

Milken Institute School of Public Health

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Milken Institute School of Public Health

Doctor of Philosophy – Social and Behavioral Sciences
in Public Health

Department of Prevention and Community Health
2020-2021

Note: All curriculum revisions will be updated immediately on
the website:

<http://www.publichealth.gwu.edu>

Program Director

Melissa A. Napolitano, PhD

Professor

Department of Prevention and Community Health

950 New Hampshire Ave, 3rd Floor

Washington, DC 20037

Phone: (202) 994-9099

drphhb_director@email.gwu.edu

Mission

The mission of the Department of Prevention and Community Health in graduating Doctoral-level scholars within this specialty field is to create a cadre of professionals who are uniquely equipped to provide public health expertise and conduct research in the field of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS). Upon completion of the PhD, these accomplished researchers will be prepared to apply their research and analytic skills to a range of research questions as well as implementation, evaluation, and advocacy needs of various cultural and socioeconomic groups and communities.

Admissions Requirements

The Doctor of Philosophy Program is designed for professionals seeking to become public health researchers. Applicants who have completed an MPH degree from a Council of Education for Public Health (CEPH) accredited Program, or who hold a master's degree in a social, behavioral, or quantitative field will be considered for admission to the PhD Program. Applicants with a master's degree in another field may indicate their relevant training, work and/or research experience, or educational background comparable to the MPH that may have prepared them for doctoral level training in Public Health. As an accredited School of Public Health, the curriculum in all graduate academic programs must provide a foundation in public health. All graduate students without a prior Masters of Public Health degree from an accredited school of public health will be required to successfully pass the zero-credit, free, online Pathways to Public Health (PUBH 6080) course within one year of matriculation.

For the PhD, qualified applicants with degrees from institutions in foreign countries are also eligible for admission. All applicants must submit scores from the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) taken within five years of the date of application. Because admission to this program is highly selective, successful applicants have competitive academic credentials and substantial prior public health professional work experience related to the specialty field to which they are applying.

PhD Competencies

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Program prepares professionals to make significant scholarly contributions to the scientific and evidence base of public health. The PhD program will train strong theoretical, methodological, and practical scholars, whose contributions could be as practitioners or academicians. Our students will be well trained in a substantive health area with a strong background in theory of social and behavior change, study design and evaluation, and statistical methods. Upon completion of the PhD, students will demonstrate ability in the core competencies listed at the end of this document. Students also will have an awareness of, and adhere to, the ethical standards of the discipline for the conduct of scientific research as well as gain competency in classroom instruction and practices.

Foundational Public Health Knowledge

Students enrolled in the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Program will demonstrate achievement of core public health knowledge areas listed at the back of this program guide.

Program Policies and Procedures

For program policies and procedures, please refer to the Doctor of Philosophy Social & Behavioral Sciences Handbook and other resources, located at the bottom of the following link: <http://publichealth.gwu.edu/content/services-students>

GW PhD in Social and Behavioral Sciences in Public Health Curriculum Distribution Summary

Total Program= 48 credits
Foundational & Research Courses = 12
Statistics Courses = 9
Methods Courses = 9
Content Area Electives = 9
Dissertation Prep Course & Dissertation = 9

**Courses in shaded rows indicate required courses*

UNIV 0250- GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT CERTIFICATION. SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THIS CERTIFICATION IS REQUIRED PRIOR TO TAKING ON ROLE AS TEACHING ASSISTANT. THIS ONLINE CERTIFICATION IS PAID FOR BY GW. THE 1-CREDIT RECEIVED FOR THIS CERTIFICATION IS NOT COUNTED TOWARD THE 48-CREDIT PhD PROGRAM.

	Course #	Course Title	Credits	Proposed Semester
Foundational & Research Courses 12 credits	PUBH 8408	Advanced Topics in Health Behavior Research and Practice – Doctoral Seminar	3	Spring Year 1
	PUBH 8409	Advanced Topics in Health Communication Research – Doctoral Seminar	3	Spring Year 2
	PUBH 8416	Study Design and Evaluation Methods	3	Spring Year 1
	PUBH 8434	Behavioral Medicine and Public Health	3	Fall Year 2
For Non-MPH Graduates Only	PUBH 6080 [^]	Pathways to Public Health	0	Year 1

[^]Students without a prior MPH degree from an accredited school of public health will be required to successfully pass the free, zero credit, online course within one year of matriculation. There is no fee for this course.

