

Provide leadership for University and Medical Campus initiative
Grow master's level degree programs ▪ Strengthen the research
program ▪ Expand efforts in health system transformation ▪ Enhance
faculty development ▪ Strengthen doctoral programs ▪ Build a center for
services center ▪ Provide leadership for University and Medical Campus
initiatives ▪ Grow master's level degree programs ▪ Strengthen the
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enhance faculty development ▪ Strengthen doctoral programs ▪

Investing for a Healthier World

Strategic Plan 2010-2015



Table of Contents

Investing For a Healthier World Strategic Plan 2010-2015

Executive Summary.....	page 1
Introduction.....	page 2
Addressing Important Public Health Challenges.....	page 3
Our Overarching Themes.....	page 5
Key Issues.....	page 5
Our Goals.....	page 6
Appendices.....	page 14

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Executive Summary

The Boston University School of Public Health (BUSPH) is a globally recognized leader in graduate education and public health research. Successive five-year strategic planning efforts over the last 15 years, undertaken by the faculty and administration, have been instrumental in enabling the School to grow successfully, to meet the challenges of an ever more complex operating environment and to take advantage of emerging opportunities.

The planning process used to develop this plan provided the School's planning committee with insight into our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. We also imagined the future to try to determine the trends in public health, health care, and graduate education, so that we could consider these trends when thinking about how to prepare for the future. We met with faculty, staff, students, alumni, leaders of other schools at Boston University, and the School's Dean's Advisory Board to get as broad a view as possible of the important issues facing the School and how we might deal with them. These insights have defined the context for this plan and have informed the selection of the plan's overarching themes and the specification of the plan's strategic goals and objectives.

In anticipation of both our new strategic plan and our participation in the University's comprehensive fund-raising campaign, we asked ourselves: Where can we invest our resources to have the most impact? At BUSPH, we have decided to focus much of our energy and resources over the next several years helping to address four vital public health challenges: ensuring affordable, quality health care; creating a clean environment; eliminating health disparities; and promoting health globally. These are complex issues that will require commitment and focus from our faculty, our students, and our supporters. Successfully addressing these four challenges is what we aspire to achieve over the next decade as a school, and this strategic plan provides a blueprint to tackle these challenges.

As we progressed during the planning process, three overarching themes emerged that guide this strategic plan: To become a top-tier school of public health; to influence the future of public health; and to lead collaborative efforts involving the Medical Campus and the University. Our new strategic plan contains a set of seven goals which, if implemented successfully, will address our three planning themes.

Our seven goals are:

- Provide leadership for University-wide and Medical Campus initiatives related to public health education, research and practice.
- Grow the master's level degree programs while maintaining high admission standards.
- Strengthen the research program through focused investment in four areas: community based participatory research, pharmaceutical policy, healthy aging, and genetics.
- Grow and strengthen the School's academic and professional doctoral programs.
- Expand School-wide efforts in health system transformation.
- Enhance faculty development efforts School-wide.
- Build a career services center that enhances employment prospects for BUSPH students and alumni.

Introduction

Founded in 1976, Boston University School of Public Health is today a globally recognized leader in graduate education and public health research. The School offers eight academic concentrations; Biostatistics; Environmental Health; Epidemiology; Health Law, Bioethics and Human Rights; Health Policy and Management; International Health; Maternal and Child Health; and Social and Behavioral Sciences. The School enrolls more than 700 full- and part-time students from more than 40 countries in an array of master's, doctoral and dual-degree programs. Simultaneously the School has grown into a first-rate research institution: more than one hundred and fifty full-time faculty members conduct a broad range of leading public health research and scholarship (\$41 million in grant awards in 2009-2010), placing the School in the vanguard of public health research.

Successive five-year strategic planning efforts over the last 15 years, undertaken by the faculty and administration, have been instrumental in enabling the School to grow successfully, to meet the challenges of an ever more complex operating environment and to take advantage of emerging opportunities.

