REVIEW FOR ACCREDITATION

OF THE

PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM

AT THE

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS

COUNCIL ON EDUCATION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

SITE VISIT DATES:
         September 13-14, 2012

SITE VISIT TEAM:
  Kim Marie Thorburn, MD, MPH, Chair
  Carole Kacies, PhD

SITE VISIT COORDINATOR:
  Kristen S. Force, MPH, CHES
## Table of Contents

Introduction ................................................................................................................................................... 1  
Characteristics of a Public Health Program ................................................................................................. 2  
1.0 THE PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM ....................................................................................................... 3  
   1.1 Mission. ............................................................................................................................................... 3  
   1.2 Evaluation and Planning ...................................................................................................................... 4  
   1.3 Institutional Environment ..................................................................................................................... 5  
   1.4 Organization and Administration ......................................................................................................... 6  
   1.5 Governance ......................................................................................................................................... 7  
   1.6 Resources ........................................................................................................................................... 9  
2.0 INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS .......................................................................................................... 11  
   2.1 Master of Public Health Degree ........................................................................................................ 11  
   2.2 Program Length ................................................................................................................................... 12  
   2.3 Public Health Core Knowledge .......................................................................................................... 12  
   2.4 Practical Skills ................................................................................................................................... 13  
   2.5 Culminating Experience .................................................................................................................... 14  
   2.6 Required Competencies .................................................................................................................... 15  
   2.7 Assessment Procedures. ..................................................................................................................... 16  
   2.8 Academic Degrees. ............................................................................................................................ 17  
   2.9 Doctoral Degrees ................................................................................................................................ 17  
   2.10 Joint Degrees. ................................................................................................................................... 17  
   2.11 Distance Education or Executive Degree Programs. ...................................................................... 18  
3.0 CREATION, APPLICATION AND ADVANCEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE ............................................. 18  
   3.1 Research. .......................................................................................................................................... 18  
   3.2 Service ............................................................................................................................................... 19  
   3.3 Workforce Development .................................................................................................................... 20  
4.0 FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS. .................................................................................................. 21  
   4.1 Faculty Qualifications ........................................................................................................................ 21  
   4.2 Faculty Policies and Procedures ....................................................................................................... 21  
   4.3 Faculty and Staff Diversity .................................................................................................................. 22  
   4.4 Student Recruitment and Admissions ............................................................................................... 23  
   4.5 Student Diversity ............................................................................................................................... 24  
   4.6 Advising and Career Counseling ....................................................................................................... 24  
Agenda ........................................................................................................................................................ 26
Introduction

This report presents the findings of the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) regarding the MPH Program at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV). The report assesses the program’s compliance with the Accreditation Criteria for Programs of Public Health, amended June 2005. This accreditation review included the conduct of a self-study process by program constituents, the preparation of a document describing the program and its features in relation to the criteria for accreditation, and a visit in September 2012 by a team of external peer reviewers. During the visit, the team had an opportunity to interview program and university officials, administrators, teaching faculty, students, alumni and community representatives and to verify information in the self-study document by reviewing materials provided on site in a resource file. The team was afforded full cooperation in its efforts to assess the program and verify the self-study document.

Founded in 1957, UNLV is an urban university in Southern Nevada with more than 28,000 students and 900 faculty members. The university offers more than 220 undergraduate, master’s and doctoral degrees through 13 colleges and divisions. UNLV also has two professional schools: dental medicine and law.

The School of Community Health Sciences was established in 2004 and grants the BS in public health, BS in healthcare administration, MHA, PhD in public health and MPH. Faculty voted to eliminate the master’s of education in health promotion in December 2011; the degree is currently being phased out. Only the MPH degree is included in the CEPH unit of accreditation.

The school does not distinguish the MPH program as a single unit; therefore, the school’s full committees, mission statement and budget are used to support the program. The four MPH concentrations are housed in two departments, and most faculty members teach students in more than one degree. This is the program’s first review for accreditation.
Characteristics of a Public Health Program

To be considered eligible for accreditation review by CEPH, a public health program shall demonstrate the following characteristics:

a. The program shall be a part of an institution of higher education that is accredited by a regional accrediting body recognized by the US Department of Education.

b. The program and its faculty shall have the same rights, privileges and status as other professional preparation programs that are components of its parent institution.

c. The program shall function as a collaboration of disciplines, addressing the health of populations and the community through instruction, research, and service. Using an ecological perspective, the public health program should provide a special learning environment that supports interdisciplinary communication, promotes a broad intellectual framework for problem-solving, and fosters the development of professional public health concepts and values.

d. The public health program shall maintain an organizational culture that embraces the vision, goals and values common to public health. The program shall maintain this organizational culture through leadership, institutional rewards, and dedication of resources in order to infuse public health values and goals into all aspects of the program's activities.

e. The program shall have faculty and other human, physical, financial and learning resources to provide both breadth and depth of educational opportunity in the areas of knowledge basic to public health. As a minimum, the program shall offer the Master of Public Health (MPH) degree.

f. The program shall plan, develop and evaluate its instructional, research and service activities in ways that assure sensitivity to the perceptions and needs of its students and that combines educational excellence with applicability to the world of public health practice.

These characteristics are evident in the public health program at UNLV. The program is located in a regionally accredited university, and program faculty have the same rights, privileges and status as other professional programs at UNLV. The program is designed to prepare students to advance the science of public health, improve the health and quality of life of people in the service area and eliminate health disparities. Interdisciplinary coordination, cooperation and collaboration are encouraged and supported at all levels of the university. The centers and institutes housed in the school create opportunities for collaborative grants and joint publications. While the organizational structure is fairly unique, the program operates coherently in practice, values public health service and embraces a public health vision, goals and values. Resources are sufficient for the program to fulfill its mission, goals and objectives. The program has developed evaluation mechanisms to ensure that its goals and objectives are addressed; however, these processes lack consistent, systematic implementation and will continue to be refined.
1.0 THE PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM.

1.1 Mission.

The program shall have a clearly formulated and publicly stated mission with supporting goals and objectives. The program shall foster the development of professional public health values, concepts and ethical practice.

This criterion is met. The program has a clearly formulated and publicly stated mission with supporting goals and objectives. The program is a significant component of the UNLV School of Community Health Sciences; as such, the mission of the school applies to the MPH program and other degrees (ie, BS in public health, BS in healthcare administration & policy, MHA and PhD in public health) within the school. Site visitors determined that the school’s mission, which follows, is appropriate for the program:

To advance the science of public health, improve the health and quality of life of people in our communities, and work to eliminate health disparities in Nevada, the nation, and the world by providing leadership in quality education, research, and service.

The program has established goal statements in support of the mission for each major function related to education, research/scholarly activities and service. Each goal is supported by two to three objectives with multiple indicators.

