June 27, 2016

Max Michael, MD
Dean
University of Alabama at Birmingham
School of Public Health
1530 3rd Ave., South
RPHB 140G
Birmingham, AL 35294-0022

Dear Dean Michael:

On behalf of the Council on Education for Public Health, I am pleased to advise you that the CEPH Board of Councilors acted at its June 15-18, 2016 meeting to accredit the School of Public Health at the University of Alabama at Birmingham for a seven-year term, extending to July 1, 2023 with an interim report to be submitted in spring 2017. The interim report must address the criteria for which there was a "partially met" assessment.

Specifically, the interim report due in spring 2017 should provide evidence that the school has:

a) Developed distinct sets of competencies for MPH, DrPH, MSPH and PhD concentrations rather than selecting competencies from a single department-based list for the departments of epidemiology and health care organization and policy. (Criterion 2.6)

b) Implemented plans to incorporate faculty assessment of students' abilities to demonstrate competencies in addition to student self-assessment. (Criterion 2.7)

c) Implemented a process to regularly collect and monitor data on employer perceptions of graduates' abilities to perform competencies in the workplace. Initial data should be presented. (Criterion 2.7)

The report will be due on May 10, 2017. Please be aware that failure to come into compliance with all accreditation criteria must trigger specific actions on CEPH's part. These actions, mandated in federal regulations governing accrediting agencies that are recognized by the US Department of Education, include initiating adverse action or, if good cause is demonstrated, extending by one year the period during which the program or school may come into compliance with the remaining criteria, after which CEPH must take adverse action. CEPH is required to deny or revoke accreditation when a school or program fails to demonstrate that it has come into compliance. Thus, interim reports have serious consequences. Additional information about preparing interim reports is available on the CEPH website.

We are enclosing a copy of the Council's final accreditation report. The report is also being transmitted to the chief executive officer of your university as the Council's official report. This differs from the team's report that you received prior to our meeting in several areas.

- The Council updated language in Criterion 1.6 (Fiscal Resources) to reflect information in the school's response to the site visit team's report.

- The Council changed the finding for Criterion 2.4 (Practical Skills) from partially met to met and updated language in this section. This change reflects the Council's review of information in the school's response.
- The Council updated language in Criterion 2.6 (Competencies) to reflect information in the school's response.
- The Council updated language in Criterion 2.7 (Assessment) to reflect information in the school's response.
- The Council updated language in Criterion 3.2 (Service) to reflect information in the school's response.
- The Council updated language in Criterion 4.4 (Advising & Career Counseling) to reflect information in the school's response.

I would call your attention to the disclosure provisions in our adopted procedures. The school is expected to make its official accreditation report available to the public on request 60 days following the accreditation decision. ***The school may make the report and final self-study available in full on its website, or it must clearly indicate on the website how to request a copy of either document.*** See p. 29 of the *Accreditation Procedures, amended September 2014* for additional information.

You may append a written response whenever you distribute the report. The official report also will be available on request from CEPH after 60 days, but it is our intent to refer all initial requests to you. If you provide this office with a copy of a written response by August 1, 2016, we will be pleased to append it whenever we respond to a request for the report. Please note that this response is optional.

We would also like to remind you that whenever an accredited school or program undergoes a substantive change, it is obligated to provide written notification to CEPH of the intended change. Substantive changes are defined in the procedures manual, but generally include offering a new degree, adding or discontinuing an area of specialization, offering a degree program in a different format or at a distant site and making major revisions to the curricular requirements. Additional information about substantive changes is available on our website.

We appreciated the many courtesies and helpfulness extended to the site visit team.

Sincerely,

Donna J. Petersen, MHS, ScD, CPH
President

Enclosure

cc: CEPH Councilors

REVIEW FOR ACCREDITATION

OF THE

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

AT THE

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

COUNCIL ON EDUCATION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

SITE VISIT DATES:
December 14-16, 2015

SITE VISIT TEAM:
Patricia Nolan, MD, MPH, Chair
Darcell Scharff, PhD
Randolph Wykoff, MD, MPH & TM

SITE VISIT COORDINATOR:
Nakita J. Kanu, MPH

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Introduction

This report presents the findings of the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) regarding the School of Public Health at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). The report assesses the school's compliance with the *Accreditation Criteria for Schools of Public Health, amended June 2011*. This accreditation review included the conduct of a self-study process by school constituents, the preparation of a document describing the school and its features in relation to the criteria for accreditation and a visit in December 2015 by a team of external peer reviewers. During the visit, the team had an opportunity to interview school and university officials, administrators, teaching faculty, students, alumni and community representatives and to verify information in the self-study document by reviewing materials provided in a resource file. The team was afforded full cooperation in its efforts to assess the school and verify the self-study document.

UAB is one of three institutions that comprise the University of Alabama System. UAB was established as an extension of the University of Alabama in the mid-1930s and became an autonomous university in 1966. As of fall 2014, student enrollment was nearly 18,700, and faculty and staff exceeded 20,200. The university offers 51 baccalaureate programs, 51 master's programs and 40 doctoral programs through one college (arts and science) and 10 schools (business, dentistry, education, engineering, health professions, medicine, optometry, nursing, public health and the Graduate School).

In 1976, a joint Department of Public Health was formed between the School of Medicine and the School of Community and Allied Health Resources, and the UAB graduate program in public health and epidemiology was housed in the School of Medicine. The UAB School of Public Health was established in 1978. The school remained a joint venture until 1981 when the Board of Trustees designated it as an independent entity.

The school was initially accredited by CEPH in 1978. Its last accreditation review was in 2008 and, based on that review, the Council granted an accreditation term of seven years, with a required interim report in 2010 related to the practice experience for MPH and DrPH students and the curriculum for academic degree students. The Council accepted the 2010 interim report as evidence of compliance with the accreditation criteria.

Characteristics of a School of Public Health

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

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

b. **The school and its faculty shall have the same rights, privileges and status as other professional schools that are components of its parent institution.**

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

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

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

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

These characteristics are evident in the UAB School of Public Health. The school is located in a regionally accredited university and has the same rights and privileges as other professional schools on campus. The school has a planning and evaluation process that is inclusive, timely and focused on public health research, teaching and service.

The school's faculty are trained in a variety of disciplines, and the centers, research partnerships and joint degree options ensure that the environment supports interdisciplinary collaboration. The school's degree programs are organized with an ecological perspective, and faculty and student connections with public health practitioners and local community members ensure that the school fosters the development of professional public health concepts and values. The school has a clearly defined mission with supporting goals and objectives.

The school has adequate resources to offer the MPH degree in the five core areas of public health knowledge and doctoral degrees in at least three areas. The school offers additional bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in public health.

1.0 THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH.

1.1 Mission.

The school shall have a clearly formulated and publicly stated mission with supporting goals, objectives and values.

This criterion is met. The school is currently operating under its strategic plan developed in 2011 for the period 2011-2016. The dean and the Executive Committee drafted the plan, and it was then reviewed by internal and external stakeholders. After responding to input, the school distributed the revised strategic plan to faculty, staff, students, alumni and stakeholders via a web-based survey; additional input was used to further revise the plan. The faculty approved the final strategic plan in spring 2012. The school's mission is as follows:

> To create, disseminate and apply scientific knowledge to improve public health in Alabama by nurturing a diverse community of outstanding scholars.

The self-study presents a set of goals and objectives that elaborate on the mission. The school has identified five goals related to education, research, service, resource development and a positive environment in which to live, learn and work. The school has two to six objectives associated with each goal.

In 2014, school leaders decided that both internal changes (eg, initiating a bachelor's degree and two fully online MPH programs) and external changes (eg, declining NIH funding and challenges in balancing teaching and research enterprises) were sufficient to require a new strategic plan.

The Executive Committee is leading the 2016-2020 strategic planning process and has involved representatives from academic and research programs. The committee has also included individuals who can share ideas about service and diversity and has engaged the student body and the faculty as a whole. Focus groups met to discuss goals and objectives and a monitoring plan. The school was in the midst of revising the goals and objectives for 2016-2020 at the time of the site visit. External stakeholders were reviewing a final draft, which was widely available, at the time of the site visit.

The site visit team confirmed that the current strategic planning process has followed the same processes used in previous years. The public health practice community is reached through the Broad Street Committee and the Alabama Department of Health. The ongoing process of strategic planning at the school demonstrates its commitment to monitoring and responding to the internal and external

environments in public health research and practice, recognizing the impact of change on the needs of students and on the capacity of faculty to respond and to advance knowledge and practice.

1.2 Evaluation and Planning.

The school shall have an explicit process for monitoring and evaluating its overall efforts against its mission, goals and objectives; for assessing the school's effectiveness in serving its various constituencies; and for using evaluation results in ongoing planning and decision making to achieve its mission. As part of the evaluation process, the school must conduct an analytical self-study that analyzes performance against the accreditation criteria.

This criterion is met. The school's process for evaluating progress on its mission, goals and objectives is well defined, with the dean, department chairs and various associate and assistant deans having specific responsibilities for monitoring and responding to needs for change. A variety of data sources are available for major areas, including academic reporting, surveys and faculty activity reports. The school has robust data for key areas of evaluation and uses a deliberative process to identify needed program changes. For larger strategic issues, the dean appoints a task force or a work group to gather information, consult with others and develop a plan, which is then reviewed by faculty and others.

The development of objectives emerged as a particular area of concern during the monitoring process. The school's evaluation process also identified weaknesses in linking student and alumni data, and the school has been working to integrate the systems to remedy this problem and to improve the reach and response rates of monitoring surveys.

Based on strategic monitoring of the 2011-2016 goals and objectives, the school accelerated its strategic planning cycle. External events, particularly a major tornado in 2011 and changes in university leadership, interrupted the capital campaign. Tension developed between the teaching and research missions of the school as state and federal funding sources also declined and faculty vacancies developed. At the same time, the undergraduate public health program grew significantly, and several graduate programs expanded. The school's 2016-2020 strategic planning process is addressing these issues; it began in fall 2014 and is now in its final phase.

After the strategic plan for 2016-2020 is approved, the school will create an evaluation plan for tracking objectives. The first step will be to name an evaluator for goals and objectives who will set up the process and identify the data for evaluating the outcomes. Then the evaluation plan will be reviewed through a group process.

The self-study process began with the working group appointed in August 2013. The critical review of the vision, mission, goals and objectives continued on a parallel course with the 2016-2020 strategic planning process. The process included comments on drafts from faculty, staff, students and the larger public

health community and formal review by the Alabama Department of Public Health, the Broad Street Committee, alumni and community leaders. Recommendations have been incorporated throughout the process.

