

Criterion IX: Students

- ▶ **CRITERION IX.A: THE SCHOOL SHALL HAVE STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND ADMISSIONS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES DESIGNED TO LOCATE AND SELECT QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS CAPABLE OF TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE SCHOOL'S VARIOUS LEARNING ACTIVITIES, WHICH WILL ENABLE EACH OF THEM TO DEVELOP COMPETENCY FOR A CAREER IN PUBLIC HEALTH.**

IX.A.1 Description of the school's recruitment policies and procedures.

The COPH Student Services Coordinator and Student Recruiter, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, Assistant Dean for Minority Affairs, and Minority Recruitment and Retention Committee share different but coordinated responsibilities for student recruitment. Some tools and strategies that have been developed to recruit a strong and diverse student body are described below.

IX.A.1.a Speaker's Bureau

The COPH developed a Speakers' Bureau, coordinated by the Student Services Coordinator and Student Recruiter, which provides a mechanism for COPH faculty to travel to other universities and colleges to educate undergraduate students about the COPH and about public health in general. Faculty and alumni volunteers are selected based on their particular areas of expertise and are invited to present to various campus organizations and academic groups about the acquisition and need for graduate degrees in public health.

IX.A.1.b Conference/Convention Exhibits

The COPH has developed an exhibit for the American Public Health Association (APHA) meeting each year and for state career fairs and conferences. This exhibit has been displayed at a variety of national and state meetings to foster student recruitment. In addition, the COPH maintains bulletin boards outside the Office of Student Services, in the COPH Student Lounge, and on the ground level of the Education II Building on the UAMS campus.

IX.A.1.c Tuition Discount

During the early development of the COPH, the Dean *pro tem* negotiated with the Chancellor of UAMS to offer full-time employees of the Arkansas Department of Health and Human Services' Division of Health (DOH), the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality, and the Minority Health Commission a 70% discount on tuition for the COPH. This discount was limited to students who began a degree program in the College during the first three years of our operation. Students granted the discount upon admittance to a COPH degree program continue to receive it until they complete that degree program or withdraw from the College. Students who are full-time employees of the University of Arkansas system are also eligible for a tuition discount in accordance with UA policy. In addition, students enrolled full-time at UAMS in the Colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Health Related Professions, and Pharmacy or in the Graduate School may enroll in COPH courses with no tuition charge.

IX.A.1.d Recruitment of Non-Traditional Students

The COPH has encouraged non-traditional students to enroll in a core course or courses in a non-degree-seeking status to build academic confidence and to determine their affinity for classroom

work in general and public health studies more specifically. This entryway has alleviated some concern among many practicing health professionals who have not been in an academic classroom for several years. Non-degree students who perform well in their coursework have the opportunity to seek formal admission to either the Post-Baccalaureate Certificate or the MPH programs.

IX.A.1.e Recruitment through Other Colleges and Universities

The COPH was established to serve the entire state of Arkansas. For this reason, COPH administrators have worked with sister institutions of higher education to provide access to COPH courses for students enrolled in health-related programs. Several classes are offered in a distance-accessible format to enable students from various locations within the state to enroll in COPH courses. The COPH also informs undergraduate students about COPH programs by visiting all four-year higher education institutions within the state of Arkansas. Furthermore, the COPH works with the Assistant Dean for Minority Affairs and the Director of Minority Student Affairs from the UAMS College of Medicine to provide materials for their visits to college and university campuses to recruit for UAMS. The Dean of the COPH has also presented information about the MPH, MS, MHSA, Certificate, and doctoral degree programs to the Directors of the eight Area Health Education Centers (AHECs), which represent over 620 practicing health professionals.

IX.A.1.f Recruitment through Alumni

In 1993, UAMS and its AHEC program signed a cooperative agreement with the Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine to develop an MPH program for delivery in Arkansas. This UAMS/Tulane program admitted its first students in 1995 and was the predecessor for the UAMS Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health. The COPH maintains a relationship with Tulane University/UAMS MPH graduates, agreeing to include them as honorary alumni. This group of 70 alumni expresses a strong sense of identity with the program. The COPH has held a series of focus groups with students who graduated both from Tulane University through the Arkansas satellite program and from the COPH to establish an alumni association that incorporates and encompasses interests of both groups. This new Alumni Association is planning in 2006-2007 to initiate a recruitment program in which they will speak annually, within their representative regions to at least one community, business or academic setting about the opportunities provided by careers in public health, the COPH, and the value of an MPH Degree.

IX.A.1.g Recruitment Brochure

A professional-quality, tri-fold, full-color brochure has been produced to explain what public health means, to convey the Vision and Mission Statements of the COPH, and to inform potential students of the community-based participatory research focus of the COPH.

IX.A.1.h COPH Website

The COPH website features faculty profiles, academic programs, research projects, student events, news articles, and other important information for dissemination to prospective students. The website contains a resource page for easy inquiry concerning the COPH. The website is located at <http://www.uams.edu/coph>.

IX.A.1.i Toll-Free Telephone Number

A toll-free telephone number facilitates inquiries from throughout the state and is used by prospective students throughout the state and region.

IX.A.1.j MASH Program

The Medical Applications of Science for Health (MASH) Program operates out of the UAMS Office of Regional Programs. This summer program offers students of high-school age a hands-on program to learn about health professions and careers. The COPH Student Services Coordinator and Student Recruiter present information about public health careers at each MASH meeting. Moreover, the COPH and Arkansas State University (ASU) collaborated on a Sound Partners grant to educate students at 27 Northeast Arkansas high schools about health careers in demand in their rural region. The COPH coordinated radio interviews with 17 health professionals and students at UAMS and ASU and produced a web-based curriculum for the high school health teachers to supplement the radio segments promoting public health careers. The URL is www.nearhealthcareers.org.

IX.A.1.k Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Program

The COPH provides a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate program, which is an 18-credit-hour introduction to the core areas of public health knowledge, consisting of the six Master of Public Health core courses. This provides a foundation in public health sciences that can be particularly valuable to experienced public health practitioners who have not had significant formal public health training. Many students who enroll in the Post-Baccalaureate Certificate program elect to continue on into the Master of Public Health (MPH) program. Through the certificate program, these predominantly non-traditional students demonstrate to themselves that they can perform well in graduate courses and thereby develop an interest in one or more of the public health sciences. Currently 34 students have transitioned from the Post-Baccalaureate Certificate program to the MPH degree program.

