



UI College of Public Health

Strategic Initiative

FY2016-FY2020

(Amended March 2018)

COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH STRATEGIC INITIATIVE FY2016-FY2020

INTRODUCTION

The College of Public Health (CPH) was founded in 1999 as the major component of the Public Health Initiative, sponsored by The University of Iowa, the Board of Regents, and the State of Iowa.

The mission of the CPH is

To promote health and to prevent injury and illness through commitment to education and training, excellence in research, innovation in policy development, and devotion to public health practice.

The vision of the CPH is

To serve Iowa and the Midwest as one of the nation's premier state-assisted schools of public health and lead the global community in rural public health education and training, research, and practice.

Our core values reflect those of The University of Iowa: Excellence, Learning, Community, Diversity, Integrity, Respect, Responsibility, and Social Justice. We seek to implement these values in ways that enhance the health and well-being of all Iowans, especially the most vulnerable segments of Iowa's population.

Excellence. The CPH is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in public health scholarship, teaching, and community service.

Learning. The CPH is dedicated to the discovery and dissemination of knowledge that will improve the health status of all people, especially those with rural roots and experiences.

Community. The CPH is committed to collaboration and actively seeks to engage community partners in its education, research, and public service.

Diversity. Diversity is key to a vibrant intellectual environment. Respect for, and inclusion of, all persons and valuing their unique experiences and contributions is essential to achieving our mission.

Integrity. The CPH adheres to the highest standards of honesty, fairness, respect, and professional and scholarly ethics.

Respect. The CPH is committed to maintaining an environment that recognizes the inherent worth and dignity of every person and that fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect.

Responsibility. The CPH is dedicated to the stewardship of all resources entrusted to it and fosters public policies that promote sustainability in all human activities, including

environmental protection, agricultural production, economic development, and community health.

Social Justice. All activities within the CPH are motivated by a commitment to social equity and fairness, a spirit of compassion for all persons, and a desire to apply the tools of scientific knowledge to pressing societal health concerns. The College strives to improve the conditions in which everyone lives and thereby contribute to the formation of a just society.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE: FY2011-FY2015

The current strategic initiative builds from the FY2011-FY2015 initiative that was adopted in January 2010. The strategic initiative was developed as a 'living initiative' that guided annual objectives and measures to assure continued momentum in the growth and success of our college. The initiative emerged from a process that was participatory and aspirational and that culminated with the articulation of three primary aspirational goals related to education, research, and impact along with a blueprint of key sustaining and incremental strategies to achieve these goals. The strategies guided five annual work plans that focused on objectives and tactics for each strategy. Our college achieved notable progress in all areas. Detailed work plans and annual assessments have been archived at <http://www.public-health.uiowa.edu/strategic-plan-documents/>

Highlights of FY2011-FY2015 accomplishments

Over the past five years, the College of Public Health continued to thrive and grow. The strategic initiative ensured continued success in existing areas of strength, including:

- Maintaining at least 50% faculty salary offset
- Broad reach of distance-learning opportunities for practicing professionals
- Sustained global health partnerships
- Robust collaborations with public health, health care, community, and industry partners
- Recruitment, timely graduation, and placement of highly qualified students
- Maintaining a culture of collaboration and inclusion
- Recruitment and retention of outstanding faculty, with particular focus on ensuring the career success of junior faculty

In addition to these sustained successes, numerous transformative activities occurred as a result of the strategic initiative. These activities include:

- *Recognition of the College of Public Health's Collective Areas of Excellence in Community Engagement, Comparative Effectiveness, and Rural Health.* These areas infuse our work in education, research, and impact and provide a framework for easy description of our work within and outside the college and for strategic investment of collegiate resources.