<h2 style="text-align:center">1.3 Institutional Environment.</h2>

The school shall be an integral part of an accredited institution of higher education and shall have the same level of independence and status accorded to professional schools in that institution.

This criterion is met. UAB is one of three institutions comprising the University of Alabama System. UAB offers 51 baccalaureate, 51 master's and 40 doctoral academic programs through one college and 10 schools. UAB is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) to award bachelor's, master's, specialist and doctoral degrees. The most recent review occurred in 2015, and UAB was awaiting results at the time of the site visit. The university's degrees in nursing, dentistry, health professions, medicine and optometry are accredited through their respective accrediting bodies.

According to the organizational chart and confirmed during the site visit, the school enjoys equal status to all other schools and colleges in the university. All deans report directly to the provost with regard to faculty and academic matters. The provost reports directly to the UAB president. The provost indicated that the university is very supportive of public health, especially given that the school provides a strong set of programs and a productive research portfolio. In particular, she indicated that she believes the new undergraduate degree in public health will bring even more collaboration and synergy with the other health degrees offered at UAB.

The School of Public Health dean participates as a full member in the Council of Deans that reports to the provost. The dean controls the school's budget, which is an amount appropriated to each school or college by the provost and president based on state funding, tuition and fees and grants and contracts.

The school complies with UAB policies regarding recruitment, selection and advancement of personnel. It is allowed considerable autonomy with regard to these issues as long as processes remain in alignment with the academic mission. The UAB Faculty Senate develops and updates policies and procedures on faculty recruitment, retention, selection and advancement. The provost told site visitors that the university policies and procedures are developed to assure that new faculty can be successful. The recruitment process for faculty involves department chairs, a search committee and staff to assure compliance with university policies. Changes in rank and tenure can be initiated by the chair or the faculty member and presented to the school's Faculty Affairs Committee, which in turn provides its recommendations to the dean. Recommendations are then provided to and approved by the UAB president. Chairs are responsible for evaluating faculty, and the dean approves the results. The dean has the authority to appoint associate and assistant deans as well as chairs. He is authorized to change the administrative

structure of the school. For example, he recently created the position of the assistant dean for undergraduate programs.

Staff are recruited by supervisors. The dean reviews all requests for new staff positions and submits them to the provost for final review and approval. Staff members are reviewed annually by their supervisor, and this review forms the basis for merit increases.

The school's Faculty Assembly approves and terminates academic programs as well as courses via the Educational Policy Committee. The Committee on Admissions and Graduation has been delegated by the Faculty Assembly to determine admissions and graduation criteria. The provost confirmed that each school is at liberty to make the admissions criteria more stringent than that defined by the university. The academic degrees (MS, MSPH and PhD) are managed by the UAB Graduate School. The Graduate School also sets standards for academic standing to which all degrees adhere.

1.4 Organization and Administration.

The school shall provide an organizational setting conducive to public health learning, research and service. The organizational setting shall facilitate interdisciplinary communication, cooperation and collaboration that contribute to achieving the school's public health mission. The organizational structure shall effectively support the work of the school's constituents.

This criterion is met. The school has five departments, each representing one of the core public health knowledge areas. Each is led by a department chair who is appointed by the dean. In addition, the school supports five centers, which are approved by the Board of Trustees. The centers conduct interdisciplinary teaching, research and service, and each has its own mission, budget and director.

The dean is the chief executive officer of the school. Associate and assistant deans, department chairs, center and office directors and the directors of development, finance and administration and diversity, equity and inclusion report directly to the dean. Collectively, the deans and directors are responsible for academic affairs, faculty affairs, administration, alumni affairs, research, student affairs and finance; however, the dean is ultimately responsible for the oversight of the school's operations. In addition, the Broad Street Committee, which includes members of the corporate, civic, academic and public health communities, reports to the dean in an advisory capacity. It provides counsel to the dean related to new programs and communicates and advances the school's goals and objectives within the broader community. A representative of the Broad Street Committee told site visitors that the committee was highly involved in the development of the school's Hero Award, Edge of Chaos program and a speaker series.

The associate dean for academic affairs and strategic programs leads all academic and strategic programs in the school. The associate dean for science develops and promotes all aspects of research

services and support. The assistant dean for undergraduate education is responsible for all aspects of the BS degree. The Office of Public Health Practice is a relatively new office that provides a connection between the practice community and the school. The Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion assures a diverse faculty, staff and student body as well as processes for retention. The director of administration and finance works closely with the dean to develop a budget and conduct financial forecasting used in planning. The director of development and alumni is responsible for alumni relationships, corporate and foundation donations and fundraising events. The director of student and academic services manages student recruitment, admissions, financial aid, graduate academic record, graduation and orientation.

The departments are responsible for the administration of academic programs. They are highly decentralized, and the chairs oversee the budget, teaching, research and service activities within departments. Chairs conduct annual reviews of all faculty and biannual reviews of those on the tenure track. Chairs also write evaluations of progress toward promotion and tenure.

The university and the school strongly support interdisciplinary collaboration. Several faculty have joint appointments with other academic units in the university, and both the school and university encourage and support joint research efforts. For example, public health faculty and students are involved in university-wide centers, such as the Lister Center for Health Policy. UAB received funding in 2008 for a Center for Translational Science, and the school is integrated into the community engagement, biostatistics and training components of the center. The school is involved in UAB's teaching improvement strategies, including Learning in a Team Environment and learning simulations, which cross colleges and schools. The school offers 21 dual degree programs with other schools at the university including business, medicine, nursing and optometry.

1.5 Governance.

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

This criterion is met. Bylaws, policies and procedures guide governance of the school and are developed and revised through inclusive procedures that involve faculty, staff, community and students, as appropriate. Governance within the school is conducted through approximately 10 standing committees.

The Leadership Team consists of the dean, associate and assistant deans, department chairs and director of finance and administration and is responsible for advising the dean regarding administrative policy development and implementation.

The Executive Committee comprises the dean, department chairs, chair of the faculty and other members of senior leadership as ad hoc members and advises the dean on issues and policies related to administration, budgeting and resource allocation, compensation and planning and evaluation policies and procedures.

The Admissions and Graduation Committee monitors compliance with established policies and procedures for admissions and graduation for all degrees within the school. The committee consists of one faculty member from each of the five academic units.

The Educational Policy Committee of the Faculty Assembly is responsible for approving new courses, tracks and degrees as well as modifications of existing courses and degrees. The committee consists of one faculty member from each of the five academic units and one student.

The Faculty Affairs Committee develops and reviews the criteria for appointment, promotion and tenure and evaluates proposals for the appointment, promotion and/or tenure of faculty, which are based on the university promotion and tenure guidelines and enhanced by the school. The committee consists of one faculty member from each of the five academic units and three at-large faculty members.

The Faculty Assembly consists of all members of the faculty with primary appointments within the school. The chair of the Faculty Assembly is elected from the school's primary faculty for a three-year term.

The Faculty Council represents and is empowered to act in the stead of the Faculty Assembly when the majority judges that this should be done. The council consists of an elected chair and five additional members, each representing one of the departments.

The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is responsible for developing and implementing school-wide strategies to promote diversity, equity and inclusion among faculty, staff, students and the local community. The director is advised by the Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, which includes faculty, staff and student representation from all departments.

The Public Health Student Association (PHSA) supports the growth of the student experience in terms of advocacy and leadership development. All students enrolled in the school are members of the PHSA; however, none of the students who participated in the site visit reported involvement. Nine officers are elected from the student body. Students are often invited by the dean to provide input into school issues or policies. Students sit on faculty search committees.

The Undergraduate Program Oversight Committee serves in an advisory capacity for the public health undergraduate degree program.

Other committees include the Online Committee, MCH Student Association for Graduate Education and the UAB Global Health Interest Group.

The dean, Faculty Assembly and Executive Committee are responsible for general policy development at the school. The dean, with advice and consent of the Executive Committee, develops general administrative policies and procedures. All policies relevant to the curriculum are the responsibility of the Faculty Assembly through standing committees (Educational Policy Committee and Faculty Affairs Committee).

The school's Executive Committee has final responsibility for school planning with involvement of faculty, staff, students, community members and alumni. The dean reports annually to the provost and president regarding the school's accomplishments, assessment procedures and evaluation activities to ensure coordination with UAB's strategic plan.

The dean is responsible for the budget and allocation of resources after consultation with the director of finance and administration and the Executive Committee. Budget allocation is guided by the school's budgeting policy that addresses the distribution of all funds (state allocation, tuition and fees and indirect cost recovery) to departments and the Dean's Office. Funds are divided based on principles of productivity and costs based on consumption of resources. Because revenues are linked to admissions, there is strong incentive to develop and maintain quality programs. Additionally, this budget allocation system encourages departments to compete for extramural funding that supports teaching, research and service.

The associate dean for academic affairs and strategic programs is responsible for student recruitment, admissions and awarding of professional degrees. Oversight for these activities is provided by the Office of Student and Academic Services. The Admissions and Graduation Committee of the Faculty Assembly recommends and develops admission policies for these programs.

The UAB Faculty Senate sets guidelines for recruitment, retention, promotion and tenure of faculty. The school has augmented these policies, which are outlined in the Policies and Procedures for Faculty Search and the bylaws of the Faculty Affairs Committee. Research and service expectations of faculty are outlined in the criteria for appointment and promotion in the bylaws of the Faculty Affairs Committee.

Academic standards and policies are developed and reviewed by the Educational Policy Committee and confirmed by the Faculty Assembly. New or modified academic programs and new courses are also approved by the Educational Policy Committee. The associate dean for academic affairs and strategic programs is charged with assuring compliance with all academic policies.

Faculty are well represented on university committees ranging from the Faculty Senate to ad hoc committees. Students are represented on the Educational Policy Committee, the Undergraduate Committee and the Broad Street Committee.

During the site visit, community members and alumni said that they have opportunities to provide input into the school concerning academic programming. One representative said that the school listens and responds to the community's ideas and puts them in place.

1.6 Fiscal Resources.

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

This criterion is met with commentary. Despite several years of declining budgets, the school currently has sufficient resources to fulfill its mission. The school's budget, shown in Table 1, is based on four major sources and two minor sources: 1) state funding; 2) tuition and fees; 3) grants and contracts; 4) indirect cost recovery; 5) endowments; and 6) gifts. University funding is allocated according to a university-wide formula that is administered by the president and provost. The provost defines the formula as a variation of a responsibility-centered management (RCM) system where a percentage of tuition, indirect cost recovery and state dollars go to the relevant school or college. The budget model for the university is currently under review, and the long-term impact of any potential changes has not yet been determined. The provost reported that she anticipates that the new model will be another variation of an RCM with, perhaps, a greater percentage of earned revenue going to each school but accompanied by increased redistribution for such items as scholarships, space, libraries and related items.

