This past year SUI funded S.C. AHEC to perform a multi-university pilot test of its population health materials and to place the materials on-line. The five population health modules were developed under an earlier HRSA contract. Sustainable Universities funded the development of five environmental case studies from which six Problem Based Learning exercises were developed to accompany the modules. The pilot test was of these materials - the modules, case studies and PBL exercises.

On-Line Development
Dr. Richard Hernandez was sub contracted with to prepare the on-line version of the materials. He chose to place the Population Health Modules on WebCT. Dr. Hernandez completed the transition of material to a WebCT format and created 5 WebCT Population Health sites for multiple uses by faculty. The Population Health Modules as well as the problem based learning (PBL) component were successfully converted to a WebCT format. It was discovered that WebCT was not available at all campuses and faculty had little experience in it use. With this information, Dr. Hernandez developed a plan to create an alternate web presence for the Population Health Modules. This new presences would have greater accessibility for the national and international audiences. He proposed Macromedia Course Builder as the tool to develop this new site.

Pilot Test
With the materials on-line, a pilot test was designed and implemented. The pilot test required participating academic programs to select at least one population health module and one problem-based learning environmental exercise. Additional modules and exercises could be chosen. Modules and exercises were to be incorporated into an existing course, senior project, graduate seminar or other special courses. Modules were to be presented using the instructor notes, glossary and other resources provided by the authors. A list of all students, taking the course where the population health materials were used, were forwarded to the project directors prior to the beginning use of the population health materials. Students were assigned assess numbers by the project directors. Faculty members were provided an account number as well as special access to the WEB CT materials. Pilot faculty participants were provided an orientation to Web CT. Faculty from six South Carolina colleges and universities were invited to participate. The evaluation was composed of a faculty pre/post assessment and a report on the implementation, logistics, and recommendations for improvement. Acknowledgments to SC AHEC and Sustainable Universities for development and funding was required in any
and all publications, presentations or other communications relating to these educational materials.

Only two programs actually participated in the pilot, others however have used the materials. Of the two completing the pilot were environmental science at Lander College under Dr. Eberhard Roeder and the Bachelor of Health Sciences at MUSC under Dr. Hernandez.

Dr. Roeder at Lander University used the modules as an adjunct to his course in environmental science. He had nine students and reported that the modules were well received by the students. They found it relatively easy to navigate through the content, and successfully engaged in the online PBL “Friends.” Dr. Roeder's only concern was with the content of some of the modules because they did not correspond to the content of his course. Overall, however, he reports a positive, and meaningful learning experience for his students. The modules were also pilot tested using undergraduate students enrolled in Health Care Delivery Systems course at MUSC. Students primarily read the text-based and PowerPoint information and did not engage in the PBLs. Students reported that the content was easy to understand and the format easy to navigate.

**International and National Exposure**

In addition to the pilot, the modules were also submitted to the University of Pittsburgh and incorporated into the “Pitt Supercourse” for epidemiology and prevention. The Supercourse is available on-line and has been distributed worldwide in CD-ROM format as well. There are currently nearly 1000 lectures in the Supercourse that have been translated into 30 different languages. At last report in May of 2002, the Supercourse web site was averaging 26,000 hits per day. With the bioterrorist developments following September 11, 2001 and the rapid updating of information, we felt that our module on emerging threats was rapidly becoming outdated. We contacted the Supercourse editors in January of 2002 to request that it be removed. We spoke briefly with the author about updating the module but it was agreed that the CDC and others had published much already, and that the information was changing too rapidly to develop one definitive source of information.

The newest development is the request by the University of North Carolina’s Southeastern Public Health Training Network to use the materials for an on-line public health continuing education course. Approval has been given and UNC will be implementing the project in the coming year.

In the summer of 2001, “Population Health Modules for Health Professions Educators” was presented at the First Annual Charleston Connections: Innovations in Higher Education conference, with the full article published in the conference proceedings. In the fall of 2001, “Interdisciplinary Population Health Modules for Health Professions Educators & Public Health Practice Coordinators” was presented at the annual meeting of the Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions in Norfolk, with the abstract published in the Journal of Allied Health Winter 2001 edition.
In the spring of 2002, the population health materials were also shown at the national AHEC workshop where they were received most positively. Sixty individuals attended the presentation. Currently the National AHEC program is placing handouts from the presentation on their Web site.

**Future**

For the future it is recommended that the modules remain available in a WebCT environment, but that the modules also be converted to a web-course using Macromedia Dreamweaver and Course Builder. This will allow for the course to be transportable to other web servers and provide portability and easier access to more health professionals.

By working with Sustainable Universities and the Health Resource and Services Administration, SC AHEC has been able to develop a valuable resource for teaching health professionals, students and faculty about the public health and all those areas that impact it such as new disease, our environment, world terrorism and building healthy communities. The SC AHEC will continue to promote the use of these materials and thanks SUI for all of its support.