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WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA M.P.H. CONNECTIONS

SPRING 2007 ISSUE

New Degree Requirements for All Students Admitted Fall 2007 and Afterward

The Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) has increased its academic requirements for all accredited M.P.H. programs throughout the United States. As a CEPH-accredited program, our M.P.H. requirements have been enhanced to assure compliance with these new national standards.

Please note that these new requirements are for ALL students officially admitted into the M.P.H. program fall semester 2007 and afterwards.

THESE NEW REQUIREMENTS DO NOT APPLY TO ALL STUDENTS CURRENTLY ADMITTED INTO THE M.P.H. PROGRAM. ALL STUDENTS ADMITTED INTO THE M.P.H. PROGRAM WILL CONTINUE TO FOLLOW CURRENT DEGREE REQUIREMENTS.

Effective fall 2007, the M.P.H. degree will require a total of 45 credits. The current core courses will remain the same; however, HEA 558 *Research Methods in Public Health* will now be an added requirement for all students. In addition, the total credits for all tracks have been increased by three credits. Some tracks are permitting the additional three credits to be an elective course; other tracks are specifying a specific course towards the additional three credits. Check with your track advisor to see what is required for your track. Here are the track advisors:

Community Health: Dr. Debra Bill
Integrative Health: Dr. Roger Mustalish
Environmental Health: Dr. Charles (Chuck) Shorten
Health Care Administration: Dr. Tanya Morgan

Lastly, the HEA 650 Applied Learning Experience has been expanded into a six-credit, two-course sequence: HEA 649 Applied Learning Experience I and HEA 650 Applied Learning Experience II.

New Integrative Health Requirements

To address the new CEPH requirements for all accredited programs, the following represent the new Integrative Health track requirements for all students admitted fall 2007 and later. Note: Existing students are to follow the current program requirements; these changes do not affect the graduate certificate in Integrative Health.

Integrative Health – 21 credits

Required: HEA 501 Integrative Health
HEA 538 Evaluation of Health Programs
HEA 539 Program Planning (new requirement)
HEA 550 Evidence-based Medicine and Public Health
Nine credits of electives, selected under advisement

Vegetarian Workshop: Summer Elective Offered

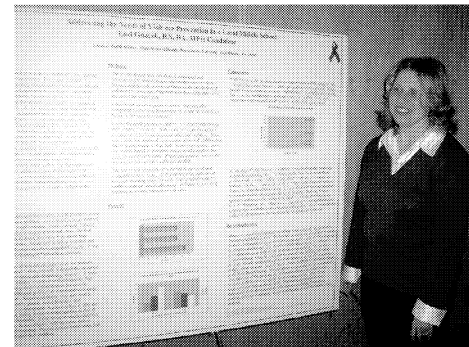
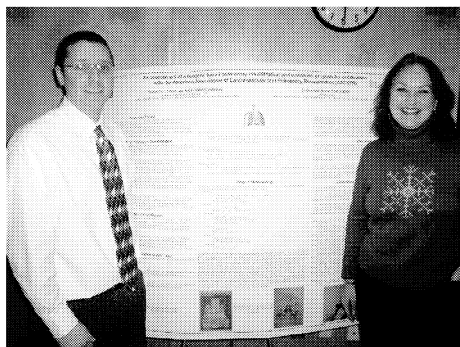
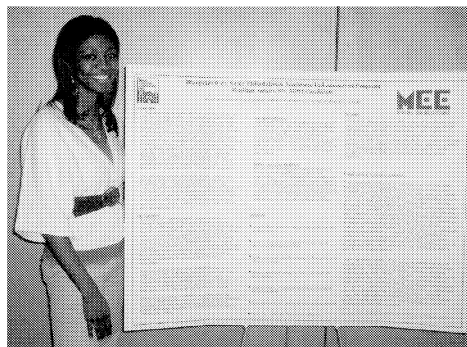
Dr. Janet Lacey will be teaching HEA 435/581-20, a three-credit course, for five days this summer: May 17, 18, 21, 23, and 25. This workshop, Vegetarian Nutrition and Cuisine, includes cooking and sampling delicious vegetarian cuisine. The course may be used to fulfill M.P.H. elective credits, with permission of track advisor. Note: Prerequisite is NTD 303 (Introductory Nutrition) or permission of instructor. For more information please e-mail Janet Lacey at jlacey@wcupa.edu.

Attention M.P.H. Students!

