

## IUPUI GAC Reviewer Form

**Reviewer:**

**School:**

**Department:**

**Email:**

**Date Reviewed:** 3/6/09

**Documents Reviewed:** Proposal for PhD in Epidemiology from the Department of Public Health

### Summary of Proposal:

#### 1. Are the goals clear and achievable?

The goals of this proposal are clear, to train graduate students leading to a PhD in Epidemiology. This type of program would clearly benefit the Indiana University School of Medicine, as well as the State of Indiana. It is difficult to determine however, if at this time, the goal is achievable.

#### 2. Is the program academically sound?

Overall, they have developed a sound academic plan that appears comparable to other graduate schools that also award the same degree.

#### 3. Are faculty resources available to offer this certificate without undercutting other key missions of the unit?

It does not appear at this time that the Department of Public Health have enough faculty to successfully implement this program.

#### 4. Is there overlap, either real or potential, with any other unit that could harm the program or be exploited to help the program?

No

#### 5. My recommendation, comments/concerns regarding this proposal...

As far as the big picture, the difficulty with this proposal is the limited number of primary faculty who are involved in the implementation and running of the program. The hiring of three additional primary faculty is critical to their success from both a teaching standpoint and having enough faculty who will be able to direct a student's dissertation research. Of course, this could create other problems for the department if the new hires are junior faculty who are trying to establish themselves while also learning the ropes of training students.

While the list of adjunct faculty is helpful for student committees and teaching classes, it is unclear which of these faculty would be able to direct a student's dissertation. Perhaps more information on this would be helpful.

As far as minor concerns, the following points need clarification.

-When are the additional courses slated to begin, and who is teaching them?

-How would someone do this on a part-time basis?

-Under clientele to be served, it states:

" The potential candidates for the Ph.D. will consist primarily of graduates of any accredited M.P.H. program, or related health professions programs. While it is expected that most applicants will have graduated from a previous M.P.H. or graduate health professional program, students with baccalaureate level training along with **substantial professional experience** will not be excluded." It is not clear what the highlighted words mean or how they could be applied. Why can't a BS enter the program, as our other graduate programs on campus all admit BS/BA students?

-Why would a LSAT or PSAT be used for admission?

-Would a student be allowed to minor in any department at the IUSM?

-Clarification of the following areas-

**a. Preliminary Examination**

The preliminary examination will be taken after completion of the four required courses: Survey Methods, Analysis of Case Control Studies, Analysis of Cohort Studies, and Applied Multivariate Analysis in Public Health.

What is the purpose of this exam, in relation to the typical qualifying exam at IU?

**b. Ph.D. Advisor**

The Department of Public health will assign the student to an advisory committee no later than one year after admission to the Ph.D. program. The advisory committee will include at least two epidemiologists; one member may be from another discipline. The advisory committee will approve the student's program of study and counsel the student until he or she passes the qualifying examination.

Does the student have the opportunity to work with several different faculty to determine where they might want to work on their dissertation research? The proposal does not define who is the advisor, only a committee. Are all faculty listed in the proposal able to direct such a dissertation, and who will determine which ones are allowed?

**c. Qualifying Examinations**

The qualifying examination will cover the subject matter on which the dissertation work will be based and will be taken after the coursework for the Ph.D. has been completed. Students who fail the qualifying examination are normally allowed to retake it only once.

Is this in line with IU Graduate School policy, as an oral exam, or combination of written and oral?

-Would it be better to initiate a program leading to a Doctorate in Public Health?

Based on these concerns, I think additional information must be provided prior to approval.