

Dean's Council (DC)

April 21, 2008

**Minutes**

Present: Dr. Albertsen, Dr. Deckers, Dr. Egan, Dr. Fortinsky, Dr. Gould, Dr. Jacob, Dr. Nissen, Dr. Pappano, Dr. Simon

Excused: Dr. Arnold, Mr. Gillon, Dr. Koeppen, Dr. Lalande, Dr. Loew

Guest: Dr. Hepworth

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 p.m. In Dr. Koeppen's absence, Dr. Pappano chaired the meeting.

1. The minutes of the March 10, 2008 and March 17, 2008 meetings were unanimously approved.
2. Department of Community Medicine and Health Care Review

At the March 10, 2008 Dean's Council meeting, Dr. Babor and members of the Department of Community Medicine and Health Care review team discussed the review report. Dr. Pappano summarized the recommendations of the review team, which include the following: creation of a coherent institutional strategy for public health; creation of a departmental planning process; consider partnering Community Medicine with a clinical department; implementation of a formal mentoring program for junior faculty members; consider moving the Masters in Public Health (MPH) program back to Community Medicine; address the deficiency in administrative support. In addition, in his response to the report, Dr. Babor also asked that he be allowed to do the following: develop a WHO Collaborating Center for research training in substance abuse; form academic partnerships with State agencies; and build a center for health policy and bioethics. It was noted that Dr. Babor's requests were not clearly stated in the self-study and that the DC may require further information before making recommendations on them. Dr. Pappano explained that the DC must now make a recommendation to the Dean advising him on actions they feel should be taken.

Dr. Deckers was asked to share his perspective on some of these issues. He explained that several years ago, an extensive Board of Directors planning retreat was conducted out of which came a clear commitment to public health and safety and quality. Concomitant was a review he commissioned of the MPH program to determine its strengths and weaknesses. The panel recommended ways to augment the Masters Program, as well as creation of a Ph.D. degree program for those interested in an education in public health. The panel noted that our strengths in public health were considerable, and suggested that the institution also consider establishing a School of Public Health. Dr. Deckers then invited Deans of public health schools to review our strengths in public health, and they concluded that the University had more strengths than many public health schools nationally. As a result, the Center for Public Health and Health Policy (CPHHP) was created, replacing the Connecticut Health signature program, and Dr. Eileen Storey was asked to direct it. It seemed reasonable to Dr. Deckers that the MPH program be seated in the Center and that the Department of Community Medicine and Health Care would be a major player in the Center and would fold into a new School of Public Health. However, due to some interpersonal relationships, non-clarity of reporting structures, and the decision not to establish a School of Public Health, the plan has not succeeded. There have recently been discussions about synergies that exist between Community Medicine, the CPHHP, and the Departments of Family Medicine, Pediatrics, and Internal Medicine, and a Synergy Project was formed to create a common platform and bring these various entities together. Dr. Hepworth, who chairs the Synergy Project, added that the group is in the process of developing their report. In formulating its recommendations, and in light of the institution's limited resources, Dr. Deckers asked the DC to consider what departments and centers are necessary for a strong public health effort to be realized. When asked whether the DC's recommendation will be held for the new Dean, Dr. Deckers responded that he has been asked to refrain from making major decisions until a new Dean is in place, but he believes it would be to his successor's advantage to have the DC's recommendations on this and other reviews. He again noted his desire for public health to succeed, but the appropriate configuration needs to be decided.

Dr. Deckers then left the meeting, and discussion ensued. Of particular note was Community Medicine's importance to the CTSA application and Dr. Babor's active involvement in that initiative. The appropriate home for the MPH program, and possible implications of moving it back to the Department of Community Medicine and Health Care, were also discussed.

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Following discussion, the DC agreed that some of their recommendations can be made to Dr. Deckers for immediate action and others clearly need to be advisory to the incoming Dean. Recommendations will be drafted and circulated to the members for discussion at the next meeting. With DC's permission, Dr. Jacob will provide a verbal report to Dr. Babor.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Monday, May 19, from 3:30-5 p.m. in the Walker Academic Affairs Conference Room, AG-070.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Donatelli