

Association of Schools of Public Health

About ASPH

“The Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH) is the only national organization representing the deans, faculty and students of the accredited member schools of public health and other programs seeking accreditation as schools of public health. Our membership is composed of 36 Member and several Associate Member [institutions]. ASPH coordinates funding opportunities, fellowships and internships, publications, and a number of other projects.”¹

ASPH was established in 1953 “to facilitate communication among the leadership of schools”¹.

“ASHP has gradually assumed a variety of functions, including:

- Providing a focus and platform for the enhancement of existing and emerging academic public health programs;
- Working with various agencies of the federal government on projects aimed at strengthening public health education and the public health profession;
- Assisting its member schools in the development and coordination of national health policies;
- Serving as an information center for governmental and private groups and individuals whose concerns overlap those of higher education for public health; and,
- Assisting in meeting national goals of disease prevention and health promotion.”¹

ASPH Projects and Activities

“On behalf of the schools of public health, ASPH works with various federal and private agencies and associations on projects aimed at strengthening public health education and the public health profession.

Currently, the Association of Schools of Public Health:

- Administers cooperative agreements with CDC and HRSA;
- Administers the Centers for Public Health Preparedness and related projects;
- Manages a grant to develop folic acid tools with the March of Dimes;
- Coordinates programs to strengthen Awareness and Pathways to Public Health;
- Provides staffing for the Delta Omega Honorary Public Health Society and the Association of Teachers of Maternal and Child Health (ATMCH);
- Administers the STEP UP project for the American Legacy Foundation;
- Administers the Building Bridges Project;
- Sponsors and manages the APHA Academic Public Health Caucus; and
- Staffs an ASPH/CDC-NCIPC Injury Project to advance Injury Control and Prevention in Research, Teaching, and Practice.”¹

Journal: *Public Health Reports*

“*Public Health Reports* is the official journal of the U.S. Public Health Service. ASPH has been a partner in the publication of *Public Health Reports* since 1999. PHR has established itself as one of the Public Health Community’s key information resources in the public health field for over 125 years. The peer-reviewed journal is published bi-monthly—six issues offering articles in three main areas: public health practice, research, and viewpoints/commentaries. In the past five years we have tackled such topics as tobacco control, teenage violence, occupational disease

and injury, immunization, drug policy, lead screening, health disparities, and many other key issues.”²

Board of Directors

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Harrison Spencer, Association of Schools of Public Health

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ASPH Committees and Councils

“ASPH is governed by its membership and a board of directors. A number of standing committees and councils also recommend program directions and policies to both the board of directors and the members in general.”¹

Committees:

- Academic Practice Committee- New Chair: Dean Ciro Sumaya, Texas A&M
- Accreditation Committee
- Diversity Committee
- Education Committee
- Executive Committee
- Finance Committee
- Global Health Committee
- Legislative Committee
- Data Advisory Committee

Councils:

- Aging in Public Health Council
- Behavioral and Social Sciences Council
- Biostatistics and Epidemiology Council
- Career Services Council
- Continuing Professional Education Council
- Development and Alumni Affairs Council
- Distance Education Council
- Environmental and Occupational Health Council
- Health Services Administration Council

- Marketing and Public Relations Council
- Maternal and Child Health Council
- Public Health Practice Coordinators Council
- Student Services Council
- Tobacco Use Prevention Council

Upcoming Meetings and Conferences

ASPH Annual Meeting (held in conjunction with APHA)
November 2005, New Orleans, LA

Activities and Position Statements Relevant to the Work of the Collaborative

1. ASPH Definition of Public Health Practice

“Several interpretations of public health practice exist. ASPH has defined public health practice as *“the strategic, organized, and interdisciplinary application of knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to perform essential public health services and other activities to improve the population’s health.”*³ From the perspective of schools of public health, public health practice is a scholarly endeavor seen as academic public health practice...The activities regarding public health practice and academic public health practice are critical to the strength of the public health infrastructure and the ability to provide successful health promotion and disease prevention services and policies.”¹

2. ASPH Council of Public Health Practice Coordinators

“The council serves to advise the deans and engage the faculty and member schools on public health practice activities. It provides a forum for the discussion of policies and programs to promote, improve and strengthen public health practice. These include faculty development activities, the planning of student field experiences, collaborative ventures with agencies and organizations, and the utilization of methods which incorporate contemporary practice principles, including the essential public health services, into teaching programs. A particular emphasis of the council is the promotion of scholarship in public health practice. In addition, members of the council perform liaison functions for their schools with various agencies of the federal government. The council is composed of at least one administrator or faculty member appointed by the dean of each school of public health.

