



## Department of Social & Behavioral Sciences

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# MPH in Community Health Academic Year 2008-2009

The community health concentration prepares professionals from a variety of backgrounds (nursing, medicine, dentistry, allied health, social work, health education, nutrition, psychology, anthropology, sociology) for public health careers. This concentration uses a multidisciplinary approach to identify community, family, social, and behavioral factors in both the onset of and solution to public health problems through disease prevention, health promotion, or health care. Community health contributes to the development, implementation, and evaluation of programs and policies that promote healthy environments and healthy lives for individuals and populations. Students will learn social and behavioral theories and methodologies that are used to plan, implement, and evaluate health promotion and disease prevention programs and interventions. Students will also be prepared to perform community-based research, communicate findings to the public and policymakers, and advocate for evidence-based programs and policies. This concentration also prepares students to take the Certified Health Education Specialists (CHES) exam. Traditionally, program graduates have assumed positions in public health departments, health and human service agencies, and other health care settings. By the conclusion of the M.P.H. program, a student in the community health concentration will be able to:

1. Identify theories, concepts models, and methodologies from a range of social and behavioral disciplines that are used in the solution of public health problems affecting the health of populations and individuals.
2. Identify needs and assets for social and behavioral science interventions.
3. Analyze social and behavioral factors contributing to disparities in population health.
4. Describe the steps and procedures for planning, implementation, and evaluation of community health programs, policies, and interventions.
5. Specify multiple targets and levels of intervention for community health programs and policies.
6. Apply evidence-based approaches in the development, implementation, and evaluation of community health promotion interventions to improve health and reduce disparities.
7. Implement and coordinate programs, research, and interventions in a public health setting.
8. Interact sensitively, effectively, and professionally with persons from diverse cultural, socioeconomic, educational, and professional backgrounds and with persons of all ages.
9. Develop community health promotion programs and use strategies responsive to the diverse cultural values and traditions of the communities being served.
10. Apply social justice and human rights principles and values when addressing community needs and use collaborative methods to achieve organizational and community health and organizational goals.
11. Apply ethical principles to address potential dilemmas in public health interventions.

## Community Health Curriculum (48 Semester Credit Hours)

### CORE COURSES: 15 SCH

BIOS	5210	Biostatistics for Public Health I	3 SCH
ENVR	5300	Environmental Health	3 SCH
EPID	5100	Principles of Epidemiology	3 SCH
HMAP	5210	Introduction to Health Management and Policy	3 SCH
SCBS	5115	Behavioral Foundations of Public Health	3 SCH

### REQUIRED COURSES: 12 SCH

SCBS	5350	Social and Behavioral Methods and Evaluation	3 SCH
SCBS	5410	Community Assessment	3 SCH
SCBS	5411	Community Program Planning	3 SCH
SCBS	5415	Public Health Interventions	3 SCH

### PRACTICE EXPERIENCE: 3 SCH

SPH	5855	Public Health Practice Experience	3 SCH
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### ELECTIVE COURSES: 18 SCH

SCBS	5140	Social and Cultural Determinants of Population Health	3 SCH
SCBS	5200	Social Justice, Ethics and Human Rights	3 SCH
SCBS	5215	Introduction to Health Disparities	3 SCH
SCBS	5420	Texas-Mexico Border Health Issues	3 SCH
SCBS	5430	Health Communication Strategies in Public Health	3 SCH
SCBS	5500	Introduction to International Health	3 SCH
SCBS	5650	Stress and Coping	3 SCH
HMAP	5240	Health Politic and Policy	3 SCH
HMAP	5270	Health Services Management	3 SCH

- Students may substitute an elective course not on this list only with prior written approval of their advisor.
- Courses not approved as substitutes will not be applied toward the degree plan.
- For the Texas - Mexico Border Health Issues course SCBS 5420, all students must have a Passport prior to taking this course, and international students must also have a US multi-entry Visa and purchase a travel visa for Mexico prior to taking this course.

### CULMINATING EXPERIENCE:

Comprehensive Exam (see details below)

- Upon approval by the student's advisor and the department chair, students may elect to complete a Thesis for the culminating experience. In this case, students will take 12 SCH of "ELECTIVE" coursework and 6 SCH of Thesis.

There will be one exam administered in-house. This exam will cover the competencies outlined in the degree program. Courses are meant as partial preparation but outside study is strongly suggested. The exam will contain practice-based questions relevant to implementing social and behavioral sciences in public health settings. Areas that will be covered include but are not limited to: community assessment, program planning, health promotion and disease prevention interventions, and evaluation of programs and interventions.

Exams will be held the fall and spring semesters. Students must have completed all core and required coursework before registering for the exam. Students should notify their academic advisor by finals week of the preceding semester that they intend to take the exam. Students will be provided a computer without internet connectivity. Length of time for the exam will be 4 hours. Outside resources are not allowed. Exam will be given to the proctor upon completion of the exam and copies will be distributed to the faculty.

Each question will be graded as Pass or Fail by more than one faculty member. The student's academic advisor is responsible for communicating the results of the exam. Students who fail the exam can retake the exam the following semester. Students who fail the retake of the exam will be withdrawn from the program and will need to apply for readmission.