

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SCIENCE



*Promoting health and preventing disease
thousands at a time.*

Why Choose Public Health?

Public health focuses on prevention among entire communities rather than on treating the diseases of individual patients. Public health seeks to improve the health of entire communities and populations by (a) preventing epidemics and the spread of disease, (b) promoting healthy lifestyles for communities and families, (c) protecting against hazards in homes, work, communities, and the environment, (d) assuring high-quality health care services, and (e) preparing for and responding to emergencies. The MPH degree is the most recognized professional credential for leadership in public health practice.

The Master of Public Health (MPH) program at BYU prepares students to serve as public health professionals and leaders in government, business, industry, higher education, and public and private sector health care settings.



Public Health Is an Exciting and Growing Profession

MPH students prepare to enter the world ready to improve the health of communities and populations, especially underserved populations. Students trained as public health practitioners recognize the scope of health problems, address specific populations in need, and match resources that will protect and promote health for all individuals and communities. Common health issues, such as improving access to health care, controlling infectious disease, and reducing environmental hazards, violence, substance abuse, and injury assure that the need for public health is growing and increasingly important.

Demand for Public Health Professionals is High

With an escalating shortage of qualified public health workers in the United States, MPH graduates are uniquely prepared to work in a variety of public health settings. Specialized careers include the following: *Health promotion* improves health outcomes of communities by implementing innovative programs that change policies, environments, attitudes, and behaviors. *Epidemiology* and *biostatistics* involve mathematics as applied to the study of disease in order to prevent the onset and spread of disease. *Environmental health* uses science and technical skills to protect people's health by focusing on environmental factors that affect health. *Health administration* provides leadership to improve health services and health care delivery. *Global health* focuses on addressing health problems in developing nations or among underserved populations in the United States and is growing in popularity. The MPH program's

strong connections and partnerships, combined with the exceptional education BYU offers, provide a truly world-class opportunity for MPH students.

Public Health Gives People Purpose and Builds Leaders

After completing the MPH program students will be prepared with leadership and research skills to work with diverse populations in domestic and international settings. BYU MPH alumni are most often employed in local and state health departments, federal settings, and other public agencies (CDC, NIH). Our alumni are also employed in community health centers, nonprofit organizations, and global health agencies. Common job areas include public health education, epidemiology, environmental health, and health administration. Finally, many MPH graduates pursue doctoral degrees (MD, JD, PhD, and DrPH) at prestigious universities.

Why Choose BYU Public Health?

The MPH program is taught by expert, engaged faculty who examine real public health issues from a global perspective, maintain an optimum student-to-faculty ratio, and provide excellent program-level mentored research experiences. The MPH program continues national accreditation since 2005 and in 2009 was awarded the maximum seven-year term through the Council on Education for Public Health.

What Makes BYU's Master of Public Health Unique?

Worldwide Connections and Partnerships

The MPH program connects students with many partner organizations around the world, including the Pan American Health Organization, World Health Organization, Utah Department of Health, local health departments,



Melissa Sevy (2009): “My faculty committee helped me complete a rigorous graduate project that turned out to be a very enriching experience. They fit my style. I felt I could go to my committee for help at any time. Regarding the course work, I liked that we were engaged in projects that directly linked up with community professionals or public health issues happening right in our backyard. Lastly, there were many opportunities to do mentored research and funding to travel and be exposed to many sides of public health, including the Advocacy Summit in Washington, DC, and the APHA Conference in San Diego.”

“Health care matters to all of us some of the time. Public health matters to all of us all of the time.”

—C. Everett Koop, Former U.S. Surgeon General



and diverse community-based organizations and nonprofit agencies. Additionally, BYU is uniquely prepared to promote public health alongside its sponsor, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Given these connections, BYU has a world presence that few academic institutions provide. The Church and the university are each noted for improving health, bolstering the standard of living, valuing the role and health production capacities of families and households, and promoting self-sufficiency within diverse populations.

Campus Diversity

BYU has approximately 1,700 international students attending the university representing cultures, religions, and languages from almost every continent. Approximately one in four MPH students share in this diversity through their country of origin or racial/ethnic heritage, and at least half of MPH students are returned missionaries who have served around the world. These students help foster support and understanding of the many cultures represented by BYU's international student body.

Highly Respected Faculty Mentors

BYU MPH faculty members hold advanced degrees from respected academic institutions and are recognized scholars dedicated to excellence in teaching and professional service around the world. They are active in research and provide mentored experiences with MPH students through research-based projects around the nation and the world.



“Public health professionals who have worked abroad, in different cultural settings, gain an enhanced set of skills and experience with which to solve challenging public health problems anywhere in the world.” —Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Many of these projects include important partnerships with local and national public health agencies, international ministries of health, and diverse nongovernmental organizations.

