



**University of Colorado**

Boulder • Colorado Springs • Denver

RECEIVED

SEP 22 2009

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF  
HIGHER EDUCATION

**Office of Academic Affairs**

---

1800 Grant Street, Suite 800  
Denver, CO 80203  
(303) 860-5600  
FAX #: (303) 860-5620

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Julie Carnahan  
Chief Academic Officer  
Colorado Department of Higher Education

**FROM:** Kathleen Bollard *KB*  
Associate Vice President and Academic Affairs Officer

**DATE:** September 18, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Approval of Master of Science Degree in Epidemiology at the University of Colorado Denver

I am writing to notify the Colorado Department of Higher Education of a new degree program recently approved by the Board of Regents of the University of Colorado.

The *Master of Science degree in Epidemiology* was reviewed and discussed by the Board of Regents at its Academic Affairs Committee meeting on June 22, 2009. The final proposal was endorsed by Chancellor M. Roy Wilson and subsequently approved by the board on September 16, 2009.

The University of Colorado appreciates your support in offering this new degree to our students.

Enclosure



Office of the Chancellor

Denver

Anschutz Medical Campus

Campus Box 168  
Denver, Colorado 80217-3364  
Phone: 303-315-2100  
Fax: 303-315-2877

Campus Box A005-168  
13001 East 17<sup>th</sup> Place  
Aurora, Colorado 80045  
Phone: 303-315-2500  
Fax: 303-315-2877

TO: President Bruce D. Benson

  
Approved

FROM: Chancellor M. Roy Wilson

DATE: August 24, 2009

SUBJECT: New Degree Proposal: Master of Science in Epidemiology

**I. REQUEST FOR ACTION BY THE BOARD OF REGENTS**

Upon the recommendation of Provost Roderick Nairn and Dean Richard Hamman of the Colorado School of Public Health, I recommend that the following resolution be submitted for approval by the Board of Regents on September 17, 2009.

RESOLVED that the degree Master of Science in Epidemiology at the University of Colorado Denver be approved by the Board of Regents as a new degree program in the Colorado School of Public Health. Upon board approval, this request will be transmitted to the Colorado Department of Higher Education for approval.

**II. STATEMENT OF INFORMATION**

The Department of Epidemiology in the Colorado School of Public Health (CSPH) proposes offering a Master of Science in Epidemiology degree at the Anschutz Medical Campus beginning in academic year 2010-2011. The CSPH developed this program as an integral part of the plan submitted to the Board of Regents in 2007 when establishing the CSPH; accreditation by the Council on Education in Public Health in 2010 is dependent on all pieces of this plan being in place, including this master's degree.

This degree program will train students in the scientific foundations of epidemiology and prepare them to address complex health issues and discover new knowledge to improve the health and well-being of the citizens of Colorado and the Rocky Mountain region. Through developing sophisticated analytic and research skills, as well as an understanding of the environmental, social and ethical factors that contribute to health and wellness in the community, scientists trained in this program will be prepared for careers in epidemiologic research, and development and evaluation of new approaches to public health surveillance, risk assessment and epidemic investigation. This training is not currently available in this region and will address the shortage of public health workers trained in epidemiologic research methods. It is important that Colorado train scientists to work in public health in order to retain them for the state's public health workforce.

The program plan for the MS in Epidemiology makes good use of existing resources. No new courses need to be developed and the students who are enrolled can be absorbed into existing classes. It is anticipated that tuition revenue will cover all costs of the new program, which is designed to be self-sustaining from the outset in order to allow the CSPH to enhance its program offerings during a period of rapid growth for the school. Enrollment is projected to be three to five new students per year for the first five years.

The new degree proposal was reviewed by David A. Savitz, PhD, Director of the Disease Prevention and Public Health Institute, Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York. He states that the program plans "are very well defined, reflecting careful thought regarding all aspects of the issue. The market for graduates, source of students, resource needs from faculty, and finances have all been considered and the resulting proposal is compelling. The academic content of the program is central, and the course requirements are consistent with the stated intent of the program and the roles for the graduates of the program. I see no significant deficiencies or limitations in the proposal." Furthermore, the proposal has been reviewed by the UC Denver Graduate School Council, and they strongly support its approval.

This item was previously reviewed and discussed at the June 22, 2009 Academic Affairs Committee meeting.

### **III. PREVIOUS ACTION**

On August 16, 2007, the Regents voted to establish the Colorado School of Public Health.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Master of Science in Epidemiology Degree University of Colorado Denver- Anschutz Medical Campus Colorado School of Public Health**

The Colorado School of Public Health at the University of Colorado Denver proposes offering a Master of Science (M.S.) in Epidemiology degree beginning in academic year 2010-2011. This degree program will train students in the scientific foundations of epidemiology and prepare them to discover new knowledge to improve the health and well-being of the citizens of Colorado, the Rocky Mountain region and the world.

The Colorado School of Public Health (CSPH) opened in July 2008 and is the only School of Public Health in the Rocky Mountain region. The school offers both professional, practice-based degrees (M.P.H., Dr.P.H.) and academic degrees (M.S., Ph.D.), and is dedicated to training the public health workforce in Colorado and the surrounding states. The vision of the school is to inspire academicians, practitioners and students to work collaboratively to assure that all people and communities are healthy and their environments sustainable. The M.S. in Epidemiology degree is an integral part of the CSPH plan to achieve this vision and to become accredited in 2010. This proposal outlines the demand for this program and the feasibility of offering the M.S. in Epidemiology degree.

The public health system in this country is experiencing a severe shortage of trained professionals at the same time public health threats such as chronic diseases, environmental contamination and disruption, and rural and minority health disparities are increasing. Addressing this workforce shortage requires strong academic and professional education programs that will prepare students and working professionals for the ever-increasing challenges facing our public health system. Offering an M.S. in Epidemiology will address the shortage of trained professionals by providing an academic degree in a core public health discipline that is not available anywhere else in the Rocky Mountain region.

The degree programs in the CSPH are being adapted for distance education to better serve the workforce in the region. This is especially important for working professionals whose ability to travel to a campus may be limited. In an effort to extend the accessibility of CSPH programs across the region, classes are offered online, in the evenings, as intensive sessions, and in a variety of locations.

One of the core values of the CSPH is having a culture and behaviors that are ethical, inclusive, creative and sensitive to health disparities. Therefore, all of the school's programs work to build an inclusive, culturally competent institution that trains health professionals who are knowledgeable and respectful of diversity in society and dedicated to ensuring health equity among populations.

The plans for the new Colorado School of Public Health included changing the focus of the school from a primarily research-based institution to a more balanced model which increased the educational programs component of the school. This has allowed faculty more time for teaching and the school to enroll a greater number of students. It is anticipated that tuition revenue will cover all costs of this new degree program.