

Guidelines and Criteria for Association Agreements
Between the Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine and
Community Departments of Health

I. Purpose

These guidelines are established to assure that community departments of public health affiliating with the College of Medicine can provide an environment conducive to quality medical and public health education.

II. Requests for Association

A written request from the applying health department shall be sent by the President of the Board of Health (or equivalent) to the President and Dean of the College of Medicine requesting formal association. The health department shall also conduct a self-study of the essential elements for association (listed below) and include the results of the self-study with the written request. Upon receipt of a formal request for association, the President and Dean of NEOUCOM will appoint a site visit team to travel to the applicant agency for the purpose of verification of the self study. The site visit team will make a recommendation to the President and Dean about association. If the recommendation is positive and the President and Dean is in agreement, the request will be forwarded to the NEOUCOM Board of Trustees for formal action.

III. Essential Elements for Association

- A. *A Health Department Director who is licensed to practice medicine in Ohio and has appropriate training in public health, or a non licensed physician or non-physician Health Department Director who has appropriate training in public health and a Medical Director who is licensed to practice medicine in Ohio and who has responsibility for clinical policies and services.*

Interpretation – It is important to the College of Medicine that associated health departments meet at least the minimum qualifications for leadership under Ohio law. It is equally important that the health department’s leaders be able to demonstrate their capacity to accept responsibility for teaching medical and/or public health students and their desire to be so engaged.

Documentation expected

1. Curriculum vita for the Director and Medical Director, if applicable. Work done for or with NEOUCOM should be indicated in the vita.
2. Description of the duties of the Medical Director (if applicable), and a copy of the Medical Director’s license to practice medicine in Ohio.

- B. *An adequate number of staff to deliver a wide range of public health services, as well as supervise and assist students working in the health department setting.*

Interpretation – The College of Medicine will need to be assured that the applicant health department is of a size and sophistication that medical and/or MPH students will have a quality experience.

Documentation expected

1. An organizational chart for the health department.
2. A list of health department staff by profession illustrating academic degrees earned.
3. A copy of the health department's latest annual report.

- C. *A supportive environment for academic activities, and adequate staff qualified to assist students in the development and implementation of medical/public health education and research endeavors.*

Interpretation – Medical and public health student experiences in a public health department should provide practice opportunities for skills already learned in the broader medicine and public health curriculum. The experience should provide insights into the issues and opportunities extant in advanced public health practice, and/or provide opportunities for population research projects. The department should have well-trained, competent staff who deliver high quality public health services.

Documentation expected

1. Special note of employees with skills that would apply to “medical/public health education and research endeavors.” For example, is there an epidemiologist or biostatistician on staff? Is the department currently conducting research? Are any staff members working with other academic institutions in terms of teaching or research?
2. Curriculum vita of key personnel with advanced degrees who would be working with medical and/or MPH students. Teaching experience should be included in the CV's.
3. Describe existing connections with other academic institutions.
4. Describe connections with other agencies or institutions (e.g. hospitals) that would facilitate student projects.
5. Describe any data bases and surveillance activities you have that might be of value to students.
6. Describe any ongoing research activities.
7. Describe anything else about the health department that is “special” and would be beneficial for learners.

D. Adequate teaching facilities, parking space, desks, telephones, computers, etc.

Interpretation – It is important for students to have adequate space in which to learn and work, and access to equipment that will support their activities. The student should have enough space available so they can maintain a personal base in the department while working there.

Documentation expected

1. Floor plans of health department space, including measurements of square footage. A picture of the department's building(s) would be helpful.
2. Description of space available for student use. This space should be highlighted on the department's floor plans.
3. Description of parking available for students.
4. Assurance of access to a desk, telephone, copier, fax and computer with high-speed Internet access.

E. The health department is eligible to receive state subsidy payments according to the Ohio Revised Code.

Interpretation – The College of Medicine is interested in associating itself only with local health departments that are in compliance with Ohio's minimum public health standards. A reliable marker for compliance is the eligibility of the department for state subsidy payments.

Documentation expected

1. A photocopy of the most recent subsidy check received by the department, or other document that verifies the department's compliance with Ohio's minimum public health standards.

III. The written request for formal association should indicate how this association will benefit the College of Medicine and the community.

Interpretation – It is helpful to the College of Medicine, as it considers a request for formal association, to understand the perspective of the applicant department as it makes the request. A narrative here should describe opportunities for collaboration that might occur with association, potential projects or issues in which it may be valuable for medical and/or public health students to become involved, projects completed by previous students working in the department (attach relevant journal articles, newspaper stories, reports). Past involvement of the department with NEOUCOM (and other academic institutions, if appropriate) should be documented here, the current capacity of the department to work with students should be summarized, and the ongoing potential that exists for working with students and other elements of the College (Office of Public Health Practice in the Division of Community Health Sciences, MPH Program, clinical and/or basic science departments) should be described. A clear picture of the attitude of the department and its board toward involvement with academic pursuits should emerge.