



April 20, 2020

Dr. Michael Baumgartner  
Executive Director  
Coordinating Commission for  
Postsecondary Education  
140 N. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 300  
Lincoln, NE 68509

Dear Michael:

Enclosed is a copy of the proposal to create a Doctor of Public Health in the College of Public Health at UNMC. The proposal was approved by the Board of Regents at the April 17, 2020 meeting. Also enclosed is the Proposal for New Instructional Program Form 92-40.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Susan M. Fritz, PhD  
Executive Vice President and Provost

Enclosures

c: Chancellor Jeffrey Gold  
Senior Vice Chancellor Dele Davies  
Dean Ali Khan, College of Public Health  
Vice Provost David Jackson

**COORDINATING COMMISSION  
FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION**

140 N. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 300  
Lincoln, NE 68508

Telephone: (402) 471-2847  
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**PROPOSAL FOR NEW INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**  
Form 92-40

**SECTION I**

Institution Submitting Proposal: University of Nebraska Medical Center

Title of Program: Doctor of Public Health

CIP Code: 51.2201

Organizational Unit in which program will be located:

College of Public Health

Name of contact person in the event additional information is needed: Dr. Susan M. Fritz

Telephone: 402-472-5242

Degree, Diploma, or Certificate to be offered (use separate submittal for each level):

Doctor of Public Health

Proposed date to initiate program: When approved by the Coordinating Commission

List the location(s) where this program will be offered: UNMC

If the program has a projected ending date, please so indicate:

Date approved by Governing Board: April 17, 2020

(Attach all documents related to this proposal upon which the Governing Board made its decision to approve the proposal.)

Chief Executive Officer's or other Authorized Officer's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Susan M. Fritz

TO: The Board of Regents Addendum VII-A-4  
Academic Affairs

MEETING DATE: April 17, 2020

SUBJECT: Creation of a Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) in the College of Public Health at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC)

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approval is requested to create a Doctor of Public Health in the College of Public Health at UNMC

PREVIOUS ACTION: April 16, 2010 – The Board approved the change in administration of the Master of Public Health program from joint status (UNMC/UNO) to UNMC, and from the Graduate College to the UNMC College of Public Health as a professional degree.  
July 28, 2006 – The Board approved establishing the College of Public Health at UNMC.  
May 19, 2001 – The Board approved a joint UNMC and UNO Master of Public Health program.

EXPLANATION: The Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) is a professional doctoral degree program designed for public health practitioners. The purpose of the DrPH program is to educate practitioners that are focused on preventing disease or injury and improving community health. Graduates are expected to occupy leadership positions that have a major influence on achieving important, broad-reaching, public health objectives in communities.  
The DrPH requires successful completion of 54 credit hours – 42 credit hours of course work, six credit hours of practicum, and six credit hours of a practice-based dissertation. The proposed program of study is consistent with other accredited DrPH programs in the United States. Full-time students will be able to complete the program in three years and part-time students will be able to complete it in five years.  
This proposal has been approved by the Council of Academic Officers; it also has been reviewed by the Academic Affairs Committee.

PROGRAM COST: \$124,850 for Year 1; \$662,073 over five years

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Tuition and fees

SPONSORS: H. Dele Davies  
Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs  
Jeffrey P. Gold, Chancellor  
University of Nebraska Medical Center

RECOMMENDED:

/s/ Susan M. Fritz  
Executive Vice President and Provost

DATE:

March 18, 2020



## PROPOSAL DOCTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH

### I. DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

**Name of the institution proposing the program:** University of Nebraska Medical Center

**Name of the program proposed:** Doctor of Public Health (DrPH)

**Degree to be awarded graduates of the program:** Doctor of Public Health (DrPH)

**Other programs offered in this field by the institution:** No other DrPH degree programs exist at the University of Nebraska. MPH degree programs do exist: 51.2201 Public Health, General (MPH only); 51.2202 Environmental Health; 51.2207 Public Health Education and Promotion; 51.2209 Maternal and Child Health and 51.2211 Health Services Administration.

**CIP Code:** 51.2201

**Administrative unit for the program:** College of Public Health (COPH)

**Proposed delivery site and type of delivery:** The curriculum for this program will be delivered online only and asynchronously utilizing the learning management system (Canvas).

**Date approved by governing board:** Pending

**Proposed date (term/year) the program will be initiated:** Upon approval

**Description, including credit hours and other requirements (program of study) and purpose of the proposed program:**

**Purpose:**

The DrPH is a professional doctoral degree program designed for public health practitioners. The DrPH degree prepares students to work as a leader or administrator in a variety of practice-based settings within the public, private or academic sectors. Examples of careers with a DrPH include health department director, health policy advisor, public health program director, or community health manager. DrPH graduates are able to convene diverse partners; communicate to effect change across a range of sectors and settings; synthesize and translate findings; and generate practice-based evidence that advances programs, policies, services and/or systems addressing public health in the United States and globally.

