November 6, 2017

Gerald J. Baldasty, Ph.D.
Provost and Executive Vice President
Office of the Provost
University of Washington

Zoe I. Barsness, Ph.D.
Senate Committee on Planning and Budgeting Chair
University of Washington

Dear Provost Baldasty and Senate Committee on Planning and Budgeting Chair Barsness:

The School of Medicine has proposed the creation of a new Department of Health Metrics Sciences to be located within the School of Medicine. Since the proposed new department would not only represent a reorganization of the School of Medicine (SOM) but also impact the School of Public Health (SPH), it is important that the two schools work together to assess and address the impacts of the new department. It is agreed that the new department should complement activities in the SPH and not compete with or undermine existing programs, strengths, or disciplines that exist in SPH. Building a Health Metrics Sciences department that is committed to collaboration across the University of Washington can result in stronger programs in both schools and across the University. Hence, our goal is to promote more collaborative research and education as an outcome of establishing the proposed new department. The purpose of this joint letter is to set forth our collective commitment to creating a framework for collaboration to ensure salient issues arising from the creation of a new department are identified and addressed, and that both schools work together to maximize the benefits to both schools that will result from the creation of the new department.

This document serves as a supplement to the attached responses provided on October 19, 2017 to Provost Baldasty which outlines the principles in which we are in agreement. This document provides additional discussion of processes to address two specific issues: collaboration and development of graduate programs.

**A. Creation of a Joint Work Group on Collaboration with the Department of Health Metrics Sciences**

Upon final approval of the new department, we will jointly charge a work group on collaboration.

- The work group’s charge will be to promote collaboration across the University of
Washington on research and educational initiatives related to health metrics sciences. This charge will specify the importance of collaboration among departments in the School of Medicine and the School of Public Health and to emphasize development of collaborations in other schools and colleges across campus.

- Specific areas of focus will include: promotion of collaboration between the new department faculty and faculty in other departments in the School of Medicine and also in the School of Public Health as well as other schools and colleges related to health metrics research; consideration of opportunities for joint faculty appointments and joint faculty recruitments; discussion of potential overlap of academic disciplines between the new department and existing departments in the two schools; promotion of collaborative planning related to educational programs; and, in communication with the Population Health Initiative, further identification of opportunities for collaboration presented by the co-location of the Department of Global Health (DGH) and substantial portions of the SPH with the proposed new department in the new Population Health Facility.

- The work group will include at least six faculty members without primary appointments in the new department, including at least three faculty members from each of the two schools. The work group will include at least one representative nominated by each of the two department chairs of Epidemiology and Biostatistics. We will also seek nominations of faculty from other units on campus and will include at least one elected faculty council member from both SPH and SOM. The membership of the work group will reflect a balance between broad inclusiveness and a workable group size.

- Co-chairs for the joint work group will be named by us if the proposed department is approved.

- The School of Medicine will charge the proposed new department with appointment of an associate chair for collaboration. This position will have a primary focus on fostering collaboration between health metrics department faculty and faculty throughout the University, and will work closely with the collaboration work group.

- The work group will establish goals and objectives and will report on their progress jointly to the undersigned. We anticipate that it will continue to meet at least quarterly through the first two years of a new department. At that time, if there is mutual agreement between the deans of SOM and SPH that the effort warrants continued attention to achieve the goals and objectives, the work group will continue for an additional one year term. We do not anticipate that the work group needs to be a permanent committee.

B. Commitment to Follow University Processes for Creation of New Degrees

The new department is interested in being a home to interdisciplinary graduate training programs in health metrics. Although faculty in the new department might teach in some undergraduate programs, the proposed members of the new department have not expressed interest in developing new undergraduate courses or programs. The faculty members involved in proposing the new department are committed to following University processes to explore any potential changes in graduate training or proposals for new programs, including
specifically the process set forth in the Graduate School’s Guidelines for New Degree Programs.

https://grad.uw.edu/for-faculty-and-staff/creatingmodifying-programs/guidelines-for-new-degree-programs/

The impact of new degree programs on existing programs will be explicitly discussed when new programs are proposed. Proposals for new programs will include formal consultation with leadership of existing programs with potentially overlapping educational objectives. We acknowledge that the university is currently developing processes at the undergraduate level to explicitly reduce overlap in the consideration of new courses and programs. It is anticipated that similar processes will be developed by the Graduate School, and these principles would be taken into account in the development of new programs. Further, if new programs are highly interdisciplinary, consideration would be given to academic location of graduate programs in the Graduate School.

There is great excitement about the continued growth of health metrics sciences at the University of Washington. The issues presented by concerned faculty can be addressed in a manner that creates an outstanding department that serves to complement and not undermine or compete with existing strong academic programs at the University. We are confident the issues presented can be addressed, and through further collaboration, including through the work of the proposed collaboration work group, the creation of the new department will ultimately be of great benefit to the University and its research and educational programs.

