

Criterion IX – Students

Criterion IX.A

The school shall have student recruitment and admissions policies and procedures designed to locate and select qualified individuals capable of taking advantage of the school's various learning activities which will enable each of them to develop competence for a career in public health.

Expected Documentation

1. Description of the school's recruitment policies and procedures, with examples of recruitment materials.
2. Statement of admissions policies and procedures.
3. Quantitative information on the number of applicants, acceptances and admissions, by program area over the last three years.
4. Quantitative information on the number of students enrolled in each degree program identified in Criterion V.A, including a headcount of full-time and part-time students and a full-time equivalent conversion.
5. Identification of outcome measures by which the school may evaluate its success in enrolling a qualified student body, along with data regarding the performance of the school against those measures over the last three years.
6. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

Criterion IX.A – Student Recruitment and Admissions

1. Recruitment Policies and Procedures

The policy of the UIC SPH is to recruit students from a diverse pool of individuals who can contribute to the advancement of scientific knowledge, public health practice and policy, and service to the community and the profession. Recruitment activities involve the dissemination of information and the education of prospective students on the nature and practice of public health; presentations at special graduate/professional college articulation fairs; exhibitions of public health materials and offerings of UIC at local and national meetings; articulation of public health issues at gatherings of professionals and communities with diverse backgrounds; counseling on career development; and targeting of special population groups. Playing an essential role in the recruitment activities are faculty/staff, alumni, public health agency partners and students.

Materials used in providing information on education and career opportunities in public health include:

- Publications by the Association of Schools of Public Health: “*You can make a difference: Pursue a career in Public Health*”, “*Reach for an opportunity for a fulfilling career in Public Health*”, and “*Questions about Schools of Public Health.*”
- Catalog of the UIC School of Public Health (see Appendix V.A.2); pamphlets developed specifically for each division of UIC SPH; materials on special opportunities for pre/post doctoral fellowships in public health; Health Pro, a annual magazine published by UIC SPH; and Urban Health Program materials that target special population groups (see Appendix IX.A.1).

The following provides an outline of our target population sites and strategies we use in recruitment.

- **Target Populations**
 1. Individuals in human services and health care-related agencies, and voluntary, non-voluntary and municipal agencies
 2. Midcareer-level individuals from a variety of settings
 3. Academic institutions
 - Graduate and professional schools; residency and internship programs
 - Undergraduate schools
 4. Elementary and secondary schools
- **Sites**
 1. Professional meetings (national, statewide and local)
 2. Community agencies

3. Agency collaborative gatherings
 4. Organized graduate college recruitment fairs
 5. Visit to college campuses
 - By special invitation
 - Reunion events
 - Homecoming events
 6. Community-sponsored events
 7. Organized on-campus conferences
 8. Urban Health Program/HCOP-sponsored conferences
- ***Strategy***
 1. National recruitment
 - Conferences
 - Colleges/organized recruitment fairs
 2. Midwest regional recruitment (states of IN, MI, WI)
 - Conferences
 - Colleges/organized recruitment fairs
 - Career fairs
 3. Illinois
 - UI campuses
 - Articulation conferences
 - Lower and upper division colleges
 - Chicago and suburbs

- **Procedures for Recruitment**

Recruitment efforts generally begin via one of the following:

a. By responding to an invitation from/by making a request for an appearance at:

- Colleges
- Student organizations
- Professional organizations
- Public/private agencies
- Organizers of graduate/professional days
- Faculty colleagues at other institutions
- Organizers of career fairs
- Special population groups
- Employment fairs

In responding to the invitation, the office of community, government and alumni affairs works out the details of the recruitment activity with the host and ascertains the number of prospective students as well as their level of exposure to education in public health. Packages of materials then are developed based on the expected number of attendees and their background. Special attention is provided to a variety of population groups deemed to be present. Priority is given in the following order:

- 1) Para/professional groups
- 2) Academic institutions without public health programs
- 3) UI system
- 4) Four-year college/university
- 5) Two-year college
- 6) Community groups
- 7) Elementary/secondary schools

b. By holding special articulation conferences on/off UIC campuses.

These are organized efforts generally initiated by UIC SPH through visitations to colleges to educate:

- Individuals with baccalaureate degrees who are changing professions or working in health care and human services industries.
- Undergraduate students within UIC and other academic institutions on the type of career opportunities in public health. Invitations and announcements for articulation conferences go to student organizations, faculty and health-related offices, student affairs offices and science and business clubs.

c. By planned office visitation of prospective students.

