



**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH**  
***BSPH STUDENT HANDBOOK 2023/2024***  
***ACADEMIC YEAR***

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## **Department of Public Health**

Welcome to Western Kentucky and especially the Department of Public Health. The Department of Public Health offers academic programs which prepare students for a wide variety of health careers. In addition, the department provides a service to the University's colonnade program through instruction to improve the health knowledge, attitudes, and behavior of students. An equally important responsibility is to carry out research and other scholarly activities which provide opportunities for student engagement, maintain the academic strength of the faculty, and expand knowledge in various fields. The department also provides services to multiple agencies, institutions, and organizations in the Commonwealth of Kentucky and across the nation.

The Department of Public Health houses five undergraduate degree programs Environmental Health Science, Healthcare Administration, Health Information Management, Health Sciences and Public Health. Minors offered include Environmental Health, Global Health Service, Health Education, Health Education & Health Promotion, Healthcare Administration, Occupational Safety & Health, Environmental Studies and Sustainability and Worksite Health Promotion. Certificate programs are: Environmental Health, Health Education & Health Promotion, Health Informatics, Long-Term Care Administration, Occupational Safety & Health, Public Health and Worksite Health Promotion.

There are also 3 graduate programs: Master of Environmental & Occupational Health Science, Master of Healthcare Administration, and the Master of Public Health.

## **Bachelor of Science in Public Health Program**

### **Accreditation**

The Bachelor of Science in Public Health (BSPH) program is accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health ([CEPH](#))

### **Vision**

To be a regionally and nationally recognized institution contributing to the optimal well-being for all populations.

### **Mission**

Prepare highly competent, public health practitioners to enhance the health status and quality of life of diverse populations.

**University Requirements:** Refer to the [WKU Undergraduate Catalog](#) - Academic Information

**Degree Requirements:** Students must complete a minimum of 120 unduplicated undergraduate semester hours ([WKU Undergraduate Catalog](#)) for additional information (degree requirements).

**Colonnade Requirements:** Refer to the ([WKU Undergraduate Catalog](#))

**Residency and Upper Division Hours:** The minimum residence requirement is 25% of the minimum number of semester hours required in the students' degree program. Students pursuing a baccalaureate degree must take at least 42 hours of upper division coursework. Students pursuing concurrent baccalaureate degrees must take at least 57 hours of upper division coursework.

**Departmental Academic Regulations:** Students who have completed a minimum of 30 semester hours, including the courses required for seeking admission status, with an overall GPA of 2.3 (an overall GPA of 2.5 for Health Care Administration majors), qualify for admission into a program in the Department of Public Health. Students whose grade point average fall below 2.3 for two successive semesters will be dropped from the program. Students who receive a grade below a "C" in two or more courses required in a major or minor will be dropped from the program. A student may be reinstated in the program when the overall grade point average is elevated to at least 2.3 and all courses in which a grade of less than "C" has been earned have been repeated and a grade of "C" or better was earned. Students must have an overall grade point average of at least 2.5 before enrolling in the internship. Grades below "C" in major or minor courses will not be counted toward meeting graduation requirements.

### **Program Description**

The Bachelor of Science in Public Health (BSPH) is accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health ([CEPH](#)). Graduates are prepared to use their skills in a variety of government agencies, hospitals and other facilities of the health care system, community mental health agencies, employee health programs in business and industry, student health services on college campuses, and many non-profit health agencies and communities. Many students choose to pursue advanced degrees in public health, and this is strongly encouraged.

The BSPH program is guided by the following competencies:

**BSPH Program Competencies**

<b>Foundational Domains</b>
Overview of Public Health: Address the history and philosophy of public health as well as its core values, concepts, and functions across the globe and in society
1. Public Health History
2. Public Health Philosophy
3. Core PH Values
4. Core PH Concepts
5. Global Functions of Public Health
6. Societal Functions of Public Health
Role and Importance of Data in Public Health: Address the basic concepts, methods, and tools of public health data collection, use, and analysis and why evidence-based approaches are an essential part of public health practice
7. Basic Concepts of Data Collection
8. Basic Methods of Data Collection
9. Basic Tools of Data Collection
10. Data Usage
11. Data Analysis
12. Evidence-based Approaches
Identifying and Addressing Population Health Challenges: Address the concepts of population health, and the basic processes, approaches, and interventions that identify and address the major health-related needs and concerns of populations
13. Population Health Concepts
14. Introduction to Processes and Approaches to Identify Needs and Concerns of Populations
15. Introduction to Approaches and Interventions to Address Needs and Concerns of Populations
Human Health: Address the underlying science of human health and disease including opportunities for promoting and protecting health across the life course
16. Science of Human Health and Disease
17. Health Promotion
18. Health Protection
Determinants of Health: Address the socio-economic, behavioral, biological, environmental, and other factors that impact human health and contribute to health disparities
19. Socio-economic Impacts on Human Health and Health Disparities
20. Behavioral Factors Impacts on Human Health and Health Disparities
21. Biological Factors Impacts on Human Health and Health Disparities
22. Environmental Factors Impacts on Human Health and Health Disparities
Project Implementation: Address the fundamental concepts and features of project implementation, including planning, assessment, and evaluation

