

Transcript from August 28, 2023: Informational Webinar about the Johns Hopkins University Health Security PhD Track at the Bloomberg School of Public Health

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Rachael Brown: Welcome to the Informational Webinar about the Johns Hopkins University Health Security, Ph. D. Track at the Bloomberg School of Public Health.

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Tara Kirk Sell: Everyone so great that we can have so many people join us today.

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Tara Kirk Sell: we're excited to talk to you about our health security track. For the Phd. Program. At Blueberg School. Public health. We will.

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Tara Kirk Sell: we'll be looking at your applications later. This that can be submitted. In the next few months. And so we're gonna tell you a little bit about the program. Just so that, we can answer your questions. There'll be a question, answer session at the end. And this this

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Tara Kirk Sell: informational webinar is going to be recorded and

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Tara Kirk Sell: put on our website. So you can refer back to it later if you need to.

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Tara Kirk Sell: So just wanna, I'm gonna start here today. I'm Terra Kirk. So I am one of the track directors. For our Phd. Program. We also have Gig Gronval, who is the Co. Director for the track on this webinar as well. I will. Introduce our the center for health security where? You know, this track is, has its home.

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Tara Kirk Sell: we are also in the Department of Environmental Health and Engineering. So that's where the Phd students, move through the school.

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Tara Kirk Sell: and then Gigi will talk specifically about the program and give a few more details about it. And then we have Annie Sundelson and Matt Walsh, who are our third year students? And they are. Gonna talk a little bit about what they were doing before, what their background is, what kind of topics they're working on now. And how they've sort of seen the program and experienced it over the last few years.

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Tara Kirk Sell: and then there'll be a chance for question and answer, so you can put your questions into the QA. And I'll be taking a look, and then I will moderate those questions to the group. I might answer them myself. And that's how we're gonna lay out

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Tara Kirk Sell: the agenda for today. So the center for all security, our mission is to protect people's health from epidemics and disasters, and ensure that communities are resilient to major challenges. There's a lot under that umbrella and you can see that we have a lot of folks working at our center for those of you who kind of are looking for inspiration, or to understand the projects and the breadth of the work that

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that we do. I'm not going to go over it all today, but I encourage you to go to our center website

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Tara Kirk Sell: and take a look at the work that our center faculty are doing here.

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Tara Kirk Sell: And and what they're focusing on, you'll find that it isn't. There's an incredible array of angles that people are taking on health security and global catastrophic biological risks. And so I think that this will be very valuable for you to look through and see who's working on what? We also have a whole collection of excellent young researchers. And so we have these 3 at the top.

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Tara Kirk Sell: Who are associate scholars. And then we have a group of analysts. In this next 2 rows. And these these individuals work with us on all of our projects, and are really sort of the backbone of the work that we do. So if you become a student. You

will be mixing in with these analysts. To work with the senior faculty on a range of different projects.

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Tara Kirk Sell: And you can see here the combine expertise. I'm not going to read these to you, but you can see here's just an example of the different sort of fields that our faculty come from that. Then we apply these tools, and theories and approaches from all these different areas to to the topics of interest. And so. It becomes a really interesting, multidisciplinary, collaborative approach to our work.

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Tara Kirk Sell: Which is a really interesting thing to be a part of, and certainly a great way to grow your methods and thinking and policy approaches about these topics.

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Tara Kirk Sell: So just to sort of summarize it down a little bit our priority areas, our global health security emerging infectious diseases and epidemics, medical and public health preparedness and response, deliberate biological threats, and opportunities and risks in the life sciences. So take a look through our website, and you'll be able to

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Tara Kirk Sell: check out all the different work that we're doing in these different areas

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Tara Kirk Sell: just to sort of give you a few picture examples. We had. Here we have some Congressional testimony. I was fortunate enough. And here's our director, Tom. To be able to present to members of Congress. Actually, many of our faculty, including Gigi as well. Have presented to Congress. In the past little while. And so we have a lot of opportunities to interact with policy makers. And I think you know here also, on the side, is an example

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from the Bwc. The Biological Weapons Convention. This takes place in in Geneva. We also have opportunities to present our work internationally. And that, I think, is what really sets our program apart from

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Tara Kirk Sell: many other programs. Because this program, we're really thinking, not just about advancing the field and advancing science, but advancing policy. So we take

our lessons, the things that we work on, the research that we do the interactions we have with practitioners and people who are out working in the field. And we really make a strong effort to translate those findings into real change in the real world.

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Tara Kirk Sell: So you know, for students in our program, we're looking for people who don't just wanna write a paper, but who wanna actually get in there and actually make a real difference in the world. So that's what we're doing here with our program and our center. And I'm gonna pass it off to Gigi. Now to talk a little bit more about the program. Specifically.

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00:09:37.810 --> 00:09:40.520 Gigi Gronvall: thanks, Tara. So

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Gigi Gronvall: this program is focused. And you guessed by the title on Health Security. And also, if this term is not familiar to you, global catastrophic biological risks, health security is, is has undergone a few different definitions over over the years. But we are working on A, we're focused on areas that minimize the danger and that help mitigate

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Gigi Gronvall: acute public health events that endanger people's health. You may have noticed that we have gone through a recent example of a health security crisis. And so we have, we participate, all of the faculty and the students as well participated as we could in addressing some of the the challenges of Sars Cov 2 and and thinking ahead to future

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Gigi Gronvall: potential epidemics, pandemics or disasters that require expertise like that, we have in this program. Global catastrophic biological risks. We are. Hopefully, going to put a link in the chat to a paper that describes global catastrophic bio logical risks and more paragraphs than I'm going to give to you today. But the idea, the concept here is that you know, there's no reason why biological risks like we experience with COVID-19, as

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Gigi Gronvall: tragic as that was as past examples, with biological incidents like 1,918 flu, which was also an incredible tragedy that occurred over several years.

