

Program Director

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Mission

The PhD in Health Policy is focused on understanding and critically assessing the political, legal, economic, and social aspects of health policy and management and learning to apply innovative research tools to analyze processes and outcomes in the health care delivery and public health settings to inform policy decision-making. Special emphasis is placed on US health policies, systems, and population health. (We assume the first class admitted will be in Fall 2019.)

Goals

Knowledge acquired in this PhD program will prepare candidates for work in academic, non-academic, and public research institutions, as well as in decision-making capacities in the field.

The objectives of this specialty field are to:

- Equip candidates with the research and analytic methods they need to analyze and evaluate the social, economic, legal and health aspects of public and private policies.
- Provide advanced training in health policy analysis using cutting edge quantitative and qualitative methods
- Gain familiarity on existing data sources and data collection methods pertaining to health programs and behaviors.
- Synthesize information on population health, legislative processes, finance and insurance schemes to motivate policy analysis

Program Requirements

PhD students are required to pass a written comprehensive examination, and complete a dissertation. For the comprehensive examination student must demonstrate advanced knowledge of health policy and public health research methods. The written examination is taken at completion of all core courses. Prior to the dissertation, students must initially submit a written proposal and pass an oral presentation. In the completed dissertation, the student must design and execute an original research study that contributes new knowledge to the field and demonstrates proficiency in using advanced analytic methods. Dissertation progress will be monitored by the program director while extensions beyond the 4th year are likely, students must complete their dissertations by the 7th year. Failure to meet this timeline may result in termination.

Admissions Requirements

The PhD in Health Policy engages in a multidisciplinary approach designed to develop a range of competencies needed to undertake sophisticated research and analysis in the health policy field. The program is especially suited for individuals who completed or are near completion of a Master's degree in public health, public policy, economics, demography, or allied fields from an accredited institution. Strong applicants who completed a bachelor's degree in such fields will also be considered. 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. Admission to this program is highly selective and successful applicants will need to have strong academic credentials. Students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 to remain in the program.

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 free, zero-credit, online Pathways to Public Health (PUBH 6080) course within one year of matriculation.

Milken Institute School of Public Health

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Doctor of Health Policy (PhD) Program of Study 2019

Course Distribution Summary

Total Credits = Minimum 48 Credits

Core Courses = 27 Credits

- Public Health Fundamentals, Advanced Health Policy =15 Credits
- Methods and Advanced Statistics =12 Credits

Approved Elective Courses = 9 to 12 Credits

- Health Policy
- Global Health
- Epidemiology and Biostatistics
- Methods for Social Sciences
- Microeconomics
- Behavioral Health and Prevention

Dissertation Research = 12 Credits

CORE COURSES

The matrix below describes core courses, seminars and electives for the PhD program in Health Policy.

- Two prerequisites (basics of economics and statistics) are assumed prior to admission.
- Students without prior public health training will be required to take the Pathways to Public Health (PUBH 6080) to graduate.
- If students have taken courses similar to the core courses before, other courses may be substituted with advanced permission of course faculty and program advisors.
- Students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 to remain in the program.
- Full time students will be expected to complete most course work in the first two years, but part-time students may take longer.
- Students admitted to the program will be expected to complete all requirements (including successful completion of the dissertation) within eight years of beginning.

Required Core Fundamental Curriculum (15 Credits Minimum)

Required Public Health Fundamental Courses		Credits	Semester Offered	Description
PUBH 8401	Foundations of Public Health Leadership and Practice	3	Fall	Interactive seminar course provides students in the health Policy PhD program with a fundamental understanding of the history of and current issues associated with the four principal public health program areas: health policy, health behavior, global health and environmental and occupational health. <i>(Note: Students without prior public health training take the online Pathways to Public Health (PUBH 6080) during this course.)</i>
PUBH 8620	Foundations of US Health Policy	3	Fall	This course provides a broad orientation to and understanding of the U.S. health care system and public health infrastructure, placing U.S. performance within the global context of industrialized nations' systems. Develop scholarly independence on key policy issues affecting the U.S. today from the perspective of the politics of health, the legislative and policymaking process, ethical underpinnings of health and health care, and theories of public policy.

