MINORITIES AND PUBLIC HEALTH CAREERS

HEALTH PROFESSIONS CAREER OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM 1994

MINORITIES & PUBLIC HEALTH CAREERS

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A special thanks to all those who have worked on this project

MINORITIES & PUBLIC HEALTH CAREERS

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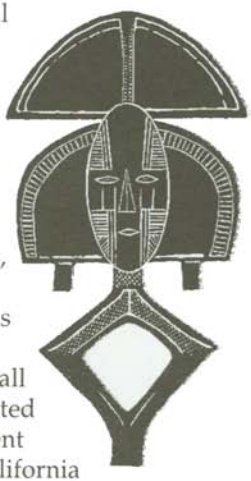
YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Minorities trained in public health careers are in short supply

Many California minority communities are underserved in health care services. Such communities need culturally and linguistically competent providers of these services. Today, the three largest underserved minority groups — African-Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans — are also underrepresented in the health professions. These three groups provide a largely untapped pool of public health care providers who already possess the needed cultural and language skills.

Although African-Americans comprise 12.1 percent of the U.S. population, less than 7 percent of those who graduated from Schools of Public Health in 1991 were African-American; Hispanics (9 percent of the U.S. population) comprised 3.4 percent of those who graduated; and Native Americans (0.8 percent of the population) comprised 1.2 percent.* Similar statistics are found throughout the health professions. These groups are underrepresented in all professional categories, including policy-making and decision-making.

Public health goals defined: to promote and maintain community and individual health; prevent disease and illness; by means of disease control, health education, preventive medicine, and the social and sanitary sciences.



Over the years, recruitment and admissions efforts have increased overall underrepresented minority student presence in California public health schools, yet still does not reflect California's minority population, which is rapidly increasing in percentage of the total population.

SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

• ADMINISTRATION OF PREVENTIVE MEDICINE AND MEDICAL CLINICS • ADVANCED NUTRITION: VITAMINS, PROTEINS, LIPIDS, AND MINERALS • AGING AND LONG-

Are you someone who would rather prevent disease and illness than treat them after they occur? If you are interested in the preventive aspects of health care, a public health career may be ideal for you. Those who choose public health reap a challenging, satisfying, and rewarding career. Two years of postbaccalaureate public health training[1] will prepare you for a yearly income beginning at $22,000 to $30,000 and ranging from $40,000 to $100,000 and more.

A career in public health can be exciting, especially for an underrepresented minority health professional serving in one of California's health care shortage areas. Once trained in public health, you will be in a position to accomplish these essential goals:

1. Provide better health care services or make possible those services.

2. Assess current minority community health care needs and prepare for meeting future needs.

3. Through knowledge of health issues, become a valuable resource for improving or expanding services in underserved communities.

4. Serve in advocacy positions; work with agencies and legislative bodies to promote policies and health legislation that serve the needs of minority communities.

YOU ARE THE SOLUTION

5. Attain positions that ensure more persons sensitive to minority needs are hired to provide and design health care services.

6. Serve as a role model for students aspiring to and working toward similar positions.

The need already exists for minority public health professionals who possess the cultural sensitivity and linguistic skills necessary to effectively serve minority communities.

SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

TERM CARE • APPLIED MULTIVARIATE BIOSTATISTICS • BIOSTATISTICAL CONSULTING • CLINICAL NUTRITION PROBLEMS • COMMUNICATIONS IN HEALTH

YOU HAVE MANY CAREER CHOICES

Possible career activities

Accelerate the hiring and training of minority and bilingual and bicultural persons where needed.

Design and implement hospital services and departments that are more sensitive to and better meet the needs of minority patients.

Accept leadership roles in community organizations and projects involving health and preventive health issues.

Design therapeutic menus for minority patients, such as weight-reduction and diabetic diets. Explain diets from a minority perspective.

Bring increased attention to and produce more resources to deal with environmental factors largely affecting the health of minority communities.