- *Establishment of the Iowa Institute for Public Health Research and Policy.* Approved by the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, in 2014, the institute is designed to foster new collaborations, within and outside the University of Iowa, ensure the highest quality of competitive research proposals, engage public-private partnerships to identify critical research topics, conduct conferences and seminars that showcase the accomplishments and capacity of the university's public health research enterprise, and bring national and international experts to campus as visiting scholars to participate in the development of new initiatives.
- *Successful philanthropy.* We have exceeded our fundraising goal and obtained resources for our state-of-the art flagship collegiate building, student scholarships, student support for global public health placements, research initiatives, and faculty recruitment and retention.
- *Leadership of the University of Iowa's Interprofessional Education (IPE) Initiative.* The university now has a committed and well-functioning IPE steering committee, a robust Students for Interprofessional Education (SIPE) organization, a strategic plan for continued growth and excellence in IPE, and a cross-disciplinary 500+ IPE course with participation of first year students from all of the health sciences professions programs.
- *Establishment of a Business Leadership Network (BLN) to connect the college with small and medium-sized business leaders and their communities.* The BLN has engaged over 500 individuals from 44 counties in Iowa and is led by a steering committee of College of Public Health faculty and staff, State Public Policy Group, and community leaders in north and south central Iowa. Dozens of community meetings and ten forums distinguish the BLN as a vital resource for community-collegiate collaborations.
- *Creation of new degree programs.* New educational opportunities include an MPH in Quantitative Methods (Department of Biostatistics) and an MS in Health Policy and an Executive Master of Health Administration (Department of Health Management and Policy).
- *Enhanced services from the College of Public Health's Research Office.* To support faculty success in programmatic research, the collegiate research office conducts pilot grant workshops and informational sessions, supports external review of faculty grants prior to submission, coordinates and supports trips to federal agencies to meet with leaders about research opportunities, conducts College of Public Health Research Week, invites leaders of funding agencies to visit the college, and facilitates linkages between the UI Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development for support of faculty with innovative research ideas.
- *Investment in junior faculty success.* Opportunities in global public health were expanded by establishing the Faculty Development Grant for Global Public Health Research and the Global Public Health Student Travel Grant. The goal of these awards is to establish new, long-term research partnerships in international settings that will foster collaborative research opportunities for faculty and students at the College of Public Health.
- *Growth in global public.* The college established and implemented formal faculty mentoring guidelines to enhance junior faculty mentoring and support. A new faculty orientation program was also implemented that includes expanded sessions with the collegiate research office. In addition, junior faculty now have access to a Junior Faculty

Research Opportunity Award that provides flexible support for developing scholarship programs.

- *Expanded undergraduate education.* The college implemented several undergraduate initiatives that have culminated in the approval of two new undergraduate degree options in public health for UI undergraduates – a BA in public health and a BS in public health. The path to this major initiative included the development of undergrad to grad degree options for advanced undergraduates who wish to complete a bachelor’s degree in any major and a master’s degree in a public health discipline in a compressed timeframe. In addition to UI undergraduates, we established collaborative undergrad to grad programs with Grinnell College and Coe College. A new Fundamentals of Public Health undergraduate course has gained wide popularity on campus and is one of the cornerstones of the new undergraduate majors. Implementation of the undergraduate degree program will occur with the guidance of the new strategic initiative.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE FY2016-FY2020

Process

Prior to initiating the FY2016-FY2020 strategic planning process, the College of Public Health’s Executive Committee reviewed the process, format, and implementation of the previous plan. The recommendations were to continue:

- The format (identify a set of strategies to achieve aspirational goals)
- Implementation approaches with the Executive Committee serving as the Steering Committee
- Using annual work plans that outline objectives and tactics for each strategy
- Posting annual progress reports for each work plan
- Seeking broad input from faculty, staff, and students, the collegiate Board of Advisors, and internal and external collaborators and stakeholders

The timeline and steps involved in creating the strategic initiative are listed below:

- April 16, 2015 - Open forum #1 – focus on identifying Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) in the areas of education, research and impact
- April 20, 2015 – Open forum #2 – focus on identifying strategies (sustaining and incremental) that are important for achieving our aspirational goals in the areas of education, research, and impact
- April 21, 2015 – Discussion of strategic initiative FY2016-FY2020 at the collegiate Board of Advisors meeting
- May 7, 2015 – Open forum #3 – focus on identifying short-term (i.e., 1-year) objectives and tactics that provide forward momentum in achieving goals in the areas of education, research, and impact
- June-July, 2015 – Steering Committee synthesis of input from collegiate forums and Board of Advisors meeting to create a draft strategic plan

