

NMSU Public Health Update

Department of Health Science
Spring 2011



this issue

Welcome by Dr. Kittleson

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Greetings to Friends and Alums of NMSU

What an absolute thrill it has been for me to join the ranks of the finest faculty in the country. I took over as Academic Head of the Department of Health Science on January 3. With the support and patience from the faculty, staff, and administration, I am slowly getting a grasp on the job. I was impressed with the students and faculty prior to my taking this job, but as I spent more time around both groups I am becoming more convinced that one cannot find a more compassionate and caring group of people.

Based on my analysis, New Mexico State University may be the only institution that has an accredited undergraduate program in Community Health Education as well as an accredited MPH. This speaks volume for our faculty and as a student you can be especially proud. As a land grant institution, NMSU is committed to providing service to students and the community—something in which our faculty excel.

There are many exciting things about to happen here at NMSU. Our website, undergoing major renovation, has a new URL: <http://publichealth.nmsu.edu>. We want (and (cont'd p. 2)



CEPH Update

In late October 2010, the MPH program had its accreditation site visit. The Council for Education in Public Health will make its decision in June 2011 as to whether the program will retain its accreditation. Based on the site team's exit interview, the program excelled in almost all of the criteria, and the remaining issues are currently being addressed by our Graduate Coordinator Dr. Jim Robinson. We are confident that the program will retain its accreditation when CEPH meets this June.

Follow Us on Twitter

The New Mexico State University's Public Health program is now on Twitter. After registering with a Twitter account, sign up to follow 'NMSUMPH'.

Greetings Continued (from page 1)

need) your input. We are creating an alum site that prospective students can access to hear about your experiences while earning your MPH. If you would like to be considered for this 'alum' page, send us a good quality photo, your contact information (i.e., phone and email), and a brief statement about your experience here at NMSU.

We also need helping updating our files. Please send me data about you and what you are doing (name, work information, email, phone numbers) so we can get this list up-to-date. We are planning some exciting things in the future and we want to make sure you are kept informed.

The department is currently involved in a search for a biostatistician. We hope to fill the position before the fall semester. In addition, we are in the process of starting a search for an epidemiologist. I am hoping that in our next newsletter we'll be able to highlight these individuals.

A little bit about me. I come from Southern Illinois University where I was Professor and the Graduate Director for the Health Education program. SIU has always had a strong PhD program in health education and recently (2005) converted its MS in Community Health to an MPH in Community Health Education. In fact, SIU's site visit from CEPH was held in September (with similar results as NMSU's). During my 22 years at *Southern* I advised approximately 20 PhD students and I served on an additional 60 doctoral committees. When we had the MS in Community Health we required a thesis...I oversaw approximately 40 of those students as well.

I am probably best known for the creation of the HEDIR (1992), a large listserv that allows health educators from throughout the

world to have instantaneous contact. For those interested in joining the 1500 plus group, go to www.hedir.org and click the 'Sign up' link. (or go to <http://hedir.org/the-hedir/faqs/>).

I also lay claim to fame in being the first to create the first peer-reviewed health education journal that was completely on-line (1998). It was so successful I was able to sell it to AAHE in 2001. I now chuckle at the fact that almost all professional journals are now on-line. I remember several editors who, in the late 90s, strongly discouraged me from creating an on-line journal.

I'm excited about my new position. As the Head of the Health Science Department, I view my job as threefold:

- Help the faculty in the department be as efficient and as successful as they can be;
- Provide every student with an incredible educational experience;
- Make all alumni feel as if they are important and an integral part of the program^a

I am committed to these three goals and hope that it will allow the NMSU Public Health program to continue to flourish and service the people of New Mexico (and the surrounding area).

Please keep us posted on exciting things that are happening to you so we can share them in future newsletters. If you are around campus, please feel free to stop in and say hello. If you have any questions, ideas, or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me at kittle@nmsu.edu.

Mark J. Kittleson, PhD, FAAHB, FAAHE

Professor and Head

'We ARE Public Health'

^a Courtesy of Adrian Hanson, Civil Engineering



Jeff Brandon Retires

Dr. Jeff Brandon, former Department Head of Health Science, and former Dean of the College of Health and Social Services, officially retired on December 31, 2010. Dr. Brandon leaves a legacy of great service to the college and university. Under his leadership, the Department of Health Science saw both the undergraduate and graduate programs become accredited. He was successful at recruiting some highly talented faculty into the Department.

Jeff and his wife Teresa will continue to teach for the department on a part-time basis, as well as serve the department in other ways. Both will enjoy retirement by traveling. We wish both Jeff and Teresa the best of retirement and thank them for years of selfless work on behalf of the department, college and NMSU.

