14 October 2008

Graduate Academic Council
c/o Jonathan Bartow, PhD
Office of Graduate Studies
The University at Albany
State University of New York
UA 125

Dear Dr. Bartow:

I am submitting to the Graduate Academic Council for review and approval a proposal for modifications to the DPH program. The intent of these minor changes is to strengthen the curriculum to be more in alignment with DPH competencies recently defined by the Association of Schools of Public Health. The revisions ensure that our students are exposed to a comprehensive curriculum that better prepares them to assume leadership roles in public health practice upon graduation. The proposed modifications were approved by the School of Public Health Academic Committee on September 18, 2008.

We will be pleased to answer any questions the Council may have about the proposed program modifications. Please direct questions to Dr. Mary Applegate, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, at mapplcgate@uamail.albany.edu or 402-0283.

Sincerely,

Philip C. Nasca, PhD
Dean
TO: Barry R. Sherman, Ph.D. Director, DrPH Program
FROM: Kurunthachalam Kannan, Ph.D. Chair, SPH Academic Committee
SUBJECT: Approval of the modifications to the DrPH program
DATE: September 18, 2008

The academic committee reviewed the proposed modifications to the DrPH curriculum and approves the revisions. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 518-474-0015, if you have any questions.
TO: Members of the SPH Academic Committee

FROM: Barry R. Sherman, Ph.D. Director, DrPH Program

SUBJECT: Minor modifications to the DrPH program

DATE: August 4, 2008

Endorsed by: Mary Applegate MD, MPH; Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

The proposed modifications grew out of a review and evaluation of the DrPH Program after nine months as its first full-time Director. The intent of these minor changes is to strengthen the curriculum to be more in alignment with DrPH competencies recently defined by the Association of schools of Public Health. The revisions ensure that our students are exposed to a comprehensive curriculum that better prepares them to assume leadership roles in public health practice upon graduation.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached at: brs02@health.state.ny.us or 518-402-0281.

Attached:  
- Brief DrPH Program Description
- Comparison Table of Current to Proposed DrPH Program
Program Leading to the Doctor of Public Health Degree (DrPH)

The mission of the University at Albany’s DrPH degree program is to prepare students for leadership roles in public health practice in governmental agencies, community-based organizations and other settings. Students acquire analytic, conceptual, and administrative skills while gaining a thorough understanding of the scientific, political, social, cultural, ethical and economic contexts within which public health problems occur and are addressed. The ultimate goal of the program is mastery of evidence-based decision-making and capacity to translate empirical knowledge into effective public health practice.

The University at Albany’s School of Public Health is unique because of its strong partnership with the New York State Department of Health, one of the largest, most prestigious health departments in the country, frequently on the front lines confronting new emerging infections or threats of bioterrorism. This collaboration is special because it expedites real-time integration of academic discipline with the every-day practice of public health on the national, state and local levels.

In sum, the University at Albany School of Public Health is a model of excellence in professional education, which should be emulated by other institutions of higher learning. The integration of academic rigor and practical experience guarantees that our graduates are extremely well prepared to face the real world of public health when they graduate.

The proposed revisions are minor but are necessary improvements that ensure that we address all DrPH competencies adopted by the Association of Schools of Public Health in 2008. The total required number of credits remains the same. The purpose of these proposed revisions is to bolster the quality of the Program’s curriculum by raising the rigor of the academic course-work to the doctoral level and to integrate more intensive education and training regarding leadership and health policy and management. The overall goals and intent of the DrPH program remain the same: to prepare well trained graduates qualified for high-level leadership roles in public health practice. The proposed revisions will strengthen the overall success of the program.

