

*School of  
Public Health*

# **ACCREDITATION CRITERIA**

GRADUATE SCHOOLS OF PUBLIC HEALTH

COUNCIL ON EDUCATION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH  
AMENDED OCTOBER 1993

## **CEPH PURPOSE AND PROCEDURES**

The Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) is the independent agency officially recognized to accredit graduate schools of public health and certain graduate public health programs outside schools of public health, including graduate programs in community health education and community health/preventive medicine. CEPH assists schools and programs in evaluating content and quality of their instructional, research, and service programs, and grants accreditation to those schools and programs which meet its published criteria.

CEPH accreditation procedures are detailed in a separate manual, which should be used in conjunction with these criteria. Separate criteria documents are published by CEPH for graduate community health education programs and graduate community health/preventive medicine programs outside schools of public health.

### **BASES FOR ACCREDITATION CRITERIA**

Accreditation of graduate education for public health, as one area of specialized accreditation, is based on the unique functions which graduate public health schools and programs perform in their parent universities and health science centers. Their educational functions derive, in turn, from the variety of functions performed by school and program graduates in the health and medical care system and in society. The goals of those working "to enhance health in human populations, through organized community effort,"<sup>1</sup> are to identify the totality of health problems and needs of defined populations, to consider mechanisms by which the needs may be met, and to assure services essential to the health of populations.

The missions and goals of public health schools and programs are focused on preparation of individuals who will serve as practitioners, researchers, and teachers competent to carry out broad public health missions and goals, within and outside schools' and programs' institutional settings.

For purposes of CEPH accreditation it is expected that excellence in education will relate to proficiency in practice. By defining educational quality in terms of competence of the graduates of schools and programs reviewed for accreditation, CEPH criteria help to link learning with application. Graduates who prepare for practice in a defined professional specialty area should be ready, when granted their degrees, to begin their professional careers with competence appropriate to their level of education and the extent of their previous experience, and to continue to keep up with current developments in health and related fields.

CEPH criteria for accreditation, as set out on the following pages, deal with quality of both product and process—the ends to be achieved through public health educational, research and service activities, the means used to achieve the desired ends, and evaluation of the degree to which the desired ends are attained.

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<sup>1</sup> Definition adopted by CEPH, 1978

## **CHARACTERISTICS**

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

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

1. The school and its faculty shall have the same rights, privileges and status as other professional schools which are components of its parent institution.
2. The school shall function as a consortium of disciplines which addresses the health of the community and focuses on instruction, research, and community service. A school of public health should be a multidimensional university center on community health. The special learning environment of a school of public health shall provide for interdisciplinary communication, development of professional public health concepts and values, and stress problem solving.
3. The school shall provide the focus for a wide array of both academic and professional interests and activities that relate to the health of the public. The school should provide a rich intellectual climate that stimulates and facilitates multidisciplinary exchanges of ideas between academics and professionals. The school should facilitate an environment which stimulates both individual creativity and initiative and collaborative and cooperative activity among its faculty.
4. The school shall have faculty and other human, physical, financial and learning resources to provide both breadth and depth of educational opportunity in the public health areas noted in criterion V. and must offer education at the masters level sufficient to provide a concentration in each of the five specified areas. The school shall offer the Master of Public Health degree (MPH) and at least one doctoral degree which is relevant to one of the five specified areas of public health.
5. The school shall plan, develop and evaluate its instructional, research and service programs in such a way as to assure sensitivity to the perceptions and needs of its students and to combine educational excellence with applicability to the world of public health practice.

# **CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION OF GRADUATE SCHOOLS OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

## **MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

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

### **Interpretation**

While each school must define its own mission, it is expected that all schools of public health will be guided by the broad mission of public health, which was defined by CEPH in 1978 as "enhancing health in human populations, through organized community effort." All schools of public health will be constituted as a consortium of disciplines, together addressing the health of the community through instruction, research and community service. It is further expected that all schools of public health, as a minimum, will prepare public health practitioners who are able to identify and assess needs of populations; plan, implement and evaluate programs to address those needs; and otherwise assure conditions which protect and promote the health of populations.

Beyond that, a school may define its mission to include other roles and functions which derive from the purposes of its parent institution, which reflect its own aspirations and which are responsive to changing health needs and demands of populations in what it defines as its service region. The mission, goals and objectives should identify in specific terms what this particular school has set out to accomplish through its instructional, research and service activities. The school's view of the role of the community in school endeavors and the school's role in serving the community should be clearly reflected in the stated mission, goals and objectives.

