

# Overview of the Focus Area

*For students who entered the major fall 2015 and later*

## **WHAT IS THE FOCUS AREA COURSE REQUIREMENT?**

The focus area allows students to explore areas of particular interest and relevance to public health, drawing connections between disciplines. Think of the requirement as your focus area within public health. The classes that you choose will enhance your understanding of the field and better prepare you for a career as a public health professional. At least **12 credits** are required in this area, at the 300 level or higher. The course material must be relevant to the study of public health.

## **OPTIONS TO FULFILL THE FOCUS AREA REQUIREMENT**

The courses must be relevant to Public Health and form a coherent set of courses. Courses can be taken in public health, another department, abroad or at one of the 5 Colleges. The course material must be relevant to the study of public health and pre-approved by the Program Advisor.

## **HOW TO GET APPROVAL FOR THE FOCUS AREA**

You must submit a “Focus Area Proposal Form,” which demonstrates how you plan to fulfill the focus area courses requirement. This form is required! The Undergraduate Program Advisor must accept the form before courses are able to count toward the requirement. On this form, you will include the course number, Spire description, semester taken/taking, number of credits, and rationale for your choices. If you want to make any changes after approval, you will have to fill out a “Course Exception Form.” Return form to Peer Advising Office, 102 Arnold. For your records, you should also keep a copy of the form.

## **ADDING THE APPROVED COURSES TO SPIRE**

Once you enroll in the last proposed course, please email the Program Advisor and ask her to update your Academic Requirement Report (ARR).

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **DOES SPIRE TRULY REFLECT WHETHER YOU FULFILLED YOUR FOCUS AREA REQUIREMENT?**

- NO! SPIRE does not always sort the focus area correctly. Even if you got approval for your focus area, the courses will not always go directly into the appropriate section. Thus, it is important that you **keep track** of what you listed on your Focus Area Proposal Form.
- Once you are enrolled in the last proposed focus area course, contact the Program Advisor to have her enter the correct courses on your ARR.

## **HOW DO I MAKE A CHANGE ONCE MY FOCUS AREA IS APPROVED?**

- The Form is a type of contract. If you want to take another course than what is listed on your Proposal Form then you will have to fill out a Course Exception Form. For your records, you should keep a copy of the form.

## **WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I DON'T FILL OUT A FOCUS AREA PROPOSAL FORM?**

- There is a chance that a class that you took will not be counted towards the Focus Area requirement. If this happens, it may prevent you from graduating on time.

## **WHAT IF I WANT TO STUDY ABROAD?**

- Studying abroad is the perfect opportunity to complete Focus Area requirements. Make sure to get your courses approved by Gloria DiFulvio before going abroad.

## **CAN I USE A LANGUAGE COURSE FOR MY FOCUS AREA?**

- You may only count one 3 credit 300+ level language course toward your Focus Area. You may, however, use cultural studies for your Focus Area as long as the classes are relevant to Public Health.

## **CAN I USE COURSES TOWARD BOTH MY FOUNDATIONS REQUIREMENTS AND MY FOCUS AREA?**

- No, you are not allowed to count any course toward two different Public Health requirements. For example, you may not count a Foundation course toward your Focus Area Course Requirement.

## **DEPARTMENTS THAT MAY HAVE PUBLIC HEALTH RELATED COURSES**

Afro-American Studies	Kinesiology
Anthropology	Latin American Studies
Biochemistry & Molecular Biology	Mathematics & Statistics
Biology	Microbiology
Chemistry	Natural Resources Conservation
Communication Disorders	Nutrition
Communications	Political Science
Computer Science	Psychology
Economics	Science (interdisciplinary)
Education	School of Management
Environmental Sciences	Social Thought & Political Economy
Food Science	Sociology
Geology	Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies
Information Technology	

## **FIVE COLLEGE (5C) AND UMASS CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS THAT MAY HAVE PUBLIC HEALTH RELATED COURSES**

African Studies (5C)	Latin American Studies (5C)
Asian & Asian American Studies	Middle Eastern Studies (5C)
Asian/Pacific/American Studies (5C)	Native American Indian Studies
Criminal Justice	Native American Indian Studies (5C)
Culture, Health and Science (5C)	Population Studies
International Agriculture Studies	Public Policy & Administration
International Relations (5C)	Civic Engagement Certificate
Latin America, Caribbean & Latino Studies	

## **SEVERAL SUGGESTED FOCUSES EXPLAINED**

Here are a few popular certificates and programs that may help you fulfill your Focus Area requirements. When considering these programs it is important to remember that they have different requirements than the Public Health requirements. Make sure you still meet the 12 credits at the 300 level or higher requirement.