The DrPH is substantially different from a PhD in a discipline of public health and can be distinguished by defining work purpose and beneficiaries. The purpose of a DrPH is to prevent disease or injury and to improve the health within a specific community. Graduates are

expected to occupy leadership positions that have a major influence on achieving important, broad-reaching, public health objectives in communities. A PhD degree focuses on the skills needed to make research-based contributions to the field of public health which contributes to generalizable knowledge. The DrPH degree is a high-level degree focused on public health leadership and management. DrPH graduates should demonstrate the ability to generate products that discover, apply and synthesize evidence from a broad range of disciplines and health-related data sources, in order to advance programs, policies, or systems addressing population health. In contrast, the MPH degree is focused on helping students learn the practical elements of public health that can be applied in a public health setting. The DrPH degree requires either completion of an MPH degree or completion of an equivalent degree.

### **DrPH program requirements:**

- Foundational competencies: all DrPH students must meet 20 foundational competencies in the areas of data analysis; leadership, management and governance; policy and programs; and education and workforce development.
- Concentration competencies: all offered concentrations must offer a minimum of five additional competencies that relate to the area of concentration.
- Advanced practice experience: all DrPH students must engage in one or more advanced level applied practice experiences collaborating with practitioners, allowing opportunities to develop leadership competencies and contributing to the public health field. The work product for the practice experience may be a single project or a set of related projects that demonstrate a depth of competence.
- Integrated learning experience: all DrPH students must generate field-based products consistent with advanced practice designed to influence programs, policies or systems addressing public health. The product must demonstrate synthesis of foundational and concentration specific competencies and requires the production of a high-quality written product (practice-based dissertation).

### **Admissions and Advising:**

Application to the DrPH program is processed through the online portal Schools of Public Health Application Service (SOPHAS). SOPHAS is a national centralized application service specific to graduate programs in public health.

Applicants must have an MPH, or equivalent degree, and a minimum of three years of public health experience. The DrPH program will accept a health-related master's degree as qualification for applying to the DrPH program, however, students who have not completed an MPH may need to take additional coursework.

Upon matriculation, all students will be assigned an academic advisor, who will help develop a personalized plan for completing the DrPH program and evaluate academic progress during the first year. The academic advisor also plays a role in assisting the advisee in understanding departmental, college and university policies and procedures. The academic advisors will be a

team consisting of a faculty member in the College of Public Health, assigned at the beginning of the program to advise on coursework based on students' degree concentration, and a public health practitioner. A program of study, prepared with the academic advisor, will be completed by the end of the first semester of enrollment.

The DrPH practice-based dissertation is an integrative learning experience designed to influence programs, policies, or systems applicable to public health practice and directed towards solving public health problems that have immediate practice implications. A practice-based dissertation advisor will be chosen no later than the beginning of the fall semester of the second year. The practice-based dissertation advisor will serve as the chair of the dissertation committee and is responsible for guiding the student to produce doctoral level, original scholarship. The student, with input from the practice-based dissertation advisor, will select at least three additional members of the dissertation committee to enrich the student's learning experience. The practice-based dissertation advisor will also assist the student with developing professional and organizational leadership skills, setting goals, accessing resources, and professional networking.

Upon completion of required coursework, the student must pass a comprehensive examination at the end of the second year of the program. It consists of a written proposal and an oral defense. The comprehensive examination will be graded by the student's practice-based dissertation committee. Upon successful completion of the comprehensive examination, the student will be considered a DrPH candidate.

With the approval of the chair and committee the student will submit a final dissertation draft to the committee. When the committee deems the student is ready to defend his/her dissertation, the chair will approve the scheduling and announcement of the final oral defense. Formal defense of the dissertation work will include a public presentation of the dissertation by the student and a private oral examination by the dissertation committee following the presentation. The oral examination is closed to the public. Upon successful completion of the written report and oral defense, the student becomes eligible for graduation.

**Credit hours:**

The DrPH requires successful completion of 54 credit hours, 42 credit hours of course work, 6 credit hours of practicum and 6 credit hours of a practice-based dissertation. The total number of required credit hours for the DrPH is based on the didactic course hours to attain the required 20 foundational and 5 concentration competencies, practice experience hours, and dissertation hours. Among accredited DrPH programs on a semester system, the range of total credit hours is 45-64 credit hours. Our proposed program of study is consistent with other accredited DrPH programs in the United States. Full-time students will be able to complete the program in 3 years and part-time students will be able to complete the program in 5 years.

## Program of Study: Doctor of Public Health

Course Name		Credit Hours	
<b>DrPH Core Courses</b>			<b>18</b>
CPH 545	Health Equity and Leadership	3	
HPRO 916	Implementation Science Models and Methods	3	
CPH 563	Strategic Planning and Management	3	
CPH 718	Leadership Theory and Practice	3	
CPH 705	Public Health Teaching and Training	3	
CPH 628	Epidemiologic Methods	3	
<b>DrPH Epidemiology Concentration Core Courses</b>			<b>12</b>
CPH 621	Applied Epidemiology	3	
CPH 746	Epidemiology in Public Health Practice	3	
CPH 757	Survey Research Methods	3	
CPH 626	Health Information and Surveillance for Public Health Practice	3	
<b>Electives – choose 4 (≥ 3 at 700 level)</b>			<b>12</b>
<b>Practicum</b>			<b>6</b>
<b>Practice-based Dissertation</b>			<b>6</b>
<b>TOTAL CREDITS</b>			<b>54</b>

We have consulted with local (Douglas County Health Department), state (Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services) and national (Centers for Disease and Prevention and Control) public health agencies as well as health system executives, other stakeholders, accreditation specialists from the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH) and the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) to ensure that our DrPH program graduates will meet the needs of the public health workforce in Nebraska and beyond.

