

PUBLIC HEALTH

What can I do with this major?

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

HEALTH POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

Health Services Administration:

- Operations
- Finance
- Program Development
- Program Evaluation
- Management
- Material Management
- Human Resources
- Medical Staff Relations
- Information Technology
- Marketing
- Public Relations
- Project Management
- Facilities
- Patient Care Services
- Provider Relations
- Government Relations
- Strategic Planning

Health Policy:

- Research
- Analysis
- Policy Development
- Legislative Work
- Lobbying

- Hospitals
- Health systems
- Clinics
- Medical practice groups
- Home health agencies
- Long-term care facilities
- Mental health facilities
- Managed care organizations
- Health finance organizations
- Insurance companies
- Pharmaceutical companies
- Academic medical centers
- Federal government agencies:
 - Department of Health and Human Services
 - Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
 - Department of Veterans Affairs
 - Food and Drug Administration
 - Office of the Surgeon General
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 - National Institutes of Health
- Military
- Legislative offices
- State government agencies
- Public health departments (state and local)
- Advocacy groups
- Health foundations
- Professional associations
- Nonprofit organizations

For health services administration, choose an undergraduate major in business, accounting, finance, or management. For policy-related careers, consider public administration or political science. Gain experience through internships or jobs in a healthcare setting. Develop strong oral and written communication, analytical, and technological skills. Learn how to use database and spreadsheet software. Develop problem-solving skills for finding creative solutions to problems. Learn to work well on teams and cultivate leadership skills. Get involved in student government or campus organizations related to health issues. Earn a master's degree in public health, health administration, public administration, business, or a related field. To prepare for positions in lobbying and legislation, some will earn a law degree. Join related professional organizations and build a network of contacts. Stay abreast of new laws and regulatory changes in the healthcare industry.

AREAS

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STRATEGIES

BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

Quantitative Research
Behavioral Research
Program Planning
Program Implementation
Program Evaluation
Advocacy
Policy

Federal government agencies:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Department of Health and Human Services
Office of the Surgeon General
State government agencies
Public health departments (state and local)
Nonprofit organizations:
American Red Cross
American Heart Association
Colleges and universities
Hospitals
Private research foundations
Research and development firms
International health agencies

Pursue research experience at the undergraduate level.
Become involved in health programming or peer education on campus.
Volunteer in the community to gain experience and develop expertise in a particular area or organization.
Develop strong public speaking and presentation skills. Prepare to communicate effectively with both groups and individuals.
Learn to work well with diverse populations and people of varying ages.
Become familiar with grant writing techniques and grant submission procedures.
Earn a graduate degree for advanced research positions.

HEALTH PROMOTION AND COMMUNICATION

Intervention:
Planning and Development
Implementation
Evaluation
Health Education:
Prevention
Promotion
Social Marketing:
Mass media
Web-based
Organizational Communication
Project Management

Federal government agencies:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Department of Health and Human Services
Office of the Surgeon General
State government agencies
Public health departments (state and local)
Wellness centers
Community mental health centers
Corporate wellness programs
Fitness facilities
Schools
Colleges and universities

Become involved in health programming or peer education on campus.
Volunteer in the community to gain experience and develop expertise in a particular area or organization.
Obtain a part-time or summer job with a campus health center or wellness coordinator.
Learn to work well with diverse populations and people of varying ages.
Develop strong communication skills for building and delivering effective interventions.
Gain knowledge of funding sources, grant writing techniques and submission procedures.
Research the Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) credential.

AREAS

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STRATEGIES

BIOSTATISTICS

Research
Public Health Surveillance:
 Data Collection
 Analysis
 Interpretation
Clinical Trials
Data Interpretation and Presentation

Federal government agencies:
 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 National Center for Health Statistics
State government agencies
Public health departments (state and local)
Pharmaceutical industry
Biotechnology firms
Nonprofit organizations
Colleges and universities
Research institutions
Hospitals
International health agencies:
 World Health Organization

Choose an undergraduate major in mathematics, statistics, or basic science. Develop strong quantitative and computing skills.
Assist with faculty research projects or apply to a summer research program.
Gain experience through related internships. Learn to work well on an interdisciplinary team.
Develop strong written and verbal communication skills, as statisticians in this field write technical reports to share findings.
Earn a graduate degree in public health/biostatistics.

