

December 4, 2016

Subject: Dean's Latest Fall Update

Dear Students,

As the Interim Dean for the School of Public Health (Initiative), I would like to take this opportunity to give an update on the progress that has been made since the early Fall Semester 2016.

Most of the necessary infrastructures (both physical and personnel) have been put in place, which included the hiring of a part-time grant writer and a public health workforce development director. The library, computer labs, and administrative offices for academic departments have been renovated, and the lecture hall on the 2nd floor has been completed and will be ready for use next semester. The School is expected to hire three more faculty members and a department chair on or before January, 2017.

The School of Public Health (Initiative) Faculty and Staff Retreat was held on Thursday and Friday, November 17-18, 2016 at the Mississippi e-Center @ JSU. During this retreat, Dr. Michelle Bell, accreditation consultant, met with faculty, staff, and representatives from the student organizations at the two-day retreat, and all were encouraged to provide feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the School and to gain a better understanding of the new Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) new criteria/standards. With the positive response given by Dr. Bell, we will be able to submit a successful application to start the accreditation process this month (December, 2016).

Speaking of accreditation, there has been some miscommunication and confusion that our public health program is not accredited. **Please note that the program has been accredited and will remain accredited for the next 5 years and beyond.** Our accomplishment is to become the first accredited School of Public Health in the state of Mississippi. Such accreditation will be a plus because you will graduate from **BOTH** an accredited program **AND** an accredited School.

Effective January 1, 2017 all faculty, staff, and students will be required to use their JSU-issued email accounts to receive any correspondence regarding class assignments, meetings, deadlines, etc. Under no circumstances will e-mails received via private accounts (e.g., Yahoo, Hotmail, Gmail, etc.) be responded to. It will be the student's responsibility to ensure that his/her JSU email account is active or have one created if he/she does not have one.

Beginning January 13, 2016, a "Meeting with the Dean" will be held each Friday from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. in Conference Room 120 (across from the Computer Lab). Students can meet with me individually or in groups to express concerns and discuss possible collaborations with faculty, staff, fellow students, and other units within the University. No appointment will be needed, and it will be on a first come, first serve basis. All you need to do is to inform Ms. Cook (601.979.6387) that you are coming to see me, and I will make sure that I will be available to meet and discuss with you any academic-related idea that you might bring to the table. We all need to work together to get the School accredited and work harder to make it a unique school of public health.

Lastly, each Friday faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to participate in the School of Public Health Initiative "Walking Campaign." The initial walk began on October 21, and it was well attended. The walk is an ongoing event, within the Jackson Medical Mall, to promote healthy well-being and fellowship.

On behalf of the faculty and staff in the School, let me assure you that all of us are committed to making sure that you receive the best education and a memorable learning experience here at the OneJSU School of Public Health (Initiative).

Thank you.

Mohammad Shahbazi, Interim Dean

