

REVIEW FOR ACCREDITATION  
OF THE  
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
AT THE  
SUNY DOWNSTATE MEDICAL CENTER

COUNCIL ON EDUCATION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

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## Introduction

This report presents the findings of the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) regarding the School of Public Health at SUNY Downstate Medical Center. The report assesses the school's compliance with the *Accreditation Criteria for Schools of Public Health, amended June 2011*. This accreditation review included the conduct of a self-study process by school constituents, the preparation of a document describing the school and its features in relation to the criteria for accreditation, and a visit in November 2015 by a team of external peer reviewers. During the visit, the team had an opportunity to interview school and university officials, administrators, teaching faculty, students, alumni and community representatives and to verify information in the self-study document by reviewing materials provided in a resource file. The team was afforded full cooperation in its efforts to assess the school and verify the self-study document.

SUNY Downstate Medical Center is a part of the state-wide SUNY system, and dates back to 1860 when the School of Medicine was founded at the Long Island College Hospital. Currently the medical center has a total of 1,738 students and residents and approximately 8,000 faculty and staff. The medical center contains two schools and three colleges: the College of Medicine; College of Health Related Professions; College of Nursing; School of Graduate Studies and University Hospital of Brooklyn; and the School of Public Health.

The SPH began as an MPH program in 2001, housed in the College of Medicine's Department of Preventive Medicine and Community Health, with a focus on Urban and Immigrant Health. The MPH program admitted its first twelve students in the summer of 2002. Currently the school has five departments and administers both MPH and DrPH degrees and one joint degree.

The school received initial CEPH accreditation as a program in 2005 and received accreditation as a school in 2010 for a five-year period. The school submitted interim reports in 2011 and 2012, which were accepted by the Council.

## **Characteristics of a School of Public Health**

**To be considered eligible for accreditation review by CEPH, a school of public health shall demonstrate the following characteristics:**

- a. The school shall be a part of an institution of higher education that is accredited by a regional accrediting body recognized by the US Department of Education.**
- b. The school and its faculty shall have the same rights, privileges and status as other professional schools that are components of its parent institution.**
- c. The school shall function as a collaboration of disciplines, addressing the health of populations and the community through instruction, research, and service. Using an ecological perspective, the school of public health should provide a special learning environment that supports interdisciplinary communication, promotes a broad intellectual framework for problem-solving, and fosters the development of professional public health concepts and values.**
- d. The school of public health shall maintain an organizational culture that embraces the vision, goals and values common to public health. The school shall maintain this organizational culture through leadership, institutional rewards, and dedication of resources in order to infuse public health values and goals into all aspects of the school's activities.**
- e. The school shall have faculty and other human, physical, financial and learning resources to provide both breadth and depth of educational opportunity in the areas of knowledge basic to public health. As a minimum, the school shall offer the Master of Public Health (MPH) degree in each of the five areas of knowledge basic to public health and a doctoral degree in at least three of the five specified areas of public health knowledge.**
- f. The school shall plan, develop and evaluate its instructional, research and service activities in ways that assure sensitivity to the perceptions and needs of its students and that combines educational excellence with applicability to the world of public health practice.**

These characteristics are evident in the School of Public Health at SUNY Downstate Medical Center. The school is a part of a regionally-accredited institution. The dean, faculty members and students have the same rights, privileges and status as other schools and colleges at the health science center.

The school functions as a collaboration of disciplines and addresses the health of populations and the community. The school's goal statements emphasize the importance of instruction, research and service, and its organizational culture embraces core public health values and goals. The school develops and evaluates its instructional, research and service activities in ways that assure sensitivity to the perceptions and needs of its students and of the surrounding community.

The school's faculty are trained in a variety of disciplines, and faculty ensure that the environment supports interdisciplinary collaboration. The school has adequate resources to offer MPH and doctoral degrees.

## **1.0 THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH.**

### **1.1 Mission.**

**The school shall have a clearly formulated and publicly stated mission with supporting goals, objectives and values.**

This criterion is met. The school has a very clear mission statement, derived from a well thought-out set of values. The mission of the school was clearly understood by all the faculty members, students, the university administration, alumni and community representatives. The school's mission is as follows:

The mission of the SUNY Downstate School of Public Health is to advance public health knowledge, promote health and well-being, and prevent disease and disability within communities, particularly in urban and immigrant ones. Such actions are accomplished through excellence in the education of public health professionals, scientific investigation of public health issues, and service to communities through collaborative partnerships.

The school articulates five primary goals in the areas of instruction, research and service. Each goal has a range of two to five measurable objectives and targets. The school has developed 18 values that were originally determined by the faculty during retreats. The value statements range in topic area and are evident throughout the curriculum.

The SPH mission, values, goals and objectives are periodically reviewed by the faculty, staff and administration at milestone meetings, including strategic planning meetings and CEPH/ASPPH annual report submission meetings. They are also reviewed by the Community Advisory Group at least once a year. The values are reviewed and modified as necessary during regular faculty meetings, the Committee of Deans and Chairs meetings and in consultation with students as represented by the Student Council, alumni and the Community Advisory Group.

Information on the mission, vision, values, goals and objectives is available on the school's website and in the student handbook, annual newsletter, promotional materials for recruitment and the institution-wide strategic plan.

### **1.2 Evaluation and Planning.**

**The school shall have an explicit process for monitoring and evaluating its overall efforts against its mission, goals and objectives; for assessing the school's effectiveness in serving its various constituencies; and for using evaluation results in ongoing planning and decision making to achieve its mission. As part of the evaluation process, the school must conduct an analytical self-study that analyzes performance against the accreditation criteria.**

This criterion is partially met. The school has some processes in place for monitoring and evaluating its overall efforts against its mission, goals and objectives. Evaluation and planning tools include the following: faculty evaluations; applicant, acceptance and enrollment data; course evaluations; curricular evaluations; and feedback from students, alumni and the Advisory Board.

The senior administration of the school in conjunction with the Committee on Outcomes, Evaluation and Assessment, oversees the evaluation of the SPH. Data are continually collected on all aspects of the school's operation, analyzed and measured against the school's goals and objectives. Student demographic and academic performance data are regularly generated by the central Office of the Registrar and the Office of Admissions. Faculty members are evaluated annually by their respective chairs. Student performance is evaluated throughout each course, and aggregated data are collected and reviewed by the Committee on Outcomes, Evaluation and Assessment for use in planning. The Committee on Outcomes, Evaluation and Assessment also develops outcome measures based upon CEPH guidelines and the mission and goals of the school. Outcome measures are discussed in the Committee of Deans and Chairs bi-monthly meetings, annually or bi-annually with the Community Advisory Group, bi-annually with the Faculty and Professional Staff Assembly and bi-annually with the Student Council leadership. In addition, the department chairs discuss these measures and related data with their faculty.

The self-study document was developed with input from the school's constituents. In April of 2014, the dean formed a Steering Committee to oversee the self-study process. The Steering Committee formed sub-committees to address the different components of the self-study document. Each sub-committee drafted sections of the self-study and submitted each draft to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee reviewed the documents and made appropriate recommendations for revisions. These drafts were discussed at regular departmental faculty meetings and were finalized at the Committee of Deans and Chairs and at the Steering Committee meetings. The information was then incorporated into the document by the associate dean for administration and reviewed by the dean. Draft versions of the entire self-study document were distributed to the members of the Steering Committee, faculty, students, alumni and the Community Advisory Group for comment. The dean then reviewed all comments and made appropriate changes. This process was repeated several times until the document was finalized.

The concern is that while the school routinely collects information on meeting its various targets, it does not appear that this information is consistently evaluated in ways that would assist with adjusting or validating targets or developing strategies to achieve them. This is evident in targets related to diversity of faculty, staff and students; in developing strategies to meet matriculation targets; and developing strategies to expand research. For the past three years, the SPH has met and exceeded most of its targets. When asked about adjusting targets, administrators stated that the targets are revised and set within the larger context of strategic planning for the medical center, and that with the development of a new strategic plan under the leadership of the new president, targets will be assessed and adjusted.

