



THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
AT
CHAPEL HILL

The School of Public Health
Department of Epidemiology

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
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TO: B.G. Greenberg, Ph.D.
Dean, School of Public Health

FROM: Michel A. Ibrahim, M.D.
Professor and Chairman *db*

DATE: July 23, 1982

RE: Highlights of the 1981-1982 Annual Report.

The 1981-82 fiscal year began on a sad note with the death of Dr. Cecil Slome (July 23, 1981). According to Dr. Slome's wishes, no formal memorial services were held. However, members of the department did assemble at his home to plant a willow tree in his honor.

ACADEMICS

Much progress was made this past year in setting and clarifying academic policy in the department. The Graduate Studies Committee was re-established this year and chaired by Dr. Barbara Hulka. This committee, along with the Admissions Committee, has become instrumental in establishing formal policy concerning the graduate program. This year, the Graduate Studies Committee considered and provided recommendations on the following issues:

- a. The Doctoral Qualifying and Masters Comprehensive Examinations: purpose, validity, timing and interpretation. As a result of the Graduate Studies Committee's recommendation, the faculty adopted separate formats for the two examinations, each focusing on the appropriate level of competence. The new formats for the examinations have proven to be highly successful in assessing basic competencies and suitability for doctoral work. The students have attested to the new examinations' fairness and relevance.
- b. The second policy recommended by the Graduate Studies Committee and subsequently adopted by the faculty, concerns joint degree programs within the University, and the degree of formality necessary for establishing such agreements between departments.
- c. The third issue considered by the Graduate Studies Committee concerns the scheduling of events in the course of the preparation of the doctoral dissertation, and the timely submission of drafts of the dissertation prior to the final defense. The faculty approved the Graduate Studies Committee's recommended time-table and procedural guidelines and established them as departmental policy.

The cutbacks in federally funded training grants caused the department some anxious moments this past year, but barely adequate funding levels were maintained. We do anticipate difficulty in attracting students to our program considering the uncertainty of future levels of funding.

RESEARCH

The department has experienced fierce competition for research support, resulting in the need for faculty to prepare three to four proposals in hopes of obtaining funding for one program. This past year, we have succeeded in generating new funds for major studies.

The department was awarded an exciting new contract to initiate pilot studies of cardiovascular community surveillance in the south east United States. This program is under the leadership of Drs. H.A. Tyroler and Suzanne Haynes. We anticipate that a successful pilot program will be followed by the Department of Epidemiology becoming the south-east arm of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute for surveillance of cardiovascular diseases.

Two of our faculty have received support for the next five years. Dr. Sherman A. James was awarded a NHLBI Research Career Development Award to study "Psychosocial Factors and Blood Pressure Variability Among Black Men." Dr. Suzanne Haynes received an Established Investigatorship Award from the American Heart Association to study "Type A Behavior, Employment Status, and Coronary Heart Disease in Women." Both of these new grants became effective on July 1, 1982.

The Department has also increased its association with the Veterans' Administrative, which underwent major administrative reorganization this past year. Two of our part-time faculty, Dr. Kathrine Habib and Dr. Shirley Beresford, of the VA Health Services Research Division, are collaborating with other faculty on pilot research programs and in developing training programs for physicians and health services researchers.

Our involvement with the UNC Cancer Research Center has increased markedly thanks to the efforts of Dr. Barbara Hulka, who was named head of the CRC's Epidemiology Program.

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF FACULTY

The following faculty received special recognition/honor/appointment this past year:

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Dr. Barbara Hulka was named Chairman of the Epidemiology and Diseases Control Study Section of the National Institutes of Health.

Dr. Michel Ibrahim was chosen President-Elect of the N.C. Affiliate of the American Heart Association.

Dr. Sherman James was one of two U.S. scientists to receive a fellowship to the 1st Advanced Seminar in Cardiovascular Disease Prevention and Control, to be held in Helsinki, Finland (July 23.- August 6, 1982).