

Public Health



The public health program is designed for students interested in the improvement of health and prevention of disease and disability throughout the lifespan. Public health is distinct in its focus on preventive health, population-level health issues and participatory research and data. Above, students volunteer at a home build for Habitat for Humanity in Tampa.

THE UNIVERSITY
OF TAMPA

B.S. in Public Health - Health Promotion and Practice

What Will You Learn?

UTampa's multidisciplinary **B.S. in public health - health promotion and practice** focuses on:

1. Identifying social and behavioral determinants of health
2. Developing and evaluating interventions and policies leading to the improvement of population health
3. Advocating for policy development and programmatic change
4. Investigating and trending diseases from the community level to national level
5. Assessing and advocating for environmental health improvement

Courses emphasize **health promotion and education, illness and disease tracking, environmental assessment, public policy and collaborative leadership and partnership**. A solid foundation in behavioral sciences principles and theories is provided, along with advanced skills in **program planning, implementation and evaluation**.

Although there are several required courses, students have flexibility in the curriculum to take courses outside the major. For instance, students may wish to pursue additional coursework in business, biology, environmental science, criminology, international and cultural studies, Latin American studies, psychology, sociology, communication or research methods.

Sample Courses

- Introduction to Public Health
- Qualitative Research Methods
- Public Health Management and Leadership
- Public Health Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response
- Principles of Epidemiology in Exercise and Public Health

CHES Certification Preparation

Students who are eligible to sit for the national certification exam to become a Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES). The CHES designation after a health educator's name is one indication of professional competency and commitment to continued professional development. The exam covers subjects such as public health program planning, implementation, administration and evaluation.

FACULTY highlights



Tracy Zontek, Ph.D.
associate professor, public health

Tracy Zontek specializes in environmental and occupational health. Her research interests include hazard evaluation of nanoscale materials and 3-D printing, as well as undergraduate research. Her work involves industrial hygiene evaluations of emerging research in nanoscale materials, including preventing human and environmental exposures.



Claudia Aguado Loi, Ph.D.
associate professor, public health

Claudia Aguado Loi specializes in public health education and promotion, program planning and evaluation, mixed-methods, community-based participatory research methods, epidemiology including study design and analysis, and project management of large research studies. She brings extensive experience working with Latino populations in cancer survivorship, chronic disease self-management and cancer health disparities.

Real-World Experience

Internships

Internships allow students to apply their knowledge and skills to real-world public health settings. All public health majors must complete an internship. Recent examples include:

- Social Marketing Campaigns
- National Diabetes prevention
- Local Anti-Drug Alliance
- Working on improving pediatric health care quality at local hospitals
- Assisting non-profit organizations with developing programs
- Environmental health initiatives

Research

The public health field is research and data driven. Excellent research skills are fundamental to analyzing the broad impact of health problems. Students are encouraged to work with faculty on research or conduct their own. Recent topics include:

- Chronic disease self-management
- Cancer health disparities and Latina breast cancer survivorship
- E-cigarette use among students
- Maternal and child health
- Sexual and reproductive health
- Disparities in perinatal health outcomes
- Father involvement impact on family health
- Parent-adolescent sexual risk behavior communication
- Health care quality improvement strategies among children with special medical needs
- Risk factors of migraines in students
- Emissions of additive manufacturing (3-D printing) that may impact health
- Health, safety and environmental protocols for work with nanoscale materials
- Disease risk from Staphylococcus

bacteria and methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA)

Community Service

Students apply their knowledge and gain valuable experience by volunteering with public health agencies in the community. Service projects have included assisting various agencies such as Vaping on Campus Statewide Initiatives to deter or decrease e-cigarette use and the American Lung Association with programmatic needs. Students also participate in community health fairs, conducting respiratory and other health screenings.

Live Well UTampa

Many public health majors are leaders in campus wellness initiatives. Live Well UTampa is a student-led organization that empowers the UT community to continually improve healthy behaviors and lifestyles. Initiatives include:

- **Rx Factor:** educates students on the consequences of prescription drug abuse
- **Breathe Easy UTampa:** tobacco/smoking/vaping peer education program
- **Watch Your BAC:** alcohol abuse reduction program that encourages students to lower their risk if they choose to drink alcohol
- **FOODS (Focusing on Optimal Dietetics for Students):** promotes healthy habits through balanced living and proper nutrition
- **SASS (Safe and Sexy Spartans):** educates students on sexual health and making safe and healthy decisions
- **EPC (Environmental Protection Coalition):** engages in environmental conservation and advocacy
- **Active Minds:** focuses on mental health and mental wellness

What Can You Do With This Degree?