Would you like to: Save gas? Save time? Save paper? Go to class according to *your* schedule? Any of these needs can be met by taking classes online via Blackboard! This summer Dr. Tanya Morgan will be teaching HEA 640 Issues of Managed Care online. A required course for Health Care Administration track students, it may also be completed as an elective for students in other tracks. For more information please e-mail Dr. Tanya Morgan at tmorgan@wcupa.edu.

Successful Fall Poster Session

We held another successful M.P.H. Poster session on December 8, 2006, in Sykes Student Union. More than a dozen M.P.H. and environmental health posters were on display. Below are photos of the session provided by Dr. Jim Brenner. *Photos from left:* Kudirat Jamiu; James M. Christie and Dr. Debra Bill; Lori Gnacek.



International Study in Peru

M.P.H. students have new and expanded opportunities to study in Peru in 2007 and 2008. These courses—Conservation Medicine, Botanical Medicine, and Ecology of the Cloud Forest and Rainforest—are now available for scheduling. Dates include summer 2007 and 2008, and during spring break 2008. Additional travel costs are involved. Academic credit toward the M.P.H. is available. Contact Marguerite Gould, mgould@wcupa.edu, for dates, itineraries, syllabi, and costs.

New Faculty Member for the Integrative Health Track

In fall 2007, Dr. Patricia Broderick will join the faculty of the Department of Health and serve in the Integrative Health track. Dr. Broderick is currently a full professor within the College of Education, Department of Educational Psychology. She is a licensed clinical psychologist and school health psychologist with an extensive and impressive teaching and scholarly record. Dr. Broderick is certified in Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction by the University of Massachusetts School of Medicine and studied under Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn, the MBSR program founder and director. For the Department of Health, Dr. Broderick will now teach graduate and undergraduate courses on mental health, stress reduction and mind/body medicine. All of the graduate offerings of these courses are appropriate electives for M.P.H. students.

Track Faculty

The Council of Education for Public Health now requires that each accredited track have a minimum of three faculty working primarily within the track. Below are the faculty assignments per track for the M.P.H. program.

Community Health: Dr. Lynn Carson, Dr. Gopal Sankaran, Dr. Debra Bill (track advisor)

Integrative Health: Dr. Stacie Metz, Dr. Patricia Broderick, Dr. Christina Jackson, Dr. Roger Mustalish (track advisor)

Environmental Health: Dr. Maura Sheehan, Dr. Gary Coutu, Dr. Chuck Shorten (track advisor)

Health Care Administration: Dr. Duane Milne, Dr. Tanya Morgan (track advisor), and a national faculty search is currently underway for the third faculty member.

Student Feedback on Program Evaluation

Several students who completed HEA538 Evaluation of Health Programs course in spring 2007 with Dr. Stacie Metz shared their thoughts on the rationale behind program evaluation and how such methodology was valuable in their own organizations. The following are anonymous quotations from these evaluations:

“Program evaluation ensures accountability for all the exploits in a program and drives the people in the program to be committed to achieving measurable positive health outcomes.”

“My employer develops and facilitates programs that encourage diversity awareness. We are constantly challenged with clients asking, ‘Was the program successful?’ and ‘How has the program benefited our bottom line?’ Effective program evaluation methods will allow us to answer these questions and acquire additional business by building credibility with our customers.”

“Although I have not had any prior experience in program evaluation, what I have learned in the class can be applied to my workplace. I work for a small medical device company who is looking to expand operations. Performing an evaluation of current operations may provide valuable insight regarding how best to expand production and services for the future.”

“Evaluation refers to a periodic process of gathering data and then analyzing it in such a way that the resulting information can be used to determine whether your organization or program is effectively carrying out planned activities.”

“Utilizing program evaluation in a professional setting has been essential to monitoring the process and outcomes that are most effective for improving patient care. Program evaluation needs to be thought of in the forefront of planning to provide the most complete effort in health program implementation. Within the healthcare industry we are expected to provide for the community, to develop opportunities for participatory healthcare. When patients can successfully engage in preventive care our efforts are highly rewarded as public health improves.”

“Evaluation gives policy makers and decision makers an idea about how effectively resources were used and what other resources would be needed for the future.”

“A program is useless unless one goes further to investigate the why.”

“In my experience, the greatest barrier to using evaluation methods outside academia is inadequate resources – human, financial, and know-how. I believe, however, that some form of evaluation is utilized by many health practitioners; it just may be more informal and less grounded in scientific rigor.”

“The course has been very useful in my current position as a research technician for the Center for Effective Schools. The class has allowed me to have a clearer understanding of pre-experimental and experimental designs. These design methods are used on a frequent basis within my organization because the vast majority of our funding comes from school-based research grants. Once these grants are awarded, it is our job to use the best experimental design we see fit in order to produce high-quality data.”