IX.A.2 Statement of admissions policies and procedures

IX.A.2.a Policies

The admissions policies for the MPH and the Post-Baccalaureate Certificate programs were developed by the Curriculum Subcommittee, which met during the early phase of the development of COPH academic programs. These policies were then ratified by the inaugural faculty in July 2001, forwarded to the UA Board of Trustees and the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE), and approved by both bodies in the fall of 2001. Students were first admitted under these policies beginning in January 2002. Admissions policies for the DrPH were established by the DrPH Working Group and subsequently approved by the Dean's Executive Council (DEC) in June 2003, and then by the UA Board of Trustees and the ADHE in December 2003. Admissions policies for the MHSA program were established by the MHSA faculty when the program first developed at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock more than 27 years ago and approved by the UA Board of Trustees and the ADHE. As the MHSA program transferred to the COPH in fall 2006, admissions are being collaboratively managed by the COPH Admissions Director and the MHSA Coordinator. Admissions policies for the MS in Occupational and Environmental Health and PhD in Health Systems Research are determined by UAMS Graduate School policy.

Admission Requirements for the Master of Public Health Program, the Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Program in Public Health, and the Non-degree seeking Students in the College of Public Health

A completed application form with all required transcripts, a \$40 application fee, curriculum vitae or resume, and other documentation must be received by the COPH Director of Admissions and Alumni Affairs by April 1 for applicants seeking admission for full-time or part-time study in the

following fall semester or by October 1 for admission in the following spring semester. The general requirements to complete an application to the COPH's Post-Baccalaureate Certificate program include the following:

- Baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university (official transcript transmitted from the registrar of the undergraduate institution).
- Personal statement or letter of interest (500–700 words).
- Applicant telephone interview completed and transcribed by a member of the COPH Student Services staff (see Appendix IX.A for a sample telephone interview guide).
- Three letters of recommendation from persons who may be contacted for academic and professional references.
- A minimum score of 600 on the paper-based examination, 250 on the computer-based examination, or 100 on the internet-based examination on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) for all international applicants, including resident and nonresident aliens, whose native language is not English and who do not have an undergraduate degree from a regionally accredited U.S. college or university. The test must have been taken within the two years immediately preceding the requested semester of admission. An original copy of the test score, sent by the testing agency to the COPH, is required before any action is taken on an application. A copy of the score provided to the student and subsequently forwarded to the COPH is not acceptable.

Additional Admission Requirements for the Master of Public Health Program

In addition to the requirements for the Post-Baccalaureate Certificate listed above, applicants to the MPH program must supply proof (within the last five years) of having taken the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), and score attained. In some circumstances, and subject to approval from the Student Admissions Committee, scores on a comparable graduate test will be considered. Applicants who have completed a master's or a doctoral degree or the Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Public Health program are exempt from the GRE requirement. Students may be considered for conditional admission.

Additional Admission Procedures for Non-degree seeking Students in the College of Public Health

The COPH Director of Admissions and Alumni Affairs must receive all application materials listed above for the Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Program and fee no later than one week before the date listed in the campus academic calendar for registering with the COPH for the semester in which a student seeks to enroll.

Non-degree seeking students are allowed to enroll in courses on a space-available basis once all degree candidates have been placed on the class roster. A student who has not been accepted in a program of study leading to a specific COPH certificate or degree may take no more than 12 semester hours of COPH coursework that can be counted toward the requirements for a COPH certificate or degree. At the time of acceptance into a COPH certificate or degree program, the Academic Standards Committee will recommend to the College which courses previously taken, if any, are to be accepted in the certificate or degree program. To convert one's status from non-degree seeking to degree-seeking, a student must complete an application to the desired degree program by submitting all of the required documentation by the appropriate deadline.

Admission Requirements for the MS in Occupational and Environmental Health

The following materials must be received by the UAMS Graduate School in order to be considered for the MS in Occupational and Environmental Health:

- UAMS Graduate School application form; official transcripts from each college or university attended with evidence of successful completion of undergraduate courses in mathematics, chemistry (general and organic), physics, and biology. For an outstanding candidate certain prerequisite requirements may be completed after admission to the program; and proof (within the last five years) of having taken the GRE and score attained.

In addition to the requirements above, international applicants must also submit:

- A minimum score of 550 on the paper-based or 213 on the computer-based TOEFL for all international applicants whose native language is not English and who do not have an undergraduate degree from a regionally accredited U.S. college or university. The test must have been taken within the two years immediately preceding the requested semester of admission. An original copy of the test score, sent by the testing agency to the UAMS Graduate School, is required before any action is taken on an application. A copy of the score provided to the student and forwarded to the Graduate School is unacceptable.
- A Summary of Experience Form (may substitute current curriculum vitae or resume); three letters of reference; documentation of financial means.

Admission Requirements for the MHSA in Health Services Administration (MHSA)

As of Fall 2006, the MHSA Program formerly offered through University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) officially became a COPH program. In preparation, the MHSA Advisory Transition Team (MATT) was formed and began meeting in November 2005. This team is comprised of the College of Public Health's Director of Admissions and Alumni Affairs, COPH Registrar and Administrative Advisor, MHSA Program Executive Assistant, and the MHSA Coordinator for External Programs. The meeting minutes are forwarded to the Chair of the MHSA Program and the COPH Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for review. The team meets biweekly addressing the following topics: admissions (including physical transition of files and applications from UALR); admissions issues for international students; registration; graduate assistantships; recruiting/Website; and alumni affairs.

Admission Requirements for MHSA as a College of Public Health Program

The requirements for completing an application for admission to the MHSA as a COPH program are as follows:

- Completed COPH Application form
- Official transcripts sent directly from every institution attended (GPA minimum 2.75/4.0 scale, or 3.0 in last 60 hours)
- Official GRE or GMAT scores (minimum of 1,000 for GRE and 550 for GMAT on combined verbal & quantitative scores)
- Current resume with contact information for two references
- Personal Statement or Letter of Interest (500-700 words)
- \$40 Application fee

As these materials are received, COPH Student Services creates the application file and makes contact with the applicant via email of all received and outstanding items. Student Services flags these MHSA files with an orange sticker for ease in locating them in the general COPH admission file cabinet. MHSA staff have complete access to these files for copying and processing, with the original file to be maintained and returned in its entirety to the general COPH admissions file cabinet.

Admission Requirements for the DrPH Program

The requirements for completing an application for admission to the DrPH program are as follows:

- Official transcript(s) showing grades earned, dates, and award of undergraduate degree(s).
- Official transcript(s) showing grades earned, dates, and award of MPH or related masters degree(s) (or terminal clinical/doctoral degree) from a regionally accredited U.S. college or university.
- Official transcript(s) showing completion of at least one graduate-level course in each of the following five areas:
 - Biostatistics
 - Epidemiology
 - Health Behavior/Health Education
 - Health Management/Policy
 - Environmental/Occupational Health

The above-listed courses must have been completed and passed with a grade of “B” or better. Applicants who have completed only four (4) of these courses but whose applications show exceptional potential for success in the DrPH program may be admitted conditionally to the DrPH program; however, they will be required to complete the remaining course (as presented in the COPH core course requirements for the MPH degree) with a grade of “B” or better before progressing to the Public Health Sciences and Public Health Practice Cores of the DrPH program. Individuals who have completed three (3) or fewer of the above-listed courses will not be considered for admission to the DrPH program.