Statistics Courses 9 credits (6 credits required)	PUBH 8418	Applied Statistical Analysis	3	Fall Year 1
	PUBH 8419	Measurement in Public Health and Health Services Research: Doctoral Seminar	3	Spring Year 2
	DNSC 6211	Programming for Analytics	3	Fall
	DNSC 6215	Social Network Analytics	1.5	Spring
	DNSC 6274	Statistical Modeling and Analysis	3	Fall
	DNSC 6275	Advanced Statistical Modeling and Analysis	3	Spring
	DNSC 6276	Exploratory Multivariate Data	3	Fall
	ECON 8375	Econometrics I	3	Fall
	EDUC 8144	Discourse Analysis	3	Spring
	EDUC 8171	Predictive Designs and Analyses	3	Fall or Spring
	EDUC 8173	Structural Equation Modeling	3	Spring
	FINA 6271	Financial Modeling and Econometrics	4	Fall or Spring
	MBAD 6221	Judgement, Uncertainty, and Decisions	1.5	Spring
	MBAD 6222	Data Analysis and Decision	1.5	Spring
	PPPA 8022	Econometrics- Policy Research II	3	Spring
	PSYC 8257	Current Topics in Social Psychology (Structural Equation Modeling)	3	Fall
Methods Courses 9 credits (6 credits required)	PUBH 6299	Applied Meta-Analysis with R	1	Fall
	PUBH 8417	Qualitative Research Methods and Analysis* <i>Prereq: PUBH 8416 or instructor permission</i> <i>*indicates course may be replaced with EDUC8257, PSYC8258 or other doctoral level qualitative class</i>	3	Spring Year 2
	PUBH 6242	Clinical Epidemiology & Decision Analysis <i>*Note: this should be taken in combination with PUBH 8242 for a total of 3 credits</i>	2	Spring Year 1
	PUBH 8242	Topics: Clinical Epidemiology & Decision Analysis – Doctoral Studies	1	Spring Year 1

	EDUC 8122	Qualitative Research Methods	3	Fall/Summer
	EDUC 8130	Survey Research Methods	3	Fall/Spring
	EDUC 8131	Case Study Research Methods	3	Fall or Spring
	EDUC 8140	Ethnographic Research Methods	3	Spring
	EDUC 8142	Phenomenological Research Methods	3	Spring
	PSYC 8231	Development of Psychometric Instruments	3	Fall
	PSYC 8256	Introduction to Survey Research	3	Fall
	PSYC 8258	Qualitative Research and Analysis	3	Spring
	PUBH 8364	Quantitative Methods	2	Spring
	PUBH 8365	Design of Medical Studies	3	Spring
Content Area Electives (Min of 9 credits) (Must take one course in each of the two categories below) Sample List				
Social and Behavioral Sciences Electives	ANTH 6501	Gender and Sexuality	3	Fall
	ANTH 6505	Medical Anthropology	3	Fall
	EXNS 6242	Nutrition Throughout the Life Cycle	2	Fall
	PHIL 6253	Cognitive Science and Public Policy	3	Fall
	PSYC 8211	Community Psychology I	3	Fall
	PSYC 8212	Community Psychology II	3	Spring
	PSYC 8253	Social Cognition	3	Fall
	PSYC 8254	Social Influence	3	Fall
	PSYC 8255	Attitude and Attitude Change	3	Fall
	PSYC 8275	Women and Health	3	Spring
	PSYC 8287	Current Topics in Clinical Psychology (Structural Equation Modeling)	3	Fall or Spring
	PUBH 6262	Introduction to Geographic Information Systems (GIS)	1	Fall or Spring
	PUBH 6555	Reproductive Health: US & Global Perspectives	2	Fall
	PUBH 6561	Maternal and Child Health Policy Analysis	2	Spring
	PUBH 6562	Physical Activity and Obesity Interventions: From the Individual to the Environment	2	Summer (even)
	PUBH 6571	Social Marketing: Theory & Practice	3	Spring
	PUBH 6573	Media Advocacy for Public Health	3	Fall
	PUBH 6574	Public Health Branding: Theory and Practice	2	Fall
PUBH 6599	Topics in Prevention and Community Health (Culture and Health)	2	Fall	
PUBH 8405	Advanced Topics: Health Economic Research	3	Fall	
Current Issues in Public Health/Diversity	PUBH 8401	Foundations in Public Health Leadership and Practice	3	Fall
	HCS 8369	Issues in Health Care	2	Fall or Spring
	HDEV 8100	Issues and Topics in Human Development	3-6	Spring
	PSYC 8220	Ethics and Professional Issues	3	Fall
	PSYC 8236	Ethnic and Racial Diversity in Psychology	3	Spring
	Other 8000 level GW elective courses not listed above do not require advanced approval prior to enrollment. Advanced Advisor's approval prior to enrollment required for any other courses			
Students interested in electives offered by other departments within Milken Institute SPH should access the Program Guides for those department doctoral programs, or the Schedule of Classes, to identify other electives offered.				
Course Descriptions may be found here: http://publichealth.gwu.edu/academics/courses				
Comprehensive Exams (Taken upon completion of all required coursework)				
Dissertation Prep Course & Dissertation 9 credits	PUBH 8435	Dissertation Proposal Development for the Social and Behavioral Sciences Prerequisites: Passing Comprehensive Exams, Approval of Program Director, one-page abstract	2	Fall Year 3