### **1.3 Institutional Environment.**

**The school shall be an integral part of an accredited institution of higher education and shall have the same level of independence and status accorded to professional schools in that institution.**

This criterion is met. The school is an integral part of the SUNY Downstate Medical Center, which is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and the Regents of New York. The medical center's College of Medicine is accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education; the College of Nursing is accredited by the National League for Nursing; the Occupational Therapy School is accredited by the American Occupational Therapy Association; the Physical Therapy School is accredited by the American Physical Therapy Association; and the College of Health Related Professions (CHRP) is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Schools. The school enjoys the same level of autonomy and authority as all other professional schools and colleges at the Medical Center.

The SUNY Downstate Medical Center is a part of the SUNY system, which includes a variety of universities and centers spanning across 64 campuses throughout New York State. Within the medical center there is, the College of Medicine; College of Health Related Professions; College of Nursing; the School of Graduate Studies; the University Hospital of Brooklyn; and the School of Public Health. The SPH has five departments, one for each of the core public health areas.

The president of SUNY Downstate reports to the chancellor of SUNY, and the chancellor reports to the Board of Trustees. The dean of each school, including the dean of the SPH, is considered the chief administrative officer of the school and reports to the president of the medical center.

Fiscal planning for the schools and colleges at SUNY Downstate is centrally managed through SUNY Downstate's Finance Office. The dean, vice dean and associate dean for administration oversee the budget and resources for the school. The SUNY system administration allocates resources to each university within the system. The dean submits the school's budget request to the vice president for academic fiscal affairs/interim chief financial officer for the medical center. The school's final budget is approved by the vice president for academic fiscal affairs.

The dean has responsibility for the recruitment, selection and advancement of all faculty and staff. The dean must consult with the Department of Human Resources at Downstate to post all open faculty and staff positions. Each department chair is responsible for the recruitment of qualified faculty and staff for their department. The department chair forwards the recommendation to the dean. The dean then makes a recommendation to the institution-wide vice president for faculty affairs and professional development. The president makes the final approval for hire, and the Department of Human Resources makes the offer to the candidate. The SPH adheres to the policies and procedures of the Trustees of the State

University of New York and the agreement between the State of New York and United University Professionals in regards to tenure.

The school adheres to the academic standards and policies of the larger SUNY system and Downstate Medical Center in regard to student admissions. The dean, with input from all faculty members, is responsible for development and implementation of policies with regard to the school's curriculum.

#### **1.4 Organization and Administration.**

**The school shall provide an organizational setting conducive to public health learning, research and service. The organizational setting shall facilitate interdisciplinary communication, cooperation and collaboration that contribute to achieving the school's public health mission. The organizational structure shall effectively support the work of the school's constituents.**

This criterion is met. The school has an organizational setting that is conducive to public health learning, research and service. The school is organized into four departments: Environmental and Occupational Health, Health Policy and Management, Epidemiology and Biostatistics and Community Health Sciences. Each is led by a department chair, who reports directly to the dean.

The dean has executive authority and is assisted by two vice deans, three associate deans and one assistant dean. Collectively, the deans and other administrative officers are responsible for academic affairs, administration, strategy, external affairs, development and communication, research, student affairs and finance.

The self-study details many research, teaching and service interactions with other units of the medical center, indicating significant interdisciplinary activity for the faculty. Many research, service and educational activities within the school cross disciplinary and departmental boundaries, and students reported involvement in many activities with faculty and students from departments other than their own. Examples of interdisciplinary collaboration include: co-hosting weekly journal clubs with the Department of Family Practice, co-PI of research projects with faculty in the College of Medicine and several service projects with the College of Medicine and other medical center faculty.

#### **1.5 Governance.**

**The school administration and faculty shall have clearly defined rights and responsibilities concerning school governance and academic policies. Students shall, where appropriate, have participatory roles in conduct of school and program evaluation procedures, policy setting and decision making.**

This criterion is met. The school administration and faculty have clearly defined rights and responsibilities concerning school governance and academic policies. Students have participatory roles in the governance of the school, where appropriate. The governance system provides guidance in all the necessary areas and uses the policies and procedures stated in the school's constitution and by-laws and



within the SUNY and Downstate Medical Center. The school has seven standing committees and six faculty and professional staff assembly-elected committees that provide for faculty governance.

The Faculty and Professional Staff Executive Committee with input from its sub-committees, is responsible for making policy recommendations to the Committee of Deans and Chairs. There is a feedback process, in which the department chairs discuss the issue with the faculty in their respective departments and bring the input back to the Committee of Deans and Chairs for further discussion and resolution. The dean makes final decisions on all general school policies. Members of the Faculty and Professional Staff Executive Committee include an elected representative from each department in the school and one representative from the professional staff.

The Faculty and Professional Staff Executive Committee and the Committee on Outcomes, Evaluation and Assessment are responsible for planning and evaluation. Both committees make planning and evaluation recommendations to the dean with input from faculty members of each sub-committee. The Committee of Deans and Chairs regularly discusses ongoing or newly identified needs by departments or centrally. Members of the Committee on Outcomes, Evaluation and Assessment include the associate dean for research, six faculty members, including at least one from each department, and one student member.

The dean, vice dean and associate dean for administration oversee fiscal planning and budgeting for the school, with input from the department chairs. The dean submits the school's budget request to the vice president for academic fiscal affairs/interim chief financial officer for the medical center. The final budget is approved by the vice president for academic fiscal affairs.

The Committee on Admissions oversees student recruitment and admissions with input from the Faculty and Professional Staff Assembly Executive Committee and its Sub-Committee on Student Admissions, Academic Standards and Faculty-Student Relations. The Office of the Registrar is responsible for the awarding of degrees. The assistant dean for enrollment and student affairs forwards each graduation candidate's final transcript to the Committee on Student Evaluation, Promotion and Honors for review and approval to award degrees. The committee then submits its recommendations to the dean for final approval. Members of the Committee on Admissions include the vice dean for academic and student affairs, assistant dean for enrollment and student affairs and five faculty members from each department. Members of the Sub-Committee on Student Admissions, Academic Standards and Faculty-Student Relations include four faculty members from each department and one student representative.

Department chairs oversee faculty recruitment. For recruitment, the department chair assembles a search committee, which is responsible for advertising open positions, and applications are screened by the

committee and the chair. Following interviews, the search committee recommends candidates to the chair, who selects a candidate and forwards the recommendation to the dean. The dean then makes a recommendation to the president of the medical center who, after approval, forwards the hiring documents to the Department of Human Resources, which makes the final offer. The Faculty Governance Committee on Academic and Professional Qualifications (CAPQ) oversees faculty promotion and tenure. The committee reviews each faculty member's dossier according to weighted criteria and a point system. The CAPQ then forwards their decision to the dean and the president for final approvals. Tenure is only granted by SUNY's central administration.

The Committee on Student Evaluation, Promotion and Honors (SEPH), with input from the Sub-Committee on Student Admissions, Academic Standards and Faculty-Student Relations and the Sub-Committee on the Educational Policy and Curriculum oversees academic policy development. These committees advise the department chairs and the deans on admissions policy, academic standards and issues regarding faculty-student relations. Members of the SEPH include the vice dean and the assistant dean for enrollment and student affairs, the associate dean for student & curricular affairs for the entire medical center and three faculty members.

The Community Advisory Group consists of professionals who are actively engaged in public health work and provides the primary source of feedback from community partners and public health professionals outside of school faculty. Members include representatives from the Arab-American Family Support Center, the Brooklyn, Queens, Long Island Area Health Education Center and the Advisory Board for the Bedford Stuyvesant Center Family Health.

All matriculated students participate in the school's governance through membership of the Student Council. Students are members of five standing committees: the Sub-Committee on Educational Policy and Curriculum, the Sub-Committee on Student Admissions Committee, the Academic Standards and Faculty Student-Relations, the Steering Committee and the Committee on Outcomes, Evaluation and Assessment.

Faculty members hold leadership positions and are members of 31 university committees including the Advisory Council on Research, the Committee on Admissions for the overall SUNY Downstate Medical Center, the Campus Selection Committee for the Chancellor's Awards for Excellence, the Search Committee for the dean of the College of Medicine and the Center-wide Library Periodical Committee.

### **1.6 Fiscal Resources.**

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

This criterion is met. The school currently has sufficient resources to fulfill its mission. The school's budget is based on eight sources: state appropriation, grants/contracts, indirect cost recovery, the Empire Innovation Award Funding, gifts, the Global Health Elective Sponsored Funding and fees. The school's sources of funds and expenditures are shown in Table 1.