CEPH is the programmatic accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education to accredit schools of public health and public health programs. The UNMC College of Public Health was accredited by CEPH in 2010. The College was recently reviewed by CEPH in 2017 and received full reaccreditation for seven more years. The DrPH degree will be included in the unit of accreditation. This requires the DrPH program to also undergo a full review by CEPH before implementation. CEPH accreditation review provides assurance that the program and curriculum meet the accepted standards of the degree as established by the profession.

## II. REVIEW CRITERIA

### A. CENTRALITY TO ROLE AND MISSION

The mission of UNMC is to lead the world in transforming lives to create a healthy future for all individuals and communities through premier educational programs, innovative research and extraordinary patient care. The mission of the College of Public Health is to promote optimal health and well-being through robust education, research, and service in collaboration with communities in Nebraska, across the country, and around the world. The DrPH degree program supports the university and college mission by producing transformative academic and practice leaders with expertise in evidence-based public health practice and research.

The DrPH program was developed in consultation with local, state and national leaders in public health practice and experts in CEPH accreditation criteria. The DrPH program has strong support from COPH and UNMC leadership. Currently, there are no existing DrPH programs in Nebraska. Therefore the DrPH program will also help meet the needs of the state of Nebraska as described in the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE) *Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education*. The program is designed to be responsive to workforce needs of employers; contribute to the health, prosperity and vitality of the people and the state through research and development efforts; and serve the state by developing and nurturing future public health leaders. It is expected that many of our DrPH graduates will work in leadership and management positions in Nebraska and will further help meet the mission of UNMC and the COPH to promote population health.

The DrPH program, as required by the COPH accreditation agency, will regularly assess evolving needs and priorities of public health and will incorporate results from these assessments into the curriculum. A survey of public health employers and leaders will be undertaken biannually to identify critical and evolving skills and knowledge in the area of public health practice leadership and management and inform curriculum development. A DrPH Advisory Council will be created and consist of prominent public health practice leaders in the state of Nebraska and nationally, as well as leading educators and scholars in the field. Annual meetings of the Advisory Council will help ensure that the DrPH program continues to meet the needs of the public health practice in the state of Nebraska and beyond.

## **B. EVIDENCE OF NEED AND DEMAND**

### **1. Need for the Program**

The public health workforce is in crisis. National studies show that the public health workforce is inadequate both in numbers and training:

- 68% of local health department directors in the United States are over the age of 50 and were likely to retire over the next several years. (NACCHO 2013)
- An estimated 40% of local health department staff members in the United States will retire within the next decade. (NACCHO 2013)
- The U.S. will be short more than 250,000 public health workers by 2020. (ASPPH 2008)
- Only 22% of local health directors had public health training (some of that training consisting only of a baccalaureate degree). (NACCHO 2013)
- Nearly 80% of the individuals leading state and local health departments do not have any graduate-level training in public health. (CDC 2002)

The DrPH degree is designed to prepare graduates for the types of careers needed to fill critical leadership roles as senior-level administrators, policy makers, and leaders in governmental, non-profit, and private-sector settings as well as teaching, research, and service in academic roles at the undergraduate or graduate level.

Despite the need for DrPH trained graduates in advanced-level public health practice skills, there is a large void in advanced practice-based public health training nationally and in

Nebraska. There are 30 accredited DrPH programs nationally and only one is in our region (Colorado). Of these 31 programs, only 4 are offered fully online and 3 are offered as online/on-campus hybrid. In addition, a major revision of the public health accreditation criteria in 2016 had an immense impact on DrPH programs; between August 2017 and September 2019, seven schools and programs discontinued the DrPH program in part due to inability to meet revisions in accreditation criteria. The UNMC DrPH program is the culmination of over two years of planning and the curriculum is based on and fully responsive to the revised accreditation criteria.

In Nebraska, between 2005 and 2008, the median increase in FTE positions in local health departments in Nebraska was 31%, in contrast to a national figure of 3%. (NACCHO 2010). In a survey of the state's local health directors, only 25% said they had sufficient staff to manage the current workload. (UNMC 2011) In addition, the vast majority of directors were first-time leaders of a health agency. Only 15% indicated previous experience as a health department director and only two had a bachelor's or master's degree in public health. In Nebraska, the public health workforce with formal public health education is lower, compared to national levels of 20% (CDC 2001) Other than the directors, of the estimated 600 employees in local public health agencies in the state, approximately two-thirds (69.0%) were college graduates; however, only about 4% of them had completed formal public health training or certification. (UNMC 2011)

## **2. Demand for the Program**

Public health challenges are becoming more global and complex and there is a need to train professionals to be the next generation of leaders. We anticipate significant demand from students to enroll in the DrPH program. Nationally, there were 2,051 student applications and 372 enrollees to DrPH programs in 2017, this is a 171% increase in enrollees since 2002. This increase is due to both the increasing number of MPH graduates and the increasing workforce demand. No university in Nebraska offers the DrPH degree. Although UNMC offers a Master of Public Health (MPH), this degree program does not provide advanced training in leadership and management. COPH doctoral (PhD) programs place an emphasis on research and do not offer advanced training in public health application. Discussions with the American Public Health Association, the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health, our colleagues across the University of Nebraska system and the United States, current students, alumni and potential employers confirm the strong interest in a degree that is tailored toward leadership and within public health practice settings.

