Minutes

UW School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH)
Oversight and Advisory Committee and
Medical Education and Research Committee
1:00 PM, June 18, 2008 – 4201 HSLC

Members Present: Sanjay Asthana, Bill Busse, Molly Carnes, Cindy Czajkowsk, Paul DeLuca, Norm Drinkwater, Meg Gaines, Susan Goelzer, Tom Grist, Jeff Grossman, Cindy Haq, David Kindig, Lorraine Lathen, June Martin Perry, Doug Mormann, Greg Nycz, Mary Beth Plane, Susan Skochelak

Members Absent: Phil Farrell, Rick Moss, Javier Nieto, Pat Remington, Gordon Ridley, Jeff Stearns, Rod Welch, George Wilding

Staff: Cathy Frey, Tonya Mathison, Ken Mount, Eileen Smith, Shannon Sparks, Karla Thompson

Invited Guests: Roger Axtell, Chris Blakey, Ken Croes, Phil Davis, Robert Golden, Ed Nelson, Jordan Petchenik, John Stevenson

Other Guests: Erik Kindschi, Murray Katcher, Helene Nelson, Patrice Onheiber, Janelle Wells, Kevin Wymore

1. Welcome, introductions and remarks

Dean Robert Golden called the meeting to order at 1:05pm. He welcomed everyone to the third joint meeting of the OAC and MERC and introduced Roger Axtell, the new UW Board of Regents liaison to the Wisconsin Partnership Program. Golden indicated that the work of the OAC and MERC in preparing the next Five-Year Plan will be aided by information shared during today’s meeting on the results of the stakeholder interviews and the public comment survey.

Golden commented on the increasing level of bidirectional communication between the OAC and MERC which has helped to enhance the potential for the development of collaborative efforts. By working together, he is confident that the two committees will achieve the mutual objective of improving Wisconsin’s health outcomes by developing solutions to address some of the public health challenges in this state - such as, the OAC’s initiative to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in birth outcomes.

Golden emphasized that the Wisconsin Partnership Program (WPP), which identified the transformation of School as one of the major goals in the first Five-Year Plan, has been instrumental in supporting many of the innovations which initiated and promoted the transformation. He closed by encouraging the committees to continue to work with one another and with community and state agencies across Wisconsin.
2. Presentation and discussion of the Stakeholder Interview Report

John Stevenson, Associate Director of the UW Survey Center, provided an overview of the work of the Survey Center and introduced three researchers who conducted the WPP stakeholder interviews: Ken Croes, Ed Nelson, and Jordan Petchenik.

The UW Survey Center conducted forty-one in-depth personal interviews with the WPP stakeholders, including: UW School of Medicine and Public Health (SMPH) Department Chairs, Center and Institute Directors, administration, committee chairs, and faculty and staff; University leadership and leaders from other UW Schools; government officials; community grantee organizations; and external stakeholders. Researchers recorded the interviews, prepared transcripts, and conducted an analysis of the content. The Survey Center researchers presented the following results:

**Advancing the SMPH transformation:** Although respondents’ knowledge of the progress of the transformation and the role of the WPP varied according to their interest and involvement with specific programs, respondents generally agreed that the WPP is the engine for the transformation of the SMPH and that funds from the WPP support public health research, initiatives for community engagement, and an expanded curriculum that increasingly includes public health concepts.

**Alignment with State Health Plan, Healthiest Wisconsin 2010:** Many respondents’ consider the state health plan to be a living document addressing a broad range of health priorities. Several respondents argued that the WPP should have a distinct role outside of the purview of the state health plan. Others offered specific suggestions on how to improve the connection between the state health plan and the WPP’s next Five-Year Plan.

**Priorities for the Future:** Six broad themes emerged as priorities for the WPP going forward, including: health initiatives, faculty development and recruitment, education and curriculum development, grants and grants administration, public health workforce development and publicizing the WPP’s mission and accomplishments.

Goelzer reported that the joint OAC/MERC Evaluation Implementation Committee will review a full report on the stakeholder interviews next month and its recommendations will be shared with OAC and MERC. Busse commented on the importance of publicizing our efforts. Goelzer noted that a cover letter will be provided explaining the purpose and objective of this qualitative survey.

3. Presentation and discussion of the results of the Public Comment Survey

Frey reported that a general Public Comment Questionnaire was distributed using an anonymous web-based survey conducted by the UW Survey Center. The survey asked respondents to answer four questions to gain perspectives on where program priorities should be for WPP’s next Five-Year Plan. The survey was distributed to approximately 5,000 individuals via the WPP’s extensive email list, the SMPH faculty database, and to organizations throughout the state.
There were 560 responses with almost half of respondents are affiliated with the SMPH, and the remaining half are a mix of individuals from other academic institutions, community-based organizations, health care provider organizations, and government agencies. Most of the SMPH respondents had not submitted a grant to the WPP and less than half of non-SMPH respondents had submitted a grant. Approximately two-thirds of respondents are from Southern Wisconsin. The top five survey responses on the following topics were:

- *General comments or suggestions on how to best use these resources in the next five years:* public health/prevention, community-based approaches, WPP/grants administration, research, and access to primary care and preventive health services.
- *Specific health areas the WPP should invest in to advance population health during the next five years:* overweight and obesity, alcohol and other substance abuse and addiction, mental health and mental disorders, tobacco use and exposure, and access to primary care and preventive health services.
- *Types of research projects that should be funded to meet the goals of the special initiative to reduce low birthweight rates and infant mortality among disparate populations in Wisconsin:* research needs (topical), social and economic factors that influence health, health education, alcohol and other substance abuse and addiction, and tobacco use and exposure.