23. Introduction to Planning Concepts and Features
24. Introduction to Assessment Concepts and Features
25. Introduction to Evaluation Concepts and Features
Overview of the Health System: Address the fundamental characteristics and organizational structures of the U.S. health system as well as to the differences in systems in other countries
26. Characteristics and Structures of the U.S. Health System
27. Comparative Health Systems
Health Policy, Law, Ethics, and Economics: Address the basic concepts of legal, ethical, economic, and regulatory dimensions of health care and public health policy, and the roles, influences and responsibilities of the different agencies and branches of government
28. Legal dimensions of health care and public health policy
29. Ethical dimensions of health care and public health policy
30. Economical dimensions of health care and public health policy
31. Regulatory dimensions of health care and public health policy
32. Governmental Agency Roles in health care and public health policy
Health Communications: Address the basic concepts of public health-specific communication, including technical and professional writing and the use of mass media and electronic technology
33. Technical writing
34. Professional writing
35. Use of Mass Media
36. Use of Electronic Technology
<b>Competencies</b>
Public Health Communication: Students should be able to communicate public health information, in both oral and written forms and through a variety of media, to diverse audiences
1. Oral communication
2. Written communication
3. Communicate with diverse audiences
4. Communicate through variety of media
Information Literacy: Students should be able to locate, use, evaluate and synthesize public health information.
Locate information
Use information
Evaluate information
Synthesize information
<b>WKU Competencies</b>
1. Health equity

2. Global/population health
3. Health literacy
<b>Cross Cutting Concepts &amp; Experiences</b>
1. Advocacy for protection and promotion of the public's health at all levels of society
2. Community dynamics
3. Critical thinking and creativity
4. Cultural contexts in which public health professionals work
5. Ethical decision making as related to self and society
6. Independent work and a personal work ethic
7. Networking
8. Organizational dynamics
9. Professionalism
10. Research methods
11. Systems thinking
12. Teamwork and leadership

**Program Requirements**

The Bachelor of Science in Public Health program consists of a total of 70 credit hours: **30 core credit hours, 28 credit hours of other required courses and 12 hours of electives (six hours have to be upper division)**. Admission requirements into the program are completion of a minimum of 30 semester hours, including COMM 145, PH 100, PSY 100, BIOL 131 and CHEM 109, with an overall GPA of 2.3. Equivalent of these courses from other accredited institutions will be accepted, but the minimum GPA requirements must be met.

**Pre-seeking admission:** 24 hours including COMM 145, PH 100 and PSY 100 / PSYS 100 OR PSY/PSYS 220 OR SOCL 100; with an overall GPA of 2.0 or better.

**Public Health Major Requirement:** At least one half of the hours required for the major must be earned in courses numbered 300 and above.

**Program Layout**

<b>Course Number</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Hours</b>
<b>Core Courses</b>		
PH 261	Foundations of Public Health Education	3
PH 381	Public & Community Health	3
PH 384	Introduction to Epidemiology	3
PH 385	Environmental Health	3
PH 410	Global Perspective in Population Health	3

PH 412	Health Equity	3
PH 484	Community Organization for Health Education	3
PH 485	Fundamentals of Public Health Planning	3
PH 488	Senior Seminar	3
PH 490	Internship	3

### Other Required Courses

BIOL 131	Human Anatomy & Physiology	4
BIOL 207 & 208	General Microbiology & General Microbiology Lab	4
CHEM 109	Chemistry for the Health Sciences	4
MATH 109, 115 or higher		3
PH 100	Personal Health	3
PH 383	Biostatistics in the Health Sciences	3
SFTY 171	Safety & First Aid	1
COMM 145	Fundamentals of Public Speaking	3