Visitation by prospective students (which could last from 30 minutes to two hours: the average time is generally 70 minutes) is preceded by a call to make an appointment to discuss public health admission criteria, deadlines, application process and career opportunities in public health. As many prospective students are not familiar with the specific areas in public health, the planned office meeting helps to clarify offerings of the school and appropriate degree options available to the prospective applicant. He/she also takes the opportunity to conduct campus tours with the help of the responsible individual for recruitment or his designee. These meetings provide an avenue to explore areas of interest to the prospective applicant. Upon identification of the area and the academic degree of interest, the student (especially if interested in an MS, DrPH or PhD) then is linked with a faculty member in the division of interest for continued dialogue and specification of interest.

d. Collaboration with other UIC/UIUC colleges during open house for recruitment.

Collaborating colleges include: Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Nursing and Business Administration. The collaboration provides an opportunity to present public health to students at various levels of their training.

e. By conducting special “star” or “talent” search.

- Locator Service - This process involves a quarterly review of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) locator service. Through this service, the responsible individual in the office identifies all GRE takers with a combined score of 1400 in V and Q that express an interest in public health and public health-related areas. These individuals are contacted via letters with recruitment materials.
- Graduate Student Biomedical Research Meetings - These are special seminars attended by graduate and undergraduate students.

f. Special meetings with and presentations at the gatherings of college counselors.

At these meetings, college counselors are provided information about the field of public health and the kind of opportunities for their graduates. They then are encouraged to share the information with their students.

g. By conducting Summer Residential Enrichment Programs.

This program provides opportunities and stipends for over 20 students to immerse themselves into “public health.” Participants are undergraduate students, usually juniors, who would have gone through an application process, been interviewed and recommended by an advisor or faculty member. The students spend eight weeks being introduced to public health in an organized fashion. The specific process includes one week of quantitative and verbal skills development and enhancement, assessment of weaknesses and strengths, and a luncheon with deans/faculty/staff. During each week of the next six weeks, the students spend three days with public health mentors (one mentor per student) in the field and two days with volunteer faculty at UIC SPH. The last week is spent working on a special project derived from contacts with mentors. On the last day of the eight-week program, students present their work at a public gathering. Abstracts of their work also are published in a booklet.

2. Student Admission Requirements and Procedures

Schoolwide admissions policies and procedures for each degree are described below. As the SPH admissions process is decentralized, the policies and procedures for each division also are included.

- **MPH Admission Requirements**

A baccalaureate degree from an accredited school is the minimum requirement for admission to the MPH degree program; a master's or doctoral degree in an area relevant to public health is preferred.

Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores are required for all but the following:

- Applicants with a graduate or professional degree at the doctoral level (e.g., PhD, ScD, MD, DDS, DO, DVM, JD) or a prior master's degree (e.g., MBA, MSW, MS, MA) from an accredited U.S. or Canadian school, provided the prior training is relevant to the basic field of the area of concentration; applicants with the

above-stated degrees from foreign schools whose applications are sponsored by an accepted referral service, such as AMIDEAST; or physicians who have been accepted into either of the joint occupational medicine residency programs.

The admissions process is highly competitive. Although exceptions may be made, admitted students typically have a combined undergraduate/graduate grade point average of 4.00 (A = 5.0) and a combined Graduate Record Examination (GRE) score of at least 1,000 (verbal plus quantitative). Additional requirements may be specified by the student's academic division. Public health, management or social leadership experience is considered in cases where applicants are otherwise equivalent.

- **DrPH Admission Requirements**

Ordinarily, applicants have either an MPH degree or other master's degree in an area relevant to public health, in addition to a baccalaureate or professional degree. Promising applicants without a master's degree may be recommended for admission to the MPH or MS programs of the School of Public Health. The time required to earn the DrPH is not necessarily lengthened. However, successful completion of the master's degree does not guarantee admission to the DrPH program.

Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores are required for all DrPH applicants. The admissions process is highly competitive. Only a limited number of students are admitted each year. Successful applicants typically have qualifications considerably in excess of a combined undergraduate/graduate grade point of 4.0 (A=5.0) and a combined Graduate Record Examination (GRE) score of at least 1,000 (verbal plus quantitative). Additional requirements may be specified by the student's academic division. Public health, management or social leadership experience is considered in cases where applicants are otherwise equivalent.