Apply approaches and techniques to minority communities in the U.S.

Design and evaluate printed and electronic media to be more effective in assisting minority populations to improve health practices in their particular communities.

Design and implement studies that accurately reflect conditions and offer solutions for minority communities.

Design and implement more effective outreach programs.

Design, administer, and implement family health programs more acceptable to minority communities.

Design systems and train persons to provide health care services more efficiently and effectively.

SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

PROMOTION AND EDUCATION • COMMUNITY CANCER EDUCATION • COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATION • COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH • COMMUNITY

Design, administer, or evaluate preventive health care or mental health programs serving minority communities.

Evaluate and interpret the needs of minority communities and work with agencies and legislative bodies for their solution.

Design, administer, or evaluate public or private dental programs serving minority communities.

Instruct and train others in preventive health care and community mental health issues for minority populations.

Educate other health care members about environmental hazards and control and sensitize them to the need and methods to improve conditions for minorities.

Effectively explain a facility's role to minority communities.

Work with industry to implement safety devices and methods.

Develop, plan, implement, and evaluate nutrition programs at different levels (schools, hospitals, *etc*). Design them for minority needs and preferences.

Design, implement, and evaluate facilities and programs serving minorities, including community clinics, health maintenance organizations, hospital departments, Medicaid and Medicare, Crippled Children's Services, migrant health programs, and others.

Evaluate and improve environmental programs as they relate to minority workers and health care recipients.

Work with maternal and child health agencies to make these programs more beneficial to minority communities.

Work with others in designing and implementing effective dental health education programs for minority communities.

In a manner acceptable to minority families, design, implement, and evaluate family planning programs.

SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

ORGANIZATION IN THE HEALTH FIELD • COMPARATIVE PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEMS • COMPUTER MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH DATA • COMPUTER USE IN DIETARY

Investigate individual and community nutritional problems; design and implement effective solutions.

Provide the minority community greater access and input in hospital policy-making and planning activities.

Train members of the health care team and serve as a resource person for their activities.

Play a major role in preventive health components of minority health programs.

Establish liaison with Third World countries and help these countries solve health problems.

Provide expertise in obtaining adequate funding for proposed programs in a variety of health areas.

Research causes and prevention of disorders in minority communities.

Work with industrial and agricultural safety agencies, such as the state or county health departments or Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to investigate violations and enforce industrial and agricultural safety laws.

Provide expertise to help facilities and programs serve communities more efficiently and effectively.

Provide family health services to children and expectant mothers.

Use the mass media to effectively reach and educate on minority health practices and issues.

Public health is a generic term encompassing several distinct disciplines, such as medicine, nursing, and dentistry. It is a field little understood by many people, *even other health professionals.* On page 6, you will find some myths about public health:

Investigate and design solutions to environmental health hazards. Implement solutions.

Work with employee groups and unions to assure maximum industrial safety to members.

Work to increase the relevance of health course content for minority school children.

Provide preventive health care or mental health services.

SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

ASSESSMENT • CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN HEALTH SERVICES AND MANAGEMENT • CONTROL OF AIRBORNE CONTAMINANTS IN INDUSTRY • CURRENT PROBLEMS

Myth 1: *Public health work is no more than restaurant inspection, water control, and immunization.*

Reality: Public health offers a wide range of career opportunities. A career in public health encompasses distinct fields, with persons in each field doing a variety of activities. For instance, restaurant inspection and water control may be performed by persons trained in environmental sciences; immunization clinics may be conducted by persons trained in maternal and child health or family health.

Yet these are but *three* of many fields. Training and career opportunities range from nutritional sciences to health education to health services administration.

MYTHS AND REALITIES

With public health having at least 30 specializations, some knowledge common to each of these disciplines is necessary, and a few specialties may overlap, such as nutrition sciences and family health. Moreover, curriculums and career experiences often allow flexibility in filling other roles. You need not be boxed into one role.

