



Preparation for a Career in Health

A distinctive education for students interested in medicine, public health, and community health

College of Human Ecology students benefit from a contemporary and interdisciplinary approach to health studies that is broad in scope and addresses human needs from perspectives in nutrition and health, human development, economics and public policy, and design and technology.

Select Outcomes

Assistant Professor, Director of School-Based Mental Health Georgetown University; Pennsylvania (Human Development)

Dermatology resident New York University School of Medicine; New York (Human Biology, Health and Society)

Dietitian United States Army; Texas (Nutritional Sciences)

Doctoral candidate, Clinical Psychology Fordham University; New York (Human Development)

Health care consultant Deloitte & Touche; Massachusetts (Policy Analysis and Management)

Primary care doctor, researcher, Department of Health Policy Mt. Sinai Medical Center; New York (Human Development)

Health Education Specialist Centers for Disease Control; Georgia (Nutritional Sciences)

Pediatrician NY Presbyterian Hospital; New York (Human Biology, Health and Society)

Physician, Obstetrics-Gynecology Thomas Jefferson University Hospital; Pennsylvania (Design and Environmental Analysis)

Senior Financial Analyst New York University School of Medicine; New York (Human Biology, Health and Society)

Our students explore and analyze the societal components of well-being, such as economics, policy, nutrition, culture, and the use of materials and built environments that influence our state of health and how we maintain, seek, and receive care. Students hone their skills in observation, analysis, and making connections to creatively solve problems as they are trained around healthcare delivery.

The health care field is diverse, dynamic, and evolving with exciting opportunities in biomedical research, chiropractic medicine, dentistry, dietetics, exercise science, genetics counseling, health administration, health education, health policy, medical ethics, nursing, nutritional epidemiology, optometry, osteopathy, pharmacology, physical therapy, podiatry, and public health.

Why Human Ecology?

Our programs approach health from a holistic perspective that focuses on wellness and prevention, and embrace the fact that health does not happen in a vacuum of biology and chemistry. The curriculum is designed so that students can take nearly two-thirds of their courses in the humanities and sciences

while completing an interdisciplinary major in Human Ecology that addresses current issues in human health. Prehealth students in the College of Human Ecology benefit from a close-knit community of 1,250 undergraduates and 105 faculty members, as well as from the vast resources of Cornell University.

Valuable clinical experience through various on-campus opportunities, as well as through meaningful involvement in the greater Ithaca community, are readily available for College of Human Ecology students. Students volunteer at Cayuga Medical Center, the Cancer Resource Center, the Ithaca Free Clinic, the Special Children's Center, the Ithaca Youth Bureau, the Ithaca Sciencenter, various assisted-living centers, and other health-related organizations.

Research opportunities in Human Ecology's supportive environment allows students to work closely with faculty in a range of settings and to develop important professional mentoring relationships. Research is conducted across the disciplines allowing students to further understand the interconnectedness of health and our environments.

Students can begin research opportunities early in their undergraduate career.

Approximately 75 percent of Human Ecology undergraduates participate in research at some point in their undergraduate career.

Choosing Your Major

There is no “premed” major at Cornell and any of Human Ecology’s seven major fields of study provide excellent preparation for health careers and medical school. Choosing a major based on genuine interests and not strictly on preparation for medical and other pre-professional programs is important. In addition, students will have compelling options and can easily change their focus if their career paths shift as they consider interests in new ways.

Nutritional Sciences builds a strong foundation in chemistry and biology and examines the interrelationships of diet, nutrition, physiology, physical and mental health, fitness and well-being, and disease prevention.

Human Biology, Health, and Society combines biology and chemistry with work in the social sciences for a broad perspective on human health through public policy and human biology, mental and physical health, and human development.

Global and Public Health Sciences emphasizes holistic and integrative perspectives on preventative, population-level solutions to public health issues. The foundation in biological sciences and quantitative methods is balanced by courses in public health, social and behavioral sciences, epidemiology, environmental health, and health policy. This major is only available to incoming freshmen students.

Human Development emphasizes all stages of the life span by integrating biology, psychology, sociology, and history. It is especially appropriate preparation given the current emphasis on a holistic approach to health and the personal competencies required for medical schools and graduate programs.

Policy Analysis and Management combines courses in economics, government, sociology, and ethics to offer students a better understanding of health care policy, public health, and hospital administration. Students also have the option of completing a 4 +1 Masters in Health Administration through the college’s Sloan Program.

Fiber Science and Apparel Design offers a Fiber Science option that provides a strong background in the physical sciences for the study of medicine or research into biomedical textiles such as arteries, prosthetics, sutures, and synthetic skin.

Design and Environmental Analysis offers a path that focuses on how the design of our physical environments impacts our health and well-being. Students examine healing and health-care design, environmental stressors, inclusive design across the life-course, and design for human potential.

Experiential Learning

Actively testing your goals is an essential part of the evolution and deepening of your interests and preparing for medical and pre-professional health schools. Human Ecology students explore the field through a variety of experiences including the following examples.

Human Ecology’s Urban Semester Program in New York City investigates multiculturalism, disparities, diversity, and urban issues. Students combine coursework and community involvement with internships that include healthcare rotations, shadowing, and research.

National or state level health policy can be explored through the Cornell in Washington and the Capital Semester (Albany, New York) programs. Cornell courses are combined with a paid internship through which students gain an invaluable understanding of the business of health care.

Cornell’s Community Health Professionals Mentorship program connects select students with local health care providers. These mentors offer the opportunity to observe some of the daily realities of the health and wellness profession in a variety of areas.

Planning for a Health Career

Prehealth advisers and other counselors in the College of Human Ecology will help you plan your course of study, identify opportunities for practical experience in the health care field, and consider career options.

PATCH (Pre-professional Association Toward Careers in Health) is a prominent Human Ecology student organiza-

tion that appeals to students interested in medicine and health related careers.

The college’s Career Exploration Center offers resources and programming to help students thoughtfully weigh their strengths, career goals, and opportunities. Students are prepared to conduct an engaged search for graduate programs and careers through guidance in focusing interests, developing résumés, preparing for interviews, and leveraging Cornell’s vast alumni network.

The university-wide Health Careers Program works with the College of Human Ecology’s advising staff to provide information, resources, counseling, and advice for students interested in health professions.

Select Graduate Program Acceptances

Albert Einstein College Medicine

Columbia University Medicine; Physician’s Assistant

Cornell University Sloan Program in Health Administration Masters of Health Administration

Drexel University College Medicine

Duke University Medicine

George Washington University Masters of Public Health

Harvard University Dentistry; Medicine

Jefferson Medical College Medicine

Johns Hopkins Masters of Public Health; Medicine

Mount Sinai School of Medicine Medicine

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine Medicine

Stanford University Medicine

State University of New York Upstate Medical University Medicine

University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey Medicine

University of Pennsylvania Medicine; Nursing

University of Rochester Medicine

Vanderbilt University Medicine

Weill Cornell Medical College Medicine

Yale University Medicine

For More Information

www.human.cornell.edu/career-development

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