To create this new strategic plan, BUSPH employed the collaborative strategic planning model. As its name suggests, this model involves many stakeholder groups and uses the information those groups provide to help build a strategic plan based on the collective wisdom of the entire community. The result is a plan that is truly “of the School.”

The year-long planning process provided the School's planning committee with insight into our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. We also imagined the future to try to determine the trends in public health, health care, and graduate education, so that we could consider them when thinking about how to prepare for the future. We met with faculty, staff, students, alumni, leaders of other schools at Boston University and our Dean's Advisory Board to get as broad a view as possible of the important issues facing the School and how we might deal with them. These insights have defined the context for this plan and have informed the selection of the plan's overarching themes and the specification of the plan's strategic goals and objectives.

Addressing Important Public Health Challenges

In anticipation of both our new strategic plan and our participation in the University's comprehensive fund-raising campaign, we asked ourselves: where can we invest our resources to have the most impact? At BUSPH, we have decided to focus much of our energy and resources over the next several years helping to address four vital public health challenges: ensuring affordable, quality health care; creating a clean environment; eliminating health disparities; and promoting health globally. These are complex issues that will require commitment and focus from our faculty, our students, and our supporters.

Successfully addressing these four challenges is what we aspire to achieve over the next decade as a school. This strategic plan provides a blueprint to tackle these challenges; our fund-raising efforts will provide the finances necessary to make a difference. Here is an overview of these challenges:

Ensuring Affordable, Quality Health Care

Our faculty and students are at the center of the ongoing national health care debate, planning a health care system infrastructure that can be more effective, and serving on government panels that will decide which measures of care quality the nation will adopt. Alumni such as U.S. Assistant Secretary for Health Howard Koh (SPH'95) and United Health Group Executive Vice President Jeannine Rivet (SPH'81) are currently making policy-shaping decisions on a national level. BUSPH faculty are committed to studying ways to streamline and improve how doctors care for patients, and how patients navigate the web of services offered through their health care programs. We recognize the key importance of disease prevention. By preventing disease, public health enables people to live healthier, more productive lives and consequently reduces the burden of costly treatments on the health care system. There are few domestic health care issues as pressing, and we are committed to making an impact to ensure that affordable, quality health care is available to all.

Creating a Clean Environment

Today, people around the world recognize the relationship between a healthy environment and a healthy public. There is a growing commitment to reducing environmental toxins and to addressing climate change by adopting sustainable energy and resource practices. That's the good news. The bad news is that there is still an enormous amount of work ahead of us, and this is why BUSPH has chosen to address the issue. The public health professionals we train today will grapple with today's environmental threats — and confront tomorrow's. At BUSPH, we are committed to investigating environmental challenges in homes, schools, and workplaces, and to using our findings to help expand public knowledge, promote smarter policies, and generate cleaner environments.

[continued page 4](#)

Eliminating Health Disparities

Reducing inequalities in health across communities and populations is an important and urgent public health challenge, and this is why BUSPH has decided to make it one of our four areas of focus. At BUSPH, we are asking why inequalities arise in the first place, and we are discovering how to eliminate them. Our goal is to head off public health disparities before they arise to give individuals and communities the opportunity to flourish. That means mobilizing and empowering communities to take control of their own health, and working with those communities to determine which challenges should be our top priorities for study.

Promoting Health Globally

BUSPH is committed to addressing today's global health problems. We are working to improve the health of populations in resource-poor countries, driven by our mission to impart social change through applied research; and we are training the next generation of global health professionals to carry on that mission.

All of our global health research is carried out collaboratively with scientists from the countries where we do our work, ensuring that the expertise stays when our team leaves. In a world made smaller by high-speed transportation, Internet communication, and globalized financial and consumer markets, public health must be considered, planned, and pursued on a global scale. Conducting useful and culturally sensitive research not only furthers the health of nations, but engenders positive relationships between the U.S. and the rest of the world.

Participation in this work is the proper role of a great research university where intellectual talent and creative and practical expertise is broad and deep. BUSPH will play a central role in gathering and focusing the talents of the University's public health scientists, clinicians, economists, anthropologists, engineers, and social scientists in this work. We will expand our efforts to discover and deploy effective global health interventions and to help governments and NGOs use their limited public health resources most effectively.