The mission, goals and objectives of a school should prescribe and limit the activities of the school in ways that permit rational allocation of resources and evaluation of outcomes. There should be clear relationships between the mission and the goals and between the goals and the objectives. Each school will be evaluated based upon its own mission, goals and objectives.

### **Documentation Expected**

1. A clear and concise mission statement for the school as a whole.
2. One or more goal statements for each major function by which the school intends to attain its mission, including instruction, research and service.
3. A set of measurable objectives relating to each major function through which the school intends to achieve its goals of instruction, research and service.
4. A description of the manner in which mission, goals and objectives are developed, monitored and periodically revised and the manner in which they are made available to the public.

5. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL SETTING — EXTERNAL**

**Criterion II.A. 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.**

### **Interpretation**

An accredited institution of higher education is one which is accredited by a regional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. Independence refers to the ability of the school to maintain the integrity of its programs through autonomous and well-informed decision-making regarding matters such as budgeting and resource allocation, personnel recruitment, selection and advancement, and establishment of academic standards and policies. Status refers to the stature within the institution and the position it holds within the institution because of the organizational arrangement. Independence and status are always viewed within the context of the institutional policies, procedures and practices, but in general the school of public health should have the same degree of independence accorded to other professional schools, particularly professional schools preparing for major health professions.

When a school of public health is sponsored by more than one institution, each parent university must be accredited by a regional accrediting agency. If one of the parent universities is the degree-granting institution, the level of independence and status accorded to the school of public health shall be comparable to that accorded to other professional schools at the degree-granting institution. If more than one of the sponsoring institutions awards the degree, there must be evidence in each participating institution that the rights and privileges extended to the school are sufficient to maintain the integrity of the school's programs through autonomous and well-informed decision-making.

### **Documentation Expected**

1. A brief description of the institution in which the school is located, along with the names of accrediting bodies (other than CEPH) to which the institution responds.
2. An organizational chart of the university indicating the school's relationship to the other components of the institution.
3. A description of the school's relationship to the university's system of governance, to amplify the diagrammatic representation, including budgeting and resource allocation; personnel recruitment, selection and advancement; and establishment of academic standards and policies.
4. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

## ORGANIZATIONAL SETTING — INTERNAL

**Criterion II.B. The school shall provide an organizational setting conducive to teaching and learning, research and service. The organizational setting shall facilitate interdisciplinary communication, cooperation and collaboration and shall foster the development of professional public health values, concepts and ethics, as defined by the school.**

### Interpretation

Organization of the school should enhance the potential for fulfillment of its stated mission and goals, and should provide for effective participation of its faculty and students in all activities of import to them. The environment must be characterized by commitment to the integrity of the institution, including high ethical standards in the management of its affairs, fairness in its dealings with all constituencies, support for the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge, and accountability to its constituencies.

### Documentation Expected

1. An organizational chart of the school, indicating relationships of its component departments, divisions, or other units, with the administration of the school and its components.
2. Description of the relationships indicated in the diagrammatic representation.
3. Description of the manner in which interdisciplinary coordination, cooperation and collaboration is supported.
4. Definition of the professional public health values, concepts and ethics to which the school is committed and a description of how these are operationalized.
5. Identification of written policies that are illustrative of the school's commitment to fair and ethical dealings.
6. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

## GOVERNANCE

**Criterion III. The school administration and faculty shall have clearly defined rights and responsibilities concerning school governance and academic policies. Where appropriate, students shall have participatory roles in school governance.**

### Interpretation

Within the framework of university rules and regulations, school administration and faculty should have sufficient prerogatives to assure integrity of school programs and to allow accomplishment of the school's stated mission, goals and objectives. School faculty should have formal opportunities for input in decisions affecting admissions and progress, resource allocation, faculty recruitment and promotion, curriculum design and evaluation, research and service

activities, and degree requirements. Where degrees are awarded to school students through the university graduate school, school faculty should represent school views and interests in graduate school policy- and decision-making. Students should have formal methods to participate in policy-making and decision-making within the school. Details regarding the role of students in governance are covered in Criterion IX.D.

