

**Board of Regents, University System of Georgia  
Administrative Committee on Public Health**

Meeting – April 25, 2008  
Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health, Georgia Southern University  
Statesboro, Georgia

**Summary of Proceedings**

Committee Members and Attendees

Armstrong Atlanta State University (AASU)

Dr. Shelley Conroy, Dean, College of Health Professions

Dr. Michael Mink, MPH Program Director

Fort Valley State University (FVSU)

Dr. William Zimmerli, MPH Program Director

Georgia State University (Georgia State)

Mr. Russ Toal, Clinical Associate Professor, Institute of Public Health

Georgia Southern University (Georgia Southern)

Dr. Charles Hardy, Dean, Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health, *Committee Chair*

Medical College of Georgia (MCG)

Dr. Carol Campbell, Associate Dean, School of Allied Health

University of Georgia (UGA)

Dr. Phil Williams, Dean, College of Public Health

University System of Georgia

Mr. Benjamin Robinson, Executive Director

USG Center for Health Workforce Planning and Analysis

Dr. Valerie Hepburn, Consultant

Dr. Hardy convened the meeting at 12:05pm. The meeting was conducted during the lunch break-out sessions on the Friday of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Biennial Master Teacher in Public Health Workshop, held at the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health at Georgia Southern University. Participants thanked Dr. Hardy and Georgia Southern for the hospitality and the excellent workshop program. Committee members and attendees introduced themselves. The group welcome Dr. Conroy, the new dean at AASU and Mr. Ben Robinson, who is beginning a new position at the USG office. Members reviewed and ratified the summary of the September 7, 2007 meeting of the committee.

Dr. Hardy asked Dr. Hepburn to bring the group up-to-date on changes which have taken place at the USG offices. Dr. Hardy then recognized Mr. Robinson to provide an overview of the vision for the Health and Medical Programs unit generally and the Center for Health Workforce Planning and Analysis more specifically. Mr. Robinson provided background from the work that has been underway and conceptualized the vision for integrated planning across the full range of academic programs in the health field. Mr. Robinson and Dr. Hepburn presented a copy of the status report entitled *System-Level Projects Health Profession Initiative*, which had been delivered by Dr. Daniel Rahn, Senior Vice-Chancellor for Health and Medical Program, to the Chancellor and

Board earlier in the month. The report highlights progress in all of the academic health sectors, with particular emphasis on the important role of public health education and research and population health in contributing to health status improvements across the state. The Center for Health Workforce Planning and Analysis will begin in May 2008, with a focus on using the range of skills and leverage points across the University System to address areas of need for health professions and health systems. Over the next months, Mr. Robinson will be visiting with campuses and programs across the system to gain input on the Center's strategic focus and opportunities for engagement.

The group then began a discussion of the role of administrative committee and the "value added" aspects of their work together. Everyone agreed that the communication and collaboration were important but the group needed to be about more than just coming together to share. Dr. Hepburn reminded the group that their role was unique, established by resolution of the Board of Regents with the vision that this group would be the first fully coordinated approach to degree program development across the system. Over the past three years, the group has worked collectively to improve public health education in Georgia, held two Master Teacher Workshops and filed annual performance reports at the system level while moving each individual institution forward at a significant pace. The relationships and processes are considered rare for the system even in this newly embraced environment of planning and coordination. The group emphasized to Mr. Robinson the important and distinct role of public health within the health professions arena and cautioned that these academic fields not be subsumed by the clinical programs.

Mr. Toal and Dr. Hepburn reported on the work of the various study committees on the state's public health system and reflected on the importance of everyone staying attuned to this work. The Governor's office is expected to propose reorganization plans during the summer, which will have a significant impact on the practice environment.

Dr. Hardy then called on the individual institutional representatives to provide updates on their progress.

Dr. Campbell reported that MCG had hired 3 new faculty members and would graduate 9 students in May. The program continues its informatics focus and is finding new students through the clinical programs at the campus. The MCG accreditation site visit is scheduled for January 2009. The process has been challenging but rewarding.

Mr. Toal provided an overview of new hires and recruitment activities for Georgia State. Ten students will complete the program in May, and job placements have been strong. Georgia State requires a thesis for completion of the MPH which is causing some delay in program completion. They expect to graduate 30-35 students in fall 2008.

Dr. Mink reported that some 20 students would complete the AASU program in spring 2008. AASU has just been recognized with a Delta Omega Chapter, a high honor for the program and the only such chapter among the USG public health programs in Georgia. AASU is working through the culminating experience process by developing a "practicum to poster" experience for students.

Dr. Zimmerli shared that FVSU expects to graduate 4 to 5 students this spring. FVSU allows students to complete with either a thesis or field experience project which seems to move students through more rapidly. FVSU is still struggling with faculty numbers and is in the process of recruiting for two positions. The program cannot apply for accreditation until faculty numbers are increased.

Dr. Hardy highlighted enrollment of 80 or more MPH students and another 14 across the three DrPH programs offered by the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health. Georgia Southern now has an FTE complement of 28 faculty, and they have just completed the process of moving to competency-based curriculum. These actions set the stage for the College to become an applicant for accreditation during summer 2008.

Dr. Williams updated the group on UGA's progress toward accreditation and the planned site visit in February 2009. The College now has some 400 students, with approximately 130 in the MPH program. Three students began the new DrPH program in fall 2007. The College will have 37 faculty members in fall 2008, with three vacant lines to be filled during the year.

The group reviewed the annual report template and agreed to submit individual institutional data by July 1, 2008. Dr. Hepburn will email the reporting materials to the group. This year the integrated report will be submitted to the new USG Center for Health Workforce Planning and Analysis, for inclusion in the strategic plan updates for the system and the Board.

The group then revisited the earlier discussion on the role of the administrative committee and areas for possible emphasis in the coming year. The following key functions were highlighted:

- Develop cross-cutting strategic initiatives to improve Georgia's health status.
- Provide expertise to the state in health policy and public health education and research.
- Serve as clearinghouse and coordinating body for new degree programs and institutional expansions in public health education and research across the system.
- Foster innovation and sharing of curriculum and credentialing expertise.
- Promote unique resource needs of public health, including the need for tuition differential, specialized resources and student loan or scholarship programs.

Dr. Hepburn reminded everyone about the newly organized GPHA student conference, to be held on December 2<sup>nd</sup> in advance of the annual conference. The group agreed to convene the next ACOPH meeting late in the afternoon of December 2, 2008, after the completion of the student conference. The meeting will be held in Savannah in conjunction with GPHA.

Dr. Hardy thanked everyone for their hard work, excellent progress and continued participation. The meeting adjourned at 1:25pm so that participants could return to the Master Teacher Workshop.