Our Overarching Themes

Early in the planning process we reaffirmed our commitment to the School's mission: to improve the health of local, national, and international populations, particularly the disadvantaged, underserved and vulnerable, through excellence and innovation in education, research, and service. We then chose four public health challenges to focus our efforts in research, education and practice.

As we progressed during the planning process, three overarching and interrelated themes emerged that guide this strategic plan: To become a top-tier school of public health; to influence the future of public health; and to lead collaborative efforts involving the Medical Campus and the University. Our ability to have a greater influence on the future of public health will be enhanced if the School is recognized by students, peers, our campus, our University and the community as a top-tier school.

Our Planning Challenge

Our strategic plan contains a set of goals and objectives that if implemented successfully will address our three planning themes.

With this plan:

- We will grow BUSPH, to meet the increasing demand for excellent graduate public health education and highly skilled practicing professionals.
- We will support and strengthen our faculty, intensify our focus on teaching, and provide ever-improving educational experiences and opportunities for our students.
- We will expand our research and practice agenda in areas in which we already excel so that we can respond quickly to public health challenges that have not yet emerged.
- With this plan, we will build a stronger School, better able to protect and advance the public's health.

Key Issues

The following key issues provide the context for our 5-year goals and objectives:

- BUSPH ranks 13th among 43 accredited schools of public health in the most recent USN&WR ratings (2007). These ratings are based solely on peer perceptions provided to the magazine by three individuals at each accredited school (the Dean, Associate Dean for Research, and Associate Dean for Education).
- Academic public health is experiencing strong and steady growth. Multiple new schools and programs have been opened and/or accredited every year for the past decade, and that pace shows no sign of slackening. Admission applications to schools of public health are growing at a healthy rate, and undergraduate interest in public health is booming.
- BUSPH has become increasingly integrated with Boston University and its strategic directions in education, research, and administration. Major examples of collaboration include the Center for Global Health and Development and five-year dual BA/MPH and BS/MPH degree programs.
- BUSPH's operating budget is generated from a combination of research grants (65%) and tuition revenues (35%), which is roughly a reversal of the percentages generated by these activities 15 years ago. Surplus income for investment in new initiatives comes almost exclusively from tuition income.
- Doctoral programs contribute importantly to the research program of a school and to its reputation. With doctoral students comprising only 14% of its student body, BUSPH has a somewhat smaller doctoral program than its comparison schools.

Our Seven Goals

Each of our five-year goals was created to advance one or more of our overarching themes. Our seven goals are:

- > Provide leadership for University-wide and Medical Campus initiatives related to public health education, research, and practice.
- > Grow the master's level degree programs while maintaining high admission standards.
- > Strengthen the research program through focused investment in four areas: community-based participatory research, pharmaceutical policy, healthy aging, and genetics.
- > Grow and strengthen the School's academic and professional doctoral programs.
- > Expand School-wide efforts in health system transformation.
- > Enhance faculty development efforts School-wide.
- > Build a career services center that enhances employment prospects for BUSPH students and alumni.

GOAL:

Provide leadership for University-wide and Medical Campus collaborations relating to public health education, research and practice

The interdisciplinary nature of public health lends itself to University-wide collaborations. BUSPH is committed to pursuing important partnerships with faculty on the Medical Campus and across the University that build on our expertise and expand opportunities in our core businesses of education, research and practice. Given the increasing importance of undergraduate public health education, BUSPH plans on expanding its

current offerings to undergraduates while strategically implementing new offerings in areas of high interest. Given the University's interest in partnering with Arizona State University (ASU), we will work with ASU to develop educational offerings that leverage our educational strengths while working to develop expertise in distance learning. We will also expand our global health presence in collaboration with new University initiatives in locations such as India. On the Medical Campus, we will take a leadership role in developing a substance abuse center that builds on our decade long investment in projects such as Join Together and the Youth Alcohol Center.