The total revenue for the school has decreased fairly consistently over the past few years, decreasing from $54.2 million in 2006 to a low of $40.9 million in 2015 (a 24.5% reduction). In the past three years, total revenue has decreased from $50.3 million to $40.9 million (an 18.7% reduction). During the same time period, expenditures decreased from $45.6 million to $37.2 million (an 18.5% reduction).

Table 1. Sources of Funds and Expenditures by Major Category, 2008 to 2014

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Source of Funds							
Tuition & Fees	$2,691,000	$2,726,000	$3,837,000	$3,630,000	$3,156,000	$3,016,000	$3,526,000
State Appropriation/UAB Funds	$7,731,000	$6,170,000	$5,745,000	$5,791,000	$5,575,000	$5,296,000	$5,296,000
Grants/Contracts	$27,406,000	$30,555,000	$32,797,000	$34,245,000	$35,999,000	$29,544,000	$30,637,000
Indirect Cost Recovery	$3,965,000	$3,857,000	$4,346,000	$4,058,000	$4,645,000	$4,479,000	$3,849,000
Endowment[1]	$943,000	$901,000	$478,000	$402,000	$572,000	$570,000	$1,054,000
Gifts	$113,000	$190,000	$292,000	$269,000	$337,000	$890,000	$794,000
Total	**$42,849,000**	**$44,398,000**	**$47,495,000**	**$48,395,000**	**$50,284,000**	**$43,795,000**	**$45,157,000**
Expenditures							
Faculty Salaries & Benefits	$13,164,000	$13,139,000	$13,968,000	$15,444,000	$15,886,000	$15,978,000	$15,462,000
Staff Salaries & Benefits	$13,720,000	$12,821,000	$13,773,000	$14,413,000	$14,265,000	$14,332,000	$17,910,000
Operations/Travel	$8,932,000	$12,051,000	$11,363,000	$11,087,000	$13,098,000	$7,653,000	$4,493,000
Student Support	$1,922,000	$1,843,000	$2,100,000	$2,011,000	$1,893,000	$1,695,000	$1,718,000
University Tax[2]	$319,000	$190,000	$413,000	$431,000	$445,000	$481,000	$1,985,000
Total	**$38,057,000**	**$40,045,000**	**$41,618,000**	**$43,385,000**	**$45,587,000**	**$40,140,000**	**$41,568,000**

[1] According to the dean, endowment funding is fairly stable year-to-year and is reliant on two major gifts. The reported decrease is related to incomplete year reporting.

[2] The university imposed a special 10% tax on school reserves in 2014.

According to the leadership team, the major underlying budgetary challenge facing the university (and the school) has been driven by reductions in state appropriations. The provost and the school leadership said that state support is now stable, though further reductions are possible. The leadership team also acknowledged that the school was too highly leveraged on external research dollars. The school is now seeking new external sources of funding including industry, the Department of Defense, the National Science Foundation and others.

Given the level of state appropriations, for several years now the Executive Committee has discussed and attempted to determine the appropriate size of the faculty. From committee members' experience, having 91 total faculty members (2013) pushed the requite percentage of extramural salary coverage to a level considered too high given the school's expectations for quality teaching, service, public health practice, and community engagement. With this experience in mind, the number of full-time primary faculty members was strategically allowed to decrease (largely through retirements and faculty leaving for leadership positions) seeking a more "reasonable" required school-wide average salary coverage through extramural funding. With the number of faculty now at 68, The Executive Committee determined that with growth of the teaching mission (expansion of the undergraduate and online programs) the faculty could be carefully expanded relying partially on increased tuition and fees to support further growth. The School's 2016-2020 Strategic Plan was modified to reflect a goal of 75 full-time primary faculty members.

UAB has three years left in a $1 billion capital campaign and has recently hired a director of development. According to the provost, approximately $650 million has been raised and it will go to university-wide scholarships, endowed chairs, academic buildings and research support.

The recently-added undergraduate programs are associated with uncertain budgetary implications, though the school leadership and the provost both report that the returned revenue has been more than enough to support the added teaching requirements. At the time of the site visit, there was no mechanism to limit enrollment growth, and the undergraduate coordinator stated that she does not believe that enrollment should be limited. To date, the undergraduate coordinator has been able to buy out 12.5% of faculty time for each undergraduate course taught, and this has been sufficient to support the added teaching responsibilities.

The school has identified four objectives through which it assesses the adequacy of its fiscal resources: tuition and fees as a percentage of total revenue budget; extramural funding as a percentage of total revenue budget; growth in gift income; and student support per FTE. The self-study provides data for 2013 and 2014; most measures show increases from 2013 to 2014. However, gift income decreased in 2014.

The commentary relates to uncertainties associated with the changing financial environment. State appropriations have been decreasing, though the provost and the dean both reported that they now appear to be stable. The recent reduction in faculty numbers may reduce earnings from grants and contracts, which may further impact the operating budget for the school.

Responding to the site visit report, the school's Executive Committee noted that the changes in the faculty complement have allowed for the recruitment of faculty who are well-matched to the evolving vision, mission and strategic priorities of the school. The increasing number of students enrolling in undergraduate courses (both majors and non-majors) will have an impact on both financial and personnel requirements. While it is agreed that the returned tuition has been more than sufficient to support the necessary teaching faculty, the program has the potential for significant growth and rapidly increasing demands on faculty time.

1.7 Faculty and Other Resources.

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

This criterion is met. Faculty headcount data show that there are adequate numbers of faculty for each discipline. It is noted, however, that there has been a reduction in the number of faculty over the past three years. In total, the number of faculty decreased from 91 in 2013 to 67 in 2015 (27.5% decrease). Significant reductions between 2013 and 2015 included those in biostatistics (from 25 to 15 faculty), health behavior (from 13 to six faculty), epidemiology (from 27 to 22 faculty) and environmental health (from eight to six faculty). Despite these reductions, adequate faculty numbers remain in each department. Additionally, the dean reported that there are two open positions each in both environmental health and health behavior.

The student-faculty ratios (SFRs) at the graduate level range from 2.1:1 (biostatistics) to 8.6:1 (health behavior). Because of the reductions in faculty and increases in students, the SFR increased between 2013 and 2015 for all departments except the Department of Health Care Organization and Policy.

According to data provided on site, 127 undergraduate majors were enrolled in the school in 2014. By 2015, this number had risen to 228. Additionally, in 2014, 789 non-majors were taught by faculty in the school. The demand for undergraduate coursework is unpredictable because of the increased interest in public health among undergraduates and because a course in global health has been added to the university-required core. There is, currently, no admissions process or other mechanism to potentially slow the rate of growth of undergraduate enrollment in the school. With the exception of a single instructor position, the 12 faculty who teach undergraduates are also considered graduate faculty.

The school had 171 full-time staff as of November 1, 2015. All departments or centers within the school have at least one administrative staff member.

Faculty reported that the school has sufficient physical resources for its needs, including both office space and research facilities. The school is largely located in the Frank and Kathleen Ellis Ryals School of Public Health building, a six-story building with 112,000 square feet of space. The school also has 17,000 square feet in the nearby Edge of Chaos facility, located on the top floor of the library. Faculty reported that there is adequate lab space for research and teaching, especially given the recent decrease in the number of faculty.

The Multimedia and Information Technology Services Unit supports computer and related resources. This unit is available to all departments within the school as a resource for teaching and support of grant-based activities. IT support is also available for the school's desktop and laptop computers, servers, printers and software.

The school is supported by two libraries: the Lister Hill Library of the Health Sciences and the Mervyn Sterne Library. The librarian from the Lister Hill Library holds weekly Tea with the Librarian sessions for public health students to explain the library resources and encourage their use. The Thomas W. Martin Memorial Library of the nearby Southern Research Institute is another valuable research resource for faculty and students. A full-time information scientist is available to conduct literature searches and to abstract and index in-house sources.

The self-study reports longstanding relationships between the school and the local health department and a variety of state agencies. The community partners who met with site visitors strongly endorsed the vital role that the school plays in the community.

The school has identified two objectives that demonstrate adequacy of its faculty and other resources. The school tracks the SFR in each graduate program and the total square footage available per faculty and staff member. The average SFR decreased from 3.42:1 to 3.12:1 from 2013 to 2014 (data for 2015 were not provided in the self-study) and square footage has increased each year from 2013 to 2015.

1.8 Diversity.

The school shall demonstrate a commitment to diversity and shall evidence an ongoing practice of cultural competence in learning, research and service practices.

This criterion is met. A commitment to diversity and collegiality is one of the core values articulated by the school. By pairing diversity with collegiality, the school emphasizes an environment that supports working toward a common purpose while valuing differences and being informed by a full range of perspectives.

In tracking its diversity, the school considers Black/African Americans and Hispanics as under-represented minorities. It is also attentive to the needs of LGBTQ individuals and international students.

Racial and ethnic data document diversity among students that is similar to the rates of underrepresented minorities in the state. The school reported that it is falling slightly below the proportion of Black/African Americans and Hispanics in Alabama for its graduate student body. Among faculty, Black/African Americans are represented on par with other colleges and schools, but Hispanics are under-represented in the school's faculty. A similar pattern exists among staff.

In October 2015, the school established its own Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to lead the effort to promote diversity and inclusion. The emphasis on inclusion is important to the school as it extends beyond efforts to increase diversity through recruiting toward sustained support for full participation in a diverse community.

In the 2016-2020 strategic plan, the intention is to focus on attaining equity for under-represented minorities using the Birmingham/Hoover MSA as the benchmark. The school has articulated three focus areas in the 2016-2020 diversity plan: curriculum, climate and community connectedness. The school will emphasize the importance of diversity in public health in the curriculum so that students and faculty gain the necessary knowledge and skills. The school will maintain alignment with the UAB Enterprise Code of Conduct to ensure that the climate fosters diversity and inclusion. School employees will be trained and tested with an emphasis on the Code of Conduct, as well as diversity and respect. The importance of respect, fairness and civility is emphasized to faculty and to students as well as to staff. Community connectedness explicitly includes increasing connections with Birmingham communities.