- August-September, 2015 – Draft strategic plan posted on the collegiate website for comments by faculty, staff, students, Board of Advisors members, and external collaborators and stakeholders
- October, 2015 – Revision of strategic plan based on comments received
- November-December, 2015 – formal adoption of strategic plan and presentation at open forum

Collegiate forums

A total of 125 faculty, staff, and students and external collaborators and stakeholders participated in the three forums. Members of the Steering Committee served as facilitators and recorders. Participants worked in facilitated groups that rotated their focus across education, research, and impact. Individuals who could not attend the forums were able to provide input through a web-based forum site or by e-mailing comments to the CPH Dean's Office.

SWOT analysis summary

SWOT analysis participants were asked to consider the following:

- Think about points of view from all stakeholders – e.g., faculty, staff, students, alumni, policymakers, and the public
- Take into account both internal and external influences on the continued growth and excellence of the College
- Remember that weaknesses and threats can be turned into opportunities
- There may be cross-cutting themes across areas

Strengths

- The CPH conducts research, training, and outreach activities that are relevant to the community and policymakers locally, nationally, and internationally
- CPH has experienced and dedicated staff and existing administrative and research infrastructure on which to build
- The CPH is on the upswing and these changes are evident in our rise in national rankings and reputation:
 - our students are obtaining leadership positions in public health and health administration
 - our alumni base is growing in number and in national presence as leaders in public health, public policy and health administration
 - our curricular programs are expanding
 - our research continues to be collaborative and of high impact
- The CPH Communications team is effective in disseminating our story and engaging our community

- Our college is very collaborative and has a strong track record in collaborations with many different fields of expertise in many different settings (e.g. academics, state agencies, industry, and community organizations)
- The CPH has a strong and long-standing portfolio of high-impact, engaged, rigorous and interdisciplinary research
- Our faculty are excellent teachers and our graduate students have a high level of faculty interaction
- Our new building has brought our educational and teaching missions together and provided us with a presence on campus
- CPH faculty draw on diverse sources of funding to support our teaching, research, and impact missions, including private foundations, direct service contracts, and traditional government research funding

Weaknesses

- The CPH is challenged to define and explain to the university and throughout the state exactly what we do and our return on investment
- The CPH remains in departmental silos due to current department-based curriculum and models of academic credit that do not encourage collaborative teaching
- Our alumni base is growing and the college should initiate more engagement with its alumni
- Our research facilities are dispersed across campus and many are in substandard condition
- Space allocation does not optimize research success and collaboration
- Student funding and engagement opportunities are not growing quickly enough to meet demand
- Our funding model requires significant effort for research that can reduce the time available for innovative teaching

Opportunities

- MPH curricula and our undergraduate programs will energize our education programs
- Public health is gaining visibility and becoming more aligned with funding agency priorities, which will help us remain competitive in our research
- Our Collective Areas of Excellence and the Iowa Institute for Public Health Research and Policy provide a foundation to pursue new activities and funding opportunities
- We have opportunities to engage our students in more advocacy and outreach efforts, such as to policymakers, K-12 programs, and in fundraising
- Changing leadership at the university could be an opportunity or a threat and we need to be proactive with new leaders at all levels to communicate our impact on community health and quality-of-life and the potential for achieving even more through expanded education, research, and service programs
- The Business Leadership Network could be optimized to integrate our outreach and research efforts and increase industry partners

- A strong group of junior faculty, with new recruitments on the horizon, give us an opportunity to define our future
- An increased presence in global health may raise our reputation
- Our fundraising capacity is growing
- New locations, such as the Pappajohn Campus in Des Moines, provide opportunities to better promote our work and increase our partner network, as well as opportunities to extend the reach of our graduate and training programs
- Engagement with the Informatics Initiative could lead to innovative public health assessment and forecasting