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Gigi Gronvall: There is no reason to believe that this is necessarily the worst that humanity could face. And so with, this is a an area to try and think about

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Gigi Gronvall: what we need to do, to detect, to prevent, to mitigate the potential for some of these more extreme biological risks that could Co could affect the humanity. And so we the this program is focused on those kind of higher end risks, and what we can do to forestall them.

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Gigi Gronvall: So I just as a note for people who are thinking of applying that you should. You should learn about what Gcds are. We often refer to them as that acronym and and think about what you could do potentially in this program that would mitigate those risks next slide, Tara.

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Gigi Gronvall: and thanks for driving the slides. By the way, so the description of of this work we are. We're hoping that this that the graduates from this program will help fill critical gaps in our response to global crises. We, our assessment is that health security and Gcbrs are not really well integrated into the research and policy communities

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Gigi Gronvall: in the Us. And in the world. So we think that there is a a need and a demand for people who are looking for science based solutions. And who can inform global policies?

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Gigi Gronvall: The, if you got when you graduate from this program, you are going to have a really good grounding in health security and public health. And this is a it's a rigorous but you know, rigorous program. But it's, you know, give you a solid foundation to be able to go out to the world and to make change next slide, please.

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Gigi Gronvall: So who who are we hoping will apply. So we hope that that the future of research leaders and experts for that can will deal with and prevent major biological health security risks will apply. We are fortunate to have a number of graduate students, including Matt and Annie, do. We'll talk soon.

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Gigi Gronvall: Who are smart, passionate, motivated, and and their leaders are ready, and health security in the Gcr field. Over the course both Annie and Matt will talk about how, how they have already been participating in the work of the Health Security Center for Health Security. We have faculty at the center and also beyond the center in the department

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who have

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Gigi Gronvall: mentored the students, and we'll be advising them. We are.

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Gigi Gronvall: I'm so happy to welcome all of our students into this growing community of professionals who are invested in preventing and mitigating global catastrophic biological risks next slide.

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Gigi Gronvall: So these are the competencies of the track. And these are this is a little bit of a form formula that you know, that is approved by the State. On on so making this a real public health degree track.

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Gigi Gronvall: And and so I'm not going to list them all here. But this, these are some of the concrete skills that you will have once you go through the program. The first 2 years are are filled with coursework as well as some other. You know. Re smaller research projects that you could get involved with. And then, your dissertation work begins. It's a 4 year program. But I'm gonna outline that. And then, in a future slide which is coming right up.

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Gigi Gronvall: So here we go. So when you start your first year as course work, you have your your written exam, which is is

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Gigi Gronvall: dependent upon the year but it it uses. It helps you use skills that you've

been developing over the course of the year to to do analysis and and to do policy research.

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Gigi Gronvall: There's more course work in year 2. But this is also when you're starting, prepare for your department level exam, and the the general you know the the school exam. At that point you're you are leading your research and and working on getting it done through years, 3 and 4. And this is a fully funded program.

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Gigi Gronvall: I think we may have mentioned that. But just to reinforce that, it's a fully funded program for 4 years

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Gigi Gronvall: there is a small travel budget for important meetings and and you're expected to be able to complete this entirety the entirety of the Phd. In 4 years

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Gigi Gronvall: next slide.

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Gigi Gronvall: So this is something that will probably change just a tiny bit from year to year. Everybody is is has their own yearbook or yearbook their handbook for what guides their the classes that they take. But these are the types of if you can see the small print depending on the size of your screen, or have, we're going to share this. We have this information available in other places.

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Gigi Gronvall: You can see the kinds of classes that are part of the program.

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Gigi Gronvall: There's a we have a lot of very focused health security classes that are that are requirements for the track. But there's also a good grounding in public health. So that you are. You are,

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Gigi Gronvall: keeping all opportunities open for for public health next slide.

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Gigi Gronvall: And there's here's some more classes that you can see. Just calling out that you know you have,

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Gigi Gronvall: Cisco methods. And you have, you know, like writing scientific papers and grant writing. We want you to be prepared for a number of different job opportunities that come down your way, and also to be able to to lead and and

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Gigi Gronvall: assess information that you need to be able to make good decisions next slide

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Tara Kirk Sell: that Gigi there's a couple of additional columns here that that people may be confused about. So this the middle column here where it's er the

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Tara Kirk Sell: 1 one left from this total right side when it says first or second, or whatever that's the term that it's offered in. and then the number like 4 or 5 per term, or whatever that is the

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Tara Kirk Sell: that's the number of units. The you know the decimal, the code all the way on the left side is the the course number. So if you want to go to the Bloomberg School of Public Health Course catalog online and look up any of these courses and see the full course description. You can do that, either via the the course identification number or the title so just wanted to add that since some folks might be confused about what those numbers are

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Gigi Gronvall: sure. Also, the something to note is that the school public health is on a term system which is unfamiliar to to many. If you, if you're used to semesters. So there there are 4 terms throughout the year, about 8 weeks each, and and so it's a pretty fast pace. And and so going through the the course work.

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Gigi Gronvall: So that's how, there are no courses in the summer, although for once

you're in grad school. This, your your.

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Gigi Gronvall: You're a student all summer as well. So there's opportunities to do research in the summer. There's not it's it's not a just the school year program.

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Gigi Gronvall: Let's see. So some of the things that that we have that are part of what students do. They? They have to go to. Well, they have the opportunity to go to these to present their work and to go to different to hear different speakers. Some of the

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Gigi Gronvall: They have different classes that are part of the environmental health and engineering curriculum. That's the department that we're in. We are a center for health security that's within a department of environmental health and engineering. It's really

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Gigi Gronvall: It's a fascinating mix of topics. And and you will, because of the where where it is right now, and the increased attention to climate issues, you will, you will, necessarily learn a little bit more about those issues as well.

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Gigi Gronvall: Next slide.

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Gigi Gronvall: And also everybody is introduced to the academic and research ethics rules. And and that's an important part of of the experience. And this is a a lot of what you do as a Phd Phd student is on your own and and but you know we have a a baseline assumption of integrity which is a reinforced in these classes.

