

# Creation of the Business School Alliance for Health Management

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The launch of *Healthcare Management, Policy and Innovation* is a major milestone for the Business School Alliance for Health Management (BAHM). BAHM was founded in 2010 to "transform the health sector by advancing education, research and practice in the nation's top schools of management." It was envisioned as a collaboration of business schools committed to the idea that management education, as applied to the challenges of healthcare delivery and healthcare innovation, can play a special role in creating new and important solutions for the health sector.

All eleven members of BAHM share in the core belief that challenges in the health sector often stem from challenges in the underlying business model for healthcare and healthcare delivery.<sup>1</sup> Business schools can develop curricula addressing these issues in the health sector, advance case studies to share best practices and knowledge across schools, and conduct critical research addressing fundamental questions from the business perspective in healthcare.

Given the enormity of the cost and quality issues in the US health sector, and the pressing challenges of healthcare access in emerging market economies, the task of preparing the workforce to address these challenges was seen as too large for any individual business school to tackle on its own. Moreover, healthcare as an industry focus is not a traditional faculty discipline in business schools. As a result, BAHM members realized that they faced the question of how to support a diverse cadre of faculty and academic programs required to meet our pressing mission.

BAHM arose out of a series of conversations across institutions where leaders of health-related programs realized the potential for a more collaborative approach to this critical mission. The BAHM members all agreed that business education offered a critical, and underused, approach to addressing the problems of the health sector.

BAHM as an organization filled a niche supporting an interdisciplinary faculty across member institutions. Health sector management programs bring together a diverse set of faculty across key business disciplines, many of who never participated together in the same academic meetings. This collaboration has already led to one interdisciplinary conference on the cost of healthcare and the spirit of this effort is embodied in our new interdisciplinary journal, *HMPI*.

BAHM also offers the potential for greater collaboration across schools in terms of student activities. The first collaborative activity of BAHM was to sponsor inter-school student case competitions. This activity has evolved from a format in which each team discussed the same case into a new format in which student teams are asked to develop new cases describing

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<sup>1</sup> For a list of BAHM members and additional information, visit [www.bahm-alliance.org](http://www.bahm-alliance.org)

innovations in healthcare delivery in emerging market economies. We hope that these student assignments will provide additional teaching cases for business education. BAHM also offers the opportunity for joint communication of student conferences and the potential for joint recruiting activities.

*HMPI* is a critical part of the BAHM story. Faculty promotion is based on research publications, but there are few opportunities for faculty interested in the business of health care to publish their research. All of us have rejection letters from journals saying that, while our research is of high quality, it is too business-oriented for a clinical or policy journal, or too health-focused for a core business disciplinary journal. While *HMPI* is just starting, we hope that a new generation of faculty will be empowered to focus their insights on the critical business questions of the health sector given this new opportunity to publish their research. *HPMI* can help us to translate our research and teaching into actionable knowledge for the broader healthcare community.

BAHM is still in its formative stages. As the world looks for solutions for the pressing problems of healthcare, we hope BAHM and *HMPI* will be there to address this critical agenda.