Myth 2: *Only doctors and other health professionals seek public health careers.*

Reality: In the past, a high percentage of public health students came from other health professions. However, most public health students today have no previous health professional degree and about one-third go directly from college to public health school with minimal health experience.

Myth 3: *You need a science major or an extensive science background to study and work in public health.*

Reality: A person with almost any undergraduate training can choose a public health career. Some programs, such as epidemiology or nutritional sciences, may require an undergraduate science major or a number of science prerequisites. However, a *nonscience* background may in fact be *required* for other programs. In biostatistics and urban planning, for instance, some desired undergraduate majors are: communications, economics, education, media, and psychology. Those students with business administration or political science concentrations move into hospital administration and health services positions. Many other majors are acceptable in the fields mentioned.

Myth 4: *Public health involves hospital work, and close contact with doctors and nurses, as well as exposure to blood and surgery.*

Reality: Some persons trained in public health are found working in hospitals. Some work in schools. However, the majority work in clinical, county, state, or volunteer health agencies and a variety of other settings.

SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

IN HEALTH EDUCATION • DATA BASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS • DEMOGRAPHIC MATERIALS AND METHODS • DEMOGRAPHY AND WORLD POPULATION

Shirley C. James is currently enrolled in the master's program in health education at the University of California, Berkeley School of Public Health.

Shirley C. James

Prior to enrolling in the School of Public Health, James worked for the Navajo Division of Health (NDH) in Window Rock, Arizona, the capital of the Navajo Nation. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Broadcast Journalism from Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, Arizona.

As a public information officer for the NDH's Community Health Representative/Outreach Program, James learned of the need to communicate the importance of health education to the Navajo people. The lack of health information provided in the Navajo language inspired James to pursue her MPH with an emphasis in health education. She plans to incorporate her MPH with her undergraduate degree in broadcast journalism to develop media health education materials that culturally and linguistically meet the needs of American Indians.

"The more education I achieve, the more confident I am addressing the health issues affecting my community. This is the reason I'm back in school — to focus on learning how to effectively implement minority health education programs using the media," says James.

SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

PROBLEMS • DENTAL CARE ADMINISTRATION • ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH • ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE PRACTICES • ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY DECISION

Public health has at least 30 distinct fields of study, ranging from biometrics to biostatistics, epidemiology to industrial hygiene, and health career education to health services. Here is a partial list of specializations you may choose from:

- *behavioral sciences*
- *biometrics*
- *biostatistics*
- *community mental health*
- *comprehensive health planning*
- *dental public health*
- *environmental health*
- *epidemiology*
- *family health*
- *health administration*
- *health education*
- *health planning*
- *health promotion*
- *health services administration*
- *health services management*
- *hospital administration*
- *industrial health*
- *international public health*
- *laboratory sciences*
- *maternal and child health*
- *medical care administration*
- *nutrition*
- *nutritional sciences*
- *occupational safety and health*
- *policy and planning*
- *population planning*
- *population sciences*
- *preventive medicine*
- *public health education*
- *public health laboratory practice*

SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

MAKING • ENVIRONMENTAL TOXICOLOGY • EPIDEMIOLOGY OF CANCER • EPIDEMIOLOGY OF CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE • EPIDEMIOLOGY OF NEUROLOGIC