PUBH 6340	Health Economics and Finance	3	Summer, Fall, Spring	Covers economic principles as they apply to health services financing and public health policy: provider payment policy and cost containment, supply of health providers and services, individual demand for health care services, and cost-benefit analyses and economic incentives to promote public health goals. Prerequisite: PUBH 6352 (Basics of Economics) or equivalent
PUBH 8622	Health Care Payments and Delivery Models	3	Spring	Covers the principal models of payment for hospital and physician services and for drugs and devices. Through an interactive process, students learn how to distinguish models and derive predictions about their impact on the use, cost, price, and quality of health care services and products. Assess the properties of these models in terms of their efficiency and impact on equity, and convey to policy and analytical audiences.
PUBH 8418/8610	Statistical Analysis in Health Policy	3	Fall, Spring	This course addresses how to use quantitative and statistical methods of data analysis for health policy and health services research. Students will design, implement and interpret analyses of prominent data bases using Stata®, a powerful software package. (pre-requisite: PPPA 6002 (statistics) or equivalent)
PUBH 6080	Pathways to Public Health	0	All	Students without a prior MPH degree from an accredited program or school of public health will be required to take this free, online zero-credit course
Required Core Methods Curriculum (12 Credits Minimum)				
Required Public Health Methods and Advanced Courses		Credits	Semester Offered	Description
PUBH 8404	Health Systems & Health Policy Research	3	Spring	Examines major issues in health services research and policy, with a focus on leading theories and conceptual frameworks, commonly-used data sources, research designs, and the trade-offs made in analyzing policy relevant research.
PUBH 8405	Advanced Health Economics Research	3	Fall	Examines core ideas the stem from economic theory, such as risk, product differentiation, market failure and moral hazard. Develops an understanding of how health economics research is conducted, and how it is applied to public policy.
PUBH 8417	Qualitative Research Methods & Analysis	3	Spring	Techniques for designing and conducting qualitative research and for analyzing and reporting qualitative data relevant to program development and implementation, community assessment, and policy analysis. Under certain circumstances students may take equivalent courses with other research emphases (permission of program advisor and course instructor required): PPPA 8023 (Mixed Methods Research)*

PPPA 8022	Econometrics for Policy Research II	3	Fall, Spring	Advanced quantitative methods, including understanding causal identification, applying reduced form methods to research questions, interpreting and evaluating policy research, implementing reduced form methods using statistical software. Under certain circumstances students may take equivalent courses with other research emphases (permission of program advisor and course instructor required): Econ 8379 (Laboratory in Applied Econometrics) PUBH 8366 (Biostatistical Methods)
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DISSERTATION SEMINARS AND PREPARATION

12 Credits Minimum

Required Public Health Dissertation Courses		Credits	Semester Offered	Description
PUBH 8422 Or PUBH 8435	Advanced Health Care and Public Health/Policy Research Design* Advanced Theorizing in Social and Behavioral Sciences in Public Health*	2	Summer, Fall, Spring	Prerequisites: Pass comprehensive exam, 3-page concept paper Program Director/Advisor approval Prerequisites: Passing Comprehensive Exams, Approval of Program Director, one-page abstract
PUBH 8999	Health Policy and Management Dissertation Research	1-10	Summer, Fall, Spring	Prerequisites: PUBH 8422 or PubH 8435; 10 credits required Multiple semesters, may be taken in increments of 1-10 credits

ELECTIVE COURSES

10-12 Credits Minimum

All courses listed below require program advisor approval

Below is a list of recommended elective courses for the PhD program in health policy and management. In addition to choosing electives from the list, students may also choose other doctoral level courses offered at the university, with the permission of their program advisor.

