

Conference Papers

Abstracts and Authors

Keynote 1

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Development of a global consortium of distance doctoral programs in health leadership

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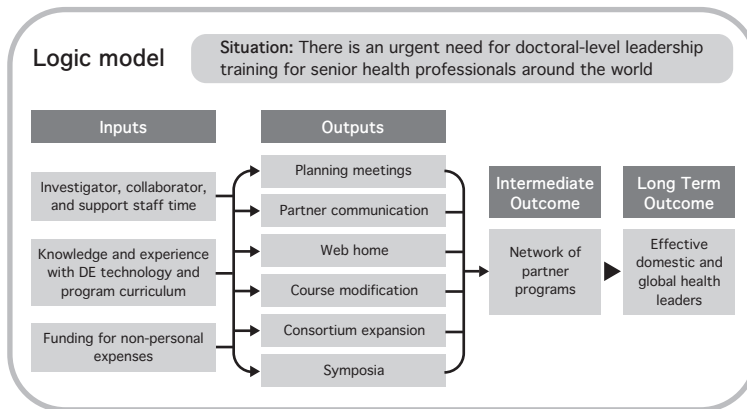
Suzanne Havala Hobbs, DrPH, MS, RD, is Clinical Associate Professor in the Department of Health Policy and Management (HPM) and the Department of Nutrition in the Gillings School of Global Public Health at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Within HPM, she directs the distance Doctoral Program in Health Leadership (DrPH), a program she helped to launch while Associate Director of the program from 2004 to 2006. She has extensive experience in the application of distance technologies in higher education. Most of her classroom teaching over the past nine years has employed distance technologies, and she has held several leadership roles at UNC in the area of distance education, collaborating with colleagues on several Department, School and University committees to develop distance education at UNC and throughout the UNC 16-campus system. She also serves the Association of Schools of Public Health on the steering committee of the DrPH Subcommittee charged with developing a competencies model for the DrPH degree. A practicing dietitian, Sue holds a doctorate in health policy and administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

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We have initiated an effort to work with universities around the nation and world to create a consortium of executive doctoral programs compatible with the model we developed and implemented in 2005. That model anticipated the potential for technology-enhanced learning to prepare mid-career professionals for senior-level positions in organizations working

domestically and internationally to improve the public's health (1, 2). Through the Global Doctoral Health Leadership Consortium, we seek to extend the program model to accelerate the pace and reach of urgently needed doctoral-level leadership training for senior health professionals around the world. Member schools will share curriculum, distance learning technology and school resources. They will function as a well-coordinated network in which faculty may teach across universities and learners may take courses or portions of courses from schools other than the schools in which they are enrolled. By addressing the

critical need for global leadership development within the senior public health workforce, we have an opportunity to contribute substantially to efforts to improve the health of people worldwide. The logic model depicted below illustrates the initiative's rationale.



We expect the consortium to increase global capacity to produce effective future health leaders. It will maximize the quality of doctoral programs in the consortium. A very significant advantage for our learners is that the synchronous distance technology enables world class experts to teach courses regardless of where those experts are located. At present, faculty from Boston, Toronto, and Washington, DC teach courses in the UNC program. We have plans to include faculty from the UK, France and Norway as guest discussants in our courses in fall 2009. The consortium will enable us and other schools to expand their access to faculty expertise throughout the world. Diversity promotes excellence.

The UNC Doctoral Program in Health Leadership currently includes learners in the U.S. and Hawaii as well as Uganda, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Papua New Guinea, France, Switzerland, Canada and Lebanon. Despite time zone differences, learners connect for class in real-time using Internet video. The distance format allows working professionals to complete doctoral leadership training while continuing full-time employment, remaining in-country throughout the duration of their education. However, the UNC program can admit no more than 12 learners per year. Demand greatly exceeds this capacity. Importantly, too, we hope in 2010 to begin scheduling one of three annual face-to-face doctoral program meetings with learners overseas. These meetings are key to program success, greatly enhancing cohort cohesion. A cooperative network of partner programs would greatly enhance opportunities for in-person interactions for learners and faculty across programs during these visits or at jointly planned annual meetings.

For all of these reasons, we believe the timing is right for establishment of this international network of

partner programs. Teleconferences among interested parties were held in March and July 2009, and the first in-person meeting of institutional representatives was held in London, UK in May 2009. In addition to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, initial participants include l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Santé Publique, France; BI Norwegian School of Management; University of Toronto; King's College, London; London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine; the University of California at Berkeley; the University of Georgia; and the University of Minnesota.

At the London meeting in May, the group collectively wrote the following statement of purpose for the consortium:

The world's complex, interdependent and ever-changing health environment creates a need for increased health leadership excellence and capacity. We are an international, collaborative network of educational institutions that offer or intend to offer professional distance doctoral programs in health leadership. We are committed to sharing objectives, substance and expertise to maximize access to and quality of doctoral health leadership education worldwide.

More information about the Global Doctoral Health Leadership Consortium is available online at: http://www.sph.unc.edu/hpaa/the_unc_drph_health_leadership_consortium_6899_6558.html.

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe the Global Doctoral Health Leadership Consortium.
 - Identify advantages of distance doctoral-level leadership training for mid-career health professionals around the world.
 - Explain the rationale for establishment of this cooperative network of partner programs.
1. DeClerq, Eugene; Caldwell, Karen; Hobbs, Suzanne Havala; and Guyer, Bernard. "The Changing Pattern of Doctoral Education in Public Health 1985-2005 and the Challenge of Doctoral Training for Practice and Leadership." *American Journal of Public Health*, 98(9): 10-14, September 2008.
 2. Hobbs, Suzanne Havala; Brooks, Edward; Wang, Virginia and Skinner, Asheley. "Developing Practitioner Leaders in a Distance Education Doctoral Program: Challenges and Opportunities." *Journal of Health Administration Education*, 24(3): 283-300, Summer 2007.