EDUCATION OPTIONS

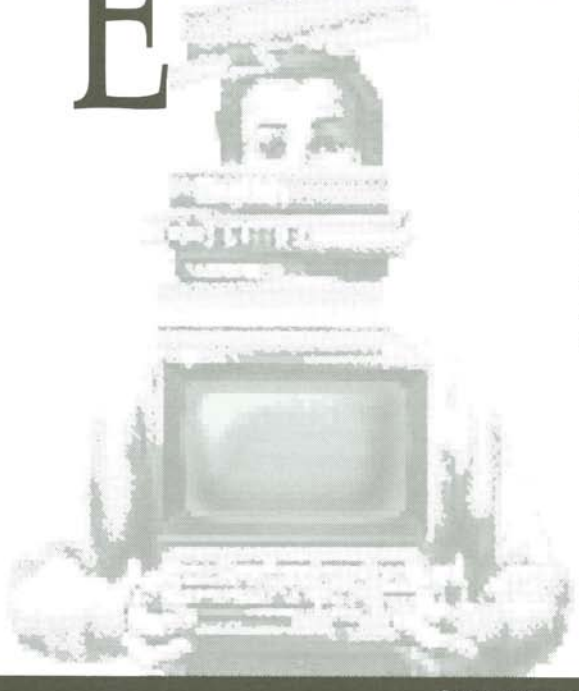
As an educational option, public health can be pursued through a Master of Public Health (MPH) or Master of Science (MS) to a Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) or Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree. Certain specialties, such as biostatistics, epidemiology, and toxicology, require a math and science background. Some divisions or departments accept students largely or entirely with specified experience (*eg*, medicine, microbiology, nutrition). Still other divisions or departments accept students from a variety of backgrounds.

Someone with a bachelor's degree in *almost any undergraduate major* meets the admissions prerequisite for the specialties of public health education, health planning, health services administration, and behavioral sciences, and others. Many opportunities exist for pursuing individual interests.

Applicants to each program are usually evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Evaluating a student's performance on a comprehensive entrance examination or thesis is usually flexible. Also, certain divisions at some schools allow students to take recommended or prerequisite courses *after* enrolling in the public health school. A student can usually have access to a university's total resources and take courses, if appropriate, in other departments and schools.

Different schools may give different names to essentially the same training. Several titles may be given to a specialty. The descriptions that follow are intended to be adjunct to those in public health school catalogues.

Possible activities that would aid minority communities are included, along with typical prerequisites and course titles. Some schools may not offer all programs, and some programs may be included in other departments.



SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

DISEASE • FAMILY AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE • FINANCIAL AND MANAGERIAL ACCOUNTING FOR HEALTH SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS • FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF

AN ALTERNATIVE TO ATTENDING A SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH IS TO ENROLL IN A COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY THAT OFFERS AN MPH *PROGRAM.* THE DIFFERENCE IS IN THE EMPHASIS AND BREADTH OF THE CURRICULUM. PUBLIC HEALTH SCHOOLS OFFER MANY CONCENTRATIONS (EG, EPIDEMIOLOGY, MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH, LABORATORY SCIENCES, AND MANY MORE) WHEREAS AN MPH PROGRAM MAY OFFER ONLY ONE OR TWO SPECIALTIES. ALTHOUGH MPH PROGRAMS LIMIT THE NUMBER OF SPECIALTIES OFFERED, STUDENTS DO RECEIVE INSTRUCTION ON THE BROAD SPECTRUM OF PUBLIC HEALTH, INCLUDING BIOSTATISTICS, EPIDEMIOLOGY, GERONTOLOGY, HEALTH EDUCATION, HEALTH PLANNING, PUBLIC HEALTH ADMINISTRATION, AND RESEARCH METHODS. ALSO, MANY SCHOOLS THAT OFFER MPH PROGRAMS ACCEPT PART-TIME STUDENTS, ALLOWING WORKING PROFESSIONALS THE OPPORTUNITY TO PURSUE THEIR DEGREE WHILE MAINTAINING THEIR EMPLOYMENT.

Behavioral sciences; community mental health

Use sociopsychological and sociocultural factors as they relate to behavior in health and illness for promoting more healthful living and preventing physical and mental health disorders. Courses in community mental health disorders (including mental retardation, drug abuse, mental disorders, and problems of aging) are part of the curriculum.

Preparation
Bachelor's or advanced degree in psychology, sociology, or related discipline.