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00:20:35.250 --> 00:20:38.830 Gigi Gronvall: Next. So that's

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Tara Kirk Sell: are we gonna take questions, or shall we launch into any of that.

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Tara Kirk Sell: This question site slide came a little bit early. So we're just gonna hop back to Annie and Matt, and then we'll take questions. There are no questions in the chat right now, so be thinking of what you want to be asked.

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Gigi Gronvall: Make sure you put your questions in the Q. And a portion.

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Tara Kirk Sell: and I'll turn it over to Annie and Matt. Now you guys can go ahead and come off mute, and I think, Annie, you are up first.

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Annie Sundelson: Okay, Hi, everyone. So my name is Annie. I am just beginning my third year here in the Phd program. Just to give you a little bit of information about my background and how I found out and came to be interested in the health security. Phd, program. I've always had what may seem like 2 very different academic and professional interests. So I

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Annie Sundelson: studied Russian as an undergraduate, and have always been interested in the security space and the in international relations. But I also have a masters in reproductive and sexual health research. So I'm also very interested in the public health space. I've always felt that these 2 interests are connected. But I didn't realize that the intersection of my interest was actually health security, or that

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Annie Sundelson: health security was actually a discipline until I came across the program. Just through a web search of of Phd program. So when I came upon the program. Everything kind of clicked, and I realized that my interests are really align well with the field of health security.

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A little bit about my previous experience before coming to Hopkins. So I once again I have a master's from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. I did a bit of work there as a research assistant on a project on Aids-related mortality in countries of the former Soviet Union. So a lot of my previous work is in the field of HIV Aids.

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Annie Sundelson: Then I went on to work as a research assistant at Columbia, at the Mailman School of Public Health in New York, where I was also working on an HIV related research study that was funded by Nih.

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Annie Sundelson: And.

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Annie Sundelson: as I said, I am a third year on the program. So I just took my oral exams and I'm just beginning to start my dissertation work.

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Annie Sundelson: for my dissertation or my thesis, I will be focusing on Russian disinformation, specifically, Russian disinformation about biological weapons and the potential for that disinformation to alter the deliberate biological threat landscape. So to undermine international treaties like the Biological Weapons convention or change state actors, decision making regarding pursuing offensive biological weapons, research or development.

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Annie Sundelson: So I'll be doing. A mix method analysis of documents as well as transcripts from biological weapons convention related meetings.

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Annie Sundelson: I will be designing and running a red teaming experiment. That will simulate hopefully the impact of disinformation on state actors, decision making regarding biological weapons.

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Annie Sundelson: And then I'll also be eliciting expert opinion regarding the extent to which this information could alter the deliberate biological threat, landscape and really weather, and how policy makers should be responding to this threat, so that has the kind of practical component as well.

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Annie Sundelson: My experience so far in the program has been great. I think the courses that we take the first 2 years gave me a really solid methodological background, and that made me feel really confident. Going into my independent dissertation work. The Health security. Related courses are also excellent, and have

really given me, I think, a broad understanding of health security related topics, both

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ones that I'm focusing on in my dissertation, and and those that are

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Annie Sundelson: that I'm not focusing on. But I'm also interested in and I think, just highlight. Tara mentioned. That we get to do some travel, and I we last November, Matt and I, both, as well as a another Phd. Student a year behind us got to go to the Biological Weapons Convention Review Conference in Geneva in November, and I got to

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Annie Sundelson: speak to the head of the Russian delegation and kind of hear their disinformation you know, front and center. And so that has really propelled my dissertation work and helped me realize what exactly I wanna focus on

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Annie Sundelson: I've also had the opportunity to work with people at the center. So analysts as well as senior scholars on projects. So Tara, as well as other members of the at the center, we recently finished an analysis of news media coverage of Ukrainian biological laboratories which have been the subject of ongoing Russian disinformation campaigns.

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Annie Sundelson: And I'm currently working with Tara on a project that is funded by Cdc, that is designed to increase trust in public health, emergency preparedness in an environment of misinformation. So I've gotten the experience, or the chance to work with Tara as well as other scholars on topics that I find really interesting, and I've really moved me forward in both my dissertation work and and my general interest.

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Annie Sundelson: So thanks so much for listening to my little spiel. I'll be happy to answer any questions as they come up.

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Tara Kirk Sell: Thanks, Annie. Go ahead, Matt.

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Matt Walsh: Great well, II think I need a great job covering. You know the some of the experiences with the travel and and various aspects of the classes. But I come to the program from, I guess, a pretty different background. My undergraduate degree is in chemistry, and then

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Matt Walsh: Shortly after that, I spent a while working at Mit Lincoln Laboratory, developing biological and chemical technologies in support of national security applications.

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Matt Walsh: That's when I started getting interested in topics like biosurveillance and bio attribution. And just in general, clever ways that you can use biology to solve complex problems.

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Matt Walsh: In 2,018, I got the emerging leaders and Biosecurity initiative fellowship through the center for security at our Center for Health Security at Hopkins, which is was kind of the start of my connection to this Phd. Program, even though it didn't exist at the time. And that's kind of how I first heard about it. A few years after that

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Matt Walsh: towards the end of my time at Mit, I was running a program where we were applying large language models to biology applications, specifically engineering, monoclonal antibody based therapeutics. To try to be able to do that quicker and cheaper. And so I kind of drawn that hands on technical experience in the work that I'm doing now at the center and as part of my Phd.

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Matt Walsh: So for my thesis. My interest is in the way, or is in understanding the ways in which advances in artificial intelligence, and particularly tools that are trained on biological data that are purpose built to engineer biology. The way that those tools impact the deliberate threat landscape

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Matt Walsh: and so to do this, I'm hoping to do what's called a Delphi study, where you survey a variety of experts, and through that process push them towards, or they push themselves, I guess, towards restraint consensus on questions that you pose to them.

