

**The University of Georgia, College of Public Health  
Five –Year Program Planning Document  
(effective October 2005)**

The College of Public Health is the University of Georgia’s newest college formally begun in January 2005. With a commitment to improving human health through developing and applying knowledge that prevents disease, protects the public from harm, and promotes health throughout the state, the nation, and the world, the College carries out this obligation through programs of teaching, research, and service.

The College of Public Health is in its infancy. It is just beginning to put together the faculty, students and staff that will move it on a path to a national and international recognized program of excellence. This document reflects the thinking of faculty, staff and students as to the possible options and choices that will position the College to achieve the potential envisioned upon its formation. Also included in these pages is attention to those items requested in the initial “Guidelines for Development of 5-Year Program Plan for College of Public Health, Phase II” document with a date of 5-13-05.

The highest priority is to move the College of Public Health towards Council for Education in Public Health (CEPH) accreditation. The importance of this accreditation can not be underestimated. Accreditation status assures enrollment of quality students, competitiveness in hiring the best faculty, access to greater extramural funding, and membership in the Association of Schools of Public Health. While the goal is to be accredited by the end of this planning cycle, 2010, it is important the time line is accelerated and that full accreditation for the College be awarded as soon as possible. Many of the options presented in this document are directed towards achieving accreditation status in the shortest possible time.

In developing this planning document a majority opinion was expressed by the faculty that permanent leadership at the dean’s level was a critical component for success. Items identified in this document represent suggestions for immediate action and those that perhaps should wait the appointment of permanent leadership. These suggestions are presented in the following sections:

1. Building the faculty
2. Supporting the students
3. College infrastructure
4. Staffing
5. Program development

**Section 1: Building the Faculty**

CEPH accreditation guidelines require that “a critical mass of faculty is necessary to support each of the five core concentration areas and, unless otherwise justified, this would require at least five faculty who are trained and experienced in the discipline for

each core MPH concentration area<sup>1</sup>.” This requires a minimum of 25 full time faculty. At present 17 faculty (greater than 0.5 EFT) are employed by the College of Public Health. Current faculty are assigned as follows to the five core areas:

Biostatistics:	1
Epidemiology:	0
Health Services Administration:	5
Environmental Health Sciences:	6
Social and Behavioral Sciences:	5

To meet CEPH faculty requirements by number four biostatistics faculty members and five epidemiologists are needed.

**Recommendation:** Proactive searches leading to strategic hires to fill in gaps in teaching of College of Public Health programs and development of the research agenda for the College.

While a minimum of 25 faculty are required by CEPH the long term plan must focus on building the College of Public Health faculty to a minimum number of 50. This number of faculty was recommended by Dr. Harrison Spencer, President, Association of Schools of Public Health, as a critical number necessary to the success of a school of public health.

Public health requires a diverse workforce and the faculty in a school of public health must reflect that diversity.

**Recommendation:** The highest priority must be given in putting together faculty searches to attract a talented and diverse applicant pool. The College must hire a faculty that is diverse and reflective of the state.

## **Section 2: Supporting Students**

The MPH degree is a College of Public Health program supported through concentration area course offerings by departments. Students have expressed a desire to be exposed to the five core areas prior to their deciding on a concentration area.

**Recommendation 1:** Students would have the option of changing their area of concentration after admission to the MPH program.

**Recommendation 2:** Consideration will be given to allowing input from graduate students on College decision-making processes and currently one MPH student serves on the MPH Advisory board.

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<sup>1</sup> The five core areas are: biostatistics, epidemiology, health services administration, environmental health sciences, and social and behavioral sciences.

### **Section 3: College Infrastructure**

A large number of faculty and staff reported on the need to develop extensive opportunities for faculty from different disciplines and different locations to get to know their colleagues across the College. The continuous interaction of college faculty on broad public health issues may have importance to a CEPH accreditation site visit. Specific recommendations to accomplish this “socialization” are:

**Recommendation 1:** Program-wide seminar series with local and nationally known speakers on public health topics of interest to a wide audience. Opportunities for networking should be built in to the seminar time frame to allow faculty and students to converse over refreshments following the talk.

**Recommendation 2:** A series of social events scheduled to place faculty in environments conducive to interaction. Whenever possible, staff should be included.