Sincerely,

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Executive Vice President for Medical Affairs and
Dean of the School of Medicine,
University of Washington

Joel D. Kaufman, M.D., M.P.H.
Professor and Interim Dean
School of Public Health,
University of Washington
Proposal for new Department of Health Metrics Sciences
Responses to follow up questions from Provost Baldasty
October 19, 2017

Impact
1. In general, how would the creation of the new department impact School of Medicine, and the School of Public Health? This includes issues such as:
   • What are the costs and benefits for each School?

These issues have in general been discussed in the document prepared by a SOM committee chaired by Dr. Jürgen Unützer in support of this proposal. More specific categories of costs and benefits are outlined below.
   • For each school: Are there issues related to:
     ○ Finance (funding and revenue),

In general the IHME finances are within SOM, and impacts are held internally. There are a few minor category of direct funding/revenue issues related to indirect cost flows from grants. These currently total less than $100,000 and appropriate corrections would be managed between the two schools through a separate memorandum of understanding to be developed.
     ○ Academics

It is difficult to quantify the costs and benefits of the new department on academics. As the Unützer report outlines, there are potential gains in having the University step out as the first with an academic department devoted to the innovative and important work that IHME conducts. That said, there are concerns among some faculty that the work of IHME (as seen in its flagship GBD program) largely falls within the goals and disciplines reflected in the Public Health sciences, especially within the disciplines of epidemiology (especially the sub-discipline of descriptive epidemiology) and biostatistics (which is devoted to quantitative tools for health metrics). Creating a new department with similar academic focus to existing departments will require respectful and collaborative focus, which on balance we believe can be done and will ultimately benefit the University and its academic missions.
     ○ collaboration?

As the Unützer report outlines, there is room for improvement in developing meaningful collaboration between the proposed faculty of Health Metrics Sciences and other units on campus, including within Public Health. Development of a new department can, on balance, improve collaboration, and steps will be taken ensure such collaboration.

   • For each school: Are there potential impacts on existing departments?

The most obvious impact would be on the Department of Global Health, as essentially all of the IHME-associated faculty are currently appointed primarily there and would presumably now be housed in the new department. This would reduce the scale of that department. As noted above, there are less direct but important impacts on other SPH departments with closely related or overlapping missions and goals to the new department. These impacts relate to
assuring recognition of scientific disciplines and (if new educational programs are launched) potential competition for students. These impacts can be mitigated or eliminated through efforts at communication and collaboration. Commitment to joint hiring, and ongoing efforts to inform each group of the expertise and work of the others will be important.

There is no anticipated negative impact on research dollars or ability to compete for extramural funding.

2. How would the proposed reorganization impact faculty?
   • What impact would the change have on the career progression for professorial and instructional faculty?

Career progression for professorial and instructional faculty would not be negatively affected by this proposed reorganization. The new department would need to develop academic human resources staffing and procedures, but there is no anticipated change in opportunities for career progression. The new department’s A&P criteria would be modeled on other criteria from departments within the SOM and modified to reflect the multidisciplinary nature of the mission of the new department.

   • How would the faculty to be moved be determined? (e.g., Who would move? Do individual faculty have input into the decision? What would drive the decision (e.g., funding source?). Are there any anticipated impacts on scholarship, both for those in the proposed new department as well as those that do not move?)

The faculty (nearly all of whom are currently appointed in Global Health) to form the initial faculty of the new department are reasonably easy to identify: those with primary offices, funding, and research portfolio associated with IHME. All such faculty would be offered the opportunity to move to the new department. There is no anticipated impact on scholarship in the proposed new department or in those that do not move, and this will be assured via processes that will be put in place via a memorandum of understanding between SOM and SPH and the department of DGH and the new department.

3. How would the proposed reorganization impact students?
   • How many students – undergraduate and graduate – would be impacted?

Assurance will be made that students will not be negatively impacted by this change. No undergraduate students or programs will be substantively affected; no new undergraduate educational initiative is anticipated. Graduate programs may be affected but this will be managed through a separate process. At this point this proposal relates to the departmental organization and not to graduate programs. Existing students will stay in the programs in which they are enrolled.

Consultation and collaboration
   1. What is the nature of the consultation with the elected faculty councils, and with other faculty, both in SoM and SPH?
The SPH elected faculty council was consulted on 19 October 2017, in a meeting with Jürgen Unützer and Ana Mari Cauce that discussed the Unützer committee report and the impact on SPH programs and faculty. In the SOM, Dean Ramsey convened the Ad Hoc committee chaired by Professor Unutzer. Dr. Ali Mokdad, Professor and IHME Director of Middle East Initiatives, met with each of the School of Public Health’s Department Chairs, as well as the Dean of the College of the Environment and the Dean of the School of Nursing. Dr. Chris Murray, Professor and IHME Director, met with multiple faculty as well as the Dean of the School of Public Health. He attended multiple standing faculty committee meetings with Dr. Ramsey to answer questions about the proposal and was formally interviewed by the committee Dr. Ramsey convened.

