

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST
AND VICE CHANCELLOR FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

HEALTH AND WELLNESS STEERING TEAM

FINAL REPORT

2006-2007



ILLINOIS
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST
HEALTH AND WELLNESS STEERING TEAM
FINAL REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	COMMITTEE CHARGE.....	(TBA)
II.	COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP.....	1
III.	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (Not to exceed one page).....	5
IV.	COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES AND PROCESS.....	9
V.	RECOMMENDATIONS OR FINDINGS.....	6,16
VI.	ATTACHMENTS.....	(TBA)

Committee Membership

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Overview

Steering team members. The following individuals served on the health and wellness steering team: Tanya Gallagher, chair; Reginald Alston, Andreas Cangellaris, John Erdman, Susan Fowler, Richard Gumport, Wendy Haight, Keith Kelley, Frances Kuo, Edward McAuley, Rob Motl, Denise Park, Ruth Watkins, Jennifer Eardley.

Charge. The health and wellness steering team was charged on October 23, 2006, to “. . . think broadly about our current institutional position regarding health and wellness, identifying both areas of existing strength and opportunities for innovative partnerships that could create areas of excellence” (excerpt from October 23, 2006, charge letter to steering committee).

Team meetings: The steering team met approximately once per month during the fall 2006 and spring 2007 semesters to discuss the content of this report. In addition, subcommittees gathered and summarized relevant data, and developed material to inform team discussions and draft contributions to this report.

Summary

The University of Illinois has achieved national and international prominence in multiple elements of human health and wellness research. Scholars from a wide range of campus units are internationally recognized as leaders in behavioral, biological, environmental and social science research and garner significant external funding in support of innovative research in areas such as aging, healthy lifestyle, mental health, and nutrition.

Despite excellence in health and wellness research in units across campus this work has not yet resulted in the large-scale cross-campus partnerships and visibility necessary to advance to the next level of prominence and innovation. Interdisciplinary collaborative efforts in health and wellness research have depended on individual efforts and a disconnected set of primarily college level mechanisms for infrastructure support.

The University of Illinois has benefited significantly from its investment in science and technology areas (e.g. Beckman Institute, Coordinated Science Lab, and the Institute for Genomic Biology), and is poised to benefit in a similar manner from an investment in health and wellness research fields. No area remains more pressing from a societal perspective than the promotion of human health across the lifespan. Prevention of disabling conditions, facilitating independent living and assuring the highest quality of life in the context of potentially life-constraining conditions such as aging, disability, and chronic physical and mental health challenges is of vital public health importance. Failure to make a significant investment in health and wellness research will reduce the campus' capacity for innovation, creativity and productivity in this vital area of research and place a number of constraints on the advancement of the campus research agenda; constrain our ability to compete most effectively for large-scale, interdisciplinary research funds which capitalizes on the breadth and strength of related sciences across the campus and our strong interdisciplinary campus research culture; constrain our national and international visibility and presence in areas in which we currently hold leadership positions; constrain our achievement of campus-wide comprehensive excellence; and, limit our potential to achieve national and international preeminence in the translational and traditional medical aspects of health research by limiting opportunities for complementary health research as a component of the Integrated Sciences for Health Initiative. Health and wellness research is a critical component of a maximally effective Integrated Sciences for Health research initiative.

Recommendation: That an interdisciplinary institute be created that will provide needed infrastructure support for health and wellness research.

The **Institute for Health and Wellness Research** is a working title for the institute that was used throughout this report for convenience but other options include the Institute for Behavioral Health Research, and the Integrated Sciences in Health and Wellness Institute.