- Four letters of recommendation from persons who may be contacted further for academic and professional references, at least one of whom must be a current or recent (within the past two years) work supervisor.
- Official scores from the GRE, MCAT, LSAT, GMAT, PCAT, or DAT, taken in the last five years. An original copy of the test score must be received from the testing agency by the COPH before any action will be taken on an application. The requirement for completion of the GRE will be waived for applicants who hold a doctoral degree. A copy of the score provided to the student and subsequently forwarded to UAMS is not acceptable.
- The requirement for current GRE scores may be waived at the discretion of the DrPH Admissions Committee. Applicants must petition for the waiver in writing by November 1st of the year prior to the relevant February 1st admissions application deadline. The petition to waive requires a statement of justification accompanied by all official academic transcripts and current resume/curriculum vitae to be submitted to the Director of Admissions. Applicants should be advised that waivers are not typically granted; thus, they are strongly encouraged to prepare for the GRE while the waiver petition decision is pending.
- A minimum score of 600 on the paper-based examination, 250 on the computer-based examination, or 100 on the internet-based examination on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) for all international applicants, including resident and nonresident aliens, whose native language is not English and who do not have an undergraduate degree from a regionally accredited U.S. college or university. The test must have been taken within the two years immediately preceding the requested semester of admission. An original copy of the test score, sent by the testing agency to the COPH, is required before any action is taken on an application. A copy of the score provided to the student and subsequently forwarded to the COPH is not acceptable.
- Personal statement or letter of interest (500–700 words).
- Personal interviews and a writing sample (obtained on-site during an interview day with current DrPH faculty and students).
- A \$40 application fee.
- A current curriculum vitae or resume.

Admission Requirements for the PhD in Health Systems Research

Individuals desiring admission to the Ph.D. Program in Health Systems Research (HSR) must ensure that the following materials are sent to the UAMS Graduate School Office by the application deadline:

- A fully completed application form for the UAMS Graduate School.
- Two official copies of the applicant's academic record sent directly to the Graduate School Office from each college or university that the applicant has previously attended. The academic record should include all courses, grades, credits attempted, and degree(s) earned.
- Scores from the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) taken within five years immediately preceding the requested semester of admission.
- A curriculum vitae or resume.
- A personal statement (500-700 words) describing and substantiating their areas of research and policy interest.
- Four (4) letters of recommendation from persons who may be contacted for academic and professional references.

The following additional application materials and criteria will apply to international applicants:

- All international applicants, including resident and non-resident aliens, whose native language is not English and who do not have a bachelor's or master's degree from a regionally accredited U.S. institution, are required to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) within two years immediately preceding the requested semester of admission and submit their score as part of the application materials. Applicants must achieve a minimum score of 550 on the paper-based written test or a minimum score of 213 on the computer-based version of the examination. The program may petition the Dean of the Graduate School, on behalf of the applicant, to consider an exception to this requirement based on the program's interaction with the student.
- All international applicants are required to take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) taken within five years immediately preceding the requested semester of admission. The program has the option to petition the Dean of the Graduate School on behalf of the applicant to substitute other official test scores on a case by case basis.
- All international applicants who are in the U.S. in a non-resident alien status must have documentation of an appropriate status with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Applicants who are currently out of status with the USCIS will have no action taken on their application.
- Students who are not U.S. Citizens must have on file at all times in the Graduate School Office current documentation of an appropriate status with the USCIS. Individuals who are out of status with the USCIS will be denied initial enrollment, and individuals who become out of status during a period of enrollment will be denied future enrollment.

Additional Admissions Requirements for the PhD in Health Systems Research

A. Graduate Degree

Applicants must have received an M.P.H. or related graduate degree (e.g. M.P.A., M.B.A., M.D., J.D.) prior to entry into the HSR program, along with some relevant experience in health policy or health services. Applicants are required to describe and substantiate their areas of research and policy interest in a personal statement as part of their application in order to ensure a close match between student interests and faculty expertise.

B. Transcripts and Grade Point Average

A minimum cumulative grade-point average of 2.85 (A=4.00) or better on all undergraduate and graduate coursework attempted at a regionally accredited institution of higher education is required for admission. Should an applicant fail to meet this requirement, the program may petition on behalf of the applicant the Dean of the Graduate School to consider an exception to this requirement.

C. Graduate Record Examination

A combined score of 1200 on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is required. The GRE must have been taken within five years immediately preceding the requested semester of admission. Programs may petition the Dean of the Graduate School, on behalf of the applicant, to consider an exception to this requirement. In light of the program's emphasis on quantitative research methods, considerable emphasis will be placed on the GRE quantitative score.

IX.A.2.b Procedures

The Admissions Committee continuously evaluates and makes recommendations concerning any changes in current admissions criteria and methods. Since 2003, the Admissions Committee has been in place to examine student admissions policies and procedures. The charge for this committee is to review, refine, and update admissions standards along with collecting data concerning the performance of the students (in MPH, Post-Baccalaureate Certificate, and non-degree programs). This committee makes recommendations to the Academic Standards Committee and the Dean's Executive Committee regarding needed revisions when applicable to the admissions policies and procedures, with the goal to ensure that admissions policies are as closely related as possible to data regarding predictors of student success.

Admissions Procedures for Post-Baccalaureate Certificate and MPH Programs

Students are admitted to the COPH on a college-wide basis, rather than a specific department. The procedures for accepting students into the COPH were established before November 2001, and reviewed and adopted by the first Admissions Committee. Modifications of admissions policies are reviewed and voted on by the COPH Admissions Committee. This Admissions Committee is chaired by the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and consists of a faculty representative from each department and two MPH students in good standing.

Applications. Applications for admission are reviewed twice a year, in April for fall entrants and in October for spring entrants.

Admissions Review. The first members of the Admissions Committee developed a scoring algorithm based on the data that applicants provided in their application portfolios. This algorithm provides a range of possible points that varies for each component of the admission requirements (e.g., academic performance has a maximum of 40 points; the personal statement has a maximum of 15 points; the telephone interview has a maximum of 10 points). In September 2003, descriptive anchors for each component score were developed, to provide guidance to Committee members with regard to what scores represent "exceptional," "very good," "good," "fair" and "poor" performance. Individual Committee members review each application and provide scores on each component, which are then entered into the COPH database.