Objectives:

Expand current course offerings for undergraduates

- Timeframe: 1-2 years
- Person(s) responsible: Associate Dean for Education
- Outcome Measures: New courses developed, enrollments increased, and favorable evaluations received

Expand public health minors

- Timeframe: 3-5 years
- Person(s) responsible: Associate Dean for Education
- Outcome Measures: One new minor, grow enrollments

Develop new 4+1 programs in concert with SED and SMG

- Timeframe: 3-5 years
- Person(s) responsible: Associate Dean for Education
- Outcome Measures: At least one new program

Develop new educational programs in partnership with Arizona State University (ASU) in concert with University efforts to develop relations with ASU

- Timeframe: 2 years

- Person(s) responsible: Associate Dean for Education
- Outcome measures: Successfully launch new MPH program at ASU

Develop new educational and research collaborations in Global Health in concert with University efforts to expand into new geographical areas

- Timeframe: 3-5 years
- Person(s) responsible: Associate Deans for Education, Research, Director CGHD
- Outcome Measures: New educational and research programs

Develop Substance Abuse Center in collaboration with MED and SDM

- Timeframe: 3-5 years
- Person(s) responsible: center director
- Outcome Measures: New center established and funded

GOAL:

Grow the master's level degree programs while maintaining high admission standards

BUSPH has decided to focus on increasing enrollment in the MPH program for four reasons:

> A heightened interest in public health and public service coupled with continued job growth in these areas is creating a demand for well-trained public health practitioners. Simultaneously, BUSPH's academic reputation has been increasing, creating a favorable climate for growth.

- > Educating more students to do the important work of public health around the world addresses the School's mission and helps BUSPH make a difference in the world.
- > Increased enrollments will contribute some of the funds needed to finance new initiatives.
- > Increased enrollment will allow the School to maintain its current 1/3 tuition-to-2/3 research income distribution, ensuring a relatively stable and reliable source of funds to cover fixed operating costs.

Objectives:

Build Admissions Customer Relationship Management Database

- Timeframe: 1 year
- Person(s) responsible: Enrollment committee, Assistant Dean for Admissions
- Outcome Measures: Better enrollment management

Increase new MPH admissions by 5% each year

- Timeframe: 5 years
- Person(s) responsible: Enrollment committee, Assistant Dean for Admissions
- Outcome Measures: Meet target numbers while maintaining student GPA, GRE scores

Develop new options for offering courses (distance or on-line courses, hybrid courses, multiple sections)

- Timeframe: 2 years
- Person(s) responsible: Associate Dean for Education
- Outcome Measures: Add new course selections, develop course enrollment guidelines

Grow and support faculty teaching commitment in concert with growing enrollments

- Timeframe: 5 years
- Person(s) responsible: Department chairs
- Outcome Measures: Adequate faculty to meet growing student requirements, enhanced incentives for teaching

Staff education and student support services as needed to handle additional enrollments

- Timeframe: 5 years
- Person(s) responsible: Associate Dean for Education
- Outcome Measures: Successful recruitments, improved student satisfaction

GOAL:

Strengthen the research program through focused investment in four areas: community-based participatory research (CBPR), pharmaceutical policy, healthy aging, and genetics

The School believes that focusing research investment in key fields will enable it to create a cohesive rationale for investment in new ideas, position itself to generate new funding and external support for research activities, and provide incentives for BUSPH faculty to engage in interdisciplinary research with high public health impact. The School envisions more center- and program-based initia-

tives because these models offer infrastructure and organizational frameworks to support robust and effective research collaborations. Future successful efforts to generate new scientific evidence in areas critical to public health over the next decade will continue to increase the School's visibility and reputation.