During the site visit, the dean introduced the newly appointed director of the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and described the move to expand beyond equity and diversity to formally address inclusion. This step includes examining inclusion and equity in the curriculum, expanding recruitment efforts, especially for faculty and students from Hispanic backgrounds, and considering opportunities to enhance community and university reputation and to help new students and faculty from diverse backgrounds experience the sense of community that will help them feel welcome and at home. The school recruits graduate students in part by working with Historically Black Colleges and Universities, providing scholarships and fellowships and participating actively with secondary schools to encourage students to enter the health professions. The core leadership was enthusiastic during the site visit about this expanded sense of direction.

The school also takes advantage of the university's equity and diversity program to support diversity recruitment, targeted faculty development and scholarship fellowships to recruit and retain under-

represented minority faculty. The school has developed its own minority retention packages for faculty as well. In the meeting with the provost and senior vice provost, the site visit team learned of the university's emphasis on recruiting a diverse and highly qualified faculty to UAB.

Climate surveys and monitoring of recruitment, retention and graduation among diverse populations are used to monitor progress and to assess whether current efforts are having the desired effects.

2.0 INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS.

2.1 Degree Offerings.

The school shall offer instructional programs reflecting its stated mission and goals, leading to the Master of Public Health (MPH) or equivalent professional master's degree in at least the five areas of knowledge basic to public health. The school may offer other degrees, professional and academic, and other areas of specialization, if consistent with its mission and resources.

This criterion is met. The school offers master's and doctoral degrees in the five core areas of public health, as well as various other concentrations and tracks, as shown in Table 2. Joint degrees in medicine, nursing, law, social work and other relevant or complementary fields are also available. The curricula are designed to prepare students to serve as practitioners and researchers in local, state, national and international settings.

Three tracks in the BS program (environmental health, global health and general public health) are defined by elective coursework and are advertised as focus areas, rather than majors.

Site visitors reviewed the corresponding plans of study for each degree and concentration and determined that the curricula appear appropriate and reflective of undergraduate- and graduate-level public health training.

Table 2. Instructional Matrix – Degrees & Specializations		
	Academic	Professional
Bachelor's Degrees		
Environmental Health	BS	
General Public Health	BS	
Global Health	BS	
Master's Degrees		
Biostatistics	MS	MPH
Clinical and Translational Science – Biostatistics	MSPH	
Environmental Health & Toxicology	MSPH	MPH[1]
Industrial Hygiene	MSPH	MPH[1,2]
Occupational Health & Safety		MPH[1]
Applied Epidemiology	MSPH	
Clinical and Translational Science – Epidemiology	MSPH	
Epidemiology		MPH

Table 2. Instructional Matrix – Degrees & Specializations		
Pharmacoepidemiology & Comparative Effectiveness Research	MSPH	
Clinical and Translational Science – Health Behavior	MSPH	
Health Behavior		MPH
General Theory & Practice		MPH
Health Care Organization		MPH[1]
Health Policy		MPH
Maternal and Child Health Policy and Leadership		MPH
Outcomes Research	MSPH	
Public Health Preparedness Management		MPH
Doctoral Degrees		
Biostatistics	PhD	
Environmental Health Sciences	PhD	
Epidemiology	PhD	
Health Education and Health Promotion	PhD	
Maternal Child Health Policy		DrPH
Outcomes Research		DrPH
Public Health Management		DrPH
Joint Degrees		
Biomedical Sciences		MPH/PhD
Business Administration		MPH/MBA
Dental Medicine		MPH/DMD
Medicine	MSPH/MD	MPH/MD
Optometry		MPH/DO
Osteopathic Medicine		MPH/DO
Veterinary Medicine		MPH/DVM
Environmental Health & Toxicology		BS/MPH
Epidemiology		BS/MPH
Health Behavior		BS/MPH
Health Care Organization		BS/MPH
Industrial and Systems Engineering		MPH/PhD
Law		MPH/JD
Nursing		MPH/MSN
Social Work		MPH/MSW
Nursing		MPH/PhD
Psychology	MSPH/PhD	MPH/PHD
Public Administration		MPH/MPA
Sociology		MPH/PhD

[1] Offered in an online format in additional to an in-person format.

[2] Offered in an accelerated format in addition to an in-person format.

2.2 Program Length.

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

This criterion is met. MPH students are expected to complete a minimum of 42 to 57 semester credits, depending on the concentration. One semester credit is defined as approximately 15 hours of classroom instruction. In addition to core coursework, students complete concentration-specific coursework and

approximately six credits of advisor-approved electives, depending on the chosen program of study. In the last three years, the school has not awarded any MPH degrees for fewer than 42 credits.

2.3 Public Health Core Knowledge.

All graduate professional degree public health students must complete sufficient coursework to attain depth and breadth in the five core areas of public health knowledge.

This criterion is met. All students pursuing a professional degree (MPH or DrPH) take at least one class equivalent to three credits in each of the five core areas of public health. Students concentrating in one of the five core areas take either an advanced version of the core course or two courses in the concentration. Some of the core courses are offered in an online format. Tables 3 and 4 present the required core courses for MPH and DrPH students, respectively.

Table 3. Required Courses Addressing Public Health Core Knowledge Areas for MPH Degree		
Core Knowledge Area	**Course Number & Title**	**Credits**
Biostatistics	BST 601: Biostatistics *OR*	4
	BST 621, 622: Statistical Methods I & II (for BST majors)	3, 3
Epidemiology	EPI 600: Introduction to Epidemiology *OR*	4
	EPI 610: Principles of Epidemiological Research (for EPI majors)	4
Environmental Health Sciences	ENH 600: Fundamentals of Environmental Health Science *OR*	3
	ENH 611: Environmental & Occupational Exposure Assessment (for ENH majors)	3
Social & Behavioral Sciences	HB 600: Social and Behavioral Science Core *OR*	3
	HB 624: Advanced Theory and Practice in Behavioral Science (for HB majors)	3
Health Services Administration	HCO 600: Introduction to Population Based Health Programs *OR*	3
	HCO 630: Introduction to Organization and Policy in Public Health (HCO majors)	3

Table 4. Required Courses Addressing Public Health Core Knowledge Areas for DrPH Degree		
Core Knowledge Area	**Course Number & Title**	**Credits**
Biostatistics	BST 611: Intermediate Statistical Analysis I	3
	BST 612: Intermediate Statistical Analysis II	3
Epidemiology	EPI 600: Introduction to Epidemiology *OR*	3
	EPI 610/610L: Principles of Epidemiologic Research (for EPI majors and HCO Outcomes Research majors without public health background)	4
Environmental Health Sciences	ENH 600: Fundamentals of Environmental Health Science	3
Social & Behavioral Sciences	HB 600: Social and Behavioral Science Core	3
Health Services Administration	HCO 600: Introduction to Population Based Health Programs *OR*	3
	HCO 630: Introduction to Organization and Policy in Public Health (for HCO majors)	3

A review of the syllabi validated that the core areas of public health are introduced to non-concentrators and provided in depth for concentrators. DrPH students are required to have an MPH or its equivalent from a CEPH-accredited institution for entry into the program. When entering DrPH students have not previously completed coursework the core areas of public health, they are required to take additional MPH courses in the deficient area(s), which is a decision made at the department level. Students are not allowed to matriculate into the DrPH program until all MPH core competencies are met.

Students may request a transfer of core courses completed at another CEPH-accredited school or program as long as any transferred course has not been applied to another degree. The course instructor reviews the course syllabus to make the determination of equivalency. In the past three years, no students have been allowed to waive a core course.

2.4 Practical Skills.

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

This criterion is met. The MPH internship is a three-credit experience and requires a minimum of 180 contact hours with the sponsoring organization. The experience must be completed within a specific semester, usually the third semester of the student's MPH program. According to the materials available online, all 180 hours of an internship are to be completed within the defined semester and are expected to be completed in either the summer or the fall semester after the student has completed all five core courses.

The MPH internship is intended to provide opportunities to engage with other professionals and participate in activities that will advance students' public health careers. Therefore, students are advised that the experience should not be heavily focused on administrative tasks or research. The school has a detailed handbook that includes forms for documenting the internship plan, reporting requirements, grading policies and information about internship sites. The student, the site and the advisor must agree on the work to be done and on the objectives to be met using a contract to document agreement and track performance. All the negotiation and planning is to be completed before the first day of class for the relevant semester. While the faculty practicum advisor is the course master for practica, the university's Career Management Site maintains the database on internships that may be available.

The handbook information for the DrPH practicum clearly states the policies, describes sites that may be considered and provides parameters for the student and faculty to consider in choosing the site and defining the practicum content. The forms and instructions are provided online, but coordination of the DrPH students' sites, preceptors, products and experiences is not in an electronic database.

There is evidence of a robust variety of placements and preceptors for MPH students. The list of 260 agencies for internships shows a wide variety of health, health care and community service agencies that may be available for students, from local to international in scope. There is also a list of 248 preceptors and their agencies that have served as internship sites or have an interest in doing so. As new preceptors or sites request interns, the faculty practicum coordinator reviews files to determine whether the site's proposed internship meets its criteria. The faculty practicum coordinator and the student's faculty advisor assist students in identifying sites that meet their needs. The student and the site develop a proposal that is reviewed with the faculty advisor, who determines whether the proposed internship will meet degree requirements and whether the preceptor is qualified to supervise the student's proposed plan.

The school tracks student evaluation of the site and the preceptor through surveys. Currently, 80% of responding students report the internship as useful, beneficial and practical. Faculty advisors are not regularly asked to assess sites and preceptors.

The practicum for DrPH students is defined as a six-credit experience with 480 contact hours. It is expected to be completed at a public health organization or agency that offers the opportunity to develop and exercise higher-level skills. There is provision for completing the internship at the candidate's place of employment; however, it is specified that the work of the practicum must be different from that of his or her regular work and may not involve primarily research or administrative tasks. At the time of the site visit, some students had been able to fulfill the DrPH practice experience by teaching at the university, including developing or modifying a course, arranging guest lecturers and/or delivering the course. In at least some instances, the student did have experiences outside the internship that may have augmented the opportunity to apply higher-level skills and to engage with the community, but these were not documented or evaluated in the same way as the internship.

In response to comments from the site visitors, the DrPH practicum policy and procedures were rewritten by a joint faculty committee, and were vetted with the DrPH faculty and a group of DrPH students. The new policy now ensures that DrPH practicum experiences consistently align with this criterion's expectations.

Practicum waivers are not permitted for either MPH or DrPH students.