The Executive Committee reviews the mission, goals and objectives annually. The self-study describes a process of inputs from multiple evaluation tools and faculty recommendations. More frequent reviews may be initiated when a specific goal or objective is not being met or when a weakness is identified through surveys or negative feedback. Faculty recommendations often relate to the capstone, internship, course schedules and course content. Proposed changes are taken to the faculty for discussion and voting in accordance with the school’s bylaws.

The mission, goals and objectives are posted online, presented to students during orientation during the fall and spring semesters and included in the student handbook.

The faculty reviewed value statements from other schools of public health and voted on those that were most appropriate for the program. The program’s values address safeguarding the health of vulnerable populations; upholding ethical principles; achieving social justice; including students, faculty and staff of diverse backgrounds; and combining quality classroom experiences with applied field practice.

These values are integrated into the curriculum and considered when reviewing student and employee applications. Furthermore, faculty members offered examples of how they model these values on a regular basis.
1.2 Evaluation and Planning.

The program shall have an explicit process for evaluating and monitoring its overall efforts against its mission, goals and objectives; for assessing the program's effectiveness in serving its various constituencies; and for planning to achieve its mission in the future.

This criterion is partially met. The program uses surveys and other measurement tools to monitor its progress in meeting its education, research and service objectives. These tools include student evaluations of instructors; faculty assessments; surveys of alumni, graduating students, preceptors and employers; faculty workload reports; student grade reports; and research and service activity reports. The Executive Committee meets twice a month during the academic year to review procedures for the MPH program. The Executive Committee reviews indicators from survey data, and confers with the dean and the executive associate dean about ways to improve the program and ways to continually engage the community. On-site review of Executive Committee meeting agendas showed time allotted for review of data from surveys. Decisions requiring changes are submitted to the school faculty for potential action.

Site visitors were impressed by the MPH Core Competencies End of Class survey instrument, which indicated that it was to be administered at the completion of every course. However, some faculty members did not seem to be familiar with the instrument. Students did remark that they had filled out the instrument, but site visitors could not confirm that it is administered consistently.

The program uses 28 indicators to monitor its effectiveness in meeting its mission, goals and objectives. Site visitors determined that some targets are not appropriate based on the data reported. For example, the program has set a target that 25% of student internship agreements will be with community health organizations or non-governmental organizations working with underserved populations. In the last two years, 57% and 69% of internship agreements have fit these parameters. The program has also set a target that at least 12 media stories at the local, state or national level will be about the school's community activities each year. Data show that there were 60, 100 and 54 such stories in the last three years.

The concern relates to the lack of a systematic process to ensure that issues identified during the evaluation cycle are identified and corrected. The self-study discusses changes that were made as part of the self-study process, such as requiring all students to complete an internship and increasing the number of credits required to earn an MPH degree. These revisions were made to comply with CEPH accreditation standards. However, changes and improvements in response to formal evaluation processes were not identified. It was not apparent that any actions have been taken when objective measurement indicators fail to meet targets. Some faculty members indicated that some targets should be revisited and revised, but there was no process to accomplish this at the time of the site visit.
During the site visit, faculty members and administrators discussed how the program’s evaluation processes have been largely driven by accreditation requirements. In fact, the MPH Accreditation Information Survey, which is administered on the first day of class, tells students that the program is specifically collecting data to comply with accreditation requirements. While this is an acceptable component of an evaluation process, it is not sufficient on its own. Site visitors would encourage the program to develop a more self-driven approach rather than rely on the mandatory reporting required by CEPH, which is intended to serve only as a baseline for the program’s own evaluation and planning efforts. The response from the program and dean indicated approaches to obtain appropriate data for the areas identified in the site visit team’s report.

1.3 Institutional Environment.

The program shall be an integral part of an accredited institution of higher education.

This criterion is met. UNLV is regionally accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. The university also responds to 28 accrediting bodies in fields such as business, architecture, chemistry, law, health administration, nursing, psychology and music.

The Nevada System of Higher Education is a single, statewide structure for higher education, and it is common to eight institutions. University policies, procedures and processes are prescribed by the Board of Regents. Within the university hierarchy, department heads report to the dean, the dean reports to the executive vice president and provost who is accountable to the president, and the president reports to the chancellor who serves at the pleasure of the Board of Regents.

UNLV’s MPH program is housed in the School of Community Health Sciences. The school is organized into two departments (environmental & occupational health and healthcare administration & policy), three centers (health disparities research, American Indian research & education and health information analysis), and one institute (Nevada Institute for Children’s Research & Policy). The Department of Environmental & Occupational Health also includes two units: epidemiology & biostatistics and social & behavioral health. In addition to MPH degrees, the school also offers bachelor’s of science degrees in public health and healthcare administration, a master’s in healthcare administration and a PhD in public health. The BS and PhD in public health are housed in the Department of Environmental & Occupational Health. The BS and MHA in healthcare administration are housed in the Department of Healthcare Administration & Policy.

Each department has the ability to determine names, titles and internal organization. Changes must be reviewed by the Graduate College New Programs Committee. If approved by the committee, the changes are recommended to the graduate dean for implementation.
Budgeting and resource allocation at the university level involves the Nevada System of Higher Education legislatively approving the operating budget for state appropriations and authorized expenditures. At the school or college level, the dean has final responsibility and authority to determine the allocation of resources for each unit within the school or college. The dean works with the Controller’s Office and/or the Director of the Budget to determine the final budget for each fiscal year. The university cabinet determines the distribution of indirect cost recovery (known as facilities and administrative [F&A] cost recovery). The Board of Regents sets registration fees and tuition levels in consultation with individual campuses. A majority of these fees support capital and general improvements, financial aid, student government, athletics and the Academic Success Center. The non-profit UNLV Foundation coordinates all fundraising activities for the university and manages all endowment gifts and life-income gifts made on behalf of UNLV to the foundation. The chancellor’s senior staff manages all gifts made to UNLV through the Board of Regents.

The executive vice president and provost must grant permission to deans to recruit and select new faculty. The vice president for diversity and inclusion performs an audit of the current department faculty before a new hire is approved. The department may recommend a ranked list of names to the dean for approval. The dean in turn recommends the hiring of a new faculty member to the executive vice president and provost who makes the final decision.

Departments discuss and approve proposed new courses and changes to the curriculum, which are then forwarded to the school or college Curriculum Committee. Proposals are then sent to the Graduate College Curriculum Committee, which reviews and recommends approval of graduate-level courses before they are published in the Graduate Catalog.

1.4 Organization and Administration.

The program shall provide an organizational setting conducive to teaching and learning, research and service. The organizational setting shall facilitate interdisciplinary communication, cooperation and collaboration. The organizational structure shall effectively support the work of the program’s constituents.

