

CoPEH-Canada accomplishments 2016-2020

Memorandum of Understanding for the creation of a consortium for CoPEH-Canada

In March 2016, the authorities of six Canadian universities (Dalla Lana School of Public Health (University of Toronto), Université de Moncton, Université du Québec à Montréal, University of Northern British Columbia, Simon Fraser University and York University) signed a MOU for the creation of a consortium linked to the CoPEH-Canada. In 2018, INRS signed and the University of Guelph is planning on signing in 2021, for a total of eight collaborating universities.

Training

CoPEH-Canada's main activities revolve around providing training opportunities for students and emerging scholars and teaching resources in the area of Ecosystem Approaches to Health to the teaching community.

The 2016-2020 period saw the emergence of CoPEH-Canada's new model for graduate and professional training: the [HYBRID, MULTI-SITE COURSE ON ECOSYSTEM APPROACHES TO HEALTH](#).

This part online, part face-to-face graduate level course on ecosystem approaches to health is offered each year at different university "sites" across Canada and internationally through an online "site" in May. Seven to eight two-hour sessions are conducted as simultaneous webinars across the sites, organized by CoPEH-Canada. The rest of the time for the onsite university groups are locally run sessions, including field trips. About half of the assignments are coordinated by the CoPEH-Canada director of programmes and students provide feedback to peers from other sites, greatly enhancing the work done at each of the universities and providing an added value that would be impossible without pan-Canadian coordination.

This course is available to graduate students from all disciplines and also to professionals interested in these themes. It is possible to register for the full course for credit at one of the participating universities or to follow the eight webinars only, on-line (a certificate of completion is provided).

Field courses were held at the following sites in the listed years (number of students in parenthesis, includes webinar participants):

2016 (27 students): University of Toronto, University of Guelph, and the University of Northern British Columbia

2017 (20 students): University of Guelph and the University of Northern British Columbia

2018 (31): Université du Québec à Montréal, University of Guelph, and the University of Northern British Columbia

2019 (26): University of Guelph and the University of Northern British Columbia

2020 (38): Université du Québec à Montréal, University of Guelph, and the University of Northern British Columbia (all sites were virtual due to Covid-19)

Teaching resources

In 2016, we received a grant from the International Association of EcoHealth, through our University of Toronto representative, Donald Cole, to design a [dynamic website for our teaching materials](#). In 2020, we decided to expand the resources on our website beyond the materials produced for our teaching manual. This section of the website is currently being redesigned around “content domains” to include 1) the CoPEH-Canada teaching manual module(s), 2) CoPEH-Canada videos that can be used for a flipped classroom and 3) other teaching resources pertinent to the content domain.

We also have **five new modules** that were collaboratively written by CoPEH-Canada members over this period and which are to be launched in 2021. The new modules are: Using Ecohealth Training to Build Capacity in the Core Competencies for Public Health; Ecohealth & Public Health Competencies: A One Day Workshop, with Offsite Learning Activities; Fostering Intersectoral Collaboration; Power and Equity; and Ecohealth & Watersheds. These modules are currently being reviewed by scholars and practitioners with knowledge and expertise in the challenges of education and training for today’s public health professionals.

In conjunction with the Pan American Health Organization and through their four-year collaboration with CoPEH-LAC - Ekosanté - CoPEH-Canada designed and created a **7-part course on Ecosystem Approaches to Health in Spanish**. The free, recorded audio modules include:

- Introduction
- Ecosystems
- Equity
- Gender
- Investigation-action
- Participation
- Transdisciplinarity

which can be found on the [Ekosanté website](#). Since the launch of this teaching resource over 6,000 people have visited. In 2017, this collaboration, through our UQAM representative, Johanne Saint-Charles also obtained a small grant from the International Association of EcoHealth.

Following our 2020 hybrid course we published reflections on running a field course on-line, in English and French:

- [Tamped down or spruced up? How we ran a field course on health and ecosystems online during a pandemic](#) (2020)
- [Comment nous avons organisé un cours de terrain en ligne sur la santé et les écosystèmes pendant une pandémie](#) (2020)

One Health is one of the Ecosystem approaches to health which focuses specifically on links between human, animal and environmental health. CoPEH-Canada's University of Guelph members are collaboratively designing, along with fellow educators, a set of One Health core competencies to help build a strong framework for consistent and robust One Health programs across Canada.

We will be submitting a grant application to SSHRC connections grant on February 1st 2021, through our UQAM representative Johanne Saint-Charles, for the recording of three webinars in French in May 2021 followed by the creation of a new module for our suite of teaching resources on the integration of occupational health case studies into teaching on Ecosystem Approaches to Health.

Finally, several of our publications (see below) pertain to our teaching resources. All members of CoPEH-Canada have access to these resources as well as supplemental resources not available to the public and designed for the yearly hybrid course. These resources are regularly shared between consortium members, another added-value of being a member.

Vansteenkiste, J., **Saint-Charles, J.**, Fillion, M., Lefrançois, M., Laberge, M., **Webb, J.**, and **Vaillancourt, C.** (submitted). Critical evaluation of the inclusion of sex, gender, and integrated knowledge translation in a cohort from an intensive graduate level course on ecohealth. Gender and Education.

McKeller, K. A., **J. Saint-Charles**, W. Berta, R Cockerill, **D. C. Cole** (2020). "Application of an evaluation framework for extra-organizational communities of practice: assessment and refinement." The Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation 35(2): 60-64.

Cole, D. C., M. W. Parkes, J. Saint-Charles, M. Gislason, K. McKellar and J. Webb (2018). "Evolution of Capacity Strengthening: insights from the Canadian Community of Practice in

Ecosystem Approaches to Health." Transformative Dialogues: Teaching & Learning Journal 11(2).

