



October 21, 2024

To: Randy Smith, Vice Provost for Academic Programs, Office of Academic Affairs

From: Rebecca Andridge, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies, College of Public Health

Re: Update to Admissions Procedure for the Bachelor of Science in Public Health

Dear Randy,

Please accept this memo as notification of a minor adjustment to the admissions procedure for the Bachelor of Science in Public Health (BSPH).

In October 2023, the Council on Academic Affairs approved changes to our admissions process and minimum GPA for the BSPH. One component of the changes was to start directly enrolling all first year students into the major who have a high school GPA of 3.0 or higher. Previously we required all new first year students to enroll as pre-majors (unless they were honors students). Pre-majors, and any other student who wished to enroll in the major (e.g., transfer students, Columbus campus students changing majors), had to write a personal essay answering the questions, "What is public health to you? Why are you interested in a degree in public health?" as part of the application.

After one year of admissions under the new process we realized that this effectively resulted in **different admissions requirements for new first year students compared to all other students**. Specifically, new first year students did not have to write an essay about public health, whereas students who came to our major later did have to write an essay. Historically public health has been a field students find later in their undergraduate journeys, and we did not intend to make it more challenging for those students to enroll in the major than the students who were interested in public health in high school. We also heard from current students and advisors that the essay was a point of stress for many students. The essay was never intended as a barrier, and indeed after reviewing admissions records for the past several years we discovered that no student had ever been denied admission based on the essay.

Thus, we plan to **remove the essay requirement from the admissions process**. The goal is to implement this change with the upcoming admissions cycle that opens on December 15, 2024. There will be no changes to the current prerequisite courses or minimum GPA requirement.

This change was approved by the college's Academic Studies Governance Committee on October 18, 2024.