

PUBLIC HEALTH STUDIES, PH.D.

Saint Louis University's Ph.D. in Public Health Studies provides expertise in research design, methods and dissemination in an interdisciplinary setting. Students gain a solid understanding of public health science, including the distribution and determinants of health and disease across populations.

Our Ph.D. program prepares students to become researchers both independently and within a team. We use an apprenticeship model that links a student with a mentor as they enter the program in order to leverage their training opportunities immediately.

Doctoral students work with their mentors (<https://www.slu.edu/public-health-social-justice/faculty/>) to forge their research pathways, while also working collaboratively with other students and faculty.

Our students learn how to work collaboratively with clinic, community, government, and industry partners by developing, implementing and disseminating research in domestic and international settings. Students become productive researchers presenting at local, national and international conferences; publishing their research findings in esteemed journals; and competing for research grants.

Curriculum Overview

SLU's public health Ph.D. program requires 72 credits. Students take 18 credits of core doctoral courses, 42 credits of coursework to train in their research concentration area, and 12 credits of dissertation research. Students may apply up to 24 credits of their master's degree coursework toward advanced standing. The faculty mentor and doctoral director review prior coursework to ensure competencies at both doctoral and concentration core areas.

Behavioral Science and Health Education

The Behavioral Science and Health Education concentration focuses on behavioral science and how it interacts at individual, organizational, community or societal levels. The type of research occurs in community and clinic-based environments as well as domestically and internationally. Current areas of research for faculty include:

- Health disparities
- Health promotion, communication and disease prevention interventions for chronic diseases
- Injury prevention
- Maternal and child health
- Nutrition and physical activity
- Sexual and reproductive health
- Global health

Biostatistics

The biostatistics concentration focuses on research for developing and testing statistical methods and responds to public health challenges using innovative computational and statistical programming. Current areas of research for faculty include:

- Methodology and application of causal inference
- Geospatial analyses to study associations between the built environment and chronic diseases

- Optimal experimental design
- Statistical modeling of genetic and environmental effects on co-morbidity

Epidemiology

The epidemiology concentration focuses on research about the distribution and determinants of health and disease in human populations. Current areas of research for faculty include:

- Cancer and chronic diseases
- Exposure assessment
- Global health
- Implementation research in public health settings
- Maternal child health

Health Management and Policy

The health management and policy concentration focuses on research about policy, health economics, health care access, delivery and quality of health services and their impact population and public health. Current areas of research for faculty include:

- Health insurance policy and its impact on health outcomes
- Quality of and access to care
- Policy change implications

Fieldwork and Research Opportunities

Examples of current student fieldwork and research interests include:

- Opioid treatment centers
- Transgender health policy
- Comparative effectiveness of diabetes treatments
- Geospatial technology to respond to vast health challenges
- Reproductive health
- Cancer prevention
- Adolescent mental health
- Minority mental health

Careers

In a recent alumni survey, 96% of graduates in public health studies stated they found a job in their field before graduation, or within six months of graduation. Graduates go on to work as academics in universities and researchers at medical centers, government, non-governmental health agencies or community-based organizations.

Admission Requirements

This program is designed for individuals who already hold a master's degree in public health or a related field. The following criteria guide admission decisions.

- Evidence of exceptional intellectual ability, analytical and writing skills necessary to complete the doctoral program requirements.
- Evidence of interest in an area of research and commitment to pursue it through the completion of a dissertation research project.
- Presence of a willing and suitable faculty mentor in one of the concentration research areas.
- A minimum 3.50 GPA in graduate work

Application Requirements

- Application form and fee
- Transcript(s)
- Three letters of recommendation
- Résumé or CV
- Professional goal statement

Requirements for International Students

All admission policies and requirements for domestic students apply to international students along with the following:

- Demonstrate English Language Proficiency
- Proof of financial support must include:
 - A letter of financial support from the person(s) or sponsoring agency funding the time at Saint Louis University
 - A letter from the sponsor's bank verifying that the funds are available and will be so for the duration of study at the University
- Academic records, in English translation, of students who have undertaken postsecondary studies outside the United States must include the courses taken and/or lectures attended, practical laboratory work, the maximum and minimum grades attainable, the grades earned or the results of all end-of-term examinations, and any honors or degrees received. WES and ECE transcripts are accepted.