Threats

- Anticipating trends in federal and state priorities and funding is difficult and will remain a challenge in the foreseeable future
- A growing number of new schools of public health and public health programs will increase competition for highly-qualified students, talented faculty, and financial resources (grants, contracts, and non-alumni contributions)
- The state of Iowa and the Midwest region are not a well-recognized or highly prioritized region of the US and the reputation of our region may hinder the spread of knowledge about our stellar programs
- We lack diversity within the CPH community (students, staff, and faculty) and the state and regional populations
- Compliance requirements, administrative burden, and sparse staff, combined with our funding model, make it difficult to be flexible and respond quickly to new opportunities
- With growth in public health schools and programs, the job market for our students may be negatively impacted
- Cost of education and lack of student funding may hinder recruitment efforts
- Administrative reorganizations (e.g., TIER) and ongoing budget cuts may challenge our infrastructure as we move to new models of shared services
- Increasing administrative burden and overall risk-averse culture at the university level threaten our growth potential and limit innovative strategies

Our SWOT analysis shows that we have developed a very solid foundation on which to build, and that our future will be strongly influenced by our current strategic decisions. Our people are one of our important strengths, and our collegiate community continues to grow. Although a relatively new college, we are well-regarded in research, education, and outreach; and we are well-regarded for our high impact, our collaboration, and our engaged approach. While we have made strides as a college, challenges in reducing departmental silos, improving facilities and space, increasing opportunities for students, and responding to a challenging workload remain.

We are well poised to compete in an increasingly competitive environment. Although we face uncertainty in the university, state, and federal leadership and political structures, we have opportunities to communicate our impact and value to bring more attention to our achievements. Engaging more partners to help tell our story will be an important activity

as our CPH community of students, alumni, and partners expands. With a growing number of public health schools and programs, we will compete through new and innovative educational programs and opportunities to increase engagement such as our new Institute and the Business Leadership Network.

As we develop plans for new initiatives, we will be guided by our strengths, awareness of our weaknesses, and mindful to identify activities that have a high return on our investment and are closely aligned with our mission.

Strategies summary

The strategies discussion was guided by the following questions. Major themes from those discussions are also listed below.

We can provide outstanding public health education, research, and impact if we continue to... (sustaining)

- Provide education to public health professionals
- Engage alumni, emeritus faculty, and public health professionals
- Hire great faculty and provide mentoring
- Collaborate with local, state, and national government and professional agencies
- Develop the Business Leadership Network
- Be interdisciplinary and collaborative across departments, colleges, institutions, and other organizations and industries
- Support junior faculty by mentoring and offering pilot grant opportunities
- Hire and retain talented staff

We can provide outstanding public health education, research, and impact if we increase... (incremental)

- Training for faculty on new teaching innovations/modalities
- Practical experiences for students
- Community interaction with faculty, staff and students
- Knowledge and awareness of public health
- Our international relationships
- Diversification of research funding portfolios

We can provide outstanding public health education, research, and impact if we begin to... (incremental)

- Offer a successful undergraduate program
- Integrate curriculum across departments
- Develop a short- and long-term facility plan for research space

Objectives and tactics summary

To aid the Steering Committee in the development of the FY16 strategic initiatives work plan, the objectives and tactics discussion was guided by the following questions. A summary of ideas from those discussions is also below.

Next year to sustain and enhance our excellence in EDUCATION we should aim to...

- Optimize collaboration across departments to expose students to a broad knowledge of public health
- Keep recruiting high-quality students
- Offer workshops to train faculty to use innovative technologies and classroom models
- Collaborate with others on-campus to broaden education opportunities for graduate students (e.g., CTSA)
- Define team teaching and policy on calculating teaching credit
- Review curriculum and identify areas of course overlap

Next year to sustain and enhance our excellence in RESEARCH we should aim to...

- Improve research facilities, especially wet labs
- Diversify funding by reaching out to organizations and educating faculty on funding opportunities and by sharing best practices among the departments and others on campus
- Provide training for faculty and staff on new grant funding processes
- Continue to provide administrative and technical support for research staff
- Engage the Informatics Initiative and organize a joint event
- Host a research open house
- Provide a database with key word search to identify on-going research interests and expertise within the college and on campus
- Disseminate a research newsletter with condensed highlights
- Provide a set time for monthly collegiate seminars that would engage all CPH faculty, staff and students

Next year to sustain and enhance our excellence in IMPACT we should aim to...