**Recommendation 3:** Development of research interest groups that cross department and ideally college lines. These would be fluid structures that would form to develop strategies to go after anticipated RFAs or RFPs. Public health is a collaborative discipline but success on a collaborative grant submission often depends on the participants having a track record of working together.

**Recommendation 4:** A mechanism to support faculty development. As new faculty are added, many new to academia, a strong and functional process for mentoring is needed. This support for faculty is a key ingredient to faculty success in a College where high expectations for scholarly productivity and quality teaching will be the norm.

For each of the items listed above resources will be needed to support the activity. It is suggested that these recommendation be initiated during this year and that they would be continued under the founding dean.

### **Section 4: Staffing**

Full staffing of programs and new initiatives perhaps best should wait for the arrival of permanent leadership but adequate staff must be in place to support the student body and faculty.

**Recommendation 1:** A plan should be developed to maximize current staff with newly assigned duties. In the planning of new hires consideration must be made of the staff needed to support these new hires. New staff should be hired as new faculty assume their positions.

**Recommendation 2:** Attention must be paid to CEPH requirements of assessing program outcomes with respect to the staff needed to adequately address and fully comply with these requirements.

## **Section 5: Program Development**

A number of items come under this section. These items reflect issues that must be addressed for accreditation, items important for good education, or new areas for development.

CEPH guidelines call for an accredited school to have three doctoral programs. The College of Public Health can count two Ph.D. programs (Ph.D. in Health Promotion and a Ph.D. through the Interdisciplinary Toxicology Program). Therefore prior to accreditation a third doctoral program must be in place. There are a number of options for a new doctoral program which could include development of a Ph.D. program in either the core area of biostatistics, epidemiology or health administration. The difficulty in developing such programs to meet a reasonable accreditation time line is the need for critical mass of faculty, the university and system approval process and the CEPH guidelines themselves.

The CEPH guideline on doctoral programs states:

**The school shall offer at least three doctoral degree programs that are relevant to any of the five areas of basic public health knowledge.**

**Interpretation.** In order to be accredited, a school of public health shall have sufficient faculty expertise, availability of advanced-level courses, and active research, sufficient to support the development and offering of at least three doctoral degree curricula. A school can be preaccredited if one doctoral program has graduated at least one student and the other two are fully functional, with five full-time faculty, and with the programs, curriculum and courses fully approved and at least one doctoral student enrolled in each program. The doctoral programs may be professional or academic degrees. A doctoral degree relevant to public health would be in one of the major disciplines or major areas of practice within public health. Interdisciplinary degree programs that are based in the school of public health may also satisfy this expectation. If such interdisciplinary degree programs are used to document compliance with this accreditation criterion, these curricula must meet CEPH's requirements for professional or academic degrees, as appropriate.

For consideration is the development of a Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) degree program. The DrPH is a professional degree geared towards those who want careers as practitioners of public health in traditional health departments, managed care organizations, community-based organizations, hospitals, consulting firms, international agencies, state and federal agencies, among others. The degree can be developed with faculty currently in place along with the anticipated new hires. It will be unique to Georgia as no such degree is currently available within the state. It is a professional

degree and like the Doctor of Pharmacy degree in Pharmacy (PharmD) and the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) degree in Veterinary Medicine would be administered by the College and not the Graduate School. It would compliment the MPH as a second professional degree offered by the College.

**Recommendation 1:** Develop the DrPH as the third doctoral program within the College. This presents the shortest time frame in meeting the doctoral programs requirement for CEPH accreditation and utilizes to a large extent strengths currently within the College.

The recommendations listed below focus on issues and strategies that are important to the 5-Year planning process:

**Recommendation 2:** A thorough review and subsequent revision of the curriculum for B.S., MPH, Ph.D. and certificate programs should be undertaken to ensure that attention has been paid to the need for a public health focus. Care should be taken to develop not only the discipline focus important to the degree but the wider view of the public health enterprise.

**Recommendation 3:** Planning for the initiation of courses delivered by distance learning technologies.

**Recommendation 4:** Development of collaborative teaching efforts with the Medical College of Georgia, Georgia State University and Emory to expand the diversity of course offerings.

**Recommendation 5:** Formation of a strategy for the College of Public Health which includes fundraising activities, building plans and alumni involvement. The time line would be strategy development and initiation of those elements that do not have to await the arrival of the founding dean.

**Recommendation 6:** Continued exploration of College of Public Health linkages to other UGA units which include joint degree options, joint faculty hiring, and research opportunities, etc.