The initial research themes for the Institute reflect significant faculty strength, external support for research, potential for growth in external research funding, and areas where initial investments have already been made in research infrastructure support. Such investments include the. Center for Health Minds (Beckman Institute); Center for Health, Aging and Disability (College of Applied Health Science); Family Resiliency Center (College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences); Osher Lifelong Learning Institute; Division of Nutritional Sciences, Children and Family Research Center (School of Social Work) are:

- Healthy Aging Across the Lifespan
- Healthy Lifestyle

- Disability and Quality of Life in the Context of Chronic Conditions
- Mental Health
- Nutrition

Recommendation: That Healthy Aging Across the Lifespan, Healthy Lifestyle, Disability and Quality of Life in the Context of Chronic Conditions, Mental Health and Nutrition be considered as early research themes of the Institute for Health and Wellness Research.

Infrastructure needs for the institute would include:

- 1) **Physical Facility:** The health and wellness steering team believes that without a facility to enable teams of scholars from various campus units to come together in partnership on research activities, the research agenda in health and wellness at the University of Illinois will not achieve its full potential. The facility would require approximately 20,000 sq. ft. of research laboratory, conference, meeting room and office space. There are several options for meeting facilities requirements in the near term and until funds from private, corporate or state sources become available. These options include the remodeling and re-purposing of existing campus space such as was done successfully in Huff Hall and Freer Hall and the dedication of a portion of space within an existing research facility.
- 2) **Personnel:** Ongoing funding for a Director, Associate Director, and one support staff position will be needed (approximately \$300,000). Additional initial funding for three years also will be needed for other personnel such as budget and systems staff (approximately \$125,000 /yr for three years). It is anticipated that after three years this additional funding can be phased out as external funding is secured that can provide assistance in supporting core activities. It is anticipated that three years should be sufficient for external funding to be obtained at levels permitting the phase out of these additional funds.
- 3) **Targeted Faculty Hires:** One – three faculty members will need to be hired in each of the Institute theme areas for a total of 4 – 12 faculty. Faculty appointments would reside in academic departments but the Institute would play a major role in recruitment in key areas to advance its interdisciplinary research mission.
- 4) **Seed Grant Funds:** Approximately \$100,000/yr of ongoing support will be needed to fund seed grant activities within each designated research theme for a total of \$400,000 across the four proposed themes. These funds are essential for bringing teams together and investing in early pilot work.

Recommendation: That a physical facility of approximately 20,000 sq. ft., ongoing funding for a Director, Associate Director and one support staff position (approximately \$300,000, three years of funding for additional personnel be provided (approximately \$125,000/yr) that will be phased out as external funding is secured, 4 – 12 departmental faculty be hired 1-3-in each research theme area, seed grant funding of \$400,000 (\$100,000/research theme be allocated for development of the Institute for Health and Wellness Research.

Expected Outcomes: That federal agency, corporation and foundation grant and contract funding for health and wellness research will increase at a faster rate than trend analyses would have predicted prior to formation of the Institute. That the Institute will provide the foundation for UIUC to become a world leader in integrated health and wellness research.

Summary Recommendations:

Recommendation: That an interdisciplinary institute be created that will provide needed infrastructure support for health and wellness research.

Recommendation: That **Healthy Aging Across the Lifespan, Healthy Lifestyle, Disability and Quality of Life in the Context of Chronic Conditions, Mental Health and Nutrition** be considered as early research themes of the Institute for Health and Wellness Research.

Recommendation: That a physical facility of approximately 20,000 sq. ft., ongoing funding for a Director, Associate Director and one support staff position (approximately \$300,000, three years of funding for additional personnel be provided (approximately \$125,000/yr) that will be phased out as external funding is secured, 4 – 12 departmental faculty be hired 1 – 3 in each research theme area, seed grant funding of \$400,000 (\$100,000/research theme be allocated for development of the Institute for Health and Wellness Research.

Report of the Health and Wellness Steering Team
June, 2007
Tanya Gallagher, Chair

Overview

Steering team members. The following individuals served on the health and wellness steering team: Tanya Gallagher, chair; Reginald Alston, Andreas Cangellaris, John Erdman, Susan Fowler, Richard Gumport, Wendy Haight, Keith Kelley, Frances Kuo, Edward McAuley, Rob Motl, Denise Park, Ruth Watkins, Jennifer Eardley.