The state provides most of the school's budget through funding totaling approximately \$4,000,000 per year. This amount has been stable over the past five years. Faculty salaries are funded entirely through state funding. There is currently no faculty salary funding supported by research grants or funded service/practice. Grant income is between \$300,000 and \$400,000 per year and is used to fund research staff salaries and operating costs of the projects. Indirect costs are recovered by the school, but the total amount is under \$100,000 per year.

Tuition income is not directly returned to the school, but is incorporated into the state appropriation line item through a mechanism of projections and negotiations within the medical center. Thus the school administration does anticipate an increase in budget allocation if there is increased enrollment and conversely is concerned that the allocation would drop if enrollment drops.

The allocation of resources appears to be adequate to maintain current activities. Both the school and medical center administration report a desire to increase the size and scope of the school through a combination of tuition and research revenue increases.

**Table 1: Sources of Funds and Expenditures in Dollars by Major Category, Academic Year 2010-2011 to 2015-2016**

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>2011-2012</b>	<b>2012-2013</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>2015-2016 (Projected)</b>
Fees Only <sup>1</sup>	19,657	9,688	31,441	27,873	26,234	55,578
State Appropriation	3,995,972	3,850,807	3,850,807	3,850,807	4,144,193	4,156,457
Grants/Contracts (Direct Costs)	890,547	329,788	360,134	177,495	319,333	369,976
Indirect Cost Recovery	746,028	323,309	167,634	51,175	78,511	87,903
Gifts <sup>2</sup>	6,250	8,237	11,100	23,000	3,000	26,200
Other (Empire Innovation Award Funding) <sup>3</sup>	356,395	350,831	207,233	0	0	0
Other (Global Health Elective Sponsored Funding) <sup>4</sup>	37,000	45,000	35,000	44,250	37,500	52,000
Other Small Operating Accounts <sup>5</sup>	3,657	2,589	1,823	998	897	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,055,506</b>	<b>4,920,249</b>	<b>4,665,172</b>	<b>4,175,598</b>	<b>4,609,668</b>	<b>4,748,114</b>
<b>Total Grants &amp; Indirects</b>	<b>1,636,575</b>	<b>653,097</b>	<b>527,768</b>	<b>228,670</b>	<b>397,844</b>	<b>457,879</b>
<b>Total Minus Grants &amp; Indirects<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>4,418,931</b>	<b>4,267,152</b>	<b>4,137,404</b>	<b>3,946,928</b>	<b>4,211,824</b>	<b>4,290,235</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>						
<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>2011-2012</b>	<b>2012-2013</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>2015-2016 (Projected)</b>
Faculty Salaries & Benefits	2,739,664	2,770,273	2,648,895	2,435,584	2,525,665	3,068,137
Staff Salaries & Benefits	1,138,921	937,307	968,740	954,211	977,228	1,017,228
Operations	95,143	89,449	86,371	107,683	113,558	114,370
Travel (Faculty)	7,809	9,105	7,816	5,979	15,373	15,000
Student Support (Including Travel)	1,500	6,600	8,723	13,753	21,922	20,000
Other (Global Health Elective) <sup>4</sup>	32,200	47,500	45,000	38,500	37,500	52,000
Other (Graduation Awards) <sup>7</sup>	600	1,100	1,700	3,500	2,500	3,500
<b>Total<sup>8</sup></b>	<b>4,015,837</b>	<b>3,861,334</b>	<b>3,767,245</b>	<b>3,559,210</b>	<b>3,693,746</b>	<b>4,290,235</b>
<b>Variance</b>	<b>403,094</b>	<b>405,818</b>	<b>370,159</b>	<b>387,718</b>	<b>518,078</b>	<b>0</b>

<sup>1</sup>SPH tuition revenues go to SUNY Central and are redistributed to individual campuses according to a formula. Fees from students for technology expenses, etc., are collected at the campus level and allocated to each School for student support purposes.

<sup>2</sup> Funds donated to the SPH by private individuals or companies for various purposes, including graduation awards and support for students.

<sup>3</sup>Empire Innovation Award, which was a New York State Initiative consisting of annual salary funding for the creation of an Environmental Institute that would address economic concerns in Brooklyn. This funding was steadily decreased from \$422,700 originally, to zero. This funding is now supposed to be subject to a bidding process, however the Request for Proposals has not been sent out by New York State to date. Salaries covered by this funding were transferred to the main State allocation in Academic Year 2014-2015, which accounts for the increase from 2013-2014.

<sup>4</sup>Funds from the College of Medicine Alumni Fund and one private sponsor designated specifically for providing stipends for the Global Health Elective students who go overseas for 6-8 weeks per year.

<sup>5</sup>Allocations from Downstate Center-wide Funds which were placed in accounts in the Research Foundation and utilized for petty cash expenditures. These allocations have been discontinued.

<sup>6</sup>Grants and indirect costs are not included in our operating costs and have been removed from the Total Source of Funds. Grants and indirect costs are not given to the SPH for use in salary or operating expenditures.

<sup>7</sup>Monetary awards given to graduates when they are awarded their degrees. Money for these awards is placed in an Income Fund Reimbursable (IFR) accounts. These IFR accounts levy "administrative processing" fees which can be as high as 54% of the amount. There is an ad hoc selection committee convened for the purpose of choosing awardees.

<sup>8</sup>Total Expenditures for each academic year are approximately \$400,000 less than total source funds minus Grants and indirect costs. This is accounted for by a small turnover in faculty positions each year; the salaries for the vacant positions that were in recruitment during the respective academic year were not expended. Two Chair positions and two junior faculty position were under recruitment in the 2014-2015 academic year. Total salaries for these four faculty positions account for the discrepancy in the Total Source Funds and Total Expenditures for the 2014-2015 Academic Year. This discrepancy was resolved in the 2015-2016 Academic Year due to the hiring of new faculty members, including the Chair of Health Policy and Management.

### **1.7 Faculty and Other Resources.**

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

This criterion is met. The school has adequate faculty, staff and other resources to fulfill its stated mission and goals and objectives. The school has a total of 23 primary faculty and 28 other faculty. The school offers doctoral programs in three of the five core areas and has an adequate faculty complement for each.

At the time of the site visit, the biostatistics concentration area had three primary faculty members with five other faculty who contribute a total of 2.0 FTE. The community health sciences, health policy and management and epidemiology concentration areas each have five primary faculty members. For the environmental and occupational health sciences concentration area, there are currently four primary faculty members, and the school is currently negotiating with a potential faculty member, which would bring the number to five.

The student-faculty ratios are below 10:1 and support effective and regular student/faculty interactions. The overall student faculty ratio is 5.3 based on primary faculty. The SFR has fluctuated over the past three years but has remained low.

The number of staff members to support the school is also adequate to provide services to students and faculty in all areas. The school has a total of nine staff members who contribute 9.0 FTE to the school. There are two department coordinators, three assistant/secretarial-level staff in the dean's office and additional professional staff in the dean's office. Students who met with the site visit team expressed that they receive adequate support from the staff.

The school currently occupies approximately 13,000 square feet of space in medical school buildings. A new building is under construction specifically for the school, with estimated completion in 2016/2017. The new building is approximately 100,000 square feet, and the plan is for the school to occupy two floors, totaling approximately 30,000 square feet, with another floor dedicated to shared classroom space. Currently, the school occupies 13,188 square feet. The school has 5,101 square feet of office space, 7,480 square feet of classroom space, 562 square feet of student recreational space and 45 square feet dedicated storage space.

The school has 620 square feet of available lab space that is shared with the school of medicine, with dedicated lab space to come in the new building.

Library, computer hardware and software, photocopying and printing resources are provided for the entire medical center and are strong. Several different computer labs are available to students, including machines with necessary specialty software available.

Students who met with the site visit team reported satisfaction with infrastructure, except for the learning management system PRIME, which appears to be an ongoing source of dissatisfaction for both faculty and students. The president expressed great satisfaction with the school as a whole and stated that he was proud of the school's achievements.

### **1.8 Diversity.**

**The school shall demonstrate a commitment to diversity and shall evidence an ongoing practice of cultural competence in learning, research and service practices.**

This criterion is met with commentary. The school demonstrates an overall commitment to diversity, including its mission, vision and values statements. The geographic location of the school and its recruiting efforts have allowed the school to acquire a diverse student population.

