

**Board of Regents, University System of Georgia  
Administrative Committee on Public Health (ACOPH)**

Meeting – December 4, 2008  
Georgia College and State University  
Milledgeville, GA

**Summary of Proceedings (Final document 1/5/09)**

Committee Members and Attendees

Armstrong Atlantic State University (AASU) *attending via teleconference*

Dr. Shelley Conroy, Dean, College of Health Professions

Dr. Michael Mink, MPH Program Director

Fort Valley State University (FVSU)

Dr. William Zimmerli, MPH Program Director

Georgia State University (Georgia State)

Dr. Michael Eriksen, Director, Public Health Institute

Georgia Southern University (Georgia Southern)

Dr. Charles Hardy, Dean, Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health, **Committee Chair**

Medical College of Georgia (MCG)

Dr. Carol Campbell, Associate Dean for Academic and Business Affairs, School of Allied Health Sciences

University of Georgia (UGA)

Dr. Marsha Black, Interim Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs

College of Public Health (CPH)

University System of Georgia

Mr. Benjamin Robinson, Executive Director, USG Center for Health Workforce Planning and Analysis

Dr. Hardy convened the meeting at 10:00am. The following items were distributed to the committee members and faxed to AASU:

- Agenda
- Summary of Proceedings from the April 25, 2008 meeting of the ACOPH
- Board Regents bylaws for the Administrative Committee on Public Health
- Written statement prepared by the Association of Schools of Public Health (2/08): “Confronting the Public Health Workforce Crisis.”
- Written statement from the National Board of Public Health Examiners, Certified in Public Health (CPH) exam
- Agenda from the January 13, 2004 Committee on Education, Research and Extension
- Three Year Progress Report from the ACOPH (September 2007)
- Letter of Intent from Columbus State University for Master of Public Health degree
- Printed PowerPoint slides from the presentation by Ben Robinson

Dr. Hardy welcomed the group and Committee members and attendees introduced themselves. Following the introductions, Mr. Ben Robison provided a PowerPoint presentation on the strategic plan for the Center of Health Workforce Planning and Analysis.

Committee members engaged in discussing key points throughout Mr. Robinson's presentation. A central theme in this discussion is the need to improve the status of health in Georgia; Georgia is at or near the bottom of health status rankings. The committee agreed that "Georgia is a sick state" and a health workforce is needed to improve this situation. Recommendations and observations made by the committee focused on how the situation can be improved included increasing the number of prevention specialists in addition to more healthcare workers (physicians and nurses). The Committee was in agreement that Georgia has a "sick care model" not a "wellness/prevention model." The demographics of Georgia area also highly correlated with disease. The Committee discussed the need to address the demand side of the health delivery system. The focus tends to be on the supply side; improving the health status of Georgia should also include finding ways to reduce demand.

The Committee recommended that the mission statement of the USG Center for Health Workforce Planning Analysis be revised; specifically the Committee suggested revising the phrase "health care workforce" by deleting the word "care." A revised phrase would be: "health workforce." This revision is consistent with the reality that a health workforce is broader than a direct healthcare workforce.

Mr. Robinson explained that a Health Professional Advisory Committee is being formed to assist the USG and the Center with strategic initiatives. The Advisory Committee will include senior institutional leadership from USG colleges and universities, and representatives of other related agencies such as the statewide AHEC office, Technical College System, Governor's Office of Workforce Development, the State DOE, and leadership from the State's academic public health community. With the exception of Public Health, no individuals will be placed on the Advisory Committee to represent a specific profession. Numerous Health Professional Task Forces will advise the committee, including such health professions areas as Nursing, Medicine, Behavioral Health, Oral Health, Allied Health, and Public Health. The ACOPH will serve as the task force for Public Health.