Identifying Information. Applicant name, address, gender, age/birth date, and race/ethnicity are removed from all application materials prior to review by any Admissions Committee member. However, if an Admissions Committee member believes that he or she recognizes the identity of an applicant despite the "blinding" of the application, the Committee member may recuse him- or herself from that application's review. The COPH invites Committee members to schedule time during a designated 2-3 week period after the application deadlines (April 1 and October 1) to

review and score the applications. Members' scores are then averaged for each applicant. After completion of the review, students' applications are ranked according to average cumulative score, with Social Security numbers (SSNs) used as identifiers. The Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs then review the data to evaluate the scoring and to determine whether the majority of reviewers agreed on the students to be admitted. SSNs are then matched to student names to generate acceptance and rejection letters from the Dean. Only students who have not yet completed their baccalaureate program but anticipate a January or May graduation are provisionally admitted. Otherwise, students are either fully admitted or not accepted.

Admission Procedures for MS in Occupational and Environmental Health

The Admissions Committee for the MS degree is composed of three faculty members in the program; the Graduate School forwards application packets to the Admissions Committee as they are completed. The MS degree program uses a rolling admissions process; applications are reviewed as they are received, and students are admitted by a consensus vote of the MS Admissions Committee.

Admissions Procedures for MHSA in Health Services Administration

As of Fall 2006, the Master of Health Services Administration (MHSA) Program, previously offered through UALR, became a COPH program. MHSA has a rolling admissions process, with no deadlines for applicants. When the admissions file is complete, the MHSA faculty meets to review the candidate. This review includes telephone contact with the two listed references, and, if feasible, a face-to-face interview with the candidate. If not feasible, a telephone interview is conducted. The applicant is notified via written letter of their acceptance or denial to the program. The letter is generated by MHSA staff with a copy placed in the student's official admission file in the COPH Office of Student Services.

Admission Procedures for DrPH Program

The first DrPH students in the COPH were admitted in January 2004. The DrPH Admissions Committee is currently composed of the Director of the DrPH program with a faculty representative from each of the five departments within the College. The Committee has defined a two-stage procedure for the DrPH application review. In the first stage of review, each Committee member reviews the applications, after which the DrPH Admissions Committee meets as a group to discuss the applications and identify (by review number) a maximum of 15 applicants (and up to five alternates, ranked in order of preference) to be invited to participate in the second stage of review. During the second stage of review, the selected applicants are invited to come to the UAMS campus to complete a series of individual interviews with a subset of DrPH Admissions Committee members and to provide an on-site writing sample. If any of the initially selected applicants decline the invitation to interview, alternates can be invited (in ranked order) to participate. After interviews and writing samples are completed, the DrPH Admissions Committee reconvenes to discuss and determine the candidates to be admitted (up to a maximum of six to eight per year). An additional two candidates can be identified as alternates, at the discretion of the DrPH Admissions Committee. Lists of applicants who are recommended for admission are then presented to the Dean for official letters of offer.

Admissions Procedures for PhD in Health Systems Research (HSR)

The HSR Program Admissions Committee is comprised of a minimum of 5 faculty members who hold faculty appointments in the UAMS College of Public Health and in the UAMS Graduate

School. Committee members are appointed by the HSR Program Director with approval from the Department Chair. Committee members review blinded copies of application materials with identifying personal information removed in order to facilitate objective assessments. Each committee member will be charged with reviewing all applications; however, a primary and secondary reviewer will be assigned to each application. These reviewers will be charged with summarizing the applications to which they have been assigned and leading discussion of these applications at a meeting of the admissions committee.

Prior to the admissions committee meeting, each committee member will rate each application using a nested set of six criteria listed below:

- Academic preparation and performance
 1. Evidence of quantitative and analytical ability (20%)
 2. Evidence of writing/verbal ability (15%)
- Research and professional interests
 1. Clarity of research interests and reasons for pursuing the degree (15%)
 2. Program capacity to support research interests (20%)
- Depth of experience in health policy and health services/systems (15%)
- Diversity of background (15%)

The HSR Admissions Committee will use the criteria weights above as a guide but will consider the sum total of the applicant's work, educational experience, research experience, recommendations, and other application data in making recommendations for admission. The committee will not allow a single factor to dominate others in the admission decisions. Based on the criteria ratings, committee members will attempt to reach a consensus recommendation on each application using one of the following options:

- Admit the applicant
- Hold the applicant pending results from an interview and/or other requested information
- Deny admission with recommendation to re-apply during the next application cycle
- Deny admission

If consensus cannot be reached, a vote of the committee membership will be used to select the recommendation. In the event of a tied committee vote, the HSR program director or HPM department chair will cast the deciding vote.

To ensure an appropriate match between applicant interests and faculty expertise, the HSR program director will discuss each applicant recommended for admission with individual members of the HSR program faculty who work in the area(s) of interest expressed by the applicant. Each applicant recommended for admission must be matched with a program faculty member who has the interest and ability to serve as the applicant's faculty advisor. If the program director fails to identify an appropriate faculty advisor, the HSR admissions committee must reconsider the admissions recommendation.

Recommendations from the admissions committee will be reviewed and approved by the department chair, and then transmitted to the UAMS Graduate School for processing. Admitted applicants will be notified by mail by the UAMS Graduate School.

IX.A.3 Examples of recruitment materials and other publications and advertising that describe, at a minimum, academic calendars, grading, and the academic offerings of the school. The most recent catalog must be included. References to website addresses may be included.

The COPH website can be found at: <http://www.uams.edu/coph>. Additional materials are also provided in appendices to this document: recruiting brochures used by the COPH (see Appendix IX.B), the most recent five-year academic calendar (see Appendix IX.C), the course catalog (see Appendix V.A), student handbook (see Appendix IX.D), and the application forms (see Appendix IX.E).

IX.A.4 Quantitative information on the number of applicants, acceptances, and admissions, by program area over the last three years

This information is provided in Table IX-1. Data from the MS degree in Occupational and Environmental Health program and PhD in Health Systems Research are tracked by the UAMS Graduate School. The Graduate School compiles quantitative information on its programs' students in five-year aggregate reports. The latest report to the Graduate School by the MS in Occupational and Environmental Health is included in the Resource File.

IX.A.5 Quantitative information on the number of students enrolled in each degree program identified in Criterion V.A, including a head count of full-time and part-time students and a full-time equivalent conversion, over the last three years.

The COPH admits students to the MPH through a centralized process. Upon completion of 12 hours of coursework most MPH students select an area of specialization. Students who have not selected a specialty track are counted as MPH undecided students. Information on the number of enrolled students by degree program, specialty track, and year is provided in Table IX-2. As described in Section IX.A.4, above, information on students in the MS program is provided in the Resource File. Currently, eight students are pursuing their MS degree: four females, four males, seven White students and one Black student.

