SNAPSHOT
College of Public Health
East Tennessee State University
January 2012

World-Class Education, World-Class Environment
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The College of Public Health at East Tennessee State University:

- Is the only fully accredited School of Public Health in Tennessee and the only one in central Appalachia;
- Has 466 students in 6 undergraduate, 6 master’s, and three doctoral degree programs;
- Has a highly diverse student body;
- Is growing its majors at a rate of about 15% annually (since 2009);
- Has Memoranda of Understanding with approximately 150 field placement sites;
- Has graduation rates that exceed 70% for master’s programs and 80% for the BSPH program, and job placement rates that exceed 80% – all higher than the accreditation benchmarks;
- Has alumni and employer satisfaction rates that exceed 90% among recent survey respondents;
- Has 40 faculty (including vacancies) and 19 staff;
- Has increased extramural research funding by 42% in the past three years, and changed the source of that funding from largely state contracts to federal research grants;
- Has the State’s only federally funded Public Health Training Center and the only statewide Institute for Public Health;
- Is focused on applied practical skills for the regional, state and national public health workforce;
- Has a comprehensive strategic plan, including goals and measurable objectives, which allows for tracking progress over time.
I. BACKGROUND

- According to the Institute of Medicine, “Public Health is what we, as a society, do collectively to assure the conditions for people to be healthy.”

- According to the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), the accrediting body for public health education, the five core areas of Public Health are:
  - Biostatistics
  - Environmental Health Sciences
  - Epidemiology
  - Health Policy and Management
  - Social and Behavioral Sciences

- There are currently 49 CEPH-accredited Colleges (or Schools) of Public Health in the United States and Mexico. These entities are all members of the Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH). The number of member-schools has increased significantly over the past decade.

- The College of Public Health at East Tennessee State University is the only fully accredited School of Public Health in Tennessee and the only one in central Appalachia;

- Though fully accredited as a School of Public Health in 2009, ETSU has one of the oldest undergraduate public health programs in the country, and the oldest EHAC accredited Environmental Health Program in the country.

- For accreditation, the College developed a five-year strategic plan, which is updated annually.

- A new strategic plan and new self-study will be developed in preparation for the next accreditation review, due in 2014.

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1 The accrediting body for Schools and Programs of Public Health [http://www.ceph.org](http://www.ceph.org)
2 According to CEPH, a School of Public Health must offer a Master’s Degree in all five areas and a Doctoral Degree in at least three areas.
3 A map of these accredited schools is at: [http://www.asph.org/UserFiles/ASPH_map.pdf](http://www.asph.org/UserFiles/ASPH_map.pdf). Though Colleges are normally larger than Schools, for ASPH, Colleges and Schools are synonymous.
4 Accredited Programs in Tennessee include: Meharry Medical College, University of Tennessee, and Vanderbilt University. The University of Memphis has a School of Public Health, but it is not yet CEPH accredited as either a Program or a School.
5 National Environmental Health Science and Protection Accreditation Council
6 The self-study (including the strategic plan—pages 16 - 30) is available at: [http://www.etsu.edu/cph/about/SelfStudy.aspx](http://www.etsu.edu/cph/about/SelfStudy.aspx)
II. KEY FACTS
A. Organizational Chart

College of Public Health

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Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology
Department of Community and Behavioral Health
Department of Environmental Health
Department of Health Sciences
Department of Health Services Management & Policy
B. Academic Offerings

- **Undergraduate**
  - BS Public Health
    - Community Health concentration
    - Health Administration concentration
  - BS Health Sciences
    - Human Health concentration (honors option)
    - Microbiology concentration (honors option)
  - BS Environmental Health Sciences
    - Environmental Health concentration (honors option)
    - Occupational Health and Safety concentration (honors option)

- **Master’s**
  - Master of Public Health
    - Biostatistics concentration
    - Community Health concentration
    - Environmental Health concentration
    - Epidemiology concentration*
    - Health Services Administration concentration*
  - Master of Science in Environmental Health