2.5 Culminating Experience.

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

This criterion is met. MPH and DrPH students complete a capstone course and dissertation, respectively, at the conclusion of their coursework. These experiences assure that each student demonstrates skills and integration of knowledge from throughout the curriculum.

MPH students enroll in a capstone course that requires students to synthesize and integrate the knowledge and skills they acquired throughout their coursework. The course emphasizes the application of public health concepts and requires student attendance at a series of seminars, literature reviews and the application of planning, management and evaluation techniques to public health problems. Students complete self-assessments regarding their knowledge across the five core areas of public health, as well as their respective concentration area. Students identify and address their personal strengths and weaknesses through self-assessment and indicate how core and track-specific competencies were achieved through coursework and fieldwork. Near the end of the course of study, students complete a final reflection to 1) identify strengths and weaknesses in terms of the MPH competencies; 2) determine how they can capitalize on the strengths they have identified as they move into their chosen career path; 3) determine what advantages their self-identified strengths give them in the job market or chosen field of study if they plan to further their education; and 4) describe any gaps seen in the course requirements.

DrPH students conduct dissertation research in fulfillment of the culminating experience requirement. The dissertation advisor guides the candidate during his or her dissertation research and the preparation of the dissertation. The ongoing involvement of the other members of the Dissertation Committee is highly encouraged. With the approval of the Dissertation Committee, students may choose to prepare their dissertation in one of two formats: 1) the traditional dissertation option or 2) the publication or preprint/reprint option. If the Dissertation Committee is not in favor of scheduling the defense, the dissertation advisor will guide the student in revising the dissertation. After a majority of the committee is in favor, the dissertation advisor will schedule a dissertation defense, at which time the student will orally present his or her dissertation and answer questions. Students must also successfully complete a comprehensive examination to display their understanding and synthesis of concepts learned across the core knowledge areas, as well as within their specific concentration area.

The syllabi, guidelines and samples of student work and dissertations reviewed by site visitors provided evidence that both forms of the culminating experience are integrative and provide an opportunity to evaluate students' overall knowledge and skills. Despite the design and intent, however, there appeared to be a consensus among MPH students who met with site visitors that the capstone course was not as rigorous as they would expect. Students described the self-assessment activities as monotonous and repetitive and questioned their benefit and purpose.

2.6 Required Competencies.

For each degree program and area of specialization within each program identified in the instructional matrix, there shall be clearly stated competencies that guide the development of degree programs. The school must identify competencies for graduate professional public health, other professional and academic degree programs and specializations at all levels (bachelor's, master's and doctoral).

This criterion is partially met. The school offers a structured system of competencies for the degrees and concentrations offered. Each of the professional degrees (MPH and DrPH) awarded by the school has a set of seven and eight core competencies, respectively, that address core public health knowledge. These competencies are referred to by the school faculty and staff as school-level competencies. The school also identified a set of seven core competencies for the MSPH that focus on the development of research skills at the master's level. The PhD competencies also focus on research skills.

Each department has identified one set of concentration competencies that are applied to the degree programs offered by that department. Each of the degree programs maps competencies to courses and other learning experiences. In the self-study, all of the department competencies are listed in each of the degree matrices for that department or concentration.

The Undergraduate Program Oversight Committee drafted the undergraduate competencies, which were then vetted by other faculty and students. From that activity, the program recognized the importance of diversity and service learning for the undergraduate program. The Educational Policy Committee created the first draft of the revised graduate core competencies based on competencies defined by the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH). Students and other school stakeholders reviewed the competencies and provided input.

Students who participated in the site visit explained that large Post-It notes with each proposed core MPH competency were placed around the school and students were invited to provide comments. The final MPH competency set was approved by the Educational Policy Committee. Departments developed the concentration competencies in a process similar to that undertaken to develop the core MPH competencies. Faculty relied on best practices, faculty knowledge of public health practice needs and other established competencies to develop the discipline-specific competencies. Some departments conferred with practice partners to assure that the competencies would meet the needs of the practice community. Competencies were approved within the departments, and the newly revised competencies went into effect in summer 2015.

The school evaluates the appropriateness of competencies primarily by staying abreast of national public health trends through participation on ASPPH committees and attendance at annual meetings. The

previous list of 53 competencies was reduced to seven after faculty attended the 2014 ASPPH meeting. The school works closely with the state and local health departments to assure the competencies are addressing up-to-date public health practice issues. Although there is no formal mechanism for community input on the curriculum and competencies, faculty indicated during the site visit that they receive informal input from community partners and the centers' advisory boards. In addition, the school's Broad Street Committee regularly reviews the curriculum. The Alumni Affairs Office implements an annual alumni survey that collects information on the relevance of the curriculum to alumni in their current positions and careers. This information is used to modify the curriculum, as appropriate.

The core MPH and departmental competencies are posted on the school's website. Core MPH competencies are provided to students during orientation, listed on core syllabi and reinforced in the integrative experience. Students are expected to map the activities conducted in the integrative experience to the competencies. The students who participated in the site visit, however, suggested that this was somewhat of a redundant activity. Students complete a pre-/post-test on competencies: they self-assess during orientation and then again during the exit interview. Departmental programmatic competencies are provided to students during orientation and listed on appropriate course syllabi. In addition, programmatic competencies are linked to their corresponding learning objectives.

The site team brought attention to the use of a single set of concentration (departmental) competencies for different graduate degree programs within a single department. However, subsequent to the visit, the Department of Biostatistics, the Department of Environmental Health Sciences and the Department of Health Behavior revised their competencies and realigned the revised competencies to their degrees and degree tracks.

The concern relates to the competencies associated with the other two departments (epidemiology and health care organization and policy). The Council could not verify that these departments had updated their competency sets to distinguish the different degree programs.

2.7 Assessment Procedures.

There shall be procedures for assessing and documenting the extent to which each professional public health, other professional and academic degree student has demonstrated achievement of the competencies defined for his or her degree program and area of concentration.

This criterion is partially met. The school assesses students' achievement of competencies through a number of methods. Course grades, the internship evaluation, the integrative experience and student pre-/post-tests are used to assess core competencies. To assess concentration competencies, departments use course grades and final course projects, internship evaluations, capstones, theses or similar final projects and professional credentialing exams, such as those in industrial hygiene and health education.

Within courses, a variety of assessment methods are used for classroom learning including examinations, papers, projects and group discussions. Faculty have flexibility in designing grading structures for their classes. However, didactic courses generally follow a competency-based assignment of points by which A=90% and up, B=80-89%, C=70-79% and F=below 70%.

During the MPH internship, both the preceptor and instructor evaluate student progress and achievement. The preceptor and faculty member each meet the student in a formalized mid-term meeting to discuss student progress. At the end of the internship, students provide a final product that documents the internship experience mapped to competencies and present a poster based on the internship. Preceptors and faculty evaluate the student at the end of the internship. The preceptor completes a final evaluation form that assesses the student's professional demeanor during the internship. Faculty members assess the student's accomplishments using goals, preceptor reports, the final report and the internship poster. Students and faculty who participated in the site visit confirmed these procedures.

During the DrPH practicum, students produce an end product appropriate for the practicum; however, there are no standards or rubrics for evaluating the product. Example DrPH work products were provided to the site visitors: most were course syllabi or descriptions of the student's teaching experience.

Students complete a self-assessment of competencies upon entry into the MPH program and during the culminating course. During this course, students self-reflect on the competencies that were addressed in the experience, but faculty do not assess the student's level of competency as part of this course.

The school administers a graduate employment survey to all alumni to assess their current employment. The survey also assesses the MPH competencies. The alumni respondents reported fairly consistently that their training prepared them for the job market.

The capstone course for undergraduates provides a summative opportunity for students to draw upon, synthesize and apply what they have learned to an original project or applied experience. The school said that it plans to develop a rubric to evaluate the capstone project.

There is currently no formal employer assessment to determine students' abilities to perform competencies in an employment setting. In the past, the school administered surveys to employers but had low response rates. The combination of the low response rates and the loss of a staff person who coordinated this activity caused the school to discontinue this practice. However, during the site visit, several faculty said that they conduct informal employer assessments of competencies when working with them in the community. Additionally, the faculty and staff indicated that they plan to work closely with career services to manage and implement an employer survey during the 2015-2016 academic year.

The school uses four outcomes to measure student achievement: GPA, graduation rates, placement rates and mastery of school-wide competencies. For the three years reported, 100% of students had GPAs greater than 3.0. For a student to maintain good academic standing in the Graduate School, a GPA of at least 3.0 (B average) and overall satisfactory performance on pass/not pass courses is required. Mastery of MPH competencies are also tracked. For each of the three years reported, the goal of over 85% was exceeded.

As required, graduation rates for each of the degree programs are provided. The BS is new, and only two years of data are provided. Therefore, it is premature to evaluate trends in these rates. The allowable time for graduation for master's students is five years and seven years for doctoral students. Most degrees meet the graduation requirements within the allowable time for graduation, with the exception of the MSPH, which was 67% for students entering in 2010. The five-year graduation rates for MPH students entering the program in 2010 was 88%. The rate was above 70% for MSPH students entering in 2011 and 2012. The graduation rates for students entering the MS program in the 2010 was 75%. It should be noted that only two students entered the MS program in 2011. For students entering the PhD program in 2009, the seven-year rate was 70%. The graduation rates for DrPH students entering the program in 2010 and 2011 was 75% and 67%, respectively. Looking at cumulative data for all PhD programs, the annual graduation rates for cohorts at least six years out range from 70% to 81%.

Employment rates for each of the degree programs were presented for 2012, 2013 and 2014. Most placement rates exceeded the 80% requirement within one year of graduation, with the exception of the most recent year reported for the MPH and the last two years of the DrPH. For the MPH, rates were 98%, 90% and 79%, respectively. For the MSPH, rates were 100%, 100% and 92%, respectively. Employment rates for the MS and PhD were 100% for all three years. Employment rates for the DrPH were 100%, 50% and 71%, respectively. The Office of Public Health Practice is working with the Office of Career Services to help improve employment rates. The internship coordinator has begun to meet with employers and the school has implemented an electronic newsletter that posts job opportunities.

The new graduate employment survey is administered anonymously each October to December, May and August graduates from the previous year. The survey assesses job status, type of organization, discipline area and salary. To increase response rates, the school has conducted direct calling campaigns and searched social media; the most recent response rate was 92%.