Collectively, the Council provides a consensus-based forum to nationally advise both ASPH and practitioners on policies and programs to strengthen overall academic-practice research, teaching and service.”¹

The meeting of the Public Health Practice Coordinator’s Council at the November 2004 meeting at APHA included significant discussion of how a practicum should be defined, and what the appropriate requirements should be. This appears to have grown out of a shared view that as professional schools, practice should be essential to public health education, and that further steps need to be taken to create faculty assistance and incentives in developing and support strong practicum programs.

3. Scholarly Practice in Promotion and Tenure Guidelines

RPT guidelines from twelve ASPH member schools were compiled in the Summer of 2003 to demonstrate the variability in approaches of member institutions in recognizing the scholarly work of faculty.

The collection of guidelines are made available online at:
www.asph.org/UserFiles/Compliation.doc

4. Council on Linkages

ASPH is a member of the Council on Linkages which is a national organization of leaders from the public health practice and academic communities whose mission is to “improve public health practice and education by fostering, coordinating, and monitoring links between academia and the public health and healthcare community, developing and advancing innovative strategies to build and strengthen public health infrastructure, and creating a process for continuing public health education throughout one’s career.”⁴

5. "Demonstrating Excellence in Academic Public Health Practice"³

"Demonstrating Excellence in Academic Public Health Practice," a paper developed by the ASPH public health practice coordinators, proposes a definition of academic public health practice and addresses the issue of defining, demonstrating and evaluating scholarship in terms of faculty rewards in promotion and tenure. These issues are critical to linking academia to practice, improve the relevance of public health education, advance the competence of the public health workforce and ultimately have a positive impact in improving the health of the public.¹

6. "Strong Schools, Strong Partners"⁵

"This report entitled, “Strong Schools, Strong Partners” was developed by ASPH, under contract to HRSA's Bureau of Health Professions (BHPPr). The report summarizes a wide array of the linkage, capacity building and student practica experience undertaken by schools of public health between 1989 and 1995. The report draws its information from progress reports the schools submitted to BHPPr detailing what each has done to improve its practice activities. These reports, read together, provide a picture of the broad range of practice activities undertaken by schools of public health, and the challenges universities face in increasing their practice agendas.”¹

Note: While the progress reports did ask specific information about administrative policies and RPT policy changes to reflect faculty public health practice activity, few schools reported information in great enough detail as to fully understand the state of RPT policies at their school, and what changes were made if any. Additionally this section is emphasized less than discussion of improving student practice activities.

7. “Research Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice”

ASPH supported the publication of a supplement to the American Journal of Preventative Medicine in 1999 which “highlights successful collaborative research activities between academic public health institutions and practice agencies and organizations.”¹

8. ASPH/HRSA Cooperative Agreement

“The Association of Schools of Public Health Cooperative Agreement with the DHHS Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).” The ASPH/HRSA Cooperative Agreement (ASPH/HRSA CA) is the first CA in HRSA history to be awarded. The ASPH/HRSA CA provides an opportunity for faculty, staff and students from accredited schools of public health to partner with HRSA and develop successful, innovative curricula and training mechanisms which cut across HRSA's goals and HRSA-supported health service delivery programs and public health education programs. In fiscal year 2001, HRSA's BCOs (*Bureaus, Centers and Offices*) funded the ASPH/HRSA CA at over \$1.8 million.

The purposes of the Cooperative Agreement are:

- ***To provide assistance in curricula and training development*** that will help address the need for better educated and culturally sensitive public health practitioners;
- ***To strengthen and institutionalize linkages*** between public health academia and the public health practice community and meet the needs of students, practitioners, and HRSA-sponsored services and programs; and,
- ***To develop innovative training mechanisms*** and help address the vast number of individuals lacking formal public health training to appropriately understand and adequately serve HRSA grantees.”¹

9. Public Health Training Centers

“The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) funded Public Health Training Centers (PHTC) are partnerships between accredited schools of public health and related academic institutions and public health agencies and organizations. The PHTC Program is designed to improve the Nation's public health system by strengthening the technical, scientific, managerial and leadership skills and abilities of current and future public health professionals. Public Health Training Centers assess the learning needs of the public health workforce and provide training to meet those needs. Currently, 42 states and the District of Columbia are covered by PHTC activity.”¹

10. APHA Academic Public Health Caucus

“Caucus Purpose and Mission:

The APHA Academic Public Health Caucus is a platform for APHA members to discuss issues of mutual concern regarding academic public health, such as academic public health practice. Specifically, the caucus provides a forum to showcase and learn about innovations in education, training, and academic research not only from public health academicians, but also from practitioners within public health institutions (i.e., federal, state, regional, local, private sector or non-profit organizations or personnel) that administer or participate in Academic/Practice partnerships. Academic/Practice partnerships include, but are not limited to, inter- multi- and

trans-disciplinary collaborations to promote health and prevent disease and injury among populations.