Table IX-1. Program Area Applicants, Acceptances, and Admissions by Ethnic Group and Race

	Academic Year 2003–2004			Academic Year 2004–2005			Academic Year 2005–2006		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
DrPH DEGREE									
Applicants									
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
African American/Black	0	3	3	0	2	2	1	2	3
Asian or Pacific Islander	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1
Hispanic/Latino	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	1	1	2	2	5	7	4	7	11
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total Number of Applicants	1	4	5	3	7	10	6	10	16
Accepted									
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
African American/Black	0	2	2	0	1	1	0	0	0
Asian or Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hispanic/Latino	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	1	0	1	1	1	2	1	4	5
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Number Accepted	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	4	5
Admissions									
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
African American/Black	0	2	2	0	1	1	0	0	0
Asian or Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hispanic/Latino	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	1	0	1	1	1	2	1	3	4
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Number Admitted	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	3	4
MPH DEGREE									
Applicants									
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	2
African American/Black	0	9	9	1	11	12	3	9	12
Asian or Pacific Islander	3	2	5	1	4	5	1	0	1
Hispanic/Latino	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	7	21	28	11	20	31	3	24	27
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	2	7
Total Number of Applicants	10	33	43	14	36	50	13	36	49
Accepted									
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
African American/Black	0	2	2	1	3	4	2	4	6
Asian or Pacific Islander	2	1	3	1	3	4	1	0	1
Hispanic/Latino	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	6	17	23	8	14	22	2	12	14
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total Number Accepted	8	21	29	10	20	30	5	18	23
Admissions									
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
African American/Black	0	2	2	1	3	4	2	3	5
Asian or Pacific Islander	2	1	3	1	3	4	1	0	1
Hispanic/Latino	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	4	14	18	7	13	20	0	12	12

	Academic Year 2003–2004			Academic Year 2004–2005			Academic Year 2005–2006		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total Number Admitted	6	17	23	9	19	28	3	16	19
NONDEGREE-SEEKING STUDENTS									
Applicants									
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0	0	2	2	4	0	1	1
African American/Black	0	10	10	2	10	12	3	14	17
Asian or Pacific Islander	2	4	6	2	1	3	1	2	3
Hispanic/Latino	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
White	10	30	40	6	27	33	8	26	34
Other	0	2	2	0	0	0	4	0	4
Total Number of Applicants	12	46	58	12	40	52	16	44	60
Accepted									
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0	0	2	1	3	0	1	1
African American/Black	0	9	9	1	8	9	3	14	17
Asian or Pacific Islander	2	4	6	0	1	1	1	1	2
Hispanic/Latino	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
White	9	28	37	3	26	29	6	25	31
Other	0	2	2	0	0	0	4	0	4
Total Number Accepted	11	43	54	6	36	42	14	42	56
Admissions									
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	1	1
African American/Black	0	9	9	0	9	9	4	14	18
Asian or Pacific Islander	1	4	5	0	1	1	1	1	2
Hispanic/Latino	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
White	8	27	35	4	26	30	6	23	29
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Total Number Admitted	9	40	49	6	36	42	12	40	52
Total Number Admitted To All Programs	20	66	86	17	58	75	20	64	84

Table IX-2. Numbers of Students Enrolled in Each Degree Program (Including Specialty Tracks) by Head Count and FTE*

Degree Program	Academic Year 2003-2004			Academic Year 2004-2005			Academic Year 2005-2006		
	Full Time	Part Time	FTE	Full Time	Part Time	FTE	Full Time	Part Time	FTE
MPH (Generalist)	2	7	6.78	2	10	7.56	3	9	8.01
MPH (Biostatistics)	2	3	4.28	0	4	1.50	1	3	2.51
MPH (Environmental and Occupational Health)	0	3	1.67	0	3	1.49	0	1	0.33
MPH (Epidemiology)	5	15	15.45	1	19	9.42	0	11	3.82
MPH (Health Behavior/Health Education)	3	8	8.59	1	12	6.50	3	9	7.50
MPH (Health Policy and Management)	0	15	9.23	2	14	7.84	0	11	5.35
MPH (Maternal and Child Health)**	1	6	4.88	0	3	1.66	1	2	1.50
MPH (Undecided)	0	6	4.88	0	9	4.33	3	16	10.02
DrPH (Leadership)	0	3	1.33	0	6	4.84	1	8	6.52

* Student FTE is calculated based on the number of credit hours taken by a given student in Fall and Spring of the academic year, divided by 18 (the total number of hours that equals full-time status across the academic year – 9 hours for each semester). Thus, a student who enrolls in 12 hours across the Fall and Spring semesters is counted as .66 FTE; a student who enrolls in 18 hours is counted as 1.0 FTE.

** Students who had completed a substantial portion of the requirements for the MPH in the Maternal and Child Health specialty before June 2005 were permitted to finish their studies in the specialty; however, no new students were permitted to elect the specialty after this time, and students who had just begun taking courses in the specialty switched to another specialty or the generalist track.

IX.A.6 Identification of outcome measures by which the school may evaluate its success in enrolling a qualified student body, along with data regarding the performance of the school against those measures over the last three years.

The measures that the COPH tracks to evaluate our success in enrolling a qualified student body include the following: overall enrollment figures (see Table IX-1) and average undergraduate GPA for admitted students (Table IX-3).

IX.A.7 Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

The COPH meets this criterion. The COPH is engaged in active outreach throughout the state utilizing a variety of mechanisms to locate and select qualified students. From recruitment efforts, the student body enrollment has increased by 19.5%, and diversity of the college is enriched by having a student body in which 34% identify as minority students. Ninety-two percent of the student body is employed, bringing relevant work values into the classroom as well as interests for advancing their public health careers. Students range in age from 22 to 62 with 35% over the age of 40, thereby bringing pertinent life experiences and related values into the academic and practice

setting. As the only public health degree program at the only academic health center campus in the state, the COPH enjoys the advantage of attracting the state's brightest students with an aptitude toward health professions and a desire to work with health issues in a population-based setting. It is an inherent expectation that the scholastic quality of the student body will continue to increase due to the rigorous refinement and evaluation of the admissions process.

- ▶ **CRITERION IX.B: STATED APPLICATION, ADMISSION, AND DEGREE-GRANTING REQUIREMENTS AND REGULATIONS SHALL BE APPLIED EQUITABLY TO INDIVIDUAL APPLICANTS AND STUDENTS REGARDLESS OF AGE, SEX, RACE, DISABILITY, RELIGION, OR NATIONAL ORIGIN.**

Table IX-3. Average Undergraduate GPA for Admitted Students by Semester of Admission

Semester	Number of Students Admitted	Average GPA
Fall 2003		
MPH	14	3.39
Spring 2004		
MPH	7	3.12
DrPH	2	3.50
Fall 2004		
MPH	20	3.51
DrPH	3	3.05
Spring 2005		
MPH	10	3.16
Fall 2005		
MPH	16	3.41
DrPH	5	3.32
Spring 2006		
MPH	7	3.28

MPH, all MPH degree program students; DrPH, all DrPH program students.

IX.B.1 Description of policies, procedures, and affirmative action plans to achieve a diverse student population.