Health Policy Courses:		Credits	Semester Offered
PUBH 6335	Public Health and Law	3	Fall, Spring
PUBH 6361	Health Workforce Policy*	2	Varies
PUBH 6364	Federal Budget Process for Health Policy*	1	Varies
PUBH 6370	Medicare/Medicaid Law and Policy*	2	Spring
PUBH 6374	Pharmaceutical Policy*	2	Fall
PUBH 6376	Primary Health Care Policy*	2	Varies
PUBH 6399	Benefit Cost Analysis in Health Care*	2	Spring
PUBH 8416	Study Design and Evaluation	3	Fall
PUBH 8419	Measurement in Public Health and Health Services Research	3	Spring
Global Health Courses:		Credits	Semester Offered
PUBH 6441	Global Health Organizations and Regulations*	3	Fall
PUBH 6442	Comparative Global Health Systems*	2	Fall
PUBH 6445 ²	Quantitative Methods for Impact Evaluation	2	Fall
Epidemiology & Biostatistics Courses:		Credits	Semester Offered
PUBH 6244	Cancer Epidemiology*	2	Spring
PUBH 6245	Infectious Diseases Epidemiology*	2	Spring

PUBH 6262-3	Geographic Information Systems*	2	Summer, Fall, Spring
PUBH 8366	Biostatistical Methods*	3	Fall
PUBH 8365	Design of Medical Studies*	3	Spring
Public Policy and Public Administration Courses:		Credits	Semester Offered
PPPA 6005	Public Budgeting, Revenue and Expenditure Analysis*	3	Summer, Fall, Spring
PPPA 6015	Benefit-Cost Analysis*	3	Fall, Spring
PPPA 8100	Literature of Public Administration	3	Varies
Methods for Social Sciences Courses:		Credits	Semester Offered
PSC 8124	Multilevel Modeling	3	Fall
PSC 8132	Network Analysis	3	Varies
EDUC 8173	Structural Equation Modeling*	3	Spring
EDUC 8131	Case Study Research Methods*	3	Varies
Microeconomics Courses:		Credits	Semester Offered
ECON 8363	Public Finance 1	3	Varies
ECON 8341-2	Labor Economics	3	Spring
ECON 8345-6	Industrial Organization	3	Varies
Behavioral Health and Prevention Courses:		Credits	Semester Offered
PUBH 6501	Evaluation of Health Promotion/Disease Prevention Programs*	3	Fall, Spring
PUBH 6399	Population Health & Public Health*	2	Varies
PUBH 8434	Behavioral Medicine and Public Health	3	Spring
² This course is expected to become an 8XXX level course beginning Fall 2019. *Course Prerequisites must be met before enrolling in this course.			

Course Descriptions and Registration information can be found on the website:

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

Broad Competencies and Goals

Students take courses in multiple subjects designed to develop broad analytical and assessment skills in multiple subjects, as applied to health policy, and complete a dissertation analyzing a specific question or questions. Upon completion of the program, students will demonstrate ability in the core competencies listed below. Students can learn from and work with multi-disciplinary faculty in the Department of Health Policy and Management, as well as other faculty in the school and university. Upon completion of the program students will demonstrate ability in these core program competencies

- Critically describe and comprehensively assess the political, legal, philosophical, economic, financial, and/or social framework of U.S. health policy and reforms, and demonstrate high level proficiency in applying that understanding to the analysis of current health policy issues.
- Critically identify, appropriately assess and, expertly apply theoretical knowledge and conceptual models in support of health policy research, develop hypotheses that can be tested in a health policy research project, select appropriate health policy research designs and methodologies, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods, and understand and appropriately apply analytical strategies used in health policy research and analysis.
- Gain understanding and ability to analyze health system and payments and delivery features, and assess impacts on health behaviors and disparities.
- Be able to identify data sets related to health policy, outcomes, management and markets and utilize them in the development of measurement and in evaluations of policy interventions
- Critically assess, appropriately use, and subtly synthesize policy-relevant qualitative and quantitative information relevant to key issues in U.S. health policy, including a full range of evidence related to the legislative, regulatory, and health care financing, from peer reviewed literature, and government, policy analysis institutes and other relevant organizations.
- Expertly apply the core elements of a policy analysis to key issues in U.S. health policy (health services and public health policy) through both descriptive and analytical papers, and oral presentations of policy analyses.
- Acquire the ability and the skills to become policy analyst and researchers in the field of health policy, serving in academic, policy institute, and government settings