Parkes, M., J. Saint-Charles, D. Cole, M. Gislason, E. Hicks, C. Le Bourdais, K. McKellar, M. St-Cyr Bouchard and CoPEH-Canada Team (2016). " Collaborative teaching and learning: Experiences from a short, intensive field course on ecosystems, health and society." Higher Education Research & Development. 1-16

Communications

We engage in regular communication between consortium members, our mailing list (consisting of alumni of the course and other people who have expressed interest in our activities) and the general public.

We hold an annual meeting each year in the Fall, regular meetings for the preparation of the course throughout the winter and spring, as well as punctual meetings to work on specific activities, publications or grant applications.

Over the 2016-2020 period we circulated five newsletters, as well as several other punctual announcements about consortium member and collective activities, to the over 300 people on our mailing list. We joined twitter in 2014 and have over 1,200 followers.

We launched a new website and logo in 2016. The landing page has had over 700,000 clicks. On the new website visitors can get up-to-date information on our activities, follow our social media involvement, find out how to collaborate with us and access ecosystem approaches to health resources such as our teaching manual.

Networking and collaboration

Our collaboration with CoPEH-LAC - Ekosanté - officially came to an end in 2017. We have created a lasting web site which offers tools and information about ecosystem approaches to health in Canada and Latin-America and the Caribbean. Most importantly, researchers can [find out who's doing what and contact people working on topics of interest.](#)

In 2018, we held an informal 10-year anniversary social event, gathering around 15 CoPEH-Canada members who had traveled to Cali, Colombia for the EcoHealth 2018 conference.

CoPEH-Canada became a supporting organization of the Environmental Physiotherapy Agenda 2023. The [EPT Agenda 2023](#) is a global call to action built around the following aim:

To ensure that every student beginning entry-level physiotherapy education from 2020 onwards will have education regarding the relationship between the environment, human health and functioning, and how this pertains to physiotherapy as part of their programme.

CoPEH-Canada was accepted into [SDG Academy's Community of Practice as a Member](#). The SDG Academy is the flagship education initiative of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), with the mandate of creating and curating the best available educational content on sustainable development and making it available as a global public good. The SDG Academy Community of Practice brings together a global cohort of educators across academia, civil society and business for peer exchange around education for sustainable development. This membership confers access to the SDG teaching resources for all consortium members.

CoPEH-Canada has also been a member of the [UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network](#) (SDSN) since 2017. This offers all members of the Consortium access to the SDSN resources.

UQAM members of CoPEH-Canada are key collaborators in the [Ecohealth Chair on Urban Air Pollution](#) and its Impacts, developed with support from the International Development Research Center. The Chair aims to improve the understanding of air pollution as well as its impacts on the health of the populations of Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal. The project is a collaboration between four African universities and is led by the Ecohealth Community of Practice in West and Central Africa (CoPES-AOC), with the collaboration CoPEH-Canada members.

Conferences, presentations and webalogues

The UNBC spearheaded monthly webalogues on a variety of topics throughout the entire 2016-2020 hosting approximately 50 of these collaborative two hour sessions. Launched in April of 2014, [our series of dynamic webalogues](#) aims to highlight the variety of ways in which a range of practitioners, professionals, policy-makers and community members are grappling with topical, current and complex issues emerging at the nexus of population health, ecosystem and society. The 90-minute sessions are participatory and focused on learning and sharing.

16 separate presentations were given by CoPEH-Canada members at the EcoHealth 2018 conference in Cali Colombia and several more were presented at EcoHealth 2016 in Melbourne, Australia. A "Gallery of Actions on Climate Change" was developed and launched at the EcoHealth 2016 conference. The Gallery, spearheaded by Maya Gislason of SFU, is a call to the ecohealth community to take practical, hopeful action and is intended to aide integrated action.

Pre-conference workshop at the Canadian Public Health Association's annual conference
June 13, 2016

CoPEH-Canada co-convened a pre-conference workshop at the CPHA's annual conference on Addressing the ecological determinants of health - implications for ongoing public health education and practice. The workshop reviewed content from a recent CPHA working group report:

- (a) training and professional development implications (to build capacity and competencies to address ecological determinants of health), and
- (b) implications for public health practice, with an emphasis on intersectoral collaboration.

Funding

CoPEH-Canada collaborated on three full applications to **CIHR's 2016 competition for teams looking into intersectoral prevention research** linked to the environment. These projects covered the natural resources (2; including one from the two-eyed seeing focus area) and urban form (1) nexus areas. Two of these applications were successful and one, ECHO, has contributed to CoPEH-Canada's funding over the past three years. "The ECHO (Environment, Community, Health Observatory) Network: Strengthening intersectoral capacity to understand and respond to health impacts of resource development", is co-led by Margot Parkes at UNBC and Sandra Allison at Northern Health in BC, along with a team from across Canada, including regional cases in British Columbia, Alberta and New Brunswick.

Our University of Toronto representative in 2016, Donald Cole, on behalf of the entire CoPEH-Canada team, submitted a successful application to the **International Association for Ecology and Health's Small Grant Competition: EcoHealth Training Material Support**. This has allowed us to hire a specialist to create an interactive page for our teaching manual on our new website. A second small grant from the International Association for Ecology and Health financed our collaboration with CoPEH-LAC toward the Ekosante website and teaching modules.

CoPEH-Canada consortium members from UQAM and INRS put in a successful application to the **CIHR Team Grant: Impact of Gender on Knowledge Translation Interventions: Generating and passing on gender-conscious knowledge about equality, equity and occupational/environmental health**. One of the case studies for a retrospective analysis was in Environmental Health and the CoPEH-Canada course served as a reservoir for prospective studies.