The site visit team noted that MPH and DrPH job placement rates were slightly below the threshold of 80%. The most recent job placement rate for the MPH was 77%, and the DrPH rates for the two most recent years were 50% and 71%. The college has clarified and updated the data to demonstrate substantive compliance. Regarding MPH students, a number were continuing their education/training,

several were seeking employment and for a few their status was unknown. As a result, there is an effort now underway to better track students through a new university-wide student/employer survey being developed by UAB Career & Professional Development. The low rate for DrPH students can be explained not only by the small numbers of graduates (four in 2013 and seven in 2015), but by the context of the individual students, two of whom are not pursuing employment by choice.

The first area of concern relates to faculty members' assessment of competency attainment. While faculty evaluate student work products for quality, the site visit team suggested more specific attention be paid to faculty assessment of the demonstration of competencies, in order to alleviate a perceived reliance on student self-assessment. Subsequent to the visit, the school has begun to make changes to its assessment system, but implementation results were not yet available at the time of the Council's review.

The other point of concern relates to the need for an improved approach to contacting employers to assess student's ability to perform competencies in an employment setting. Site visitors were told that an updated survey, which intends to improve the usefulness of information gained, s expected to be administered during the 2015-2016 academic year. Several additional upgrades and changes to the system are in process, according to the school's response to the site visit team's report.

2.8 Other Graduate Professional Degrees.

If the school offers curricula for graduate professional degrees other than the MPH or equivalent public health degrees, students pursing them must be grounded in basic public health knowledge.

This criterion is not applicable.

2.9 Bachelor's Degrees in Public Health.

If the school offers baccalaureate public health degrees, they shall include the following elements:

Required Coursework in Public Health Core Knowledge: students must complete courses that provide a basic understanding of the five core public health knowledge areas defined in Criterion 2.1, including one course that focuses on epidemiology. Collectively, this coursework should be at least the equivalent of 12 semester-credit hours.

Elective Public Health Coursework: in addition to the required public health core knowledge courses, students must complete additional public health-related courses. Public health-related courses may include those addressing social, economic, quantitative, geographic, educational and other issues that impact the health of populations and health disparities within and across populations.

Capstone Experience: students must complete an experience that provides opportunities to apply public health principles outside of a typical classroom setting and builds on public health coursework. This experience should be at least equivalent to three semester-credit hours or sufficient to satisfy the typical capstone requirement for a bachelor's degree at the parent university. The experience may be tailored to students' expected post-baccalaureate goals (eg, graduate and/or professional school, entry-level employment), and a variety of experiences that meet university requirements may be appropriate. Acceptable capstone experiences might

include one or more of the following: internship, service-learning project, senior seminar, portfolio project, research paper or honors thesis.

The required public health core coursework and capstone experience must be taught (in the case of coursework) and supervised (in the case of capstone experiences) by faculty documented in Criteria 4.1.a and 4.1.b.

This criterion is met. The school began offering a bachelor's degree in public health in fall 2013. The curriculum trains students on how to plan, initiate and manage public health programs. Students learn the fundamentals of public health history, theory and practice, including how biological, environmental, social and behavioral factors interact to influence health and disease. Identifying the health needs of communities and the role of health disparities is emphasized. Students gain a basic understanding of public health research, study design and data interpretation. Courses are taught by qualified faculty members, drawn from the pool of faculty that support the school's graduate programs.

The BS degree requires a total of 120 credit hours, which aligns with the expectations of bachelor's-level curricula at the university. Students are required to complete 27 credit hours of public health courses (plus a one-hour first-year experience course) with a grade of C or better. Three tracks in the BS program (environmental health, global health and general public health) are defined by 18 credits of elective coursework (a component of the 27 credits) and are advertised as focus areas, rather than majors. Basic coursework in the five core areas of public health is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Required Courses Addressing Public Health Core Knowledge Areas for BS Degree		
Core Knowledge Area	**Course Number & Title**	**Credits**
Biostatistics	PUH 250: Biostatistics for Professionals	3
Epidemiology	PUH 302: Epidemiology – Beyond the Outbreak	3
Environmental Health Sciences	PUH 220: Environmental Factors in Public Health	3
Social & Behavioral Sciences	PUH 204: Health Meets Life – Sex, Drugs, Weight and Other Health Behaviors	3
Health Services Administration	PUH 307: Public Health Systems	3

The program culminates in a three-credit capstone course (PUH 495: Public Health Capstone Experience), which provides an integrative opportunity for students to synthesize and apply what they have learned to an original project and/or real-life application. Depending on the discipline, the capstone may involve collaborative projects, internships, service learning, fieldwork, independent research, community outreach and/or thesis writing. Capstones also include a set of well-defined learning outcomes, significant writing and integration of discipline-specific competencies in quantitative literacy and in ethics and civic responsibility. Students present a final report on their experience and how they applied their coursework.

A full-time academic advisor currently advises undergraduate students. The school recently hired a new half-time advisor to supplement her support; this individual is expected to begin in January 2016. The university's Academic Success Center offers tutoring services, peer mentoring and various academic workshops. These services are designed to help students develop academic skills and provide resources toward academic success. Further academic support is also provided by a Math Learning Lab and English Writing Center available to all students at the university. The UAB Office for Undergraduate Research and Service Learning also provides services and support to undergraduate students at the university looking to supplement traditional classroom experiences. The goal of these opportunities is to enhance the overall student experience and to provide community-based experiences. Students in the BS program have additional resources through the Career Services and Professional Development Offices on campus, including a public health liaison, to help aid students in their career planning.

2.10 Other Bachelor's Degrees.

If the school offers baccalaureate degrees in fields other than public health, students pursuing them must be grounded in basic public health knowledge.

This criterion is not applicable.

2.11 Academic Degrees.

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

This criterion is met. The school offers one MS, eight MSPH and four PhD degrees that are considered academic degrees, as shown in Table 2.

All academic degree students are automatically enrolled in a self-paced course known as Overview of Public Health. This course, which students said takes about 37 hours to complete, is a combination of videos, readings and projects and does not have any credits associated with it. A review of the course outline showed that it provides an overview of public health, a review of key elements in the history of public health and modules on public health infrastructure and environmental health. Students in the course are required to attend three presentations outside of their concentration area and to complete a summary of each. The course requires students to complete a three- to five-page paper documenting how their concentration area fits into the overall structure of public health. A review of a sample of these papers showed that students are able to integrate their discipline into the overall field of public health. One student who participated in the course spoke highly of it and reported that it gave him, as a working professional, a much better understanding of, and passion for, public health. Conversely, faculty reported that, generally, students do not enjoy taking the course, find that it is time consuming and say that it does not advance their discipline-specific interests.

Students who have earned an MPH degree or have significant work experience can petition to waive the overview course. Faculty confirmed that no other students have been able to waive the course. No decision has yet been made on whether students entering an academic degree program with a BS in public health could receive a waiver.

Additionally, all academic degrees include at least one course in epidemiology and one course in biostatistics.

The culminating experience for the MS and MSPH degree is a master's-level research thesis that must focus on problems or issues that are relevant to public health. Students must state how their research can be applied to public health practice. For the PhD degree, the culminating experience is the dissertation/thesis constituting original scientific work and the associated readings, seminars, research and defense.

2.12 Doctoral Degrees.

The school shall offer at least three doctoral degree programs that are relevant to three of the five areas of basic public health knowledge.

This criterion is met. The school currently offers the PhD in four concentrations, as shown in Table 2. The PhD is considered an academic degree and requires defined coursework and a dissertation, as described previously. The DrPH is considered a professional degree and requires defined coursework, a practicum and a dissertation.

Faculty from each department confirmed that there are a wide range of financial support resources for students. These funds include graduate fellowships from the UAB Graduate School, MERIT scholarships, T32 traineeships and graduate research assistantships, graduate teaching assistantships and others. Department-specific support includes, for example, the Louis Dale Fellowship for minority students studying biostatistics, MCH Bureau training grants and ERC training grants. Faculty reported that the vast majority of doctoral students receive financial support for at least the first year.

Enrollment in the doctoral degrees varies across programs and departments. In 2015, eight students were admitted to the PhD programs, while one student was admitted to the DrPH programs. According to the faculty, these lower numbers were, in part, intentional and reflected the reduced number of faculty in the relevant departments.

2.13 Joint Degrees.

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

This criterion is met. The MPH/MSN program prepares graduates to participate in the development, implementation and evaluation of innovative health behavior programs and policies. The MPH/MPA

program provides students with the ability to describe the economic, legal, organizational and political underpinnings of the US health system. The MPH/MBA program provides a health management credential with broad applicability. The MPH/OD joint degree provides optometrists with the skills to assess community needs for vision care services. The MSPH/PhD prepares PhD students in psychology to perform research in health outcomes or health policy analysis. The MPH/DVM trains veterinary practitioners in population-based approaches to human and animal health. The MPH can also be combined with the BS in public health degree or any other BS degree on campus. Such fast-track programs simply allow undergraduate students to begin their MPH coursework during their senior year.

Joint degree students complete largely the same curriculum, including the practice and capstone experiences, as other MPH students. A maximum of 12 credits in a complementary degree program may be substituted for MPH coursework. The content of shared courses is individually reviewed and evaluated for comparability and subject to approval by the Educational Policy Committee. Efficiency is primarily achieved through the substitution of public health-relevant courses for public health electives. A portion of the DVM placement may be counted toward the traditional internship requirement. However, at the time of the site visit, no student had ever enrolled in the DVM/MPH program, and site visitors were unable to fully assess the implementation of this practice experience. No reduction in MPH coursework is involved in the fast-track BS/MPH programs.

Site visitors verified that equivalent or comparable public health content is addressed in the syllabi of shared courses. As a result, students still complete at least 42 credits of public health or appropriately related coursework.

2.14 Distance Education or Executive Degree Programs.

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

This criterion is met. The school offers four online MPH degree programs and one online joint degree, as shown in Table 2. The programs deliver the same content as the on-campus courses using Canvas, an asynchronous online platform. The courses are overseen by the UAB Educational Policy Committee, which reviews and approves all online and campus courses. All courses offered online are also offered on campus, and the majority of the time, the same faculty deliver the online and campus versions. The Office

of Student and Academic Affairs provides support for faculty and students. Faculty support includes course design and training, as well as IT support. Student support includes technical assistance through UAB's Department of Information Technology. The course instructor is expected to contact each student weekly. Formal interim evaluation is at the instructor's discretion.

Student identification is addressed primarily through the student ID and password on the Canvas platform. The requirement for high-stakes examinations to be proctored allows for picture ID verification and supervision during exams. The proctor must be approved prior to taking the examination.

Advising, internship placement requirements and monitoring of progress toward the degree are the same as for on-campus students.

