



To: Joel Kaufman, Interim Dean, School of Public Health

From: David L. Eaton, Vice Provost and Dean

Rebecca Aanerud, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

RE: Review of the Department of Epidemiology (2015-2016)

This memo outlines the recommendations from the academic program review of the Department of Epidemiology. Detailed comments and findings can be found in the documents that were part of the following formal review proceedings:

- Charge meeting between review committee, department, and administrators (November 9, 2015)
- Department self-study (February 16, 2016)
- Site visit (May 9-10, 2016)
- Review committee report (June 10, 2016)
- Department response to the review committee report (November 8, 2017)
- Graduate School Council consideration of review (May 18, 2017)

The review committee consisted of:

Tessa Evans-Campbell, Associate Professor, UW School of Social Work (Committee Chair)

Peter Tarczy – Hornocho, Chair & Professor, UW Dept. Biomedical Informatics and Medical Education

Sharon Kardia, Professor, Epidemiology & Senior Associate Dean for Administration, School of Public Health, University of Michigan

Bradley Pollock, Professor & Chair, Department of Public Health Sciences, School of Medicine, University of California, Davis

The Department of Epidemiology is located in the School of Public Health at the University of Washington and offers the following graduate programs: Master of Science, Master of Public Health, and Doctor of Philosophy.

The Graduate School Council considered findings and recommendations from the review at its meeting on May 18, 2017. A summary of this report, composed by Graduate School Council Members, is attached to this document.

Graduate School Council Recommendations

The Graduate School Council commends the Department of Epidemiology on the strength of its programs, faculty, and students. After discussion regarding the attached general recommendations, the Council recommended the following action items:

- Full academic program review in 10 years (2025-2026)
- Submit an update on the six areas noted in the attached summary to the Graduate School Council in five years (Winter Quarter, 2021)

We concur with the Council's comments and recommendations.

cc: Gerald Baldasty, Provost and Executive Vice President
Patricia Moy, Associate Vice Provost for Academic and Student Affairs, Office of the Provost
Victoria Holt, Professor & Chair, Department of Epidemiology
John Paulson, Assistant Director, Student Academic Services, Department of Epidemiology
UW Members of the academic program review committee
Members of the Graduate School Council
Wesley Henry, Associate Director, Academic Affairs and Planning, The Graduate School President, Graduate and Professional Student Senate

Attachment

Summary of Graduate Program Review Department of Epidemiology

Graduate School Council Recommendations:

- Continuing with 10-year review cycle
- Program updates—not more than that—be submitted to Graduate Council in 5 years concerning the six areas enumerated below:

Epidemiology Strengths

- Very good & appreciated new Chair, Dr.Holt for attentive listening, proactive development of actions, open to feedback, and dealing with budget constraints
- Faculty, with notable depth and breadth, has high national and international reputation. Program has a positive reputation for both teaching and funded research. The faculty is highly engaged and enthusiastic
- Affiliations with other research institutions (e.g. Fred Hutchinson and Group Health Cooperative Center for Health Studies), and corresponding 17 of 60 “core” faculty with primary appointments at other research institutions adds significantly to the unit’s success
- Program has attracted outstanding students who are successful and very supportive of the program (though continuing to do so in the future likely will depend on increasing faculty and financial resources)
- New undergraduate courses have been launched and are successful

Epidemiology Challenges

1. Mission

Following some reduction in course offerings, need to make sure both basic disciplinary and advanced topics are covered appropriately. Need to assess possible overlap between undergraduate and masters-level courses.

2. Faculty Engagement

While faculty are all very engaged, junior faculty are more so, with “usual” drift by senior faculty such that action to develop more re-engagement is commended—partly be more explicit acknowledgement of senior faculty’s achievements. There has been some lack of faculty knowledge about budget situation and implications for offerings, etc. More contribution of both primary and non-primary faculty in decision-making is desirable, which will help with development of positive, forward-orientation.

3. Research-Education Balance

While the majority of faculty support the emphasis on research and grant-based funding, there is some concern about the educational dimension—in part a better knowledge of the actual funding mechanisms would help understanding the emphasis. Parallel, student should better understand parameters for hiring RAs.

Internal and external advisory boards are recommended to gain more advice.

4. Fiscal Situation

ABB has had a major negative impact, especially as applied to the department level. Strategic decisions and pragmatic tactics are hampered both by this basic condition and the fact that some faculty and students do not adequately understand the funding sources and limitations. New revenue generating projects, such as an online option, should be considered, but with an eye to the limits of stretching time and budget allocations

A clear and comprehensive model of expenses and revenues, in detail, should be generated to enable shared understanding. Fundraising efforts should be increased, in coordination with the School's Advancement team/plans, and overall UW capital campaign.

5. Diversity

More proactive efforts are encouraged to strengthen the multiple aspects and priorities of increased diversity.

6. Relationships with Off Campus Partners

While faculty from other-than-UW units are crucial to the departments success, a number of non-primary faculty "feel disenfranchised and at are at risk of becoming disengaged. Though there are restraints (e.g. in grant applicants and return of a portion of indirect costs), realistic changes should be attempted to improve the linkages.

Areas of Concurrence

The department has agreed with and positively responded to all the concerns and recommendations of the review committee. Indeed, the department has already begun to implement many of the changes often with increased meetings, retreats, **providing and focally discussing relevant data provision—especially budget details--**and web-based information; all the other significant issues are being considered (as appropriate) by the Curriculum Committee (e.g. reviewing course offerings and overlap), Student Academic Services, the Diversity Committee, and other committees.

Overall, the department's positive responses are even more detailed than the review committee's coverage.