- Develop a mechanism or systemic way to educate the public about public health and about what our college does
- Continue to collaborate with the arts
- Provide media training for faculty and staff

CPH Board of Advisors discussion summary

The Spring 2015 CPH Board of Advisors meeting was held on April 21st. The Board's afternoon breakout sessions were focused on the strategic planning initiative for FY2016-FY2020. Board members were asked to think about sustaining and incremental strategies in the areas of education, research, and impact. A summary of ideas generated from that discussion is below.

Strategies in the area of education

The Board acknowledged the college's commitment to providing outstanding graduate education and encouraged the college to continue to offer innovative and diverse degree opportunities that will attract world-changing and innovative students. They also recognized the college's curricula innovations initiative and the importance of students developing real-world skills in the classroom and faculty participating in interdisciplinary teaching.

The Board has been kept apprised of our undergraduate major initiative and was pleased to see that initiative has advanced at a rapid pace and will provide an undergraduate pipeline of students who understand public health beginning in the Fall of 2016. To ensure a successful undergraduate program they suggested a marketing strategy to show the importance and impact public health has on citizens.

Other strategies discussed related to education focused on exploring partnerships with Iowa's community colleges, UI's Informatics Initiative, and international entities that could expand global public health opportunities.

Strategies in the area of research

The Board credited the college's amazing research success to its excellent faculty and staff and support from the CPH Research Office. The college's reputation for collaboration across campus and with other universities and private organizations has provided a solid base for increasing its research. The Board discussed the positive impact the new Iowa Institute for Public Health Research and Policy will have on research. They encourage the Institute, in collaboration with the CPH Research Office, to encourage faculty to continue to diversify their funding portfolios. This can be achieved by enhancing infrastructure to build and support collaborative interdisciplinary research teams, establishing collaborations with organizations that could provide data access, and choosing a set of priority public health challenges to focus resources.

Strategies in the area of impact

The Board appreciates that public health impact has always been a priority for the College of Public Health. The college's education, research, and policy initiatives have had significant impact on Iowa, nationally, and internationally. The Board discussed the importance of continuing the training and education of the public health workforce and its effort to partner with communities and businesses through the Business Leadership Network. The Board encouraged the College to focus on ways to nurture and expand the BLN and enhance our relationships with policymakers.

Comments received from faculty, staff, students, and stakeholders

The strategic initiative was posted on our website and faculty, staff, students, and stakeholders were invited to review the draft initiative and send comments by October 1,

2015. Comments received were positive and encouraged the college to be bold and innovative in its activities. Comments that included action-oriented ideas will be addressed through objectives and tactics in our annual work plans.

Synthesis

The Steering Committee met in June and July to review and synthesize the input from the forums and to develop a framework for the new strategic initiative. The Steering Committee revised the wording of the three aspirational goals and identified strategies in the areas of education, research, impact, and those that were cross-cutting.

Aspirational goals

The College of Public Health has three primary, aspirational goals to:

Provide outstanding public health education in academic degree programs, certificates, and continuous professional development;

Conduct innovative, collaborative, interdisciplinary research that advances the knowledge base for public health theory, methods, and practice; and

Enhance community health and improve quality-of-life in Iowa, nationally, and internationally.

Central to our ability to achieve these goals are: clearly articulated priorities; faculty, staff, and students; culture; and infrastructure. Thus, our continued strategic initiative should be directed at sustaining and growing our college in a way that maintains an optimal balance among these core components.

Strategic goals FY2016-FY2020

The strategic initiative outlines four objectives each for education, research, and impact along with eight cross-cutting objectives. These objectives are summarized in the following figure below.

