

PUBLIC HEALTH

Associate of Public Health Degree

The Associate of Public Health (APH) teaches the first four responsibility areas of health education: assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation of public health programs, to improve the health of our communities.

The associate of public health provides the initial coursework to prepare students for a career in public health. Public health is an exciting area of practice which takes a population-based focus to health. Individuals in this field interpret community data to determine health needs and intervention priorities. In addition to needs assessment, they work with community leaders to plan, implement, and evaluate community health education interventions such as smoking cessation, chronic and infectious disease awareness campaigns, vaccination programs, and family planning and prenatal care initiatives. This program is ideal for those who like to work with the public, yet who also like to take the broader view of how to promote the health of communities and groups of citizens.

The associate degree program fully articulates with the bachelor of public health program offered at NMSU-Las Cruces campus in the Department of Public Health Science (<https://publichealth.nmsu.edu/>), which also offers the master of public health at the graduate level. The courses in this associate of public health curriculum at DACC will meet the majority of NMSU's General Education degree requirements and are designed to give students a full overview of public health and community health education. There are no special admissions criteria for this program, but prospective majors should arrange an initial degree advising session with a public health faculty member in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Division. The faculty member will also be able to advise students regarding choices for elective courses.

Community Health Worker Certificate

The sixteen-credit Community Health Worker (CHW) certificate is embedded within the DACC Associate of Public Health. The Community Health Worker certificate will train students to have a basic understanding of key public health issues like maternal and child health, chronic disease and environmental health. The program includes competencies such as: effective communication, interpersonal skills, health coaching, service coordination, capacity building, advocacy, community health outreach, and community knowledge and assessment. Upon completion of the DACC CHW Certificate, students may apply for CHW endorsement from the NM Department of Health.

NOTE: The Associate Degree in Public Health and the Community Health Worker Certificate may be obtained entirely online.

Visit the public health program website here. (<https://dacc.nmsu.edu/academics/programs/public-health/>)

Public Health - Associate Degree (<https://catalogs.nmsu.edu/dona-ana/academic-career-programs/public-health/associate-of-public-health/>)

Community Health Worker - Certificate of Completion (<https://catalogs.nmsu.edu/dona-ana/academic-career-programs/public-health/community-health-worker-certificate/>)

CHSS 1110. Intro to Health & Community Services 3 Credits (3)

This course offers a holistic and multidisciplinary approach towards health promotion, wellness and a healthy lifestyle. Emphasis is placed on the major problems/issues that have the greatest significance to personal and community health. Topics to be discussed include: nutrition, fitness, stress management, sexuality, drug education and others. May be repeated up to 3 credits.

Learning Outcomes

1. Understand basic foundations of community health –history, framework and present progress: Identify key historical advances, people and events in public health; Understand Healthy People 2020 goals and objectives; Understand the levels of prevention (primary, secondary, tertiary) of public health
2. Identify organizations that help shape community health and their role in promoting health: Governmental; Quasi-Governmental; Nongovernmental; Identify local resources/agencies focused on health and human services
3. Conduct research in public health: Identify major sources for public health research; Governmental websites; Journals; Interpret and evaluate public health resources for academic use; Write a basic journal article critique
4. Understand the history and function of the school health program: Identify components of a coordinated school health program; Identify and overcome barriers common to CSHP; Apply the CSHP to contemporary issues in child/adolescent health

CHSS 2510. Service Learning

4 Credits (4)

Service Learning Experience in Human and Community Service: Exploration of contemporary social, civil, economic and ethical problems that require student participation in collaborative efforts within the community. Restricted to Community Colleges campuses only.

Prerequisite: PHLS 2110.

Prerequisite/Corequisite: PHLS 1110G, CHSS 1110, and PHLS 2120.

Learning Outcomes

1. Understand the importance of service learning in community building and civic participation.
2. Students will complete 120 hours of service learning experience with a collaborating community agency.
3. Compile and submit a list of detailed daily service learning activities including contact individuals, meetings attended, presentations, specific tasks accomplished or contributions to agency or community, new skills learned, trainings, and number of hours spent on each activity.
4. Design a service learning project incorporating the key elements of Public Health, and addressing a need in the community.
5. Provide an oral presentation and write a personal reflection of the service learning experience in class.
6. Practice critical thinking, decision making skills, and civic responsibility in promoting better health and general well-being.

PHLS 1110G. Personal Health & Wellness

3 Credits (3)

A holistic and multi-disciplinary approach towards promoting positive lifestyles. Special emphasis is placed on major problems that have greatest significance to personal and community health. Topics to include nutrition, stress management, fitness, aging, sexuality, drug education, and others. May be repeated up to 3 credits.

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will identify, describe and explain human health behaviors and how they are influenced by social structures, institutions, and processes within the contexts of complex and diverse communities.

Students should: Develop an understanding of self and the world by examining content and processes used by social and behavioral sciences to discover, describe, explain, and predict human behaviors and social systems.

2. Students will articulate how beliefs, assumptions, and values are influenced by factors such as politics, geography, economics, culture, biology, history, and social institutions. Students should: Enhance knowledge of social and cultural institutions and the values of their society and other societies and cultures in the world.
3. Students will describe ongoing reciprocal interactions among self, society, and the environment. Students should: Understand the interdependent nature of the individual, family/social group, and society in shaping human behavior and determining quality of life.
4. Students will apply the knowledge base of the social and behavioral sciences to identify, describe, explain, and critically evaluate relevant issues, ethical dilemmas, and arguments. Students should: Articulate their role in a global context and develop an awareness and appreciation for diverse value systems in order to understand how to be good citizens who can critically examine and work toward quality of life within a framework of understanding and justice.

PHLS 2110. Foundations of Health Education **3 Credits (3)**

Role and responsibility of the health educator with emphasis on small group dynamics, oral and written communication skills, building community coalitions and introduction to grant writing. Taught with PHLS 3210. Cannot receive credit for both PHLS 2110 and PHLS 3210. May be repeated up to 3 credits.

Prerequisite: PHLS 1110G or consent of instructor.

Learning Outcomes

1. Define health, three levels of prevention, health education and health promotion, and describe the major determinants of health.
2. Describe the 7 major areas of responsibility, major competencies and sub-competencies of a professional health educator and the CHES's possible roles in various community health settings.
3. Describe and examine the historical context and development of the profession of health education.
4. Identify and critique major processes and practices of health education programming.
5. Describe the steps involved in conducting needs assessments, program and intervention planning, implementation, and program evaluation.
6. Identify, examine and describe elected health behavior change theories and models and explore possible applications in health education practice.
7. Describe and discuss the process of community mobilization and building of a community coalition.
8. Identify health issues and describe effective methods/strategies in health education advocacy.
9. Describe and discuss the future trends and issues in the professional preparation and practice of professional health educators. 1
10. Demonstrate effective and appropriate oral and written communication skills for health education professionals.

PHLS 2120. Essentials of Public Health **3 Credits (3)**

The course will focus on principles and major areas of public health, including ecological and total personal concept of health care system, epidemiological approaches to disease prevention and control. Consent of Instructor required. May be repeated up to 3 credits.

Learning Outcomes

1. Understand the sources of public health data, and how to interpret that information.
2. Access existing health related data.
3. Analyze health related data.
4. Identify populations for health education programs.
5. Incorporate data analysis and principles of community organization.
6. Interpret results from evaluation and research.
7. Infer implications from findings for future health-related activities.
8. Have a basic understanding of health topics faced by various populations.

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