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Transitioning from Program to School of Public Health

The mission of the proposed School of Public Health at the University of California, Irvine is to organize the existing academic and professional programs focused on creating, integrating, and translating population-based knowledge into preventive strategies for reducing the societal burden of human disease and disability through excellence in research, education, and public service.

When established, the UC Irvine School of Public Health will be the third School dedicated to public health within the UC System, the youngest of which was established more than 50 years ago (UCLA). UC Irvine’s School will be distinctive in its situation in the largest research university in the sixth most populous county in the United States, and more than 30% of residents in our county community are foreign born with more than 35 different languages spoken at homes. Therefore, our vision is to be the leading academic resource for research, education at the baccalaureate and graduate levels, and outreach service in suburban settlements where emphasis is placed on the sociocultural diversity and global context of public health.

The ten-year old Program in Public Health at UC Irvine has evolved rapidly, having laid a solid foundation for innovative approaches to public health research and practice, and is at an opportune time to transition to School status. The major accomplishments of the Program in Public Health that provide the propellant for this transition are as follows:

2. Robust and highly competitive undergraduate degree programs (B.A. and B.S.) in public health enrolling approximately 1,200 students.
3. Strong professional Masters degree in Public Health (M.P.H.) with three areas of emphasis, enrolling approximately 40 students.
4. Innovative research-focused Ph.D. degree in Public Health to begin enrolling students in 2013-2014; jointly sponsored M.S. and Ph.D. in Environmental Health Science; collaboration with the Ph.D. in Epidemiology.
5. A Department of Population Health and Disease Prevention with approximately 40 core and affiliated faculty members; 14 members of staff; approximately 25,000 sq. ft. of office and laboratory space; and research activities budget exceeding $50 million.
6. Community engagement network including partnerships with more than 200 public health agencies.
7. External advisory board members who are distinguished leaders in public health practice to support the mission of the Program. See appendix for letter of support from the board members to chancellor Drake about the proposed School of Public Health.
8. Vigorous organized research centers, including GHREAT: Global Health Research, Education and Translation.
9. Partnerships with the Institute for Clinical and Translational Science in research and education.

10. Founding member of the national Association of Schools and Programs in Public Health (ASPSPH).

The proposed School can be established without infusion of new resources beyond those necessary to create an administrative structure for participating units and to support the academic and administrative leaders of the School. As the School grows in terms of research needs, student enrollment, and public engagement, it is expected that resource requirements will increase commensurably, and the administration will go through the well-established campus-wide processes to request and acquire additional resources.

To be considered eligible for accreditation review by CEPH, a school of public health shall demonstrate the following characteristics. The text in bold blue font indicate the status of the current program and what needs to be accomplished to establish UC Irvine’s School of Public Health as an accredited academic unit:

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 or its equivalent in other countries. **(UCI Status: Satisfied)**.

b. The school and its faculty and students shall have the same rights, privileges and status as other professional schools that are components of its parent institution. **(UCI Status: The proposal for School status will accomplish this goal, with the necessary appointment of a Dean for the new School)**.

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 values. **(UCI Status: The proposal for School status will serve as the vehicle to communicate the accomplishment of this goal. The current department of population health and diseases prevention already functions as stated, and the functions will be expanded to accommodate additional units that may join the new School initiative)**.

d. The school 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

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public health values and goals into all aspects of the school’s activities. **(UCI Status: The proposal for School status will accomplish this goal, with the necessary appointment of a Dean for the new School and necessary administrative infrastructure).**

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. At a minimum, the school shall offer the Master of Public Health (MPH) degree, or an equivalent professional 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. **(UCI Status: Partly satisfied. We already have three areas of emphasis in our MPH program, and three more (global health, clinical and translational science, and health informatics have been suggested for development over the next five years; Doctoral training requirement is satisfied with the Ph.D. in Public Health; Ph.D. in Environmental Health Science, and Ph.D. in Epidemiology).**

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 community and that combines educational excellence with applicability to the world of public health practice. **(SUCI Status: Partly satisfied with the establishment of a self-study process for accreditation review, which was successfully completed to gain accreditation for the Program in Public Health. The evaluation procedures will be expanded to include collaborating units in the School initiative).**
Appendix

Letter from the External Advisory Board of the Program in Public Health to Chancellor Michael V. Drake about the Proposed School of Public Health at UC Irvine.
28 June 2013

CHANCELLOR MICHAEL V. DRAKE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE

RE: TRANSFORMATION OF THE PROGRAM IN PUBLIC HEALTH TO
THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA, IRVINE

UC Irvine’s Program in Public Health is a ten-year old academic unit that has
grown rapidly to make impressive contributions to the research, education,
and community service mission of the university. The undergraduate program
enrolls 1,200 students and graduates 500 students a year. The alumni are
employed in various public health sectors in the community. The professional
Masters program is small, but of very high quality, and research doctorate
training programs have been launched successfully. The faculty members are
engaged in extramurally-funded research activities advancing the mission of
evidence-based public health at various levels, including community based
interventions and investigations of risk factors and vulnerable populations.
Based on these accomplishments, the Program earned full accreditation by the

Members of the External Advisory Board of the Program in Public Health
believe that this is an opportune time to advance to the next stage of the
strategic vision for organizing diverse public health initiatives at UC Irvine.
We believe that the next accreditation review of the academic unit should
occur with the plan to gain accreditation as a School of Public Health. For
this to happen, the support of your administration is needed for the proposal to
establish a School of Public Health and to shepherd the proposal through the
systemwide review process and endorsement by the Regents of the University
of California, Irvine. There are several reasons to embark on the creation of a
School of Public Health at this time:

1) The future of health care is requiring a focus on prevention and
population health management. It is critical that these foundational elements
of public health be visible at UCI at the level of a School.

2) Orange County does not have a School of Public Health. In order for
UCI to demonstrate its leadership and prominence in the field of public
health it needs this level of prominence to differentiate itself from other
programs in the County.
3) A School of Public Health provides a stronger platform to seek private and government funding to support public health research, as well as to recruit top students and faculty.

We note that the University of California System has only two Schools of Public Health (UCLA and UC-Berkeley) both established more than 50 years ago. UC Irvine is primed to be the next School of Public Health within the UC System. With the solid foundation, unique academic features, and accomplishments of the current Program in Public Health, we expect that a new School of Public Health will be a major asset for the university and for the Orange County region.

Sincerely,

Signatures:

[Signatures]

Sincerely,

[Signatures]

America Bracho, MPH, CDE

Sincerely,

[Signatures]

Sincerely,

[Signatures]

Eric G. Handler, MD, MPH, FAAP
Deputy Agency Director/Health Officer

Sincerely,

[Signatures]

William W. Bonney, MD MPH
Health Care Council Orange Co