The field of public health is extremely broad and encompasses a variety of careers, so career options range from local to international. No matter where you choose to reside, there is a need for your skills. Upon completion of the program, students are qualified for graduate studies and/or leadership roles in many public and private organizations. These organizations may include hospital outreach programs, community health centers, community-based nonprofit organizations, public and private corporations, foundations, workplaces, schools, colleges and local, state and federal public health agencies.

Most jobs in public health require at least an undergraduate degree and offer a competitive salary. Some jobs may require the completion of a master's degree or doctorate. Salaries in this field can vary greatly.

Students might also consider combining a public health major with another major or minor in a complementary field such as sociology, communication, leadership studies and international studies.

The demand for public health professionals continues to rise in response to global concerns such as bioterrorism, pandemics, HIV/AIDS and environmental issues. Rising insurance costs and increased awareness of health and wellness have also generated corporate and government support for prevention and education programs in areas such as diet, diabetes and tobacco use. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of health educators and community health workers is expected to grow by 11 percent from 2024-2034.

Sample Job Titles

- Community health coordinator
- Health services administrator
- Corporate wellness director
- Epidemiologist
- Infectious disease specialist
- Biostatistician
- Clinical researcher
- Emergency management specialist
- Environmental specialist
- Health educator
- Research analyst
- Peace Corps



alumni profile

Douglas Weigelt '13

Public Health Officer, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Philadelphia, PA

As a public health officer with the CDC's Philadelphia Quarantine Station in the Division of Global Migration and Quarantine, Douglas Weigelt develops and monitors surveillance systems for infectious diseases, and assists in identifying and responding to outbreaks domestically and internationally. He previously worked on tuberculosis and refugee health research for the CDC, and deployed to Sierra Leone to trial an Ebola vaccine. In 2018, he earned his MPH at the University of Pennsylvania. "I would not be where I am today without the support and experiences UT provided," he said.



UTampa students volunteer with Feeding Tampa Bay by packing and sorting meals for local families in need. This is one of the many ways Public Health students take action and serve their community each year.

College of Natural and Health Sciences

Public Health



Claudia Jiménez '20

Major: public health, with concentration in health education and wellness

Hometown: San Juan, Puerto Rico

Activities: Eta Sigma Gamma vice president, Breathe Easy UTampa coordinator, International Student Ambassadors secretary, lab assistant

"I chose to study public health because of my interest in health education, promotion and prevention. Many people think that studying medicine is the only way to prevent illness, but public health goes beyond that by preventing health issues and promoting healthy lifestyles. UTampa's public health program has given me the tools to expand my knowledge and has opened doors for me to put this into practice. After graduation, I hope to work in health care or public policy to decrease health disparities."

Student Organizations

UTampa offers a variety of health-related organizations for students, including:

- Public Health Student Association (PHSA), which represents the public health program and advocates health education, leadership and professionalism. It offers opportunities to network and learn about internships, research and service learning.
- Eta Sigma Gamma (ESG), a national health education honorary society. Inductees gain volunteer service and research experiences, professional development opportunities, and exposure to a network of public health professionals.

Professional Organizations

To learn more about the field of public health, visit the following websites:

- Florida Public Health Association,

www.fpha.org

- American Public Health Association, www.apha.org
- National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, www.nchec.org
- Centers for Disease Control, www.cdc.gov
- National Environmental Health Association, www.neha.org
- Society for Public Health Education, www.sophe.org
- National Association of Health Care Quality, www.nahq.org

Career Services

UTampa's Office of Career Services offers advisory services to all students, helping them prepare effective resumé's, find internships and apply for positions with organizations in the Tampa Bay area and beyond. Students and alumni have free, lifetime access to a variety of tools and networks to help advance their careers. Learn more at utampa.edu/career.



About UTampa

The University of Tampa is a medium-sized, private university offering more than 200 undergraduate and graduate programs of study. UTampa is the school of choice for approximately 11,500 students from all 50 states and most of the world's countries.

Visit utampa.edu/publichealth to learn more about UTampa's public health program and the Department of Health Sciences and Human Performance.



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