### **Expected Documentation**

1. Description of the school's administrative, governance and committee structure and processes, particularly as they affect:
  - a. general school policy development;
  - b. planning;
  - c. budget and resource allocation;
  - d. student recruitment, admission and award of degrees;
  - e. faculty recruitment, retention, promotion and tenure;
  - f. academic standards and policies;
  - g. research and service expectations and policies.
2. A list of standing and important ad hoc committees, with a statement of charge and composition.
3. A list, including membership, of the school and university committees through which faculty contribute to the activities of the school and university.
4. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

## **RESOURCES**

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

### **Interpretation**

School resources shall be sufficient to achieve the school's mission, goals and objectives. These include financial resources, personnel (faculty, administration and staff), offices, classrooms, library facilities and holdings, laboratories, computer facilities, field experience sites and other community resources which facilitate partnerships with communities to conduct instruction, research and service.

### **Documentation Expected**

1. A clearly formulated school budget statement, showing sources of all available funds and expenditures by major categories, since the last accreditation visit or for the last five years whichever is longer.
2. A concise statement or chart concerning faculty resources, showing number and percent time of faculty by program area and computing a student faculty ratio for each and for the

school as a whole. (FTE faculty and FTE student numbers should be used and these should be consistent with FTE faculty and student numbers presented in sections VIII and IX.)

3. A concise statement or chart concerning the availability of other personnel (administration and staff).
4. A concise statement or chart concerning amount of space available to the school by purpose (offices, classrooms, common space for student use, etc.), by program and location.
5. A concise statement or floor plan concerning laboratory space, including kind, quantity and special features or special equipment.
6. A concise statement concerning the amount, location and types of computer facilities and resources for students, faculty, administration and staff.
7. A concise statement of library/information resources available for school use.
8. A concise statement identifying field experience sites used during the last three years.
9. A concise statement describing other community resources available for instruction, research and service, indicating those where formal agreements exist.
10. Identification of outcome measures by which the school may judge the adequacy of its resources, along with data regarding the school's performance against those measures over the last three years. As a minimum, the school must provide data on student-to-faculty ratio by program, institutional expenditures per full-time-equivalent student, and research dollars per full-time equivalent faculty.
11. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS**

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

**The areas of knowledge basic to public health include:**

- 1. Biostatistics - collection, storage, retrieval, analysis and interpretation of health data; design and analysis of health-related surveys and experiments; and concepts and practice of statistical data analysis.**
- 2. Epidemiology - distributions and determinants of disease, disabilities and death in human populations; the characteristics and dynamics of human populations; and the natural history of disease and the biologic basis of health.**



3. **Environmental health sciences - environmental factors including biological, physical and chemical factors which affect the health of a community;**
4. **Health services administration - planning, organization, administration, management, evaluation and policy analysis of health programs; and**
5. **Social and behavioral sciences - concepts and methods of social and behavioral sciences relevant to the identification and the solution of public health problems.**

### **Interpretation**

A program, sometimes referred to as a program of study, course of study or curriculum, is a series of planned and evaluated learning experiences which constitute the total requirements for the award of a degree. The school shall offer the Master of Public Health (MPH), the primary professional public health degree. Other masters degrees (e.g. MHA, MHSA, MCH) also designate preparation for public health practice in a community setting and are considered to be equivalent professional masters degrees. A school may offer other degrees as well, including bachelors and doctoral degrees, if these are consistent with its stated mission and if it has the additional resources needed to do so.

A professional degree is one that, based on its learning objectives and types of positions its graduates pursue, prepares students with a broad mastery of the subject matter and methods necessary in a field of practice; it typically requires students to develop the capacity to organize, analyze, interpret and communicate knowledge in an applied manner. A research or academic degree program is one that, based on its learning objectives and the paths its graduates follow, prepares students for scholarly careers, particularly in academia and other research settings; it typically prepares students to investigate, acquire, organize, analyze and disseminate new knowledge in a discipline or field of study.

The five areas of knowledge considered basic to public health include biostatistics, epidemiology, environmental health sciences, health services administration, and the social and behavioral sciences. A school of public health must provide depth of training in each of these areas, sufficient for a student to pursue a professional degree, concentration or major, depending upon the terminology used by the institution. Depth of training requires a critical mass of faculty and sufficient advanced level courses to support the program. Other public health specialties may be offered when the school has the critical mass of faculty to assure depth of training in those specialties. Generalist training may be offered in addition to the concentrations or areas of specialization.

All degree programs, at all levels and all areas of specialization, offered by a school of public health, including those of a non-traditional format, must be presented for accreditation review.

### **Documentation Expected**

1. Identification in matrix form of all of the school's degree programs, including undergraduate degrees if any, showing the areas of specialization possible and distinguishing between those considered by the school to be professional degrees and those considered to be

academic degrees. If the school offers degrees in a non-traditional format, these must be included in the matrix and identified as non-traditional.