Application and Assistantship Deadlines

All students are required to submit an application, even students currently enrolled in other programs at Saint Louis University. The Ph.D. program only accepts applications for the fall semester.

The application deadline is January 15. Assistantships will be considered for top candidates.

Review Process

All admission decisions will be finalized by the end of March.

Assistantships

The doctoral program in public health has a limited number of graduate research assistantships, which are designed to allow students to work closely with a mentor on a research project. Assistantships are typically awarded for two years and provide a stipend, student health insurance and tuition waiver (up to 21 credits annually). Students will be informed about the terms and length of awards at the time of acceptance to the program. Additional funding is either provided through undergraduate teaching assistantships or faculty research funded projects.

Scholarships and Financial Aid

The College for Public Health and Social Justice offers several ways to help finance graduate education. Opportunities include a limited number of merit-based scholarships and graduate research assistantships.

Awards are made to applicants with the highest combinations of GPAs and test scores who complete their applications by the priority deadlines.

For more information, visit the student financial services office online at <http://finaid.slu.edu> (<http://finaid.slu.edu/>).

Accreditation

The College for Public Health and Social Justice is fully accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH).

View the Most Recent CEPH Self-Study (July 2016) (http://www.slu.edu/public-health-social-justice/pdfs/cphsj_self_study_august_2015_report.pdf)

Learning Outcomes

Saint Louis University's Ph.D. program in Public Health Studies continues to improve its curriculum to match the skills and competencies graduates should have. The overall Ph.D. competencies are listed below and additional competencies are described within the concentration areas.

Domain 1: Critical Thinking

Critically evaluate, integrate and challenge existing scientific knowledge. Assess gaps in research to develop research questions.

Domain 2: Analytical Skills

Plan, design and conduct research studies. Interpret the results using inferential statistical methods and methods of qualitative data analysis.

Domain 3: Communication

Communicate clearly and effectively about scientific information for diverse audiences through scientific publications, grant applications, teaching/ training, etc. Develop partnerships in community, clinic, academic and/or governmental settings to conduct research projects collaboratively.

Domain 4: Management and Leadership

Apply leadership and management principles to assemble and cultivate effective teams and successful projects or studies, including the management of team members, budgets and deliverables.

Domain 5: Ethics and Professionalism

Adopt and apply ethical principles for public health research and decisions on social justice and equity in the global environment. Conduct research that requires Institutional Review Board approval.

Domain 6: Community/Cultural Orientation

Evaluate the impact of cultural, structural, legal, political, and public health and social justice on health outcomes.

Domain 7: Translation and Dissemination

Use innovative methods to communicate scientific findings and implications to diverse audiences, ensuring appropriate strategies

Requirements

Code	Title	Credits
Required Core Courses		
BST 5100	Introduction to General Linear Modeling	3
PHS 6010	Design and Analysis in Public Health	3
PHS 6050	Science, Theory and Public Health	3
PHS 6040	Applied Research Skills I: Primary Data Collection	3
PHS 6060	Applied Research Skills II: Grant Writing	3
PHS 6900	Professional Development	3
Concentration Courses		12-33
Behavioral Science and Health Education Concentration (p. 3)		

Biostatistics Concentration (p. 3)	
Epidemiology Concentration (p. 3)	
Health Management and Policy Concentration (p. 3)	
Electives *	9-30
All electives must be taken at a graduate level and be pre-approved by the mentor.	
Dissertation Credits	
PHS 6990 Dissertation Research †	12
A prerequisite for entry into the program is a successfully completed graduate level introductory statistics course that has been taken in the past 5 years.	
Students without a prior graduate level public health introduction course or an MPH or MSPH degree may also be required to take PUBH 5010 Mission and Practice of Global Health.	
Total Credits	72

†

No more than 24 hours of advanced standing from previous master's work (except from SLU) can be substituted for requirements. Students will work with their mentor, program coordinator and doctoral director to review and petition for advanced standing. Students may not petition for advanced standing until second year.

