



2025-2026 Curriculum Guide for PhD degree program with a specialization in HEALTH BEHAVIOR AND HEALTH PROMOTION

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree requires a significant program of study and research that qualifies the recipient to conduct independent high quality research and communicate complex information in public health. In addition, the PhD graduate will contribute to the advancement of the field of knowledge. The emphasis is on mastery of the field and particularly on the acquisition of research skills as a basis for original work.

Students pursuing the PhD degree complete didactic and research courses. In addition, PhD students must successfully complete and pass a Dissertation Proposal Defense, a PhD Candidacy Exam, Dissertation and Final Examination. Due to the expanded depth and scope of content and research, it typically takes a minimum of four years to complete the program requirements to earn the PhD degree. Graduates are prepared for teaching/research faculty positions in higher education and other positions in various public and private sectors.

Students admitted to the PhD degree program are assigned a faculty advisor who will provide guidance throughout the program. This document serves as a resource to be used by the student and the advisor in planning a program with a specialization in Health Behavior and Health Promotion (HBHP). All students are expected to be familiar with the College of Public Health (CPH) Graduate Student Handbook: <https://cph.osu.edu/students/graduate/student-handbook>, the Graduate School Handbook: <https://gradsch.osu.edu/graduate-school-handbook-gsh> and the CPH competencies: <https://go.osu.edu/cphcompetencies>.

PROGRAM OF STUDY

The PhD program requires a minimum of 80 credit hours or 50 credit hours beyond a master's degree. With approval of the student's advisor, up to 30 credit hours of appropriate master's level course work can be counted toward the PhD. Additional requirements for courses and distribution of credit hours are provided below. Students should work closely with their advisor to develop a tentative curriculum plan during the first term of their enrollment.

Major Field

Required Foundation Courses:

PUBHTLH 6010+ Essentials of Public Health	3 credit hours
PUBHBIO 6210 Applied Biostatistics I	<i>credit hours count in Research Methods</i>
PUBHEPI 6410 Principles of Epidemiology	<i>credit hours count in Research Methods</i>

*Not required for students with a CEPH accredited MPH

Required Specialization Courses:

*PUBHHBP 8562	Advanced Theory of Health Behavior Change in Public Health Applications	2 credit hours
PUBHHBP 7193	Research Rotation (Independent Study)	4 credit hours
‡PUBHHBP 8899.01	1 st Year Doctoral Seminar in Health Behavior and Health Promotion	2 credit hours
PUBHHBP 8899.02	2 nd Year Doctoral Seminar in Health Behavior and Health Promotion	2 credit hours

Additional Major Courses: Choose additional courses from the major or closely related courses to bring the total credit hours in the program to 31 credit hours for the major field

PUBHHBP 6520	Advocacy for Health Justice	3 credit hours
PUBHHBP 7520	Community Health Assessment	2 credit hours
PUBHHBP 7522	Program Planning and Implementation	3 credit hours
PUBHHBP 7532	Program Evaluation in Public Health	3 credit hours
PUBHHBP 7542	Settings and Special Populations in Health Promotion	3 credit hours
PUBHLTH 5558	Policy as a Prevention Strategy	3 credit hours
PUBHLTH 6000	Introduction to Global Health	2 credit hours
PUBHEPI 6442	Methods in Social Epidemiology	3 credit hours

Research Methods (31 credit hours)

Required Courses:

PUBHBIO 6210	Applied Biostatistics I	3 credit hours*
PUBHBIO 6211	Applied Biostatistics II	3 credit hours*
PUBHEPI 6410	Principles of Epidemiology	3 credit hours*
PUBHEPI 7410	Epidemiology II and Lab	4 credit hours*
PUBHHBP 7534	Research Methods in Health Behavior and Health Promotion	3 credit hours

Qualitative Methods coursework

5 credit hours
(minimum)

Quantitative Methods coursework

15 credit hours
(minimum)

**This course counts towards the 15-credit hour minimum for quantitative methods coursework*

Minor Cognate Field (12 credit hours)

Additional credit hours are required in a minor cognate field that is relevant to the student's research interests. Depending on the student's interests, the minor cognate area may occur within the College of Public Health (e.g., biostatistics or epidemiology) or within other disciplines (e.g., sociology, disability studies, sexuality studies). Students select their minor cognate area and courses with Advisor approval.

Dissertation (Minimum 6 credit hours)

PUBHLTH 8998/8999 Pre-Candidacy and Post-Candidacy Dissertation Credit hours

Note that a maximum of 20 credit hours of dissertation work can be counted toward the degree.

Grade Policy:

In addition to the general Graduate School requirements of a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher, students must meet specific college grade policies. Students should familiarize themselves with Section 12 of the College of Public Health Graduate Student Handbook.

College of Public Health - Office of Academic Programs and Student Services (OAPSS)

OAPSS staff are available to assist with College, Graduate School and University policies and procedures.
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