The first commentary relates to the link between the school's classification of its underrepresented groups and the diversity goals the school has developed. There is a disconnect between the data that are collected and reported regarding student diversity and the school's groups of interest. The school reports data based on age, sex and ethnicity but not based on country of origin, location in Brooklyn and New York or first generation immigrant Americans. The data that are collected should correspond with the priority groups, specifically for students.

Currently, 26% of the SPH full-time faculty are under-represented minorities, and 25% of the part-time faculty are under-represented minorities. The percent of part-time faculty has remained steady for the past four years and was reported as 25% for 2015-16. The school has a diverse staff with 44% who are under-represented minorities. The school has identified a goal of having 10% of their students from out-of-state, and the school has met this goal (11% of students are from out-of-state), but it is not known what percent of these students are US vs. international students. The school also identified students' age distribution as an important part of diversity, and this distribution is in line with the school's goal of enrolling 60% of students between the ages of 20 and 29. Overall, 57% of the SPH student population are under-represented minorities.

The second commentary relates to the fact that the school has not met its diversity goal for faculty. The student data indicated that the diversity of the students is parallel to the diversity of the surrounding Downstate community, with about 57% of students being from underrepresented groups. However, the diversity of the full-time faculty was reported as 26% for 2015-16, which was lower than the school's goal

of 40%. School administrators explained the process for recruiting and hiring diverse faculty but stated that the pool of qualified applicants is not diverse, making it hard to recruit.

The school adheres to the federal and state laws regarding affirmative action and diversity. The central Office of Diversity and Inclusion oversees the school's hiring process to assist the SPH in meeting its goals for under-represented minority faculty. The school also makes an effort to recruit diverse faculty at APHA. The policy statements by the school and the SUNY Downstate Medical Center define compliance measures to prevent discrimination.

The school identified several events geared towards recruiting diverse students which include the following: minority student health professions fair at Lehman College and annual career fairs at Brooklyn College, recruitment through APHA and partnerships with undergraduate programs throughout the city. The school is also considering hiring a recruiter responsible for reaching out to diverse students. During the site visit, students validated that the school has had several activities that support an inclusive environment for a diverse student body, including multicultural potlucks at the end of the semester.

The school integrates competencies into the curriculum that address health disparities. These competencies are identified in the core MPH and DrPH courses. Similarly, the course content identifies issues related to disparities such as environmental social justice.

## **2.0 INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS.**

### **2.1 Degree Offerings.**

**The school shall offer instructional programs reflecting its stated mission and goals, leading to the Master of Public Health (MPH) or equivalent professional master's 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.**

This criterion is met. The school offers instructional programs reflecting its stated mission and goals, leading to the MPH degree in five concentrations, three doctoral degrees and one joint degree. As illustrated in Table 2, the school offers an MPH in biostatistics, community health sciences, environmental and occupational health sciences, epidemiology and health policy and management; a DrPH in community health sciences, environmental and occupational health sciences and epidemiology; and a joint medical degree. The school has a partnership with the Peace Corps to offer the MPH degree to its participants. The school also has a partnership with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to offer the MPH degree to its residents. Site visitors' review of MPH syllabi from the concentration areas show appropriate breadth and depth of content for each concentration.

<b>Table 2. Instructional Matrix</b>		
	Academic	Professional
<b>Master's Degrees</b>		
Biostatistics		MPH
Community Health Sciences (Social and Behavioral Health Sciences)		MPH
Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences		MPH
Epidemiology		MPH
Health Policy and Management (Health Services Administration)		MPH
<b>Doctoral Degrees</b>		
Community Health Sciences (Social and Behavioral Health Sciences)		DrPH
Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences		DrPH
Epidemiology		DrPH
<b>Joint Degrees</b>		
Medicine		MPH/MD

In addition to coursework in the five core public health knowledge areas, the school requires coursework for different concentrations in immigrant populations' health, urban health, survival analysis, built environments, policy and law and mental illness policy. Students complete the degree with advisor-approved electives, a field experience and a culminating experience.

Students who met with the site visit team expressed great satisfaction with the school. Students thought the strongest point of the school and the curriculum was the integration of urban and immigrant health into the curriculum. Students also stated that the curriculum and courses prepared them to excel in their field experience.

## **2.2 Program Length.**

**An MPH degree program or equivalent professional public health master's degree must be at least 42 semester-credit units in length.**

This criterion is met. All MPH degrees offered by the school require a minimum of 42 semester credit hours, which includes the field experience and culminating experience.

One credit hour is defined as 15 contact or online hours with a professor. No MPH degrees have been awarded for less than 42 semester credit hours in the past three years.

## **2.3 Public Health Core Knowledge.**

**All graduate professional degree public health students must complete sufficient coursework to attain depth and breadth in the five core areas of public health knowledge.**



This criterion is met. All students are required to take at least one course in each of the five core areas of public health as displayed in Table 3 and Table 4. The learning objectives for these required courses contribute to the MPH core competencies and provide students with a strong foundation of public health core knowledge.

<b>Table 3. Required Courses Addressing Public Health Core Knowledge Areas for the Master of Public Health Degree</b>		
<b>Core Knowledge Area</b>	<b>Course Number &amp; Title</b>	<b>Credits</b>
Biostatistics	BIOS 5200: Principles of Biostatistics	3
Community Health Sciences	CHSC 5200: Health Behavior and Risk Reduction	3
Environmental Health Sciences	EOHS 5200: Issues in Environmental Health	3
Epidemiology	EPID 5200: Principles of Epidemiology	3
Health Policy and Management	HPMG 5206: Introduction to Health Policy and Management	3

<b>Table 4. Required Courses Addressing Public Health Core Knowledge Areas for the DrPH Degree</b>		
<b>Core Knowledge Area</b>	<b>Course Number &amp; Title</b>	<b>Credits</b>
Biostatistics	BIOS 7200: Quantitative Research Methods for Public Health Practice PUBH 7201: Study Design in Public Health	3
Community Health Sciences	PUBH 7201: Study Design in Public Health	3
Environmental Health Sciences	PUBH 7201: Study Design in Public Health	3
Epidemiology	BIOS 7200: Quantitative Research Methods for Public Health Practice PUBH 7201: Study Design in Public Health	3
Health Policy and Management	HPMG 7200: Public Health Management and Ethics PUBH 7200: Public Health Policy and Politics Seminar	3

Students in the DrPH programs are required to take four doctoral-level courses in the core areas of public health: BIOS 7200: Quantitative Research Methods for Public Health Practice, in which students are exposed to biostatistics and epidemiology content; PUBH 7201: Study Design in Public Health, in which students are exposed to community health and environmental health content; HPMG 7200: Public Health Management and Ethics; and PUBH 7200: Public Health Policy and Politics Seminar, in which students are exposed to health policy and management content.

Site visitors were concerned about the breadth and depth of environmental health content that DrPH students acquire through the study design core course. The syllabus did not illustrate any lectures specific to environmental health. However, faculty members provided examples of the environmental and

occupational health case studies that are a part of the study designs course. Faculty members also explained that DrPH students who have not had prior exposure to environmental health curricular content are required to take up to 15 credits of master's-level environmental health coursework as a prerequisite. DrPH students are not required to have an MPH prior to enrolling.

## **2.4 Practical Skills.**

**All graduate professional public health degree students must develop skills in basic public health concepts and demonstrate the application of these concepts through a practice experience that is relevant to students' areas of specialization.**

This criterion is met. All professional public health students complete a required practicum experience.

The practice experience is coordinated and developed by the student, the site preceptor and the faculty advisor and includes a minimum of 200 contact hours. The faculty advisor approves all practicum placements. The faculty advisor and the site preceptor are expected to keep in regular contact via telephone or e-mail to monitor the progress of the student.

Students draft a practicum plan and placement agreement that must be signed by the site preceptor and the faculty advisor prior to beginning the practicum. The practicum plan must include measurable learning objectives that the student will be applying to real-world public health problems. MD/MPH students adhere to the same practicum requirements. DrPH students have the same requirements, however, they are encouraged to engage in a field experience that will allow them to be in leadership roles.. Placement sites and site preceptors' qualifications are evaluated based on their self-reported agreement and commitment.