This criterion is met with commentary. The MPH program is embedded within the School of Community Health Sciences. The department chairs, center directors and institute director report to the executive associate dean who in turn reports to the dean of the school. The Department of Environmental & Occupational Health houses two additional units (epidemiology & biostatistics and social & behavioral health); an MPH concentration is offered through each. The Department of Healthcare Administration & Policy houses the fourth MPH concentration.

Departments develop, review and implement curricular changes for the concentrations contained within. Departments must be approved by the Board of Regents and must have a department chair and an
operating budget. The two units located within the Department of Environmental & Occupational Health are not yet recognized as departments; thus, neither has a chair nor an individual budget, and they are encompassed within the department’s operations.

The program supports interdisciplinary collaboration through graduate assistantships, scholarly projects and collaborative grants. Joint publications and grants are common among faculty members within the school and with faculty from other schools and colleges. All schools in the Division of Health Sciences (ie, allied health sciences, nursing, dental medicine and community health sciences) hold an annual poster presentation to feature ongoing research. In addition, course instructors may ask colleagues to share their knowledge and experience with students through guest lectures.

The Nevada System of Higher Education Code addresses the university’s commitment to integrity and high ethical standards. The general guidelines for faculty are contained in the “Ethical Guidelines for UNLV Faculty,” which has been adopted by the Faculty Senate. The “Rules and Disciplinary Procedures for Members of the University Community” outline procedures for dealing with alleged violations and has been adopted by the Board of Regents.

The first point of commentary relates to the organization of the MPH program into two departments. Site visitors were told that this was a deliberate decision that program administrators think is effective. However, information provided in the self-study and on-site meetings with various constituent groups gave site visitors the impression that the program lacks cohesion. The healthcare administration & policy concentration has its own graduate coordinator, internship coordinator, admissions procedures and culminating experience, while these functions are shared among the other three concentrations.

The second point of commentary relates to the frequent references to a school of public health in program documents. The program’s response provided evidence that references to the “school of public health” have been removed, with the exception of historical documents that refer to the program’s early and original name.

1.5 Governance.

The program administration and faculty shall have clearly defined rights and responsibilities concerning program governance and academic policies. Students shall, where appropriate, have participatory roles in conduct of program evaluation procedures, policy-setting and decision-making.

This criterion is partially met. The self-study describes well-defined university governance in which the dean reports to the vice president and provost of UNLV and has operational decision-making authority and responsibility, including organizational decisions and distribution of resources. Department chairs,
who serve for three years with the possibility of renewal, have oversight and management of
departmental and program budgets and personnel.

The Graduate College of UNLV manages the recruitment of graduate students and confers degrees. The
Graduate Council, which includes a representative from each university department, contributes to
Graduate College policies and procedures.

Faculty recruitment, retention, promotion and tenure are the responsibility of the school in compliance
with UNLV policies, procedures and bylaws. Permission to recruit and hire must be obtained by the dean
from the UNLV vice president and provost. Recruitment and hiring by the school is done in conjunction
with the university’s human resources.

There are no committees specifically dedicated to the MPH program. School committees, which cover
the two BS degrees, MHA, PhD and MPH, serve in place of program committees. The Executive
Committee, additional standing committees and ad hoc committees have input into school governance.
The Executive Committee, chaired by the dean, advises on school administration and provides a forum to
share policy decisions and other matters with faculty and other stakeholders of the school. The program
is represented on the Executive Committee by the graduate coordinators.

Standing committees have operational duties and make policy and procedural recommendations to the
dean. The Graduate Studies Committee has multiple responsibilities related to students. The Academic
Standards Committee ensures that academic standards conform to university and school policies. The
Bylaws Committee reviews and revises the school’s bylaws as necessary. The Curriculum Committee
reviews and recommends revisions to the curriculum. The Faculty Review Committee manages
promotion and tenure recommendations. The Faculty Appeals Committee hears faculty appeals. The
Scholarship Committee recommends qualified students for awards. Finally, the Accreditation Committee,
which includes four sub-committees, is responsible for the development of the self-study.

The first concern relates to the lack of community participation in program governance. According to the
self-study, the Community Advisory Committee had met once by the time of the site visit, and its
members are available for consultation with school administrators. Community members who met with
the site visit team were not familiar with the Community Advisory Committee, but did say that program
faculty are receptive to input about operations and other issues. The site visit team was not able to meet
with any members of the Community Advisory Committee, and reviewers could not identify examples of
its contribution to the program. There did not appear to be any mechanism for systematically obtaining
input from the community about program governance and operations.
The second concern relates to the lack of student participation in program governance. The self-study explicitly states that students are not involved in program governance but are involved in providing input on program functioning through survey responses. Students do not serve on any school or program committees. The program should have administrative mechanisms to permit student involvement in program policy formation and review. The Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) is a university-wide organization that includes representatives from each department with graduate programs. The GPSA assists with policy and decision making for the university. While the site visit team met several alumni who had represented the MPH program on the GPSA, there was no MPH representative at the time of the site visit.

1.6 Resources.

The program shall have resources adequate to fulfill its stated mission and goals, and its instructional, research and service objectives.

This criterion is met. The program has sufficient resources to fulfill its mission. The majority of funding for the MPH program comes from state appropriations, with the amount of funding ranging from 50% to 100% in each of the four teaching units. The program and university have recently experienced a decline in state appropriations. As a result, the program reduced its expenses by $300,000 through various university-driven initiatives including the implementation of an unpaid leave program and a voluntary separation incentive program (VSIP). During the 2011-2012 academic year, three full-time faculty members chose to participate in the VSIP. The program was able to hire additional part-time instructors to meet the teaching needs after losing these three full-time faculty members.

The administration and faculty reported during the site visit that the financial resources to support the program have increased in the 2012-2013 academic year. For example, the program hired two new faculty members who started in fall 2012. One additional faculty line remains open and is expected to be filled in 2013.