In 2017, a market analysis was conducted to assess the market viability of a DrPH program by examining the real-time labor market data and interviewing the directors of prominent schools of public health throughout the US. The findings from this analysis are summarized below:

1. There is a growing nationwide employer demand for doctorate-level management and research positions in public health
  - National employers seek doctorate-level public health professionals in 5,748 relevant job postings in the past 12 months
  - An online DrPH program can attract students with diverse backgrounds from all over the country

2. A wide range of public and private sectors seek doctorate-level professionals including:
  - Research and education (colleges, universities, professional schools; scientific research and development services)
  - Public sectors (executive, legislative and other general government support; social advocacy organizations; national security and international affairs; individual and family services)
  - Health care (general medical and surgical hospitals; pharmaceutical and medicine manufacturing; insurance carriers; offices of physicians)
  - Other (administration of human resources programs; management, scientific and technical consulting services)
  
3. There is an emphasis on the development of leadership, management, and research skills over discipline-specific content mastery in the program curriculum
  - Among profiled institutions, online DrPH programs generally focus on building a cross-disciplinary skillset for working professionals
  - Job posting data on the most in-demand skills reflect the need to teach management and research skills.

Over the years, the college has received many inquiries about the availability of a DrPH program at recruitment events, especially the American Public Health Association (largest public health conference worldwide) and the National Public Health Service Corps meeting, as well as by email and phone calls.

The number of new students each year expected to enroll in the program and the total number of students that will be enrolled each year in the first five years of operation are shown below. The total number of students that need to be enrolled each year to make the program viable is 11. The numbers below are a conservative estimate of planned enrollment and based on the assumption that there will not be a full marketing campaign in place for year 1 and we will instead reach out to the persons who have contacted us in the past. After year 1 we will have a marketing campaign, active recruitment for the degree, and word of mouth. We currently have four individuals that have maintained close contact with us about the status of a DrPH program and state their intention to enroll in the DrPH program as soon as it is approved.

Year	New Students Enrolled	Total Students Enrolled
1	3	3
2	6	9
3	6	15
4	6	18
5	6	18

In summary, to our knowledge, there currently does not exist a viable alternative for a DrPH degree in the University of Nebraska system. Furthermore, there are no accredited doctor of public health or equivalent degree programs in the state of Nebraska. As described above there is a shortage of public health workers, especially those trained for leadership positions, both in Nebraska and nationally. We believe the proposed program will help meet this need and will provide rigorous, competency-based training for leadership in public health practice.

## **C. ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES**

The DrPH program will be managed by the College of Public Health (COPH) at UNMC. Adequate resources to develop and implement the program are available. There is a projected deficit between tuition revenue and expenditures in years 1 and 2 of the program. Revenue calculations are based on tuition dollars from students enrolled in the DrPH program only. All but 3 courses offered in the DrPH program courses required by other degree programs and already being taught. Of the three new courses designed, we expect these courses may bring in additional revenue from what is projected based on students in other degree programs registering for the courses included in the program of study. The remaining cost will be covered by college funds allocated to the department teaching the course.

### **1. Faculty and Staff Resources**

Required faculty resources based on CEPH accreditation criteria requires a minimum of 3 faculty for the DrPH degree, 2 of which must be primary instructional faculty with a 1.0 FTE. In the College, there are 16 assistant, associate and full professors available to instruct and advise DrPH students. One additional full-time assistant professor with applied practice experience needs to be hired. The Director of Professional Programs manages all existing professional degrees and the expense for this position is not incurred by the DrPH budget. In addition, the College will provide additional 0.05 FTE staff member dedicated to assisting with administration of the DrPH program. Staff in the Office of Educational Services supports the administration of all COPH educational programs and provides student support through recruiting assistance, admissions administration, course scheduling, records administration, career counseling and other student co-curricular activities. COPH information technology services provides assistance with the technological needs of online learning and the COPH Director of Educational Design and Development provides Canvas support for students and faculty and faculty development workshops and consultations for online course planning, implementation and evaluation. The salary for this position is covered in part by the distributive learning fee that will be paid by all DrPH students. Faculty are also supported by an Administrative Assistant. The COPH also has an accreditation specialist who is responsible for all data tracking for accreditation purposes.

### **2. Physical Facilities**

The College is housed in the Harold M. and Beverly Maurer Center for Public Health, a state-of-the-art facility located on the UNMC campus. The 61,423 square foot facility provides offices, classrooms, workspaces, and meeting spaces for College students, faculty and staff. The facility provides approximately 14,640 square feet of lockable office space for faculty and staff, and 5,330 square feet of modular office space for staff and teaching and research assistants. Centrally located space for core support function (mail, copying and general workspace) is provided on each of the facility's three floors.

### **3. Instructional Equipment and Informational Resources**

The DrPH program will be fully online, and there are four conference rooms and nine classrooms equipped with Smart Board technology, computers and projectors, and streaming internet video, two-way video conferencing, and Echo 360 video/audio recording to support

interaction with online students. An audio booth is available in the College for faculty to create audio and video recordings for online courses. Office computers can also be used to create recordings. All faculty and staff have adequate computer, space and other resources to implement and manage the program.

