

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Board of Regents  
**From:** Board Office  
**Subject:** Pre-Accreditation Report for the College of Public Health,  
University of Iowa  
**Date:** March 12, 2001

**Recommended Action:**

Receive the report on pre-accreditation for the College of Public Health, University of Iowa.

**Executive Summary:**

On October 7, 2000, the Board of Councilors of the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), the accrediting body for schools of public health, voted to pre-accredit the College of Public Health at the University of Iowa. Pre-accreditation is a category of accreditation that indicates reasonable assurance that the College will be able to meet all expectations for full accreditation within two years. The University of Iowa's College of Public Health will be expected to submit a self-study by October 7, 2002, and undergo an on-site evaluation approximately five months later.

The CEPH accreditation process evaluates programs on the basis of 24 criteria. They are summarized as Attachment A, page 9. The Site Visit Team report, based on a visit in May 2000, concluded that 18 criteria were met, five were "partially met," and one standard was not applicable. Of the 18 met, ten were designated as "met with commentary." Many comments in the "met with commentary" and the "partially met" categories underscored that the College of Public Health is a new University entity and is in the process of developing administrative structures, curriculum, program sub-tracks, resources, and facility improvements. References to strengths outweigh concerns. The Site Visit Team and CEPH clearly believe that the College will be able to meet full accreditation in 2002

One method of measuring quality of academic programs is through periodic accreditation by appropriate professional/state agencies. The accrediting process typically focuses on the internal governance structure, faculty, curriculum, student background and performance, facilities, and resources.

Accreditation is consistent with KRA 1.0.0.0, Quality, of the Board of Regents' strategic plan. More specifically, it relates to Objective 1.1.0.0, "to improve the quality of existing and newly created educational programs," and Strategy 1.1.2.0, "strengthen the quality of graduate and professional education at Regent institutions within the unique mission of each institution."

### **Background:**

In 1997, the University of Iowa determined that the College of Medicine's Department of Preventive Medicine and Environmental Health should begin a transition toward becoming a school of public health. The College developed a plan for this effort, which was approved by the Board in April 1999. The SUI College of Public Health (CPH) was founded on July 1, 1999. Like the University, the College has developed a five-year strategic plan, which includes gaining accreditation.

The strategic plan of the CPH includes statements regarding mission, vision, and goals. Although not included below, the plan also includes measurable objectives relating to each major function, and a process for doing future strategic planning.

- Mission Statement: to promote health and prevent injury and illness through commitment to education and training, excellence in research, innovation in policy development, and devotion to public health practice.
- Vision Statement: to serve Iowa and the Midwest as one of the nation's premier state-assisted schools of public health and lead the global community in rural public health education and training, research, and practice.
- Five-year goals:
  - Goal 1: Educate highly competent and committed public health professionals and research scientists
  - Goal 2: Advance the scientific basis for the practice of public health
  - Goal 3: Promote meaningful community service and collaboration
  - Goal 4: Integrate public health and individual health care
  - Goal 5: Enhance diversity and collaboration among students, staff, faculty, and alumni
  - Goal 6: Become a fully accredited school of public health in the year 2000.

The College of Public Health has five departments: Biostatistics, Community and Behavioral Health, Epidemiology, Health Management and Policy, and

Occupational and Environmental Health. The self-study notes that the structure of the College is highly interdisciplinary and that the College faculty and administration work closely with other collegiate units at SUI, such as the Colleges of Medicine and Nursing.

The College of Public Health offers two professional degrees: the Master of Public Health (MPH) and the Master of Health Administration (MHA). It also offers two academic degrees: the Master of Science (MS) and the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.). See Attachment B, page 10, for a more detailed outline of the degrees and areas of specialization.

Faculty resources in the self-study (April 2000) relative to student ratios were identified as follows:

	Current FTE faculty	Current FTE Students			Student to Faculty Ratio
		MS/MHA	Ph.D.	MPH	
Biostatistics	11	13.0	6.7		1:8
Community and Behavioral Health	4			6.9	1:7
Epidemiology	10	27.0	9.0	2.4	3:8
Health Management and Policy	12	30.0	6.0	5.7	3:5
Occupational and Environmental Health	12	15.8	1.6	2.4	1:7
Total	49	85.8	23.3	17.4	2:6

[Note: The data in this table is based on Fall 2000 statistics.]