In addition to receiving state appropriations, the MPH program has several other funding sources, including grants and contracts. Twelve percent of the school’s direct and indirect revenue from research productivity is used to support the MPH program. Overall, the program’s budget from FY 2008 through FY 2012 reflected revenue and expenditures that were relatively constant over the five-year period. The executive vice president and provost told site visitors that the university is strongly committed to the success of the MPH program, as evidenced by the program’s growth over the last four years while more than 20 other programs were discontinued. The executive vice president and provost also said that the university’s budget is stable now and additional cuts are not expected. Table 1 presents the program’s budget for the last five years.
Table 1. Sources of Funds and Expenditures, Fiscal Years 2008 to 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Funds</th>
<th>FY2008</th>
<th>FY2009</th>
<th>FY2010</th>
<th>FY2011</th>
<th>FY2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Appropriations</td>
<td>$1,187,264</td>
<td>$1,292,243</td>
<td>$1,500,552</td>
<td>$1,487,648</td>
<td>$1,272,102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants/Contracts</td>
<td>$136,529</td>
<td>$181,528</td>
<td>$142,432</td>
<td>$146,909</td>
<td>$192,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect Cost Recovery</td>
<td>$6,118</td>
<td>$5,015</td>
<td>$14,605</td>
<td>$8,618</td>
<td>$3,154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts</td>
<td>$736</td>
<td>$1,322</td>
<td>$407</td>
<td>$11,053</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,330,647</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,480,108</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,657,996</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,654,228</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,467,706</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditures</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Salaries/Benefits</td>
<td>$1,020,936</td>
<td>$1,116,623</td>
<td>$1,364,494</td>
<td>$1,339,420</td>
<td>$1,126,803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Salaries/Benefits</td>
<td>$89,420</td>
<td>$127,716</td>
<td>$91,671</td>
<td>$94,033</td>
<td>$95,433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations</td>
<td>$70,114</td>
<td>$77,716</td>
<td>$60,461</td>
<td>$40,952</td>
<td>$54,973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>$1,724</td>
<td>$2,959</td>
<td>$1,340</td>
<td>$1,602</td>
<td>$1,989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Support/Tuition</td>
<td>$148,452</td>
<td>$155,787</td>
<td>$140,030</td>
<td>$178,221</td>
<td>$188,508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,330,646</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,480,108</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,657,996</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,654,228</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,467,706</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the MPH program started in 2004, it has experienced remarkable growth, with the number of full-time faculty increasing from nine to 17. This represents a 53% increase in faculty over an eight-year period. The self-study shows five full-time faculty in the environmental & occupational health concentration, four in the epidemiology & biostatistics concentration, five in the healthcare administration & policy concentration and five in the social & behavioral health concentration. This complement meets the minimum CEPH requirements of three FTEs for each of the four MPH specialty areas. During the site visit, the program updated its student-faculty ratios (SFR) per total faculty FTE and provided data indicating an SFR of 5.2:1 in environmental & occupational health, 9.95:1 in epidemiology & biostatistics, 3.9:1 in social & behavioral health and 4.1:1 in healthcare administration & policy. The site visitors were informed that two faculty members (both in the environmental & occupational health concentration) have recently resigned. There are 18 support staff members to address the administrative, academic, clerical and research support needs of the MPH program.

The MPH program has an appropriate amount of space dedicated for office, classroom, research and student use. Office space is located in the Rod Lee Bigelow Health Sciences building. The program shares this building with the School of Nursing and the School of Allied Health and Sciences. The MPH program has a dedicated classroom, meeting rooms, a laboratory, common areas and computer space in the building. Additional teaching and laboratory space is available in a number of other buildings on campus.

The program has excellent computer resources available for students, faculty and staff. Faculty and staff all have individual workstations, and MPH students have access to two computer laboratories: one with 31 computer workstations and the other with eight computer workstations. Students also have access to
several larger computer laboratories on campus. Wireless internet access is available for all students, faculty and staff in the Bigelow Health Sciences building and most other main buildings on the UNLV campus. The Office of Information Technology is available to assist with technical challenges, academic research support, online teaching assistance and audio-visual conferencing support. Full-time and adjunct faculty said during the site visit that the IT support they receive is extremely helpful in creating and delivering online MPH courses.

Library resources are available through five university libraries on campus. Extensive online journals, books, e-books, databases and other resources are available to MPH students. Subject liaisons are available to support academic units.

Public health practitioners as well as state and local health departments are community resources that support the mission of the program. They provide guest lectures and practicum sites, respectively. Faculty members also collaborate with community organizations and agencies for research projects and to coordinate service opportunities.

The program has identified four outcome measures by which it assesses the adequacy of its resources. The program aims to increase its institutional expenditures per FTE student and its external research dollars per faculty, and it has been successful over the last three years. The program also aims to decrease its institutional expenditures per MPH FTE, and these values have fluctuated in the last three years. Finally, the program aims to increase its extramural funding as a percentage of its total budget and reports values of greater than 10%, greater than 10% and 13% for the last three years.

2.0 INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS.

2.1 Master of Public Health Degree.

The program shall offer instructional programs reflecting its stated mission and goals, leading to the Master of Public Health (MPH) or equivalent professional master’s degree. The program may offer a generalist MPH degree or an MPH with areas of specialization. The program, depending upon how it defines the unit of accreditation, may offer other degrees, professional and academic, if consistent with its mission and resources.

This criterion is met with commentary. The program offers the professional MPH degree in four concentration areas, as shown in Table 2. In addition to six core courses that are common across all concentrations, students must also complete at least 12 credits of concentration-specific coursework, an internship, six to nine credits of electives and either a thesis or professional paper (or a comprehensive exam in the case of the healthcare administration & policy concentration).
The commentary relates to some MPH concentrations functioning and being marketed to students as academic degrees rather than professional degrees. Students and alumni who met with site visitors had all either completed or were planning to complete a thesis for their culminating experience, and many intended to pursue a doctoral degree after completion of the MPH. A faculty member said the perception throughout the program is that a thesis makes it a more rigorous degree; therefore, students are encouraged to choose the thesis option. However, faculty members in other meetings said the mix of theses and professional papers is more balanced. Furthermore, they confirmed that the students who participated in the meeting with site visitors were not a representative sample of the student body. In fact, no students or alumni from the healthcare administration & policy concentration attended the meeting. The program’s response documents the fact that the student handbook clearly labels the MPH concentrations as professional degrees. However, the response does not address the issue of student and other constituent perceptions, which remain worthy of attention.

### 2.2 Program Length

An MPH degree program or equivalent professional master’s degree must be at least 42 semester credit units in length.

This criterion is met. All MPH students must complete a minimum of 45 semester credit hours. One semester credit hour at UNLV is equivalent to one hour per week in the classroom for 15 weeks. Most MPH courses are three credit hours each.

The MPH program required a minimum of 39 credits to graduate until spring 2009 when the minimum was increased to 42 credits. In fall 2010, the minimum was again increased to 45 credits to include a required internship experience. The program estimates that about 10 students still remain who began the program before fall 2010 and will graduate with 42 credits but no internship requirement.

### 2.3 Public Health Core Knowledge

All professional degree students must demonstrate an understanding of the public health core knowledge.

This criterion is met. The MPH curriculum includes required coursework in the five core areas of public health. Table 3 shows the coursework that addresses the core knowledge areas. On-site review of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Master’s Degrees</th>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>Professional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental &amp; Occupational Health</td>
<td>MPH</td>
<td>MPH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epidemiology &amp; Biostatistics</td>
<td>MPH</td>
<td>MPH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social &amp; Behavioral Health</td>
<td>MPH</td>
<td>MPH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare Administration &amp; Policy</td>
<td>MPH</td>
<td>MPH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Table 2. Degrees Offered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>Professional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental &amp; Occupational Health</td>
<td>MPH</td>
<td>MPH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epidemiology &amp; Biostatistics</td>
<td>MPH</td>
<td>MPH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social &amp; Behavioral Health</td>
<td>MPH</td>
<td>MPH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare Administration &amp; Policy</td>
<td>MPH</td>
<td>MPH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
course syllabi showed an appropriate breadth and depth of coverage. Core competencies have been developed and integrated throughout the curriculum. In addition to the five core courses, students are required to complete Fundamentals of Public Health (EOH 710), which introduces students to the five core disciplines of public health.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3. Core Knowledge Coursework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAB 703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAB 705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EOH 740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCA 701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HED 705</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.4 Practical Skills.

