Top of Form

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* + Epidemiology Program

 

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* **Program Name:\***

Epidemiology (PhD)

* **Provide a brief summary of the proposed program and describe the rationale:\***

Epidemiology is the study of the origin and causes of diseases in a community. It is frequently considered the basic science of public health, and its methods are used by epidemiologists, laboratory scientists, statisticians, physicians and other health care providers, and public health professionals to better understand the determinants of health and the distribution of those determinants in communities (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC n.d.). In general, the field of public health requires a dynamic and highly trained workforce, which is constantly challenged to meet the new demands on a local, state, national, and global scale. From increases in chronic disease morbidity and mortality in developing nations to antibiotic resistance and from emerging and reemerging infectious diseases and natural and man-made disasters, the public health workforce must be capable to respond by applying advanced scientific training to address these threats. Epidemiologists are an integral component of the public health workforce and are key to our public health system’s capacity.

Shortages in graduate trained epidemiologists at all levels, including the PhD, have been documented across research and practice. Since 2001, the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) has conducted Epidemiology Capacity Assessments (ECAs) to monitor epidemiology capacity in the U.S. (CSTE 2017). According to the most recent assessment, an additional 1,200 epidemiologists are currently needed in the national public health workforce, an increase of 36% over current employment. Workforce needs are particularly acute in areas such as research, evaluation, and in emerging program areas including substance abuse, mental health, informatics, and data translation. An assessment of Federal public health, environmental, and agricultural laboratories’ capacity found that only 12% of the workforce had a doctoral or professional degree (CDC 2013) and the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) notes that only 20% of top health department executives have graduate training in public health (NACCHO 2008). In a CDC survey of academic health center Chief Executives, 94% reported faculty shortages were a problem in at least one of their health professional schools, with 55% specifically pointing to faculty shortages in schools of public health (Moskowitz 2007).

In addition to these public health workforce shortages, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects long-term employment growth for academic faculty in the health sciences, including public health and epidemiology, to be 19% between 2014 and 2024 (BLS 2014). The U.S. Department of Labor ranks post-secondary health specialties faculty 57 of 589 of the fastest growing occupations in the U.S. (Department of Labor 2017). A recent survey of nearly 12,000 graduates from doctoral-level programs in public health showed that individuals were trained in either epidemiology or biostatistics or from an academic institute with the highest level of research intensity were significantly more likely to secure employment in both academic and non-academic settings after graduation (Brown-Podgorski et al. 2018).

* **List only New Courses that are being currently submitted for this program:\***

EPID605, EPID610, EPID615, EPID620, EPID621, EPID622, EPID623, EPID650, EPID860, EPID964, EPID969

* **List any courses from outside departments being utilized in the curriculum:\***

BHAN609, DISA650, GEOG622, GEOG630, GEOG670, GEOG671, HLTH844, HLPR605, HLPR610, HLPR630, HLPR632, HLPT803, HLPR807, HLPR823, KAAP601, KAAP602, KAAP609, NURS881, STAT609, STAT 611, STAT617, STAT656, STAT674, STAT675, UAPP619, UAPP701

* **Resolution:\***

WHEREAS, the Program in Epidemiology (EPID) in the College of Health Sciences has successfully initiated a new program for training students with a master of public health in epidemiology, and

WHEREAS, Epidemiology as a field has a significant shortage of qualified research doctoral level individuals who can conduct epidemiologic research, and

WHEREAS, Epidemiology has assembled a nationally recognized faculty who are qualified to train students in research in epidemiology and has funding, adequate research space, and staff to support a doctoral program

RESOLVED, that the Faculty Senate recommends provisionally for seven years the approval of the establishment of a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Epidemiology.