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Matt Walsh: And then the other component of my project will be about establishing, I guess, frameworks to evaluate these types of types of impacts on the threat landscape.

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Matt Walsh: So I see that there's a bunch of questions in the chat that Gigi is gearing up to answer, so I'll I'll hand it over to her.

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Tara Kirk Sell: Well, thanks, Matt, so I'll moderate the questions and and throw them around to to different folks. Did you? Why don't we start with? The questions? There's 2 questions in this chat about kind of the process for advising. Do you need to get an advisor before you apply? You know, how does that sort of all work out? So can you sort of describe for our audience how that's working?

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Gigi Gronvall: Sure. So so there's when you apply, there's a there's a Hopkins site to apply, and the links are are on our our web page. And so you can. But so there's a there's an application where you can select that you want to to be in the health security track the

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Gigi Gronvall: you. You may express a preference for an advisor, so an advisor would be someone like me or Tara, or somebody who is a on the and part of the faculty of the Center for Health Security. But but it's it's something that it's not necessary.

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Gigi Gronvall: And it's more important that you talk about like the kinds of what? What your interests are. Your interest in, Gcp. etc., and and familiar familiarity with the work in this field.

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Gigi Gronvall: It's the person who will be your advisor. You know there's a committee of people who will help you and mentor you. So there's there doesn't have to be a an exact match in in the in the research direction of the advisor and the student. So you know, all of us are are able to to guide you within some

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Gigi Gronvall: area, and people who have special expertise will help. So we we do take a kind of collaborative approach to this, however. I am Matt's advisor, Terra's, Annie's advisor and other faculty who are at the center who are able to to advise students. Jared, do you wanna add to that?

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Tara Kirk Sell: I would just add that you know, in a lot of different programs. Other Phd programs, St potential students are required to kind of find a faculty member who will like sponsor them. That's not how it works here.

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Tara Kirk Sell: You're admitted to the program based on your fit for the program overall.

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Tara Kirk Sell: And then an advisor who matches up with you pretty well is assigned to advise you. And I will say that you know you don't. So you know that's me. This means that you don't have to have, you know, like a a advisor pulling you through. But it is a good idea to be familiar with different folks at the center. The the work that's being done at the center, especially in global catastrophic biological risks. So that you kind of know what's going on.

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Tara Kirk Sell: in the field at the center that you can describe potential research that you're interested in. In a way that sort of makes sense, too.

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Tara Kirk Sell: The people who are gonna read your application. So that's that's one thing that you know. I think I want to

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Tara Kirk Sell: emphasize there. did you? I think this is a great question for you. Can you talk about like the switch from someone's asking about switch from something like a hard science like microbiology? To doing work in health security.

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00:32:37.860 --> 00:33:02.380

Gigi Gronvall: Yeah, so that's you can definitely do that. Matt has the experience in doing that as well. And and I, my Phd. Is actually in immunology. And so I was

working in the lab and have now worked in in health the health security policy. So yes, it's it's valuable to have. If you don't wanna stay in in the laboratory or stay doing

112

00:33:02.380 --> 00:33:23.470

Gigi Gronvall: kinds of science that you were doing, it's it's a valuable background and knowledge to an expertise to bring to to this field which, as the one of the slides that Tara showed, I mean, there are a lot of expertise types of expertise that that are influential and important for health security. It's a really multidisciplinary field. So so it's definitely you're definitely welcome.

113

00:33:23.470 --> 00:33:32.999

Gigi Gronvall: And I would just, you know, make sure you described this in your personal statement, and why you are doing why, you're hoping to do what you do.

114

00:33:33.000 --> 00:33:55.679

Gigi Gronvall: and to show that you're passionate and interested in in this step in in your career. And II also saw that there was, you know, so questions about like, if your background is bio safety or or other, you know, infectious diseases work, that's all. That's all good, you know. Well, th, those kinds of those kinds of backgrounds are really important.

115

00:33:57.210 --> 00:34:07.320

Tara Kirk Sell: Yup, just a great idea. I think. Gg, said this to make sure you articulate how that background applies to our program and global catastrophic biological risks.

116

00:34:07.340 --> 00:34:12.140

Tara Kirk Sell: So that you make an argument. For your reader, the readers of your application that

117

00:34:12.469 --> 00:34:35.549

Tara Kirk Sell: you know, you make sense in the program. I'll just answer really quickly this question about part time work. So this Ph is a full time program, and it is a residential program. So you have to live in Baltimore. But if you are interested in a doctoral program in health security at Hopkins. There is one that that is part time it's for. It's called the Dr. Ph.

118

00:34:35.550 --> 00:34:53.800

And you can, you know, on our website, if you go to the Phd program website. The Dr. Ph links are right there. And so our center also runs that program. And that's a that's a

part time program, but that is self funded. And so you know, it's a little bit of a different model, because

119

00:34:54.000 --> 00:35:04.640

Tara Kirk Sell: you know, this is more. For folks who are are continuing to work, and so therefore you know, make you know, money in their jobs. And then they, you know

120

00:35:04.670 --> 00:35:19.650

Tara Kirk Sell: employers, funds that program, too, if they have any sort of tuition reimbursement, you know they so a lot of people who are getting a Dr. Ph, they are doing this with the permission and encouragement and sometimes funding of their employer.

121

00:35:20.690 --> 00:35:32.669

Tara Kirk Sell: Great. And then another question here is about foreign candidates. There are no restrictions to foreign candidates, but it does mean you. You just have to sort of be able to navigate the visa requirements.

122

00:35:32.720 --> 00:35:35.619

Tara Kirk Sell: And we actually have one.

123

00:35:37.190 --> 00:35:40.799

Tara Kirk Sell: one, actually, 2 students now in the program. Who?

124

00:35:42.080 --> 00:35:54.430

Tara Kirk Sell: how we're are from foreign countries? And so it it works out. But you just have to be thoughtful because you. There's some in person requirements that you have to navigate, which is a little bit of inside baseball. We won't go over here.