- **Doctoral**
  - Doctor of Public Health
    - Community Health concentration
    - Epidemiology concentration
  - Doctor of Philosophy in Environmental Health

- **Certificates**
  - Undergraduate Certificate in Public Health Fundamentals for Field Professionals*
  - Graduate Certificate in:
    - Biostatistics*
    - Epidemiology*
    - Gerontology
    - Healthcare Management*
    - Rural Health

* Available both on-ground and online
C. Field Placement/Internship

- The majority of degree offerings in the college require a 2 – 3 month culminating field placement during which students acquire practical skills to prepare them for public health practice.

- To support these, the Assistant Dean for Public Health Practice maintains Memoranda of Understanding with approximately 150 U.S. and international affiliate organizations.

- The College of Public Health Practice Advisory Council, consisting of regional public health and health care leaders, meets annually and advises the Assistant Dean about field placement matters.

- Scholarship support has been received from:
  - The Frist Global Health Leaders Program, with support from:
    - Hope Through Healing Hands Foundation
    - The Niswonger Foundation
  - The Wykoff Family Scholarship
  - ASPIRE Appalachia Scholarship, with support from:
    - Love Everybody Foundation (William Kenneth “Big Kenny” Alphin)
  - ETSU International Programs and Services

- International field placements have included:
  - American Samoa (2)
  - Honduras (2)
  - Kenya
  - Peru
  - Rwanda
  - Sierra Leone
  - South Africa (4)
D. Faculty and Staff

- The College is organized into five departments: [http://www.etsu.edu/cph/departments/](http://www.etsu.edu/cph/departments/)
  - The Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology
  - The Department of Community and Behavioral Health
  - The Department of Environmental Health
  - The Department of Health Sciences
  - The Department of Health Services Management and Policy

- Currently, the College has 35 full-time faculty (plus 5 vacancies).
  - 17 (49%) have been hired in the past six years.
  - 31 (88%) have terminal degrees.

- Most departments are very close to, or at, the minimum number of faculty to meet CEPH accreditation requirements for faculty number or student-faculty ratios.\(^7\)
  - Biostatistics-- Required: 3 full-time + 2 full-time equivalents\(^8\); Actual: 4 + 1
  - Epidemiology-- Required: 5 full-time\(^9\); Actual: 3 (plus two unfilled vacancies)
  - Community and Behavioral Health-- Required: 5 full-time; Actual: 6\(^10\) (plus one vacancy)
  - Environmental Health-- Required: 5 full-time; Actual: 4 (plus one vacancy)
  - Health Sciences-- Does not offer the MPH
  - Health Services Management and Policy-- Required: 5 full-time; Actual: 5\(^11\) (plus one vacancy)

- Currently, the College has 19 staff.
  - Staff includes department executive aides, staff hired by research projects, teaching laboratory support, and the program staff for the Tennessee Institute for Public Health and the Public Health Training Center.
  - The Dean’s Office houses 10 administrative and support staff positions (7.6 FTE) compared to an average of 17 positions at peer schools\(^12\). As a result, several key functions that are required for accreditation, including student services, alumni relations, communications, and planning and evaluation, do not have dedicated staff and are assumed by current faculty and staff.

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\(^7\) CEPH requires 5 full-time faculty for any Department offering a doctoral degree and 3 full-time faculty and two FTE equivalents for any Department not offering a doctoral degree, but offering the MPH. CEPH requires a Student-Faculty Ratio of 10:1 or lower for graduate programs.

\(^8\) Because a doctoral degree in Biostatistics is not offered, the college must have at least 3 full-time faculty and a total of 2 full-time equivalents.

\(^9\) Because a doctoral degree in Epidemiology is offered, the college must have at least 5 full-time faculty.