Mr. Robinson explained that the role of the Center is threefold:

1. Build intellectual capital within the state and the USG to gain an understanding of the expected need Georgia's population will have for health services and the way in which to respond to identified imbalances between supply and demand
2. Tap into expertise of our institutional leadership, professional faculty and many state partners to build collaborative approaches that impact the health of Georgians and the quality and quantity of health professionals to serve them
3. Relative to Public Health – Identifying special focus initiatives that use simple interventions (through policy, programs, budget...) to improve the health of identified segments of the state's population

As discussion on the Center's role continued, the Committee made the observation that public health is both a profession and a philosophy. The challenge of raising awareness and understanding the meaning and role of public health was discussed. The Committee observed that public health is

difficult to describe partially because it involves both delivery of direct patient care and non-direct care. Suggestions on how public health could address this issue included framing it differently than “public” health. Other options include framing it as “health equity”, “population health” or simply “health.” Other issues include the fact the public health careers are frequently low paying jobs. Students are not attracted to low paying jobs and this is a barrier to change. The Committee was also in agreement that as Georgia achieves a healthier status, that it will not necessarily require a smaller health workforce; rather the workforce should shift its focus from health care to health promotion, prevention and protection of our population.

Dr. Hardy reminded the Committee of the need to continue with its annual program productivity data collection function. The Committee had previously agreed to collect data using CEPH templates. The Committee affirmed this as the best method for the collecting data for the 2008 report. Dr. Hardy will send out requests for reports in June. Mr. Robinson stated that the BOR strategic plan calls for at least six accredited public health schools and/or programs by the year 2012 (baseline year is 2007). The Committee discussed the Center’s potential role in assessing the total number of graduates needed by the State and the potential for determining a state-wide target. The conclusion of this discussion was that rather than setting a specific target at this time, the Committee will add an impact statement to its annual productivity report. This impact statement will highlight how the existing schools and programs are impacting the health status in Georgia.

Dr. Hardy directed the Committee’s attention to the new National Board of Public Health Exam. This exam is endorsed by the Association of Schools of Public Health. Committee members shared their views regarding the exam. Dr. Erikson explained that Georgia State does not recommend the exam to their students. AASU makes their students aware of the exam but they do not actively encourage their students to take the exam. The Committee members discussed the issue of exam validity, which is questionable in the view of many.

Dr. Hardy indicated that the ACOPH had been requested by The USG system office to provide a recommendation on the Letter of Intent from Columbus State University which proposes a new MPH program. Committee members noted that existing USG MPH programs are already offered online. Currently, AAASU program has an on-line option, MCG’s program is nearly entirely online and FVSU offers many of its courses online as well. The Committee expressed concern that the Columbus State proposal seems to lack a demonstration of the state-wide strategic plan for public health programs. Other concerns included the proposed budget, which includes a request for new state allocation. The Committee also expressed concern regarding the number of graduates (20) projected in the proposal; the Committee felt this number is high. The availability of faculty expertise was also discussed by the Committee; the availability is questionable. Dr. Hardy asked the Committee to give the proposal additional thought and to send comments to him by Monday via email. He will compile the feedback and construct a recommendation from the ACOPH to Mr. Robinson.

Dr. Hardy asked Committee members to report on school/program progress; the reports are as follows:

- Dr. Mink reported that AASU was approved for full re-accreditation by CEPH until 2013.
- Dr. Campbell reported that MCG is scheduled for an accreditation site visit in March 2009.

- Dr. Black reported that UGA is scheduled for an accreditation site visit on February 23-25, 2009; they are “on the home stretch” and are now busy polishing up the final version of the self study. She also reported that UGA held a mock site visit in November to acquaint faculty with the process and obtain additional feedback, which went well. UGA CPH faculty will grow to 43, with the January 2009 hires of 3 new faculty (1 each for Epi, Biostats, and Health Policy and Administration). Student numbers at UGA, including MPH, DrPH, MS, and PhD are ~ 400; MPH is the largest growth area.
- Dr. Erikson reported that Georgia State matriculates 120 students and graduates 15 per semester; they currently have 9 Fullbright scholars. Dr. Hardy reported that Georgia Southern has 107 students (28 in the DrPH) and they have one Fullbright scholar from Iraq.
- Dr. Hardy also reported that their application to begin the accreditation process was approved by CEPH at the October meeting – the self-study is due by October 2010, with the on-site visit in the spring of 2011. As a result of this approval, JPHCOPH accepted an invitation to become an Associate Member in the Association of Schools of Public Health. He reported that student enrollment for fall 2008 was 106, with 65 MPH students, 13 MHSA students, and 28 DRPH students. Faculty has now grown to 27, with 7 searches underway this year. Finally, Dr. Hardy reported that the university is in the process of planning a renovation to develop new facilities for the JPHCOPH.
- Dr. Zimmerli submitted the following report:

**Fort Valley State University – Master of Public Health Program – Annual Report**

**FVSU – MPH Program has had an exciting year in 2008.**

(1) The structure of the MPH program within FVSU:

President:	Larry E. Rivers, Ph.D.
Executive Vice President & Vice President for Academic Affairs:	Daniel K. Wims, Ph.D.
Academic Unit – College of Arts & Sciences:	Jehad Yasin, Ph.D., Interim Dean
Graduate Unit – College of Graduate Studies and Extended Education	Anna Holloway, Ph.D., Dean
Department of Graduate Health Sciences	Mygleetus Wright, M.D., M.P.H., Interim Department Chair (until 12-08)
M.P.H. Program	Mygleetus Wright, M.D., M.P.H., Interim Coordinator (until 12-08)
M.P.H. Program Concentrations	
Environmental Health (2001)	
Program change – Thesis or Non-Thesis	

Gerontology (Letter of intent submitted to FVSU Administration – Planned for Summer 2009 – Courses were approved in 1999 and are already in the catalogue)

Health Promotion & Behavior (Letter of intent to be submitted in Spring 2009 --Planned for Fall 2009 -- Courses are in the developmental stage)

(3) Graduation and Retention Rates

Year	# Graduates	In Program	
2005	1	40	
2006	7	35	
2007	8	30	
2008	20 projected	30	
2009			

(4) SACS accreditation coming to FVSU in 2009. The University is moving to put in place the SACS requirement of having 4 FTE faculties for each graduate program, including the MPH program.

Faculty	Degrees	Position	Rank	FTE Time
Dr. M. Wright	M.D., M.P.H.	Interim Coordinator	Associate Professor	½ FTE
Dr. J. Michael	Ph.D.	Faculty	Assistant Professor	1 FTE
Mr. D. Trotter	M.S.P.H. (IH)	Faculty	Instructor	½ FTE
Dr. W. Zimmerli	M.S., ED.D	Faculty	Professor	1 FTE
<b><i>Other shared</i></b>	<b><i>Faculty</i></b>	<b><i>from</i></b>	<b><i>other</i></b>	<b><i>Departments</i></b>
Dr. D. Arora	Ph.D. (Biology)	Faculty	Professor	1/3 FTE
Dr. R. Bright	Ph.D. (Chemistry)	Faculty	Associate Professor	1/3 FTE
Dr. D. Daniels	Ph.D. (Chemistry)	Faculty	Associate Professor	1/3 FTE
Dr. F. Lochner	D.V.M., M.S. (Vet Science)	Faculty	Professor	1/3 FTE
Dr. F. McLaughlin	Ed.D. (Biology)	Faculty	Assistant Professor	1/3 FTE

There are two faculty positions open within the M.P.H. program:

- (1) Chair, Department of Graduate Health Sciences
- (2) MPH Teaching Faculty

(5) The FVSU MPH program recently signed an MOU with Region 5 – GDPH so that interns can be placed throughout region 5 at County Health Departments – Environmental Health Divisions (Bibb, Houston, Peach, Crawford).

(6) The FVSU MPH program has started a student council with officers.

(7) The FVSU Graduate School began mini-semesters in Spring 2008, which allow M.P.H. graduate students to complete 12 to 15 semester hours per term, thereby completing the degree in eighteen months to two years.

Dr. Hardy will seek input regarding a spring meeting at a later date. The economy may dictate meeting arrangements. More to come on this during the spring semester.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:20pm.