

# Doctor of Philosophy Program in Public Health Sciences Concentration in Health Promotion

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## Introduction

The Ph.D. concentration in health promotion in the Department of Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences is in the Ph.D. in public health sciences degree program in the University of Louisville's School of Public Health and Information Sciences. The concentration is designed to prepare students for careers in higher education, upper level management positions in government and private nonprofit health agencies, and research positions with universities, government agencies and in the private sector. In addition to gaining a solid foundation in the theories and concepts of the discipline, students also achieve competency as independent researchers.

## Competencies

The successful student is able to demonstrate:

- Advanced knowledge of behavioral and cognitive sciences related to public health education and promotion.
- Expertise in planning, implementing, and evaluating theory-driven health promotion interventions in a variety of community and clinical settings.
- Research, evaluation, scholarship and leadership skills that may be applied in higher education, government, and community health agencies.

It is expected that prior to graduation, students in the program have demonstrated these competencies by completing the curriculum, passing the qualifying exam, successfully defending the dissertation, participating in collaborative research and service projects with public health agencies, and serving as an instructor and mentor for master's level and beginning doctoral students.

Competency in the basic principles and application of epidemiology is a requirement for all students in the School. If a student has not had sufficient exposure to epidemiology prior to matriculation, he or she is required to take a course in epidemiology as part of the program of study.

## Admission

Applicants should have a minimum of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale and, in most cases, should have completed a master's or other graduate degree related to the theme of the doctoral program. Applicants who have a master's degree in a different discipline may be admitted with the

stipulation that they complete foundation course work during their enrollment for the doctoral degree. This coursework is in addition to the outlined curriculum, and is negotiated with the student's academic advisor on a case-by-case basis.

The formal application, curriculum vitae, personal statement, application fee, at least two letters of recommendation, official transcripts of all college work, and official scores on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test must be submitted to the Graduate School Office of Admissions. The personal statement should be a one-two page essay which discusses the student's background in health promotion, why the student is attracted to the field, and how the degree helps the student reach his or her career goals. Students should score above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile on the GRE. In addition, prior work experience relevant to the health promotion discipline is also considered as a factor in acceptance into the program. International students are required to submit TOEFL scores and a foreign credential evaluation of their transcripts. These are required no later than thirty days before the first day of classes of the semester in which the applicant plans to enroll.

For specific information about the degree concentration or the application process, students should contact Dr. Richard W. Wilson, Chair, Department of Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences, 502-852-8040.

### **Curriculum**

The typical progression through the health promotion curriculum is:

- Program of Study (year 1)
- Required and elective coursework of 39 credit-hours (years 1 and 2)
- Qualifying examination (year 2)
- Candidacy
- Dissertation research and preparation
- Oral examination

### ***Faculty Advisor***

The Department of Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences appoints a director of the Ph.D. concentration program each year. The director assigns advisors for each doctoral student. The assignment process is negotiated with the student who has the option of requesting a specific advisor. The student's choice is contingent on the agreement of the desired advisor, his or her availability, and the overall faculty resources of the department.

### ***Program of Study***

Upon matriculation in the program, each student meets with his or her assigned advisor and develops a program of study that includes courses in research design and statistics as well as selected cognate courses. The program of study may be modified as the student's needs change or course availability is altered.

If a student has not had sufficient exposure to epidemiology prior to matriculation, he or she is required to take a course in epidemiology as part of the program of study. In addition the

program of study includes development of competencies in other areas of public health knowledge that are relevant to the student's are of interest.

## Degree Requirements

### Coursework

The Health Promotion concentration of the Ph.D. in Public Health Sciences consists of a minimum of 39 credit-hours, including the following requirements:

39 total credit-hours:

21 credit-hours of required coursework:

12 credit-hours of coursework in health promotion theory and principles

3 credit-hours of cognate coursework

3 credit-hours of research design and statistics

3 credit-hours of ELFH-683 College Teaching

18 credit-hours of elective coursework:

9 credit-hours of cognate coursework

9 credit-hours of research design and statistics

Course #	Course Title	Credit-Hours
PHPB-701	Theoretical Basis of Health Promotion	3
PHPB-704	Psycho-Social Foundations of Health Decision Making	3
PHPB-705	Community Organization and Health Policy Advocacy	3
PHPB-710	Community-Based Participatory Research	3
PHPB-722	Health Risk Communication	3
PHPB-724	Dissertation Methods Seminar	3
	Research design and statistics electives (with approval of advisor)	9
	Cognate electives (with approval of advisor)	9
ELFH-683 or ELFH-661 or other course	College Teaching or Adult Development and Learning or equivalent course (with approval of advisor)	3
Total		39

### Research Design and Statistics Electives

Students work with their advisors to select appropriate courses to complete the twelve credit-hours required in this category. Selections are based on the research and statistics background of students and the anticipated research and statistics needs of the dissertation research projects.