EPIDEMIOLOGY

Research:
 Design
 Data Collection
 Analysis
 Interpretation
Grant Writing
Incident/Disease Investigation
Risk Assessment
Surveillance
Technical Writing

Federal government agencies:
 National Institutes of Health
 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 Military
State government agencies
Public health departments (state and local)
World Health Organization (WHO)
Private research foundations
Pharmaceutical industry
Research and development service firms
Nonprofit organizations
Hospitals
Colleges and universities
Medical schools

Develop a solid background in the biological sciences, statistics, mathematics, and the software utilized for statistical analyses.
Gain experience with research. Volunteer to assist professors with research or apply for summer research programs.
Find a topic of interest and seek as much knowledge and experience in that area as possible.
Develop strong communication skills for grant and report writing.
Plan to work collaboratively with other professionals who study risk factors and disease distribution.
Earn a master's or doctoral degree in public health, epidemiology, or related field. Some clinical epidemiologists are also MDs.

AREAS

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STRATEGIES

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Research
Field Research
Air Quality
Food Protection
Radiation Protection
Solid Waste Management
Water Quality
Noise Control
Housing Quality
Vector Control
Toxicology
Occupational Safety
Risk Assessment
Management
Policy Development
Consulting

Federal government agencies:
CDC's National Center for Environmental Health
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
Environmental Protection Agency
Food and Drug Administration
Military
Department of Energy
State government agencies
Public health departments (state and local)
Private research facilities
Nonprofit organizations
Environmental agencies
Consulting firms

Major in biology, chemistry, or other science area.
Develop strong research skills and the ability to manage data.
Become involved with environmental-related organizations on campus.
Learn to work well with a team of other professionals such as physicians, engineers, and scientists.
Read related journals to stay abreast of new trends and legislation in the field.
Plan to earn a graduate degree in public health or related field.
Research the many specialties to determine interest areas in which to gain experience.

GLOBAL HEALTH and EPIDEMICS

Social and Economic Development
Health Policy
Demography
Women's Health
Children's Health
Nutrition
Design of Healthcare Systems
Disease Prevention and Control:
 Education/Medication
Distribution
Disaster Relief

International organizations:
World Health Organization (WHO)
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
United Nations Development Programme
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
World Bank
USAID
Bilateral government development agencies:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Public Health Service
Office of International Health
Nonprofit organizations:
Peace Corps
International Red Cross
CARE
Doctors Without Borders

Major in a social science and plan to continue education in public health.
Learn one or more foreign languages.
Study, volunteer, or intern abroad as much as possible.
Participate in international service learning trips or missions.
Volunteer in the local community with health-related issues.
Develop excellent research, writing, communication, and organizational skills.
Learn to adapt to cultural and racial diversity. Be willing to live and work in third world nations.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Public health is a broad, multi-disciplinary field, and most professionals specialize at the graduate level. Other specialties within public health include maternal and child health, nutrition, health disparities, and veterinary public health. Additionally, some professionals choose interdisciplinary career paths that involve public health, such as MPH/RN, MPH/JD, MPH/MD, etc. Learn about all the options through the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH).
- Seek involvement in undergraduate and community-based public health programs. Some higher education institutions have peer health educators trained to provide education and support to fellow students.
- A bachelor's degree opens the door for entry level opportunities in areas such as health education and promotion and environmental health.
- A master's degree is typically required for management, administration, research, policy development, biostatistics, and epidemiology.
- A doctoral degree is required to reach the highest levels of administration or research and for university teaching positions.
- Students planning to apply to a public health graduate program will do so through the Schools of Public Health Application Service (SOPHAS).
- Research the Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) and Master Certified Health Education Specialist (MCHES) offered by the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, Inc., as these certifications may be preferred or required for some positions.
- Many opportunities in public health exist with government agencies including: The Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Health Resources and Services Administration, Indian Health Service, National Institutes of Health, and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Become familiar with government hiring procedures. Obtain a government internship in area of interest.
- Develop a specialty area of interest via supplemental coursework and/or work experience for greater marketability within that specific career field.
- Writing, research, and presentation skills are critical in most career fields related to public health.
- Gain experience working with diverse populations across diverse settings. Learn to work well with others individually and in groups.
- Technology skills are integrated and demanded across all areas.