Public Health Program Preparation at the University of Oregon

What is Public Health?

• Public health professionals aim to protect and improve the health of communities through outreach, education, and research.

• Public health has numerous areas of emphasis, such as nutrition, health administration, biostatistics, epidemiology, health promotion, environmental health, international health, biomedicine, and more.

• A multi-disciplinary field, public health draws professionals from a variety of backgrounds and undergraduate majors.

• Public health organizations tend to seek individuals who can employ strengths in creativity and critical thinking to solve problems in new ways.

• Although graduate study isn’t required, an advanced degree in public health increases opportunities for career flexibility and advancement.

• Graduate programs tend to have an experiential component of the curriculum, allowing students to apply their knowledge and gain additional professional experience while earning their degrees.

Examples of Career Opportunities

• Epidemiologist
• Tropical disease specialist
• Communications specialist
• College health coordinator
• Community health activist
• Health administrator
• Public health educator
• Environmental health technician
• Public health inspector

Examples of Public Health Employers

• World Health Organization (WHO)
• Center for Disease Control (CDC)
• National Institute of Health (NIH)
• U.S. Agency for International Development
• Consumer Product Safety Commission
• Disaster relief organizations
• Academic institutions
• Not-for-profit organizations

Types of Public Health Degrees

• MHA: Master of Health Administration
• MHS: Master of Health Science
• MPH: Master of Public Health
• MPHE: Master of Public Health Education
• MS: Master of Science
• DrPH: Doctor of Public Health
• PhD: Doctor of Philosophy
• ScD: Doctor of Science
• Dual Degree Programs (MPH/MD, MPH/PA)

Possible Prerequisites

• Applicants must research individual programs to find prerequisite coursework. Health professions advisors are available to help develop an academic plan tailored to specific graduate study goals.

• Students interested in public health commonly take courses in biology, human physiology, math, statistics, sociology, psychology, international studies, anthropology, and environmental science.
Classes to Consider

- BI 309: Tropical Diseases in Africa
- HPHY 104: Underst Human Disease
- HPHY 105: Principles of Nutrition
- HPHY 112: The Science of Health
- INTL 340: Global Health & Development
- PPPM 202: Healthy Communities
- PSY 366: Culture and Mental Health
- SOC 399: Sp St Health & Medicine

*This list is a small snapshot of UO courses that would help prepare students for a career in public health.*

Public Health Program Application Preparation

- Admission requirements vary depending on the degree type, program, and focus area. Applicants should spend time researching different programs to help establish an academic plan.
- Nutrition, epidemiology, environmental health, and biomedical public health programs commonly require prerequisites in science and math.
- Completing the prerequisites (if any) is just one aspect of the process. Applicants must also have a well-rounded application consisting of experience (volunteer work, job shadowing, undergraduate research, life experience, etc.), letters of recommendation, GRE scores (program and degree type dependent), and a strong statement of purpose.
- Experience within the public health field, whether paid or volunteer, is a crucial component of a competitive application.

Online Resources

- Health Professions Program Website
- New Fall 2017: Global Health Minor
- This Is Public Health
- American Public Health Association
- Centralized Application Service for Public Health
- Exploring Health Careers

Campus Resources

- Student organizations (Students for Global Health)
- Center for Undergraduate Research and Engagement
- Duck Nest
- TLC GRE preparation
- Global Education Oregon
- Academic departments
- Holden Center
- TLC study support
- HPP workshops
- Career Center

Advising

For more information and individualized academic planning, call or visit the Teaching and Learning Center (541-346-3226, 68 PLC) to schedule an appointment with a health professions advisor.