation team interviewed 19 not-so-recent alums (2019 and earlier) from the school's master's and doctoral programs with the majority (63%) having earned an MPH. Doctoral students are underrepresented, as only one DrPH graduate and no PhD graduates were interviewed. Not-so-recent alums were asked about the future of the field and what skills should be incorporated into the GWSPH curricula to better prepare graduates for the future workforce. Interestingly, several alums commented on how the COVID-19 pandemic has shaped the field and what future GWSPH graduates need to be prepared for. For example, future graduates will need to rebuild the public's trust, communicate complex scientific information to a general audience and provide clear action steps with a caveat that as the evidence continues to be examined, those steps may change. Alums noted that as a result of the pandemic, there was a shift in research and federal funding from chronic diseases to infectious diseases and outbreaks. Aligned with this shifted focus is the need for future public health practitioners to be able to write grants, manage finances and analyze data, specifically quantitatively with open-source software.

- 7) *Provide documentation of the method by which the school gathered employer feedback.*

See ERF > Criterion F > Criterion F1: F1.7: Employer Feedback_Method.

- 8) *If applicable, assess strengths and weaknesses related to this criterion and plans for improvement in this area.*

Strengths

- We have fantastic employer relations, supported by school and university engagement efforts. We engage employers for MPH and DrPH (D)APEX, MHA fellowships/residencies and employment opportunities. These relationships strengthen our connections in the community and benefit our students.
- GWSPH takes advantage of our DC location and works very closely with governmental, national and local organizations to create meaningful opportunities for students to engage and participate in public health work. Our central location means that institutions such as the WHO, White House and PAHO are all within walking distance or a short Metro ride.

Challenges

- During COVID-19, it was difficult to bring stakeholders to campus, but those activities are resuming positively.

Future Plans

- Stakeholder engagement will increase as we move into our strategic planning phase in 2023-2024.