Biostatistics; biometrics

Preparation
A background in math, including at least one year of calculus, is usually required. Frequently, undergraduate majors are in math, computer science, biology, sociology, or behavioral science.

Use statistics as applied to health and biological sciences. Statistical techniques and tools such as computer technology are studied for use in research and evaluation.

SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

HEALTH SERVICES ORGANIZATIONS • FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF PUBLICLY FUNDED HEALTH CARE INSTITUTIONS • GENETICS EPIDEMIOLOGY • HEALTH AND

Dental public health[2]

Administer public and private dental programs and dental health education. Train in producing data to aid in the planning and operation of programs. Learn prevention and control measures and how to effectively use auxiliary personnel.

Preparation
Generally restricted to dentists or dental hygienists.

Environmental health

Concerned with the quality of natural and man-made environments, as well as chronic and acute exposure to chemical, physical, or biological contaminants. Major specializations include: occupational health and industrial hygiene, environmental management, water quality, air quality, environmental toxicology, and environmental health engineering. Students are trained to recognize, assess, plan, and implement appropriate preventive environmental or occupational health programs.

Preparation
Usually a biological, physical science, or engineering degree with courses in chemistry, biology, physics, and math. Persons with backgrounds in political science, management, planning, or law may be considered for some programs.

Epidemiology

Evaluate diseases as they affect a population. Includes studies of occurrences and distribution, which often point the way to causation, control, and prevention. Epidemiology has largely been viewed as a research tool of medical sciences and as a basis for the control of infectious diseases. Recently, more emphasis has been given to applying epidemiological principles to chronic diseases and disease prevention. Persons other than health professionals are increasingly accepted into epidemiology programs.

Preparation
Quantitative analysis, computers, biology basics. Courses in single and multivariate statistics and calculus.

Minority epidemiologists may conduct studies on conditions prevalent in minority populations to determine cause and prevention. An epidemiologist may serve as a resource to other health workers, clinics, and systems.

SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

CONSUMER ECONOMICS • HEALTH APPLICATION OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION • HEALTH BEHAVIOR: THEORY AND PRACTICE OF CHANGE • HEALTH DISEASE

Family health; maternal and child health

In the context of family and community, focus on growth, development, and health problems of mothers, infants, and children through adolescent years, using a biological and behavioral sciences perspective with a heavy preventive emphasis. Areas include: the epidemiology of morbidity; mortality of pregnant and nonpregnant women, infants, children, and adolescents; and factors related to identification and delivery of services to high risk mothers, infants, and children. Other areas include: family planning; pregnancy and prenatal care; child protection; and the organization, evaluation, and design of community health and social services.

Employment opportunities include: maternal and child health services (*eg*, prenatal clinics, well-baby programs, child health screening programs, hospital outreach, and pediatric or obstetric programs); family planning programs; Crippled Children Services; school health programs; and other community health programs offering services to women and children. Also included are administrative and planning positions with state and county governments, hospitals, and health plans (*eg*, health maintenance organizations).

Preparation
May require professional credentials in health-related discipline, as well as practice for two years.

SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

AND HEALTH SERVICES IN LATIN AMERICA • HEALTH EDUCATION IN CLINICAL SETTINGS • HEALTH POLICY ANALYSIS • HEALTH PROBLEMS AND PROGRAMS IN

Health education; health promotion; public health education

Multiple approaches to behavioral changes. Health educators are trained to recognize needs and opportunities. They plan, administer, and evaluate educational aspects of health programs, as well as mobilize community resources for planned social change.

Students learn to use a variety of media resources to prevent or solve health-related behaviors and problems. They may concentrate on health education practice as it relates to a variety of issues (*eg*, health policy, environmental protection, consumer health information, medical care, occupational health, gerontology). They may take related courses from other departments and other schools.

Preparation
Students often have a background in the social, biological, or health sciences.

