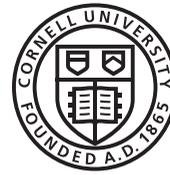


Human Biology, Health, and Society



Biology in the context of life

Program highlights: Biological and social aspects of growth and development | Biology and behavior | Biology and health promotion | Metabolism, genetics, and health

Overview

The College of Human Ecology's Human Biology, Health, and Society (HBHS) major, offered through the Division of Nutritional Sciences, provides a strong background in human biology while preparing students to investigate health issues from a social science perspective. The biological bases of health and illness of individuals are critically examined in the context of how social, psychological, economic, cultural, design, and policy aspects affect individuals, communities, and populations. In addition, coursework in Nutritional Sciences allows students to comprehensively and holistically focus on health and wellness.

Innovations in health and a changing approach to its management are redefining the healthcare industry and the roles of health professionals. The breadth and depth of the HBHS major prepares students for work in this complex and dynamic environment.

Human Biology, Health, and Society is especially appropriate for students desiring careers as health care practitioners—physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, dentists, wellness counselors, physical therapists, and genetic counselors. While all students pursuing this major will complete the coursework required for premedical studies, the program can also lead to careers in biomedical research, exercise science, pharmacology, toxicology, health communications, gerontology, or health education. Many graduates go on to advanced study to further their career goals.

Sample Courses

Nutrition, Health, and Society (NS 1150) discusses the facts and fallacies concerning the role that nutrition, exercise, and other health behaviors play in preventing disease, maintaining good health, and maximizing athletic performance. Emphasis is on understanding the biological mechanisms through which good nutrition and regular exercise affect psychological and physical health.

Obesity and the Regulation of Body Weight (NS 3150) involves a multidisciplinary discussion of the causes, effects, and treatments of human obesity. Topics include the biopsychology of eating behavior, the genetics of obesity, the role of activity and energy metabolism, the psychosocial determinants of obesity, anorexia nervosa, therapy and its effectiveness, and social discrimination.

Nutrition and Disease (NS 4410) covers the principles of nutrition, biochemistry, physiology, genetics, pathology, and pharmacology to understand disease risk, prevention, progression, and management. Lecture offers opportunities for the class to engage in the discussion of original research articles on topics of high current interest in the area of nutrition and health.

Public Health Nutrition (NS 4500) examines efforts to improve the diets and nutritional status of whole populations by working at the community, state, and national levels. This course helps prepare students to work in public health nutrition by describing the methods used in the assessment of nutritional programs, the development of nutrition-related policies, and the delivery of health, nutrition, and food assistance programs.

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College of Human Ecology: Examining human life from a scientific, social and design perspective

Research

Program research interests range in scale from molecular to population levels to understand the complex relationships among human health, nutritional status, food and lifestyle patterns, and social and institutional environments. Understanding these relationships includes the study of the metabolic regulation and function of nutrients, nutrient requirements through the life span, role of diet in reducing risk of disease, nutritional quality of foods, and interventions and policies designed to promote nutritional health of individuals and populations.

Undergraduates are active in the development, implementation, and analysis of research inquiries as participants on faculty research teams, as well as through independent research projects.

Experiential Opportunities

Beyond the required course work, students may take advantage of other engaged learning opportunities that provide valuable practical knowledge while testing students' academic or career interests.

Professional Pathways

Many Human Biology, Health, and Society students go on to graduate or professional school in medicine, dentistry, health administration, nutrition, physical therapy, nursing, or other health sciences. The broad perspective of the program prepares them for the complex settings, organizations, and specialties they will encounter in their advanced study.

Students who seek employment immediately after graduation can apply their strong background in the biological and the social aspects of health to positions in research, communications, education, and business.

Research examples

- Potential associations between Vitamin D status and bowel health during pregnancy using national survey data
- Trends in the stigmatization of disabilities and overweightness using current and historical research
- Effect of carioca bean prebiotic extracts on iron-related brush border membrane proteins and intestinal bacterial populations in chickens

Honors program

The Honors Program is designed to challenge academically gifted students with a strong interest in undergraduate research. Students pursuing this Program take a seminar course in their junior year and plan an independent research project to be completed during the junior and senior years under the direction of a faculty member.

Study away options

Students can apply to study abroad through a Cornell University-sponsored program, overseas university, or a program sponsored by another institution. Off-campus study is also offered through one of Cornell's internship-based programs such as *Cornell in Washington* in Washington, DC; the *Capital Semester* in Albany, NY; or Human Ecology's summer program, *Practicing Medicine: Health Care Culture and Careers* in New York City.

Internship examples

Community Outreach/Perinatal Health Intern, Stanford University

Health Clinic Fellow, Mayor Potencial/Honduras

Health Policy and Analysis Intern, Results for Development

Hospital Volunteer, Crouse Hospital

Intern, Southern African Institute for Policy and Research (SAIPAR)/Zambia

Research Assistant, Mount Sinai Hospital

Graduate/Professional school

In recent years, graduates have been offered admission to numerous medical schools, including Cornell, Yale, Baylor, Vanderbilt, Mount Sinai, and Albert Einstein, as well as Harvard and Columbia dental schools.

Undergraduates interested in the College of Human Ecology's Sloan Program in Health Administration are eligible to apply to this graduate program in their junior year for a five-year BS/MHA degree.

Sample career paths

AIDS cellular immunology research, Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital

Doctor, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

Equity research analyst, Suffolk Capital Management

Nutritionist, Women Infants and Children

Physical therapist, Stanford Hospital

Project manager, E-Commerce Group, Capital One

Research analyst, Health Care Policy Practice, Lewin Group

Senior counsel, Office of the Corporation Counsel, Law Department