‡

May be taken after passing the written comprehensive exam.

*

Electives for students in behavioral science and health education concentration should contain at least three quantitative methods courses taken in consultation with mentor.

Behavioral Science and Health Education Concentration

Code	Title	Credits
BSH 5400	Assessment, Intervention Development, and Evaluation I	3
BSH 5410	Assessment, Intervention Development, and Evaluation II	3
BSH 5450	Introduction to Qualitative Methods	3
PUBH 5030	Methodological Approaches to Understanding Population Health	3
Total Credits		12

Biostatistics Concentration

Code	Title	Credits
BST 5020	Theory of Biostatistics	3
BST 5025	Theory of Biostatistics II	3
BST 5030	Statistical Programming and Study Planning: SAS	3
BST 5200	Survival Data Analysis	3
BST 5210	Categorical Data Analysis	3
BST 5220	Multilevel and Longitudinal Data Analysis	3
BST 5400	Applied Data Management	3
PUBH 5030	Methodological Approaches to Understanding Population Health	3
Total Credits		24

Epidemiology Concentration

Code	Title	Credits
BSH 5400	Assessment, Intervention Development, and Evaluation I	3
BSH 5410	Assessment, Intervention Development, and Evaluation II	3
BST 5030	Statistical Programming and Study Planning: SAS	3
BST 5200	Survival Data Analysis	3
BST 5210	Categorical Data Analysis	3
BST 5220	Multilevel and Longitudinal Data Analysis	3
EPI 5020	Epidemiology Methods II	3
PUBH 5030	Methodological Approaches to Understanding Population Health	3
Select two courses from the following:		6
BST 5420	Sampling Theory and Survey Design in Public Health	
EPI 5110	Epidemiology of Infectious Disease	
EPI 5220	Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology	
EPI 5250	Social Epidemiology	
EPI 5120	Chronic Disease Epidemiology	
EPI 5270	Cancer Epidemiology	
EPI 5500	Environmental and Occupational Epidemiology	
Select one course from the following:		3
EPI 5120	Chronic Disease Epidemiology	
EPI 5220	Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology	
EPI 5250	Social Epidemiology	
EPI 5270	Cancer Epidemiology	
EPI 5500	Environmental and Occupational Epidemiology	
Total Credits		33

Health Management and Policy Concentration

Code	Title	Credits
BST 5030	Statistical Programming and Study Planning: SAS	3
EPI 5020	Epidemiology Methods II	3
HMP 5000	Health Care Organization	3
HMP 5200	Health Economics	3
HMP 5500	Health Policy	3
ORES 5160	Data Management	3
ORES 5430	Health Outcomes Measurement	3
ORES 5440	Comparative Effectiveness Research	3
PUBH 5030	Methodological Approaches to Understanding Population Health	3
Total Credits		27

Continuation Standards

Students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 in all graduate/professional courses.

Roadmap

Behavioral Science and Health Education Concentration

Course	Title	Credits
Year One		
Fall		
Participation in research symposia, conferences and journal clubs. Responsible Conduct of Research, CITI and IRB trainings		
PHS 6050	Science, Theory and Public Health	3
BST 5100	Introduction to General Linear Modeling	3
PUBH 5030	Methodological Approaches to Understanding Population Health	3
Credits		9
Spring		
Participation in SLU Graduate Research Symposium, Participation in research symposia, conferences and journal clubs		
PHS 6040	Applied Research Skills I: Primary Data Collection	3
PHS 6010	Design and Analysis in Public Health	3
BSH 5450	Introduction to Qualitative Methods	3
! Quantitative Methods Course *		3
Credits		12
Year Two		
Fall		
Participation in Research Symposia (APHA) and Journal Clubs; Practice for Written Exam		
PHS 6060	Applied Research Skills II: Grant Writing	3
PHS 6900	Professional Development	3
! Quantitative Methods Course *		3
! Quantitative Methods or Electives Course		3
Credits		12
Spring		
Participation in SLU Graduate Research Symposium, Other Professional Conferences; Take Written Comprehensive exam. If passed exam, may begin Dissertation Research and plan for Oral Exam		
! Concentration Courses or Electives		15
Credits		15
Year Three		
Fall		
Participation in Research Symposia, Professional Conferences. Take Written Comprehensive exam. If passed exam, may begin Dissertation Research and plan for Oral Exam		
Concentration/Methods Courses or Electives		12
PHS 6990	Dissertation Research	3
Credits		15
Spring		
Participation in Research Symposia, Professional Conferences. Plan or take Oral Exam		
PHS 6990	Dissertation Research	3
Credits		3