Frey explained that the fourth question was open-ended with a broad range of responses. There were many positive comments with an emphasis on the importance of grants administration and communication efforts.

4. **Financial status report**

Mount provided a brief history of the endowment funds at the UW-Foundation and an overview of the projections for the next Five-Year Plan. The overview included a breakdown of projected annual revenue for the OAC and MERC equal to $7.2M and $13.5M, respectively, which is based on projected interest earnings on the fund balance, or one-time cash, and a 5% transfer of the projected endowed interest earnings. The overview also included a breakdown of the projected fund balance, or one-time cash, for the OAC and MERC equal to $14.3M and $30.7M, respectively, for the period ending December 31, 2009.

5. **Five-Year Plan 2009-2014**

OAC’s role to advise and comment on MERC expenditures

Goelzer presented a document providing the basis for OAC's responsibility to advise and comment on MERC expenditures, along with approaches and processes the OAC has developed to carry out this function. The document included OAC's overall impressions of the existing expenditures of MERC, including recommendations for future investments in the context of the next Five-Year Plan. The OAC expressed satisfaction with the expansion of their interactions with MERC, resulting in increased opportunities for comment.
Initiatives planned by each committee
DeLuca reported that three subcommittees – Education, Research, and Community Engagement – were convened by MERC to develop goals, strategies, and initiatives for consideration during the next five years. Following a discussion of each subcommittee’s report, MERC decided to focus on the following initiatives: faculty expansion and development, education, research, community engagement, OAC/MERC collaboration, and MERC governance and membership.

Goelzer reported that OAC will support a range of initiatives – from those that are responsive to community needs to those that are strategic in focused areas. OAC will continue to fund Development and Implementation grants via the Community-Academic Partnership Fund (CAPF) and Public Health Education and Training (PHET) initiatives including the Wisconsin Population Health Fellowship Program and Healthy Wisconsin Leadership Institute (HWLI). In addition, OAC will provide funding to address targeted or special initiatives, such as the current initiative on reducing disparities in birth outcomes.

Presentation and discussion of outcomes of Wingspread Conference
Goelzer reported that the Wingspread Conference entitled “The Wisconsin Infant Mortality Summit” successfully convened state and national experts to discuss infant mortality and created a coalition of partners to support an action plan for improving birth outcomes in Wisconsin. Goelzer presented an overview of the action plan developed during the conference which includes seven priority areas with specific recommendations, evaluation criteria, and potential partners and resources. WPP staff will develop a draft work plan for planning a comprehensive, multi-year strategy.

Discussion of OAC and MERC collaborative projects
Participants discussed the following collaborative projects:

*Public health education and training (PHET) programs.*
Carnes recommended that participants review a recent Institutes of Medicine Report which indicated that having a diverse public health workforce can effectively reduce disparities. Golden added that the SMPH is developing a new program to encourage the hiring and retention of underrepresented minorities in faculty positions. Haq suggested that the SMPH promote minority students to pursue careers in public health by building relationships with middle and high schools. Golden commented that the SMPH is exploring the use of such a model to recruit medical students.

Skochelak indicated that support for a distance-based MPH Program would be an exciting collaborative effort of the OAC and MERC.

Mormann added that MERC and OAC could collaborate in supporting the PHET initiatives, specifically the HWLI and the Wisconsin Population Health Fellowship Program.
Faculty expansion and development.
Haq questioned if the strategic hires could be linked to the state public health departments. Golden indicated that there have been two such hires with the City of Milwaukee Health Department which have been mutually beneficial.

Gaines raised questions regarding MERC’s proposed plan to hire faculty since it is difficult to defend in terms of the impact on health in the state. Golden responded that strategic hires aimed at transforming the School will indeed impact health by bringing knowledge and expertise in new areas. For example, a faculty member focused on infant mortality could work with OAC on its special initiative. Carnes added that the perspectives of the new faculty will help current faculty speak the language of public health.

6. Member wrap-up comments
Golden invited further comments and reflections from participants.

7. Next joint meeting – October 15, 1-4pm, 4201 HSCL
The next joint meeting of OAC and MERC is scheduled on October 15, 2008.
Golden adjourned the meeting at 3:45pm.
Recorder, Tonya Mathison
Secretary, Lorraine Lathen