125

00:35:54.860 --> 00:36:23.719

Gigi Gronvall: Yeah, there's there's a whole office that Hopkins Hopkins has lots of international students. And so you know, please don't let that discourage you. We've we've worked the process for for 2 of our students. And and there's there's many, you know. There's many possible people who can help you with this. And it's just a matter of you know, there's just gonna be some extra things that you need to do. And but you know, to to live in Baltimore full time and or live.

126

00:36:23.720 --> 00:36:27.800

Gigi Gronvall: and within within a range, so that you can go to classes.

127

00:36:31.330 --> 00:36:46.250

Tara Kirk Sell: Great. I'm just sort of listening to you, and also trying to look. Read the questions at the same time. You know, is there any more detail that you can provide? Gg, about the difference between the Phd. And the Dr. Ph. About what the costs and benefits are.

128

00:36:47.320 --> 00:37:12.390

Gigi Gronvall: You know, it's it's really like there's there's there are many jobs, many positions for which a terminal degree, like a Phd or Dr. Ph is required. And and you know. I think there's a certain amount of name recognition for the Phd. But there's a growing, a lot of growing name recognition for Dr. Ph. 2. So I don't think that that's

129

00:37:13.040 --> 00:37:27.970

Gigi Gronvall: That's necessarily. There's not much of a difference there, but it does. It does take people. I mean, it's part time program for dart. Dr. Ph, so it does take longer for for students, it's I mean, you have access to faculty

130

00:37:28.090 --> 00:37:48.319

Gigi Gronvall: coming up with a a dissertation is a little bit different, because it's not based at at the center for health security. So you have to find an ability to do your dissertation at your workplace. So there are some, some things that you can. I would suggest just going onto the website and reading about the Dr. Ph program if you're interested in that model.

131

00:37:49.140 --> 00:38:07.569

Tara Kirk Sell: And I would say, if you're you know, if you're interested in health security. But you're hesitant about Gcbrs. You know the the Phd. Program is, I wanna just sort of emphasize. This, again is very focused on Gcvrs. But if you want sort of that broader angle on it. You know, the Dr. Ph, program is probably

132

00:38:07.640 --> 00:38:09.029

Tara Kirk Sell: a better fit.

133

00:38:09.230 --> 00:38:20.710

Tara Kirk Sell: I'll answer. One thing really quick. There are no age restrictions. You know we we are. Don't have any specifics about which which countries apply.

00:38:20.780 --> 00:38:32.439

Tara Kirk Sell: so that's that's fine. And then the question I was just going to answer disappeared. I think Matt answered it in writing

135

00:38:32.520 --> 00:38:38.180

Tara Kirk Sell: but here, how large is the cohort of students? We generally accept.

136

00:38:38.870 --> 00:38:47.670

Tara Kirk Sell: it, didn't. It ranges so Annie and Matt had 2 2 in their cohort. We had one the next year. We actually have 5 this year. So it ranges

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00:38:47.720 --> 00:38:55.530

Tara Kirk Sell: a bit there. Probably about 3, and we'll say, average 3.

138

00:38:55.680 --> 00:39:04.780

Tara Kirk Sell: Let's see, there's a question of what kind of level of professional or academic experience or strong candidates expected to have.

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00:39:05.970 --> 00:39:29.860

Gigi Gronvall: It's been a range. I think you know. So Annie and Matt had some experience bef working in in there, and and before coming back to to school, we have another student who pretty much went straight through. So so it's been there's there, I would I would. If this is something that you wanna do, I would

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00:39:30.180 --> 00:39:39.279

Gigi Gronvall: apply and express why you think you can do it, and why you want to do it, and how that will help you so I wouldn't let that stop you.

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00:39:40.490 --> 00:40:08.379

Tara Kirk Sell: But I think one thing, there's another question here. You know, people who are have, you know, full medical degrees. You know. I think, that it's important to sort of articulate what the Phd. Adds to your capacity to make change in the world. On top of what you already what programs or what credentials you already have? So you know you'd have to sort of make that that argument there.

142

00:40:08.600 --> 00:40:13.820

Tara Kirk Sell: do, did you wanna just talk a little bit about

00:40:14.060 --> 00:40:21.179

Tara Kirk Sell: governance of emerging biotechnology? And sort of that space of research that we're working, that the center is working on.

144

00:40:22.090 --> 00:40:40.420

Gigi Gronvall: Sure. So I don't know if the question is, do you need a Phd. To to discuss governance? or if that's something that would be fitting into a Phd in this in the self security track. I'm just gonna assume it's the latter.

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00:40:40.630 --> 00:41:04.380

Gigi Gronvall: because, you know, yes, you can focus your dissertation on the governance of emerging biotechnologies. That is a huge topic. It's a big part of my work. It's it's a big part of Matt's dissertation work. So that's that's a lot of trying to figure out the policies that can for stall

146

00:41:04.380 --> 00:41:18.109

Gigi Gronvall: the negative effects of emerging technologies, whether it's Bio or Nano or AI, or whatever technology, while while still being able to benefit from the from those technologies. That's

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00:41:18.110 --> 00:41:22.130

Gigi Gronvall: that's definitely bread and butter for this type of of degree

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00:41:24.100 --> 00:41:37.320

Gigi Gronvall: in health and the the health security track. You're the person who writes has a background in microbiology and public health that seems like a a really great foundation to be able to further your studies to discuss scientific evidence.

149

00:41:38.110 --> 00:41:52.979

Tara Kirk Sell: Wanted to sort of bring up a question that that Matt Matt answered. In writing really? Well, but I wanna sort of just say it out loud. There's a question about if you need to articulate your research interest in your application. You know.