All professional degree students must develop skills in basic public health concepts and demonstrate the application of these concepts through a practice experience that is relevant to the students’ areas of specialization.

This criterion is met. As of fall 2010, all students must complete a minimum of a three-credit (120 contact hours) internship. Up to six credits can be received for an internship with a proportionate increase in contact hours. Students are expected to view internships as a stepping stone to employment, and this experience cannot be waived.

Prior to beginning the internship, students must complete all MPH core courses and 15 of the 18 hours of concentration coursework. The internship is graded satisfactory/unsatisfactory based on project proposal forms, evaluation forms, internship activities and projects, a portfolio and a formal poster presentation. An internship coordinator assists students with these activities. Site visitors learned while on site that the internship coordinator who has served in this role since the internship became required in 2010 would be leaving during the fall 2012 semester. A new coordinator had been assigned and was beginning to assume the responsibilities of the position at the time of the visit.

Students are encouraged to identify potential internship sites and then work with their advisors and the internship coordinator to determine the site’s suitability. A site must have an up-to-date working agreement with the program. The internship coordinator reviews resumes and determines academic and professional qualifications of preceptors. However, the program does not have formally developed or publicly stated preceptor qualifications.

Students meet with their faculty advisor, their graduate advisory committee, the internship coordinator and the preceptor to determine learning objectives, competencies and activities that will be included in the internship. The preceptor and faculty advisor have defined roles and responsibilities during the
internship. Students must complete a detailed project proposal for the internship coordinator prior to the internship that includes competencies to be strengthened. They must also evaluate the placement upon completion and submit a portfolio along with their formal presentation.

The self-study provides a diverse list of organizations that provide student internship placements. Among the students who met with the site visit team, several completed internships at the school with faculty as preceptors. These experiences appeared to meet the standards for the internship; however, site visitors would encourage the program to send more students off campus so that they are not only exposed to new projects, but also to new settings and people.

Preceptors must have at least a bachelor’s degree and five years of public health practice experience. This requirement is included in the student handbook and on the program’s internship project proposal form.

2.5 Culminating Experience.

All professional degree programs identified in the instructional matrix shall assure that each student demonstrates skills and integration of knowledge through a culminating experience.

This criterion is partially met. The culminating experience for each student in the MPH program consists of one of three options: a thesis, a professional paper or a comprehensive exam. Students in environmental & occupational health, epidemiology & biostatistics and social & behavioral health concentrations have the option of completing a thesis (six credits) or a professional paper (three credits). Students in the healthcare administration & policy concentration have these options as well as the choice to complete a comprehensive exam. On-site meetings indicated that nearly every healthcare administration & policy student elects to complete the comprehensive exam.

The six-credit thesis requires an independent qualitative or quantitative research project that includes data collection and scientific writing. The professional paper involves a critical investigation of a well-defined public health issue and is presented as a scholarly manuscript. Special permission is required before a student can complete the professional paper as an option for the culminating experience. During the site visit, faculty and students explained that students are encouraged to choose the thesis option because it provides better preparation for a PhD program. The six-hour comprehensive exam is offered twice a year and assesses students’ knowledge in the healthcare administration & policy concentration. It is the same exam administered to MHA students.

In preparation for the culminating experience, students are required to form a committee of four faculty members: three from within the school and one from outside the school. Several students commented during the site visit that it was difficult to identify a committee representative from outside the school. As part of the requirements of the capstone course, students identify the competencies they have acquired...
while writing their paper and answer questions about the competencies during the oral defense. Samples of students' professional papers and posters were reviewed during the site visit and were deemed to be appropriate examples of culminating experiences.

The concern relates to the fact that public health core knowledge is not integrated into the comprehensive exam for healthcare administration & policy students. The self-study states that the Department of Healthcare Administration & Policy is working on redesigning the exam to incorporate aspects of the core public health courses to comply with CEPH comments and provide students with a fully comprehensive culminating experience. At the time of the site visit, changes, such as adding one additional essay question, were still in the discussion phase. The program’s response indicates that faculty will add one or more questions per year, but this assertion alone, without evidence of the full context of the exam, does not allow the Council to verify that there is appropriate coverage of core and concentration-specific knowledge.

2.6 Required Competencies.

For each degree program and area of specialization within each program identified in the instructional matrix, there shall be clearly stated competencies that guide the development of educational programs.

This criterion is partially met. The program has core and specialization-specific competencies that are comprehensive and appropriate for graduate-level learning. The program has adopted a set of 13 core competencies for all MPH students. These interdisciplinary/cross-cutting competencies were adapted from the Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH) and address the areas of communication and informatics, diversity and culture, leadership, professionalism, program planning, public health biology and systems thinking. While the program does not have core competencies specifically about the public health core knowledge areas, on-site review of coursework confirmed appropriate coverage of the core knowledge areas. Each MPH specialization has an additional seven to 10 competencies that were developed by faculty in each specialty area and then shared with the remaining program faculty for edits and suggestions. The executive associate dean and dean of the school gave final approval.

Course instructors use the core and specialization-specific competencies when creating learning objectives for classes, and the competencies are discussed with students every fall during orientation. In addition, the competencies are available on the program’s website, printed in the student handbook and included on course syllabi. The program has clearly mapped the competencies to specific learning experiences such as reading assignments, class presentations, written papers, critical discussions, group projects and exams.
Faculty and administrators may bring suggestions and raise issues about the appropriateness of the competencies to the school’s Executive Committee, which holds meetings every two weeks. These changes are addressed through regular faculty governance procedures.

The concern relates to lack of input and need for a systematic process to assure the competencies reflect the needs of public health practice. The competencies were developed internally, and reviewers could not identify a systematic process for periodically assessing the competencies to ensure that they are still relevant and appropriate. The need for systematic processes was discussed in more detail in Criterion 1.2. In addition, the community advisory group discussed in Criterion 1.5 could play an important role in the assessment of competencies in the future.

2.7 Assessment Procedures.

There shall be procedures for assessing and documenting the extent to which each student has demonstrated competence in the required areas of performance.

This criterion is met with commentary. The program assesses student achievement of competencies through several methods. Students must earn a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better and successfully complete the internship and capstone project. Surveys of students, alumni, employers and faculty also address competency attainment.

