



22 September 1998

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members University Senate

FROM: University Senate Council

RE: AGENDA ITEM: University Senate Meeting, Monday, October 12, 1998. Proposal to create a School of Public Health at the University of Kentucky Chandler Medical Center in the College of Medicine. If approved, the proposal will be forwarded to the administration for appropriate action.

Proposal

It is proposed to create a School of Public Health at the University of Kentucky Chandler Medical Center in the College of Medicine.

Rationale

As it currently stands, there is no school of public health in Kentucky. In fact there are no schools of public health in several of the states that surround Kentucky. The closest schools are St. Louis University, the University of North Carolina, Emory University and the new school at Ohio State University. There are now nationally only 27 schools of public health accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), the national voluntary accrediting body for schools and programs in public health. The School will seek accreditation by the CEPH.

There are three potential student targets for a school of public health. These are, first, students entering traditional public health disciplines for the first time. Schools of public health are traditionally interdisciplinary and focus their attention at the graduate, primarily master's, level. Thus students from a variety of backgrounds from the sciences, both natural and social, to the liberal arts, to those who hold professional health related degrees would be attracted to such a program. The second group of students is that in the other professional schools. One of the hallmarks of schools of public health is that they frequently provide dual or joint degrees, so that students in medicine, dentistry,

nursing, pharmacy, law or social work can simultaneously earn both the first professional degree and the master's degree in public health. Finally, the Commonwealth of Kentucky's public health departments, in many cases, do not have well prepared public health professionals. It is likely that these individuals, particularly if provided distance learning opportunities, will want both degree programs and continuing education.

Process

The school will be established within the College of Medicine. The notion of schools existing within colleges is common on the University of Kentucky of campus. The school will be led by a Director, who will also hold the title of Associate Dean of the College of Medicine for Public Health, as delineated in the UK Governing Regulations.

The College of Medicine offers the Master's of Science in Public Health (MSPH). As is common in other colleges of medicine, it is a generalist degree without specific majors or concentrations in specific areas. It requires a thesis and is a 30-unit masters program. It currently has seven students, full and part time, in the program. The program was primarily developed to assist residents in occupational and preventive medicine meet American Board of Preventive Medicine requirements for an MPH, or its equivalent, to take that Board examination. In many cases, the Department of Preventive Medicine, in which the degree is offered, must turn away students because the breadth of courses offered is not available here, but is available in schools of public health.

The proposed MPH would flow out of the existing MSPH, which would remain a degree option, with an academic rather than a practice orientation, i.e., the MSPH would only have a Plan A option.

A thirty (30) unit MPH is planned. Faculty of the unit would have the responsibility for the development of the curriculum and proposal of degrees as appropriate. In addition to the MPH, the School would envision the future development of a Doctorate in Public Health (DrPH). This is the professional doctoral degree offered by schools of public health.

The proposal has been approved by the Senate Academic Organization and Structure Committee and is being forwarded by the Senate Council without recommendation.