Students' performance in the field experience is evaluated based on weekly activity logs, progress reports, evaluation from the preceptor and a final field experience report. The report should be 500 words or less, and include an abstract prepared by the student assessing the activities and attainment of the learning objectives. The final report may also include additional departmental requirements, such as a poster, presentation or seminar. Students also complete a separate self-assessment of the accomplishment of the competencies and learning objectives at the end of their practicum.

MPH students have completed their practicum at a variety of sites including the Kings County Hospital, The Department of Emergency Medicine at SUNY Downstate, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, the Woodhull Medical and Mental Health Center and the Brooklyn Veteran's Administration Medical Center. Doctoral students have completed their practica at both local and national sites including the University of California San Francisco Program on Reproductive Health, the New York University School of Medicine and the Harlem United Community Health Center.

Students seeking a waiver must submit extensive documentation of their previous public health employment/experience history. The faculty advisor and the departmental chair reviews the student's employment history and job descriptions to ensure that they have attained the competencies that are mapped to the practicum. No waivers were granted in the last three years.

Students who met with the site visit team spoke of their satisfaction with the field experience and the opportunities that allowed them to work in the community.

### **2.5 Culminating Experience.**

**All graduate professional degree programs, both professional public health and other professional degree programs, identified in the instructional matrix shall assure that each student demonstrates skills and integration of knowledge through a culminating experience.**

This criterion is met. All students are required to demonstrate skills and integration of knowledge through a culminating experience. Review of samples showed the high quality of the work and the variety of subjects that were covered.

For MPH students, the culminating experience builds upon the practicum and includes a paper and an oral presentation demonstrating mastery of core and concentration competencies. This requirement is separate from the 500-word paper required for the practicum. Faculty members use an evaluation form to evaluate both the paper and the oral presentation to ensure students' mastery of the competencies. The student's advisor oversees the entire process.

All DrPH degree candidates must complete a dissertation within their chosen concentration with an oral defense that allows the students to demonstrate mastery and integration of the DrPH core competencies. Like MPH students, DrPH students may also complete their practicum in the same topic area in which they will conduct their dissertation research. The student's advisor oversees the dissertation process.

Site visitors' review of dissertation and final paper examples indicated that students were integrating the knowledge acquired throughout the curriculum and included skills from the five core areas of public health.

### **2.6 Required Competencies.**

**For each degree program and area of specialization within each program identified in the instructional matrix, there shall be clearly stated competencies that guide the development of degree programs. The school must identify competencies for graduate professional public health, other professional and academic degree programs and specializations at all levels (bachelor's, master's and doctoral).**

This criterion is met. The school has identified competencies that guide curricular development for each degree program within the school. The school has developed 11 core MPH competencies, nine core

DrPH competencies and competencies specific to each concentration. The MPH core competencies were established based on source materials from the ASPPH MPH Core Competency Project. The school reviewed the ASPPH DrPH Core Competency Model to determine the appropriate competencies for the DrPH program.

The school has developed competency matrices for the core and concentration competencies. Each matrix identifies the relationship between the competencies and individual courses and the culminating experience. The MPH concentrations each have a range of six to nine competencies. The DrPH concentrations each have a range of eight to 11 competencies.

Competencies were developed through an iterative process that included the faculty, the department chairs, SPH administration and community leaders. The chairs and the administration developed a set of core MPH and DrPH core competencies to propose to the faculty during a general faculty meeting. The faculty members provided feedback, and changes were made. For the concentration competencies, each department chair met with faculty members to develop their concentration competencies. A draft of the concentration competencies were presented to the Community Advisory Group and then to the Steering Committee for the Re-Accreditation of the School of Public Health to solicit feedback. Course directors then made changes to their syllabi after the competencies were finalized. All syllabi and course offering forms have been reviewed by the Sub-Committee on Educational Policy and the Curriculum to ensure that syllabi list the competencies and that they are linked to learning objectives. The competencies are reviewed periodically to incorporate changes in the field of public health, however significant changes will be predicated on new CEPH criteria.

Examples of school-wide changes that have resulted from revision of the competencies include shortening the list of core and concentration competencies to ensure that they would be more achievable for students.

The competencies are introduced to students during orientation and are reiterated through the course syllabi and discussed by course instructors. The competencies are also accessible to students via the school website and in the student handbooks. After site visitor's review of the course syllabi and competency matrices, along with validation from the students, the school appears to effectively use the competencies to guide curricular development.

## **2.7 Assessment Procedures.**

**There shall be procedures for assessing and documenting the extent to which each professional public health, other professional and academic degree student has demonstrated achievement of the competencies defined for his or her degree program and area of concentration.**

This criterion is partially met. The school has established procedures beyond course grades to assess students' mastery of competencies for each degree and concentration. The school has also identified outcome measures to evaluate student achievement in each program. The school assesses competency attainment for both MPH and DrPH students via course performance, preceptor and academic advisor evaluations, the culminating experience paper evaluation form and the evaluation form for the oral component of the culminating experience.

For the field experience, preceptors and academic advisors complete an evaluation, which addresses achievement of core and track-specific competencies as outlined on the field experience form.

For the culminating experience, members of each student's committee (thesis/capstone advisor, the second reader and the specialty track advisor), assess competency attainment by evaluating the final product (dissertation/culminating experience paper) using an evaluation form. The evaluation form also allows the committee to assess whether the paper and dissertation is integrative across the five core areas of public health.

MPH students have a maximum allowable time of six years to graduate, and DrPH students have a maximum allowable time of eight years. MPH students who entered in 2010-2011 have a graduation rate of 72.5%. The most recent cohort (2015-2016) has a total of 51 continuing students. With very low attrition rates and a large cohort, it appears that the school will continue to meet the required 70% graduation rate.

DrPH students who entered in 2008-2009 have a graduation rate of 33.3%. There are a total of three students in this cohort; one student withdrew, one graduated and one student is continuing. Though the school has not met the required 60%, this cohort is on track to achieve a graduation rate of 66% if the last student graduates.

The school has developed an outcome measure regarding average MPH student GPA at graduation, with a target of 3.5. All cohorts, with the exception of the 2010-2011 cohort, have met and exceeded that target.

The school collects job placement data through a comprehensive database to track its alumni. The database includes the graduates' demographic information, degree, concentration and current employment information. The school collected data for a total of 79 MPH students in the academic year 2014-2015. A total of 36 graduates were employed (84%), seven were continuing education (16%), no students were actively seeking employment or not seeking employment at all, and 36 students were unknown.

For DrPH students, a total of five students have graduated within the last three years. For the most recent academic year (2015-2016) one student has reached the one year threshold after graduation, and that student is employed. For the previous year there were a total of three graduates, one was employed and two were not seeking employment.

The first concern relates to the school's efforts to assess employers' perception of graduates' competency attainment and performance in the workforce. According to information provided in the self-study, the dean solicits information about competencies in relation to the needs of the workforce from the Community Advisory Group. Site visitors' review of the meeting meetings confirmed this. Though this information is important for curricular and competency development, the information collected does not assess the performance of the schools' graduates in the workforce, in general or specific terms. Faculty members who met with the site visit team stated that they were concerned that asking for information about employee performance from employers would infringe on confidentiality policies as graduates would be easily identified.

The second concern relates to the school's efforts to assess alumni's perception of their level of competency attainment and performance in the workforce. As noted in the 2015 meeting minutes of the Community Advisory Group, one member made the suggestion to survey alumni to assess their competency attainment and performance in the field. The medical school has recently administered an exit survey for all graduating students to complete, which has a specific question about the skills that they use in their current employment. However, not all students would have secured employment by the time of graduation. Also, because the survey was recently administered, the school has not evaluated the data that was collected. It would be helpful for the school to establish measures to collect data after graduation.

## **2.8 Other Graduate Professional Degrees.**

**If the school offers curricula for graduate professional degrees other than the MPH or equivalent public health degrees, students pursuing them must be grounded in basic public health knowledge.**

This criterion is not applicable.

## **2.9 Bachelor's Degrees in Public Health.**

**If the school offers baccalaureate public health degrees, they shall include the following elements:**

**Required Coursework in Public Health Core Knowledge:** students must complete courses that provide a basic understanding of the five core public health knowledge areas defined in Criterion 2.1, including one course that focuses on epidemiology. Collectively, this coursework should be at least the equivalent of 12 semester-credit hours.

