

Sent:
Subject:

Monday, September 9, 2024 11:56 AM
Welcome Back



Dear MEZCOPH Community,

Welcome back to a new and exciting academic year! I hope each of you had a restful and rejuvenating summer break, filled with joyful moments, family and friends. As we gather once again on campus, I am thrilled to welcome our returning students, staff and faculty and the many new faces who are joining us this fall.

This year, we are excited to welcome 254 new students to the Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health (MEZCOPH). Our programs span multiple University of Arizona campuses and modalities, and we are pleased to greet 165 new students at our Main Campus, 70 through AZ Online, and 19 from the Phoenix Campus. Of these, 111 are incoming undergraduates, with 99 enrolled in the BS in Public Health program and 12 in the BA in Wellness and Public Health Practice program. On the graduate side, we welcome 143 new students, including 7 pursuing MS degrees, 3 DrPH candidates, 19 PhD candidates, and 114 MPH students. Notably, our fall 2024 Online MPH cohort has grown significantly, with an increase of 41% from 2023.

Our community is further enriched by the perspectives and experiences of international students from 22 countries across the globe. Additionally, our [Global Health Institute](#) programs continue to expand. We are proud to host 29 students from the Universidad del Valle de Mexico (UVM) in our undergraduate dual-degree program.

Our incoming class reflects the vibrant diversity and commitment to public health that defines our college. You may have seen the [recent article](#) in UA News announcing another record-breaking first-year cohort. It is the most diverse incoming class in history with 50% of students self-identifying as ethnicities other than white. I'm pleased to note that here at MEZCOPH, 74% of incoming students identify with ethnicities other than white and 26% of our new students are the first in their families to attend college. This diversity strengthens our

community and enhances our ability to address the complex public health challenges of our time.

Welcoming New Faculty and Staff

Our faculty roster has grown with the addition of several new colleagues, each bringing unique expertise and enthusiasm for teaching, research and service. These new members join our returning faculty to foster an environment of academic excellence and practice-based research that strengthens the health and well-being of individuals and communities in Arizona and beyond. We look forward to your contributions to our college and the larger University of Arizona community.

We also extend a warm welcome to our new staff members and express our deep appreciation to our returning staff. Your hard work and dedication are fundamental to our college's success, and I look forward to the collective achievements we will accomplish together this year.

Opportunities, Resources and Community

As many of you are aware, President Robert Robbins will soon step down with the arrival of a new president for the university . After a successful five-month nationwide search, we are excited to welcome Dr. Suresh Garimella as the 23rd president of the University of Arizona on October 1st. As highlighted in this **recent article**, Dr. Garimella's vision, experience, and strong commitment to student success will usher in a new era filled with opportunities.

In keeping with our commitment to health and safety, please note that the university has launched a new **University Safety website**, offering valuable resources to our campus community. The **Wildcat Safety Guide** is an essential resource to bookmark, providing information on both emergency situations and non-emergency wellness services available to our campus.

Finally, I hope to see you all at our upcoming **College Mixer** on September 18th from 11:30am to 1:30pm in the Walkway of Wellness! Organized by the MEZCOPH Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and the Office of Student Services, this event is a wonderful opportunity to come together as a college, enjoy food and refreshments, and celebrate another exciting year ahead.

As we step into this new academic year, I am grateful for all we have accomplished together and optimistic about our future. It is a privilege to be part of such a dynamic and talented community, and I look forward to all that we will achieve together. Let's make this year one of growth, learning, and success.

Best regards,

John Ehiri, PhD
Senior Associate Dean of Academic and Faculty Affairs