Students will have access to the UNMC's McGoogan Library of Medicine currently undergoing renovation. McGoogan Library provides access to over 27,000 journals, including 6,100 health care and research-related e-journals, 43 databases, and nearly 100,000 books and e-books. The Library provides a full range of information and learning services for students, faculty, and staff, such as how to search for articles and books, how to cite sources and avoid plagiarism, reference manager tool, writing assistance and other services. The Library's electronic services can be used on-site or accessed remotely. Using secure logins, students are able to access full-text biomedical information resources, tutorials, databases, and bibliographic citation software from inside and outside campuses through the Library's website. Students will also have access to libraries in other University of Nebraska campuses. Students can benefit from the Interlibrary Loan Department, which is part of an extensive, worldwide network that quickly obtains the full-text information required by students and faculty for research and education purposes. Funding from the Chancellor's Office and the Library ensures all UNMC students receive up to 50 free digitally delivered documents or interlibrary loaned books/book chapters/journal articles per academic year.

Distributive learning technologies are used on the UNMC campus. The Canvas Learning Management System is widely used for delivery of instructional materials of all courses to students. All course materials are password protected and accessible only to students and instructors or others involved in the technology to create and update the course.

UNMC has significantly expanded its investment in information and educational technology over the past 10 years. This investment includes technical staff support; a robust, secure campus network; and a multi-campus, statewide video network. There is wireless high-speed internet access throughout the UNMC campus, and students have access to the Microsoft Office suite as part of an institutional license. Consistent with many other accredited DrPH programs, students will be required to have a laptop and/or tablet for the duration of their program of study. All courses will follow campus policies and will be ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant. UNMC provides on call support for IT issues. Any additional students' needs will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

The College ITS unit supports all computing in the College, including supporting live stream lectures; maintaining College network servers; specifying, configuring, and ordering all equipment, software, and data; and troubleshooting hardware and software problems.

#### **4. *Five-Year Budget Projections for the Program***

There is a deficit between revenue and expenditures in years 1 and 2 of the program (see Tables 1 and 2). Revenue calculations are based on tuition dollars from students enrolled in the DrPH program only. Courses offered for the DrPH program may bring in additional revenue from what is projected based on students in other degree programs registering for the courses included in the program of study. The remaining cost will be covered by college funds allocated to the department teaching the course.

## D. AVOIDANCE OF UNNECESSARY DUPLICATION

Currently, there is no Doctor of Public Health degree offered in Nebraska.

The most comparable programs in the University of Nebraska system is the UNMC PhD program in Epidemiology, however the PhD is very different from a DrPH. The PhD degree is a research degree and focuses on developing scientific skills needed to become a public health researcher. In contrast, the DrPH degree is a professional degree and focuses on developing public health practitioners. The DrPH improves knowledge and analytical skills in leadership, policy, program management, and professional communication. The DrPH program prepares public health practitioners for leadership and administrative roles in public health practice settings. Both degrees lead to careers in the public health field, but the PhD is for students who want to conduct research and educate, and the DrPH is for students who want to lead and manage.

There is only one DrPH program offered in a contiguous state (Colorado), and it is not available online. The DrPH program is geared toward mid-career professional who prefer to continue working while pursuing a degree and need the flexibility of an online program. There is only one DrPH program offered (Illinois) within the states that are members of the Midwestern Higher Education Compact, and it does have an online option. The Illinois program receives upward of 120 applications per year and only accepts 15 students. Illinois also charges \$950 per credit hour which is almost double of the \$580 per credit hour charged by Nebraska.

## E. CONSISTENCY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE PLAN FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

The proposed DrPH program is consistent with the vision and goals outlined in the *Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education*. This includes but is not limited to the following:

### ***2-1 Meeting the Educational Needs of Students:***

#### Participation and Access

- **Use of Instructional Technology to Broaden Access:** The proposed DrPH program expands education opportunities for Nebraskans as it is fully online and asynchronous. It is anticipated that most, if not all, of the DrPH students will be working professionals and unable to enroll in a traditional on-campus degree program. There is no geographic barrier with an online program and students can access courses at any time and from nearly any place. As a requirement of our national accreditation body, all courses, course learning objectives and course assignments are clearly mapped to the 20 foundational and 5 concentration competencies.

#### Student-Centered

- **Preparation and Admission Standards:** Admission standards are clearly stated and comparable to peer programs.

- **Time to Degree:** Among accredited DrPH programs on a semester system, the range of total credit hours is 45-64 credit hours. At 54 credit hours, the proposed DrPH program falls within the credit hour range of other programs. Full-time students will be able to complete the program in 3 years and part-time students will be able to complete the program in 5 years.

Support Services:

- **Providing Resources:** COPH has excellent technology and staff resources as detailed above to support online learning and ensure students have a successful online learning experience. All online courses are evaluated at the end of every using the OSCQR tool to assess course quality.