2. How do the School of Medicine and School of Public Health currently function in the oversight of the Department of Global Health with regard to issues such as, but not limited to, faculty appointments, promotion, and merit review; academic programs, curriculum and student support; and strategic planning and coordination of mission.

Faculty appointments, promotion, and merit review in the Department of Global Health are conducted in systems that adhere to the requirements of both schools. While faculty are appointed primarily in one school, appointment in DGH confers in effect a joint appointment in both schools. Dr. Ramsey, Dean of the School of Medicine and Dr. Kaufman, Dean of the School of Public Health meet with the chair of DGH on a quarterly basis to discuss current state and strategic goals of the department. In addition, SOM and SPH have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that provides guidelines for the management of DGH in the areas of academic appointments, staff positions, student educational programs, pre and post research activities, space and funds flow. The MOU describes when both schools’ input is involved, when it resides with the department and when it resides with one school or the other. The two schools also agreed that review and approval of appointments, promotions and merit require the review and approval of both schools if the faculty member is appointed in both schools with the primary school taking the lead. Applications for new courses and course changes require approval of both schools’ curriculum committee and signature of both schools’ applicable associate or vice dean.

3. What are the plans for facilitating and enhancing collaboration among IHME, School of Public Health and School of Medicine?

A enormous strength of the University of Washington is its collaborative work across disciplines, schools, and departments. In addition, IHME has led a highly successful worldwide scientific collaboration through the GBD. A challenge moving forward is to develop robust collaborations between IHME and other units at UW. Such collaboration can be anticipated to grow naturally through co-location of DGH and substantial portions of the SPH with IHME in the new Population Health Facility. The new department is committed to growing collaborations at UW through both organic and engineered processes. Part of this will include recognition of the abundance of talent at the UW who can be engaged in the IHME’s relatively well-resourced
activities. In addition, IHME will commit to supporting a number of joint faculty recruitments with primary appointment in key departments in SPH, SOM, and other units on campus but research roles at IHME; this will create critical foci for new and broader collaborations. Finally, the new Department of Health Metrics Sciences will also include a departmental level leader (e.g., associate chair), with a specific charge to facilitate UW collaborative activities.

**How would the new department function?**
Specifically, how will the new department function, both in relation to Public Health and to Medicine?

(a) Degrees. Will the new unit be a degree granting unit? Would the Dept of Global Health PhD program’s Health Metrics emphasis be moved to the new department? (and has the Graduate School been consulted on any potential move?)

The new department proposes to be a degree granting unit, with aspirations to both an MS and PhD degree. At this time there has not been formal consultation of the graduate school. Hence the development of degrees will need to follow those regular policies and procedures. No programs are being created or divided through development of a new department. The DGH PhD program currently is in Implementation Science and Health Metrics and is an integrated curriculum. Decisions would follow on whether the best path is to continue an integrated program or divide into two separate programs.

(b) RE: the proposed creation of a Master of Science (MSc). What discussions have taken place with the Department of Global Health and the School of Public Health regarding the impact of a new degree on the Master of Public Health (MPH) Health Metrics and Evaluation track?

This is an important issue that will need to be addressed through the graduate school and appropriate faculty committees. MPH programs would continue to be organized the SPH. The MPH in Health Metrics and Evaluation is largely directed by the IHME-aligned faculty, and those energies would be re-directed to the new department’s plans for an MS program, and that program ultimately would enroll the general group of students now in the health metrics MPH track. There would be collaborative opportunities to continue the MPH track if there is interest from faculty and student interest.

**Other questions:**

**Disciplinary status?**
Why is departmental status appropriate for the proposed organization? (i.e., is health metrics a method or a discipline?)

This question is an interesting and potentially divisive one. It is easy to argue that the extensive body of work ongoing in Health Metrics qualifies it as a distinct discipline; letters have been obtained that attest to this. It is also possible to characterize Health Metrics as a set of novel
and interdisciplinary approaches to a set of tasks previously undertaken by existing disciplines (e.g., descriptive epidemiology). However, the existence of a discipline is not required for the reorganization of SOM and creation of a new department, and propagation of these arguments risks undermining collaborative opportunities. The past and future success of the UW in the field of Health Metrics strongly suggests a department is warranted. The real issue is ensuring that other units on campus benefit from this and are not harmed, and steps will be taken to assure this.

**Location:**
Why in Medicine, rather than in Public Health or jointly in Public Health and Medicine (similar to Global Health).

The IHME activities currently exist within SOM. Hence this new department reflects a reorganizations of activities within SOM.