




UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

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**MEMORANDUM**

To: Jeffrey Dembo  
Chair, Faculty Senate

From: Emery A. Wilson, M.D.   
Dean

Re: College of Public Health

Date: March 1, 2004

The Faculty Council in the College of Medicine has carefully considered the proposal to create a College of Public Health. I have attached a copy of their report.

Based on their report and my own review of the proposal, I support the creation of the College at this time. Although I acknowledge the financial issues raised by the Faculty Council, on balance I feel that the University of Kentucky should respond to the public health issues faced by the Commonwealth and provide, through the training and research programs in the proposed college, solutions to some of these problems.

attachment

cc: Thomas H. Kelly, Ph.D.  
Steven A. Haist, M.D.  
David S. Watt, Ph.D.  
Thomas W. Samuel, J.D.

EAW:lmaw



UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

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February 27, 2004

Thomas Samuel, J.D.,  
Interim Director  
School of Public Health  
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David Watt, Ph.D.  
Associate Provost for Academic Affairs  
University of Kentucky

Dear Drs. Samuel and Watt:

The Faculty Council of the College of Medicine would like to acknowledge and thank you for your efforts in preparing a report on the proposal to create a College of Public Health at the University of Kentucky and for attending meetings with the Faculty Council (1/20/04) and with the Faculty (2/12/04) to discuss the proposal and answer questions. This process has been helpful in clarifying a number of issues pertaining to the proposal and in permitting the faculty to provide an informed opinion. The purpose of this letter is to identify the specific issues that College of Medicine faculty have identified in forming opinions regarding the proposal and to summarize the opinions of the faculty. Only those issues that were identified by multiple faculty members have been listed. Faculty members were invited to provide a general opinion of the proposal. It is unlikely that each faculty member considered every issue equally or even as pertinent to their own evaluation of the proposal.

Prior to discussing the issues voiced by faculty, Faculty Council would like to comment on two historical events related to this proposal. First, inaccuracies are apparent in the original proposal to create a School of Public Health at the University of Kentucky Chandler Medical Center. For example, the report indicates that the School will seek accreditation by the Council on Education for Public Health, that the criteria for accreditation had been 'carefully reviewed' and that the School will meet the criteria as it is developed. Faculty Council is concerned that the decision to create the School of Public Health was made without a clear understanding of the issues. Second, Faculty Council remains deeply concerned with the ongoing strategy of recruiting students to attend the School of Public Health with an implicit message that the School will achieve national accreditation. This strategy is dismissive of the merits of an objective evaluation of the proposal to create a College of Public Health, and since there is now a cohort of students enrolled under such an impression, has had a significant impact on the merits of the proposal. Furthermore, Faculty Council believes that while this strategy has benefited the School of Public Health in its recruitment efforts, it has done so to the detriment of those students. While Faculty Council recognizes that you have not been associated in

Health, and the academic achievements of these units now contribute to the overall academic productivity of the College of Medicine. The relocation of the School of Public Health and the Department of Preventive Medicine and Environmental Health from the College of Medicine into the College of Public Health will result in these resources and indices of academic productivity being removed from the College of Medicine. While there is no net loss to the University, this relocation will have a detrimental impact on the ongoing efforts of the College of Medicine to achieve academic excellence.

- 2) The current proposal recommends that the Graduate Center for Toxicology and the Center on Drug and Alcohol Research be administratively relocated within the College of Medicine to offset this loss. There is general agreement with regard to the relocation of the Center on Drug and Alcohol Research, but the proposal to relocate the Graduate Center for Toxicology to the College of Medicine remains under discussion. While faculty are generally supportive of the proposal to relocate both centers into the College of Medicine, assuming that all parties are in agreement, it is important to recognize that the Toxicology proposal remains under consideration at this time.
- 3) The resources needed to achieve accreditation are not equal to those that will be required to operate the College. While acknowledging and thankful of your efforts in projecting the costs of establishing and maintaining a new College of Public Health, faculty remain unconvinced that no additional resources beyond those that already exist in the budgets of the affected units will be required to operate the new College.
- 4) Faculty believes that substantial additional resources will be required to support the College in its pursuit of academic excellence. Perhaps the concern is best expressed in that there are a number of academic units on campus that will require additional resources to achieve greater academic excellence at a time when resources appear to be diminishing. There is concern that the creation of the College of Public Health will result in yet another unit that is achieving marginal success due to limited resources.

The faculty has also expressed **additional concerns** associated with the proposal that impact enthusiasm for the proposal at this time.

- 1) The current proposal recommends that two faculty who are critical to ongoing efforts of the Cancer Center in its pursuit of extramural support being relocated to the College of Public Health. Both individuals are fully supportive of both the College and the Cancer Center. At the current time, productivity by these faculty members contribute to the College of Medicine, regardless of whether academic progress is credited to the Cancer Center or to the School of Public Health. The Dean of the College of Medicine can help to assure that the overall missions of the faculty and programs are coordinated. Relocating the School of Public Health to the College of Public Health removes the Dean of the College of Medicine

any way with these historical events, and that these events are not germane to the current evaluation of the academic merits of the proposal, we hope that public awareness of these historical events may help to reduce the chance that similar events will reoccur in the future.