**3-1 Meeting the Needs of the State:**

Workforce Development

- **Prepared Graduates:** The DrPH degree is competency-based and responsive to the needs of prospective employers. DrPH graduates will have the skills and knowledge to succeed as leaders in public health organizations. The DrPH degree will become part of the unit of accreditation for COPH. Accreditation assures that the program will be evaluated and meet the accepted standards established by the profession to produce competent public health professionals.
- **Targeted Skills:** The proposed DrPH program responds to workforce needs based on a market analysis and a national study conducted by the ASPPH and NACCHO. According to the market analysis conducted by the Education Advisory Board (EAB) in 2017, NACCHO and the ASPPH report published in 2013, there is a strong and growing demand for DrPH graduates as 68% of local health department directors in the United States are over the age of 50 and were likely to retire over the next several years, the U.S. will be short more than 250,000 public health workers by 2020 and nearly 80% of the individuals leading state and local health departments do not have any graduate-level training in public health. (NACCHO 2013, ASPPH 2013, CDC 2002)

These studies recommend a doctorate program that emphasizes the development of leadership, management, and research skills to prepare practitioners with a cross-disciplinary skillset. The proposed DrPH program addresses leadership, management and research competencies of public health professionals through didactic coursework and a practice-oriented applied project.

- **Lifelong Learning:** The DrPH program provides an opportunity for advanced training of professionals who have been in the field. The proposed online DrPH program allows professionals to obtain quality education without the need to take time off or travel distance. The program responds to requests from students and employers to upgrade the skills of the existing workforce. According to the interview study of DrPH programs in the US, most students enrolled in DrPH programs possess at least five to 10 years of work experience and range 30 and 40 years of age. The majority of students continue to work full-time during the program.

- **Expanded Workforce Diversity:** The proposed DrPH program will participate in the University of Nebraska's system efforts to enhance educational and workforce development opportunities for minority populations who have been underrepresented in the workforce.
- **Attracting and Retaining Students:** Although the College of Public Health has made a substantial progress in addressing the public health workforce shortage in Nebraska through the MPH program, there is still more work to be done. According to the interview study of DrPH programs, the majority of their students enroll from outside the local area or surrounding region. Administrators at online programs report enrolling students from across the US and from abroad. The proposed DrPH program offers a rare opportunity for students to obtain an advanced degree through distance learning. It is anticipated that the program will attract students throughout Nebraska, including rural communities, as well as students from other states and other countries.

#### Research and Technology Transfer

- **Research and Knowledge Transfer:** The DrPH prepares students for evidence-based practice, generation of practice-based evidence, and leadership positions that apply and synthesize translational and implementation science findings in a variety of settings including, governmental, non-profit, and private-sector settings as well as teaching, research, and service in academic roles at the undergraduate or graduate level. The proposed DrPH program curriculum is innovative, current, and proactive to adapt to the ever-changing public health systems and health care landscape.
- **Adequate Health Care:** Graduates of the DrPH program will work in a variety of settings including health insurance companies and health care organizations. The proposed DrPH program has a role in health-care education to meet the health-care needs of Nebraska's citizens and the overall US and global populations.
- **Scholarly Research:** While often difficult to measure, scholarly research conducted at higher education institutions not only enhance the learning experience of students within the institutions but also the knowledge base of Nebraska citizens. The DrPH program requires students to conduct an applied public health research study to produce evidence needed to improve the population health.

#### Serving Citizens

- **Educated Citizenry:** The DrPH program will serve the state and the country by preparing individuals for productive, fulfilling lives by developing and nurturing the citizens and future leaders of Nebraska and beyond. The DrPH program has the following critical content to enhance the knowledge base and skills of students which are critical to enhance the lives of Nebraskans: 1) evidence-based methods and approaches to interventions at individual, community, population and system levels that promote population health; 2) evidence-based policy development, analysis, and translation processes including, the role and impact of scientific information, legal and regulatory approaches and constraints, ethical issues, and varied stakeholder interests; 3) community-based approaches for engaging practitioners and researchers with community leaders; and 4) communication with people and communities across the whole range of academic and health literacy levels.

- **The Needs of Immigrants:** Higher education plays an important role in engaging individuals of various backgrounds including immigrants. The DrPH and other programs implemented through the College of Public Health encourage participation from diverse population groups. One of the core missions of the college is to develop culturally and logistically diverse and competent public health workforce.

#### Technology

- **Use of Instructional Technology:** Consistent with our other programs in the College of Public Health, substantive use of a variety of instructional technology resources will be utilized in the program. This includes maximizing the tools provided by our learning management systems.

#### ***4-1 Meeting Educational Needs through Exemplary Institutions***

Funding Exemplary Institutions: We believe the DrPH program will be highly effective and efficient in meeting the growing needs for skilled public health practitioners because of its emphasis on stakeholder-driven competency-based education. The program is designed to leverage the existing resources of the University of Nebraska system in order to minimize program expenses. As a result, conservative projections of program revenues substantially exceed projected expenses over a 5-year period (see Tables 1 and 2). Also, the DrPH program as proposed is not duplicative of other programs in the state of Nebraska for the reasons given previously.

Accountability and Effectiveness: By pursuing the rigorous accreditation standards set by CEPH, our program will be highly accountable for achieving the mission and vision stated above as well as delivering a high quality educational experience that demonstrates concrete improvement in student outcomes. For example, all learning and evaluation tools will be linked to program competencies, and students, faculty and prospective employers will be regularly surveyed to ensure that the program's competencies are responsive to the changing healthcare landscape in Nebraska and nationally.