Donna L. Wagner Hired

Dr. Donna Wagner, formerly director of the Center for Productive Aging at Towson University (Maryland) was appointed associate dean of academic affairs. She started January 3, 2011, and will be involved in many of the curricular and accreditation issues of the departments within the College. Dr. Wagner's academic appointment is in the School of Social Work.

Dr. Wagner has a deep passion for aging issues and will be working with NMSU officials to continue providing advanced training for health professionals.



Update on Faculty

Dr. Michael Young was recently appointed as Chair of the Board of Associate Editors of the *American Journal of Health Education*.

Dr. Mark Kittleson is being awarded with the HEDIR Technology Award at the AAHE San Diego Conference. March 29-April 2.

Dr. Sue Forster-Cox was recently appointed to the Southwest Public Health Leadership Institute/Leaders Across the Border, hosted by the University of Arizona.

Dr. Cindy Kratzke will be a co-facilitator with Dr. Monica Torres, English Department, for the Cross-cultural Communications Workshop (BaFá BaFá) at the Teaching Academy in February.

Dr. Stephen Arnold is back full-time with the faculty after serving as interim head and interim associate dean for the past several years. The Department of Health Science welcomes him back to faculty ranks and looks forward to his continued leadership and effective advisement of both undergraduates and graduates.

Dr. Cindy Kratzke is working with Dr. Rev. Margaret Short, Memorial Medical Center, to write an article regarding their health communication project at the hospital. Their research was presented in December 2010 at the 16th annual Multiracial and Multicultural Rural Health Conference in Tucson.

Dr. Rebecca Palacios traveled to Seattle to visit the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research

Center for the purpose of identifying a potential research partnership. As a result of this visit, she will be working with Dr. Jonathon Bricker from FHCR to develop a grant study that will examine the effectiveness of two interventions for obesity in Hispanics.

Dr. Forster-Cox is also working with campus officials in celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Peace Corps and the two NMSU PC programs: USA/Fellows and the Masters International programs. Both of these programs are in CHSS and the College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences.

Dr. Chuck Kozel has been asked to service on a National Strategic Plan Implementation Committee, co-chaired by Rick Cain and Past President Diane Allensworth, will work to implement the plan and develop a dashboard of indicators to monitor progress.

Graduate Students Update

- Andrew Vernon, Elva Palmer, and Dr. Cindy Kratzke recently had a presentation accepted for the SOPHE Mid-Year Conference to be held in Albuquerque. This presentation (*Barriers to Health Communication: Readability of Chronic Disease Information on Pan American Health Organization U.S.-Mexico Border Office Web Site*) was a class project in MPH 572—Techniques of Communications in Health Education completed by both Vernon and Palmer under the supervision of Dr. Kratzke.
- Aisha Kudura, Savannah Pierson, and Dr. Cindy Kratzke also had an abstract accepted for Mid-Year SOPHE: *Diabetes and Diet: Evaluation of Online Health Materials for Older Adults and Implications for Health Education*
- Aisha Kudura recently participated in an interview for a research internship at NIH-National Cancer Institute. The interview went really well and Aisha is coordinating plans for a year-long internship after she graduates.
- The first cohort of 16 online MPH students will be proudly proceeding toward graduation in May.

Important Dates

- Deadline for on-campus MPH applications: March 15; deadline for on-line MPH students, April 1
- American Association of Health Education annual conference, March 30-April 2, San Diego
- The First NMSU Social at AAHE; tentatively scheduled for Thursday, March 31, 5:30-7:30 at the Rock Bottom Restaurant (Gaslight District of San Diego).
- NM Public Health Association annual meeting, April 27-28, 2011, Albuquerque, NM
- SOPHE Mid-Year Scientific Meeting, May 1-4, Albuquerque, NM
- NMSU Spring Break March 21-25
- NMSU Commencement, May 7
- American Public Health Association's annual conference, Washington, DC, October 29-November 2



Undergraduate Students Update

- Stephanie Padilla has been selected by the American Association of Health Education (AAHE)'s Major of the Year. She will receive recognition at this year's conference in San Diego. Congratulations, Stephanie!
- Congratulations to Nancy Martinez for landing a full-time job at the Dona Ana County Health and Human Services. This past semester Nancy has served as the department's receptionist and 'unofficial advisor'. We'll miss her but wish her luck!

Our Mission: To provide academic, professional, and service excellence in preparing community health education professionals who will demonstrate competent leadership, innovation, and technical expertise at local, state, and national levels, with particular emphasis on border and rural health problems in communities along the U.S./Mexico border.

New Mexico State University
Department of Health Science
'We Are Public Health'

<http://publichealth.nmsu.edu>

575-646-4300 ph
575-646-4343 fax