\(^10\) Includes Associate Dean Pack

\(^11\) Includes Dean Wykoff and Assistant Dean Baylor

\(^12\) Peer schools are accredited colleges of public health at the following eight universities: Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisville, North Texas, Ohio State, Oklahoma, and Texas A&M.
E. Students

- Currently, the College has 466 students.
  - This includes 360 undergraduate majors, 82 master’s students, and 24 doctoral students.
  - Over the past two years, the College has seen an increase of 36% in total student enrollment:
    - 38% increase in undergraduate enrollment
    - 24% increase in master’s enrollment
    - 50% increase in doctoral enrollment
  - Of the graduate students:
    - About 80% are domestic, including:
      - Three-fourths from Tennessee
      - One-fourth from 19 different States (California, Colorado, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Maine, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin)
      - Three-fourths are female
    - One-fifth are international, representing 8 different countries (Barbados, Canada, China, Ghana, India, Nepal, Nigeria, and Sri Lanka)

- The College has several student organizations.
  - The largest, open to all students in the College, is the Public Health Student Association (PHSA).
  - Environmental Health students can join the student chapter of the Tennessee Environmental Health Association (TEHA).
  - Students in the Health Sciences can join the student chapter of the American Society of Microbiologists (ASM).
  - The College also has a Student Council that represents all students in the College.
F. Other Components of the College

- In addition to its academic departments, the College houses:

  - **LIFEPATH—the Tennessee Public Health Training Center.** LIFEPATH (“Long-Distance Internet Facilitated Educational Programs for Advanced Training in Health”) is a five-year, $3.25 million dollar, federally funded workforce development partnership to provide educational programs for working professionals across Tennessee and in southwest Virginia. [http://www.etsu.edu/cph/tnphtc.aspx](http://www.etsu.edu/cph/tnphtc.aspx). Housed at ETSU, partners include the University of Tennessee, Meharry Medical College, the University of Memphis and the Tennessee Department of Health. LIFEPATH’s mission is to “provide a home for the collaborative partnership between Tennessee’s academic public health training providers and Tennessee’s public health workforce, and to provide comprehensive, competency-based training for that workforce.” Since its inception in fall 2010, LIFEPATH has trained more than 600 participants across Tennessee and enrolled more than 20 working public health professionals into Certificate or Master’s-level programs at ETSU.

  - **The Tennessee Institute of Public Health (TNIPH)—**TNIPH is a legislatively created partnership of public and private health agencies, organizations, and academic institutions created to maximize resources for promoting health research, education, and service focused on improving the health of Tennesseans. TNIPH was originally housed at the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, but was relocated to ETSU in 2009, by mutual consent. TNIPH has a State-wide Advisory Board[^13] and a mission to “to foster measurable improvements in the health and wellness of all Tennesseans through conducting and promoting statewide multi-sector initiatives, including data-driven planning, health education and public awareness, and research and advocacy for effective health-related policy.” In addition to coordinating the annual release of the State-wide County Health Rankings[^14], TNIPH has also identified and publicized sixteen “Leading Health Indicators”[^15] for Tennessee.

[^13]: The members of the Board are listed at: [http://www.etsu.edu/tniph/board.aspx](http://www.etsu.edu/tniph/board.aspx)
[^14]: The most recent rankings, and a TNIPH-crafted Op-Ed are at: [http://www.etsu.edu/tniph/rankings.aspx](http://www.etsu.edu/tniph/rankings.aspx)
[^15]: The Leading Health Indicators are at: [http://www.etsu.edu/tniph/indicator.aspx](http://www.etsu.edu/tniph/indicator.aspx)
III. EDUCATIONAL and RESEARCH OUTCOMES
A. Learning Outcomes

- The College regularly assesses graduation rates by degree program.
  
  o For the MPH program, graduation rates have increased, exceeding the 70% mandate required by CEPH for the years 2006-07, 2007-08, and 2008-09.\(^\text{16}\)
  
  o For the BSPH program, graduation rates\(^\text{17}\) have exceeded 80% (well above the CEPH mandate) for the years 2006-07, 2007-08, and 2008-09.
  
  o For the doctoral programs, 25 students enrolled since the inception of the programs in 2006-07, and of those, 21 (84%) students had graduated or were actively enrolled in spring 2011.