The Caucus has been in official relations with the American Public Health Association (APHA) since 1992. The caucus has been very important in providing an opportunity for public health academicians who are APHA members to share and discuss issues that impact the research, teaching and service missions of graduate public health education not only from a regional perspective, but also from the consideration that academic public health can provide critical support to the public health infrastructure and operations. In addition, the caucus activities are ideal occasions for public health practitioners to learn about share their concerns regarding the education that future public health practitioners should receive and the pertinent issues that should be addressed in continuing education and training programs that would be offered by the academic public health community. Further, the caucus provides a forum for sharing concerns regarding public health practice with the goal that these issues covering all the dimensions of health will be addressed in policy debates.

Caucus Goals:

1. Promote the development, support, and advancement of academic public health practice within graduate public health education institutions among APHA membership and leadership.
2. Heighten the understanding and support of academic public health practice by practitioners at the federal, state, and local public health agency levels, as well as with community organizations, foundations, and other organizations that partner with academicians to fulfill national and local public health needs.
3. Encourage and enhance the capacity of public health practice through partnerships with public health agencies, community organizations, and other institutions and fields engaged in issues or activities that illustrate how academic public health practice scientifically improves practice goals.
4. Explain, translate, and promote the understanding of scholarly practice-based teaching and research activities for academic and practice audiences through educational programs, publications and presentations.
5. Share information about organizations, programs, funding sources and other resources engaged to promote academic public health practice public health.
6. Promote linkages with organizations (including other APHA caucuses and sections) which share goals with those of this caucus, for mutual support, education, policy development and advocacy.”¹

Caucus Chair: Patricia Johnston, DrPH, MS, RD
 Dean, School of Public Health, Loma Linda University
 (*Collaborative member school*)
 Caucus staffed by ASPH

11. Report on Practice-Based Teaching for Public Health from ASPH⁶

The Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH) Council of Public Health Practice Coordinators has recently released "Demonstrating Excellence in Practice-Based Teaching for Public Health." The document is sponsored by the ASPH Council of Public Health Practice

Coordinators, the WK Kellogg Foundation, and the Bureau of Health Professions of the Health Resources and Services Administration.

The intent of the document is to build on the framework provided in "Demonstrating Excellence in Public Health Practice" (<http://www.asph.org/uploads/demon.pdf>) and to help "schools of public health and all practice communities understand and undertake their joint responsibility for the learning needs of students and practitioners through the dynamic and scholarly means of practice-based teaching."

The document provides:

- * a description and explanation of terms,
- * guiding principles, and
- * suggestions on methodologies for implementation.

The document also seeks to promote "a culture within the schools and their practice partner institutions that nurtures and sustains practice-based teaching" and provides a framework for evaluating the scholarship and rigor of practice-based teaching for the purposes of faculty promotion and tenure.

For copies of the report, contact ASPH at 202-296-1099, www.asph.org.

ASPH Meeting with CCPH

CCPH staff met by phone with Harrison Spencer, President and CEO of ASPH.

- Interested in working with CCPH to organize a group of interested public health schools to work on this issue.
- Possible topic of discussion at the Dean's retreat.
- ASPH would be interested in discussing this further. CCPH will send a series of possible action/policy steps to consider.

Contact Information

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References:

¹ Association of Schools of Public Health Website. www.asph.org Accessed 11/3/04.

² Association of Schools of Public Health, Public Health Reports Website. www.asph.org/document.cfm?page=713 Accessed 11/3/04.

³ Demonstrating Excellence in Academic Public Health Practice. Association of Schools of Public Health. June 1999. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Bureau of Health Professions, Rockville, MD. Available at: www.asph.org/uploads/demon.pdf. Accessed 11/3/04.

⁴ Council on Linkages Website. www.phf.org/Link.htm. Accessed 11/7/04.

⁵ Strong Schools, Strong Partners: A Report on Practice Activities of Schools of Public Health. Association of Schools of Public Health. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Bureau of Health Professionals, Rockville, MD. Available at: www.asph.org/uploads/StrongSchools.pdf. Accessed 11/3/04.

⁶ Council of Public Health Practice Coordinators. Demonstrating excellence in practice-based teaching for public health. Washington, DC: Association of Schools of Public Health, 2004.