### **CITIZEN SCHOLAR'S PROGRAM**

**About:** One remarkable program offered through CESL is the Citizen Scholars Program, is a two-year, academic service-learning program that links real-life experience to academic coursework. This course sequence is a great way to fulfill some public health requirements.

**Who:** This program is open to ANY sophomore and junior UMass students who have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. Students who might be interested in the program include those with a passion for social justice and community engagement, those who wish to strengthen their leadership skills and those interested in nonprofit or government work.

**Requirements:** For this program there is a requirement that students be on campus for four semesters.

**For more information:** <http://cesl.umass.edu/citizenscholars/apply>

### **CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND PUBLIC SERVICE CERTIFICATE**

**About:** This certificate provides students with hands on experience, promoting social change. It enhances student skills and knowledge of activism and citizenship.

**Who:** This certificate is a good option for those committed to social justice, community organizing, public policy, or political theory. If you're in Citizen Scholar's Program, you only need two additional classes to complete the certificate.

**Requirements:** Students must complete a minimum of six courses (each three credits or more) for a minimum of 18 credits that fulfill specific requirements.

**For more information:** <http://cesl.umass.edu/certificaterequirements>

### **POPULATION STUDIES CERTIFICATE**

**About:** The Population Studies Certificate examines factors affecting Public Health, which include family dynamics, environmental impacts, labor markets, and population estimates.

**Who:** This could be a good option for those interested in economics, health policy, community health education, or urban planning. This certificate is straightforward in the guidelines and expected coursework.

**Requirements:** The certificate requires 15 credits, with five required courses.

**For more information:**

<https://www.umass.edu/sociology/undergraduate/current/certificates/population-studies>

### **PUBLIC POLICY & ADMINISTRATION CERTIFICATE**

**About:** The Public Policy & Administration Certificate focuses on various Public Policy issues, including health care policy, education reform, environmental policy, international relations, etc.

**Who:** This certificate may benefit students who are interested in a career in health policy and management, hospital administration, health care reform or political science within the Public Health field.

**Requirements:** The Public Policy & Administration Certificate consists of three mandatory courses, in addition to five elective courses. The remaining five elective courses are chosen based on student interests and three of them must be at the three hundred level or higher. Students interested in this certificate must complete an application and a one page proposal for their course plan and explanation.

**For more information:** <https://www.umass.edu/spp/academics/undergraduate-certificate>

### **CULTURE, HEALTH, & SCIENCE CERTIFICATE**

**About:** The Culture Health & Science Certificate is offered to all students within the Five College program. This interdisciplinary program focuses on areas including research strategies, disease outbreaks, social sciences, cultural experience, the environment, etc.

**Who:** Many of the courses offered overlap with the Public Health major requirements, making it a good choice for Public Health students. However, you are only allowed to use 3 major courses toward the certificate.

Additionally, students have the opportunity to take courses at any of the Five Colleges, which enhances their academic experience.

**Requirements:** Students are required to complete seven courses, four of which may be counted toward the student's major. Four semesters of a foreign language are encouraged, but not required. Students must take at least one course from each of the five listed categories. Students are required to pursue an independent research project, which provides students with hands on experience in a particular area of interest. Join the listserv and attend CHS events.

**For more information:** <https://www.fivecolleges.edu/chs/>

### **ICONS**

**About:** The icons program (Integrated Concentration in Science) is an 18 credit academic program with a track in biomedicine and a track in renewable energy.

**Who:** This program is best suited for freshman, due to course plan, but sophomores are also encouraged to apply. This program is a good fit for freshman and sophomore students who are interested in focused in renewable energy or biomedicine. This rigorous curriculum prepares students for a career in Environmental Health, Epidemiology, or Biostatistics.

**Requirements:** Application is required. Students enroll in three courses, one each year, and then complete a senior thesis.

**For more information:** <http://www.cns.umass.edu/icons-program/academics>

## Sample Focus Areas & Relevant Courses

**DISCLAIMER:** Please note that some of these courses have prerequisites and restrictions. The sample focuses listed below are simply suggestions and examples for some focus areas. These are NOT premade collateral fields/focus areas; not all of these examples completely fulfill the collateral/focus area requirements. **Even if you choose to pursue some of these courses, you still MUST submit a proposal form.**

### ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

These courses encompass environmental policy, environmental health, biology and chemistry knowledge background as well as environmental science concepts. An EcoRep program and an independent study are examples of ways to get experience in your collateral field that can be used toward your courses.