**Recommendation 7:** Identify current areas of strength and leverage those strengths when possible through targeted hires.

Addressing the items identified in the “Guidelines for Development of 5-Year Program Plan for College of Public Health, Phase II” document the College of Public Health has developed the following for the 2005- 2010 planning cycle. This plan meshes well with the specific items discussed in the sections above and will provide a general “road map” for the College of Public Health during its critical formative years.

**Five Year Program Plan  
2005-2010  
College of Public Health**

**A. STATEMENT OF VISION AND GOALS**

**1. Vision**

The University of Georgia College of Public Health is committed to protecting human health through its teaching, research, and public service capabilities. The College was established to expand the availability of affordable public health education and training in Georgia and to increase public health expertise throughout the Southeast. The College addresses the needs of local, state, national, and international organizations working to promote quality of life for people in Georgia, the United States, and elsewhere. The College of Public Health shares a vision that will place it, the University, and the State of Georgia at the forefront of efforts to address these challenges.

**1. Goals**

The College must obtain accreditation from the Council on Education in Public Health (CEPH) to achieve its vision. By 2010, the principal goal of the College is to obtain full accreditation and national stature for a comprehensive College of Public Health in the most resource-efficient, expedient, and strategically appropriate manner.

The specific objectives for achieving this goal are stated below.

- Build new faculty and restore lost faculty positions to allow for the expansion of the College to the level required for accreditation within a five year period.
- Improve graduate education programs to be competitive at the national level. This will require the development of new concentration areas within the MPH program and additional graduate assistantships.
- Successfully compete for external funding that will expand the College's research base, provide additional overhead return dollars, and support improvements in graduate education.
- Obtain additional space to allow for College growth in instruction and research.

**3. External Factors**

Georgia ranks among the worst states nationally in terms of the per capita incidence of premature death, infant mortality, and maternal mortality in childbirth, infectious disease, heart disease, cancer, substance abuse, obesity and related disorders such as diabetes. According to *Healthy People 2010* (U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, January 2000) approximately 65%-70% of the morbidity and mortality rates are a consequence of preventable factors. In Georgia, more than 36,000 people die each year from heart disease, cancer, and stroke. Additionally, minorities are affected disproportionately. The goal of the national strategy of Healthy People 2010 to eliminate

health disparities would be a major focus of the new program. In addition, an urgent public health issue in the State Georgia is the emergence of an elderly population that is at risk for poor health outcomes. According to the 2000 census, Georgia's population contains the fifth largest (785,275) elderly population in the 16 Southern states. Georgia also ranks fifth in proportional growth of 65+ populations in the South in the last decade (20%). In terms of population demographics, Georgia has the fifth highest percentage (19%) of African American Medicare beneficiaries, compared to the national average of 8%. Census information (September, 2003) shows that Georgia has the fastest growing Hispanic population in the country. Unfortunately, Georgia also ranks third highest (19%) in the percentage of persons 65 years+ who are living at or below the poverty threshold. The mortality rate of Georgia ranks eighth in the nation; heart disease accounts for 27% of all deaths. Georgia ranks 26<sup>th</sup> highest overall in cancer mortality and 6<sup>th</sup> highest for death due to stroke. Georgia also has the second highest prevalence in the nation of diabetes in the 65-74 age group, and ranks 48th in the percent of 65+ who receive the flu shot. Almost twenty-two percent (21.4%) of adults do not have a high school diploma, ranking Georgia 38th nationally in terms of education attainment. About 11% of the total population is Medicare dependent which places Georgia 12<sup>th</sup> highest in the nation. Of the 159 counties in Georgia, 144 (90.6%) contain census tracts that are labeled medically underserved. In many of these counties, out-migration of wage earners creates high proportions of older adults, mothers, and children in need of health care services from the public sector. Improvement of training of health professionals in the care of older Georgians is imperative in Georgia. To effectively address these needs, the College of Public Health must be accredited and this will require a combination of state and external funds but, in the short-term, additional state support will be required to establish the basic infrastructure to obtain accreditation.