**Elective Public Health Coursework:** in addition to the required public health core knowledge courses, students must complete additional public health-related courses. Public health-related courses may include those addressing social, economic, quantitative, geographic, educational

and other issues that impact the health of populations and health disparities within and across populations.

**Capstone Experience:** students must complete an experience that provides opportunities to apply public health principles outside of a typical classroom setting and builds on public health coursework. This experience should be at least equivalent to three semester-credit hours or sufficient to satisfy the typical capstone requirement for a bachelor's degree at the parent university. The experience may be tailored to students' expected post-baccalaureate goals (eg, graduate and/or professional school, entry-level employment), and a variety of experiences that meet university requirements may be appropriate. Acceptable capstone experiences might include one or more of the following: internship, service-learning project, senior seminar, portfolio project, research paper or honors thesis.

The required public health core coursework and capstone experience must be taught (in the case of coursework) and supervised (in the case of capstone experiences) by faculty documented in Criteria 4.1.a and 4.1.b.

This criterion is not applicable.

#### **2.10 Other Bachelor's Degrees.**

**If the school offers baccalaureate degrees in fields other than public health, students pursuing them must be grounded in basic public health knowledge.**

This criterion is not applicable.

#### **2.11 Academic Degrees.**

**If the school also offers curricula for graduate academic degrees, students pursuing them shall obtain a broad introduction to public health, as well as an understanding about how their discipline-based specialization contributes to achieving the goals of public health.**

This criterion is not applicable.

#### **2.12 Doctoral Degrees.**

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

This criterion is met. The school offers the DrPH degree in three concentrations: community health sciences, environmental and occupational health sciences and epidemiology. Site visitors determined that the coursework available to doctoral students is at an appropriate level of depth and rigor.

The DrPH program is a 45-credit hour degree program. All students in the DrPH program take four doctoral-level public health core courses (12 credits), four concentration-specific courses (12 credits), six credits of electives, three credits of field experience and 12 credits of dissertation work. Two of the DrPH required courses are focused on research design, and two are focused on policy management and ethics. Each department provides the courses for its concentration.

Each student has an academic advisor and has access to the department chair. Financial resources available to doctoral students include the following: salary support for student assistant positions; support

to cover travel expenses to attend the APHA annual meeting and exposition if they are presenting a poster or abstract; support to cover travel expenses to attend the CUGH annual meeting if they are presenting a poster or abstract; and financial support to allow students to participate in field experiences overseas.

The number of students in the three DrPH programs has increased from 26 students in the 2012-13 academic year to 51 students in the 2015-16 academic year. The number of faculty in the departments currently allow for sufficient student support. There are 24 students for the five faculty members in community health sciences, 10 students for the five faculty members in environmental and occupational health sciences and 17 students for the five faculty members in epidemiology. Since 2012-13, there have been two graduates in the community health sciences, one graduate in the epidemiology and one in the environmental and occupational health sciences programs.

### **2.13 Joint Degrees.**

**If the school offers joint degree programs, the required curriculum for the professional public health degree shall be equivalent to that required for a separate public health degree.**

This criterion is met. The school offers one joint degree program, the MD/MPH, which is considered to be a concurrent degree within the SPH.

The MD/MPH uses the same competencies, and requires the same practicum and culminating experience as the standalone MPH. There is no credit sharing. Students must apply to, and enroll in both the College of Medicine and the School of Public Health. Tuition must be paid for each degree independently. The only difference between an MD/MPH student and a “standard” MPH student is that the MD/MPH students entering in a particular academic year become a cohort, taking their MPH courses together in the same order, so as to complete the MPH degree coursework in their first two years of medical school.

MD/MPH students who met with the site visit team stated that one of the strong points of the school is the flexibility of the curriculum and the ability to take classes that correlate with their interests. Students are allowed to choose any of the five MPH concentrations that the school offers.

### **2.14 Distance Education or Executive Degree Programs.**

**If the school offers degree programs using formats or methods other than students attending regular on-site course sessions spread over a standard term, these programs must a) be consistent with the mission of the school and within the school’s established areas of expertise; b) be guided by clearly articulated student learning outcomes that are rigorously evaluated; c) be subject to the same quality control processes that other degree programs in the school and university are; and d) provide planned and evaluated learning experiences that take into consideration and are responsive to the characteristics and needs of adult learners. If the school offers distance education or executive degree programs, it must provide needed support for these**



**programs, including administrative, travel, communication and student services. The school must have an ongoing program to evaluate the academic effectiveness of the format, to assess learning methods and to systematically use this information to stimulate program improvements. The school must have processes in place through which it establishes that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence education course or degree is the same student who participates in and completes the course and degree and receives academic credit.**

This criterion is not applicable.

### **3.0 CREATION, APPLICATION AND ADVANCEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE.**

#### **3.1 Research.**

**The school shall pursue an active research program, consistent with its mission, through which its faculty and students contribute to the knowledge base of the public health disciplines, including research directed at improving the practice of public health.**

This criterion is met. The school pursues a research program, consistent with its mission. Approximately two-thirds of faculty have published in the past three years, with about half to two-thirds publishing in any given year. Their research areas span a broad spectrum, including clinical research, community-based research, epidemiological research and environmental health research. A number of faculty report involvement in research projects with medical school colleagues.

The school's funded research portfolio totaled \$228,000 in 2013-2014, \$398,000 in 2014-2015 and \$458,000 to date in 2015-2016. Of those amounts, the majority comes from a single grant, Barbershop Talk: HIV prevention for African-American men. For the 2015-2016 year, the breakdown of the funding sources is as follows: Barbershop Talk: \$241,000, Internal SUNY funds: \$144,000 and "other": \$73,000.

The large influx of internal funds is responsible for the increase in the current year and is an indication of the success of public health faculty in competing for internal funds, according to both school and medical center administration. Overall sources of grant funding include internal initiative funds, CDC (Barbershop Talk), NIOSH and foundations and trade organizations.

Approximately one-third of faculty are engaged in community-based research, according to data reported in the self-study, and many more are involved in a spectrum of service/practice activities that include evaluation. Examples of community-based organizations in which SPH faculty conduct research include: the Department of Community Health Sciences, the Kaiser Permanente Institute for Alternative Futures and the American Federation of Teachers.

Students who met with the site visit team reported having many opportunities to be involved in research. The medical center has regular research days at which students present work. As noted in the self-study, students participated in seven of the 23 research projects with faculty members. One DrPH candidate received a \$10,000 grant from NIOSH, and another DrPH candidate received a post-doctoral fellowship at Duke.

### 3.2 Service.

**The school shall pursue active service activities, consistent with its mission, through which faculty and students contribute to the advancement of public health practice.**

This criterion is met. The school pursues active service activities, consistent with its mission. There are a variety of opportunities for students to participate in service efforts conducted by faculty.

The commitment to service is reinforced by the school's core values, particularly those that emphasize excellence in teaching, scholarly endeavors and community and professional service. The school's commitment to service is deeply integrated into all of its educational and research activities.

The promotion and tenure process is governed by the overall regulations of the SUNY Board of Trustees and the Union of University Professionals. In addition, the SPH's Committee on Academic and Professional Qualifications (CAPQ) of the Executive Committee of the Faculty and Professional Staff Assembly oversees the development of SPH-specific tenure and promotion policies. The SPH has a tenure track specifically dedicated to teaching and service. The Education and Community/Professional Service Track is a full-time tenure eligible track in the SPH for faculty whose central contribution to the university involves major teaching responsibilities and major involvement in professional and community service.

Faculty members participate in a typical range of professional activities, which include peer reviewing for the Journal of Community Health, the Journal of Healthcare for the Poor and Underserved and the Journal of Community Health, among many others. Faculty members also serve as volunteers to community clinics, as board members, advisors and grant writers. Some faculty members have worked with a church-based health ministry and several served on city, state, and national working groups.