Select **one** of the following: 3

PSY/PSYS 100 Introduction to Psychology OR

PSY/PSYS 220 Introduction to Lifespan Development Psychology OR

SOCL 100 Introductory Sociology

### Electives

**Select 12 hours of the following courses (6 of these hours must be upper division)**

BIOL 315	Ecology
CHEM 314	Introductory Organic Chemistry
CHEM 330	Quantitative Analysis
ENV 280	Introduction to Environmental Science
ENV 321	Fundamentals of Industrial Hygiene
ENV 323	Fundamentals of Industrial Hygiene Laboratory
ENV 360	Air Pollution
ENV 365	Air Pollution Laboratory
ENV 375	Introduction to Water Resources
ENV 380	Principles of Environmental Toxicology
ENV 410	Water treatment processes
ENV 411	Water Treatment Processes Laboratory
ENV 430	Radiological Health
ENV 460	Environmental Management
ENV 474	Environmental Risk Assessment
ENV 480	Hazardous and Solid Waste Management
ENV 490	Food Safety
GEOG 310	Global Hydrology
AH/HIM 290	Medical Terminology
SFTY 270	General Safety



HMD 211	Human Nutrition
HCA 340	Health care Organization & management
HCA 347	International Comparisons of Health Care Systems
HCA 459	Global Health Service-Learning Practicum
LEAD 200	Introduction to Leadership Studies
LEAD 300	Leadership Theory & Application
LEAD 325	Leading Change
LEAD 330	Leadership Ethics & Decision-Making
PH 365	Human Sexuality
PH 382	Peer Health Education
PH 390	Wellness & Fitness Assessment
PH 402	Worksite Health Promotion
PH 443	Health & Aging
PH 444	Death, Dying & Bereavement
PH 456	Independent Study in Health & Safety
PH 464	Women's Health
PH 467	Drug Abuse Education
PH 468	Sexuality Education
PH 483	Administration of Public Health Programs
PS 338	Government & Ethics
SOCL 260	Race & Ethnic Relations
SOCL 270	Introduction to Community, Environment, & Development
SOCL 350	Systems of Social Inequality
SOCL 360	The Community in Rural and Urban Settings
SOCL 362	Social Institutions: Race, Class, and Gender
SOCL 375	Diversity in American Society
SOCL 376	Sociology of Globalization
STAT 330	Introduction to Statistical Software
SWRK 101	Foundations of Human Services

**Total Hours**

**70**

**Advising:** Students are encouraged to schedule at least one advising appointment with their advisor each semester. Advising can be provided over the phone, email or on Zoom. Remember to schedule your advising appointment early.

**Graduation Requirements:** Students must have completed all degree/program requirements.

**Internship:** Supervised, 200/400-hour field experience planned with various agencies, organizations, facilities, industries, and businesses with health-related missions or programs, and approved by the Department of Public Health. Off-campus travel is required, and students are responsible for their own transportation. Note: Permission of instructor is required.

Students will participate in a pre-internship orientation and agency selection. A portfolio will be submitted at the end of the internship experience.

### **Certifications**

CPR/First Aid

Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) – Optional. CHES Examination information can be found at: <https://www.nchec.org/>

### **Certificate/Minor Programs**

- Minor, Health Care Administration
- Minor, Health Education
- Minor, Gender and Women’s Studies
- Minor, Gerontology
- Minor, Nutrition
- Minor, Non-Profit Administration
- Minor, Sexuality Studies
- Minor, Sociology
- Minor, Social Work
- Certificate, Environmental Health
- Certificate, Health Education and Promotion
- Certificate, Health Informatics
- Certificate, Long-Term Care Administration
- Certificate, Occupational Health and Safety
- Certificate, Public Health
- Certificate, Worksite Health Promotion

### **Student Organizations**

#### **PHUGAS**

This is the student governance organization for all BSPH and MPH public health students. Students discuss and vote on different things relating to the programs, including policy, procedure, diversity, inclusion, and curriculum within PHUGAS. Let your voice be heard.

#### **KPHA**

This organization seeks to promote and create awareness of public health issues both on campus and in our community. Through community partnerships and campus activities, members develop interpersonal and networking skills that will translate into their public health profession. The organization also aims at providing a platform for our members to participate in the community and help to make our society a better place to live.