Student-Centered Faculty

The program faculty is committed to quality education by striving to be student-centered. A marker for student-centeredness is the faculty-to-student ratio. The MPH program continues to achieve fewer than two students for every full-time faculty (1:1.77 in 2009). This ideal ratio allows the BYU MPH faculty to be accessible, approachable, and encouraging of students and their work. Each faculty member has distinct research and teaching interests, and when joined in student committees, they are able to assist students in performing their fieldwork and projects with optimal synergy.

Public Health Instruction at BYU

During this exciting and rigorous program, students take 11 core courses designed to develop analytic skills and knowledge in key areas of public health, including epidemiology, health policy, environmental health, administration, biostatistics, chronic and infectious diseases, and research methods. Working with faculty advisors, students create a signature for their training by selecting elective courses tailored to their interests and goals with an emphasis in health promotion (community health education) or global health promotion.

Health Promotion

Health promotion professionals aim to advance healthy lifestyles in order to prevent chronic diseases such as cancer, heart disease, and diabetes; to educate at-risk populations to reduce teen pregnancy and infant mortality; and to advocate equal access to cost-effective care. They also seek to control and prevent infectious diseases and outbreaks such as influenza, HIV/AIDS, and tuberculosis and to reduce death and disability caused by unintentional



Rachel Beene (2009): “BYU’s MPH program is great. The teaching quality is excellent because faculty use interactive teaching styles and provide real-life situations for class projects. I’m really glad to have selected BYU for my public health experience. It has been extremely useful for my work in medical school.”

Global health priority issues: tobacco control, obesity, injury prevention, migrant-worker health, tuberculosis, malaria, HIV/AIDS, pandemic flu, maternal health, poor physical environments, and adequate health systems



injuries through policies such as seat belt and worker safety laws. Finally, health promotion professionals empower communities to improve mental health, reduce substance abuse, and counter social violence.

Global Health

Global health promotion seeks to determine the proven, basic, and crosscutting approaches that can be applied to virtually any population or setting, domestic or international. Thus, “global” is less about location of problems and more to do with shared solutions for problems that are universally felt around the world.

A recognized strength of the program is learning public health by doing public health. In the summer between year one and year two, all students immerse themselves in applied public health experiences through a field experience and a graduate project. These applied experiences replace the typical thesis that other universities require



and create a culminating experience that helps graduates become practice-ready. Many students complete this work in global health settings. (See the MPH Web site, mph.byu.edu, for details and examples.)

Global Health Priorities

Consistent with practices of the World Health Organization and Pan American Health Organization, and to address the Millennial Development Goals, BYU promotes global public health efforts that are addressed through cooperative actions and universal solutions but adapted and implemented to meet local needs. Students seeking experience in global public health will adapt simple health promotion approaches to the needs of communities in order to improve health, reduce disparities, and protect against global or local threats.

Eligible Students

Students from a variety of backgrounds and fields of study are encouraged to apply to the MPH program. Students come to public health from diverse academic disciplines including biology, political science, nursing, economics, statistics, environmental science, anthropology, social work, nutrition, food science, psychology, sociology, geography, and business management. As such, no prerequisite courses are required for admission. Students wishing to learn more about the admissions process and apply to the program can complete an online application available through the MPH Web site (mph.byu.edu).

How to Apply

For application and admission information, please select the “Prospective Students and Admission” tab at mph.byu.edu.

You’ll find:

- Academic requirements
- Course work sequence
- Research and teaching interests of faculty
- Faculty mentoring profiles
- Admission requirements
- Details about the application process
- Financial aid and assistantships
- MPH student outcomes



Grant Sunada (2008): “Being at BYU as a graduate student in public health was my first experience on campus. With competing offers, I chose to come to BYU. I found that solid scholarship was emphasized. Since graduating, I have followed that pattern, and I am really excited about what has happened to me in my professional career at the state health department.”



The mission of the Master of Public Health program at Brigham Young University is to promote community and family-centered health by training future public health professionals to strategically plan, implement, and evaluate health promotion solutions that improve health and well-being. Emphasis is placed on reducing preventable diseases, injuries, and health disparities among underserved or at-risk populations in both domestic and international settings.

“There is a great need in our world for the examination and understanding of cultures and societies and languages and people other than one’s own, including the religious, moral, and aesthetic aspects of life. We need in these troubled times, on a smaller and smaller globe, to understand others in their terms, as they are, as well as to improve our efforts to bring representatives of different cultures together in an exchange of experiences and ideas so that understanding can move from individuals to nations.”

—Jeffrey R. Holland, 1983



BYU’s Master of Public Health program is fully accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health.