Charge. The health and wellness steering team was charged on October 23, 2006, to “. . . think broadly about our current institutional position regarding health and wellness, identifying both areas of existing strength and opportunities for innovative partnerships that could create areas of excellence” (excerpt from October 23, 2006, charge letter to steering team).

Team meetings: The steering team met approximately once per month during the fall 2006 and spring 2007 semesters to discuss the content of this report. In addition, subcommittees gathered and summarized relevant data, and developed material to inform team discussions and draft contributions to this report.

Main Report

The Chancellor, Provost and Vice Chancellor for Research charged the Health and Wellness Steering Team to consider several critical questions regarding health and wellness research at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The questions are outlined, below, with the team’s input on each major issue.

1. “Which aspects of health and wellness are most promising, i.e., in which areas of health and wellness research do we already have national prominence and a position of leadership?”

The steering team began its deliberations in response to this question by discussing how the terms “health and wellness” would be interpreted in the context of this report. The team viewed health and wellness as not simply the absence of disease. In their original charter of 1946, the World Health Organization wrote, “health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” Mental and social well-being is part of health, and it is now well accepted that the traditional practice of medicine is only one of the many ways to improve health. Habits and behaviors, which are collectively known as lifestyle, are critically formed and shaped by our physical and social environment as important determinants of health and wellness. Health and wellness research requires novel interdisciplinary approaches.

Approaches that integrate disparate research disciplines to create the synergies that are needed to understand the scientific bases of the major behavioral and environmental factors known to have a profound effects on health and wellness, including exercise, nutrition, mental health, aging, and disability.

Using this definition of health and wellness research the steering team conducted an informal quantitative analysis of funded research activity on campus. The attached report “Background on Funding”, provides a summary of the data collected but because of the dispersed nature of health and wellness research at Illinois, it is difficult to precisely determine the extent of external support for the area.

An overall estimate of external funding trends between 2003 – 2006 revealed that a significant portion of the NIH-supported research activity at UIUC addresses health/wellness areas. Defined broadly as focusing on behavioral and/or social dimensions of health and wellbeing, roughly 20-25% of the campus’ total NIH funding portfolio supported health and wellness research with a primary focus on aging, disability, and mental health. External funding has also been received from the U.S, Department of Education, SSA, NSF, corporations and foundations, and the State of Illinois. A conservative estimate is that Health and Wellness research accounts for approximately \$25,000,000 or 7% of Illinois research expenditures annually.

The University of Illinois has achieved national and international prominence in multiple elements of human health and wellness research. Scholars from a wide range of campus units are internationally recognized as leaders in behavioral, biological, and social science research and garner significant external funding in support of innovative research in areas such as aging, healthy lifestyle, mental health, and nutrition.

The steering team also conducted an informal analysis of campus research infrastructure and existing centers/institutes related to promoting scholarship in health and wellness. In addition to basic research infrastructure, such as IRB and Research Board, the following centers were identified as areas of existing strength in research infrastructure support related to health and wellness (see appendix for brief summary of each activity):

- Center for Health Minds (Beckman Institute)
- Center for Health, Aging and Disability (College of Applied Health Science)
- Family Resiliency Center (College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences)
- Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
- Division of Nutritional Sciences
- Children and Family Research Center

A review of funded research suggests that even successful research programs do not fully leverage expertise across the campus. There are also several areas of research where Illinois should have greater external support based on the existing expertise such as nutrition and aging, engineering and disabilities, informatics and rural health. It is

reasonable to predict that given an environment that facilitates cross-campus interaction to a greater extent, health and wellness related research could grow significantly.

2. “Is there a unique niche for Illinois in the health and wellness arena?”