The following is the list of approved electives for this category. Other courses may be considered with permission of the faculty advisor and the program director.

<i>Approved Research Design and Statistics Elective Courses</i>		
Course #	Course Title	Credit-Hours
PHEP-602	Epidemiological Methods	3
PHPB-615	Advanced Program Evaluation	3
PHEP-710	Community-based Participatory Research	3

PHPB-711	Qualitative Research Methods in Public Health	3
PHPB-724	Dissertation Methods Seminar	3
PHST-630	Applied Statistical Methods	3
PHST-640	Statistical Methods for Research Design in Human Studies	3
PHST-680	Biostatistical Methods I	3
PHST-681	Biostatistical Methods II	3
PHST-682	Multivariate Statistical Analysis	3
PHST-684	Categorical Data Analysis	3
PHST-725	Design of Experiments	3
PSYC-610	Advanced Statistics I	3
PSYC-611	Advanced Statistics II	3
PSYC-612	Advanced Statistics III	3
ECPY-793	Reviewing Scientific Literature [course in meta-analysis]	3
SOC-609	Seminar in Statistics I	3
SOC-609	Seminar in Statistics II	3
SOC-618	Qualitative Field Research Methods	3

### *Cognate Electives*

Students work with their advisors to select appropriate courses to complete the twelve credit-hours required in this category. Selections are based on the research and professional interests of students and the career paths anticipated.

The following is the list of approved electives for this category. Other courses may be considered with permission of the faculty advisor and the program director.

<i>Approved Cognate Elective Courses</i>		
<i>Course #</i>	<i>Course Title</i>	<i>Credit-Hours</i>
PHPB-604	Health Decision and Risk Analysis	3
PHPB-610	Introduction to Health Informatics	3
PHPB-612	Health Communication Campaigns	3
PHPB-650	Advanced Topics in Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences	3
PHPB-655	Systems Thinking and Dynamic Modeling in Public Health	3
PHPB-721	Health Promotion and Healthcare-Associated Infection	3
PHPB-727	Culture and Public Health	3
PHPB-753	Independent Study in Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences	3
GEOG-657	Geographic Information Systems	3
HSS-669	Administering Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Programs	3
HSS-675	Health Promotion and Disease Prevention at the Individual Level	3
HSS-676	Community Health Promotion and Disease Prevention	3
HSS-684	Program Planning in Health Education and Promotion	3
NURS-657	Health Promotion and Illness Prevention Across the Lifespan	3
PHCI-631	Social and Behavioral Sciences in Health Care	3
PHEH-620	Global Issues	3
PHMS-604	Legal and Bioethical Aspects of Public Health	3
PHPH-630	Geographic Information Systems in Public Health	3
PSYC-581	Introduction to Health Psychology	3

### Qualifying Examination

Upon completion of all formal course work, typically at the end of the second year, students take a written qualifying exam to demonstrate their ability to synthesize and apply concepts from those courses. The exam is evaluated on a pass/fail basis; students who don't pass the exam at the first administration are given time to prepare to sit for the exam one additional time. Once the qualifying exam is successfully completed, students are admitted to candidacy for the doctoral degree.

### Dissertation

A dissertation, based on original research conducted by the student, is required of a candidate for the degree of doctor of philosophy in public health sciences with a concentration in health promotion. The dissertation is to be a scholarly achievement that demonstrates the student's thorough understanding of research techniques in health promotion and the ability to conduct independent research.

### *Dissertation Committee*

The student's dissertation research is guided by, and the final product approved by, a dissertation committee, chaired by the student's faculty advisor, and appointed by the dean of the school upon the advice of the chair of the department. The dissertation committee consists of five members and must include one representative outside the department. The dissertation must be approved by the committee and the chair of the department.

Once the student has completed work on the dissertation, the dissertation committee schedules a date for the student's final examination during which the student is asked to defend the dissertation and the supporting research. The dissertation must be approved by the committee and by the chair of the department.

### *Dissertation Proposal*

A student who successfully completes the qualifying exam must submit a written dissertation proposal to all members of the dissertation committee. The student is then orally examined on the dissertation proposal.

### *Dissertation Preparation*

The dissertation is to be prepared in format and binding according to university guidelines.

### *Dissertation Approval*

The dissertation is to be submitted in completed form to the chair of the department at least thirty days before the end of the term in which the candidate expects to be graduated, and the candidate is not eligible for final examination until the dissertation has been accepted by the committee and chair.

The dissertation committee schedules an oral defense by the candidate. The time and place for the defense is published to the general academic community, members of which are free to attend the defense. The dissertation is approved by a majority vote of the committee and the concurrence of the department chair.

*Dissertation Distribution*

One unbound copy of the dissertation, signed by the dissertation committee, must be deposited with the School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies prior to graduation.

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