Global and Public Health Sciences

Sample Courses

Introduction to Public Health (NS 1600) provides the basic principles, practices, and policies of public health, including an introduction to the infrastructure and organization of public health; methods of data collection and surveillance; disease promotion and prevention; health disparities; and achievements, challenges, and controversies in the field.

Introduction to Global Health (NS 2600) explores contemporary global health topics, issues, and controversies. The global burden of disease is introduced and students examine complex social, economic, political, environmental, and biological factors that structure the origins and consequences of global health problems and potential solutions. The core modules of this course focus on HIV/AIDS, maternal mortality, and food insecurity; health disparities; HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases; and access to health care.

Epidemiology (NS 3600) uses didactic lectures, classroom discussions, applied projects, and in-depth case studies to explore epidemiologic research, including disease occurrence, measures of association, causal inference in quantitative research, and applications of epidemiologic methods to global and public health research. Epidemiologic principles in the design, conduct, and interpretation of findings from observational and experimental studies will be explored.

Nutrition and Global Health (NS 3060) introduces students to nutritional problems in the global community through evaluation of the scientific literature and exploration of epidemiological, biological, demographic, and social factors that affect nutritional status. Students will think critically about the major challenges to improve nutrition with applications to infectious diseases, maternal and child health, and non-communicable diseases.
Research

Program research interests range in scale from molecular to population levels and draw on the chemical, biological, and social sciences to understand the complex relationships among human health, nutritional status, food and lifestyle patterns, and social and institutional environments.

Undergraduates play a critical role in the development, implementation, and analysis of research inquiries as participants on faculty research teams, as well as independent research projects.

Research examples

- Evaluating adherence to Vitamin D supplementation guidelines in hospitalized Baffin Island infants
- Studying the relationships between dengue fever and anthropometric measures in coastal Ecuador
- Examining factors associated with pica behavior among pregnant and postpartum women in western Kenya

Honors program

The Honors Program is designed to challenge academically talented students who have a strong interest in research. During their junior year, each student in the Program participates in a course on professional research in the health sciences and plans an independent research project under the direction of a faculty member. Each student completes a thesis and presents a seminar on the research problem at the end of their senior year.

Experiential Opportunities

GPHS students are required to complete an experiential component in a research or community setting where students are challenged to engage with the content of their courses. Students gain a deeper understanding of public health issues and problems, and have the opportunity to enhance research, writing, and critical thinking by applying knowledge and skills learned in the classroom in a greater context.

Supervised experiential learning locations and capstone course

Students may select from a variety of opportunities to fulfill the experiential learning component of the major. Many students independently source an appropriate experience, approved by the Division, in the local community, an academic/research setting, or an international setting. Students may also apply to select pre-approved experiences (ex: Cornell in Washington, Cornell Global Health Summer Program in India).

Explorations in Global and Public Health (NS 4600) serves as the major’s capstone course and is taken upon completion of the experiential learning component. As a result of the experience, students demonstrate their ability to collaborate, develop a holistic understanding of a public health problem, and design practical, effective, and ethical solutions.

Internship examples

- Nutrition and Education Intern, Cornell Cooperative Extension
- Partnerships Intern, Partnership for a Healthier America
- Research Assistant, Cornell University
- Research Intern, Food and Drug Administration

Professional Pathways

Opportunities in public health are growing given an anticipated gap in public health professionals. Career tracks include health education, international health, infectious disease, environmental health, health policy management, epidemiology or biostatistics.

In addition, students can pursue public service, research, social entrepreneurship, and other health-related careers domestically and globally. The major is particularly appropriate for those interested in leadership positions in organizations that deal directly with current and emerging health concerns.

Graduate/Professional school

Students will be prepared to pursue advanced professional graduate education in medicine, public health, allied health sciences (e.g., dentistry, nursing), law, and business. Additional graduate work possibilities include Masters programs in Biomedical Sciences and Global Health Economics, as well as Masters of Public Health programs or programs such as the 4+1 Masters in Health Administration offered through the College of Human Ecology’s Sloan Program, and PhD programs.

Sample career paths

- Analyst, ClearView Healthcare Partners
- Clinical Research Analyst, Northwell Health
- Hospital Reimbursement Analyst, Managed Care Revenue Consulting Group
- Implementation Project Manager, Epic
- Intake Coordinator, America Works of New York
- Program Coordinator, Mt. Sinai Health System
- Public Health Fellow, Skorton Center for Health Initiatives at Cornell Health
- Research and Evaluation Intern, Planned Parenthood Federation of America
- US Market Access Strategy Consulting Associate, IQVIA