Using the above mentioned data on funding patterns and current campus research activity, the team identified areas in which there is significant faculty strength, leadership and national and international preeminence; significant external support for research and potential for growth in external research support; and, areas where investments have already been made in research infrastructure. These were:

- Healthy Aging Across the Lifespan
- Healthy Lifestyle
- Disability and Quality of Life in the Context of Chronic Conditions
- Mental Health
- Nutrition

The University of Illinois has invested faculty and research infrastructure support in interdisciplinary activities in science and technology areas, with the Beckman Institute, Coordinated Science Lab, and the Institute for Genomic Biology as examples. Campus investment in these interdisciplinary research institutes has paid significant dividends. Productivity and innovation of individual investigators has been expanded in these areas given these collaborative opportunities, and Illinois has achieved national and international recognition for accomplishments in areas of science and technology. The model of the interdisciplinary institute is a powerful one with a proven record of achievement, particularly in technology and science arenas.

The steering team sees a parallel opportunity for Illinois in health and wellness. There is significant faculty and scholarly strength in areas related to health and wellness, and a strong profile of external funding. To date, however, limited campus-wide mechanisms have existed to bring scholars together around these critical themes (e.g., aging, disability, areas of mental health, etc.). Consequently, our visibility, leadership and accomplishment in these areas have been limited by the availability of mechanisms to promote the type of large-scale interdisciplinary efforts and path-breaking innovation that will be needed for breakthroughs of the 21st century. The steering team views establishing a UIUC Institute for Health and Wellness Research as maximizing the opportunities provided by campus strengths that would serve as a biological -behavioral- social-environmental complement to related sciences across the campus (e.g. Institute for Genomic Biology, Engineering, etc.) . The institute would enable the campus to take full advantage of the scientific partnerships that would be possible in the context of these complementary strengths and the strong interdisciplinary campus research culture. The scientific partnerships that the institute would facilitate and support would place the campus in a strong competitive position relative to other campuses without the breadth and depth of scientific resources available at UIUC. The health and wellness research

that would result is a critical component of a maximally effective UIUC Integrated Sciences for Health Research Initiative.

3. “Given limited resources available, what are the implications of directing portions of existing support for health and wellness research toward more focused efforts?”

Despite excellence in health and wellness research in units across campus this work has not yet resulted in the large-scale cross-campus partnerships and visibility necessary to advance to the next level of prominence and innovation. Interdisciplinary collaborative efforts in health and wellness research have depended on individual efforts and a disconnected set of primarily college level mechanisms for infrastructure support.

A science-based research institute in health and wellness is critically needed to address issues that are among the most pressing societal concerns nationally and globally. UIUC has a unique opportunity to capitalize on institutional strengths and gain greater visibility and impact on the research and policy agendas in these areas.

As summarized above, the steering team gathered information on current campus centers and institutes that relate to health and wellness research (e.g., Center for Healthy Minds, Center for Health, Aging and Disability, Family Resiliency, Children and Family Research Center, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, etc.). The support for the majority of these endeavors has come from fundraising efforts, external grants, and, to a limited degree, institutional resources. If an **Institute for Health and Wellness Research** were established, with the goal of facilitating innovation and new partnerships in health and wellness related research around key themes, the work of current centers and institutes would be expanded, integrated and thereby amplified. This Institute would work with current entities and faculty engaged in health and wellness research, build upon their current efforts, and extend those efforts through strategic investments, integrations and collaborations.

The **Institute for Health and Wellness Research** is a working title for the institute that was used throughout this report for convenience but other options include the Institute for Behavioral Health Research, and the Integrated Sciences in Health and Wellness Institute.

Guiding principles for issues such as ICR distribution would need to be established but the steering team considered the positive implications of developing research themes within an Institute would far outweigh any perceived or real concerns. The lack of such a major campus-wide entity in health and wellness has constrained our success in utilizing the campus’ positions of strength in addressing these critical societal areas of study. Focusing resources in the area of behavioral health has the potential to yield significant new resources, innovation and productivity.

4. “What are the likely consequences of not actively pursuing research excellence in selected aspects of health and wellness research? How does health and wellness research strengthen other aspects of the Health initiative?”