- The College regularly surveys graduating students, alumni, employers, and field preceptors.\(^\text{18}\)
  
  Highlights of the surveys show that:
  
  o In the 2010 alumni survey, 96% reported satisfaction with their educational experience, and 95% had, or would, recommend the College to others. Those figures were 98% and 91%, respectively, in the 2011 alumni survey.
  
  o Of 2009/10 graduates, 85% accepted a job offer within one year of starting their search, and 96% were employed or continuing their education at the time of the survey in fall 2011. This exceeds the 80% CEPH-required job placement rate.
  
  o Of 53 employer responders to the 2011 survey,
    - 90% rated the College graduates as highly or very highly competent in their field of practice;
    - 94% rated the College programs as highly or very highly effective in preparing graduates to meet the needs of the communities served.
  
  o Based on 128 preceptor evaluations of MPH students over the past 3 years, the average competence score of MPH students across 10 professional skills was 4.7 (out of a maximum of 5.0). Based on 108 preceptor evaluations of B.S. students over the past 3 years, the average competence score of students across 16 discipline-specific and professional skills was 4.53 (out of a maximum score of 5.0).

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\(^{16}\) Graduation rates have not been calculated for more recent cohorts because they are within the allowable time to graduate.

\(^{17}\) For undergraduates, the graduation rate is calculated based on the number of students with a declared major in Public Health who have completed their general education requirements (usually the beginning of their 3rd year).

\(^{18}\) Who oversee students during their field placements
B. Research Productivity

- The College has undertaken a systematic process to grow and expand its external research funding. Specific actions taken include:

  o Created a Research Development Committee composed of experienced researchers:
    ▪ Conducted a faculty-wide survey to identify research skills and perceived needs;
    ▪ The survey results allowed the categorization of faculty into five groups based on their experience and research capabilities;
    ▪ The survey also identified specific needs and opportunities to enhance research:
      • Started a College-wide Grand Rounds Program to encourage sharing of research results and to identify potential partnerships
      • Named an Associate Dean for Research
      • Hired a Research Services Manager
      • Created a “Research Academy” to allow promising researchers mentoring, time and other resources to achieve excellence in research.
  
  o Relevant new faculty are hired with:
    ▪ Research start-up funds
    ▪ Graduate Assistants
    ▪ Competitive “at risk” salary covered by the College for a period of time
  
  o The College has systematically sought collaborations with other academic institutions.

- Significant increases have been seen in research and scholarly activity:
  o In 2010 and 2011, the college received its first two R01 grants from the National Institutes of Health.\(^19\)
  o Dollar Amount of Research Funding\(^20\)
    ▪ FY 2007/2008: $1,192,599 (predominately state contracts)
    ▪ FY 2010/2011: $1,691,529 (42% increase; predominately federal grants and internal research development grants to stimulate federal submissions)
  o Dollar Amount of Submitted Proposals
    ▪ FY 2007/2008: $5,319,837
    ▪ FY 2010/2011: $8,983,297 (68% increase)
  o Peer Reviewed Publications
    ▪ Calendar year 2007: 28
    ▪ Calendar year 2010: 40 (43% increase)
  o Percent of tenured/tenure-track faculty with funded research
    ▪ FY 2007/2008: 42%
    ▪ FY 2010/2011: 57% (36% increase)
  o Importantly, 86% of funded research projects involve students.