Students are prepared for: teaching or research at colleges and primary and secondary schools; leadership in community organizations and health projects; patient education in clinics, health care systems, or hospitals; communications and community health education; occupational health education programs; and consumer-oriented preventive health programs.

Health planning; comprehensive health planning

Usually the curriculum overlaps or is part of health services administration. It is interdepartmental, with courses in business administration, economics, political science, and urban planning. Planners of comprehensive health care are trained in evaluating needs and implementing programs to meet a community's *total* needs. Persons trained in this area may work at regulatory agencies and deal with health care facilities and providers, as well as investigate, plan, and recommend programs that will better serve the needs of minority communities.

Preparation
Students come from diverse backgrounds: political science, urban planning, economics, business administration, sociology, and so forth. Courses in economics, political science, accounting, statistics, and social sciences are helpful.

SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

AFRICA • HEALTH PROBLEMS OF MODERNIZATION • HEALTH RECORD SCIENCE • HEALTH SERVICES IN CHILD DAY CARE • HEALTH SERVICES ORGANIZATION

Ruth Ann Terry

Ruth Ann Terry, RN, MPH, is a Supervising Nursing Education Consultant for the California State Board of Registered Nursing. Her work involves monitoring the licensing of California nurses.

As an undergraduate, Terry studied nursing at San Francisco State University. She obtained her Master in Public Health, with a concentration in health administration, from University of California, Berkeley in 1974.

Prior to her career as nursing education consultant, Terry applied her talents as a High Blood Pressure Task Force coordinator, then as project coordinator of a worksite training program for licensed vocational nurses and registered nurses. She has also worked as assistant clinical professor for University of California, San Francisco's Department of Mental and Community Nursing. Terry commented, "It is important for health professionals of color to be on the faculty of health professional schools as part of a support group helping students of color through the educational system. Having an MPH affords me the opportunity to be in a position to effect changes in policy and other decision-making that affects communities of color."

Terry has served as a board member on various health associations and consortiums. She has co-authored several publications on community health nursing. In September 1993, Terry was appointed executive officer of the State Board of Registered Nursing.

SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

• HELMINTHIC DISEASE OF MAN • HOSPITAL PROGRAMS AND TRENDS • HUMAN SEXUALITY AND SEXUAL HEALTH • INTERNATIONAL HEALTH AGENCIES AND

Health services administration; health administration; policy and planning; medical care administration

Focuses on effective delivery of personal health care and medical services and formation of private and public health care policies and programs at the institutional, community, county, state, and national levels. Students are trained to participate in the political processes of decision making and resource allocation in various settings to administer clinics, health care programs, and departments of larger entities.

Those concentrating in administration are competent in the areas of health and medical care systems, health planning and policy, health law and politics, health economics, organizational theory, management of human resources, finance, and quantitative analysis.

Preparation
Diverse backgrounds, including political science, business administration, social sciences, urban planning, and health professions.

Health policy and planning students focus on health and health care policy formulation at all levels. They prepare for careers in: executive and legislative agencies; health planning agencies; health care delivery systems; hospitals, labor unions, consumer groups, and provider associations; as well as consulting firms and educational institutions with health and medical programs. Students are encouraged to take courses in other departments, such as business administration or management, economics, and political science. Three- to six-month residencies (often paid) in a health entity or agency to gain practical experience are generally required.

Hospital administration; health services management

Design, implement, maintain, and evaluate effective hospital-based services for the community.

Preparation
Variety of backgrounds, often including previous course work in accounting, economics, and statistics.

Industrial health; occupational health

Some schools include industrial health and occupational health under the environmental health department. Students are trained to recognize, measure, evaluate, and control chemical and physical stresses in industrial and other occupational environments.

Preparation
Several backgrounds are suitable, including social or biological sciences and the health professions.