Faculty Council has discussed the proposal for the creation of a new College of Public Health and, following the general faculty meeting of 2/14/04, anonymous opinions on the proposal were solicited from the faculty of the College of Medicine. The following is an overview of the issues that have been identified.

It is clear that the School of Public Health must achieve administrative status as a College in order to obtain accreditation by the Council on Education for Public Health. The information you have provided assures us that the current proposal, if adopted, provides an adequate number of faculty and the economic resources needed to achieve national accreditation without the need for any further financial support.

The faculty of the College of Medicine recognizes a number of important **strengths** associated with achieving national accreditation for public health:

- 1) Accreditation will provide greater educational and professional opportunities for current and future public health students and thereby permit the program to recruit and serve top students. It is recognized that faculty and students in the College of Medicine are among the group of current and prospective students.
- 2) A nationally accredited program will enhance the academic environment and reputation of the University and will support the recruitment and retention of talented faculty, particularly in the areas of epidemiology and biostatistics.
- 3) A nationally accredited program will enable Public Health to compete for federal funds that are restricted or most likely awarded to accredited programs. For example, you have indicated that one to two million dollars in educational funds will become available to the College upon achieving national accreditation, and that approximately 70 million dollars in federal research funds are available exclusively to nationally accredited programs of public health.
- 4) The faculty believes that a College of Public Health will serve the Commonwealth more effectively than the current School of Public Health.
- 5) The faculty and students of the School of Public Health and the Department of Preventive Medicine and Environmental Health are unanimously supportive of this proposal.

The faculty also identified the following **costs** associated with this proposal.

- 1) College of Medicine resources have supported the development of the School of Public Health and the Department of Preventive Medicine and Environmental

from that role. The concern is that while the faculty members are supportive of both the College of Public Health and the Cancer Center, both programs will likely be dependent on individuals within these two units contributing to the respective missions of their Center of College. It is not clear that the activities of these faculty members can be simultaneously supportive of both programs. A formal agreement should be established whereby academic effort is allocated and productivity is credited to the two programs in a manner that is mutually acceptable to the faculty and the programs, and/or that additional faculty with similar skills be targeted for recruitment.

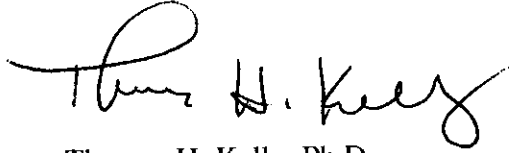
- 2) Salary support for faculty in the Department of Preventive Medicine and Environmental Health will also require careful attention to avoid conflict among faculty members and departments in the new College of Public Health. The status of the Department of Preventive Medicine and Environmental Health in the College of Public Health (i.e., clinical and distinct or equivalent to other departments) has not been specified. The faculty of the Department of Preventive Medicine and Environmental Health identified concerns regarding 'state salary base' in a memorandum dated November 12, 2003. A response by Dr. Watt on December 22, 2003, indicated that the issue would need to be raised with the permanent administration of the College.
- 3) The faculty is concerned about the potential impact of the creation of a new College at a time when resources are diminishing and substantial tuition increases are being discussed on the morale of faculty, staff and students of the University and on the reputation of the institution throughout the Commonwealth.
- 4) There is significant administrative change that is occurring at the University at this time, and while you have assured us that there is support for the creation of a College of Public Health by the Commonwealth of Kentucky, documentation of that support has not been forthcoming.

It is also important to recognize, however, that further delay regarding the proposal to create the College of Public Health will have an adverse impact on the morale of students and faculty who are impacted by the proposal.

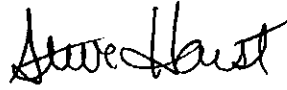
The faculty was also asked to indicate whether they supported the proposal, were not opposed to the proposal, or were opposed to the proposal. Opinions were solicited with regard to the proposal, in general, and when considering conditions at the University at this time. Opinions were provided by 91 faculty members. Regarding the proposal, in general, 55% of the opinions were in support of the proposal and 22% were opposed. Regarding the proposal when considering conditions at the University at this time, 46% of the opinions were in support of the proposal and 38% were opposed. As such, when the proposal was considered in general, approximately twice as many faculty supported the proposal as were opposed. When the proposal was evaluated when considering current conditions at the University, there was no clear consensus as to whether or not the faculty supported the creation of a new College of Public Health.

Thank you again for all of your efforts in preparing a report and in meeting with us to clarify and discuss the issues. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can provide additional information or clarification.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Thomas H. Kelly".

Thomas H. Kelly, Ph.D.  
Chair, Faculty Council

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Steven A. Haist".

Steven A. Haist, M.D.  
Chair Elect, Faculty Council