- ENVIRSCI 315: Principles of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (3)
- ENVIRSCI 342: Pesticides, The Environment, and Public Policy (3)
- POLISCI 387: Energy Policy (4)
- ENVIRSCI 452: Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (3)

### WOMEN'S HEALTH

These courses focus on the biology, politics and issues of women's health.

- PSYCH 355: Adolescent Psych (3)
- PUBHLTH 328: Fundamentals of Women's Health (3)
- POLISCI 394FI: Family and the State (3)
- SOCIOL 395K: Domestic Violence (3)

### Pre-Health Studies

These courses focus on the multidisciplinary aspects of undergraduate education that medical/physician assistant/dental schools might require or recommend for admission. Collectively, these classes may assist students in attaining a holistic perspective on medicine and public health.

- Biochemistry 420: Elementary Biochemistry (3 credits)
- Psychology 380: Abnormal Psychology (3 credits)
- Psychology 330: Behavioral Neuroscience (3 credits)
- Psychology 350: Developmental Psychology (3 credits)
- Chemistry 261: Organic Chemistry (3 credits)
- Chemistry 262: Organic Chemistry 2 (3 credits)
- CHEM 269: Organic Chemistry Lab 2 (3)
- BIOCHEM 420: Elementary Biochemistry (3)
- ANTHRO 312: Medical Anthropology (3)
- NURSING 312: Cultural Diversity in Health and Illness (SI, U) (4)
- MICROBIO 310: General Microbiology (3)

### SCIENCES

This sample focus shows how classes from different but similar disciplines can be combined to form a well-rounded knowledge of the sciences to compliment your public health degree.

- CHEM 250: Organic Chemistry (3)
- CHEM 261: Organic Chemistry (3)
- MICROBIO 310: General Microbiology (3)
- MICROBIO 330: Microbial Genetics (3)
- BIO 383H: Gene and Genome Analysis (4)
- BIOCHEM 420: Elementary Biochemistry (3)

### **INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS 5-COLLEGE CERTIFICATE**

- ANTHRO 336: Political Anthropology
- POLISCI 354: International Relations
- POLISCI 359: International Political Economy
- GEOGRAPHY 364: Development
- HISTORY 381: U.S. Diplomatic History II

### **CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

These courses give an interdisciplinary understanding to the health and development of a child, both physically and mentally.

- PSYCH 355: Adolescent Psych (3)
- SOCIOLOGY 382: Sociology of Childhood (3)
- POLISCI 394FI: Family and the State (3)
- PSYCH 391C: Infancy (3)

### **CITIZEN SCHOLAR'S PROGRAM & OTHER SERVICE COURSES**

These courses and community service engagement come together to form a basis of knowledge and experience about working in and serving the community.

- PUBHLTH 499N: Public Policy and Citizen Action (4)
- PUBHLTH 499O: Organizing: People, Power, and Change (4)
- SERVCLRNG 393TH: Tools for Democratic Change (4)
- ANTHRO 380: Grass Roots Community Organizing (4)
- ANTHRO 397S: Community Service Learning (1)
- ANTHRO 397L: Leadership and Activism (4)
- ANTHRO 496W IS: Advanced Critical Pedagogy (1)

### **Social Inequalities**

These courses collectively evaluate various inequalities or disparities, which can be helpful when creating policies that might affect health. This focus area could be interesting to someone who wants to learn more about the intersectionality of health and how the inequalities that exist in society might influence an individual's health.

- SOCIOL 397K: ST-Youth and Social Inequality: Rebellion Risk Resistance
- SOCIOL 356: Social Forces, Health & Life Course
- SOCIOL 357: The Wire and Urban Inequality
- POLISCI 380: Social Welfare Policy
- SPP 397P: Policymaking for Social Change

### **Global Epidemiology**

- PUBH 497R-F: Research Ethics
- PUBH 290KH (counts as 300 level): Environmental Epigenetics
- PUBHLTH 397A: Global Health
- PUBHLTH 307 (Abroad): Surveillance of Infectious Diseases
- PUBHLTH 389: Health Inequities

### **Food Safety**

- Food Science 391A: Food Science (1)
- SOCIOL 331: Food and Labor (4)
- SOCIOL 392E: Food and Society (3)
- Environmental Science 315: Principles of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (3)
- Environmental Science 342: Pesticides, the Environment and Public Policy (3)

### **Health Education**

These courses focus on public health, education, and political science to understand the public health approach to educational practices in the current policy frameworks.

