Recommendations

B.A./B.S. Public Health

To learn more about how to make the most of your educational experience within and beyond the classroom:
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PARTICIPATE

Community Service

Related course
HPEB 511: Health Problems in a Changing Society, HPEB 553: Community Health Problems, PUBH 498: Public Health Capstone Seminar

Sites/Experiences
There are endless numbers of potential sites and experiences for public health students. Site and experience selection depends upon (individual/group project) student interests. Students are encouraged to seek Community Service opportunities on their own and as part of course requirements. Some recommended sites/experiences include, but are not limited to: schools (K-12, higher education); churches; military bases; hospitals, free clinics, after school programs, community centers - anywhere people are. Students are encouraged to spend time reviewing USC's Community Service Directory and USC's Student Organization Directory.

Why this is important
Public health professionals need exposure to a variety of community agencies, organizations, governmental actions, community dynamics, community neighborhood structure and organization to understand how to best address communities' priority health needs.

Global Learning

Related course

Timing for "study abroad"
For B.S. students study abroad is recommended during winter break or summer semesters depending upon the student's progression. Laboratory science requirements and the sequencing of science courses often make study abroad challenging for B.S. students during fall & spring terms. B.A. students have more flexibility in their program to incorporate study abroad experiences.

Destinations
Again, since public health is everywhere, all study abroad destinations are recommended and relevant. Selection should be based on student's interests. Many public health majors opt to travel to Spanish speaking countries as a way of improving their Spanish speaking skills for work with Hispanic/Latina populations. However, numerous students who do not speak Spanish or who share this goal have traveled to Africa, Italy, Germany, and countless other locations.

Opportunities
USC Alternative Break (Spring & Fall); faculty led study abroad programs, student volunteer directory. Student organizations not limited to, but including: GlobeMed at the University of South Carolina, Global Leadership Network, Students Associated for Latin America (SALA), Amigos del Buen Samaritano, Carolina Against Sex Trafficking (CAST), Engineers Without Borders - USA, Operation Smile at USC, Students Helping Honduras at the University of South Carolina, Timmy Global Health at USC, TOMS at University of South Carolina, FACE AIDS- University of South Carolina Chapter. The Arnold School also has several Centers and faculty who travel and conduct community-based public health research and interventions (e.g., Consortium for Latino Immigration Studies and PASOs Program).
**Why this is important**

Global study is directly connected to and critical for students in public health. Not only are many of our health problems at home (in the U.S.) shared by others around the world, but the leading causes of death and morbidity world-wide have an impact on each and every one of us. Many public health students aspire to participate in the Peace Corps and such programs as Doctor’s Without Borders. Study abroad is the perfect compliment to students who are passionate about travel and about helping others at the international level.

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**Peer Leadership**

**Student Organization(s)**

Students are strongly encouraged by their academic advisors, UNIV 101 class (required for all PH majors), faculty teaching core public health courses and through USC Connect to search the Student Life database of over 400 organizations to join.

**Opportunities**

The Arnold School has a Dean’s Advisory Council (DSAC) which includes student representatives from both Public Health and Exercise Science. Students are encourage to be leaders in class projects and presentations. Students are also encouraged to participate in the numerous leadership opportunities through USC Student Government (as Arnold School Representatives), UNIV 101, Visitor Center Student Ambassadors, and Summer Orientation Peer Leaders.

**Why this is important**

Not only is leadership experience important for employability and successful admission to graduate programs, but it is essential for public health practitioners who direct, supervise and coordinate the many duties necessary to ensure the nation's health.

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**Internships**

**Related Courses**

PUBH 498: Public Health Capstone Seminar, HPEB 301: Practicum in Health Education (varies by Faculty interest; must have special permission), Independent Study (by Faculty Department & Interest; must have special permission)

**Recommended sites/work experiences**

There are endless numbers of potential sites and work experiences for public health students. Site and experience selection depends upon individual student interests and career goals. Students are encouraged to select a site as part of PUBH 498 course requirements. Some recommended sites/experiences include, but are not limited to: schools (K-12, higher education); churches; military bases; hospitals, free clinics, after school programs, community centers - anywhere people are. Student are encouraged to spend time reviewing USC’s Community Service Directory; meeting with the Community Internship Program Office through Career Counseling; and by networking with advisors, faculty and public health professionals.

**Professional Organizations**

American Public Health Association (APHA) Student Member; South Carolina Public Health Association, Student Chapter; Society for Health Education (SOPHE); American Association for Health Education (AAHE); American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD), Student Member; and numerous others based on student interest.