The associate dean for community public health affairs provides a very strong link between the school, its faculty and students and community-based groups. She also facilitates opportunities for students to engage in community-based service activities among underserved populations in Brooklyn. Students who met with the site visit team stated that there are volunteer opportunities available, but some students may not have the time to participate because most students commute and work full-time. The school does not have a systematic way for tracking student involvement in service. Faculty who met with the site visit team acknowledged the difficulty in tracking students' participation in service activities, and stated that they are looking into ways to improve tracking activities. Examples of service activities that students are involved in include the STEM program with the Arthur Ashe Institute at SUNY Downstate, and the school's annual health fair.

### **3.3 Workforce Development.**

**The school shall engage in activities other than its offering of degree programs that support the professional development of the public health workforce.**

This criterion is met. The school regularly supports the professional development of the public health workforce through extensive collaboration with its community.

Though the school does not conduct a formal workforce needs assessment, the school uses data from the New York State Health department needs assessment to plan its continuing education activities. Also, evaluation of public health workforce needs is garnered at Community Advisory Group meetings, and from faculty involvement with community groups. The associate dean for community public health affairs regularly consults with community leaders and is on the Board of Directors of some Community-Based Organizations, which allows her to assess the needs of the workforce. The associate dean for community public health affairs communicates that information to the deans and department chairs.

The school offers an advanced certificate in public health, which includes the five core MPH courses. The first students were enrolled in 2013-14, and enrollment has increased each year from 25 to 55. The certificate program has also been a helpful tool in recruiting students into the MPH program.

The SPH also offers a bi-weekly research seminar/journal club series, which allows researchers to present their work and discuss their research in depth. Faculty, students and community members are invited and encouraged to participate in the discussions and writing aspects of the journal club. Though the self-study provides the number of faculty and student participants, the number of community members who participate in each seminar was not provided.

The SPH collaborates with different organizations to offer continuing education including: the Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health (located within the Downstate Medical Center complex), the Brownsville Action Community for Health Equality, City University of New York, the Kings Against Violence Initiative, Kingsborough Community College, Brooklyn, NYC Care for the Homeless, the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the NYU Initiative for Women with Disabilities and the University Hospital of Brooklyn.

## **4.0 FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS.**

### **4.1 Faculty Qualifications.**

**The school shall have a clearly defined faculty which, by virtue of its distribution, multidisciplinary nature, educational preparation, practice experience and research and instructional competence, is able to fully support the school's mission, goals and objectives.**

This criterion is met. Primary faculty are well qualified in the core disciplines of public health. The faculty as a whole have strong training and breadth in each discipline. There is particular strength in urban and immigrant health, a major focus of the school. All faculty have doctoral degrees.

The school's primary faculty includes the ranks of assistant, associate and full professor; clinical professor; clinical assistant professor and lecturer. The assistant, associate and professor faculty are either tenure-track or tenured. The other faculty ranks are non-tenure track. One of the 24 primary faculty is non-tenure track. In addition to the primary faculty, the school has a total of 28 other faculty. These faculty devote a range of 0.05 to 0.5 FTE to the school. They hold titles that include part-time assistant, associate or clinical professor.

Faculty members have training in areas central to the teaching disciplines of the school and provide perspectives from the field of practice in several ways. A few faculty, including the dean, have significant professional public health agency experience. Others have very significant involvement in activities on the service/practice/community-based research spectrum. Their participation in the teaching and research programs of the school complements the expertise of other primary faculty and enriches opportunities for students for practica, obtaining jobs after graduation and networking.

Students who met with the site visit team expressed their satisfaction with the faculty and stated that the faculty are the best thing about the school. Students also noted the genuine concern that the faculty have for the community.

#### **4.2 Faculty Policies and Procedures.**

**The school shall have well-defined policies and procedures to recruit, appoint and promote qualified faculty, to evaluate competence and performance of faculty, and to support the professional development and advancement of faculty.**

This criterion is met. The school follows the regulations set by several New York State documents that describe the policies and procedures related to appointment, promotion, tenure, annual evaluations and development. The school's CAPQ committee has documented policies and procedures related to membership, procedures for reviewing credentials of individuals for promotion and tenure, materials required for tenure decisions and procedures for appeals. However, there is not a specific faculty handbook for the school. The SUNY Downstate Faculty Handbook does not mention the school of public health specifically.

The school has a four-track appointment and promotion system. The two tracks for tenure-eligible faculty are an academic track and an education and community/professional service track. The academic track includes full-time tenure-eligible faculty members who contribute to research, scholarship, teaching mentoring and service. Faculty members in education and community/professional service track devote their time to teaching and service. For faculty members seeking promotion or tenure, the department chair reviews their CV and other supporting documents. A point system is used to guide promotion and tenure for the tenure-eligible faculty.

The CAPQ membership is elected by the assembly from a slate of candidates presented to the assembly by the Dean and the sub-committee on nominations, elections and by-laws. Membership of the CAPQ can include up to two department chairs and two faculty members from each department who serve for three years with a quorum consisting of four members. The committee reviews a candidate's dossier (curriculum vitae and other supporting documents clearly listed in the CAPQ guidelines). Voting is by secret ballot and with a minimum of three supporting votes required for supporting rank, promotion and tenure. The committee provides its recommendation to the dean. The CAPQ informs the department chair of all their actions. The CAPQ does not review appointments for non-tenure faculty appointments. The department chairs propose those appointments to the dean, who makes the final decision.

Faculty members complete a faculty effort form each year that addresses teaching, advisement, research, and service. Faculty members also complete an annual faculty evaluation and development report each year that includes open ended reflections on the previous year's outcomes, plans for the next year for teaching research and service and any faculty development activities that are planned.

Students complete course evaluations which address 10 criteria: (1) course goals and objectives, (2) quality of the course syllabus, (3) teaching effectiveness, (4) course readings, (5) fostering problem-solving and reasoning, (6) course length, (7) effort required in the course, (8) exams and assignments, (9) overall course effectiveness and (10) overall instructor effectiveness. These reports are reviewed by the chair of their department. The department chair meets individually with the faculty members to discuss the forms.

The school provides a variety of faculty development opportunities for the faculty, including lectures, workshops and trainings. SUNY Downstate has created a new Office of Faculty Affairs and Professional Development. The annual faculty evaluation and development report also provides an opportunity to have the department chair identify faculty development needs and to provide input on development opportunities.

#### **4.3 Student Recruitment and Admissions.**

**The school shall have student recruitment and admissions policies and procedures designed to locate and select qualified individuals capable of taking advantage of the school's various learning activities, which will enable each of them to develop competence for a career in public health.**

This criterion is met. The school has well defined student recruitment and admissions policies and procedures designed to locate and select qualified individuals. The school has a standing admissions committee with a clear mission statement focused on accepting students who meet three major criteria: academic ability, commitment to public health and potential for contributing to public health. Applications to the school are processed through the school's "Apply Yourself" website.

There are two deadlines for MPH applications for admissions during the summer semester and the fall semester. Admission requirements for the MPH include a baccalaureate degree, official transcripts and recommended GPA of 3.0, specific coursework for three concentrations (biostatistics, epidemiology and environmental and occupational health sciences), a personal statement, letters of recommendation, a graduate entrance examination and a TOEFL for foreign language students. All students are required to provide a criminal background check prior to enrollment, post-admissions.

There is one deadline for DrPH applications for students starting their study in the fall semester. Admission requirements include a prior master's degree, transcripts with a GPA of 3.5 or greater, a personal statement, letters of recommendations, the completion of the GRE, an on-site interview and a TOEFL for foreign language students. All students are required to provide a criminal background check prior to enrollment, post-admissions.

The school has set admission goals for their programs that include admitting 45 MPH students, six MD/MPH students and three DrPH students each year. These goals have been met on average during the past four years, although there was a slight drop for the MD/MPH program in 2015-16 (decreased by three students). The number of applications to the MPH program has increased each year since the 2012-13 entering class (47 applications to 127 applications). However, the percent of accepted applicants who choose to enroll has decreased during the past four years (100%, 85%, 78% and 38%), with the greatest decrease occurring for the concentration in community health sciences. The MD/MPH program remains a relatively small program with students enrolling in the MPH concentration area of their choice. The number of DrPH applications have consistently been 20 or more each year, and all 12 applicants who were accepted in 2015-16 enrolled in the school. The number who enroll in each concentration has averaged about three students per concentration.