2. The school bulletin or other official publication which describes all curricula offered by the school for all degree programs.
3. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

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

### **Interpretation**

The school must provide opportunities for professional degree students to apply the knowledge and skills being acquired through their courses of study. Practical knowledge and skills are essential. A planned, supervised and evaluated practice experience is considered a very important component of a public health professional degree program. These opportunities should be arranged in cooperation with as wide a range of community agencies as possible, including especially local and state public health agencies in the school's geographic area. Individual waivers should be based on well-defined criteria; the possession of a prior professional degree in another field or prior work experience that is not closely related to the academic objectives of the student's degree program would not be sufficient reason for waiving the practice requirement.

While there are advantages to a practice placement conducted full-time in a concentrated block of time, this is not always possible for students. Schools should be sensitive to the constraints of students and may develop alternative modes for providing practice experiences.

A culminating experience is one which requires a student to synthesize and integrate knowledge acquired in course work and other learning experiences and to apply theory and principles in a situation that approximates some aspect of professional practice. It may be used as a means by which faculty judge whether the student has mastered the body of knowledge and can demonstrate proficiency in the required skills. Many different models are possible, including written or oral comprehensive examinations, supervised practice placements, a major written paper such as a thesis or an applied research project, development of case studies, capstone seminars and others. Each professional degree program must require a culminating experience.

### **Expected Documentation**

1. Identification of the means by which the school assures that all professional degree students have a broad understanding of the areas of knowledge basic to public health. If this means is common across the school, it need be described only once. If it varies by degree or program area, sufficient information must be provided to assess compliance by each program.

2. Description of the school's policies and procedures regarding practice placements, including criteria for selection of sites, methods for approving preceptors, approaches for faculty supervision and methods of assessment of students.
3. Identification of agencies and preceptors used for formal practice placement experiences for students, by program area, over the last three years.
4. Identification of the culminating experience required for each degree program. If this is common across the school's professional degree programs, it need be described only once. If it varies by degree or program area, sufficient information must be provided to assess compliance by each program.
5. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

**Criterion V.C. For each program and area of specialization within each program identified in Criterion V.A., there shall be clear learning objectives.**

### **Interpretation**

Learning objectives are statements that describe what a successful learner should know and be able to do upon completion of a particular program or course of study. These statements should define the competencies that a successful graduate will demonstrate at the conclusion of the program and should be articulated in terms of measurable outcomes. Stated learning objectives for individual programs should be demonstrably related to the school's mission, goals and objectives, and, in turn, course objectives and other planned learning experiences should be demonstrably related to the stated learning objectives of the programs.

The articulation of learning objectives is central to the educational process. Since these objectives define the nature and content of a program and establish explicit student expectations, they should be widely available to students and prospective students. Stated learning objectives should guide the curriculum planning process and should be the primary measure against which student achievement is measured.

If a school expects or allows students to develop highly individualized learning objectives consistent with the students' prior experiences and career goals, these learning objectives must be comparable in their level of specificity to learning objectives that would be appropriate to define a degree program as identified in V.A. and must be documented on an individual basis. Furthermore, specific documentation must accompany modification of the students' personalized learning objectives.

### **Expected Documentation**

1. Identification of a set of learning objectives for each program of study identified in the matrix for V.A. If individualized learning objectives are used, identification of a sample set that is typical of each program of study and which can be verified through on-site inspection.

2. A description of the manner in which learning objectives are developed, used and made available to students.
3. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

**Criterion V.D. There shall be procedures for assessing and documenting the extent to which each student has attained these specified learning objectives and determining readiness for a public health practice or research career, as appropriate to the particular degree.**

### **Interpretation**

A school of public health shall award or recommend the award of a degree only when the student has demonstrated mastery of necessary theories, concepts and content and competence in the skills defined in the learning objectives. Procedures for measuring attainment of stated objectives may include course tests and examinations, evaluation of performance in practice placements, written project reports or theses, comprehensive examinations, and professional credentialing examinations, as examples. Successful completion of a set of required courses is not, in and of itself, sufficient evidence that a student has mastered the necessary content or demonstrated proficiency in the application of skills. A graduate-level curriculum is more than a set of required courses and the judgment about the success of an individual student in that curriculum should include an assessment about the student's ability to select theories, methods and techniques from across the content matter of a field, to integrate and synthesize knowledge, and to apply it to the solution of public health problems. The manner in which this assessment is done may differ between professional and academic programs and among degrees and among specializations.