M.P.H. Poster Session

The M.P.H. Poster Session was held from 6.00 pm to 8.00 pm on Friday, May 4, 2007 in Ballroom A, Sykes Student Union. Thirteen students who completed HEA 650 Applied Learning Experience in spring 2007 presented their projects.

CHES Exam

The CHES (Certified Health Education Specialist) exam will be held at West Chester University on Saturday, April 28, 2007. All students in the community health track will be eligible for the exam. The National Commission for Health Education (<http://www.nchec.org>) is the sponsor of the exam and has the application forms available online.

M.P.H. Advisory Board Meeting

The M.P.H. Advisory Board met on February 9, 2007, in the Alumni House, to discuss the current M.P.H. program. Among topics that were discussed were the seven-year accreditation granted by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), new courses to be added to the curriculum starting fall 2007, integration of online courses via Blackboard, and learning experiences abroad offered to students—namely trips to Mexico and the Amazon with Dr. Debra Bill and Dr. Roger Mustalish, respectively. The board members provided valuable feedback to the M.P.H. faculty about current issues they see affecting the public health field, such as consumerism, professional ethics, new communication and technology tools, and health insurance issues pertaining to uninsured/underinsured groups.

Faculty Scholarly Accomplishments

Dr. Debra E. Bill, associate professor in the Department of Health, has had four peer-reviewed abstracts accepted for presentation at national/international health conferences in spring/summer 2007:

“Evaluation of a Home-visiting Promotora Outreach and Education Program (POEP) for Hispanic Pregnant Women,” American Alliance for Health Education Research Coordinating Board Presentation: Women’s Health Issues, AAHPERD National Convention and Exposition 2007, Baltimore, Maryland, March 16, 2007.

“*Promotoras* in Public Health: Lessons Learned from a *Promotora* Outreach and Education Program for Hispanic Pregnant Women,” Society of Public Health Education Scientific Conference—National Health Education Conference, June 9, 2007, Seattle, Washington.

“Reducing Perinatal Health Inequities in the Americas Through the Use of Promotoras,” 19th International Union of Health Promotion and Education: Health Promotion Comes of Age: Research, Policy and Practice for the 21st Century, June 10th, 2007 Vancouver, British Columbia.

“Linking the Social Environment, Community Building, and Health: A Case Study of an Asset-Based Community Building Approach to Change,” 19th International Union of Health Promotion and Education: Health Promotion Comes of Age: Research, Policy and Practice for the 21st Century, June 12, 2007, Vancouver, British Columbia.

Some of the scholarly activities of **Dr. Gopal Sankaran**, professor, Department of Health, during the current academic year are highlighted here:

Grant Proposals

Corbett, I. M., and Sankaran, G. (2007). “Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program.” Grant submitted to United States Department of Education TRIO Program in January. Amount requested: \$ 947,292. WCU matching funds: \$ 60,500. Total amount of grant: \$ 1,007,792.

Sankaran, G. (2007). “Teaching cultural competence: Helping students develop global perspectives for success in a multicultural world.” Funded proposal submitted to 2007 Faculty-Staff Development Abroad Initiative at West Chester University. Awarded Global Development Collaborative grant to participate in the Global Perspectives in Higher Education Conference at Guizhou University, Guiyang, People’s Republic of China.. Award amount: \$ 1,500.

Sankaran, G. (2007). MEGA Incentive Award from the Office of Sponsored Research and Faculty Development. Award amount: \$ 1,000.

Invited Presentations

“Conducting Evaluation and Research Related to Health Education” and “*Assessing Individual and Community Needs for Health Education.*” Both presentations at the Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) Test Preparation Workshop, Saint Joseph’s University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on April 14, 2007.

“Including Global Perspectives in the Curriculum: An example from health.” Global Perspectives in Curriculum Integration Workshop, West Chester University, West Chester, Pennsylvania on April 11, 2007

“Looking for solutions? Let us understand the health landscape through different lenses.” “Theories of health behavior change and Model for Implementation,” and “Evaluation of health interventions.” Seventh Annual Community and Public Health Institute of the American Medical Student Association at Reston, Virginia on January 26.

Invited Reviewer

Abstracts submitted to International Health Section for the 135th Annual meeting of the American Public Health Association in Washington, D.C. in November 2008

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REMINDER

Students are strongly encouraged to submit news, views, and experiences for publication in the M.P.H. Connections. Please contact Dr. Sankaran (gsankaran@wcupa.edu) Or Chrissie Mullett (cm570080@wcupa.edu) with any questions.