	PUBH 8999.11	Dissertation Research – <i>Prerequisites:</i> Successfully defending dissertation proposal	7	Multiple. May be taken in increments of 1-7 credits.
Professional Enhancement Hours	PE	PhD students are required to attend 8 professional enhancement hours in research ethics topic areas. Hours must be documented and signed by an academic advisor.	8 hours	
		Optional PE Opportunity RCR @ GW and Beyond is a weekly seminar course introducing key topics in the responsible conduct of research (RCR). At the completion of the course, students will earn a GW RCR Certificate and 13 hours of PE.		Spring

Program-Specific Competencies

On completion of the PhD Program, students will possess the following functional competencies and subject area knowledge:

Practice-based products that demonstrate PhD competency achievement: Social & Behavioral Sciences in Public Health	
Competency	Course or Requirement
Synthesize the research literature in public health social and behavioral sciences as well as be able to compare and contrast prominent social and behavioral sciences theories	8408: Health Behavior Research and Practice Application – Doctoral Seminar
	8409: Health Communication Research – Doctoral Seminar
	8434: Behavioral Medicine and Public Health
	Comprehensive Exam
Critically examine and employ distinct theories, or combination of theories, at multiple levels to study health outcomes and influence health behavior research	8408: Health Behavior Research and Practice Application – Doctoral Seminar
	8409: Health Communication Research – Doctoral Seminar
	8434: Behavioral Medicine and Public Health
	Comprehensive Exam
Demonstrate advanced knowledge in the principles of evaluation and study design and data analysis as well as develop evidenced based questions and predictions, gather, synthesize, and interpret empirical evidence	8408: Health Behavior Research and Practice Application – Doctoral Seminar
	8416: Study Design and Evaluation Methods
	8417: Qualitative Research Methods and Analysis
	8418: Applied Statistical Analysis
	8419: Measurement in Public Health and Health Services Research – Doctoral Seminar
	8434: Behavioral Medicine and Public Health
Comprehensive Exam	
Exhibit the ability to apply scientific knowledge to develop new conceptual models and/or research predictions, including justifying new questions with existing literature, selecting appropriate research models to study those questions, and indicate the potential contributions of the proposed research	8408: Health Behavior Research and Practice Application – Doctoral Seminar
	8409: Health Communication Research – Doctoral Seminar
	8434: Behavioral Medicine and Public Health
	Comprehensive Exam
Demonstrate substantive knowledge within an area of social and behavioral sciences and display competency in communicating research ideas and findings to the larger scientific community	8435: Dissertation Proposal Development for Social and Behavioral Sciences
	8408: Health Behavior Research and Practice Application – Doctoral Seminar
	8409: Health Communication Research – Doctoral Seminar
Comprehensive Exam	

PhD Graduation Requirements

Graduation

While degrees are awarded at the end of each semester, formal commencement ceremonies occur only in May, including the doctoral hooding ceremony. Students are eligible to participate in graduation activities only after they have completed all degree requirements and have no financial obligations to the University. Students may include PhD designation after their name upon completion of all degree requirements.

Graduation Requirements

1. Credits: Successful completion of 48 credits.
2. Curriculum: Successful completion of the foundational, research methods, and program-specific specialty field courses.
3. Comprehensive examination: Once the course of study is completed, students are required to pass the comprehensive exam to be officially admitted to the candidacy phase.
4. Dissertation: [PUBH 8435](#): Dissertation Proposal Development for Social and Behavioral Sciences plus 7 credits in dissertation research are required. Once the proposal has been successfully defended and the dissertation research credit requirement has been met, the oral defense may be scheduled.
5. Grade point average: A minimum overall grade-point average of *B* (3.0).
6. Time limit: The degree must be completed within seven years of matriculation.
7. CITI Training requirement: All students are required to complete training regarding human subject protection regulation and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). To fulfill this requirement, you must complete the Collaborative IRB Training Initiative (CITI) Course in The Protection of Human Research Subjects.
8. Integrity Quiz & Plagiarism requirement: All students are required to review the George Washington University Code of Academic Integrity, take the quiz within their first semester of study, and ensure documentation is submitted to the SPH Office of Student Records.
9. Professional Enhancement requirement: Students must participate in 8 hours per degree program of advisor pre-approved Public Health-related lectures, seminars, and symposia, related to the appropriate field of study specifically focused on research and research ethics. Students must submit documentation of Professional Enhancement activities to the SPH Office of Student Records.

Note: No transfer credits are accepted.