

## **Position Description**

PROFESSOR, Charles and Rita Gelman Professor in Risk Sciences  
DIRECTOR, University of Michigan Risk Science Center

## Position Description

The University of Michigan is seeking a Director for the School of Public Health's (SPH) University of Michigan Risk Science Center (UMRSC), who will continue to build the Center's strong national and international reputation in the risk sciences and orchestrate the next phase of growth. The Director will also hold an endowed faculty appointment with the SPH - the **Charles and Rita Gelman Endowed Professorship**. The Director's appointment will be within a department at the UM SPH that matches the expertise of the successful candidate and will report Center activities directly to the Dean. The Director represents the Center within the University and among a wide range of external constituencies and will be expected to develop a national and international presence for the UMRSC across the University as well as at scientific meetings and by influencing national decision-making policy.

### **THE POSITION:**

#### **OVERVIEW**

A recent \$5M gift to the UMRSC established the endowed professorship, funds for the addition of two new faculty members and fellowship support for graduate students, as well as funds for Center administration and marketing. The Director will continue to build the Center's strong national and international reputation in the risk sciences and orchestrate the next phase of growth. The Director represents the Center within the University and among a wide range of external constituencies and will be expected to develop a national and international presence for the UMRSC across the University as well as at scientific meetings and by influencing national decision-making policy.

The selected candidate will be expected to

- provide intellectual and scholarly leadership as Director of the UMRSC,
- perform basic and/or applied research in risk assessment,
- build teams with the ability to tackle a variety of environmental health risk research problems
- establish communication strategies for reaching various audiences,
- further develop educational programs, and
- lead the recruitment of two additional junior scientists.

The Director will have primary responsibility for identifying and selecting the areas of study, determining the approach to the study areas, and leading sponsored research projects and/or partnering with other faculty in the development of grant proposals in those areas of interest. She or he will also participate in instructional activities, in mentoring and supervising postdocs and students engaged in research activities, and as a member or co-chair of dissertation committees.

The Director will be a tenured faculty member with the responsibilities inherent to that role. In addition the Director will be a Center Director within UM SPH and will represent the Center within the School, the University and with external stakeholders.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS**

Candidates must have a doctoral degree and an outstanding track record of research accomplishments, as evidenced by scholarly contributions to the literature, commensurate with a senior appointment at SPH. Proven leadership and management ability combined with excellence in teaching and mentoring are required. The successful candidate will foster interdisciplinary research, excel at grantsmanship, and have a broad background in the public health sciences, including risk and the policy sciences.

## **APPLICATION INFORMATION**

Letters of application, including curriculum vitae and the names and contact information for three references, will be accepted until the position is filled. Submission of materials as an Adobe PDF file is strongly encouraged. All inquiries and applications will be treated in a confidential manner and should be sent to:

UM Risk Science Center  
Attention: Hilda McDonald  
SPH I Rm 1800  
109 S. Observatory  
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-2029  
Email: [umrscsearch@umich.edu](mailto:umrscsearch@umich.edu)  
*Electronic Submissions Preferred.*

The University of Michigan is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Individuals from traditionally underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply.

## **UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN RISK SCIENCE CENTER**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The University of Michigan Risk Science Center (UMRSC) is a research center focusing on important scientific issues that result from human exposure to health hazards. The Center serves as an independent and objective source of advice for the public, elected officials, industry, and international bodies who are facing complex questions involving risks to human or ecological health. Our mission is to serve the public sector by promoting informed decision making and effective communication, providing a forum for debate on policy using evidence-based risk science, and educating risk scientists.

### **DESCRIPTION**

The UMRSC is an interdisciplinary research Center based in the School of Public Health. The goal of the Center is to support the mission by providing a forum through which researchers can come together to address scientific and social issues posed by human exposure to various health hazards. The structure provided by the Center allows the resources of the University to be efficiently brought together to tackle complex questions which require extensive interdisciplinary research.

### **RESEARCH**

The Center so far has built strength in three core areas of research: occupational and environmental epidemiology, biological mechanisms and toxicity of nanoparticles, and risk modeling. UMRSC researchers currently are working on such issues as the role of pesticides in pancreatic cancer, mercury neurotoxicity in dentists, the effects of dioxin exposure, how perception of risk affects treatment decisions of breast cancer patients, toxicity of polymeric nanoparticles, and life cycle impact assessments for chemicals.

The UMRSC is uniquely positioned to capitalize on the strength of UM faculty and research in building teams to tackle important issues resulting from human exposure to health hazards. The landmark dioxin exposure study(<http://www.sph.umich.edu/dioxin/>) provides a model for community-based sponsored research:

- Transparent and unbiased;
- Trusted researchers;
- Highest academic quality; and
- Stakeholder involvement.

### **UMRSC FACULTY**

The Acting Director for the UMRSC is Professor Martin Philbert, professor of toxicology in the department of environmental health sciences and senior associate dean for research at UM SPH. Founding Director of the UMRSC Professor Emeritus David Garabrant is a physician and professor of occupational medicine in the department of environmental health sciences and a professor of epidemiology in the department of epidemiology. Faculty from the department of environmental health sciences currently include Nil Basu, Alfred Franzblau, Howard Hu, Olivier Jolliet, Jerry Keeler, Jerome Nriagu, Rudy Richardson, James Vincent, and Chuanwu Xi. Faculty from the department of health management and policy currently include Paula Lantz and David Mendez. The newly recruited director will hold a faculty position in a department at the UM SPH which best matches their field of expertise.