As highlighted previously, the University of Illinois has benefited significantly from its investment in science and technology areas, and is poised to benefit in a similar manner from an investment in research in health and wellness fields. There is no area that is more pressing from a societal perspective than promoting human health across the lifespan, preventing primary and secondary disabling conditions, supporting independence and the highest quality of life in the context of potentially life-constraining conditions such as aging, disability, and chronic physical and mental health challenges. There are significant negative consequences of not committing an institutional investment in these critical areas of behavioral health.

In the absence of facilities and resources that bring scholars from a range of campus units together around themes in the area of health and wellness, we will:

- Reduce the campus’ capacity for innovation, creativity and productivity in this vital area;
- Constrain our ability to compete most effectively for large-scale; interdisciplinary research funds;
- Constrain our national and international visibility and presence in areas in which we currently hold leadership positions;
- Constrain our achievement of campus-wide comprehensive excellence; and,
- Limit our potential to achieve national and international preeminence in the translational and traditional medical aspects of health research by limiting opportunities for complementary health research as a component of the Integrated Sciences for Health Initiative.

5. “What organizational structures should be considered to facilitate health and wellness research? What is needed for the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to undertake a serious research thrust in the health and wellness arena? What resources are needed for UIUC to achieve a position of preeminence in health and wellness research?”

The health and wellness steering team has concluded that the lack of an adequate infrastructure support to bring together scholars with a shared focus on health and wellness research is a significant barrier to creating the type of interdisciplinary partnerships that hold the greatest promise for the next phase of innovative, path-breaking scholarship. Over the next decade, these creative interdisciplinary partnerships in health and wellness research will be essential not only for optimal productivity and innovative, but also for competitiveness in securing federal funding.

By consolidating and coordinating current University of Illinois research in health and wellness under the umbrella of a new institute, individual faculty efforts will be integrated into the full concept of health and wellness, thereby providing a platform to

rapidly accelerate research productivity and innovation, and attract significant more research support to this campus. The interdisciplinary strengths of campus faculty in the many aspects of biological and behavioral health sciences, when combined and focused, within an institute that emphasizes all aspects of health and wellness, will greatly facilitate the translation research.

The health and wellness steering team identified four critical elements that are needed to establish an Institute for Health and Wellness Research. Infrastructure needs for the Institute would include:

Physical Facility

The health and wellness steering team has concluded that the lack of a physical facility for bringing together scholars with shared focus on health and wellness research is a significant barrier to creating the type of interdisciplinary partnerships that have the greatest promise for the next phase of innovative, path-breaking scholarship. Without a facility to enable teams of scholars from diverse units, the agenda for health and wellness research at the University of Illinois will not achieve its full potential. There is, quite simply, no substitute for creating the context in which researchers from varied disciplines with shared interests and goals can come together around proposals and activities. This has been the critical missing element at the University of Illinois to date. This is viewed as a most important element for assertively advancing health and wellness work on this campus.

The facility would require approximately 20,000 sq. ft. of research laboratory, conference and meeting room and office space. There are several options for meeting facilities requirements in the near term and until funds from private, corporate or state sources become available. These options include the remodeling and re-purposing of existing campus space such as was done successfully in Huff Hall and Freer Hall and the dedication of a portion of space within an existing research facility. As discussions progress, specific estimates and square footage requirements could be further developed.

Personnel

In order to enable, support and sustain large-scale interdisciplinary research efforts, personnel dedicated to the institute activities will be required. Ongoing, core personnel required include a senior researcher to serve as the institute Director. The Director should be a well-established scholar who can catalyze innovative proposals, facilitate team-work across diverse disciplines, and support ambitious research and fund-raising efforts. An associate director to assist in the management of day-to-day operations also will be needed, as well as one staff support person. Ongoing core personnel costs are estimated at approximately \$300,000. Additional initial funding for three years also will be needed for other personnel such as budget and systems staff (approximately \$125,000 /yr for three years). After three years this additional funding can be phased out as external funding is secured that can provide assistance in supporting institute activities. It

is anticipated that three years should be sufficient for external funding to be obtained at levels permitting the phase out of these additional funds.