The school uses six distinct methods for disseminating recruiting materials for all the degree programs. These include a website, Facebook, two student handbooks, a school Viewbook, retractable display banners for recruitment fairs and expositions and specific pamphlets for the MD/MPH program. Recruitment occurs with numerous giveaways that include fliers, trifolds, newsletters and logos inscribed materials. The school has two incentive scholarships, the Rao Scholarship and the Biostatistics Scholarship. Other marketing materials and efforts include presentations at various meetings, extensive use of internet services, mailings, public fairs and TV/Video productions. The school has two work-study marketing assistants that support marketing efforts.

The school is meeting the recruitment goals for its programs. The number of applications is increasing, and even though the percent of accepted students who are enrolling has decreased, the total number of

students in the MPH program has remained strong. The number of students enrolling the MD/MPH and DrPH concentrations appears to be variable, but this is also due to the small size of these programs.

#### **4.4 Advising and Career Counseling.**

**There shall be available a clearly explained and accessible academic advising system for students, as well as readily available career and placement advice.**

This criterion is partially met. The school has an accessible, albeit informal, academic advising system and readily available career and placement advice, but does not obtain regular feedback from students about satisfaction with the system or suggestions for improvement.

All students participate in an orientation at the start of their program. The school provides an overall SUNY DMC student handbook and a supplemental school of public health student handbook that contains information about curriculum, competencies, degree requirements, field experiences and the culminating experience. The supplemental handbook also contains information specific to the DrPH program. Faculty members are the primary source for individual student advising. The faculty advisor and the assistant dean for enrollment and student affairs provide oversight for course scheduling and progress toward degrees.

Career advising is mostly an individualized process and includes emails from the associate dean for community public health affairs about job opportunities. The faculty advisor, the assistant dean for enrollment and student affairs and the Student Council provide individual and group informational settings regarding career advisement, employment opportunities and information on internship opportunities.

The SPH has an open environment, which encourages students to voice their opinions regarding the operations of the school. Within the larger medical center, there is a formal process for grievances that involve issues of sexual harassment or violence in the SUNY DMC Student Handbook. Grievance procedures regarding disputed grades or unfair treatment rest with the school. Academic or any other type of grievances in the SPH are formally addressed by the vice dean and the Committee on Student Evaluation, Promotion and Honors (SEPH) committee. The student may appeal the committee's recommendation to the dean. These policies are stated in the Policies and Procedures of the SEPH committee and publicized in the SPH Supplemental Student Handbook and the SUNY Downstate Student Handbook, which are accessible to students on the Downstate website. The school has not had any grievances.

The concern relates to the lack of formal assessment of student satisfaction with career counseling and advising. The school does not have a formal mechanism for assessing student satisfaction in these areas, however the self-study states that the school obtains feedback from students informally during Steering Committee meetings that include student members and general day-to-day interaction with the

students. After reviewing the Steering Committee meeting minutes, site visitors were unable to verify this. The Medical Center administers a centralized exit survey to students, but it does not collect specific information about student advising and career counseling. Informal mechanisms may not be sufficient as the school grows.

Students reported that they have outstanding access to faculty members who serve as both advisors and mentors. In addition to an open door policy, students reported that faculty provide career counseling in a variety of methods that is personalized to their interests. Examples of career counseling efforts include notifying students about job vacancies, revising resumes and hosting career fairs.



## Agenda

### COUNCIL ON EDUCATION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH ACCREDITATION SITE VISIT

#### SUNY Downstate Medical Center School of Public Health

November 16-18, 2015

#### Monday, November 16, 2015

- 9:30 am      Meeting with Core Leadership Team  
Pascal James Imperato, MD, MPH&TM, MACP  
Karen Benker, MD, MPH  
Barbara G. Delano, MD, MPH  
Michael A. Joseph, PhD, MPH  
Judith H. LaRosa, PhD, RN  
Leslie Schechter, MA  
M. Monica Sweeney, MD, MPH, FACP  
Michael Szarek, PhD
- 10:45 am      Break
- 11:00 am      Meeting with Key People Involved in the Self-Study Process  
Pascal James Imperato, MD, MPH&TM, MACP  
Aimee Afable, PhD, MPH  
Karen Benker, MD, MPH  
LeConté J. Dill, DrPH, MPH  
Daniel C. Ehlke, PhD, MA  
Laura A. Geer, PhD, MHS  
Elizabeth Helzner, PhD, MS  
Daniel Ilyayev, MSED  
Michael A. Joseph, PhD, MPH  
Leslie Schechter, MA
- 11:45 am      Break
- 12:00 pm      Lunch with Students  
Talaat Abdelmoneim  
Emmanuel Adomfeh  
Damien Bird  
Caroline Dolce  
Penelope Georgakopoulos  
Temitope Omoladun  
Max Trica  
Susan Yee  
Alison Philip  
Leah Timbang  
Bianca Rivera
- 1:30 pm      Break
- 1:45 pm      Meeting with Instructional Programs for MPH and ACPH Curricula-Group 1  
Karen Benker, MD, MPH  
Barbara G. Delano, MD, MPH  
Daniel Ehlke, PhD, MA  
Laura Geer, PhD, MHS  
Daniel Ilyayev, MSED  
Michael A. Joseph, PhD, MPH  
Judith H. LaRosa  
Arlene L. Mbonu, MA  
Carl R. Rosenberg, PhD  
Leslie Schechter, MA  
M. Monica Sweeney, MD, MPH, FACP  
Michael Szarek, PhD  
Michael Walsh, PhD, MPH

Leone L. Waltrous, MD, MPH  
Tracey Wilson, PhD

3:00 pm        Break

3:15 pm        Team Executive Session and Resource File Review

5:00 pm        Adjourn

**Tuesday, November 17, 2015**

9:15 am        Meeting with Faculty Related to Research, Service, Workforce Development  
Francine Benjamin, MS  
Karen Benker, MD, MPH  
Denise Bruno, MD, MPH  
Laura A. Geer, PhD, MHS  
Michael A. Joseph, PhD, MPH  
Arlene L. Mbonu, MA  
Leslie Schechter, MA  
M. Monica Sweeney, MD, MPH, FACP  
Michael Szarek, PhD  
Leone L. Waltrous, MD, MPH, CLC  
Tracey Wilson, PhD

9:45 am        Break

10:00 am       Meeting with Instructional Programs for DrPH Curriculum-Group 2  
Aimee Afable, PhD, MPH  
Karen Benker, MD, MPH  
Denise Bruno, MD, MPH  
Barbara G. Delano, MD, MPH  
LeConté J. Dill, DrPh, MPH  
Laura A. Geer, PhD, MHS  
Elizabeth Helzner, PhD, MS  
Daniel Ilyayev, MSED  
Michael A. Joseph, PhD, MPH  
Paul Landsbergis, PhD, MPH, EdD, MA  
Judith H. LaRosa  
Arlene L. Mbonu, MA  
Simone A. Reynolds, PhD, MPH  
Janet E. Rosenbaum, PhD  
Leslie Schechter, MA  
M. Monica Sweeney, MD, MPH, FACP  
Michael Szarek, PhD  
Michael Walsh, PhD, MPH  
Tracey Wilson, PhD

11:15 am       Break & Resource File Review

12:00 pm       Lunch with Alumni  
Kizzi Belfon  
Sharon Chu  
Yolene Gousse  
Garry Graham  
Briana Hecht  
Loriel Johnson

12:45 pm       Meeting with Community Stakeholders  
Maha Attieh  
Gabrielle Kersaint  
Harvey Lawrence

1:45 pm        Meet with Medical Center Leadership  
John F. Williams, MD, EdD, MPH, FCCM  
Astra Bain-Dowell, MPA  
Melanie F. Gehen, MHSA

2:15 pm        Break

3:00 pm      Meeting with Faculty Related to Faculty Issues, Student Recruitment and Advising  
Aimee Afable, PhD, MPH  
Karen Benker, MD, MPH  
Barbara G. Delano, MD, MPH  
Elizabeth Helzner, PhD, MS  
Daniel Ilyayev, MEd  
Michael A. Joseph, PhD, MPH  
Paul Landsbergis, PhD, MPH, EdD, MA  
Leslie Schechter, MA

4:00 pm      Break

4:15 pm      Executive Session & Resource File Review

5:30 pm      Adjourn

**Wednesday, November 18, 2015**

8:30 am      Executive Session and Report Preparation

12:30 am      Exit Interview