UAB School of Public Health
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FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT UAB.EDU/SOPH/HOME
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#1 in the nation for community outreach efforts around health and well-being

#1 YOUNG UNITED STATES UNIVERSITY / #12 YOUNG UNIVERSITY, WORLDWIDE

Recognized as a 2019 Diversity Champion by INSIGHT into Diversity Magazine.

100+ countries represented by our students, faculty, and staff in fall of 2019

31st in 2018 federal research funding, which is 15th among public universities in 2018
Working for a Healthier World

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
The University of Alabama at Birmingham
School of Public Health Accolades

The only accredited School of Public Health in Alabama

$14 million in NIH funding, which is 19th among all schools of public health

More than $33 million in active projects

Our Vision
We aspire to fulfill the great promise of the discipline of public health: to protect and improve the health, safety, and well-being of all. We accomplish this through cutting-edge research, educating future generations of outstanding public health practitioners, and serving our community, state, region, and the world.
Welcome to the Magic City.

UAB is located in the heart of the Magic City, putting students at the epicenter of everything Birmingham has to offer.

Birmingham is a beautiful, diverse city in the midst of a cultural rebirth. In the past few years, it has become widely recognized as a “foodie” city, with new restaurants and breweries opening what seems like every day. The downtown has become revitalized, with new loft developments, hotels, food halls, parks, music venues, and more. The city is home to a thriving art scene with concerts, symphonies, festivals, theatrical productions, and more.

Yet, despite all of this activity, Birmingham remains a very easy city to live in. It’s easy to get around, there’s lots of green space, housing remains relatively affordable, and the health care is world class. The city and surrounding areas are naturally beautiful, with mountains, forests, lakes, and a whole host of outdoor activities.
“My experience at UAB SOPH has allowed me to put my passions into practice, convert my intellect into action, and transform my faith into function. I have learned so much from my peers and mentors, made lifelong friends, and contributed hours of service. I will be attending UAB School of Medicine in the fall and want to continue research and service in public health with the hope of being part of the change needed in our society as we work toward health quality and equality for all.”

“Like many, I didn’t even know what public health was and as a first-generation college student, I could never have imagined the opportunities that the UAB SOPH could offer me. Studying public health has given me the ability to solve problems and make a difference. I have met people from the UAB campus, Birmingham community, and even in different countries. It’s been amazing connecting with people through our shared desire to improve health in our communities and around the world.”

“I am currently in the coordinated MPH/JD program which provides a stimulating and rewarding balance of thought, perspective, and knowledge. My goal is to focus on healthcare and environmental issues and, ultimately, advance public health policy initiatives on local, national, and global levels. I envision myself in advocacy work for marginalized groups like African-Americans, veterans, and individuals experiencing homelessness. I am thrilled to embark on a path that is built on passion, service, and excitement.”
One of the fastest growing undergraduate programs at UAB

Bachelor of Science in Public Health

In the Public Health concentration, you will learn about factors and dynamics that contribute to public health issues around the world and gain a broad understanding of current public health practices.

Bachelor of Science in Environmental Health Sciences

A concentration in Environmental Health Sciences will prepare you to protect both the environment and workers by identifying and eliminating health hazards in a variety of settings, as well as studying their effects on human and natural populations. Global climate change and sustainability are a major focus of this concentration.

Bachelor of Science in Global Health Studies

As a student in the Global Health concentration you will learn about health conditions that affect people around the world and associated challenges that make these issues difficult to address such as poverty, cultural beliefs, and population dynamics.

Minor in Public Health

Our Minor in Public Health complements most major degree programs by providing a broader perspective on health and community concepts. Pursuing a Public Health minor will allow you to incorporate health promotion and disease prevention into any career field and prepares you for a graduate program in public health.

Accelerated Learning Opportunities

The School of Public Health offers several Accelerated Learning Opportunities for high-achieving students to reduce the time and cost necessary to complete both their undergraduate and graduate degrees. These opportunities include the Fast Track and Accelerated Bachelor’s to Master programs, both of which allow students to begin graduate coursework while finishing their undergraduate degree in any field. Exceptional high school seniors may also be invited to participate in the Early Acceptance Program when they are first admitted to UAB, which guarantees admission to the Master of Public Health program if students maintain a 3.5 undergraduate GPA.
Graduate Degrees

Our graduate programs give students the knowledge, insight, and perspective needed to address complex public health problems in the US and abroad. Students develop the critical scientific, technical, and leadership skills very much in demand by business, industry, academia, and the public sector.