Resources: These changes require no additional resources.
Comparison of Current DrPH with Proposed Revisions

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS:

Credits/Curriculum:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total # credits = 75</td>
<td>Total # credits = 75</td>
<td>In order to integrate SPH 569: Public Health Leadership into the DrPH Core, 3 credits were subtracted from Doctoral Project/Dissertation (15 to 12) and added to the DrPH Core (9 to 12). Clarification that the 12 credits are split evenly between 2 separate 6-credit practicum placements. Because doctoral dissertation projects will generally be a continuation of the practicum rotation, and the fact that, after the proposal is defended and approved, only one credit per semester registration is required, subtracting 3 credits from the overall doctoral experience should have little consequence for the overall DrPH program of study.</td>
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<td>MPH Core: 15</td>
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<td>DrPH Core: 9</td>
<td>DrPH Core: 12</td>
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<td>Concentration: 18</td>
<td>Concentration: 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional: 6</td>
<td>Additional: 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practicum: 12</td>
<td>Practicum: 12 (two 6-credit)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doctoral Project/Dissertation: 15</td>
<td>Dissertation: 12</td>
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<td>DrPH core courses (9 credits)</td>
<td>DrPH core courses (12 credits): 4 of the following as approved by advisor: EPI 502: Principles epi. STA 553: Principles stat. HPM 627: Program Plan/Development. Management (e.g., HPM 641) Leadership (e.g., SPH 569) Policy (e.g., HPM 501)</td>
<td>HPM 627: Program Planning and Development replaces HPM 647: Program Evaluation to better prepare students for the comprehensive qualifying exam. Evaluation topics are covered in a variety of other courses. Leadership Training and Education is also now required because one of the integral elements of the DrPH degree is leadership and the curriculum lacked sufficient emphasis and content regarding this important topic. In consultation with advisors, students will select courses to provide a solid upper-level background in the disciplines of public health. To fulfill requirements for the DrPH Core in leadership, management, and policy, students will be encouraged to register for advanced doctoral courses in the Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy.</td>
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<td>Current</td>
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<td>Available concentrations: 1. Biostatistics; 2. Epidemiology; 3. Health policy &amp; management; 4. Social behavior and community health</td>
<td>Available concentrations: 1. Epidemiology/ Biostatistics; 2. Health policy, management and behavior.</td>
<td>The DrPH is an interdisciplinary degree. By reducing 4 tracks (2 in each department) to two (2) Departmental Concentrations, we are able to preserve specialization to meet the needs of potential employers, but at the same time, permit flexibility in the curriculum that gives students opportunities to pursue more upper level electives. Fine distinctions between tracks are not as relevant to the DrPH degree as are broader categories like Epidemiology/Biostatistics, compared to Health Policy and Management.</td>
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<td><strong>Epidemiology concentration:</strong> -EPI 502 -EPI 601 -Advanced methods course -Two 600 level or above Epi courses -One 600 level or above elective</td>
<td><strong>Epidemiology/Biostatistics</strong> 6 courses (18 credits) from the following as approved by advisor, including at least one advanced methods course. STA 554: Intro stat theory STA 555: Stat theory STA 558: Intro data anal/methods STA 559: Data anal/methods EPI 601: Advanced epi methods 600 level or above Epi/Biostat electives</td>
<td>Epidemiology and Biostatistics are being combined into one Departmental concentration, instead of 2 tracks.</td>
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<td><strong>Health Policy and Management</strong> HPM 501 HPM 511 HPM 650</td>
<td><strong>Health Policy, Management and Behavior</strong> HPM 511: Econ. Analysis. HPM 650: Strategic leadership/hlth mgmt. HPM 520: Research design. HPM 521 (Family and community) OR HPM 530 (Childhood obesity) OR HPM 625 (Aging) HPM 627: Health ed and promo. 600 level or above electives</td>
<td>The two tracks; Social Behavior and Community Health and Health Policy and Management will combine to make one departmental concentration. There will be a choice of new 600 level courses within SPH and additional courses will be made available in the Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy in order to increase offerings related to policy and management in the public health sector.</td>
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4 December 2008

Dean Phillip A. Nasca
School of Public Health
GEC 100
One University Place
Rensselaer, NY 12144-3445

Dear Dean Nasca:

I received your letter dated November 26, 2008 regarding your request to have doctoral students in public health take some of our graduate courses in policy, management and leadership. We would be delighted to have your students enroll in our courses. The number you project is fine. It would not cause any burden to instructors. On the contrary, we welcome the intellectual diversity that the students will bring to the classroom. I wish the doctoral program in public health much success and we look forward to receiving your students.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey D. Straussman
Dean

Cc: Graduate Academic Council