

DRAFT CHARGE- UTSA Human Health Planning Advisory Task Force

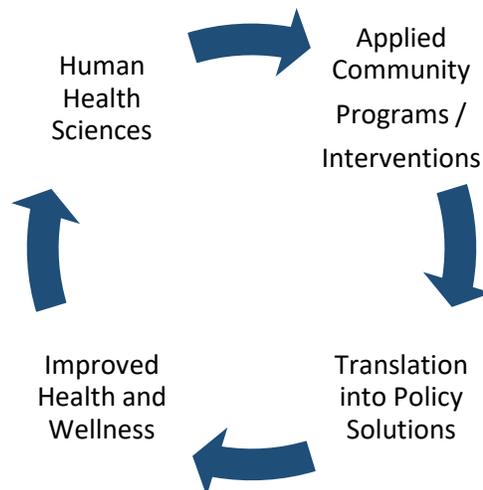
Background: According to the SA Works 2018 Jobs Report, the number of healthcare related jobs in the San Antonio- New Braunfels area increased by 8,758 over the last five years. Matching this trend, UTSA students are demonstrating a high degree of interest in these professions, as evidenced, for example, in the steep growth in public health degrees awarded over the last two years, success of the new Medical Humanities degree and interest in health-related doctoral programs.

In San Antonio, health disparities loom large, with Bexar County’s most recent Community Health Needs Assessment (2016) documenting a 20-year gap in life expectancy when comparing San Antonio area neighborhoods. Addressing this gap requires a multidisciplinary understanding and skillset, including of the socioeconomic determinants of health, and an understanding of the relationships between science, clinical care, community health programs, and policy.

Currently, health-related programs at UTSA are distributed across 3+ colleges and are split and/or buried in disciplinary-based departments. While there is advantage from a strong disciplinary grounding that provides an intellectual platform by which to understand the factors related to health, it is more challenging for students to access and pursue their career interests in health and fully appreciate the multi-faceted nature of the dynamics that contribute to health. Additionally, consultants have identified high demand programs that UTSA currently does not have in its inventory related to human health.

Goals: A realignment of human health related programs at UTSA is needed to improve student outcomes and preparedness for modern health careers, increase visibility of our programs to students and the health community, maximize synergies among disciplines and programs, and provide the following benefits:

- Better prepare our students for the modern setting of human health careers, in which physician scientists, nurses, therapists, technicians, social workers and policymakers work together to deliver comprehensive health solutions. This approach is particularly effective in addressing complex community health issues such as obesity, diabetes, and opioid use, to name a few which are related to political and societal, environmental and biological dynamics contributing to health disparities and population health.



- Increased visibility of our health-related programs to positively impact UTSA's burgeoning reputation for quality health-related faculty, educational programs and research. Many of our students express interest in science, business or engineering in a context that allows them to give back to their families and communities – health related careers provide this opportunity. Making the landscape of our health-related educational programs more clear and visible will particularly benefit our first-generation students, who do not have as much experience navigating academic particularities to find these programs in our current college structure.
- San Antonio and the South Texas region are rich in partners interested in collaborations with UTSA, including UT Health San Antonio, UTHealth School of Public Health, City of San Antonio Metropolitan Health District, Haven for Hope, and other governmental and community service organizations. More integrated, visible organization for health-related programs will expand experiential learning opportunities for students, and increase preparedness for careers and graduate studies.
- Federal agencies, particularly the NIH, the largest external supporter of health related research, is awarding a greater percentage of funding to larger transdisciplinary teams studying complex, multi-faceted problems. Many of UTSA's identified "research areas of excellence" relate to health. For faculty, an aligned college structure addressing health-related issues will support greater multidisciplinary, collaborative research efforts and increase the likelihood of securing philanthropic funding and competitive federal grants, including NIH, HRSA and CDC training grants (although some are only available to accredited schools of public health). This strategy will also increase UTSA's competitiveness for opportunities only available to minority serving institutions and programs focused on under-served and underrepresented communities.