MASTERS OF PUBLIC HEALTH (MPH)

The Master of Public Health (MPH) is the most well-known Public Health degree. It is considered a "terminal" or "professional" degree, as it fully prepares individuals for lifelong careers in public health practice without the need for additional education.

At UAB, all MPH degree programs begin with a shared MPH Core based on the Evidence-Based Public Health framework, which provides all students with the practice-based skills they need to be effective in the public health workforce. Students further enhance their training through one of many departmental concentrations; these concentrations are designed to deepen students’ knowledge in specific areas of public health. Regardless of concentration, all MPH students engage in an Applied Practice Experience (Internship) in the community and conclude their coursework with an Integrative Learning Experience (Capstone) in which they pull together skills and perspectives learned in both the core and the concentration courses to produce a high-quality written product.

Common career settings for individuals holding the MPH degree include State and Local Health Departments; community-based organizations and non-profits; healthcare consulting firms; international, state, and federal agencies (e.g., WHO, CMS, CDC); managed care organizations; and various clinical settings. Because of their broad training in public health management, individuals holding the MPH degree have excellent prospects for advancing into leadership roles in these settings.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY

Working with communities is at the core of what we do at the UAB School of Public Health. Students have countless opportunities to work with faculty and community partners on the community health issues they’re passionate about, whether it’s addressing environmental justice concerns in North Birmingham, exploring heightened stroke risk throughout the rural South, or combatting HIV-related stigma and discrimination in developing countries. MPH and DrPH students also participate in a formal Applied Practice Experience (internship or practicum) as part of their degree requirements. In this structured experience, students demonstrate such critical practice-based skills as coalition building, negotiation, advocacy, interprofessional teamwork, and targeted communication under the direction of a preceptor and faculty advisor. Students create at least two work products that can be used by the community partner, demonstrating their readiness to make an impact in the public health workforce.
Degree Concentrations

**Biostatistics**

Biostatisticians apply statistical methods for research in the health sciences, use mathematical principles and historical trends to predict outcomes and influence life-changing decisions, and interpret data to draw conclusions regarding observed behaviors.

- MS Biostatistics
- MSPH Biostatistics
- PhD Biostatistics
- DrPH Biostatistics

**Environmental Health Sciences**

Environmental health scientists work to understand the causes and hazards related to public health issues and to influence policy about both natural and man-made environmental factors.

- MPH Environmental and Occupational Health also available online
- MSPH Industrial Hygiene
- MSPH Environmental and Occupational Health Science
- PhD Environmental Health Sciences

**Epidemiology**

Known as “disease detectives,” epidemiologists investigate causes of diseases and work to control their spread. They also determine risk factors for disease and identify targets for preventive medicine and public policies.

- MPH Epidemiology also available online
- MSPH Applied Epidemiology
- PhD Epidemiology

**Health Behavior**

Health behaviorists use data and theory to develop and evaluate programs addressing behaviors that lead to disease and promoting benefits to the public’s health. Research topics include obesity, addiction, sexual health risks, and family and adolescent health issues.

- MPH Health Behavior also available online
- PhD Health Education and Health Promotion

**Health Care Organization and Policy**

Students in Health Care Organization learn to effectively manage and lead public health, while students in Health Policy build the skills required to recommend or evaluate systems or policy changes. Maternal and Child Health (MCH), focusing on vulnerable populations, provides additional skills in comprehensive systems development and evaluation. Outcomes Research focuses on the evaluation of the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of specific clinical healthcare interventions or treatments.

- MPH Health Care Policy also available online
- MPH Health Care Organization also available online
- MPH Maternal and Child Health Policy and Leadership also available online
- MSPH Outcomes Research only available online
- DrPH Health Care Organization and Policy
- DrPH Maternal and Child Health Policy
- DrPH Outcomes Research

**Population Health**

This individualized concentration is designed for professionals working in healthcare-related fields or for students enrolled in one of our coordinated degree programs.

- MPH Population Health also available online
Coordinated Degree Programs

Individuals training for a wide range of professions (e.g., medicine, law, business, social work) can benefit from adding the population health perspective offered by an MPH degree. Our coordinated degree programs allow students to combine training in their chosen field with an individually-designed MPH concentration in Population Health. In addition to the MPH Core based on the Evidence-Based Public Health framework and a course on multidisciplinary perspectives on Population Health, students select from all available Master’s-level courses to design a unique concentration that supports their career goals. Because a portion of the coursework in the coordinated degree programs is shared between the two degrees, students are able to complete both degrees more quickly and at a reduced cost.

