About Public Health

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) has defined the role of public health as "...the fulfillment of society's interest in assuring the conditions in which people can be healthy (IOM, 1988)." Public health activities focus on improving the health of communities.

Public health is also defined as the art and science of promoting health, preventing disease, and prolonging life among human populations; the broad mission of public health is to enhance human health through organized community efforts (Council on Education for Public Health, 1978).

A diverse and ever-expanding field of practice, public health embraces an ecological approach that recognizes the interactions and relationships among multiple determinants of health. It involves the dissemination of reliable information for policy decisions; identifying systemic inequalities and problems; protecting the public’s health and safety through education and research; and fostering partnerships with individuals, communities, and organizations to promote health.

Though public health involves the knowledge and application of many disciplines in its research, teaching, service, and practice activities, the following have been identified as fundamental, core areas to the practice of public health (CEPH Accreditation Criteria, 2011):

- **Biostatistics** - collection, storage, retrieval, analysis and interpretation of health data; design and analysis of health-related surveys and experiments; and concepts and practice of statistical data analysis;
- **Environmental Health Sciences** - environmental factors including biological, physical, and chemical factors that affect the health of a community;
- **Epidemiology** - distributions and determinants of disease, disabilities, and death in human populations; the characteristics and dynamics of human populations; and the natural history of disease and the biologic basis of health;
- **Health Services Administration** - planning, organizing, administration, management, evaluation, and policy analysis of health and public health programs; and
- **Community Health Education-Social and Behavioral Sciences** - concepts and methods of social and behavioral sciences relevant to the identification and solution of public health problems.

Public health is concerned with protecting the health of communities, both small and large. Public health professionals focus on building on assets and preventing problems from happening or re-occurring through implementing educational programs, developing policies, administering services, and conducting research in concert with, but in contrast to, clinical health professionals (e.g., physicians and nurses) who focus primarily on treating individuals after they become sick or injured. No matter what form public health assumes, its goal is always the same: to improve the quality of life of individuals, families, and communities by focusing on prevention, promotion, and protection.

This preventive model encompasses three core functions:

1. assessing and monitoring the health of communities and at-risk populations to identify health problems and establish priorities;
2. formulating public policies in collaboration with community and government leaders designed to prioritize and solve local and national health problems; and
3. assuring that all populations have access to appropriate and cost-effective health care, including health promotion and disease prevention services, and evaluating the effectiveness of the care.

Our Shared Values

The Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health is endowed by Dr. Karl E. Peace as a tribute to his wife and an enduring celebration of her life characterized by “a zeal for excellence, consideration of others, intelligence and scholarship, honesty, kindness and humility.” In honor of Dr. Hsu, the faculty, students, and staff of the JPHCOPH commit to demonstrate these values in our behavior toward one another and to those whom we serve.

In 2007, the JPHCOPH students, faculty, and staff worked together to clarify the following list of shared core values. These values serve to guide decision-making for our workforce development, research, professional service, and community engagement activities. We will also use these values to help us make choices about how to move forward when the path is not clear.

- Excellence in research, service, and instruction.
- Passion for improving the health of rural communities and underserved populations.
Responsibility for promoting health equity and eliminating health disparities in rural communities and underserved populations.
Commitment to community involvement.
Collaboration for problem solving.
Commitment to developing as a "learning organization".

Experiential Learning Opportunities
All students are required to complete an internship experience. The internship is competency-based and provides the student the opportunity to further develop and integrate skills learned in the classroom.

Programs

Majors


Minors


Certificates

No results were found.

Advising

Undergraduate students are advised by the Undergraduate Advisor in the College of Public Health. The advisor is located in Room 1016 in Hendricks Hall, (912) 478-2674.

To make an advising appointment, send an email to: jphcoph-ugradadvisor@georgiasouthern.edu.

Contacts

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