Year Four

Fall

Participation in Research Symposia, Professional Conferences. Oral Exam		
PHS 6990	Dissertation Research	3
Credits		3

Spring

Participation in Professional Conferences; Dissertation Research (if not yet complete); Plan for Dissertation Defense		
PHS 6990	Dissertation Research	3
Credits		3
Total Credits		72

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Other quantitative courses should be taken in consultation with the mentor:

- Biostatistics, outcomes research and/or health data courses (multiple options each semester)
- Epidemiology courses (multiple options each semester)

Biostatistics Concentration

Course	Title	Credits
Year One		
Fall		
Participation in SLU Graduate Research symposium, Journal Clubs, Responsible Conduct of Research, CITI and IRB trainings		
BST 5020	Theory of Biostatistics	3
BST 5100	Introduction to General Linear Modeling	3
PHS 6050	Science, Theory and Public Health	3
PUBH 5030	Methodological Approaches to Understanding Population Health	3
Credits		12
Spring		
Participation in SLU Graduate Research Symposium, Journal Clubs, CITI and IRB Trainings		
BST 5025	Theory of Biostatistics II	3
BST 5030	Statistical Programming and Study Planning: SAS	3
PHS 6010	Design and Analysis in Public Health	3
PHS 6040	Applied Research Skills I: Primary Data Collection	3
Credits		12
Year Two		
Fall		
Participation in Research Symposia, APHA and Professional Conferences, Journal Clubs; Practice for Written Exam		
BST 5200	Survival Data Analysis	3
BST 5210	Categorical Data Analysis	3
BST 5400	Applied Data Management	3
PHS 6060	Applied Research Skills II: Grant Writing	3
PHS 6900	Professional Development	3
Credits		15

Spring

Participation in SLU Graduate Research Symposium, Other Professional Conferences, Journal Clubs; Practice for Written Exam

BST 5220 Multilevel and Longitudinal Data Analysis 3

! Concentration/Methods Courses or Electives 6

Credits 9

Year Three**Fall**

Participation in Symposia and Other Professional Conferences; Take Written Comprehensive exam. If passed exam, may begin Dissertation Research and plan for Oral Exam

! Concentration/Methods Courses or Electives 12

PHS 6990 Dissertation Research 3

Credits 15

Spring

Participation in Symposia and Other Professional Conferences; Plan Oral Exam

PHS 6990 Dissertation Research 3

Credits 3

Year Four**Fall**

Participation in Professional Conferences; Dissertation Research. Take Oral Exam

PHS 6990 Dissertation Research 3

Credits 3

Spring

Participation in Professional Conferences; Dissertation Research (if not yet complete); Plan for Dissertation Defense

PHS 6990 Dissertation Research 3

Credits 3

Total Credits 72

Epidemiology Concentration

Course	Title	Credits
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Year One**Fall**

Participation in Research Symposia and Journal Clubs, Responsible Conduct of Research, CITI and IRB trainings

BST 5100 Introduction to General Linear Modeling 3

PHS 6050 Science, Theory and Public Health 3

PUBH 5030 Methodological Approaches to Understanding Population Health 3

Credits 9

Spring

Participation in SLU Graduate Research Symposium, and Journal Clubs, Responsible Conduct of Research, CITI and IRB trainings

