

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

ACCREDITATION REPORT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
MASTER OF HEALTH ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

Action Requested: Receive the accreditation report from the College of Public Health's Master of Health Administration Program at the University of Iowa.

Executive Summary: The Master of Health Administration (MHA) Program (1) underwent a self-study that addressed the criteria defined by the accrediting body; and (2) had an on-site visit by peer evaluators. The Program was accredited for a period of six years. However, six out of 45 criteria were only partially met. The accrediting body requires that all criteria be fully met within two years of the accreditation action; the first progress report is due by February 1, 2007.

Background:

- ◇ **Description.** The MHA program provides graduates with a comprehensive understanding of patient-centered health care as well as the skills needed to understand complex administrative and management systems.
- ◇ **Accrediting Agency.** The accrediting body is the Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME).
- ◇ **Review Process.** The self-study prepared by the Master of Health Administration Program contained the responses to the appropriate criteria required by the accrediting body – program, mission, goals, objectives, and performance; students and graduates; teaching and curriculum; and faculty, research, and service.
- ◇ **On-Site Team Report.** In November 2005, the visiting team determined that the Master of Health Administration Program met 39 of the 45 criteria elements required by CAHME.
- ◇ **Sample Strengths Identified by the Visiting Team.**
 - ☑ “The program is to be commended for working to develop a collegial relationship between Tippie College of Business faculty and MHA faculty, which has facilitated MHA student enrollment in business school courses.”
 - ☑ “The faculty of the department have developed a superior record of accomplishment with regard to both scholarly publication and external funding of projects. Research is conducted in many areas relevant to health services delivery and policy and appears to be expanding over time.”
 - ☑ “Faculty of the department are actively involved in projects and with external units such as committees, boards, and commissions that directly contribute to the improvement of the health and well being of the residents of Iowa as well as the nation.”

- ◇ Sample Concerns Identified by the Visiting Team.
 - ☑ “The lack of a plan to address minority student enrollment limits the program’s ability to generate an applicant pool of qualified individuals sufficient to provide diversity in the student population.”
 - ☑ “There is substantial overlap between the content in the data and decisions course in the College of Business and the biostatistics course in the College of Public Health.”
 - ☑ “The program does not ensure that all MHA students are able to obtain sufficient meaningful applied experiences that enable them to apply critical thinking and problem solving skills as well as management knowledge and skills.”

- ◇ Institutional Responses to Concerns Identified by the Visiting Team.
 - ☑ Student diversity. “Both the department and the college have established specific targets in their strategic plans for diversity of faculty and students. The college created an associate dean for diversity position to direct the college’s Diversity Committee which is charged with developing a formal plan for achieving diversity.”
 - ☑ Course syllabi. “The department is working closely with the business school and the biostatistics and epidemiology faculty to ensure that everyone understands the need for explicit behavioral objectives and session by session topics.”
 - ☑ Curriculum evaluation. “Arrangements with the departments of epidemiology and biostatistics to provide course evaluations have been finalized. The department is working with the College of Business to provide course evaluations for the MHA required courses beginning in Spring 2006.”
 - ☑ Managing information. “The overlap between the data and decisions course in the College of Business and the biostatistics course in the College of Public Health is being resolved. The department is reviewing all non-financial quantitative courses to strengthen the content. The review and restructuring will address the content overlap. The review will also determine the appropriate core requirements for non-financial quantitative courses to achieve consistency for all MHA plans of study.”
 - ☑ Faculty diversity. “During the search for a new department head, women and minority candidates have been sought. The department anticipates recruiting several additional faculty with a strong emphasis on women and minorities. The department has an endowed scholarship program for female health management students which has funded seven scholarships; the department recently received a bequest to endow a chair that will focus on women’s health issues.”

- ◇ Best Practice cited by Visiting Team. “The program has adopted an innovative approach to student career development in the form of an executive-in-residence program.”

- ◇ Accreditation Status. In April 2006, the Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education awarded accreditation to the Master of Health Administration Program for six years¹.

This report addresses the following objective in the Board’s Strategic Plan – “offer high-quality programs through ongoing program improvement for undergraduate, graduate, professional, and non-degree students and special school students” (1.1.).

Details about the accreditation report are available in the Board Office.

¹ The maximum period possible is eight years.