

Milken Institute School of Public Health

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Department of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences

Master of Public Health
Chronic Disease Prevention
Academic Year
2026-2027

Residential Program

All curriculum revisions will be updated immediately on the
website <http://www.publichealth.gwu.edu>

Directors

Loretta DiPietro, PhD, MPH
Professor
Department of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences
950 New Hampshire Ave, 2nd Floor
Washington, DC 20037
Phone: 203.641.0763
Email: ldp1@gwu.edu

Karina Lora, PhD, RDN
Associate Professor
Department of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences
950 New Hampshire Ave, 2nd Floor
Washington, DC 20037
Phone: 202.994.4226
Email: klora@gwu.edu

Program Mission Statement

The prevalence of chronic disease (e.g., cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, dementia) has grown steadily over the past 20 years and currently affects 50% of the US population. Treatment for chronic disease now accounts for more than 85% of health care costs. Indeed, the prevention and delay of chronic disease morbidity and mortality among people of all ages has become a top priority on the global public health agenda. The mission of the Master of Public Health (MPH) degree in *Chronic Disease Prevention* from the Department of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences is to train graduate students to integrate principles of the biological, behavioral, social, exercise, and nutrition sciences into the core of public health practice to address biological, environmental, commercial, and social drivers of chronic disease. This program is designed to train students both as public health scientists and practitioners who are well-versed in program development and evaluation to advance behavioral and policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) strategies for chronic disease prevention and management across the life-course.

Program Competencies

1. Access and interpret US and global surveillance data pertaining to chronic disease trends.
2. Examine the joint contributions of genetic, lifestyle, social, commercial and environmental factors to chronic disease etiology.
3. Examine sociodemographic drivers contributing to disparities in chronic disease occurrence.
4. Apply statistical and epidemiological methods to develop and test hypotheses pertaining to the independent and combined roles of nutrition and physical activity in the etiology of chronic diseases.
5. Synthesize and evaluate scientific research related to the role of nutrition and physical activity in chronic disease prevention and management.
6. Design and evaluate community-based behavioral and PSE strategies for chronic disease prevention across the life-course.

Program Requirements

All Milken Institute School of Public Health (SPH) MPH students who select the *Chronic Disease Prevention* program enroll in Core Courses (19 credits), Program-Specific Courses (18 credits), and Electives (8 credits). The requirements for the MPH in Chronic Disease Prevention are detailed below.

Required Coursework

The following courses are used to address the Program Competencies

Competency number	Relevant courses
1. Access and interpret US and global surveillance system data pertaining to chronic disease trends.	PUBH 6237 and 6259
2. Examine the joint contributions of genetic, lifestyle, social, commercial and environmental factors to chronic disease etiology	EXNS 6208, PUBH 6237, 6619, 6620, and 6630
3. Examine sociodemographic drivers of disparities in chronic disease occurrence	PUBH 6237, 6514, and 6620,
4. Apply statistical and epidemiological methods to develop and test hypotheses pertaining to the independent and combined roles of nutrition and physical activity in the etiology of different chronic diseases	EXNS 6204, PUBH 6015, and APEx
5. Synthesize and evaluate scientific research related to the role of nutrition and physical activity in chronic disease prevention and management.	EXNS 6208; PUBH 6237, 6619, 6630, 6015, and APEx
6. Design and evaluate community-based behavioral and policy, system, and environmental (PSE) strategies for chronic disease prevention across the life-course.	EXNS 6208; PUBH 6620, 6630 and 6631, 6015 and APEx

Course Descriptions and Registration

Information can be found on the website: <http://publichealth.gwu.edu/academics/>.