#### ***5-1 Meeting Educational Needs through Partnerships and Collaboration***

The DrPH practicum is a required experience for all DrPH students to develop leadership competencies and contribute to a public health setting. The practicum takes place within an organization external to the college. Students work with senior public health practitioners and leaders to address a need identified by the host organization that directly relates to the student's academic goals and professional interests. Students are responsible for completing a work project that is meaningful to the organization and advances public health practice. The work product may be a single project or a set of related projects that demonstrate a depth of competence. Relevant organizations may include governmental, non-governmental, non-profit, industrial and for-profit settings. The COPH Office of Public Health Practice (OPHP), will help support the success of DrPH program by assisting with the identification of practicum experiences. The OPHP plays the essential role of fostering mutually beneficial partnerships between COPH and the practice partners.



February 4, 2020

David Jackson  
Interim Executive Vice President and Provost  
University of Nebraska,  
3835 Holdrege Street  
PO Box 830743  
Lincoln, NE 68583-0743

Dear Dr. Jackson,

I am writing to support the launch of a new professional program, the Doctor of Public Health (DrPH), in the College of Public Health. The DrPH program is designed to produce transformative public health leaders for careers as senior-level administrators in governmental, non-profit, and private-sector settings.

The five-year budget projections for the DrPH program shows a deficit at the start of the program in years 1 and 2. Revenue calculations are based on tuition dollars from students enrolled in the DrPH program only. A total of 45 of the 57 credit hours for the DrPH degree are currently being taught for other degree programs. For the additional 9 credit hours, we expect these courses to bring in tuition dollars from student registration in other degree programs in addition to DrPH students. The College will commit funds to cover any deficit from college funds allocated to the department teaching the course.

The DrPH program is well aligned with the mission of the College of Public Health "to promote optimal health and well-being through robust education, research, and service in collaboration with communities in Nebraska, across the country, and around the world". As a state institution, our service to the population of Nebraska is at the forefront of our mission and in Nebraska there is a need for DrPH trained graduates in advanced-level public health practice skills. The program also supports one of the strategic goals of college to increase student enrollment. By year 4 of the program, we expect a minimum enrollment of 18 students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ali S. Khan'.

Ali S. Khan, MD, MPH, MBA  
Assistant Surgeon General (ret.), USPHS  
Dean and Professor  
University of Nebraska Medical Center



Healthy. Vibrant.  
Everyone. Everywhere.

To Protect, Promote, and Prioritize the Health of our Entire Community

Midtown Campus, 1111 South 41<sup>st</sup> Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68105

October 17, 2019

To Whom It May Concern,

As the Director of the Douglas County Health Department in Omaha Nebraska, I am writing this letter of support to create a DrPH program at the University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Public Health.

There is already a shortage in the state and local public health workforce and this shortage will be magnified as it is expected approximately 45% of public health employees will be eligible for retirement in the next five years. This wave of retirements comes at a time when public health departments are in need to assuming greater responsibility for threats such as the opioid epidemic, pandemic influenza, bioterrorism and drug resistant strains of common infections.

A DrPH program in the state of Nebraska will prepare future public health leaders to address the practical problems the field is currently facing. Importantly, the proposed DrPH program is fully on-line and enables students to remain in place at their current jobs while receiving needed training for advancement. It is important to retain professionals and encourage opportunities for them to build the skills that will be needed in the future. For employees, advancing their education in a DrPH program is an excellent way to be positioned for one of the many choice leadership positions that will become available in coming years.

I believe a DrPH program in Nebraska is essential to supporting public health in our state.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Adi Pour'.

Adi Pour, Ph. D.  
Health Director

AP:su

10/11/2019

To whom it may concern,

I write this letter in support of a Doctorate of Public Health (DrPH) program at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) College of Public Health. As a public health practitioner in Nebraska, I am very familiar with the work force capacity and needs, as well as the complexity of public health and epidemiological work. Having a DrPH program at UNMC would provide a great benefit to developing leaders working in the health sector within Nebraska and beyond, and therefore be of value to the health and well-being of our community.

As an epidemiologist at the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), myself and numerous colleagues at DHHS and partnering agencies obtained a master's degree in public health (MPH) at the beginning of our careers. This is a standard degree in our line of work. However, this evolving and technical field is growing and further develop skills, knowledge, and leadership capacity is necessary. Additionally, a DrPH would have a significant advantage over other terminal degree programs such as a PhD because the concentration would be focused on public health practice rather than research, as well as focusing on persons already working in this field rather than full-time students.

I look forward to the prospect of participating in this program myself and would be happy to add further information should my input be of assistance. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Blake Hendrickson, MPH

Vaccine-preventable disease Epidemiologist

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

Blake.hendrickson@nebraska.gov

(402) 471-6450



October 17, 2019

To Whom It May Concern,

The Public Health Association of Nebraska strongly supports the creation of a DrPH program at the UNMC College of Public Health.

The 2017 Public Health Workforce Interests and Needs Survey (PH WINS) highlights areas of growth for public health workers and emphasizes the need to develop leadership capacity, particularly in the areas of: systems and strategic thinking, leading change, developing cross-sector partnerships, improved communications; and working with diverse cultures.

