

October 9, 2008

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to provide you with the first progress report on the Faculty of Health Sciences' activity towards accreditation for our Master's of Public Health program (and potentially our BSc and BA degrees, pending final decision by the Undergraduate Studies Committee) by the Council of Education for Public Health (CEPH: <http://www.ceph.org>). If successful, we'll be the first Anglophone program in public health to be accredited in Canada (there is currently one accredited program within the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Montreal).

The accreditation process has two critical components: a comprehensive self study and a site visit.

Over the past many months we have begun work on a number of fronts as we begin to prepare for the CEPH accreditation review team's visit scheduled for October 19-20, 2009 (mark your calendars now!):

- An initial consultation visit by Mollie Mulvanity of CEPH was completed in early 2007. It was as a result of this visit that we were given the go-ahead to apply for accreditation. Our application was approved in July of 2007.
- An Accreditation Self-Study Working Group (ASSWG; an unfortunate acronym, I know) was established in October of 2007. Membership includes: Craig Janes, Lorraine Halinka Malcoe, Kitty Corbett, Michel Joffres, Karen Palmer (since last spring), Steve Corber, Barb Berry, Bratislav Mladenovic (new to the committee pending inclusion of the BA/BSc), Lynn Kumpula, Kim Laing (student rep), and Kyle Danielson (student rep).
- Craig Janes and Karen Palmer participated in a 2-day Accreditation Orientation workshop in August 2008 hosted by the CEPH in Washington, DC.
- We recently hired a project consultant (Sue Roppel) to help construct the self-study document and to provide us with information about University-level context information required throughout the report. For those of you who don't know Sue, she was formerly director of Academic Relations at SFU, and has assisted SFU with a number of important initiatives, including a role as technical consultant and advisor to the task force on university restructuring.
- The ASSWG has begun drafting a number of substantial governing documents including a mission statement, MPH program goals, MPH objectives, a values statement (based on refinements to the draft FHS values statement for the MPH), MPH program core competencies, and others. These draft documents are now being readied for submission to the FHS community for debate, discussion, and ratification.
- We have begun development of an FHS-community-accessible website to provide you with ongoing information, draft documents, and general information about the accreditation process and the CEPH. We'll send you the URL as soon as it is available.

- We have developed a comprehensive “to-do” list of the work to be done.
- Information and discussion sessions with all faculty will be initiated at the Faculty Council meeting on October 16, with follow-up town-hall type discussions on November 3 and 4 from 12-2pm in our Faculty boardroom (we hope everyone with interest in FHS’ programs in population and public health can attend one or the other of these).
- More focused consultations with Faculty, organized according to the CEPH-identified “core public health disciplines” (social/behavioral sciences, health administration/policy, environmental/occupational health, biostatistics, and epidemiology) are currently being scheduled. The purposes of these meetings are to solicit critical feedback on the competencies that have been developed within these specific areas, and particularly to ensure adequate exchange between core course instructors and the ASSWG in regard to course-content and the draft competencies.
- Consultations with graduate students have been set for November 13 and 18th.

We (the ASSWG and CEPH) value an engaged self-study process with maximum faculty participation, and we would like to take this opportunity to strongly encourage you to become informed about accreditation, to review the draft documents as they are made available, and to provide the ASSWG with your feedback and suggestions for improvement. We need your help and involvement as we continue to strive to build high quality, innovative population and public health programs within the Faculty of Health Sciences.

We will continue to send you approximately monthly updates of the activities and progress of the ASSWG and the development of the self-study report.

Please feel free to contact me (cjan@sfu.ca) at any time if you want more information about the accreditation process or if you would like to provide comments to the ASSWG.

On behalf of the ASSWG, I look forward to working with you on this important initiative over the coming year.

Sincerely



Craig Janes, Associate Dean, Education
Chair, Accreditation Self Study Working Group (ASSWG)