Each academic division may have specific entrance requirements regarding prerequisite training, experience and grade point average (GPA) performance beyond the schoolwide minima.

In most divisions, full-time applicants are given preference over part-time students for admission to the DrPH program.

- **MPH/ DrPH Application Process**

Applications are considered for fall enrollment only. SPH application forms must be used. Applicants must follow all instructions and submit academic transcripts, three letters of recommendation, a career goal statement, and GRE scores. Applicants educated primarily outside of a country where English is the primary language must submit TOEFL scores. Students must indicate the academic division to which they are applying. An interview may be required.

- **MS Admission Requirements**

An applicant must have (1) a baccalaureate degree, preferably with a major in the biological, physical or social sciences; (2) an undergraduate grade point average of at

least 4.00 (A = 5.00); and (3) a combined Graduate Record Examination (GRE) score of 1,000 (verbal plus quantitative). Although exceptions may be made, admitted students usually have qualifications in excess of these minimum standards.

The academic divisions may have additional admission requirements.

- **PhD Admission Requirements**

An applicant must have (1) a baccalaureate and master's degree, at least one of which is in the biological, physical or social sciences; (2) a combined undergraduate/graduate grade point average of at least 4.00 (A = 5.00); and (3) a combined Graduate Record Examination (GRE) score of 1,000 (verbal plus quantitative). Although exceptions may be made, admitted students usually have qualifications in excess of these minimum standards.

The applicant's potential for making a contribution to the advancement of public health science also is considered. Prior experience is used to assess leadership, concern for public welfare and research potential. The primary requirement is a demonstrated ability to plan and complete significant health-related research. The applicant's MS or MA thesis is used to evaluate this requirement. A formal research paper or other evidence may be accepted in unique cases.

Promising applicants without a master's degree may enter the MS program as the route into the PhD program. The time required to earn the PhD is not necessarily lengthened. However, successful completion of the master's degree does not guarantee admission to the PhD program.

Applicants with an MPH or a post-baccalaureate education in a health or related science and MS students who have completed 32 semester hours and have demonstrated potential for conducting independent research also may be considered for admission.

- **MS/ PhD Application Process**

Applications for the MS and PhD degree are considered for fall enrollment only. The Graduate College application forms must be used. Applicants must submit academic transcripts, Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores, three letters of recommendation, and a career-goal statement including (1) reason for pursuing the MS at UIC in the chosen area of concentration and (2) career goals and intended research.

Minimum admission standards are a combined undergraduate and postgraduate grade point average of 4.00 (A = 5.00) and a combined Graduate Record Examination (GRE) score of 1,000 (verbal plus quantitative). These standards may be relaxed in unusual circumstances when excellence of previous professional achievement can be demonstrated. However, the admissions process is highly competitive; admitted students usually have qualifications well in excess of these minimum standards.

The applicant's potential for making a contribution to the advancement of public health practice also is considered. Prior experience is assessed for leadership, concern for public welfare and research potential.

3. Quantitative Information on Applicants

In the fall of 1995, the SPH discontinued rolling admissions. Although there are occasional exceptions, all new students are admitted in the fall semester. Table IX.A.3 presents the data on the applications, admissions and new enrollments for the fall semester for academic years 96/97, 97/98, and 98/99. The number of applications to the school for the 96/97 and 97/98 academic years are roughly comparable, however the number of applicants dropped approximately 15% in FY98/99. We feel that this decrease reflects the earlier and firmer application deadline as well as the nationwide decline in applications to professional and graduate degree programs. Over this time span, an increasing proportion of applicants were admitted, reflecting the more competitive applicant pool, and about 42% of those admitted matriculated. Two-thirds of the new enrollees are in the MPH degree program and about 20% are in the credit nondegree program (many of whom apply for a degree program in the subsequent academic year).