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00:41:53.650 --> 00:42:15.080

Tara Kirk Sell: like Matt said. There, there's a lot of flexibility that you know no one is saying. But you wrote in your application, you're gonna do X. So we expect you. That's

what you're gonna do. But providing specifics about what you're interested in looking at makes a good it. It provides a good impression on a good, a good view of what

151

00:42:15.180 --> 00:42:29.989

Tara Kirk Sell: kind of researcher you might be. Have you thought about the topic area? And and what you wanna do? With depth, with thoughtfulness. So it is good to be specific and to really sort of describe. Kind of

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00:42:30.270 --> 00:42:39.879

Tara Kirk Sell: what you're what you might kind of what kind of research you might do, and sort of articulate kind of the some of the foundation of why you are are interested in that.

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00:42:40.170 --> 00:42:53.100

Gigi Gronvall: Yeah, I mean, it's this is, this is for a Phd program. This is a relatively short experience. So 4 years is is pretty streamlined as streamlined as a Phd. Can get. But

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00:42:53.100 --> 00:43:18.020

Gigi Gronvall: it's not something you should jump into lightly. So we wanna make sure that this is something that is of interest to you, and that you are that these issues are ones that you really care about. So that's that's what your your personal statement has is all about, and you know you don't have to outline your dissertation proposal at this time. There's plenty of time to to have your interest grow. And and there's a lot of learning that takes place in the first couple of years

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00:43:18.020 --> 00:43:28.740

Gigi Gronvall: of this program. So so that's all that's all great, but but we just wanted know that you're dedicated. So that's that's what the purpose of this is.

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00:43:31.120 --> 00:43:39.039

Tara Kirk Sell: So we're waiting for a few additional questions to come in. If you haven't been following the answers.

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00:43:39.110 --> 00:43:44.640

Tara Kirk Sell: see the answers? And I think they can only see. So

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00:43:44.920 --> 00:43:46.559

Gigi Gronvall: okay, yeah.

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00:43:46.970 --> 00:43:57.189

Tara Kirk Sell: so the question is, should propose, does propose research have to be done in the Us. Only. No,

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00:43:57.800 --> 00:44:15.220

Tara Kirk Sell: The research could be done on anything anywhere or not. Anything gcr topics that are anywhere and but it really depends on on kind of like your angle on it. And I'll say that again, for instance, are

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00:44:15.380 --> 00:44:24.650

Tara Kirk Sell: are allowed to apply and anyone who is accepted into the program receives the full funding for the 4 years

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00:44:25.040 --> 00:44:43.410

Gigi Gronvall: we haven't yet experienced somebody doing international research in this track. But it's it's kind of not an unusual occurrence for the the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, to do work around the world. So so there is. There is some

163

00:44:43.460 --> 00:44:51.900

Gigi Gronvall: yes, you can. You can. If your proposal, if your your work takes you there and we can, and it's you know, funded, then we can. We can do that.

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00:44:55.840 --> 00:45:01.100

Tara Kirk Sell: Annie or Matt anything that we've sort of been talking about, that

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00:45:02.290 --> 00:45:15.510

Tara Kirk Sell: that sort of as jump started something that you think that the that the prospective students or applicants. Should know. That we've been sort of talking about, or any sort of details you want to add to any of our answers.

166

00:45:20.410 --> 00:45:45.489

Matt Walsh: I mean, I think we can be explicit and say that, you know, I think there's there's a lot of questions about, you know. Is this, how can I make this work as a part time program? Or I'm going back to school. And and how does this play out? And I think you know, just to be aware that you know, when we say it's like fully funded that

covers tuition. And then, as Annie said in one of the comments or stipend stipend. That stipend is, you know, probably gonna be like 37, or 38,000 Us. Dollars a year.

167

00:45:45.490 --> 00:46:01.930

Matt Walsh: So if that is a significant consideration for you. You know, and needing to be in Baltimore. You know, the expectation is is that you're working full time, and and that is helping to kind of cost or cover the cost of

168

00:46:02.700 --> 00:46:20.580

Matt Walsh: living. So I think that's that's one thing. And then the other thing that you know, really just emphasizing. You know, there's there was like a lot of questions about, you know, this particular field or area of interest. And it's all, you know, very, very exciting. And all the topics that were kind of mentioned have potential tie-ins to

169

00:46:20.580 --> 00:46:43.819

Matt Walsh: global catastrophic biological risks. And Rachel put that link in the chat. And I think you know again there's some slides in here that really highlight, how this is health, health security and Gcvrs. And I think that that's again, just really wanna emphasize that. That's perhaps the key to successful applications, including how your work right connects to the among the various fields.

170

00:46:45.110 --> 00:47:09.689

Gigi Gronvall: One thing that we don't have since this program is relatively new is we don't have. We can't put yet have slides to say, you know the wonderful positions of influence that that Matt and Annie and other you know, future graduates of this program will you know the what they're doing. However, we do have A lot of people who have been affiliated with the center

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00:47:10.220 --> 00:47:34.879

Gigi Gronvall: from, you know, for years, who have gone on to be part of and to lead policy efforts in this area across the Us. Government and every, you know, many agencies, and in the White House and in Congress and in international organizations. And the network that you are coming into as being part of this program is significant.

172

00:47:38.130 --> 00:47:45.489

Tara Kirk Sell: There, I thought maybe we might talk briefly about some examples of direct impacts that that you know we've had students

00:47:45.510 --> 00:47:48.629

Tara Kirk Sell: like, even though like, did you said they are?

174

00:47:49.330 --> 00:47:57.550

Tara Kirk Sell: you know, we, Annie and Matt, are most senior students in the program. So and this is, you know, they're going into their third year. So we haven't had a ton of time. But

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00:47:57.570 --> 00:48:08.599

Tara Kirk Sell: you know, give a few examples. You know, Annie, was able to present lead some work with the National academies

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00:48:08.600 --> 00:48:29.549

Tara Kirk Sell: of science, engineering and medicine presented their framework for that sort of organized one of their workshops about infidemics, and it was really thrilling like during that workshop to to hear people sort of referring to Sundelson at all. You know, in the talks. So it was able to, you know, present

177

00:48:29.740 --> 00:48:54.739

Tara Kirk Sell: work that that was really meaningful there, and folks at Cdc actually saw it and asked us to come and present you know that work to them as well. So you know some, I'll say. Another time. Annie had been doing some special studies work for me. We had to present quickly to we had a quick request to to present to leadership at the FDA.