The four areas of focused investment are directly or indirectly linked to the four public health challenges that we are addressing as a school in the following ways:

- >CBPR is a major tool used to approach the issue of understanding and eliminating health disparities and in the implementation of public health research, especially intervention techniques.
- >Pharmaceutical policy decisions are key to ensuring affordable, quality health care for individuals and populations.
- >Interdisciplinary knowledge concerning healthy aging is essential to improving health care quality and addressing issues of health disparities, and it is of strategic importance globally.
- >Expertise in the technology, data management methodology and interpretation of genetics and genomics data is critical to addressing the public health research challenges associated with the environment, aging, health disparities and pharmaceutical policies.

Objectives:

Create new centers in the following areas: community-based participatory research, pharmaceutical policy, healthy aging, and genetics

- Timeframe: 2-5 years (depending on program)
- Person(s) responsible: Associate Dean for Research
- Outcome Measures: New center funding, increased research funding in targeted areas greater than School's investment

Emphasize integration of education, research and practice in the four new areas

- Timeframe: 1-3 years
- Person(s) responsible: Associate Deans for Research, Education and Practice

- Outcome Measures: New courses and course content and new practice opportunities around areas of research strength

Develop systematic approach to identifying and funding new research areas

- Timeframe: 1-2 years
- Person(s) responsible: Associate Dean for Research
- Outcome Measures: New target areas considered, funded if appropriate, success at obtaining grants

GOAL:

Grow and strengthen the school's academic and professional doctoral programs

The number and size of doctoral programs in schools of public health continue to grow. In all accredited schools of public health, approximately 24% of students are doctoral students. At BUSPH, approximately 14% of our students are in doctoral programs. Competitor schools, with one exception, have a higher proportion of their students in doctoral programs (Columbia (18%), Emory (14%), George Washington (5%), Tulane (14%), and

Yale (21%). Strong doctoral students make substantial contributions to the School's teaching and research efforts, and strong graduates have the potential to raise the School's visibility and enhance its reputation.

Objectives:

Develop and Enhance School-wide DrPH degree

- Timeframe: 3-5 years
- Person(s) responsible: Associate Dean for Education
- Outcome Measures: Courses and mentoring offered across many departments

Develop PhD programs in International Health (IH) and Community Health Sciences (CHS)

- Timeframe: 3-5 years
- Person(s) responsible: IH and CHS chairs
- Outcome Measures: Approved degree programs

Create teacher training programs for doctoral students

- Timeframe: 1 year
- Person(s) responsible: Associate Deans for Education and Research
- Outcome Measures: Doctoral students involved in teaching, teaching quality monitored

Develop and implement school-wide model for financing doctoral education

- Timeframe: 3-5 years
- Person(s) responsible: Associate Deans for Administration and Finance, Research and Education
- Outcome Measures: New model implemented

Participate in BU efforts to strengthen doctoral and postdoctoral programs

- Timeframe: 1-5 years
- Person(s) responsible: Associate Deans for Education and Research
- Outcome Measures: New postdoctoral fellowships created

Transfer oversight of PhD programs to the Associate Dean for Research

- Timeframe: 3 months
- Person(s) responsible: Associate Dean for Research
- Outcome Measures: Transfer completed

Move University biostatistics graduate program to BUSPH

- Timeframe: 4-5 years
- Person(s) responsible: Dean, Associate Dean for Research, department chair
- Outcome Measures: Transfer complete

GOAL:

Expand School-wide efforts in Health System Transformation

Many of our planning retreats identified the area of health system transformation as likely to be among the most important in public health over the next 5 years, and with the greatest potential to be the next “break-through” area for BUSPH. An exciting combination of external and internal factors led to this conclusion. The external factors include: strong enrollment trends for health system positions nationally; the size of the health

care sector and the range of employment opportunities it offers for MPH graduates; the stimulus provided by health care reform no matter what shape it takes, and the emerging importance of health systems in the developing world. The internal factors include: a strong and well-funded research program across several departments; a growing doctoral program in health services research; unique partnerships with the VA and with the BU Schools of Management and Law across several departments; and the University’s interest in developing health system transformation as an area of emphasis.