In admission procedures, reviewers of the MPH and Post-Baccalaureate Certificate applications and reviewers of the first (pre-interview) phase of the DrPH applications are blinded to all applicant information, including name, race, and sex. This policy has been in place since the admission of inaugural students to ensure fairness in the admissions process.

The COPH, as part of UAMS, adheres to UAMS policies concerning nondiscrimination in hiring and promotion of faculty and staff and in interactions with students. These policies include an antidiscrimination policy, a policy on compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and a sexual harassment policy, all of which are found in the UAMS Administrative Guide (<http://www.uams.edu/ohr/policies/index.html>). The nondiscrimination and sexual harassment policies are printed in the COPH Student Handbook (see Appendix IX.D).

The COPH adopted a policy statement specific to students with disabling conditions, setting forth a procedure for requesting accommodations. The policy statement is contained in the COPH Student Handbook and included in every course syllabus. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs is responsible for assisting faculty in implementing this policy in the classroom.

As stated in the COPH Plan for Recruitment and Retention of Minorities and Female Personnel and Students (see Appendix IX.F), the minimum goal is to recruit and train students and faculty who are representative of the diversity of Arkansas' population; ideally, because of the COPH's focus on racial and ethnic health disparities, our goal would be to exceed these proportions. Strategies to achieve our goals include the work of the Minority Recruitment and Retention Committee, which contacts individuals in minority groups and encourages their interest in the field of public health. The COPH has developed a working relationship with the Office of Minority Affairs in the College of Medicine. When staff members of that office make recruitment visits to high schools and colleges throughout the state, they distribute COPH program materials.

IX.B.2 Quantitative information on the demographic characteristics of the student body, including data on applicants and admissions, over the last three years.

Table IX-1 details quantitative data on the demographic characteristics of the COPH student body over the last three years. Table IX-4 shows the wide age span of COPH students.

Table IX-4. Gender Distribution of Enrolled Students

Gender	Academic Year 2003–2004	Academic Year 2004–2005	Academic Year 2005–2006*
Male	35 (21%)	36 (22%)	41 (24%)
Female	130 (79%)	127 (78%)	127 (76%)
Total	165	163	168

* Excludes data from Summer 2005-2006.

Table IX-5. Age Distribution of All Enrolled Students

Age Range	Academic Year 2003–2004	Academic Year 2004–2005	Academic Year 2005–2006*
20–29	57 (35%)	58 (36%)	61 (36%)
30–39	43 (26%)	48 (29%)	49 (29%)
40–49	42 (25%)	31 (19%)	34 (20%)
50–59	20 (12%)	24 (15%)	23 (14%)
60+	3 (2%)	2 (1%)	1 (1%)
Total	165	163	168

* Excludes data from Summer 2005-2006.

Table IX-6. Number and Percentage of Enrolled Students with Hometowns in each of the Arkansas AHEC Regions, and Employed by COPH Partners

	Academic Year 2003–2004	Academic Year 2004–2005	Academic Year 2005–2006*
AHEC REGION (HOMETOWN)			
Central	53 (32.1%)	56 (34.4%)	57 (34.0%)
South Central	27 (16.3%)	22 (13.5%)	25 (14.9%)
North Central	13 (7.8%)	14 (8.6%)	17 (10.1%)
Northeast	10 (6.0%)	8 (5.0%)	7 (4.1)
Northwest	7 (4.2%)	3 (1.8%)	4 (2.4%)
Southwest	6 (3.6%)	3 (1.8%)	3 (1.8%)
Delta	3 (1.8%)	3 (1.8%)	3 (1.8%)
South	7 (4.2%)	5 (3.1%)	5 (3.0%)
Hometown is out of state	39 (24%)	49 (30%)	47 (27.9%)
Total	165	163	168
COPH PARTNER (PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT AT ENROLLMENT)			
ADEQ	2 (1.2%)	2 (1.2%)	2 (1.2%)
DOH	38 (23.0%)	29 (17.8%)	25 (14.9%)
State Legislature	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.6%)
MHC	1 (0.6%)	1 (0.6%)	1 (0.6%)
UA system	63 (38.2%)	80 (49.1%)	80 (47.6%)
Tobacco Commission	1 (0.6%)	1 (0.6%)	1 (0.6%)
Other	60 (36.4%)	50 (30.7%)	58 (34.5%)
Total	165	163	168

ADEQ, Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality; DOH, Arkansas Department of Health & Human Services, Division of Health; MHC, Minority Health Commission; UA, University of Arkansas.

*Excludes data from Summer 2005-2006.

Table IX-5 details the gender distribution of enrolled students. The COPH has been very successful in recruiting and retaining a highly diverse student body. In fact, it ranks first among UAMS colleges in proportion of minority students.

IX.B.3 Identification of measures by which the school may evaluate its success in achieving a demographically diverse student body, along with data regarding the school’s performance against these measures over the last three years.

In addition to diversity with respect to race, sex, and age (see Tables IX-1, IX-4, and IX-5), the COPH monitors geographic diversity by tracking the proportion of students who enroll from each of the state’s Area Health Education Center regions. When out-of-state students begin to enroll, the COPH will track the proportion of students enrolling from each state. Because a significant part of the COPH’s mission is to assist in public health workforce development, the COPH monitors the proportion of enrolled students employed by the DOH and other major partners (Table IX-6).

Because the COPH is committed to maintaining a high degree of racial diversity within the College, with the ideal goal that the proportion of minority students in the College exceeds that of the state overall, we benchmark our data against other surveys, including the most recent U.S. Census data for the state of Arkansas and the most recent data from member schools of the Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH) (Table IX-7).

Table IX-7. Racial Diversity Among Actively Enrolled Students in the COPH, the State of Arkansas (per U.S. Census), and the ASPH Student Census (rounded to the nearest whole)

Race/Ethnicity	COPH–2006	Arkansas–2000	ASPH–2004
African American	25 %	16 %	12 %
American Indian	1 %	1 %	1 %
Asian	6 %	1 %	12 %
Hispanic	2 %	3 %	9 %
White	66 %	79 %	66 %
Total	100%	100%	100%

IX.B.4. Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

The COPH meets this criterion. The COPH has the most diverse student body of any college on the UAMS campus. The student body reflects and exceeds the diversity of the state's population. From our inception, the COPH has made student recruitment from minority populations a priority and has met or exceeded our goals. The need to demonstrate relevance to the citizens of the state is often judged by the overall number of students enrolled in a program or college. The COPH has shown a clear upward curve in our enrollment since January 2002. In addition, the COPH enjoys significant geographic and age-related diversity within our student population and is serving our major partners, including the DOH.