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00:48:54.740 --> 00:49:04.120

Tara Kirk Sell: And you know her work translated into a a piece of that presentation as well, which was very well received by them. So you know, there's these.

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00:49:04.120 --> 00:49:15.049

Tara Kirk Sell: the work that's being done by students. At our center. Really does translate. I know Gigi and Matt. You work together on some high level meetings. I don't know if you want to describe that a little bit?

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00:49:15.170 --> 00:49:16.789

Gigi Gronvall: Yeah, Matt, do you wanna talk about that?

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00:49:18.400 --> 00:49:21.000

Matt Walsh: Sure. So I think.

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00:49:21.580 --> 00:49:45.650

Matt Walsh: the just the other week, the us. Department of Defense released their by defense posture review. And I guess maybe a year and a half ago I think we decided it was we were talking about it last week. We hosted a meeting for the Department of Defense to listen to Biosecurity and health Security experts. To get their input in developing that high level strategic document.

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00:49:45.820 --> 00:49:51.599

Matt Walsh: And then a follow up or not necessarily follow up. But another project that I helped with

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00:49:51.650 --> 00:50:12.230

last year was hosting a meeting for the office of science, technology and policy at the White House. To. Similarly, listen to subject matter. Experts on technologies for attributing the the source of a biological agent.

185

00:50:12.320 --> 00:50:25.670

Matt Walsh: And then following both of these kind of meetings, where I think what we do well at Hopkins is, we kind of summarize the meetings and then put out a report so that people who weren't there can, you know, share in the benefit of of

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00:50:25.750 --> 00:50:28.710

Matt Walsh: you know, accessing the information that was shared from the experts.

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00:50:29.170 --> 00:50:47.780

Gigi Gronvall: Yeah, it's important for us to. I mean the all the skills policy skills of being able to to summarize the top level findings and to put it out into the world so that you know it can be referred to in the future. Sometimes the policy process can take a little bit longer than you expect

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00:50:47.780 --> 00:51:09.280

Gigi Gronvall: as occurred with the department defenses bio Defense posture review. I think it was. It was about. It was a little over a year and a half for that process to work its way through, but you know, at the end of the day, when they released it publicly last week, they they credited our meeting, and another meeting that that Mit had

00:51:09.280 --> 00:51:34.079

Gigi Gronvall: had organized for them, as you know, influence by helping to set the trajectory of how the tre report was written. So there! There are opportunities like this that come up sometimes quite suddenly. You know, these were great projects for the ones that most both Matt and Annie talked about. There were great projects because they were time limited. They were, you know.

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00:51:34.080 --> 00:52:01.600

Gigi Gronvall: these types of meetings that could be prepared for, written about and bring a lot of expertise and influence to the process. You know, and then a good good, a activities for first and second year graduate students. You know, the other other activities that are a little bit more on a slower role. And and so those are things that are, you know, that require more day to day contact. And we have, we have

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00:52:01.600 --> 00:52:04.980

Gigi Gronvall: different kinds of opportunities like this that are going on all the time.

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00:52:06.930 --> 00:52:11.019

Tara Kirk Sell: Danny, did you have something anything that you wanted to add. I was sort of

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00:52:11.110 --> 00:52:17.159

Tara Kirk Sell: asking you and Matt if there were any sort of gaps in what we had been answering, that you wanted to sort of emphasize

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00:52:17.330 --> 00:52:19.870

Tara Kirk Sell: to the prospective applicants.

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00:52:20.000 --> 00:52:25.410

Annie Sundelson: No, I think you covered it pretty well. I've also been

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00:52:25.640 --> 00:52:49.760

Annie Sundelson: answering some questions in the chat. I think somebody had a question about course content specifically, and whether it was test based or more project based, I think it's definitely a mixture of both. So the epi and stats courses are are pretty heavily test, based, at least in the first few terms. But there are also opportunities for projects. And then.

00:52:49.760 --> 00:52:56.560

Annie Sundelson: the health security specific classes. You do a lot of like writing policy memos

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00:52:56.560 --> 00:53:10.240

Annie Sundelson: or, you know, developing your own presentation. So you definitely get a mixture of of both, and I think those provide, especially the project based classes provide good opportunity to start thinking about your dissertation.

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00:53:11.650 --> 00:53:40.019

Tara Kirk Sell: Annie and Matt. Can you kind of talk a little bit about the ways that students collaborate together? You know, both in, eeh? And then the folks who are specifically pro in the in the health security program. I mean, it's not. You know, the number is is moderate. So you kind of know each other, you know, personally, and have office space. But what kind of you? What are some other ways that? You know, people are collaborating and connecting. The students are

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00:53:41.780 --> 00:53:54.709

Annie Sundelson: so in your first year. Matt feel free to add to this, but in your first year you take a class called or I guess it's a set of 2 classes called Advanced Environmental Health, which is

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00:53:54.890 --> 00:54:15.150

Annie Sundelson: with the entire environmental health and engineering first year cohort. So that's a really good opportunity to get to know other students in that cohort. And as part of that project you are sorry. As part of that class, you get to develop a project with a group of students. And so that

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00:54:15.150 --> 00:54:28.439

Annie Sundelson: provides a really good way to get to know other students, but also get to know what their interests are. And how their expertise may help benefit you, or kind of steer you in the direction that you're interested in

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00:54:28.440 --> 00:54:30.850

Annie Sundelson: Matt. I don't know if you wanna add anything to that.

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00:54:33.180 --> 00:54:36.689

Matt Walsh: No, I mean, II think that's

00:54:37.780 --> 00:54:53.410

Matt Walsh: definitely true. And that's definitely one of the highlights of the first year as working on those projects. I worked a little bit like, I guess, more formally in an academic collaboration setting, I guess, working with some like another Phd student

206

00:54:53.480 --> 00:54:59.689

Matt Walsh: in the department of I mean, I just know the acronym. It's Mmi. It's like molecular biology.