Enrollment in most of the online offerings is low except in health care organization and policy. However, during the site visit, faculty stated that on-campus students also take online courses, generally assuring that there are sufficient enrollments to allow for student-to-student learning in the online environment. Many courses are available online, and marketing efforts to increase interest in online degree programs are being intensified.

The online industrial hygiene MPH requires 14 fewer credit hours than the in-person program, for a total of 44 credits. During the site visit, faculty explained that the online version was created for those with prior work experience. This track is designed specifically for and limited to graduates of undergraduate industrial hygiene programs financially supported by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).

3.0 CREATION, APPLICATION AND ADVANCEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE.

3.1 Research.

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

This criterion is met. The school has developed a strong, creative and robust research culture with 166 grants reported over the past three years, with annual revenue of over $30 million per year. Thirty-five (21%) of the research projects are, by report, community-based. By total amount of research funding, the school reports that it is the second largest at UAB, and, by amount-per-faculty, the most productive on campus.

The university and the school have established policies, procedures, practices and infrastructure to support the research agenda. These include, but are not limited to, a university-wide Office of Research and Economic Development, Office of Sponsored Programs, Conflict of Interest Review Board, an

institutional officer and an Animal Resources Program. Within the school, there is an associate dean for science, IRB officers and department-specific business officers. The provost reported a strong personal commitment to supporting research growth at the university.

Faculty reported that interdisciplinary research is both supported and encouraged within the school. Those who met with site visitors said that the university has created six university-wide Interdisciplinary Research Centers that provide mentoring and financial support for collaborative research ideas that involve at least two schools.

The dean also maintains a "back of the envelope" program where his office can provide start-up funding for promising research ideas. The Edge of Chaos space is an open-use floor in the adjacent library where faculty, community members and others are encouraged to meet and explore collaborative research ideas. The school has also retained a number of former NIH project officers who can provide consultation, review and support for grant-writing efforts. These school initiatives foster an environment that is highly supportive of creative, collaborative and inter-professional research.

Each department is responsible for mentoring its junior faculty in research development activities. Junior faculty stated that they receive outstanding mentoring, protected time, support to develop K awards and other types of support to develop their research portfolios.

Both junior and senior faculty said that there are adequate lab spaces and offices designated for research, though it is acknowledged that some of the availability is due to the recent reductions in the total number of faculty.

Indirect costs generated by externally funded research, are, initially, divided between the university and the school. The portion returned to the school is subdivided to support activities within the Office of the Dean and the rest is returned to the department. Money can be set aside to support faculty operation costs, but there is no incentive program that would increase faculty salaries.

The school has a series of goals and objectives related to research productivity. These objectives relate to expenditures per FTE faculty, publications, total citations, publication as first/senior authors and publication impact. While the school has not met its targets on all but one of these metrics, this may be due, in part, to the recent reduction in the total number of faculty. Overall, the level of productivity is significant and consistent with the school's mission.

The Department of Environmental Health appears to have less funded research than the other departments, with only three funded grants in the past two years and only one that is currently active.

Faculty representatives noted that there are only three doctoral students in the department, and that there is sufficient research to support these students. Student enrollment will increase when two current faculty vacancies are filled.

Three funding sources support student involvement in research. According to the self-study, 46% of funded research projects have included students. Graduate students confirmed to site visitors that they have opportunities to engage in meaningful research activities.

3.2 Service.

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

This criterion is met with commentary. The school has an infrastructure that supports community and professional service by faculty members. While the data collection method changed in 2014, the overall level of participation appears to be high, and the number of activities per faculty member has increased across the latest three-year period.

Numerous faculty members provide consultation and technical assistance to policymakers, public health departments and public health organizations. Similarly, faculty members serve as editors or reviewers for numerous professional journals. During the site visit, the team heard from community organizations about the strong support they have received from faculty members in developing grant applications, evaluating programs and developing policy.

The self-study describes a number of endeavors that support faculty and student engagement in community service. The breadth of service is significant. While it centers on Alabama and its community needs, national and global engagement is evident as well. For example, in 2013, three faculty members participated in the inaugural cohort of UAB's Faculty Fellows in Service Learning and Engaged Scholarship Program. A fourth faculty member participated in 2014. As a result, the school provided six service learning courses in 2013 and 14 in 2014. In total, more than 260 students have participated in a service learning course.

The school has established an Office of Public Health Practice in the Dean's Office. The office director visits state and local health departments and community organizations to expand and promote service opportunities for faculty, staff and students. The Outstanding Public Health Service Award is given annually to recognize a faculty member with exemplary service. A service award is also presented annually to a staff member for exemplary service.

The faculty activity report includes service activities and is completed annually. The expectations for tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty differ, and expectations of non-tenure-track faculty are outlined in their appointment letters. In promotion and tenure decisions, service is a significant point: faculty members whose primary activities involve service in the public health practice community are eligible for promotion under a scholarly public health practice criterion.

Several grants are described in the self-study that support student engagement in community service. Community service is also supported through various centers. Two graduate student organizations with community projects are described in the self-study: the Public Health Student Association and the Student Association for Graduate Education. In addition, several undergraduate activity groups engage in service activities.

The commentary relates to the lack of tracking or evaluation of student engagement in service: the proportion of undergraduate, master's and doctoral students in public health who engage in community service outside their internship is not available. Among students who met with the team, none reported engagement with the student associations. The school's response to the site visit team's report indicates that the college is now disseminating a student e-newsletter which announces upcoming activities and events across the school, including those sponsored by the Public Health Student Association (PHSA) and will include an introduction to the PHSA at its New Student Orientation for the incoming class, as two ways to encourage increased engagement in student organizations. In addition, the school is currently investigating the adoption of a portfolio system to track and monitor student projects, service learning activities, extracurricular activities and participation in other school- or faculty-sponsored events.

3.3 Workforce Development.

The school shall engage in activities other than its offering of degree programs that support the professional development of the public health workforce.

This criterion is met. The school has made a significant investment in workforce development for public health agencies and programs in Alabama. Keys to this endeavor are the Public Health Training Center (part of the Region IV PHTC) and the Preparedness and Emergency Response Learning Center. The lead evaluator of the Region IV PHTC is a school faculty member. This faculty member conducts an annual public health workforce development needs assessment in Alabama and Mississippi, and she maintains relationships with the public and community providers of public health services in both states. The school also reviews Community Health Improvement Plans and Community Health Assessments in these two states to identify priority concerns for workforce training. The school maintains the UAB Cancer Prevention and Control Training Program to train cancer prevention and control researchers as part of a partnership with the School of Nursing and the Department of Nutrition Sciences. The Deep South Center

for Occupational Health and Safety maintains a continuing education component to meet the needs of occupational health and safety professionals.

Using plans and assessments, the various centers at the school offer training programs to fill the identified needs. Continuing education courses are offered in classroom settings, conferences and as web-based programs, both live and asynchronously. All public health workforce training offerings are evaluated, typically for learning, planned behavior change, results and participant satisfaction.

The school also offers endowed lectures that meet the needs of academics, practitioners, policymakers and the general public, both enriching the discussion about health and preparing the workforce to address problems. The Center for the Study of Community Health provides a forum for faculty and students to present their prevention research to the public health workforce. The school collaborates with more than 35 entities to assure that workforce development needs are met.

The school also offers several certificate programs that are specifically designed to enhance workforce performance and to meet specific training needs. These certificates are offered in global health, public health and statistical genetics.

The school acknowledged that it lacks central coordination of its many workforce training programs, making it harder to ensure that identified workforce development needs are met. The school is considering ways to enhance coordination without reducing the flexibility and responsiveness to workforce development that is currently demonstrated.

4.0 FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS.

4.1 Faculty Qualifications.

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

This criterion is met. The full-time faculty—together with adjunct, part-time and secondary faculty—have training and expertise in diverse disciplines and are qualified to support the school's academic and professional programs and its research and service activities.

All of the school's primary faculty members hold doctoral degrees. Tenured and tenure-track faculty are expected to contribute to the teaching, research and service activities of the school, whereas contract faculty serve under annual contracts and may focus their efforts in a single area (eg, research, workforce development or teaching).

Among the 67 primary faculty documented in the self-study, 22 are assistant, 22 are associate and 23 are full professors. Of these faculty, 32 have a PhD and 17 have a PhD and MPH or a PhD and MSPH. Nine have a PhD with another master's degree.

The school reports a strong practice-based perspective among faculty. Faculty told site visitors that the school has had 25 years of strong relationships with the departments of health in Alabama and Mississippi. These relationships are reflected in consultation agreements with state and local health departments and community-based organizations and in collaboration with practitioners on research and teaching activities. Faculty also serve on state and national task forces and committees. Additionally, practitioners provide lectures and serve as preceptors for student placements. Community members and employers spoke about the extent and value of the interactions between the school and public health efforts in the region.

The school reports nine metrics by which it evaluates the effectiveness of its faculty component. These measures include course and instructor ratings, research expenditures, publications and terminal degree. The school has met its targets in each of the last three years.

Additionally, the school and the university annually recognize faculty excellence with a series of awards.

Faculty discussed with site visitors the importance of balancing both research and teaching and the importance of mentoring. There is a shared understanding, on the part of the faculty, of the importance of both research and teaching to the success of the school, and the faculty have been willing to support the added teaching responsibilities associated with the newly introduced undergraduate program.

4.2 Faculty Policies and Procedures.

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

This criterion is met. The school follows policies for faculty recruitment, appointment, promotion and tenure that are published in the university's faculty handbook. School faculty reported that they are involved with the development and oversight of the faculty handbook. Additionally, there is a Faculty Affairs Committee, in the school, that advises the dean and the faculty on cross-cutting issues such as promotion and tenure, sabbatical requests and related items.

The university is under the general jurisdiction of the Board of Trustees for the University of Alabama System and under the Alabama Commission of Higher Education. While both bodies provide oversight and guidance on program development, the university is generally free to develop its own operating policies and procedures.

Faculty who met with site visitors reported satisfaction with their annual review process and the promotion and tenure process. They said that promotion and tenure criteria are specific to each department but that all departments include teaching, research and public health practice in their criteria. There is a formal annual review, and pre-tenured faculty receive a biennial review by the department's Promotion and Tenure Committee.

The promotion and tenure process starts with the review of a submitted portfolio by the departmental committee. According to the faculty, this committee is independent and makes a promotion and tenure recommendation to the chair. The chair's recommendation is forwarded to a school-wide committee and then to the dean.

