

ASACR 5

Office of the President
June 10, 2014

Members, Board of Trustees:

ACADEMIC DEGREE RECOMMENDATION:
COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Recommendation: that the Board of Trustees approve the establishment of a Bachelor of Public Health degree within the College of Public Health, effective in the Fall 2014 Semester.

Background: The need for public health undergraduate programs is a high priority both nationally and in Kentucky. The justification for the founding of the College of Public Health in 2003 was derived from countless national reports replete with statistics reflecting Kentucky's poor health status. A 2013 report by the United Health Foundation ranked Kentucky as one of the unhealthiest states in the nation, due to elevated death rates for cardiovascular disease, cancer and diabetes. Infrequent access to preventive health care and the high prevalence of established risk behaviors for many diseases, including substance abuse, obesity and sedentary lifestyles, contribute significantly to this elevated disease burden in both adults and children.

Undergraduate majors using the title of Public Health are emerging with some frequency on campuses in the U.S. Nearly 30 percent of the 49 colleges of public health accredited by the Council on Education in Public Health already have established baccalaureate programs with an estimated dozen institutions working on creating a program. Public health topics introduce a new and highly relevant approach to national and global understanding. Many students seek avenues to socially and globally responsible work. Others are exploring career options related to their majors and want to explore programs that might lead to graduate and professional school.

The primary mission and intent of public health practice is to avert disease at the population level. Rather than approaching health and disease at the level of each individual in any given community, efforts are directed toward creating the policy environments, physical environments, social structures, surveillance systems, etc. needed to assure any given community worldwide is protected against premature morbidity or mortality. The University of Kentucky can provide high quality undergraduate education to students throughout the world.

This program has the approval of the appropriate councils and the University Senate and has completed the 45 day review process of the Council on Postsecondary Education. The Provost of the University supports this recommendation.

Action taken: Approved Disapproved Other _____