Objectives:

Build on existing School-wide expertise (quality assessment, outcomes measurement, pharmaceutical policy, health law, global health) and expand into new areas as appropriate

- Timeframe: 5 years
- Person(s) responsible: All Chairs, Associate Deans for Research and Planning
- Outcome Measures: Successful recruitments, center funded, new areas established

Recruit new Health Policy and Management department chair/center director

- Timeframe: 12-18 months
- Person(s) responsible: Dean
- Outcome Measures: Successful recruitment

Work with University Leadership to define BUSPH’s role in a University-wide program

- Timeframe: 6-12 months
- Person(s) responsible: Dean, Associate Dean for Planning
- Outcome Measures: N/A

GOAL:

Enhance faculty development efforts school-wide

Faculty are the most important resource for any institution of higher education. BU has explicitly recognized this by designating faculty as the number one priority in the University's strategic plan. BUSPH recognizes that faculty work is increasingly complex and challenging, and that faculty need and expect organizational support to help them improve their skills and succeed in their efforts as educators and scholars. While the faculty

at BUSPH have been extraordinarily successful in obtaining peer-reviewed grant funding for their work, the School cannot take this success for granted in an era of increasing competition for fewer available grant dollars. The School needs to provide career development opportunities for faculty to ensure their continued success as scholars. In addition, the School needs to support faculty in developing their teaching skills. Support for teaching will be increasingly important as the School moves to expand the size and scope of the teaching program while working to improve the quality of the program. New programs that support and provide tools and techniques for faculty are needed.

Objectives:

Identify a school leader for faculty development and diversity

- Timeframe: 4 months
- Person(s) responsible: Dean
- Outcome Measures: Appointment made

Develop and implement a training program for chairs in faculty mentoring

- Timeframe: 1 year
- Person(s) responsible: New leader
- Outcome Measures: Program in place, evaluation of chairs completed

Expand faculty mentoring programs

- Timeframe: 1-5 years
- Person(s) responsible: New leader
- Outcome Measures: All faculty involved in mentoring programs, mentors evaluated

Develop programs to enhance faculty scholarly work, teaching and research skills

- Timeframe: 1-5 years
- Person(s) responsible: New leader, Associate Deans for Education and Research
- Outcome Measures: Average faculty teaching score increases, increased efficiency in teaching large courses, new measures developed and implemented for assessing teaching, hit rate for grants increases, increased faculty satisfaction and productivity, increased student satisfaction

Improve annual meeting program and annual assessments

- Timeframe: 1-5 years
- Person(s) responsible: New leader
- Outcome Measures: Improvements in FDA, increased faculty acceptance

GOAL:

Build a career services center that enhances employment prospects for BUSPH students and alumni

Internal planning sessions and graduate surveys have helped the school identify career services as a major area for emphasis in this planning cycle. Creating a substantially enhanced career services division is a critical facet of our plan to increase enrollment at the School over the next five years and increase students' practice opportunities. The School plans to build a career services unit that emphasizes relationship development

with prospective employers in addition to the more traditional career planning services currently offered. As a professional school that trains practitioners eager to enter the job market at a high level, BUSPH believes an enhanced and productive career services program will offer the School a competitive advantage in recruiting students.

Objectives:

Hire leader to oversee expanded career services center

- Timeframe: 6 months
- Person(s) responsible: Associate Dean for Practice, Executive Director for Practice
- Outcome Measures: Successful recruitment, new career services plan developed

Recruit employment outreach and cultivation positions

- Timeframe: 18 months
- Person(s) responsible: New leader
- Outcome Measures: Successful recruitments

Create and offer new opportunities for career development skills

- Timeframe: 18 months
- Person(s) responsible: New leader
- Outcome Measures: Courses offered, favorable evaluations received

Explicitly coordinate the efforts of employment outreach and practicum development

- Timeframe: 1-3 years
- Person(s) responsible: Executive Director for Practice, New leader
- Outcome Measures: Practice and employment opportunities created at 25 new organizations

Appendices

[Appendix A—Governing Council Membership](#)

[Appendix B—Planning Process](#)

[Appendix C—Planning Retreats Consolidated Summary](#)

[Appendix D—Concept Papers](#)

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