### **SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The UM SPH seeks to create and disseminate knowledge with the aim of preventing disease and promoting the health of populations in the United States and worldwide. We are especially concerned with poor, often minority populations, who suffer disproportionately from illness and disability. Among health science schools, we are unique in that we place a strong emphasis on disease prevention and health promotion, rather than on the treatment of existing illness. We aspire to be a crossroads of knowledge, where ideas and people from the biological, physical, social, and managerial sciences meet. The school employs integrated approaches to solving public health problems, and teaches and promotes the ethical practice of public health.

In the past, public health measures have conquered diseases such as smallpox, measles, whooping cough, rubella, and tetanus. Michigan has played an historic role in such achievements. We are especially proud of our contribution to the control of polio through the work of Thomas Francis Jr. and Jonas Salk, who developed and

tested their polio vaccine during their years with UM SPH. It was here in 1955 that the vaccine was declared "safe, effective, and potent." The 50th anniversary of that event was celebrated in April 2005.

Currently, researchers at Michigan work in labs on viruses, parasites, and toxins; derive new techniques for analyzing data on health and illness; design epidemiological studies to track emerging diseases; develop strategies to alter behavior that predisposes one to health risks; help communities create the capacity to solve their own health problems; and pioneer health policy that gives greater access to health care and prevention services.

The UM SPH is organized into five academic departments: Biostatistics, Environmental Health Sciences, Epidemiology, Health Behavior and Health Education, and Health Management and Policy.

### **SPH FACULTY**

The School of Public Health is headed by a Dean in collaboration with three associate deans who also serve as Center Directors. More than 200 professors and research scientists work at UM SPH. Many are world renowned experts in their fields and regularly share knowledge with governments, communities, and nongovernmental organizations. Among other achievements and contributions, they have:

- Identified ten genetic variants associated with Type-2 diabetes
- Pioneered solutions to the crisis of the uninsured in the United States
- Developed new strategies for the self-management of chronic disease
- Assessed the long-term mental-health impact of Hurricane Katrina
- Measured dioxin levels in Michigan communities with contaminated waters
- Found a gene that dramatically increases a child's risk for asthma
- Studied the global distribution of breast, liver, and other life-threatening cancers

### **SPH DEPARTMENTS**

#### **BIostatISTICS:**

The Department of Biostatistics at the University of Michigan brings biostatistical expertise to a wide spectrum of health-related problems, advances knowledge in biostatistics and health through educational programs for students and applied researchers, and provides

- leadership and outstanding scholarship in research, teaching, and service.

Faculty, students, and staff work in important areas of current biostatistical research, including image analysis, survival and event history analysis, statistical genetics and bioinformatics, clinical trials, Bayesian methods, statistical computing, longitudinal data analysis, methods for missing data and survey research. We are engaged in collaborative research with researchers in the Institute of Social Research and the Schools of Public Health, Medicine, Nursing, Dentistry, and elsewhere. See <http://www.sph.umich.edu/biostat/> for more detailed information.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCES:**

The environmental health sciences are concerned with the impact of environmental conditions on human health -- in particular the health effects in people that can arise from exposures to agents (chemical, biological, physical, or even behavior) through the air they breathe, the water they drink, the food they eat, and the manner in which they go about their lives and their work. It is an essential component of public health, with faculty, students and staff working in the the areas of environmental chemistry, physics and biology, environmental and occupational health, toxicology and human nutrition. See <http://www.sph.umich.edu/ehs/> for more detailed information.

#### **EPIDEMIOLOGY:**

Since 1941, the Department of Epidemiology has worked continuously to reduce the disease burden in human populations through research, education, and service. We practice epidemiology as a broad scientific discipline, addressing the occurrence of disease and the distribution of health status in populations. By integrating causal concepts at the molecular, cellular, clinical, and social-environmental levels, our diverse faculty work to maintain an intellectual environment that facilitates the integration of biological, social, and analytic approaches. Within such an environment, faculty and students are able to develop the breadth of knowledge necessary to appreciate fully the complexities of the biosocial systems that we seek to understand and modify. See <http://www.sph.umich.edu/epid/> for more detailed information.

#### **HEALTH BEHAVIOR AND HEALTH EDUCATION:**

The Department of Health Behavior and Health Education is designed to focus on social and behavioral factors associated with health status and behavior; and to develop programs to promote health, prevent disease, and manage chronic illness. Our mission is to prepare students and conduct research to lead the nation and the world in understanding these issues and developing strategies to improve the public's health. Our multidisciplinary faculty provide students with a broad choice of courses, including those which emphasize individual, family, social network, community, and policy approaches to health behavior and health education. Faculty are also involved in conducting research using multiple research designs and methods, for the diverse purposes of examining basic research questions, evaluating interventions, applying research findings to program development, and involving community. See <http://www.sph.umich.edu/hbhe/> for more detailed information.

#### **HEALTH MANAGEMENT AND POLICY:**

The Department of Health Management and Policy offers exciting and challenging programs for gaining knowledge and skills in health management and health policy. Exciting, in that we offer state-of-the-art curricula taught by a world-renowned faculty. Challenging, in that we provide a rigorous, multidisciplinary course of study that prepares students to meet the changing demands of the health care, public health, and health policy environments.

Michigan's recognition as the country's leading program confirms the contributions HMP graduates make to the organization and management of the nation's public health and health care systems. They continue to hold key

positions in government at all levels, in health insurance, in special programs for the poor and disadvantaged, federal and state agencies, and, most frequently, as managers of the nation's hospitals, clinics, HMOs, and health departments. See <http://www.sph.umich.edu/hmp/> for more detailed information.