BST 5030 Statistical Programming and Study Planning: SAS 3

EPI 5020 Epidemiology Methods II (! (or EPI 5960 Capstone)) 3

PHS 6010 Design and Analysis in Public Health 3

PHS 6040	Applied Research Skills I: Primary Data Collection	3
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Credits 12

Year Two**Fall**

Participation in Research Symposia, APHA and Professional Conferences, Journal Clubs; Practice for Written Exam

BST 5200 Survival Data Analysis 3

BST 5210 Categorical Data Analysis 3

PHS 6060 Applied Research Skills II: Grant Writing 3

PHS 6900 Professional Development 3

Credits 12

Spring

Participation in SLU Graduate Research Symposium, Other Professional Conferences, Journal Clubs; Practice for Written Exam

BST 5220 Multilevel and Longitudinal Data Analysis 3

EPI 5960 Capstone in Epidemiology 3

Concentration/Methods Courses or Electives * 9

Credits 15

Year Three**Fall**

Participation in Symposia and Other Professional Conferences; Take Written Comprehensive exam. If passed exam, may begin Dissertation Research and plan for Oral Exam

Concentration Courses or Electives or Advanced Standing Credits * 12

PHS 6990 Dissertation Research 3

Credits 15

Spring

Participation in Symposia and Other Professional Conferences; Take Written Comprehensive exam. If passed exam, may begin Dissertation Research and Plan for Oral Exam

PHS 6990 Dissertation Research 3

Credits 3

Year Four**Fall**

Participation in Professional Conferences; Dissertation Research. Take Oral Exam

PHS 6990 Dissertation Research 3

Credits 3

Spring

Year Four (Spring): Participation in Professional Conferences; Dissertation Research (if not yet complete); Plan for Dissertation Defense

PHS 6990 Dissertation Research 3

Credits 3

Total Credits 72

Health Management & Policy Concentration

Course	Title	Credits
Year One		
Fall		
Participation in Research Symposia and Journal Clubs, Responsible Conduct of Research, CITI and IRB trainings		
BST 5100	Introduction to General Linear Modeling	3
HMP 5000	Health Care Organization	3
ORES 5160	Data Management	3
PHS 6050	Science, Theory and Public Health	3
Credits		12

Spring

Participation in SLU Graduate Research Symposium, and Journal Clubs, Responsible Conduct of Research, CITI and IRB trainings

BST 5030	Statistical Programming and Study Planning: SAS	3
HMP 5200	Health Economics	3
PHS 6010	Design and Analysis in Public Health	3
PHS 6040	Applied Research Skills I: Primary Data Collection	3
PUBH 5030	Methodological Approaches to Understanding Population Health	3
Credits		15

Year Two

Fall

Participation in Research Symposia, APHA and Professional Conferences, Journal Clubs; Practice for Written Exam		
HMP 5500	Health Policy	3
PHS 6060	Applied Research Skills II: Grant Writing	3
PHS 6900	Professional Development	3
ORES 5430	Health Outcomes Measurement	3
Credits		12

Spring

Participation in SLU Graduate Research Symposium, Other Professional Conferences, Journal Clubs; Practice for Written Exam		
EPI 5020	Epidemiology Methods II	3
BST 6100	Causal Inference	3
Concentration Courses or Electives		3
Credits		9

Year Three

Fall

Participation in Symposia and Other Professional Conferences; Plan Oral Exam		
Concentration Courses or Electives		12
PHS 6990	Dissertation Research	3
Credits		15

Spring

Participation in Symposia and Other Professional Conferences; Plan Oral Exam		
PHS 6990	Dissertation Research	3
Credits		3

Year Four

Fall

Participation in Professional Conferences; Dissertation Research. Take Oral Exam		
PHS 6990	Dissertation Research	3
Credits		3

Spring

Participation in Professional Conferences; Dissertation Research (if not yet complete); Plan for Dissertation Defense		
PHS 6990	Dissertation Research	3
Credits		3
Total Credits		72

Contact Us

Apply for Admission (<https://sophas.liasoncas.com>)

For additional admission questions please contact:
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