- PUBHLTH 301: Principles of Community Health Education (3)
- PUBHLTH 302 (online): Community Development & Health Education (3)
- EDUC 305: Educational Psychology (3)
- EDUC 377: Introduction to Multicultural Education (4)
- EDUC 491A: Introduction to Inclusion (3)
- POLISCI 381: Health, Education, & Arts Policy (3)

### **Global Health and Developing Community Collaboration**

- PUBHLTH 397A: ST – Introduction to Global Health from an Interdisciplinary Perspective (3)
- PUBHLTH 390K: Maternal and Child Health in the Developing World (3)
- EDUC 494RI: Educational Issues in Real World Contexts (3)
- SOCIOLOG 334: Sociology of International Crises and Disasters (4)
- SOCIOLOG 356: Social Forces, Health & Life Course (4)
- PSYCH 305: Educational Psych (3)

### **Social Justice Issues and Public Health**

- SOCIOLOG 392J: Race and Policing (4)
- PSYCH 492P: Civil Resistance & Social Change (4)
- ANTHRO 397GR: Gender, Race and the Body (3)
- WGSS 301: Theorizing Race, Gender and Power (3)
- WGSS 395G: Gender, Sexuality, Race & the Law: Critical Interventions (3)

### **Health Administration**

- PUBHLTH 380 Intro to Health Service Management (3)
- PUBHLTH 450: Comparative Health Care System (3)
- PUBHLTH 490P: Health Services Strategic Planning and Analysis (3)
- POLISCI 320: Public Administration (4)
- POLISCI 385: Comp Public Policy (3)
- ECON 397 WP-St-Wellbeing, Inequality, and Poverty (3)

### **Women's Rights in Health:**

- WGSS 395G: Gender, Sexuality, Race and the Law: Critical Interventions (3)
- PUBHLTH 497E: Global Perspectives in Women's Health (3)
- History 397RL: Rape Law: Gender, Race, (In)Justice (4)
- HPP 582: Reproductive Justice (3)
- HPP 590M: Mass Incarceration and Public Health (3)
- SOCIOLOG 395K: Domestic Violence (3)

### **Health Care Informatics**

These courses will provide students the knowledge needed for data analysis in the health care field using different programming languages and skills.

- Computer Science 328 - Mobile Health Sensing and Analytics (3)
- BIO 383/383H - Gene and Genome Analysis (4)
- PUBHLTH 490ST - Telling Stories with Data: Statistics, Modeling, and Visualization (3)
- PUBHLTH 410 – Introduction to Health Economics (3)
- Informatics 397F - Special Topics - Introduction to Data Science (3)
- CHEM 312- Analytical Chem (4)

### **Health Services Management**

- PUBHLTH 380 - Introduction to Health Services Management (3)
- MANAGMNT 301 - Principles of Management (3)
- SPP 320 - 01 Public Administration (4)
- ECON 330 – 01 Labor in the American Economy (3)
- ECON 341 – 01 Labor Economics (3)

### **Health Promotion and Policy**

- HPP 580: Comparative Healthcare Systems (3)
- HPP 583: Global Health in the Developing World (3)
- PUBHLTH 380: Intro to Health Services Management (3)
- PUBHLTH 379A: Global Health (3)
- PUBHLTH 390P: Case Studies in US Health Policy (3)
- PUBHLTH 499N: Public Policy and Citizen Action (4)
- SPP 397M: Policies and Strategies for Social Change (3)

### **Maternal and Child Health**

- PUBHLTH 390K: Maternal and Child Health in the Developing World (3)
- PUBHLTH 328: Fundamentals of Women's Health (3)
- PUBHLTH 490E: Reproductive Epidemiology (3)
- PUBHLTH 490EW: Epidemiology of Women's Health (3)
- PUBHLTH 490J: Reproductive Justice (3)
- PSYCH 308: Psychology of Women (3)
- PSYCH 350: Developmental Psychology (3)
- PSYCH 350S: Child Behavior and Development (3)
- PSYCH 391AD: Psychology of Adoption (3)
- PSYCH 391G: Child, Family & Community (3)

### **Environmental Sustainability and Resource Conservation**

- NRC 397F - Special Topics - Regenerative Design for Eco-Social Sustainability (3)
- SOCIOL 316 – Environment and Society (4)
- SOCIOL 392V – S-Environmental Sociology (3)
- ANTHRO 392RL – ST: Cultural Resource Laws and Practice (3)
- ENVIRSCI 397R - Special Topics- Renewable Energy and Sustainability (3)
- LEGAL 432 - Environmental Justice (3)