Students must earn a B or better to receive course credit, and a lower grade results in academic probation. If a student’s cumulative GPA falls below a 3.0, the student has one semester to improve or be dismissed from the program. Students must also complete at least six credits per academic year, file appropriate paperwork with the Graduate College and meet with faculty advisors upon request. Failure to fulfill these requirements is considered by the Academic Standards Committee on a case-by-case basis.

The internship is designed to reinforce many of the core and specialization-specific competencies. Students must identify the competencies they expect to address during the experience in the initial proposal/learning agreement and then must discuss how the competencies were used in practice as part of the final paper. In addition, all MPH students must complete one of the following: a comprehensive exam, a professional paper or a thesis. Students are required to integrate and demonstrate the competencies as part of the experience. Students must also participate in an oral defense, at which they are asked which competencies they have learned and how they use them.

The program asks students at the time of graduation and alumni about one year after graduation how well they think they mastered the core and specialization-specific competencies. Responses from 21 students indicated that students believed they did understand the competencies. On a five-point Likert scale, the
average score for all respondents was greater than 3.5 in the core areas and 3.58 or higher in each concentration area.

The program has identified course grades as useful measures to evaluate student achievement. The self-study presents two outcome measures: average GPA in core courses should be 3.0 or higher and 80% of grades in specialization courses should be 3.0 or higher. Data for the last three years show that both measures have been consistently exceeded.

Program graduates from 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 have reached their maximum allowable time to graduation and reported rates of 82% and 73%, respectively. Students in more recent cohorts still have time to complete the degree, and attrition rates are low enough for the program to remain in compliance.

Alumni surveys were administered in summer 2009 and summer 2011 seeking information about job placement. Alumni reported employment in a variety of sectors, including government, nonprofit, health care, university/research and further education. Fewer than 20% of respondents reported that they were not employed or did not answer the question.

The commentary relates to the low response rates the program receives on surveys. Given that the surveys were recently developed and implemented, the program is still fine tuning the process. The program is confident the response rate to the exit survey will improve now that it is required as part of the capstone project’s oral defense. The program will also begin asking graduates for a personal e-mail address and other contact information so that they can be contacted as alumni. As the program develops more consistent relationships with its alumni, it is hoped that responses to the employer survey would improve as well.

**2.8 Academic Degrees.**

If the program also offers curricula for academic degrees, students pursuing them shall obtain a broad introduction to public health, as well as an understanding about how their discipline-based specialization contributes to achieving the goals of public health.

This criterion is not applicable.

**2.9 Doctoral Degrees.**

The program may offer doctoral degree programs, if consistent with its mission and resources.

This criterion is not applicable.

**2.10 Joint Degrees.**

If the program offers joint degree programs, the required curriculum for the professional public health degree shall be equivalent to that required for a separate public health degree.

This criterion is not applicable.
2.11 Distance Education or Executive Degree Programs.

If the program offers degree programs using formats or methods other than students attending regular on-site course sessions spread over a standard term, these programs must a) be consistent with the mission of the program and within the program’s established areas of expertise; b) be guided by clearly articulated student learning outcomes that are rigorously evaluated; c) be subject to the same quality control processes that other degree programs in the university are; and d) provide planned and evaluated learning experiences that take into consideration and are responsive to the characteristics and needs of adult learners. If the program offers distance education or executive degree programs, it must provide needed support for these programs, including administrative, travel, communication, and student services. The program must have an ongoing program to evaluate the academic effectiveness of the format, to assess teaching and learning methodologies and to systematically use this information to stimulate program improvements.

This criterion is not applicable.

3.0 CREATION, APPLICATION AND ADVANCEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE.

3.1 Research.

The program shall pursue an active research program, consistent with its mission, through which its faculty and students contribute to the knowledge base of the public health disciplines, including research directed at improving the practice of public health.

This criterion is met. The MPH program has a strong research portfolio that supports the mission of the program and the institution. Faculty are actively involved in national, state and local research projects in areas such as HIV/AIDS, childhood lead poisoning, diabetes, obesity, food safety, cancer, chronic diseases and environmental health issues.

A number of MPH students are actively involved in research projects with faculty. Graduate assistantships are provided to some students through faculty grants. Several students told site visitors that they chose UNLV because of the opportunity for research graduate assistantships. Students’ research participation outside of the program is tracked through a self-reported questionnaire administered on the first day of class each semester.

Outcome measures by which the program evaluates its success in meeting its research goals and objectives include the percentage of faculty serving as principal investigator or co-principal investigator on research grants (81%); the percentage of faculty with peer-reviewed publications annually (81%); the total number of peer-reviewed publications annually (as primary or co-author) (58%); the percentage of research grants/projects that involve interdisciplinary research partnerships among faculty and professional staff within the school, the university and other academic institutions (69%); the percentage of research grants/projects and/or publications that include contributions by community partners (73%); the percentage of faculty who engage in community training, technical assistance and/or peer review of
grant proposals and/or manuscripts (81%); and the percentage of faculty who participate in state, national and international conferences and proceedings (83%).

Outcome measures with regard to student involvement in research include the percentage of students that complete a thesis (33%); complete a professional paper (30%); are included in faculty research projects, as evidenced by authorship on abstracts, conference presentations, publications and/or participation in community service related to the research project (53%); and are included in faculty research projects, as evidenced by a graduate assistantship (12%). Faculty members are actively involved in grant writing activities and have been successful in receiving external and internal funds.

3.2 Service.

The program shall pursue active service activities, consistent with its mission, through which faculty and students contribute to the advancement of public health practice.

This criterion is met with commentary. Faculty members provide service to the profession and to the community. The UNLV executive vice president and provost emphasized the strong link between the university and the community during the meeting with site visitors. He said that the MPH program is essential to fostering this link with the community.

Faculty members do participate in community activities that contribute to their professional development and the advancement of public health practice. Professional staff members are encouraged to engage in professional service as well. The self-study identified the program’s desire to increase awareness of its service activities as an area that could be strengthened.

The first point of commentary relates to the imbalance between faculty service to the profession and to the community. A large majority of the service activities described in the self-study reflect organizational membership; however, reviewers did not see much evidence of service to the local and regional community. Furthermore, organizational membership is not sufficient to count as service. Faculty members must serve in a leadership role to count the activity in this criterion. The self-study lists each faculty member’s memberships in professional organizations, symposium presentations and journal article reviews. Community service activities include serving on the Community Advisory Board for the YMCA, serving as a member of the Nevada Coalition for Safe Injection Practices and serving as co-chair of the Asthma Action Coalition.

The second point of commentary relates to the development of the outcome measures for service. Faculty members who met with site visitors said they did not have input in establishing the service objectives, indicators or targets, and they see opportunities for revisions and updates. These faculty
members speculated that the existing measures were either established by program administrators or through a review of service outcomes established in other CEPH-accredited programs.

