

School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine

Mailing Address

Tulane University
New Orleans, Louisiana 70118
www.sph.tulane.edu/bsph

Pierre Buekens, M.D., Ph.D., Dean

Jeffery T. Johnson, Ph.D., Associate Dean

Downtown Office

Phone: (504) 988-8876
Fax: (504) 988-0907

Uptown Office

Phone: (504) 865-5140
Fax: (504) 862-8455

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine is to advance public health knowledge, promote health and well being, and prevent disease, disability and premature mortality. This is accomplished through academic excellence in education of public health professionals, rigorous scientific research of public health problems, creative partnerships to advance the practice of public health, and innovative service to the local, national and international public health community.

INTRODUCTION

The Bachelor of Science in Public Health (BSPH) integrates the disciplines of public health with studies in the liberal arts and sciences. The program is flexible to provide the student with a breadth of engagement in the liberal arts disciplines and depth in the selected public health discipline. Three majors are:

Environmental Health Sciences provides graduates with a solid foundation in the sciences, which may lead to positions with public health agencies, industry or the option of medical school.

Global and Community Health provides graduates with the skills to analyze the factors underlying domestic and international public health challenges and to implement disease-prevention strategies.

Health Informatics provides graduates with quantitative skills for careers in health analysis, data management and evaluation.

Upon completion of the undergraduate degree, the school offers exceptional students the opportunity to apply for a graduate degree program, the Master of Public Health. Students complete both degrees in a “4+1” format, e.g., four years for the undergraduate degree and an additional year for the master’s.

The BSPH program is set apart from graduate studies in public health because it is specifically designed to provide a strong foundation in both the public health sciences and the liberal arts. Students not only will have opportunities to delve into timely public health issues like global health care disparities, HIV/AIDS, and bioterrorism preparedness, they also will have the benefit of studying with senior public health scholars in understanding the roots of public health through its literature and history.

Students will develop both scientific and humanistic skills, combining research experience with the ability to make difficult social choices and devise solutions to individual and population-wide health problems. Because undergraduate education has increasingly become more interdisciplinary, public health education is also a great foundation for graduate study in fields such as business, human services, international affairs, law and further public health specialties. In addition, with a curriculum that draws from the bench sciences, humanities, and social sciences, public health has come to be viewed as an appropriate degree for students considering medical school.

HISTORY

The study of public health in Louisiana began in the early 1800s when New Orleans suffered from endemic malaria and almost yearly epidemics of cholera and yellow fever. Attempts to control tropical diseases led to the establishment of the Medical College of Louisiana in 1834. The founders, a group of young physicians, issued a prospectus, which emphasized the lack of knowledge of these diseases and the necessity for studying them in the environment in which they occurred. In 1881, formal instruction in hygiene was offered for the first time. After the Civil War when Paul Tulane bequeathed funds to establish a new university the

name of the medical college was changed to Tulane University of Louisiana, College of Medicine,

A school of hygiene and tropical medicine was first established in 1912 with a \$25,000 gift from Samuel Zemurray's United Fruit Company. In 1947, the departments of tropical medicine and preventive medicine merged to establish a department of tropical medicine and public health in the medical school. Instruction at the graduate level expanded to a full academic year with programs leading to the degrees of master of public health and master of public health and tropical medicine. A doctoral program was approved in 1950, and the first doctoral degrees in public health were awarded in 1953.

With the rapid expansion in public health and tropical medicine, and the participation of other departments of the medical school in educational activities, an administrative division of graduate public health was created in 1958. In 1961, this administrative division was redesignated as the Division of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Programs leading to the degrees of master of science and doctor of science in hygiene were instituted, providing a wide range of preparation for public health careers.

In 1967, the Division of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine became the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. The school is now organized into seven departments: biostatistics, community health sciences, environmental health sciences, epidemiology, health systems management, international health and development, and tropical medicine.

In December 2003, the University Senate approved the establishment of the Bachelor of Science in Public Health (BSPH) degree program in the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine with the inaugural class beginning in fall 2005.