Another way the CPH's self-study attempted to measure the adequacy of its resources was through the following five indicators: FTE Faculty, FTE Students, FTE Student-to-Faculty Ratio, School Expenditures per FTE Student, and Research Dollars per FTE Faculty member. The results for the past three fiscal years are presented in the following table:

Outcome Measures	FY 97	FY 98	FY 99
FTE Faculty	37	36	41
FTE Students	139.3	125.4	130.7
FTE Student-to-Faculty ratio	3:76	3:48	3:19
School Expenditures per FTE Student	\$21,885	\$29,832	\$32,010
Research dollars per FTE Faculty	\$394,970	\$387,707	\$513,481

At the time of the self-study and site visit, the CPH occupied 71,585 square feet in five buildings in Iowa City and Oakdale, Iowa. The buildings included: Steindler, Medical Education, and Westlawn on the main campus; Oakdale Hall; and space in the Institute for Rural and Environmental Health (IREH) at the Oakdale Campus. The self-study stated that the new Medical Education and Biomedical Research Facility next to the Steindler Building is scheduled for completion in the Fall of 2001. This building will add two large auditoriums and several teaching commons/classrooms. The University has been asked to determine if off-campus space would be rented to meet the projected growth needs of 30,000 square feet for faculty, students, administration, and research over the next five years. The Site Visit Team report concluded in its report (page 4) that "space resources are inadequate."

### **Analysis:**

The final report of the Site Visit Team report (October 7, 2000), noted **strengths** of the College. The descriptions of a number of these strengths are found under the "Met with Commentary" sections of the report:

- Efforts of strategic planning, which are consistent with both the public health initiative [of the State of Iowa] and the plan of the University as a whole
- Success with regard to recruiting ethnic minorities
- Active research agenda
- Extensive service program
- Qualified faculty
- Effective program of student recruitment.

The CPH responded to the Site Visit Team report of May 2000 with a 30- page (single spaced) document in August, 2000. The report included data and evidence which addressed points raised in the criteria judged to be met that also contained commentary. The CPH presented extensive responses to the five criteria identified as "partially met." The Site Visit Team report was revised and issued in October 2000. Key sections of the Site Visit Team report and CPH responses, in italics, are provided below. The criteria are in bold-face, followed by the Site Visit Team evaluations.

**The school shall have resources adequate to fulfill its stated mission and goals, its instructional, research, and service objectives.**

The Site Visit Team concluded that the CPH has sufficient financial resources to fulfill its stated mission, goals, and objectives. That includes having a "very favorable" faculty:student ratio. The Team surmised, however, that increased enrollment and the increase in distance education programs will "stretch the capabilities of the faculty college-wide."

Regarding facilities, the Team noted the fragmented deployment of faculty and programs because of space limitations. It stated that the CPH "needs a firm commitment from the UI administration to identify, build and/or remodel space to compensate for space that will be lost in the transition, until a new and permanent home is constructed for the college."

*Response: The faculty and staff currently occupying approximately 18,000 square feet in the Steindler Building (and other nearby facilities), will relocate into 19,560 square feet of fully renovated facilities within the General Hospital beginning in early 2001. . . . The General Hospital space, however, is not sufficient at present to support the current and anticipated growth of the College of Public health. Therefore, in the meantime the University is planning to relocate several program functions out of the nearby Westlawn Building in order to provide an additional 7,500 square feet of assignable space to the College of Public Health for the recruitment of faculty, program, and research staff during the coming academic year. . . . The conceptual design for the site [ed. Note -- the site of the Medical Education and Biomedical Research Facility ] includes a third building (Building -- C) of up to 105,000 square feet, which is intended to serve as a new academic home for the College of Public Health.*

**Professional Degree and Core Content.** The school shall offer programs reflecting its stated mission and goals, leading to the **Master of Public Health (MPH) or equivalent professional masters degree in at least the five areas of knowledge basic to public health. The school may offer other degrees, professional and academic, and other areas of specialization, if consistent with its mission and resources.**

The five areas of knowledge basic to public health are:

- Biostatistics -- collection, storage, retrieval, analysis, and interpretation of health data; design and analysis of health-related surveys and experiments; and concepts and practice of statistical data analysis.
- Epidemiology -- distributions and determinants of disease, disabilities and death in human populations; the characteristics and dynamics of human populations; and the natural history of disease and the biologic basis of health.
- Environmental health sciences -- environmental factors including biological, physical and chemical factors which affect the health of a community.

- Health services administration -- planning, organization, administration, management, evaluation and policy analysis of health programs.
- Social and behavioral sciences -- concepts and methods of social and behavioral sciences relevant to the identification and the solution of public health problems.

The Site Visit Team reported that the College now offers three professional degree programs: the MPH with six projected sub-tracks; the MHA in health services administration, and the MS in industrial hygiene. It also offers several academic degrees, including MS degrees in biostatistics, epidemiology, occupational and environmental health, and a Ph.D. in biostatistics, epidemiology, occupational and environmental health, industrial hygiene, and health management and policy. (Page 14 of the Site Visit Team report included a table illustrating the degrees. It is reprinted as Attachment B, page 9.) The College was also developing focus areas, including clinical investigation, aging studies, global health, and ergonomics. Because student enrollments were still in flux and some of the focus areas had not yet been approved, the programs could not be evaluated.