Program-at-a-Glance

		Credits	Semester Offered	Grade
Core Courses				
PUBH 6000*	Applied Practice Experience (practicum)	0	Fall, Spring, Summer	
PUBH 6002	Biostatistical Applications for Public Health	3	Fall, Spring, Summer	
PUBH 6003	Principles and Practice of Epidemiology	3	Fall, Spring, Summer	
PUBH 6007	Social and Behavioral Approaches to Public Health	2	Fall, Spring, Summer	
PUBH 6009	Fundamentals of Public Health Program Evaluation	2	Fall, Spring, Summer	
PUBH 6011	Environmental and Biological Foundations of Public Health	3	Fall, Spring, Summer	
PUBH 6012	Fundamentals of Health Policy	2	Fall, Spring, Summer	
PUBH 6015	Culminating Experience	2	Fall, Spring, Summer	
PUBH 6021	Essentials of Public Health Practice and Leadership 1	1	Fall, Spring, Summer	
PUBH 6022	Essentials of Public Health Practice and Leadership 2	1	Fall, Spring, Summer	
PUBH 6023	Interprofessional Education Experience	0	Fall, Spring, Summer	
Total	Core Credits	19		
*PUBH 6000 will be graded upon successful completion and review of 120-hour practicum and deliverables.				
Program-Specific Courses				
EXNS 6204	Biostatistical Methods and Research Design	3	Fall	
EXNS 6208	Physical Activity in Public Health	2	Spring	
PUBH 6237	Chronic Disease Epidemiology	2	Fall	
PUBH 6514	Preventing Health Disparities	2	Spring	
PUBH 6619	Fundamentals of Nutrition Science	3	Fall/Spring	
PUBH 6620	Design of Healthy Communities	2	Spring	
PUBH 6630	Physical Activity and Nutritional Drivers of Cardiometabolic Disease	2	Summer	
PUBH 6631	Experiential Outreach in Community Chronic Disease Prevention	2	Spring	
Total	Program-Specific Credits	18		
Electives (8 credits)- any GW graduate level courses				
The list below contains examples of electives that students may take depending on their interests.				
	Exercise and Physical Activity			
EXNS 6810	Advanced Metabolism	3	Spring	
EXNS 6202	Advanced Exercise Physiology I	3	Fall	
EXNS 6203	Advanced Exercise Physiology II	3	Spring	
	Nutrition and Food			
PUBH 6241	Nutrition Epidemiology	2	Fall	
PUBH 6612	Food Systems	2	Fall, Spring	
PUBH 6611	Nutrition Assessment	2	Fall	
PUBH 6614	Study Design and Analysis in Nutritional Epidemiology	2	Spring	
EXNS 6242	Nutrition Throughout the Life Cycle	3	Spring	
PUBH 6613	US Food Policy and Politics	2	Spring	
PUBH 6199	Topics: Food and the Global Environment	1	Varies	
PUBH 6482	International Food and Nutrition Policy	2	Spring	
PUBH 6556	Maternal and Child Nutrition			
PUBH 6499	Global Maternal and Child Nutrition	2	Fall	
PUBH 6492	Global Health Programs and Approaches to the Control of Chronic Disease	2	Spring	

PUBH 6420	Understanding Commercial Determinants of Public Health	1	Summer Institute	
	Obesity and Cancer			
PUBH 6562	Physical Activity and Dietary Interventions for Promoting Healthy Weight	2	Summer	
EXNS 6299	Topics: Multi-level Determinants of Childhood Obesity & Prevention Strategies	2	Spring	
PUBH 6699	Topics: Weight Bias, Policy, and Justice	3	Fall	
PUBH 6235	Epidemiology of Obesity	1	Summer	
PUBH 6259	Epidemiologic Surveillance in Public Health	2	Spring	
PUBH 6244	Cancer Epidemiology	2	Spring	
	Brain Health and Dementia			
PUBH 6248	Epidemiology of Dementia and Cognitive Health	2	Fall	
PUBH 6220	Challenges and Controversies in Brain Health and Dementia Research	1	Summer	
	Social & Behavioral	2		
PUBH 6054	Community Engagement and Advocacy	2		
PUBH 6417	Cross-Cultural Approaches to Global Health Practice	1	Fall	
PUBH 6477	Structural Racism in Public Health	2		
PUBH 6504	Social and Behavioral Research Methods	3	Fall/Spring	
	Biostatistics			
PUBH 6850	Introduction to SAS for Public Health Research	1	Fall/Spring	
PUBH 6851	Introduction to R for Public Health Research	1	Fall/Spring	
PUBH 6852	Introduction to Python for Public Health Research	1	Fall/Spring	
PUBH 6262	Introduction to Geographic Information Systems	1	Summer	
PUBH 6502	Practical Data Analysis for Prevention and Community Health	1	Fall, Spring, Summer	
Course Distribution		Credits		
Public Health Core Courses		19		
Program-Specific Courses		18		
Electives		8		
Total Degree Credits		45		

Graduation Requirements

All students accepted to this MPH program must follow the policies and regulations outlined in the [GW Bulletin](#) and the [GWSPH Student Handbook](#). This includes, but is not limited to:

- Minimum Grade Point Average (GPA)
- Minimum Course Grades
- Continuous Enrollment
- Maximum Time to Degree
- Required Minimum Degree Credits
- Transfer Credit Policy
- CITI Training
- Integrity Quiz and Plagiarism
- Professional Enhancement (PE) Hours
- Interprofessional Education (IPE) Experience
- Applied Practice Experience (Practicum)
- Culminating Experience (e.g., CE)

Sample Schedule for MPH in Chronic Disease Prevention

Fall Semester 1

Course Number	Course Name	Course Credits
PUBH 6002	Biostatistical Applications for Public Health	3 credits
PUBH 6003	Principles and Practice of Epidemiology	3 credits
PUBH 6007	Social and Behavioral Approaches to Public Health	2 credits
PUBH 6012	Fundamentals of Health Policy	2 credits
PUBH 6021	Essentials of Public Health Practice and Leadership 1	1 credit

TOTAL CREDITS: 11

Spring Semester 1

Course Number	Course Name	Course Credits
PUBH 6011	Env & Biol Foundations of Public Health	3 credits
PUBH 6022	Essential of Public Health Practice and Leadership 2	1 credit
EXNS 6208	Physical Activity in Public Health	2 credits
PUBH 6619	Fundamentals of Nutrition Science	3 credits
PUBH 6631	Experiential Outreach in Community Chronic Disease Prevention	2 credits

TOTAL CREDITS: 11

Summer 1

Course Number	Course Name	Course Credits
PUBH 6000	Applied Practice Experience (Practicum)	0 credits
PUBH 6009	Fundamentals of Public Health Program Evaluation	2 credits
PUBH 6630	Physical Activity and Nutritional Drivers of Cardiometabolic Disease	2 credits

TOTAL CREDITS: 4

Fall Semester 2

Course Number	Course Name	Course Credits
EXNS 6204	Biostatistical Methods and Research Design	3 credits
PUBH 6237	Chronic Disease Epidemiology	2 credits
PUBH 6023	Interprofessional Education Experience (IPE) Electives	0 credits 5 credits

TOTAL CREDITS: 10

Spring Semester 2

Course Number	Course Name	Course Credits
PUBH 6514	Preventing Health Disparities	2 credits
PUBH 6620	Designing Healthy Communities	2 credits
PUBH 6015	Culminating Experience Electives	2 credits 3 credits

TOTAL CREDITS: 9

Sample Schedule for MPH in Chronic Disease Prevention for Spring Matriculation

Spring Semester 1

Course Number	Course Name	Course Credits
PUBH 6002	Biostatistical Applications for Public Health	3 credits
PUBH 6007	Social and Behavioral Approaches to Public Health	2 credits
PUBH 6619	Fundamentals of Nutrition Science	3 credits
EXNS 6208	Physical Activity in Public Health	2 credits
PUBH 6021	Essential of Public Health Practice and Leadership 1	1 credit

TOTAL CREDITS: 11

Fall Semester 1

Course Number	Course Name	Course Credits
PUBH 6003	Principles and Practice of Epidemiology	3 credits
PUBH 6011	Env & Biol Foundations of Public Health	3 credits
PUBH 6012	Fundamentals of Health Policy	2 credits
PUBH 6022	Essentials of Public Health Practice and Leadership 2	1 credit

TOTAL CREDITS: 9

Summer 1

Course Number	Course Name	Course Credits
PUBH 6000	Applied Practice Experience (Practicum)	0 credits
PUBH 6009	Fundamentals of Public Health Program Evaluation	2 credits
PUBH 6630	Physical Activity and Nutritional Drivers of Cardiometabolic Disease	2 credits

TOTAL CREDITS: 4

Fall Semester 2

Course Number	Course Name	Course Credits
EXNS 6204	Biostatistical Methods and Research Design	3 credits
PUBH 6237	Chronic Disease Epidemiology	2 credits
PUBH 6023	Interprofessional Education Experience (IPE) Electives	0 credits 5 credits

TOTAL CREDITS: 10

Spring Semester 2

Course Number	Course Name	Course Credits
PUBH 6631	Experiential Outreach in Community Chronic Disease Prevention	2 credits
PUBH 6514	Preventing Health Disparities	2 credits
PUBH 6620	Designing Healthy Communities	2 credits
PUBH 6015	Culminating Experience Electives	2 credits 3 credits

TOTAL CREDITS: 11