Targeted Faculty Hires (through Faculty Excellence or Other Mechanisms)

As plans for the Institute for Health and Wellness Research are refined, it is anticipated that 1-3 faculty hires in each of the four proposed research themes areas will be sought to help create new partnerships and advance research. These faculty hires, totaling between 4 and 12, will be appointed within academic units, however, the Institute will play a key role in recruiting these targeted hires and in providing an innovative, interdisciplinary context for their scholarship. The Faculty Excellence mechanism would be an appropriate mechanism to use to enable these strategic hires across various academic units.

Seed Grant Funds

Approximately \$100,000/yr of ongoing support will be needed to fund seed grant activities within each of the research themes for a total of \$400,000 across the four proposed themes. These funds are essential for bringing teams together and investing in early pilot work.

Expected Outcomes of the Institute for Health and Wellness Research

The broad aims of creating an Institute for Health and Wellness Research at the University of Illinois are to leverage existing Illinois excellence into international prominence, and to enhance innovation and productivity in Illinois research and scholarship that addresses some of society's most pressing concerns, the promotion of human health and wellness. Illinois has strong profile of research in areas such as aging, disability, and mental health, yet is not ideally positioned to maximize these strengths through the type of large, multidisciplinary projects and proposals that are increasingly the norm in the field. The barriers to large-scale, multidisciplinary endeavors in health and wellness research include the following: (a) faculty expertise in shared areas of inquiry is distributed across multiple departments and colleges, (b) the lack of shared physical space makes it difficult for partnerships to form and benefit from shared activity and creativity, and (c) the absence of infrastructure to support research hampers the preparation, submission and management of large-scale proposals, impedes the development and delivery of coherent communication strategies that promote visibility and recognition of exceptional work, and has, to date, limited the formulation and effectiveness of fundraising efforts in particular areas of health and wellness research.

Measures of impact. The Institute for Health and Wellness Research is proposed to remove barriers to Illinois' preeminence in health and wellness research, in order to enable optimal productivity and innovation in research and place Illinois scholars in prominent roles in national policy and agenda setting. The primary purpose of the Institute is to enable Illinois scholars to develop and successfully compete for the scale and scope of multidisciplinary research funding that characterizes the most productive

scholarship in health and wellness. The absence of complete baseline data makes it difficult to formulate crisp target metrics for the Institute of Health and Wellness Research, however it is expected that federal agency, corporation and foundation grant and contract funding for health and wellness research will increase at a faster rate than trend analyses would have predicted prior to formation of the Institute. Candidate metrics would include:

- Amount of NIH funding in health and wellness areas
- Amount of NSF support dedicated to health and wellness research
- Amount of private, corporate and foundation support in health and wellness areas
- Amount of funding in support of health and wellness research from other federal agencies, e.g., U.S. Department of Education, Social Security Administration
- Proportion of campus funding profile derived from NIH
- Number of funded program project grants or other large-scale multi-investigator projects
- Number of Illinois investigators on federal grant review teams and/or policy making committees
- Number of new multidisciplinary research partnerships

Summary Recommendations:

Recommendation: That an interdisciplinary institute be created that will provide needed infrastructure support for health and wellness science research.

Recommendation: That Healthy Aging Across the Lifespan, Healthy Lifestyle, Disability and Quality of Life in the Context of Chronic Conditions, Mental Health and Nutrition be considered as early research themes of the Institute for Health and Wellness Research.

Recommendation: That a physical facility of approximately 20,000 sq. ft., ongoing funding for a Director, Associate Director and one support staff position (approximately \$300,000, three years of funding for additional personnel be provided (approximately \$125,000/yr) that will be phased out as external funding is secured, 4 – 12 departmental faculty be hired 1 – 3 in each research theme area, seed grant funding of \$400,000 (\$100,000/research theme be allocated for development of the Institute for Health and Wellness Research.