**Other**

Some students, especially those interested in health education, opt to take the Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) exam which is a national competency-based examination administered by the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, Inc. Many job positions in health education and health promotion require applicants to have their CHES certification.
**Why this is important**

Public health is an applied profession and therefore requires students to develop a core set of skills and professional behaviors. Internship and practice opportunities are essential and critical to allow students the opportunity to “try-out” these skills and to be mentored/trained by practicing public health professionals. Students are strongly encouraged to seek summer internships, independent studies and volunteer opportunities during their entire 4-year program - not wait until their Senior Capstone Seminar course (PUBH 498).

**Research**

**Related courses**

HPEB 511: Health Problems in a Changing Society (policy brief creation), EPID 410: Principles of Epidemiology, PUBH 498: Public Health Capstone Seminar, Independent Study (by Faculty Department & Interest; must have special permission)

**Sample research projects or topics**

USC student use of prescription medications, periodontal disease and perinatal risk, comparative analysis of the Indian and U.S. healthcare systems, Hispanic/Latina immigrants’ perceptions and experiences with accessing healthcare in SC, alcohol use and sexual risk on USC’s campus, USC walking program for employees, efforts to increase breastfeeding support in the workplace, exploring seniors’ perceptions of occupational and physical therapy, Latina motherhood in the US: stories of hardship and triumph, Does bright light improve sleep quality in veterans with combat-related post traumatic stress disorder?; Increased physical activity and produce intake as a result of community garden participation, and implementing a physical activity and nutrition program in area middle schools.

**Other recommendations**

Students are strongly encourage to ask faculty teaching their public health core and related courses about their research interests and opportunities for involvement. Advisors routinely provide information about USC’s Office of Undergraduate Research, Arnold School and other campus faculty's research areas, and public health sections of UNIV101 introduce students to resources on campus related to research. Numerous public health students have received Magellan Scholars awards to conduct health research with Arnold school faculty.

**Why this is important**

Public health is a discipline which is grounded in science and in creating an evidence-base for not only understanding and prioritizing population health issues, but also for developing prevention and treatment strategies. Epidemiology is the cornerstone of public health and is concerned with rigorous, reliable and accurate research methods, statistical procedures, data collection and analysis, research study designs, creating population health surveillance systems and numerous other science related functions (e.g., labs, disease tracking, water & sanitation inspections, etc.). All public health students must have an understanding of research principles and how to apply them to addressing current health issues to keep society well.

**INTEGRATE**

**How to Integrate**

All courses in the public health major core focus on the “application” of theory, course concepts, course material, etc. to the “real world”. Because public health is an applied, practice based discipline every course requires students to engage in integrative learning. Course assignments and activities include, but are not limited to: case studies, data collection and recommendations for problem solving, research papers with implications for practice, reflective journals, service learning with reflection papers, health promotion intervention planning, implementation and evaluation, writing policy briefs, and creating an ePortfolio beginning in UNIV101 with the final version due in senior capstone seminar.
Public health students are challenged to apply what they learn in a variety of new contexts throughout their coursework, service learning activities, volunteer service, global study, peer leadership, leadership positions and in their senior capstone project (50+ hours of required out-of-the-classroom experiences). Students are encouraged to participate in USC Discovery Day and in other showcase settings as available.

Public health is an applied, practice based field which requires students to develop skills which transcend subject matter. For example, all students need to demonstrate: critical thinking skills, interpersonal communication (written & verbal) skills, how to locate and interpret health data, public speaking/presentation skills and among others.

LEAD

Initial career opportunities

Public Health students will be prepared for entry level positions in a variety of settings to include, but not limited to: Not-for-profit agencies/organizations (e.g., United Way, Red Cross, American Heart Association, American Diabetes Association, Eat Smart Move More, Alzheimer’s Association), Local, state, federal governmental agencies (e.g., SC DHEC, county health departments, health & human services, CDC, offices of aging, etc.)

Related graduate programs

Public health students in the B.S. program will be prepared for graduate study in many areas including, but not limited to: Medicine, Physician’s Assistant, Nursing, Pharmacy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech and Hearing Disorders as well as Public Health (MPH) in any area (i.e., Health Promotion, Environmental Science, Epidemiology, Biostatistics, Health Services Administration - MHA); Social Work (MSW), Law, and any social behavior science (e.g., medical anthropology, tropical disease/global health, psychology, sociology, education, counseling).

Future career opportunities

Advanced study in the field (PhD or DrPH - Doctorate in Public Health) could result in employment as CEO of a not-for-profit organization, Director/Agency Head in a governmental agency such as the CDC or US Department of Health and Human Services, higher education settings (i.e., faculty and research positions), social scientist/researcher in policy organizations such as Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Kaiser Permanente, Brookings Institute and/or as a self-employed consultant.

The listed experiences are a sample of options for your major. See the USC Connect experiences database to search for more opportunities. www.sc.edu/uscconnect/participate