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\(^19\) The R01 is the oldest and one of the most competitive mechanisms for researcher-initiated support from NIH.
\(^20\) This does not include the $650,000 per year for the Public Health Training Center.
IV. IMAGING, OUTREACH, and COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- To increase faculty, student, and alumni awareness and involvement, the college has created:
  
  o A bi-weekly “Dean’s Note” a brief newsletter that highlights and celebrates an item, event, activity, or award of importance. Previous editions are available at: http://www.etsu.edu/cph/deansNotes.aspx
  o A semester newsletter that provides detailed information about the college, its faculty, staff, students, and alumni. Previous editions are available at: http://www.etsu.edu/cph/deansNotes.aspx
  o Public Health Grand Rounds (featuring faculty presentations about ongoing research);
  o Breakfast with the Experts (featuring local health and health care leaders speaking about career-related issues);

- The college created and sponsors “The Leading Voices in Public Health (LVPH),” a premier lecture series designed to bring internationally respected thought-leaders to the community to speak with students, community members, and faculty about issues of key importance to the public’s welfare. The lectures, usually held one evening per month, last about one hour and are followed by an active question and answer period. Often the lecturers meet separately with student leaders, faculty researchers, and the media. Important partnership opportunities have resulted from LVPH. Speakers, to date, include:
  
  o Stan Brock, CEO—Remote Area Medical
  o Surgeon General Richard Carmona
  o The Honorable Bill Frist
  o Ambassador Eric Goosby, U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator
  o The Honorable Al Gore
  o David Kessler, former FDA Commissioner
  o Surgeon General David Satcher
  o Gail Wilensky, WHO Commission on the Social Determinants of Health

- The College has created an “image” and is focused on developing a niche within the framework of the 48 other schools of public health in the country:
  
  o The “image” has been built around “the stream scene” a photograph of Hazel Creek in the Great Smoky Mountains, taken by Kim Guinn, and used with his consent.
  o The stream scene has been highlighted on the college website, on posters and flyers, on the conference display and on a variety of college items.

- The College has drawn considerable attention to Tennessee’s poor health rankings with its “No More 48” campaign. Beginning when Tennessee was ranked 48th by the United Health Foundation, the College has annually issued a pin with the number of the current ranking (now 39) with a red “no more” line through it. http://www.johnsoncitypress.com/News/article.php?id=96463

- Faculty and Staff of the College are actively involved in membership and leadership of dozens of community organizations, professional bodies and related service activities.
The College is committed to interdisciplinary, community-based education. The Trilogy Program of the College received the national Delta Omega award for Innovative Curriculum for Public Health in 2005.

China-Tennessee Health Education Training Institute. A delegation of almost 20 health educators from China spent two weeks in November 2011 studying at ETSU, as part of the China-Tennessee Health Education Training Institute. The visitors heard lectures by faculty and guest lecturers, and visited a variety of the region’s health-related institutions to witness firsthand how health education is put into action. The Institute was felt to be highly successful, and plans are underway to continue it in the future. The 2011 Institute followed two similar exchanges in 2009 and 2010. Two-week institutes such as this, combining expert lectures and topic-focused site visits, represent an important opportunity to share expertise with foreign colleagues, to recruit new students, and to build professional partnerships.

The College is committed to training its students in a wide-range of applied skills essential for assisting those in limited resource settings. To this end the College is developing a new course known as ESSENTIALS (Essential Skills, Strategies, and Expertise Necessary To Improve and Advance Low-resource Settings). ESSENTIALS is a hands-on course designed to teach the applied skills that the student might reasonably be expected to know if he/she were to become a mission worker in a less-developed country, a Peace Corps volunteer in a rural and isolated community, or following displacement due to natural or man-made disasters. Meeting at the Valleybrook campus, to date, faculty/student groups have completed pilot projects building a Brick Stack Stove, a Biosand Water Filter, a concrete Beehive Stove, a Rus-style water pump, a “tippy tap” field hand-washing station, a roof-top water catchment system, and a model building with three different walls (home-made brick, wattle and daub and corrugated iron).