A DrPH program at the University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Public Health would train leaders to implement evidence-based solutions for public health practice and build greater leadership capacity for the Nebraska public health workforce. An increase in DrPH trained practitioners will prepare senior-level administrators and develop skills of applied researchers and policy makers to address the practical problems facing public health professionals.

A DrPH program is a key asset to supporting public health in Nebraska.

On behalf of the Public Health Association of Nebraska,

Colleen Svoboda

Board President, Public Health Association of Nebraska

10/9/19

Christine Arcari, PhD, MPH  
Associate Dean for Academic & Student Affairs  
Department of Epidemiology  
UNMC COPH  
984355 Nebraska Medical Center  
Omaha, NE 68198-4355

Dr. Arcari:

My name is Wendy Wells and I have been a Community/Public/Population Health Nursing Instructor with University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Nursing West Nebraska Division (UNMC CON WND) for 17 years. I completed my masters in Community Health Nursing in 2001. I have a previous degree from Colorado State University (1993) with majors in Human Nutrition and Biology and a minor in Anatomy and Neurobiology. I completed the BSN program with UNMC CON WND in 1996. Even as an undergraduate nursing student I knew I wanted to work in public/population health.

I am ready to pursue a doctorate and am excited that UNMC COPH is beginning a DrPH program. I feel that this is the best fit for my background. I would like to expand to teaching online and within the public health arena in addition to nursing. I am more interested in pursuing a doctorate with practice significance versus a research doctorate. I work with many public health agencies and this doctorate would be beneficial for this. I am in full support of this program being approved and offered through UNMC COPH.

I am particularly interested in disaster planning concentration which is one of my favorite topics to teach in my population health course. I understand this program has not been officially approved yet, however I am taking courses that will apply once it has been approved.

I am excited for this opportunity! Please keep me advised as to the status of the program. Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Wendy Wells, RN*

Wendy Wells, BS, BSN, MSN, RN  
Population Health/Leadership Instructor  
Student Nurse Association Co-Advisor-WND  
Sigma Theta Tau Counselor-WND  
Adopt-a-School Coordinator-WND  
After School Program- presentation Coordinator- WND  
Interprofessional Education Coordinator-WND  
NP-AHEC Education Coordinator  
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308/641-7190- cell- phone & text  
308/632-0415-fax

Area Health Education Center-  
"Connecting Students to Careers, professionals to communities, and communities to better health"

**TABLE 1: PROJECTED EXPENSES - NEW INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**  
UNMC Doctor of Public Health

Personnel	(FY 2020) Year 1		(FY 2021) Year 2		(FY 2022) Year 3		(FY 2023) Year 4		(FY 2024) Year 5		Total Cost
	FTE	Cost									
Faculty <sup>1</sup>	1.00	\$120,000	1.00	\$123,600	1.00	\$127,308	1.00	\$131,127	1.00	\$135,061	\$637,096
Professional	0.05	\$2,350	0.05	\$2,421	0.05	\$2,493	0.05	\$2,568	0.05	\$2,645	\$12,476
Graduate Assistants											
Support Staff											
Subtotal	1.05	\$122,350	1.05	\$126,021	1.05	\$129,801	1.05	\$133,695	1.05	\$137,706	\$649,573
<b>Operating</b>											
Operating and Supplies <sup>2</sup>		\$2,500		\$2,500		\$2,500		\$2,500		\$2,500	\$12,500
Equipment											
Library/Information Resources											
Subtotal		\$2,500		\$2,500		\$2,500		\$2,500		\$2,500	\$12,500
<b>Total Expenses</b>		\$124,850		\$128,521		\$132,301		\$136,195		\$140,206	\$662,073

<sup>1</sup> 42 credit hours for the DrPh.

<sup>2</sup> Includes communications and marketing.

**TABLE 2: PROJECTED REVENUES - NEW INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**  
UNMC Doctor of Public Health

	(FY 2020) Year 1		(FY 2021) Year 2		(FY 2022) Year 3		(FY 2023) Year 4		(FY 2024) Year 5		Total
	FTE	Cost									
Reallocation of Existing Funds <sup>1</sup>		\$89,324		\$21,942		\$0		\$0		\$0	\$111,266
Required New Public Funds											
1. State Funds											
2. Local Tax Funds (community colleges)											
Tuition and Fees <sup>2</sup>		\$35,526		\$106,578		\$177,630		\$213,156		\$213,156	\$746,047
Other Funding											
<b>Total Revenue</b>		\$124,850		\$128,520		\$177,630		\$213,156		\$213,156	\$857,313

<sup>1</sup> Reallocation of existing college funds may be necessary the first two years to offset any deficit.

<sup>2</sup> Tuition rate = \$580; fees per credit hour = \$78.

Hours taken per academic year, per student 18

	Students Enrolled (new & existing)*	Tuition Revenue Per Year	Fees Revenue Per Year	Total Revenue Per Year
Year One	3	\$31,320	\$4,206	\$35,526
Year Two	9	\$93,960	\$12,618	\$106,578
Year Three	15	\$156,600	\$21,030	\$177,630
Year Four	18	\$187,920	\$25,236	\$213,156
Year Five	18	\$187,920	\$25,236	\$213,156

\* Every student counted for 3 years.