### **Expected Documentation**

1. Description of the procedures used for monitoring and evaluating student progress in meeting stated learning objectives.
2. Identification of outcomes which serve as measures by which the school will evaluate student achievement in each program, and presentation of data assessing the school's performance against those measures over the last three years.
3. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

**Criterion V.E. If the school also offers curricula for academic degrees, then students pursuing them shall have the opportunity and be encouraged to acquire an understanding of public health problems and a generic public health education. These curricula shall cover as much basic public health knowledge as is essential for meeting their stated learning objectives.**

### **Interpretation**

Because schools of public health must provide an interdisciplinary learning environment, students pursuing academic public health degrees have an opportunity to acquire a broad, public

health orientation, as well as depth of education in a specific discipline. Since these degree programs are preparing students who will become the next generation of public health faculty and preparing researchers who will be expected to work in multidisciplinary settings, learning objectives should reflect a commitment to acquiring a public health perspective. Students pursuing graduate academic degrees shall have the opportunity and be encouraged to acquire generic public health knowledge which might be met through mechanisms such as symposia, working groups, collaborative working relationships, choice of thesis topic, and courses. If these experiences are waived for individual students, the reason for the waiver shall be documented.

While opportunities to engage in research activities are important for all students, they are essential for students in academic or research curricula. Such opportunities are possible only when faculty themselves are actively engaged in research. Research curricula should culminate in an integrative activity which permits the student to demonstrate the ability to successfully undertake research.

### **Expected Documentation**

1. Identification of all academic degree programs, by degree and area of specialization. The matrix in V.A. may be referenced for this purpose.
2. Identification of the means by which the school assures that students in research curricula have the opportunities and are encouraged to acquire a public health orientation. If this means is common across the school, it need be described only once. If it varies by degree or program area, sufficient information must be provided to assess compliance by each program.
3. Identification of the culminating experience required for each degree program. If this is common across the school's academic degree programs, it need be described only once. If it varies by degree or program area, sufficient information must be provided to assess compliance by each program.
4. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

**Criterion V.F. The school shall offer at least one doctoral degree which is relevant to one of the five specified areas of basic public health knowledge.**

### **Interpretation**

In order to be accredited, a school of public health shall have sufficient faculty expertise, availability of advanced level courses and active research, sufficient to support the development and offering of at least one doctoral degree. A school can be preaccredited if there is a reasonable expectation of developing a doctoral degree within the next two years prior to the school's accreditation. This may be a professional degree or an academic degree. A doctoral degree relevant to public health would be in one of the major disciplines or major areas of practice within public health.

## **Expected Documentation**

1. Identification of all doctoral programs offered by the school, by degree and area of specialization. The matrix in V.A. may be referenced for this purpose. If the school is a new applicant and has no active doctoral program, a description of plans and a timetable for offering a doctoral program must be presented, with university documentation supporting the school's estimate.
2. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

**Criterion V.G. 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.**

## **Interpretation**

Schools of public health, in cooperation with other degree-granting units in the institution, may offer joint, coordinated or dual degrees, such as the MD/MPH, MBA/MPH and MPH/MSW. The required curriculum of the public health component of these joint degrees must be comparable to the curriculum in the separate public health degree.

## **Expected Documentation**

1. Identification of joint degree programs offered by the school and a description of the requirements for each.
2. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

**Criterion V.H. If the school offers degree programs using non-traditional formats or methods, these programs must a) be consistent with the mission of the school and within the school's established area of expertise; b) be guided by clearly articulated student learning outcomes which 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 which take into consideration and are responsive to the characteristics and needs of adult learners. If the school offers non-traditional 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 teaching and learning methodologies and to systematically use this information to stimulate program improvements.**

## **Interpretation**

A program of study may be delivered through various models and may use a wide range of teaching and learning technologies. Non-traditional programs, sometimes referred to as alternative or extended degree programs, are those that are offered in a format or design that differs significantly from the established approach of students attending regular on-site course

sessions spread over a quarter, semester or other standard term. Permitting students to extend their program over a longer period of time than the norm, offering courses in the evening or offering regular day and evening courses in an off-campus site but still spread over a standard term are no longer considered non-traditional. Nor is the occasional use of sophisticated communications technologies in a regular program format considered non-traditional.

