Section 1  TPG Summary & Relevance

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act, NIOSH is tasked with supporting professional level Occupational Safety & Health training to insure a steady stream of trained OSH professionals to serve the need of the American workplace. The Industrial Hygiene Training Program Grant at the University of Arizona assists NIOSH in meeting its goal of supplying qualified professional personnel, by providing Master’s level graduate training in Industrial Hygiene, which is one of the four original core occupational safety and health areas.

With more than a thirty year history of providing graduate level Industrial Hygiene training, the University of Arizona’s College of Public Health continues to be a leader in the Industrial Hygiene field. Its key focuses are the MPH (ABET Accredited) and the MS in IH, but doctoral level IH study is also available (not NIOSH supported), and undergraduate Public Health students in the EOH track are exposed to IH course material. The Industrial Hygiene Program is administratively housed in the Environmental and Occupational Health Section of the College of Public Health. The continuation of a high quality Industrial Hygiene program in the Southwest is important to meet the strong demand for well-trained occupational health professionals in a region of the United States that is experiencing high growth. This is the only such program in Arizona and there are no IH programs in the neighboring states of New Mexico and Nevada. Furthermore, the southwest is the home of the majority of the metal and non-metal mining in the USA which is an inherently dangerous industry, made more hazardous by the downturn in metallic mineral prices and the accompanying layoffs. The Arizona program also serves an important function as a focal point for the information, research, and professional development needs for the region's practicing professionals. The purpose of the MPH/MS degrees is to prepare students for Industrial Hygiene careers involving professional IH practice. IH and EOH are fundamental parts of our national public health system.

Environmental & Occupational Health (EOH) is a core part of the field of Public Health, and Industrial Hygiene is a key part of EOH, so the program relevance is inherent in the program content.

Key Personnel

J. Burgess, MD, MPH,
T Stobbe, PhD, CIH, CSP, CPE, teaching/research faculty
S Griffin, PhD, CIH, teaching/research faculty
P Beamer, PhD, teaching/research faculty
R Canales, PhD, teaching/research faculty
P Harber, MD, research faculty
E Lutz, PhD, teaching/research faculty
M O’Rourke, PhD, teaching/research faculty
K Reynolds, PhD, teaching/research faculty
Section 2 - Summary of 2014-15 Progress

The most important event occurring within the TPG during this time period was receiving the official notification from ABET that the MPH-IH program received accreditation.

One highlight of the year occurred when one of our trainees presented their Master's research report (An evaluation of the success of Ergonomic Interventions in UofA offices) at the AIHA Local Section's annual PDC day. The presentation was selected as the best student paper at the conference, and the student received a cash award for the best paper designation. This paper was then presented at the annual AIHCE where her paper won the Erwin Tichauer Award presented by the AIHA Ergonomics Committee. She is now working for a consulting firm.

Another interesting highlight is the activity of a couple of the trainees who have been working with high school students in the Tohono O'odham Nation, Ak-Chin Indian Community, and Gila River Indian Community to raise their awareness about both OSH and EOH issues in general and more specifically the career opportunities that exist in these professional areas.

On the academic side, the program is adding a new course, “Industrial Hygiene Field Studies”, in which the students will, over the semester, provide OSH assistance to two small businesses in the greater Tucson area. They will act as consultants (with faculty oversight) to these businesses assessing Industrial Hygiene Issues, and suggesting controls for situations where over exposures are identified. The first business is a foundry which specializes in non-ferrous castings.

The Program has continued its OSH research work with both the local firefighting services and the southwestern US mining communities.