Health promotion and education are essential in public health. The emphasis in health promotion and education is on influencing health-related behavior and policy initiatives to impact long-term health improvement. There is increasing interest in incorporating new concepts from informatics, risk and decision analysis, as well as global perspectives.

The Department of Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences uses theoretical and applied knowledge to address the public health challenges of today and tomorrow. We offer instruction, conduct research, and provide community service to advance public health education and health promotion competencies, such as community assessment, program planning, communication techniques, and program evaluation.

The department is committed to active learning, using student engagement as an instructional strategy. Different methods, such as team learning, web-based instruction, and social media are used to help students improve their knowledge and skills. Partnerships with local and state public health agencies, healthcare organizations, school systems, community groups, commercial entities and other university departments broaden opportunities for student engagement. The department is participating in the school’s initiative to form global partnerships, and offer a Master of Public Health (MPH) concentration in global health.

Community engagement also enhances the department’s research and service mission. Department faculty members partner with governmental public health agencies and other stakeholders on disease prevention and management, and collaborate with numerous private nonprofit organizations. Research is ongoing in the areas of violence prevention, asthma management, health literacy, social determinants of health, HIV/AIDS attitudes and stigmas, and policy implications of adverse childhood experiences. There is an overriding theme of understanding and addressing health disparities.

The department offers a concentration in the MPH, the school’s professional degree. Graduates with this concentration are qualified for careers with agencies in various levels of government, nonprofit and community-based health agencies, healthcare facilities, universities and school systems, and private corporations. In addition, we offer a specialization in health promotion within the PhD in Public Health Sciences. This program covers theories and principles of health promotion, courses in statistics and research design, and 12 hours of electives to form an area of emphasis. Most full-time students are able to complete this degree in 3 to 4 years.