A non-traditional degree program is a curriculum or course of study which is flexibly structured to meet the needs of a student population and which leads to the award of a degree. There is great variation in non-traditional models but generally they are designed to accommodate the needs of employed professionals (or part-time students) who cannot pursue a course of study in a traditional time frame or format. Most often accommodations are introduced in terms of time, location or format. Non-traditional programs, for example, may be offered over an extended period, in time slots outside the regular weekday work week, or in concentrated blocks of time during the summer or throughout the academic year. They may be offered in locations distant from the main campus of the institution that awards the degree. They may be offered in innovative formats, sometimes taking advantage of advanced technology such as interactive television, computer assisted learning, and other contemporary teaching/learning methods.

Innovative means of offering public health degree programs and thereby upgrading the qualifications of the public health work force are encouraged, particularly those models that respond to the needs of mid-career working professionals. Schools that do so, however, must plan, implement and evaluate these programs, consistent with principles of good practice regarding adult learning. While format and structure of the learning experiences must be appropriate to the adult student, academic rigor must be comparable, regardless of the format and structure. Academic rigor takes into consideration such factors as the qualifications of the teacher, institutional approval and review processes, and congruence between degree of complexity and the level of the degree.

### **Expected Documentation**

1. Identification of all degree programs that are offered in a non-traditional format. The matrix in V.A. may be referenced for this purpose.
2. Description of the non-traditional degree programs, including an explanation of the model or methods used, the school's rationale for offering these programs, the manner in which it provides necessary administrative and student support services, the manner in which it monitors the academic rigor of the programs and the manner in which it evaluates the format and methodologies.
3. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

## **RESEARCH**

**Criterion VI. 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.**

## **Interpretation**

The research program shall be consistent with the school's stated mission and goals and should complement teaching and learning objectives stated for the school's instructional programs. The school should provide an environment that is conducive to research and scholarly inquiry by all faculty. Such endeavors may involve basic and applied topics and appropriately include research aimed at improving the practice of public health. Opportunities should be available for students who would benefit from research experiences, whether or not such is required as a part of the curricula.

## **Documentation Expected**

1. A description of the school's research activities, including policies, procedures and practices which support research and scholarly activities.
2. A description of current community based research activities and/or those undertaken in collaboration with health agencies and community based organizations. Formal research agreements with such agencies should be identified.
3. A list of current research activity, including amount and source of funds, over the last three years.
4. Identification of measures by which the school may evaluate the success of its research activities, along with data regarding the school's performance against those measures over the last three years.
5. A description of student involvement in research.
6. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

## **SERVICE**

**Criterion VII. The school shall pursue an active service program, consistent with its mission, through which faculty and students contribute to the advancement of public health practice, including continuing education.**

## **Interpretation**

The school's service program should contribute to the fulfillment of its stated mission and goals and should complement teaching and learning objectives. Because the community is the site where public health is implemented, effective linkages with organizations and agencies in the community are essential to the success of the school in meeting its overall objectives. As a consequence, faculty should be actively involved with the community through communication, collaboration, consultation, provision of technical assistance, and other means of sharing the school's professional knowledge and competence. There should, as well, be effective ways for the community to participate in the work of the school, from assessing the relevance of curricula, to participating in teaching, to evaluating the effectiveness of the school. The service activities may relate to existing local, regional, national and international opportunities and needs.



Opportunities to engage in service should be available to all students, regardless of curricular requirements.

Although the primary educational function of a school of public health is the preparation of well qualified professionals, a school should also address the needs of the large numbers of personnel engaged in public health practice without formal training and the needs of previously trained professionals who need to maintain and advance their knowledge and skills. Assessment of professional needs should be undertaken periodically in public health settings and short-term programs should be developed in response to those needs and made available in easily accessible locales and formats. Schools should collaborate with other institutions that train public health personnel, in order to extend continuing education opportunities beyond the school's own market area.

Service is an explicit activity undertaken for the benefit of the greater society, over and beyond what is accomplished through teaching and research. The term service is often ill-defined and covers a wide range of activities including contributions of professional expertise, professional practice, continuing or outreach education, and membership on university committees. Participation in internal university committees is not within the definition of this section. Service as described herein refers to contributions of professional expertise to the public, including professional practice. While these activities may generate revenue, the value of service is not measured in financial terms.