The University of Iowa College of Public Health Aspires to:		
Education	Research	Impact
Provide outstanding public health education in academic degree programs, certificates, and continuous professional development	Conduct innovative, collaborative, interdisciplinary research that advances the knowledge base for public health theory, methods, and practice	Enhance community health and improve quality-of-life in Iowa, nationally, and internationally
We achieve these goals through:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A curriculum of innovative, engaged teaching for undergraduate, master, and doctoral students to attract and retain highly-qualified students • Strong training and education programs for practicing professionals • The highest level of compliance with accreditation criteria • Sustained success in post-graduate placement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust and sustained collaborative research partnerships • Diversified funding of high impact research • State-of-the-art research facilities • Effective translation and dissemination of research results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustained recognition as a highly-sought resource for education, training, policy, and research • Awareness of and timely response to critical public health issues to inform decision-making • State-of-the-art communications that underscore the importance of public health • Strong engagement with practitioners, communities, organizations, and alumni
Our efforts in education, research, and impact are enhanced through:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practices in collegiate governance, infrastructure support, and professional development • Targeted growth in the number of faculty based on education, research, and service priorities • An environment for all students, faculty, and staff that is supportive and rich in diversity and inclusion • Robust, focused, and sustained global partnerships • Effective philanthropy that enhances collegiate resources • Creativity and collaboration in education, research, and service • High-quality faculty and staff • Strong engagement with alumni 		

Annual objectives

Annual objectives and tactics related to each of the strategic initiative goals will be developed using the following template:

**UI College of Public Health
FY2016 Strategic Initiative Work Plan**

Objectives	Tactical Initiatives	Activities	Accountabilities
EDUCATION			
A curriculum of innovative, engaged teaching for undergraduate, master, and doctoral students to attract and retain highly-qualified students			
Strong training and education programs for practicing professionals			
The highest level of compliance with accreditation criteria			
Sustained success in post-graduate placement			
RESEARCH			
Robust and sustained collaborative partnerships			
Diversified funding of high impact research			
State-of-the-art research facilities			
Effective translation and dissemination of research results			
IMPACT			
Sustained recognition as a highly-sought resource for education, training, policy, and research			
Awareness of and timely response to critical public health issues to inform decision-making			
State-of-the-art communications that underscore the importance of public health			
Strong engagement with practitioners, communities, organizations, and alumni			
CROSS CUTTING			
Best practices in collegiate governance, infrastructure support, and professional development			
Targeted growth in the number of faculty based on education, research, and service priorities			

Objectives	Tactical Initiatives	Activities	Accountabilities
An environment for all students, faculty, and staff that is supportive and rich in diversity and inclusion			
Robust, focused, and sustained global partnerships			
Effective philanthropy that enhances collegiate resources			
Creativity and collaboration in education, research, and service			
High-quality faculty and staff			
Strong engagement with alumni			

Measureable outcomes

Achieving our aspirational goals will occur through a series of strategic initiatives with annual objectives and metrics for success. In addition to these specific initiatives, the college has defined a series of broad outcomes that will be tracked through the use of collegiate dashboards. These outcomes are general indicators that we are achieving our educational, research, and public health impact goals and includes outcome measures for ensuring the balance of people, culture, priorities, and infrastructure. Current metrics are summarized below and may be modified as accreditation criteria change and the college develops new initiatives.

Education

Evidence that we provide outstanding public health education includes metrics related to our students and our degree partnerships. With regard to academic degree programs and non-academic training and education (e.g., certificate) programs, we assess:

- The quality of the students we attract
- Student enrollment and graduation rates
- Student placement by degree and career impact
- Number and type of degree partnerships within the university, state-wide, nationally, and internationally
- Student funding

Research

Evidence that we conduct innovative, collaborative, interdisciplinary research focuses on our research teams, types of research funding, and the visibility of our research findings in the academy and broader public arena. Metrics include:

- Number/types of interdisciplinary collaborations on the research teams of funded grants
- Interdisciplinary publication and authorships
- Success rate on peer-reviewed grant submissions
- Quality of peer-reviewed journals of CPH-based publications
- Citation references of CPH-based publications
- Large-scale research projects, such as center grants and program projects
- Faculty recognition as fellows in professional societies, IOM membership, national awards

Public health impact

Indicators of our impact on public health include:

- Local, state, national, and international collaboration on public health programs and policy
- Workforce development through training and education
- Non-academic references/citations of our research
- Adoption and integration of programs developed and evaluated by CPH faculty
- Public-private partnerships for innovative public health and policy initiatives

Assessment of progress

Annual progress will be assessed both with regard to achievement of annual work plan objectives and our measurable outcomes.