- ▶ **CRITERION IX.C: THERE SHALL BE AVAILABLE A CLEARLY EXPLAINED AND ACCESSIBLE ACADEMIC ADVISING SYSTEM FOR STUDENTS, AS WELL AS READILY AVAILABLE CAREER AND PLACEMENT ADVICE.**

IX.C.1 Description of the advising and counseling services, including sample orientation materials such as student handbooks.

IX.C.1.a New Student Orientation

New student orientation sessions are held at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters and coordinated by the Director of Admissions and Alumni Affairs. The current orientation is laid out much like a traditional “job fair.” Students are given time to visit each exhibitor, obtain a student identification card, and attend a welcome session with the Dean and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. The participating campus departments are Campus Police, Student Housing, UAMS Library, UAMS Fitness Center, COPH Office of Community-Based Public Health, COPH Student Council, COPH Honor Council, Arkansas Public Health Association, UAMS Information Technology and Creative Services (Media Support). During orientation, COPH Student Services distribute the COPH Student Handbook (see Appendix IX.D), required forms for completion including insurance, HIPAA, and confidentiality forms.

IX.C.1.b Student Advising

The COPH uses a two-tiered advising system. In this system, each student benefits from the expertise of an administrative advisor, as well as from a faculty advisor or faculty advisory committee (depending on the student’s program of study).

Administrative Student Advisor

The Academic Standards Committee proposed the position of Administrative Student Advisor in early 2003 as the size of the student body continued to grow, in the interest of providing consistent information for students regarding COPH policies and procedures, thereby allowing faculty advisors to focus on assisting students with course selection, and curriculum and career planning. The Administrative Student Advisor works with all COPH students regardless of their degree program. The role of the Administrative Student Advisor is (a) to provide students with consistent and accurate information regarding COPH policies and procedures that pertain to student performance and promotion, (b) to assist MPH students in selecting a generalist or specialist focus, and (c) to provide general advice regarding courses (e.g., course description, prerequisites, etc.) and curricula (e.g., courses required in certain specialty tracks, preceptorship, and integrative experience requirements, etc.). As with any member of the Dean’s Office staff, the Administrative Student Advisor may serve as an initial contact for student concerns and directs students, as needed, to faculty members or members of the Dean’s Office staff for in-depth assistance. The Administrative Student Advisor works with the Dean’s Office Staff to ensure that the most accurate information is consistently conveyed to all COPH students. Currently, the Registrar and Assistant Dean for Student Affairs share the duties of the Administrative Student Advisor.

Faculty Advisors

Because of the strong interdisciplinary focus of the generalist MPH and the DrPH, students in these programs have the opportunity to work with an advisory committee. The generalist MPH students work with three faculty members (who represent at least two public health disciplines and at least two of whom must be Public Health faculty). The DrPH students have one primary advisor and

have the opportunity to attend monthly DrPH Leadership Committee meetings for additional guidance, as well. In these two programs, students may select their primary advisor, and then work with him or her to select the other members of their advisory committee. Students in specialist tracks within the MPH program select a single faculty advisor within the appropriate discipline. The role of Faculty Advisor is to provide students with guidance in selecting courses and developing a curriculum plan that meets COPH requirements, as well as students' personal and professional goals. Faculty Advisors also assist students in identifying preceptorship and integrative experiences, and in selecting appropriate faculty mentors for those courses.

Other Student Advising Services

Career Counseling. Career counseling is largely a function of student–faculty interaction in coursework, practica, and faculty advising. Faculty members directly model a broad variety of practice patterns within the COPH. This offers unique chances for students to learn about career options. The same may be said for the many practitioners whom students meet outside the COPH during field placement. In addition to this network of informal interactions and settings, the COPH co-sponsors six-eight monthly public health conferences that provide students exposure to a wide variety of presentations depicting work in the public health arena. Finally, the COPH maintains information about public health-related jobs and opportunities, and posts this information on the COPH website and student bulletin boards located outside the Office of Student Services and inside the COPH student lounge.

Arkansas Health Careers Manual. The Arkansas Health Careers Manual is a comprehensive resource guide provided by the UAMS Regional Programs to the College of Public Health's Office of Student Services. It provides information on more than 75 health-related careers, including work activities, work settings, educational or special requirements, and is accompanied by the 2002-2007 Health Workforce Vacancies in Arkansas document. This document contains a section specific to public health careers including environmental health specialists, epidemiologists, health services administration, allied health, and public health educators.

Alumni and Career Fairs. As described in section IX.A.1.f., the COPH Alumni Association, composed of alumni from the UAMS/Tulane program and from the COPH, has recently been formed and has become active in recruitment activities. In addition, alumni are planning to participate in career fairs sharing their professional experiences and job roles with students in the MPH program.

Office of Educational Development. The Office of Educational Development (OED) offers academic support services to students at no charge, including workshops in learning skills, preparing for tests, time management, and study strategies. In addition, OED staff members assist students in identifying an OED staff member or peer tutor for course-specific tutoring as needed.

Personal Counseling. Personal counseling is available to students through three venues: the UAMS Wellness Program, Pastoral Care Services, and Student Mental Health Services. The UAMS Wellness Program provides students with the opportunity (a) to investigate their own personal values; (b) to experience a variety of cultural and intellectual programs that encourage an appreciation of diversity and the arts; (c) to learn more about practical health-related issues to enhance their own lives, and the lives of patients or colleagues; and (d) to learn that while healthy lifestyles and choices are a personal responsibility and decision, health care providers and researchers have a responsibility to be positive role models. Pastoral Care Services are available to students for personal or spiritual counseling or referrals to local spiritual communities or congregations. Student Mental Health Services is a preventive service created to provide short-term, confidential assistance for UAMS students.

IX.C.2 Information about student satisfaction with advising and counseling services.

Student comments and questions regarding advising and counseling services are typically directed to the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Negative feedback is typically received in the form of an oral complaint, which receives an immediate response. In 2003-2004 the COPH initiated an annual exit survey for new graduates. The measure assesses the level of satisfaction regarding the Office of Student Services' quality of assistance specific to the Registrar, Admissions Office, and Administrative Advising. The overall mean was 1.0 on a five-point Likert-type scale (with one being the highest level of satisfaction). Additional data evaluated the Office of Student Services' adequacy as a career/employment services resource. A mean of 2.5 was tabulated which represented a response of "Neutral" to "Somewhat Satisfied" indicating the need to enhance resources in this domain (section IX.C.1.b. describes those efforts). Surveys for 2005-2006 are currently being compiled. As additional needs for improvement have been identified, the staff is undertaking an extensive "customer service quality improvement" initiative. In 2006-2007, the Office will develop an extensive survey specific to student and faculty satisfaction to be administered each spring semester beginning in 2007. The survey will be used to identify priorities for quality improvement, initiation of new services, or deletion of unused services.