#### **4. Statement of Program Priorities**

In order to bring the vision to reality and accomplish the above goals, the following are our specific program priorities:

##### **Year One FY2005 - 2006**

- Create a new Department of Health Administration, Biostatistics, and Epidemiology.
  - o Move one faculty member from the College of Pharmacy to serve as Interim Department Head.
  - o Hire one faculty member with a legal background to serve in the Health Policy area (will be paid 50% by the College of Law).
  - o Complete the hires of two faculty positions with active searches, one position in Epidemiology and one in Biostatistics (first three years of funding for these lines will be paid by UGARF).
  - o Conduct a search for three new faculty positions for this department, one in Biostatistics, one in Epidemiology, and one in Health Administration/Policy.

- Hire two faculty lost to recent budget reductions, one in the Department of Environmental Health Science and one in the Department of Health Promotion and Behavior.
- Conduct a national search for a Dean and hire the individual during the year.

#### **Year Two FY2006 – 2007**

- Hire three faculty recruited in FY2005-2006 (one in Biostatistics, one in Epidemiology, and one in Health Administration/Policy).
- Conduct a search for three new faculty positions for this department, one in Biostatistics, one in Epidemiology, and one in Health Administration/Policy.
- Conduct a search and hire an Associate Dean.

#### **Year Three FY2007 – 2008**

- Hire three faculty recruited in FY2006-2007 (one in Biostatistics, one in Epidemiology, and one in Health Administration/Policy).
- Conduct a search for three new faculty positions for this department, one in Biostatistics, one in Epidemiology, and one in Health Administration/Policy.

#### **Year Four FY2008 – 2009**

- Begin the accreditation process.
- Hire three faculty recruited in FY2007-2008 (One in Biostatistics, one in Epidemiology, and one in Health Administration/Policy).
- Conduct a search for three new faculty positions for this department, one in Biostatistics, one in Epidemiology, and one in Health Administration/Policy.

#### **Year Five FY2009 – 2010**

- Hire three faculty recruited in FY2008-2009 (One in Biostatistics, one in Epidemiology, and one in Health Administration/Policy).
- Receive full accreditation from CEPH.

### **B. INSTITUTIONAL-LEVEL PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

The methods described below will be used to annually measure demand, quality, productivity and impact:

#### **1. Demand**

Demand for the educational programs will be measured in conventional ways:

- Enrollment in undergraduate-level courses.
- Enrollment in graduate-level courses.
- Number of completed applications for graduate programs.

- Number of accepted graduate students that actually enroll in a College graduate program.

Since the College is new, a base-line number for each of these categories will be established for FY2005-2006 and subsequent years will be compared to it.

## **2. Quality**

A number of metrics will be used to measure the quality of the College's educational programs and the key ones are listed below:

- Course evaluations report student satisfaction with instruction.
- During the last term of enrollment, each prospective program graduate (undergraduate and graduate program) is asked to complete a written survey that gives them the opportunity to express their likes and dislikes with their educational experience.
- Three-years following graduation, each program graduate will be requested to complete a survey form that assesses how beneficial their educational experience was and asks for suggestions for improving our programs.
- Employers (when known) of our graduates will be surveyed three years following an individual's graduation to determine the employers views of the effectiveness of the College's educational programs.

## **3. Productivity**

The productivity of both faculty and students will be monitored annually. The means used to measured faculty will include:

- Number of courses taught and contact hours generated per year.
- Number of peer-reviewed publications coupled with the impact rating of the specific journals.
- Number of grants submitted and the number awarded.
- Other aspects such as number of presentations at national/international conferences, professional society activities, awards received, etc. will be used.

Student productivity will be assessed by:

- Awards received by students including scholarships, fellowships, and other special recognitions.
- Graduation rates of undergraduates and graduates.

## **4. Impact**

The College of Public Health will have a positive impact on the University's three strategic goals as shown below:

- Building New Learning Environment
  - The College of Public Health anticipates being very successful in recruiting minority students. Existing programs within the College have African-American enrollments of more than 20% and these numbers are significantly greater than the overall UGA student population.
  - The College will provide educational opportunities that are lacking at UGA and these new programs, specifically biostatistics and epidemiology, will allow students from related-sciences to benefit from the course offerings.
- Research Investments
  - The College will have a significant impact on expanding the external research support to the University. It is anticipated that this impact will be gradual at first but, once accreditation is obtained, the external support, based on a per faculty member basis, should be the highest of any unit on campus.
- Competing in a Global Economy

The College should contribute to the improvement of the health status of Georgians, specifically in the rural areas of the state. This improvement should improve economic development in these areas as well.