Table IX.A.3
Applications, Admissions and New Enrollments

	Fall 96/97	Fall 97/98	Fall 98/99
Applications	584	622	529
Admissions	301	334	367
New Enrollments	135	139	153
MPH	87	90	97
MS	7	12	12
DrPH	1	3	1
PhD	11	6	7
CND*	29	28	36

*Credit Nondegree

4. Enrollment by Degree Program

The enrollment figures from fall '96 through fall '98 reflect the desired steady state for that time period (see Table IX.A.4.1). Throughout this time period, approximately 65% of the degree students were part-time (registered for less than 12 semester hours during the fall semester). In fall 1998, 54% of the students were enrolled in the MPH program, similar to that in previous years. Nine percent were in the MS program, 5% in the DrPH program, and 18% in the PhD program. This percentage distribution by degree program has fluctuated only slightly over this time period. Approximately 12% of enrolled students are in credit nondegree status.

Table IX.A.4.1

Enrollment by Degree Program and Full time/Part Time Status

	Fall 1996		Fall 1997		Fall 1998	
	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time
Total Enrollment	147	287	157	280	159	283
Degree Program						
MPH	82	152	94	133	104	135
MS	28	18	29	20	24	20
DrPH	5	20	5	25	3	21
PhD	32	50	29	55	27	53
CND		47		47	1	54
* Full-time status is >= 12 credit hours per semester.						

Data in Table IX.A.4.2 indicates the enrollment by Division and Degree Program including where applicable enrollments by specialization.

Table IX.A.4.2

Fall 1998 Enrolled Students by Division and Degree

	MPH	DrPH	MS	PhD
Community Health Sciences (CHS)				
Generalist	30	4		0
Gerontology	2	1	0	5
Health Promotion and Education	28	1	0	8
Maternal and Child Health	27	3	0	8
Other	1	2	0	13
Health Policy and Administration (HPA)	43*	11	1	13
Public Health Policy and Administration				
Health Services Administration and Policy				
Generalist (PEP Only)				
Chicago				
Rockford (beginning Fall 1999)	26			
*(MPH students can select concentration very late in their programs, these data are not tabulated for enrolled students)				
Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences (EOHS)		2	13	12
(Students undertake a general program of study unless they are enrolled in one of the following)	8			
Occupational Medicine Residency Program	6			
ABET Accredited Industrial Hygiene Program	6			
Epidemiology (EPID)	62		10	12
Biostatistics (BSTT)	Fall 2000		20	9
Credit Non-Degree	N=55			

5. Outcome Measures

In conjunction with the school's Evaluation Committee, the school identified the following measures to evaluate our success in enrolling a qualified student body: demonstrated academic ability (GPA, GRE scores), student diversity, and how many students we graduate each year.

- Demonstrated academic ability: The mean GPA and the mean GRE scores for accepted students over the last three academic years are shown in Table IX.A.5.1. The calculation of the undergraduate GPA for applicants has not been operationalized in a systematic manner either at the campus level or the school level. Data presented below are for a limited number of new enrollees. The GRE data are presented for those accepted students who took this exam. Many students submit comparable examination scores (e.g., MCAT, GMAT or LSAT) or are not required to submit scores at all by virtue of having a previous professional or master's degree.

Table IX.A.5.1
Mean Grade Point Averages and Graduate Record
Examination Scores for New Enrollees

1995/96 – 1997/98						
	96/97		97/98		98/99	
	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N
GPA	4.16	14	4.14	44	N/A	
GRE-V	508	81	512	77	524	126
GRE-Q	571	81	608	77	587	126

- Student diversity: This outcome measure is addressed in the response to Criterion IX.B.
- The number of students who graduate: The number of graduates from the degree programs for the last three academic years is shown in Table IX.A.5.2.

Table IX.A.5.2
Graduates by Degree Program

1995/96 – 1997/98			
	95/96	96/97	97/98
MPH	120	99	96
MS	20	13	19
DrPH	0	3	4
PhD	10	20	9
Total	150	135	128

The number of graduates from the school over the last 3 years has dropped from 150 to 128. This, we feel, may reflect the increase in the number of students who work full-time while taking classes at SPH. While, as reported in the response to Criterion IX.A.4, the

percentage of our students who are part-time has remained constant at approximately 65%, it is likely that the percentage of these students who work full-time has increased. Thus, it may be taking students a longer time to complete their programs. The average length of time in the program for the MPH graduates in the last three years is approximately 2.75 academic years. A recent review of the length of time recent PhD graduates took (from the last 3 academic years) indicated the average time to completion of degree is 4.22 calendar years. New data systems that will be developed over the next year will allow us to better track our students and better evaluate our enrollees.

6. Assessment

This criterion is met.