Outcome measures by which the program evaluates its service efforts exceeded their targets in all areas. Measures included the percentage of faculty who conduct community presentations and activities (81.3%); percentage of faculty or staff who serve on at least one local health-related committee, community group or council (68%); percentage of faculty or staff serving on at least one regional, state, national or international health-related committee, organization or council (75%); and percentage of student internship agreements that include community service (100%).

While no formal student government exists to plan and execute student service activities, students are actively engaged in community service through volunteer coordination of events throughout the year. The exit survey that will be distributed to graduating students will ask about students’ participation in community service activities and their satisfaction with service opportunities through the MPH program.

3.3 Workforce Development.

The program shall engage in activities that support the professional development of the public health workforce.

This criterion is partially met. The self-study states that the program does not have a continuing education program. However, site visitors found some evidence of workforce development activities.

The MPH program is part of the California-Nevada Public Health Training Center, a regional public health training center funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration. Site visitors learned that the MPH Program receives a subcontract of $55,000 annually to support professional development of the public health workforce. The Public Health Training Center produced a summer institute series of trainings attended by students, local public health agency staff members and other healthcare organization workers. Course evaluations from this summer training series included a needs assessment about future training topics.

In addition, the Department of Environmental & Occupational Health is a training facility for the National Center for Healthy Housing, which certifies home visitors in assessing home health hazards. The department has also provided additional trainings on specific healthy housing topics to various groups.

The concern relates to the lack of a systematic approach to assessing professional development needs of the local public health workforce and the paucity of effort and offerings in this area. In 2009, a former MPH student assessed perceptions of skill gaps among employees of the state public health agency. The program has not been involved in any continuing education to meet the identified needs, and
expressed concern in the self-study about the reliability of the data collected. On-site discussions with various constituent groups indicated that the program initiates workforce development efforts based on their interests and abilities rather than in response to an expressed need from the target population.

4.0 FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS.

4.1 Faculty Qualifications.

The program shall have a clearly defined faculty which, by virtue of its distribution, multidisciplinary nature, educational preparation, research and teaching competence, and practice experience, is able to fully support the program’s mission, goals and objectives.

This criterion is met. The program has a well-qualified faculty complement based on educational preparation, practice experience and teaching competence. Information provided in the self-study indicates 17 primary faculty members. Twelve of the 17 are tenured, five are on a tenure track and one is on a research track. It was noted during the site visit that two new faculty members were hired at the start of the 2012 fall semester (one in epidemiology & biostatistics and one in healthcare administration & policy) and two faculty are leaving from the environmental & occupational health concentration. All primary faculty have advanced degrees in public health or related areas. All full-time faculty have a nine-month appointment. Administrators (ie, dean and executive associate dean) have 12-month appointments.

Part-time faculty support the educational mission of the MPH program. Each adjunct faculty member is qualified in his or her respective teaching area and brings practical experience from the field. The reviewers met with several practitioners who are doctoral students in the school and also teach in the MPH program. They indicated that the support they receive to teach their classes, both online and in class, is outstanding. Part-time faculty are comfortable making suggestions for program improvement and they feel that their voices are heard by the MPH administration.

The MPH program invites guest lecturers from public health practice to integrate real-world perspectives into the learning experience. Faculty attend local and national conferences and stay current with the latest public health research and developments; however, they indicated that faculty travel funds have been limited in recent years. Faculty indicated that if they want to attend professional conferences in their disciplines, they do so with travel funds from their grants.

4.2 Faculty Policies and Procedures.

The program shall have well-defined policies and procedures to recruit, appoint and promote qualified faculty, to evaluate competence and performance of faculty, and to support the professional development and advancement of faculty.

This criterion is met. The MPH program follows the policies and procedures for faculty recruitment, appointment and retention outlined in the UNLV Faculty Handbook. During the site visit, the reviewers
met with several new faculty members who described in detail the faculty hiring process and its compliance with the Faculty Handbook. Faculty members being recommended for appointment with tenure must receive an “excellent” rating in teaching or research and no less than a “satisfactory” rating in service.

The evaluation of faculty performance follows university and school guidelines, and faculty who met with site visitors raised no major problems or concerns with this process. The evaluation consists of the department chair’s annual review of each faculty member’s teaching, research and service. The faculty member meets with the department chair to review and discuss the annual evaluation, which is used for making salary adjustments and promotion decisions.

The MPH program has a system in place to assess faculty teaching effectiveness through course evaluations. Student feedback regarding each course is summarized and provided to the department chairs. Faculty members meet with their department chairs to review the course evaluations and make necessary adjustments or changes when warranted. Several faculty members provided concrete examples of how student feedback from the course evaluations was used to improve their courses, change the textbook used and realign the sequence of the content taught.

Professional development opportunities are available to faculty through local, state and national conferences. Travel funds are limited, so attendance at professional conferences is based on start-up funds and travel funds included in the budgets of faculty grants. Most faculty have active research portfolios and are able to attend scientific conferences in their discipline. Faculty confirmed during the site visit that they are satisfied with the professional development opportunities available to them.

Community service, according to the promotion and tenure policy of UNLV, is an important component of the evaluation of all faculty at all ranks. The MPH program faculty recognize the importance of community service and see this as a growing area ripe with opportunity for expansion in health departments and other organizations.

4.3 Faculty and Staff Diversity.

The program shall recruit, retain and promote a diverse faculty and staff, and shall offer equitable opportunities to qualified individuals regardless of age, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or national origin.

This criterion is met with commentary. UNLV has a strong commitment to faculty diversity with oversight by the Office of the Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion. Diversity efforts include considerations of race, ethnicity, hearing ability, geographic origin, immigration status, language, socioeconomic class, employment status, gender, gender identity and expression, family configuration, sexual orientation, physical, developmental and psychological ability, veteran’s status, age and generation, religious,
spiritual, faith-based and secular belief, physical appearance, environmental concern, political affiliation, and the exercise of rights secured by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States.

The vice president for diversity and inclusion performs audits of current department faculty before a new hire is approved. Several academic and research centers within the SCHS focus on diversity and overcoming health disparities, which further creates a culture that supports diversity.

The faculty complement is 63.5% male, 67% Caucasian, 21% Native American/Alaska Native, 16% International, 6% Hispanic/Latino and 3% African American. The five-member staff includes three Caucasian females, one Hispanic/Latino female and one Asian/Pacific Islander female.

The commentary relates to the under-representation of some racial and ethnic groups on the faculty. More than one quarter of Nevada’s population is Hispanic/Latino, yet only 6% of the faculty was of that ethnicity. African American faculty representation was also below the Nevada and national proportion.