### **Expected Documentation**

1. A description of the school's service program, including policies, procedures and practices which support service. If the school has formal contracts or agreements with external agencies, these should be noted.
2. A list of the school's current service activities, including identification of the community groups and nature of the activity, over the last three years.
3. A description of the school's continuing education program, including policies, procedures and practices which support continuing education.
4. A list of the continuing education programs offered by the school, including number of students served, over the last three years.
5. A list of other educational institutions with which the school collaborates to offer continuing education, if any.
6. Identification of the measures by which the school may evaluate the success of its service program, along with data regarding the school's performance against those measures over the last three years.
7. A description of student involvement in service.
8. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

## FACULTY

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

### Interpretation

Faculty adequacy, quantitatively and qualitatively, relates to a number of factors, including those stated above. The faculty of a school of public health must draw broadly from the many disciplines that contribute substantially to public health and must, in particular, be able to support the instructional concentrations the school elects to offer. A critical mass of faculty is necessary to support each concentration. While teaching resources may be drawn from other parts of the university and from professionals in practice settings, as well as people from the community, there must be a central core of faculty to sustain the curricular requirements for each concentration.

Faculty should teach and supervise student research and practice experiences in areas of knowledge with which they are thoroughly familiar and qualified by education and experience. To assure a broad public health perspective, in spite of increasing specialization in the field of public health, there should be faculty who have professional experience and have demonstrated competence in public health practice. To assure the relevance of curricula and individual learning experiences to current and future practice needs and opportunities, schools should regularly involve public health practitioners and other individuals involved in public health work through such arrangements as adjunct and part-time faculty appointments and use as preceptors. Schools should also encourage faculty to maintain ongoing practice links with public health agencies, especially state and local.

### Expected Documentation

1. Identification in table or chart of faculty to support the degree programs offered by the school, indicating at least professorial rank, tenure status, percent time, earned degrees, universities at which degrees were earned, disciplinary area of degree, area of teaching responsibility, area of research interest, and selected demographic data (gender, ethnicity).
2. Description of the manner in which the faculty complement integrates perspectives from the field of practice.
3. Identification of outcome measures by which the school may judge the qualifications of its faculty complement, along with data regarding the performance of the school against those measures over the last three or more years.
4. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

**Criterion VIII.B. 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.**

## **Interpretation**

Policies, procedures and operational guidelines related to conditions of employment should be established and available to all faculty. Procedures should provide for fair and equitable treatment of faculty and should be consistently applied. Criteria for advancement should reflect the school's mission and goals. The school should provide opportunities to enhance the teaching capabilities of faculty and otherwise support their professional growth and development. If the school makes part-time, adjunct, clinical or other faculty appointments, the responsibilities and privileges of these categories should be made explicit. Service to the community should be seen as a significant contribution in promotion and tenure deliberations. Procedures for evaluating faculty competence and performance, particularly in the area of teaching, should be in place and consistently applied.

## **Expected Documentation**

1. Inclusion of a faculty handbook or other written document which outlines faculty rules and regulations.
2. Description of provisions for faculty development, including identification of support for faculty categories other than regular full-time appointments.
3. Description of formal procedures for evaluating faculty competence and performance.
4. A description of student course evaluation process and/or evaluation of teaching effectiveness.
5. Description of the emphasis given to community service activities in the promotion and tenure process.
6. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

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

## **Interpretation**

Given the mission of public health of enhancing health in human populations and the mission of a school of public health to prepare professionals who address health needs and problems of populations, the inclusion of all segments of society is directly relevant to the achievement of the mission of a school of public health. A faculty that reflects the diverse demographic characteristics of the population can provide incentives for enrollment, matriculation and achievement of students from diverse demographic groups. Policies, procedures and practices of a school of public health should encourage the inclusion of faculty members who contribute to the diversity of the faculty complement.

## **Expected Documentation**

1. Demographic data on the school's faculty.
2. Description of policies and procedures regarding the school's commitment to providing equitable opportunities without regard to age, sex, race, disability, religion or national origin.
3. Identification of outcome measures by which the school may evaluate its success in achieving a demographically diverse faculty complement, along with data regarding the performance of the school against those measures over the last three or more years.
4. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

## **STUDENTS**

**Criterion IX.A. 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.**

### **Interpretation**

A school of public health should seek individuals who have the educational prerequisites, interest and motivation for undertaking and advancing in public health careers, consonant with the school's stated mission, goals and objectives. Admission procedures and policies should emphasize public health experience as an important factor when considering applicants.