The need for deliberate consideration and action is now. President Eighmy has set our sights on national recognition as a future oriented, urban serving multi-cultural discovery enterprise. With new Provostial leadership and an upcoming dean search, accelerative growth in student success and research excellence, the opportunity to shape the fabric of our efforts in health is before us.

Charge: 1) Consider the landscape of UTSA student interests, regional workforce needs and partnering opportunities, and multidisciplinary research opportunities related to human health - from science to policy (and back again), and 2) Recommend a college organizational structure that aligns health-related programs to enhance student success, career readiness and partnering opportunities, transdisciplinary research and funding competitiveness.

Process and Deliverables: The Task Force includes broad representation of human health related departments and programs and leadership from community partners. In addition, "resource members" from UTSA Academic Affairs and the Office of the Vice President for Research, Economic Development, and Knowledge Enterprise will attend meetings and provide the Task Force with institutional data and information as needed.

The Task Force will be chaired by Dean Margo DelliCarpini, College of Education & Human Development and co-chaired by Regional Dean Melissa Valerio, UT School of Public Health San Antonio Regional Campus. It will be convened in November and staffed by Dr. Shannon Heuberger, Assistant Vice Provost of Academic Initiatives in Academic Affairs.

The Task Force is expected to deliver specific recommendations that address the charge to UTSA Provost Kimberly Andrews Espy in January of 2018. The report will include findings of the Task Force and specific recommendations for a new organizational structure for UTSA's human health related programs.

To accomplish these goals, the Task Force is charged with conducting outreach, including to the relevant stakeholders both internally (e.g., students, faculty) and externally (e.g., health-related educational and service providers and key local employers in the relevant professions), to seek input on the alignment that will maximize student success in human health related fields. In parallel, the Task Force will use institutional data provided by the "resource members" as indicators of student areas of interest and areas of research opportunities. A subcommittee model, working in parallel, will be used to address portions of the Task Force's effort.

The Task Force's process and reporting should include the following:

Survey of the current landscape

- Needs of UTSA students pursuing human health related degrees, including:
 - Identify areas with the greatest increases in enrollment
 - Identify gaps or areas of opportunity to improve student services, such as experiential learning opportunities
- Workforce needs of the San Antonio community and alignment with UTSA's human health related programs
- Key transdisciplinary funding opportunities that could be catalyzed and facilitated with the new college structure, including research and training grants

Recommendations on a realigned college organizational structure

- Diagram and describe the proposed units and departments that would be better aligned in the recommended college organizational structure
- Naming for the proposed college organizational structure
- Identify high-demand programs that UTSA does not have that could fit into the proposed structure
- Describe the alignment with external partners
- List the benefits to faculty, students and staff of the proposed structure
- List all potential risks and describe the risk avoidance plan, including any potential impacts to existing colleges/departments/programs
- Include accreditation considerations (both long-term and near-term)
- With the help of Task Force resource members, identify any needed short-term operation critical investments to ensure success that might be considered in UTSA's IRM budget model as a result of the proposed model.
- Describe other models that were considered but deemed by the Task Force to be less workable, feasible, or desirable.

Constraints

Please use the following parameters to guide this process:

- The proposed organizational structure must be:

- Student-centric. Geared towards increasing student success (i.e., enrollment, retention, graduation, advancing career outcomes).
- Logical, intuitive, and centered around advancing human health from a transdisciplinary perspective.
- Focused around maximizing synergies and new opportunities, including alignment with the interests of our key partners and external funding opportunities.
- Financially viable. Must not add administrative overhead, personnel or costs relative to the current structural configuration.
- Fair. Cannot jeopardize the viability of existing colleges/departments, including operationally or for the purposes of accreditation.

Metrics for Success: A successful realigned college organizational structure will facilitate increased enrollments and retention in human health related programs. An optimal structure will also strengthen UTSA's partnerships with community organizations and increase research funding opportunities.