

COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Friday, October 14, 2011

DECISION ITEM B:

Schools of Public Health at IUPUI and Indiana University Bloomington

Staff Recommendation

That the Commission for Higher Education approve the creation of a new Indiana University School of Public Health-Indianapolis at the IUPUI campus; and

That the Commission accept the request from Indiana University to change the name of the School of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation at Indiana University Bloomington to the Indiana University School of Public Health-Bloomington.

Background

By statute, the Commission for Higher Education “may approve or disapprove the . . . establishment of any new college or school.” In the case of the IU School of Public Health-Indianapolis, a new unit is being created where none existed before.

The IU School of Public Health-Bloomington represents a different situation, in that the existing School of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation (HPER) will comprise the basis of the new school and, from the perspective of the IU Board of Trustees, this is a name change. Because the conversion of HPER into a School of Public Health does represent a significant change – involving, for example, accreditation of the entire school by an accrediting body, rather than individual programs, and a curricular change of every program offered by the school to reflect at least some tie to public health – the staff bring this change to the Commission for formal action, rather than accepting this through routine staff action.

Since President Michael McRobbie announced the IU Public Health Initiative on May 5, 2009, and in subsequent presentations by the University, including those made in conjunction with Commission approval of four Ph.D. programs related to public health on three separate occasions, the Commission has been supportive of (1) the need to increase the state’s programmatic capacity in public health and (2) the appropriateness of engaging both the IUPUI and Bloomington campuses in that expansion. (The Commission approved the following four Ph.D. programs: Epidemiology at IUPUI, August 2009; Health Policy and Management at IUPUI, August 2010; Epidemiology and Environmental Health at IU Bloomington, March 2011.)

From a Commission perspective, the issue that remained unresolved was the way in which the programmatic resources at the

Bloomington and Indianapolis campuses were to be organized. More specifically, is it more effective and efficient to have a single school, embracing both campuses, or two separate schools? In the 12-state Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC) region, there are five states (Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri) with accredited schools of public health, and in each case, the state has just one school, involving just one campus.

President McRobbie's May 2009 announcement of the University's Public Health Initiative expressed a preference for a single school, as indicated in the following statement:

“However the requirements of the accrediting body for schools of public health (CEPH – Council on Education for Public Health) rule out the formation of a core school that would combine the public health resources on both campuses. Given this, and given the strong foundations in public health that exist on both campuses, each campus is authorized to begin the process for establishing a school of public health on each campus. However, should the CEPH accreditation rules change in the future to allow the formation of a core school, then the expectation would be that the two schools (assuming both are established) would merge into a single core school.”

Direct conversations with CEPH confirm that accreditation of a single, core school spanning both campuses would be unlikely under CEPH's current rules.

Given the significant, adverse consequences that would follow a time- and effort-consuming failed attempt to become accredited as a single, core school – which include lessened attention to critical public health issues and opportunity costs associated with an inability to pursue research grants that are available only to accredited schools of public health – there is a compelling case to proceed with the University's request to create two, separately accredited schools of public health.

Supporting Documents

Three documents that were shared with the Indiana University Board of Trustees were also shared with Commission members:

- (1) *Proposal for a School of Public Health on the IUPUI Campus*, March 7, 2011
- (2) *Proposal for a Name Change on the IU Bloomington Campus from School of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation to School of Public Health*, March 12, 2011
- (3) *The Indiana University Public Health Initiative – the Need for Two Schools*, May 2011