### **Expected Documentation**

1. Description of the school's recruitment policies and procedures, with examples of recruitment materials.
2. Statement of admissions policies and procedures.
3. Quantitative information on the number of applicants, acceptances and admissions, by program area over the last three years.
4. Quantitative information on the number of students enrolled in each degree program identified in Criterion V.A., including a headcount of full-time and part-time students and a full-time equivalent conversion.
5. Identification of outcome measures by which the school may evaluate its success in enrolling a qualified student body, along with data regarding the performance of the school against those measures over the last three years.
6. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

**Criterion IX.B. Stated application, admission, and degree-granting requirements and regulations shall be applied equitably to individual applicants and students regardless of age, sex, race, disability, religion or national origin.**

**Interpretation**

A school should encourage the inclusion of students who reflect the diversity of the population. Schools should have affirmative action plans to recruit, admit and graduate students from groups that are disadvantaged or underrepresented in the public health professions. Approaches such as provisional admissions and remedial course work may be used to promote a diverse student body.

**Expected Documentation**

1. Description of policies, procedures and affirmative action plans to achieve a diverse student population.
2. Quantitative information on the demographic characteristics of the student body, including data on applicants and admissions.
3. Identification of measures by which the school may evaluate its success in achieving a demographically diverse student body, along with data regarding the school's performance against these measures over the last five years.
4. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

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

**Interpretation**

Each student enrolled in any school program should have access, from time of enrollment, to advisors who are knowledgeable about the school's curricula overall and about specific courses and programs of study. Orientation, including written documentation, should be provided for all entering students. Career and placement counseling should be available to students, including students who may not be seeking employment. If the school has large numbers of mid-career working students or non-traditional students, advisors should be sensitive to the differing needs of these students in regard to career and placement counseling. Appropriate career and placement counselors may include clinical faculty, community practitioners and alumni. The school may also wish to consider the development of a mentorship program which could draw mentors from these same affiliated groups.

**Expected Documentation**

1. Description of the advising and counseling services, including sample orientation materials such as student handbooks.
2. Information about student satisfaction with advising and counseling services.

3. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

**Criterion IX.D. Students shall, where appropriate, have participatory roles in conduct of school and program evaluation procedures, policy-setting and decision-making.**

### **Interpretation**

Students should participate in appropriate aspects of evaluation including assessment of teaching, of research and service opportunities, of field experiences, and of counseling and placement procedures. Administrative mechanisms should permit appropriate student involvement in program policy formulation and review. Standing and ad hoc committees, with explainable exceptions, should include student members.

### **Expected Documentation**

1. Description of student roles in evaluation of school and program functioning.
2. Description of student roles in governance, as well as in formal student organizations.
3. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

## **EVALUATION AND PLANNING**

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

### **Interpretation**

A school of public health must undertake systematic, broad-based and integrated evaluation of its activities, to determine its effectiveness in achieving its stated mission, goals and objectives. The results of this process must be linked to and systematically utilized to inform the school's processes by which it plans for the future. Evaluation and planning are interrelated functions which should be ongoing and explicit and contribute to making the school a learning organization in all aspects.

The school should have regular data collection mechanisms to provide information needed for its own evaluation, management and planning. Information should be obtained on a regular basis from alumni and from public health agencies concerning careers in public health, the value of graduates' educational experiences, and current and future needs for professional education. Planning should reflect the school's accommodation to changes in health needs of populations and in society and institutional responses to such change.

Evaluation and planning processes should provide for participation of the school's major constituent groups, including administration, faculty, students, alumni and the community. A wide variety of methods for achieving their input is possible.

### **Expected Documentation**

1. Description of evaluation procedures and planning process being used.
2. Identification of measures by which the school may evaluate the effectiveness of its evaluation and planning activities, along with data regarding the school's performance against these measures over the last three years.
3. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

**Criterion X.B. For purposes of seeking accreditation by CEPH, the school shall conduct an analytical self-evaluation and prepare a self-study document that responds to all criteria in this manual.**

### **Interpretation**

Accreditation is a form of external, peer-based evaluation that schools may elect to pursue and it can be one, although not the only, method of evaluation used by a school of public health. A school that pursues accreditation must undertake a self-evaluation that includes a qualitative and quantitative assessment of its success in achieving its mission, goals and objectives. A self-study process should be reflective, thoughtful and analytical and should result in a candid assessment of strengths and weaknesses in terms of the school's performance against the set of accreditation criteria.

The self-study process should involve the school's institutional officers, administrative staff, teaching faculty, student body, alumni and other significant constituencies, especially including representatives of the public health community.

### **Expected Documentation**

1. Provision of all documentation specified as being expected.
2. Description of the process used for the self-study.
3. An analysis of the school's responses to recommendations in the last accreditation report, if any.
4. Summary statement of the school's strengths and weaknesses in regard to each accreditation criterion and to the school's performance overall. (This statement may be organized as an executive summary, if the school so chooses.)
5. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.