



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

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CONF. COURSES - GILLUM, JACOBS,
LUEPKER, KOTTKE, PRINEAS

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CONFIDENTIAL

TO: Richard Gillum, David Jacobs, Russell Luepker, Thomas Kottke,
Ronald Prineas

FROM: Henry Blackburn

SUBJECT: Epidemiology Merger

For your information I am sharing, with Ron Prineas, the responsibility of meeting with various consumers of Epidemiology training in the School of Public Health and on campus. A thorough understanding on our part of their needs, and perceived needs, should improve our preparation for upcoming responsibilities. Diplomatically, an expression of our interest and concern for their interests should also help smoothe the transition and reduce anxiety which is natural in any transition. This worry has been rather encouraged by the negative mentality and expressions of our colleagues in Epidemiology who are not exactly doing their best to make the transition pleasant and optimistic with their staff or the community.

First interview: Don Barber, Director, Environmental Health PH 5-330.

The Epidemiology I course is needed and popular and is needed in both Fall and Winter quarters. On the other hand, the main conflict with scheduling, and trauma they had in dealing with Epidemiology, has to do with Epidemiology's "overwhelming" requirement for five credit hours, a third of a student load for that course. They have repeatedly asked for reduction to three credits.

PH 5-333 has been used as an alternative course when conflicts with scheduling occurred, as has the summer Epi course, which is also very popular. (Our colleagues in Epidemiology do not regard the summer course as an adequate substitute for Epidemiology I.)

The communicable disease Epidemiology course, PH 5-343, and environmental and occupational epidemiology course have been popular and are considered important to maintain.

There is a strong perceived need on the part of Environmental Health students and faculty for a well-stated series of requirements for a minor in Epidemiology.

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There is a graduate training offering in Environmental Health called "Environmental Health, Biometry and Epidemiology" directed by Donald Vesley. It has had, until recently, fellowship support. This is now gone but the offering continues. This involves no shared courses (there is very little exchange of lectures between Epidemiology and this division), but is a package which they want to continue.

The most "popular courses" in Epidemiology on the part of Environmental Health students and faculty are listed below:

5-330, 5-333, 5-335, 5-340, 5-343, 5-363, 8-340, and the Summer Course.

Clearly, we will need to keep the environmental-occupational epi course going. Dr. Barber was generally positive about Jack Mandel representing this area of training for us in case a new faculty member is not acquired who has those precise skills.

I reassured him finally that after merger we would have a strong emphasis in the environment, that there would be no major changes in the offerings and that any eventual changes would be gradual.

We also discussed researches and collaboration between LPH, Epidemiology and Environmental Health.

The Iron Range Study was the principal topic of conversation. An important meeting will be held in Eveleth next week to address management issues precipitated by the following factors:

1. An insufficiently vigorous direction on the part of the University of Minnesota Epidemiology component with resultant delays and bureaucratic type operational problems.
2. Acute difficulties precipitated by shutdown of the mines, which eliminates much of the possibility of study during operation, or contacts with employees.
3. Extension vs. reapplication for funds, with the unlikelihood expressed of funds available from the current collaborative source. (Alternatives: NIH, Bureau of Mines, AID.)
4. Renewal application plans to those sources.

Dr. Barber felt that there should be new vigorous leadership in which Environmental Health and Epidemiology are co-equals. He indicated some dissatisfactions with Epidemiology management and some operational problems between the coordinator B. Specter and the Environmental Health faculty in

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the cumbersome clearance mechanisms established by Epidemiology. He indicated that it was conceivable she was effective enough as coordinator that the study could run under her guidance and existing faculty, if there were to be a delay in appointment of a new principal investigator.

/jml

P.S.: May I also request that you not discuss anything with anyone about policy after we merge. The present faculty are running so scared and the rumors are so rife that we should not feed the fire. I will consult with you and then make policy.
Thanks.