The school has a unique approach to annual reviews. Each faculty member is reviewed both by his/her own department chair and two randomly selected chairs from other departments. The faculty member is given a score on a four-point scale that must be the majority decision of the three chairs.

Faculty have multiple opportunities for professional development. The provost said that initial efforts to have university-wide development activities were less well received than programs such as the Center for Teaching and Learning. Faculty said that they receive support in areas such as online coursework development, research productivity and teaching methods.

The school uses the IDEA student evaluation methodology. Teaching effectiveness is measured both by progress on relevant objectives and by the students' assessments.

Faculty and chairs reported significant support from the university in terms of faculty recruitment. There is a shared emphasis, by both community members and the school, to work together to support recruitment efforts.

4.3 Student Recruitment and Admissions.

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 competence for a career in public health.

This criterion is met. The school employs a variety of methods to identify and attract promising applicants. The school has established rigorous policies and procedures for recruitment and admissions and sets high standards to ensure a distinguished student body and a high caliber future public health workforce.

Emphasis is placed on recruitment of undergraduates in the physical, biological, quantitative and behavioral sciences; high school and community college students; active public health professionals; and

experienced health practitioners (eg, physicians, flight surgeons, nurses, veterinarians, pharmacists and nutritionists) who wish to enhance their careers and skills. The task of recruitment is a shared responsibility, involving faculty, administrators, students, major contributors, alumni and the academic units. The recruitment coordinator in the Office of Student and Academic Services directs recruitment efforts. The recruitment materials include large and small displays, posters, school view books, departmental fact sheets, giveaways, brochures, the school's magazine and other promotional items. Recruitment activities include staffed displays at national and regional colleges and universities, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The school sponsors a booth at the annual meetings of the American Public Health Association and the Alabama Public Health Association, at which recruitment materials are made available. The school also participates in undergraduate career symposia at regional colleges and universities. The school plans to increase recruiting efforts in high schools and UAB recruiting events. The school is also using online recruiting fairs and marketing to recruit new students into the smaller standalone degree programs.

Admissions policies and procedures are described in the school's catalog. Graduate-level policies are developed by the Admissions and Graduation Committee and the Education and Policy Committee before submission to the Faculty Assembly for approval. The Office of Student and Academic Services is responsible for the administration of the admissions process. To be considered for admission to a graduate program, an applicant must submit a completed application form online, including a statement of career goals, transcripts from all colleges and universities attended, three letters of recommendation, official scores from the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or other acceptable standardized test (eg, MCAT, GMAT) and a TOEFL score if English is not the applicant's first language.

Graduate applications are compiled by the online system or the UAB Graduate School, sent to the coordinator of admissions in the Office of Student and Academic Services at the school and forwarded to the appropriate department for review and a decision on admission. The school's admissions requirements reflect its desire to admit the most qualified applicants based on their academic credentials, experience and promise as public health professionals. Academic credentials include undergraduate GPA, graduate GPA (if applicable) and performance in the verbal and quantitative sections of the GRE.

Undergraduate admissions are controlled by the university. The school does not have any additional requirements for admission beyond what the university requires for undergraduates. Faculty who met with site visitors asserted that they do not want to limit the number of undergraduate students at this point in time—particularly in support of applicants from disadvantaged communities. Lack of control over admissions, however, leads to uncertainty about the size of the student body from year to year. Site visitors questioned faculty about the possibility that student numbers may rapidly increase before the

school is able to secure additional faculty resources necessary to accommodate this growth. The site visitors were told that the school is considering developing an honors track with an admissions cap.

There are differences in the application number and acceptances across departments. Each department is successfully enrolling students; however, some of the concentrations are not well subscribed.

4.4 Advising and Career Counseling.

There shall be available a clearly explained and accessible academic advising system for students, as well as readily available career and placement advice.

This criterion is met with commentary. Academic advising and career counseling services are available to students from the time of enrollment to graduation.

At the time of admission, graduate students are assigned an academic advisor by the chair of the department to which they have applied. Most faculty maintain some advising responsibilities. Every student must meet with his or her academic advisor prior to registration each academic term. Each department in the school also employs a program coordinator who is responsible for supporting the academic advising provided by faculty members. The program coordinator is typically the first point of contact for students and often addresses the routine curricular and registration activities. Prior to the beginning of the fall term, the school holds an orientation for all incoming graduate students. Students may request a change in their academic advisor at any time, and some do so, typically seeking a better alignment of educational, research or career goals. Academic advisors are mentors to students, guiding their careers and assisting in socialization to the profession of public health. UAB hosts several orientation sessions throughout the summer for freshmen and throughout the year for transfer students. Academic advisors meet with all incoming students individually to help with registration for classes.

The Office of Career Services provides students with a variety of seminars and workshops throughout the year. This office provides support for resume writing and interviewing skills along with electronic distribution of job and internship announcements and other self-help aids accessed from the school's website. The university's Career and Professional Development Office assigns career consultants to the school to assist students in career development and preparation.

At the time of graduation, every student completes an exit interview that assesses student satisfaction with advising and career counseling services. For the academic years of 2012, 2013 and 2014, 86% to 92% of the students who completed the exit interview reported satisfaction with their academic advising; 89% to 98% agreed that faculty were easy to access; and 77% to 90% agreed that they received adequate guidance for selection of their department and track. The accounts of most students who met with site visitors corroborate exit survey data. Many appreciated the clear guidance they received from

their advisors and how helpful they are. A few students from the Department of Health Behavior, however, reported that their advisors were not as helpful or informed about curricular requirements.

The commentary relates to a sudden decline in student satisfaction with career counseling. Among 2013 graduates, 38% reported using the school's career counseling services and, of those who did, 85% rated such services as excellent or good. Among those who graduated during the 2014 academic year, 49% reported using the school's career counseling services. Only 41% of students who responded to the most recent exit survey, however, rated those services as excellent or good. Faculty attribute the sharp drop to a period of time in which a career counselor was unavailable—the career counselor left during that year, and there was a delay in hiring a replacement. Now that a new staff member has been hired, the school expects satisfaction rates to reverse. Increasing the awareness of the career services support in the school is a goal as well as improving the quality of the services. The new liaison to the UAB Career Services is a 100% FTE position in the school and serves as the liaison to UAB Career Services. Additionally, the school has someone from UAB Career Services who is assigned to the school. This new structure is expected to provide more direct career services to students, plus bring the expertise of the UAB Career Services. In the prior model, the career services 40% FTE served all students at UAB rather than only public health. Students who met with site visitors reported an abundance of career counseling and consistent communication in this area, which suggests that the school's recent efforts are working. Finally, it is worth noting that the UAB Career & Professional Development has developed and is currently implementing a plan specific for the UAB School of Public Health to enhance career services for graduate and undergraduate students.

UAB's Graduate School grievance policy is listed on the website. Normally, such complaints are resolved quickly through discussion with the involved faculty. In rare situations where such resolution does not occur, the student contacts the chair of the appropriate department to file a formal grievance. If the matter cannot be settled within the department, the student may appeal to the associate dean of academic and strategic programs. If the administrative officer is unsuccessful in resolving the complaint, it may then be forwarded in writing to the provost or a designee for further consideration. In addition to the formal grievance procedure, the Public Health Student Association meets with the dean on an annual basis to discuss student concerns. There have been no formal grievances in the last three years.

Agenda

COUNCIL ON EDUCATION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH
ACCREDITATION SITE VISIT

University of Alabama at Birmingham
School of Public Health

December 14-16, 2015

Monday, December 14, 2015

8:30 am	<u>Request for Additional Documents</u> Donna Arnett	
8:45 am	<u>Executive Session</u>	
9:30 am	<u>Meeting with Core Leadership Team</u> Max Michael Donna Arnett Peter Ginter David Allison Suzanne Judd Andy Rucks April Carson Lisa McCormick	
10:45 am	<u>Break</u>	
11:00 am	<u>Meeting with Self-Study Committee</u> Donna Arnett Peter Ginter Max Michael Andy Rucks	
11:45 am	<u>Break</u>	
12:00 pm	<u>Lunch with Students</u> Erin Burns Mallory Cases Whitney Smith Remi Myers Justin Leach Raina Brooks Praful Schroff Timothy Adewale Sam Blount Alex Ream Jawanza Foster Spencer Porch April Hoge	
1:30 pm	<u>Break</u>	
1:45 pm	<u>Meeting with Instructional Programs Group 1 (MPH, DrPH, Joint Degrees)</u> Jeff Szychowski Julie Preskitt Dale Dickinson Robin Lanzi Olivia Affuso Kimberly Hawkins King Della Daniel Brenda Campbell Julie Brown Cheryl Johnson Lisa McCormick	

3:00 pm	<u>Break</u>
3:15 pm	<u>Executive Session</u>
5:00 pm	<u>Adjourn</u>

Tuesday, December 15, 2015

8:30 am	<u>Meeting with Faculty Related to Research, Service, Workforce Development</u>
	David Allison
	Virginia Howard
	Claudiu Lungu
	Ryan Irvin
	Justin Blackburn
	Olivia Affuso
	Lisa McCormack
	Suzy Davies
	Martha Wingate

| 9:45 am | <u>Break</u> |

10:00 am	<u>Meeting with Instructional Programs Group 2 (BS, MS, MSPH, PhD Degrees)</u>
	Suzanne Judd
	Nicole Gravitt
	Henna Budhwani
	David Redden
	Russell Griffin
	Robin Lanzi
	Dale Dickinson
	David Becker
	Cheryl Johnson

| 11:15 am | <u>Executive Session</u> |

12:00 pm	<u>Lunch with Alumni and Community Stakeholders</u>
	Beth Kitchin
	Mazi Rasulnia
	Shauntice Allen
	Bill Bryant
	Bryn Manzella
	Heather Lee
	Anna McConnell
	Carlos Robinson
	Kadie Peters

| 1:30 pm | <u>Break</u> |

1:45 pm	<u>Meeting with University Leadership</u>
	Linda Lucas
	Suzanne Austin

| 2:15 pm | <u>Executive Session</u> |

3:00 pm	<u>Meeting with Faculty and Staff Related to Faculty Issues, Student Recruitment, Advising</u>
	Craig Wilson
	Bisakha (Pia) Sen
	Suzy Davies
	Claudiu Lungu
	Suzanne Judd
	Bertha Hidalgo
	Angela Sullivan
	Nicole Gravitt

| 4:00 pm | <u>Executive Session</u> |

| 5:30 pm | <u>Adjourn</u> |

Wednesday, December 16, 2015

 9:00 am   Executive Session and Report Preparation

12:30 pm   Exit Interview