*Response: The six MPH degree sub-tracks are now operational with 16 students admitted to them for fall 2000. They will be fully evaluated as they develop.*

**Each professional degree program identified above, as a minimum, shall assure that each student: a) develops an understanding of the areas of knowledge which are basic to public health, b) acquires skills and experience in the application of basic public health concepts and of specialty knowledge to the solution of community health problems, and c) demonstrates integration of knowledge through a culminating experience.**

The Site Visit Team was concerned that the MHA and the MS in Industrial Hygiene do not require the complete public health core. The MHA degree does not require students to obtain core knowledge in the social and behavioral sciences or in environmental health and the MS in Industrial Hygiene does not require students to obtain knowledge in the social and behavioral sciences or health services administration. The Team also recommended that either an internship or a residency be a requirement for students in the MHA program.

*Response: Task forces have been set up to examine the MHA and IH curricula to determine alternatives for providing instruction for MHA students in areas of environmental health and social/behavioral health and for IH students in health services administration and social/behavioral health. The MHA task force has already identified social and behavioral science content in seven of the MHA courses. We project a decision about any curriculum revisions to occur by the end of the 2000-2001 academic year.*

*Response to internship concern: All MHA students do have a substantial amount of training in real world situations through course experiences, summer internships, and administrative internships. The actual manner in which MHA students gain this real world experience varies by student, but 100% of those students do participate in substantial and meaningful real world experiences.*

**The school shall recruit, retain, and promote a diverse faculty, and shall offer equitable opportunities to qualified individuals regardless of age, sex, race, disability, religion, or national origin.**

The Site Visit Team urged continued efforts to increase diversity. It noted that 6.9% of the faculty were minority and that 32.7% of the faculty were women. In particular, it urged greater recruitment and placement of women in administrative roles.

*Response: We are continually striving to increase diversity of faculty and administrators and progress has been made as is documented in the attached summary of the strategic plan. Among efforts to be made, we will increase recruitment efforts at national meetings such as the American Public Health Association annual meeting.*

**The school shall have an explicit process for evaluating and monitoring its overall efforts against its mission, goals and objectives; for assessing the school's effectiveness in serving its various constituencies; and for planning to achieve its mission in the future.**

The Site Visit Team noted the tremendous effort the CPH had put into strategic planning. It added that less attention had been paid to formal evaluation and monitoring. Since procedures for evaluation were not in place, they could not be assessed, although the Site Visit Team deemed that the evaluation plan would be ready at the time of the full accreditation visit.

*Response: Since the site visit, the College leadership team completed the Framework for Monitoring Progress in Implementing the Strategic Plan including data requirements, data collection procedures, and methods for assessing and summarizing the findings. Very few of the 27 objectives were targets for completion in academic year 1999-2000, but our assessment shows substantial efforts and progress in relation to each of the key indicators.*

The Board Office has copies of the Self-Study, Site Visit report, and correspondence between the institution and accrediting organization.

  
Charles R. Kniker

Approved:   
Frank J. Stork



**Council of Public Health  
Characteristics of a School of Public Health Criteria**

**(Summary of Site Team Notations)**

- I. Mission and Goals -- met
- II.A. Accredited Institution -- met with commentary
- II.B. Organizational Setting -- met
- III. Governance -- met with commentary
- IV. Resources -- partially met
- V.A. Professional Degree and Core content -- partially met
- V.B. Culminating Experience -- partially met
- V.C. Learning Objectives -- met with commentary
- V.D. Assessment of Student Achievement -- met
- V.E. Academic Degrees -- met
- V.F. Doctoral Degrees -- met
- V.G. Joint Degrees -- met
- V.H. Non-traditional Format -- not applicable
- VI. Research -- met
- VII. Service -- met with commentary
- VIII.A. Faculty Qualifications -- met with commentary
- VIII.B. Faculty Development -- met
- VIII.C. Diversity -- partially met
- IX.A. Student Recruitment and Admission -- met
- IX.B. Student Diversity -- met with commentary
- IX.C. Advising and Career Counseling -- met
- IX.D. Student Roles in Governance -- met with commentary
- X.A. Ongoing Evaluation -- partially meet
- X.B. Self-Study Process -- met with commentary

**Degree Programs Offered by  
College of Public Health -- University of Iowa  
(Including Areas of Specialization)**

Department/Subtrack	MPH*	MHA*	MS	PhD
<b>Biostatistics</b>				
Biostatistics	X		X	X
<b>Epidemiology</b>				
Public Health Epidemiology	X		X	X
<b>Community and Behavioral Health</b>				
Community and Behavioral Health	X			
<b>Health Management and Policy</b>				
Policy and Planning	X			
Health Administration		X		
Health Management and Policy				X
MHA/MPH		X		
MHA/JD (Law)		X		
MHA/MBA (Business)		X		
MHA/MA (Urban and Regional Planning)		X		
<b>Occupational and Environmental Health</b>				
Occupational and Environmental Health	X		X	X
Ergonomics	X			
Industrial Hygiene			X*	X
MS/MA (Urban and Regional Planning)			X	
<b>Collegewide (General)</b>	X			
Clinical Investigation^	X			
Aging Studies^	X			
Global Health^	X			
Nutrition and Exercise#	X			
Maternal, Child and Family Health#	X			

\* Professional degree programs  
^ Approved focus area  
# Proposed focus area