IX.C.3 Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

The COPH meets this criterion. Available student services are functioning well and provide students with comprehensive guidance during their time as COPH students. As evidenced above, at enrollment students have access to advisors who are knowledgeable about the programs of study and the curricula. Exit surveys of new graduates indicate high satisfaction with most student services, and moderate levels of satisfaction with career services, which are now being expanded. A goal for the COPH during the 2006–2007 academic year is to initiate an annual survey of current students and faculty to determine what adjustments or improvements need to be made. The COPH plans to maintain this proactive approach providing high quality support to applicants, students, and faculty.

► CRITERION IX.D: STUDENTS SHALL, WHERE APPROPRIATE, HAVE PARTICIPATORY ROLES IN CONDUCT OF SCHOOL AND PROGRAM EVALUATION PROCEDURES, POLICY-SETTING, AND DECISION-MAKING.

IX.D.1 Description of student roles in evaluation of school and program functioning.

IX.D.1.a Course Evaluation

The COPH adapted a course evaluation form during the first semester of operation, relying on documents provided by UAMS, the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR), and the University of Central Arkansas (UCA). During the 2004-2005 academic years, the COPH convened a work group of students and faculty to develop recommendations on upgrading the evaluation process, which voted to move to the on-line system currently in use by the College of Pharmacy and the College of Medicine. CAIRO, Course and Instructor Ratings On-line, is a system for defining and conducting Web-based course and instructor evaluations. It is designed to create, schedule, administer, and report on course and instructor evaluations. The evaluations are Web-based with development and refinement on-going. Major features of CAIRO include the ability to: 1) create course, instructor, and combined course/instructor evaluations by means of templates; 2) pre-define standard core evaluation items with the ability to add user-defined items; 3) provide a list of over 170 researched optional items which can be used in templates; 4) provide a standard response scale

for each item; 5) provide templates that can be used repeatedly to implement different evaluations; 6) provide scheduling of evaluations based on defined date ranges; 7) provide e-mail messages that are automatically sent to students based on their course enrollment, describing the evaluations and the time frames to complete them; 8) provide a built in report module to avoid tedious data collection and manipulation; 9) provide a user-friendly system that can be used by designated office personnel; and 10) provide security provisions to define specific permissions for designated staff and preserve student anonymity. The standard course/instructor evaluation and the list of 170 optional items are provided in Appendix VIII.C.

Beginning in Spring 2004-2005, the COPH used CAIRO to administer course evaluations on-line. The evaluations are conducted anonymously at the end of a semester and data from the evaluations are forwarded to the Office of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, who coordinates the evaluation process. Copies of the compilations of the course evaluations are provided to the Dean, Department Chair and the faculty member for the course. Individual course evaluations are provided in the Resource File.

IX.D.1.b Self-study Review Committee

One student and two alumni served as members of the Self-study Review Committee to both review and provide input to the self-study document. Committee members were asked to agree to be a primary reviewer of at least one criterion and a secondary reviewer of as many as two additional criteria. All criteria were distributed to Committee members; in addition to thorough feedback received from primary and secondary reviewers, feedback was also solicited from all members for each criterion. Student members of the Review Committee are full voting members. (The Self-study Review Committee is described further in Section X.B.2.)

IX.D.1.c DrPH Working Group and Leadership Committee

One active COPH student and two individuals who had self-identified as likely DrPH applicants served on the DrPH working group charged with developing the COPH's DrPH program in Public Health Leadership (see Criterion V.F for a full discussion of the program). These individuals were full voting members of the working group and served on the Curriculum and the Infrastructure Subcommittees. Currently, the DrPH Faculty Leadership Committee consists of eight faculty members representing each Department in the COPH. After fall 2006, when DrPH students are anticipated to complete their first comprehensive examination, a DrPH student will be elected to serve on the Leadership Committee.

IX.D.2 Description of student roles in governance, as well as in formal student organizations.

IX.D.2.a Student Leadership within COPH

Student Council

Since 2003, the COPH Student Council annually implements the following: recruits members; elects officers; solicits fundraisers; provides a "Meet and Greet Fall Mixer;" sends the President to APHA; helps staff the exhibit at APHA; selects awards for the Outstanding Student, Outstanding Student Leader, and Outstanding Faculty Member; assists each semester with the New Student Orientation Day; and helps prepare for the commencement luncheon. The 2005-2006 Student Council officers planned and promoted a text book exchange program augmented by a book exchange bulletin board in the student lounge. Additionally, one volunteer service project will be implemented each semester beginning in the 2005-2006 academic years and will be continued for each year thereafter. In fall 2005, the Student Council partnered with the UAMS Staff Nurse Advisory Council to assist

Hurricane Katrina evacuees living in Arkansas; and in spring 2006 volunteered its service to the La Casa Health Network, a community-based public health organization by staffing a health fair that included health appraisals and health screenings of community participants.

Honor Council

The COPH Honor Council is composed of five COPH students, two student alternates elected by the student body, and two faculty appointed by the Dean. Violations of the Honor Code are brought before the Honor Council according to its By-Laws; the decisions of the Honor Council in response to violations are implemented by the Office of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and may be appealed to the Dean. The Honor Council has implemented an extensive education program, meeting with most MPH core courses during the first week of each semester to review the Honor Code and answer any questions that students may have. The Council also coordinates a “Tip of the Month” email that focuses on a specific question related to academic integrity and is distributed to all students and faculty. In addition, the Honor Council coordinated a survey that assessed knowledge of the Honor Code among students in Fall 2005. The survey revealed that most students had a good understanding of the Honor Code, but identified some areas of confusion that have been emphasized by Honor Council members during its classroom presentations. The results of the survey were presented by the Honor Council President and faculty liaison at the 2005 national meeting of the Center for Academic Integrity.

Student Membership on Governance Committees

Students also serve on several of the standing committees in the governance structure of the COPH. These committee memberships are defined in the College’s Governance (Appendix III.A). Up to two students may be elected by the Student Council to serve on the Academic Standards Committee each year, and a minimum of one and maximum of two students are appointed as members of the Admissions Committee each year. The Student Council may, at its option, annually elect two members to the Research Committee. These students provide input related to policy setting and decisions regarding the management of the COPH.

IX.D.2.b. Student Leadership on the UAMS Campus

House of Delegates

Students are elected and serve in the UAMS House of Delegates, the representative body on campus composed of students, faculty, and staff, which serves as the voice of employees and students to the Chancellor.

Associated Student Government Council

Student representatives are elected annually to serve on the Associated Student Government Council. The council meets monthly to advise the UAMS administration on matters such as health insurance coverage, student activities, and events.

IX.D.3 Assessment of the extent to which this criterion is met.

The COPH meets this criterion. Students in the COPH serve on major committees that develop policies and programs in the COPH, specifically the Academic Standards Committee, the Research Committee, and the Admissions Committee. In addition, students serve on and self-govern two representative bodies that have decision-making authority within specific areas of the COPH: the Student Council and the Honor Council.