Online Degree Programs

Many degree programs in the School of Public Health are available completely online and do not require any travel to Birmingham. These online degree programs are identical to the on-campus versions and award the same degree upon completion. All online students are assigned both an academic and a faculty advisor and have access to all UAB and School of Public Health resources necessary to be successful.

Certificate Programs

Our certificate programs offer a cost-effective way to explore the field of public health; they are also ideal for current health care and public health workers looking to deepen their public health knowledge. These certificates are available completely online, though certificate students are welcome to take on-campus courses if they prefer. Coursework taken in pursuit of a certificate can be used toward an MPH degree for students who choose to continue their training at the UAB School of Public Health and may also be used as part of UAB’s new interdisciplinary master’s degree program.

PUBLIC HEALTH CERTIFICATE

The Public Health certificate is a 17-hour course of study ideal for individuals interested in exploring the field of public health or expanding their knowledge and skills. The certificate is built around the MPH Core, which is based on the Evidence-Based Public Health framework. This core set of courses builds skills in all critical areas of public health, including public health and healthcare systems; planning and promotion to promote health; as well as policy, leadership, communication, and systems thinking. Students also select one elective course from all available Master’s-level courses to round out their training. After completion of this Certificate, students are eligible to sit for the Certified in Public Health (CPH) exam.

GLOBAL HEALTH STUDIES CERTIFICATE

This 15-hour certificate program offers UAB graduate students, non-degree seeking students, and selected undergraduate students the opportunity to gain knowledge in the ways that global processes (like globalization, climate change, and global migration) converge on local communities to impact population health and health care delivery. Core courses provide certificate students with the foundations and theories needed to apply global health frameworks in different settings and cultures. Elective courses offer the opportunity for application (often through participation in projects with international partners and global health scholars) to cultivate the capacity to deal with any complex global health problem: how to identify the critical issues, ask the right questions, and create solutions that are meaningful and effective in the local and global context.
Careers in public health

Career options for students trained in public health are exceptionally strong and will continue to grow in the future. More than ten years ago, the Association of Schools of Public Health noted that “the worsening [public health] worker shortages will reach crisis proportions in the coming years.”

Based on an analysis of the number of trained public health workers relative to the growth of the U.S. population, the report estimated that the US would be short 250,000 public health workers by the year 2020. But it’s not just that public health positions are going unfilled as workers retire – the field of public health itself is rapidly changing and expanding, leading to new opportunities for students trained at accredited schools of public health like UAB.
SOPH Student Engagement

Diversity and Inclusion

As faculty, staff, and students in the UAB School of Public Health, we are committed to fostering a community and culture that embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion.

We come from diverse backgrounds with unique experiences that shape who we are and who we will become. We recognize that this diversity is our greatest strength as a School – it’s what empowers us to make a difference in communities locally, nationally, and globally.

Student Governance

All students in the School of Public Health are represented through the Public Health Student Association (PHSA). PHSA provides numerous opportunities for students to participate in service to the School, the community, and the profession. PHSA also provides numerous social and networking opportunities for students. Elections for officers are held in the Fall of each academic year, and general meetings are held throughout each semester.

Student Interest Groups

- Global Health Interest Group (GHIG)
- Maternal and Child Health SAGE (MCH SAGE)
- Mental Health Ambassadors
- Alabama Student Rural Health Association (ASRHA)

Diversity and Inclusion Statistics

1 : 1 is our faculty gender ratio
1 out of 3 faculty belong to a minority group
5 out of 10 students belong to a minority group
1 out of 10 students are international

SOPH SHARED VALUES

Diversity and Inclusion Celebrating what makes us unique and what makes us one school; Ethical Behavior and Integrity Doing what is right for the right reasons; Collegiality Practicing mindfulness and accountability in the work-place and modeling professional collaborations for our students; Academic Freedom Pursuing excellence in our scholarly interests through innovation in teaching, research, and service; Stewardship Earning the public’s trust in how we engage communities and manage our resources.
At the UAB School of Public Health, we aren’t looking for good test takers, but for individuals with a passion for serving their communities.

Holistic admissions is a comprehensive process that carefully examines all components of your application. While we look at your previous coursework, GPA, and test scores (note that the GRE is recommended but not required for admission to the MPH program), our main focus is on YOU – do you have the dedication to make a difference? A resume/CV that demonstrates a long-standing commitment to engagement and service is vital, as are strong letters of recommendation that describe your character and capabilities. But the most critical component is the Statement of Purpose, which should clearly demonstrate how you intend to make an impact in the field of public health. We already know that most students pursue a degree in Public Health because they want to help people – tell us what that looks like for YOU!