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00:55:00.740 --> 00:55:07.869

Matt Walsh: Essentially microbiology. I'm not sure what else it is. But bench. Scientists is really what it turns out to be in my mind.

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00:55:07.910 --> 00:55:18.119

Matt Walsh: and so you're like collaborating kind of on a a an article about kind of infectious disease, surveillance, and and

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00:55:18.190 --> 00:55:26.280

Matt Walsh: thinking about the ways in which policy in the United States might influence the way in which we do infectious disease, surveillance.

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00:55:26.480 --> 00:55:49.630

Matt Walsh: But I would say that for students who are considering applying now, they're in a much better spot to collaborate than when Annie and I were applying. Because, you know, when the students matriculate in 2024 right, they'll have students that are one year, 2 year and 3 years above them. Whereas when Annie and I were starting out there weren't, you know, Phd. Students and health security track ahead of us.

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00:55:49.670 --> 00:55:56.880

Matt Walsh: So I just expect there to be kind of, you know, going forward. A lot more collaboration happening. Among the health security track at the center.

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00:55:57.790 --> 00:56:00.429

Gigi Gronvall: It's molecular microbiology and immunology.

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00:56:04.320 --> 00:56:29.319

Tara Kirk Sell: So I don't see that. Thank you, Matt and Annie, for those those answers. You know, I don't see any more questions in the chat. So I'll kind of you know. Go to everyone for final comments, and then we'll close down the webinar, but I just wanna say you know we're excited to see your application. You know we wanna you know the the tips that I would give to

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00:56:29.910 --> 00:56:31.620

Tara Kirk Sell: to

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00:56:31.930 --> 00:56:46.849

Tara Kirk Sell: to to have to to help you with a successful application is to really look into these global catastrophic biological risk papers. The different ways people are looking at at that in the field.

216

00:56:46.850 --> 00:57:11.609

Tara Kirk Sell: You may you. It may be interesting to go. This program is, is sponsored by open philanthropy. And so it may be good to go to their website and take a look at the different approaches that are are articulated there. And so I think that I just would like, you know, I don't wanna have a great candidate sort of miss the boat on on really focus, providing a good application. That you know, that's looking at, that's

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00:57:11.610 --> 00:57:19.090

looking describing how they're interested in Gcds. Why, they're interested in the program kind of how that program fits with them

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00:57:19.390 --> 00:57:25.159

Tara Kirk Sell: and how the program is going to really make them able to be able to do something

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00:57:25.470 --> 00:57:55.070

Tara Kirk Sell: that they couldn't do if they hadn't been accepted to the program. So it's not just another degree to slap onto your list of degrees. It's actually something that is enhancing the field, enhancing our ability to respond or prevent Gcrs, because we put you know, we gave we were able to train you and put you into the field or into policy realm, or wherever with the education that you gained to us. So what change will you make in the world because you were able to take advantage of our program.

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00:57:55.090 --> 00:57:57.240

Tara Kirk Sell: I'll pass it off to you. Gigi.

00:57:57.970 --> 00:58:10.350

Gigi Gronvall: Yeah, I just I mean, encourage you to apply. This is a big step is an exciting step, and it's really you know, our program has some of the smartest and most interesting students around.

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00:58:10.350 --> 00:58:35.140

Gigi Gronvall: And not only not only that, but but there's, you know, there's just so many fascinating and incredibly inspiring and interesting and and impactful researchers at Hopkins, who you can learn from, who are beyond, who are working in areas that are tangential, where, you know, even completely different than the kind of work we do, but

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00:58:35.140 --> 00:58:59.810

Gigi Gronvall: you know, but will inspire you as well. And this is a great opportunity to really learn and to think about what you can bring to the to the future, so that you know, to make a positive change. And and so we're so excited to have this program where we can make all these tools available to you. I hope so, please.

224

00:58:59.810 --> 00:59:21.459

Gigi Gronvall: you know, Con, consider applying. We have questions that are, we have some answers to some of the questions that you're likely to have on the website. But we can answer others. So just, you know, we're, we're very findable. So so just, you know, find us and and if you have particular situations that you wanna work out. But the very basics.

225

00:59:21.610 --> 00:59:49.270

Gigi Gronvall: this is a residential program. So so just, you know, plan for that. As you're thinking. You will have a solid grounding in public health beyond beyond health security. So this is a, this is a rigorous program, and it's and I'll serve you well in the future. And and just, you know, pay attention. Your personal statement. This this program is, is focused on global catastrophic biological risks.

226

00:59:49.270 --> 01:00:01.530

Gigi Gronvall: Think about what you would like to do to to address them. And and we can't wait to read your application later. Wait when when they're due December.

227

01:00:02.050 --> 01:00:30.800

Gigi Gronvall: First get it in before then, because there's steps, and there's lots of

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documents that need to go in, and they have to be complete. But you know, if you're applying, if you start that process, just reach out to Tara and I, and let let us know that you're that you have started the process, and you're starting to to check all the boxes to make sure that all of your grades and everything else are are into the system.

228

01:00:32.130 --> 01:00:36.729

Tara Kirk Sell: Cj, that's a that's a really good point. Annie or Matt. Anything to add at the end.

229

01:00:37.590 --> 01:00:53.630

Annie Sundelson: I'll just add really quickly, I think my email is on the center for all security website. And I've talked to applicants in the past. If they have questions about the program or the application process feel free to shoot me an email and I can.

230

01:00:53.640 --> 01:00:56.339

Annie Sundelson: We can arrange a time to chat.

231

01:00:57.140 --> 01:01:10.109

Tara Kirk Sell: Thanks for that, Annie. Alright. Well, with that you know. Thank you all for attending, and we'll look forward to seeing your application. In a few months all the best. Bye, thank you.