4.4 Student Recruitment and Admissions.

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

This criterion is met. The program has clear policies for the recruitment and admission of students guided by the Nevada System of Higher Education Code, which discusses equal treatment of all people, diversity and social justice. The program provides detailed information on its web pages and has a presence on Facebook and Twitter for the purpose of recruitment. In addition, faculty members who met with site visitors discussed their roles in recruitment, which include connecting with American Indians and Alaska natives who could be potential students, introducing middle and high school students to public health and promoting the program during summer sessions on campus. The program’s work with community and state organizations and its efforts to make courses more accessible by offering them in a distance-based format have also led to the recruitment of more students. The School of Community Health Sciences recently redesigned its undergraduate program and now offers a bachelor of science in public health. Program leaders expect this degree to serve as a pipeline to the MPH program.

Admission requirements to the MPH program are as follows:

- Bachelor’s degree or recognized equivalent and adequate preparation in the biological, physical or social sciences
- Minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0
- Minimum score of 550 (written) or 213 (computerized) on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or 85 on the Michigan Test for applicants whose native language is not English
- Three letters of recommendation
Applications are reviewed by the school’s Academic Standards Committee. The committee consists of one elected representative from each academic unit of the school and is responsible for developing admissions standards and guidelines. The committee requires three votes for an applicant to be admitted into the MPH program. These applicants are then recommended to the Graduate College for admission.

Data provided in the self-study show that about 70% of applicants were accepted into the program over the last three years. Nearly 100% of those accepted chose to enroll. The program notes that despite the negative economic climate affecting the state, applications continue to be received. The cutting of university-funded graduate assistantships is a concern as the program seeks to attract high-quality candidates; however, the program has been successful at obtaining research funding that includes funds for graduate assistants.

### 4.5 Student Diversity

**Stated application, admission, and degree-granting requirements and regulations shall be applied equitably to individual applicants and students regardless of age, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or national origin.**

This criterion is met. The university is committed to equal educational opportunity and supports many policies and programs to ensure a diverse student body. The Office of the Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion oversees student diversity.

The program supports a culture of student diversity with its commitment to mitigating health disparities and centers and programs devoted to diversity and overcoming health disparities. The student body of the program is more racially diverse than the Nevada state population; however, Hispanic/Latinos are under-represented in the program. The program is addressing this issue by working with Latino/Hispanic community leaders to inform them about the undergraduate program in public health in an attempt to develop a Latino/Hispanic cohort for the program.

MPH students identify their race and ethnicity as follows: 12.7% African American, 41.8% Caucasian, 9.0% Hispanic/Latino, 25.4% Asian/Pacific Islander, 3.0% American Indian/Alaska Native and 8.2% Multiracial/Other.

### 4.6 Advising and Career Counseling

**There shall be available a clearly explained and accessible academic advising system for students, as well as readily available career and placement advice.**
This criterion is met with commentary. Students are referred to the graduate coordinator after matriculating into the program, and they choose an advisor in the second semester. Advisors provide guidance on class scheduling, choosing a specialization, professional goals and paper topics. Students are encouraged, but not required, to communicate with their advisor at least once every semester. Students also have an advisory committee that is chaired by the academic advisor and also includes two MPH program instructors and one Graduate College representative. The committee reviews the student’s completion of all coursework, approves the prospectus, attends the defense and ultimately passes the student by unanimous vote.

Students receive the MPH Degree Program Student Handbook during orientation before the first semester begins. The handbook is updated annually and is available on the website. Students can access information about the program’s mission, goals and objectives, competencies, academic requirements and general academic policies in the handbook. Students must sign and return an acknowledgement form to ensure that every student receives a copy of the handbook.

Results from alumni surveys show that most respondents are satisfied with the academic advising they receive. Graduates are asked “how satisfied were you with the academic counseling?” and responses could range from 1 for “very dissatisfied” to 4 for “very satisfied!” The 33 responses received in 2009 yielded a mean score of 3.09. The 27 responses received in 2011 yielded a mean score of 3.37.

Open-ended responses included “All faculty advisors should be providing the same type and quality of advisement to thesis students” and “Make sure everyone is on the same page when giving advice. I had two or three different versions of what needed to happen to turn in my capstone project.” The on-site meeting with students and alumni indicated high satisfaction with the new-student orientation and academic advising through an informal, open-door approach.

Students are referred to the university’s Career Services Office for career counseling. This office sponsors career fairs for students and maintains UNLV CareerLink, which is an online recruiting system for students to connect with potential employers.

The commentary relates to the lack of public health-specific career counseling available to students. Individual faculty members informally discuss employment opportunities with students as they are nearing graduation, but students who met with site visitors said it would be beneficial to have more formal resources. The program discussed its intention to use the school’s revamped undergraduate program as a pipeline to the MPH program. As students with less work experience are accepted into the program, career counseling services will likely become even more necessary. The program has begun sending e-mails to students when internships, assistantships or job opportunities are available.
Agenda

COUNCIL ON EDUCATION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH
ACCREDITATION SITE VISIT

University of Nevada, Las Vegas
MPH Program

September 13-14, 2012

Thursday, September 13, 2012

8:30 am  Site Visit Team Request for Additional Documents
          Shawn Gerstenberger

9:00 am  Executive Session and Resource File Review

9:45 am  Meeting with Administrators and Faculty Regarding Program Leadership
          Mary Guinan
          Shawn Gerstenberger
          Michelle Chino
          Chris Cochran
          Melva Thompson-Robinson
          Dan Bubb
          Carolee Dodge-Francis

10:45 am Break

11:00 am Meeting with Faculty Regarding Instructional Programs
          Jay Shen
          Timothy Bungum
          Olena Mazurenko
          David Wong

12:00 pm Break

12:15 pm Lunch with Students and Alumni
          Jennifer Lucas
          Trevor Low
          Aaron Hunt
          Matt Kappel
          Sarah Gasiewicz
          Mackenzie Burns
          Michelle Ching
          Erika Marquez
          Jennifer Berger
          Courtney Coughenour
          Jennifer Pharr

1:30 pm  Break

1:45 pm  Meeting with Faculty Regarding the Creation, Application and Advancement of Knowledge
          Charles Regin
          Sheniz Moonie
          Guogen Shan
          Mark Buttnar

2:45 pm  Break

3:00 pm  Meeting with Faculty Regarding Faculty, Staff and Students
          Carolee Dodge-Francis
          Paulo Pinheiro
          Darren Liu
          Patricia Cruz
          Melva Thompson-Robinson
          Michelle Chino
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4:00 pm</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 4:15 pm    | Meeting with Part-time Instructors, Community Representatives and Preceptors  
Brian Labus  
Michelle Sotero  
Starr Wharton |
| 5:15 pm    | Executive Session and Resource File Review                  |
| 5:30 pm    | Adjourn                                                    |

**Friday, September 14, 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 8:30 am    | Meeting with University Leadership                         
John Valery White |
| 9:15 am    | Executive Session and Report Preparation                   |
| 12:30 pm   | Exit Interview                                            |