Some possible course titles

Programs • Introduction to Occupational Health • Issues in Health Planning • Legal Aspects of Family Health • Legal Aspects of

International health

Deals with status, trends, and issues in health regarding other countries, especially developing countries. Emphasizes the cultural, social, and economic aspects of health and health care in other cultures. Often, excellent opportunities to travel exist for bilingual persons in this and other public health fields. Students develop knowledge of international health problems and skills in planning, management, and evaluating development of health services. Students learn to maximize their skills in a cross-cultural setting, in the U.S. or elsewhere.

Minority graduates may be employed in the traditional areas of international health (i.e., UN agencies, U.S. missions, or volunteer international agencies such as CARE). Such positions are limited. However, graduates in this field are well-prepared for employment in minority communities in the U.S.

Preparation
Several backgrounds qualify, including social or biological sciences, and the health professions.

Laboratory sciences; public health laboratory practice

For advanced positions relating to laboratory methodology, research, and directing laboratories in health agencies. Persons are generally prepared for teaching or administration in laboratory medicine. Curriculums generally include medical microbiology (bacteriology, virology, mycology), immunology, parasitology, and clinical and public health laboratory sciences.

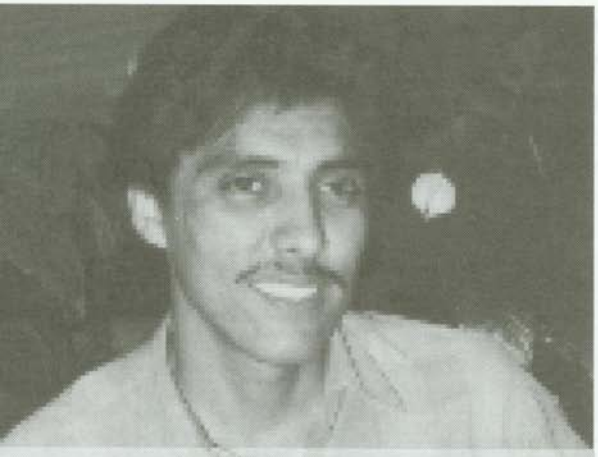
Preparation
A number of backgrounds qualify.

Possible job titles

- chief finance officer
- deputy director of health
- program analyst
- assistant administrator
- associate director of managed care

Some possible course titles

Hospital Administration • Management of Epidemiologic Data • Management of Health Maintenance Organizations • Management of Medical



Jesse Nodora received his Master's from the UCLA School of Public Health, Division of Behavioral Sciences and Health Education, in June 1988, with a concentration in the development of health policy and minority health.

Jesse Nodora

In June 1986, Nodora graduated with honors from Cornell University, New York, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology. Using high school GPAs and standardized test scores, he wrote an honors thesis on the predictability of academic success for Cornell minority students. The results were applied by the Cornell admissions office in minority recruitment and retention.

While at UCLA, Nodora continued to be active in student recruitment and peer advising through the Health Careers Opportunity Program. In addition to his studies and his employment as an assistant in the management of his school's computing facility, he conducted a study on the characteristics of dental practices in California for the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD).

On graduating in May 1988, he was accepted into the Executive Fellows Program, working with the California State Department of Education, Federal Liaison Office. While in the program, among other accomplishments, he wrote and published *Federal Education Programs: An Information Guide, California Department of Education, 1989.*

In September 1989, he accepted a position as an analyst in the AIDS Intervention Section of the California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs. One of his primary responsibilities was to work with county alcohol and drug administrators to initiate HIV/AIDS training for their staff.

He is now earning a Doctorate of Public Health in Health Promotion at the School of Public Health, University of Texas Houston Health Science Center, where he has been active in the formation of a Student Governance Organization. He is a founding vice president and a member of the school's Minority Action Council.

SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

CARE ORGANIZATIONS AND PROGRAMS • MANAGING HUMAN RESOURCES IN HEALTH FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS • MANPOWER MANAGEMENT IN HEALTH

Nutrition; nutritional sciences

Master's programs emphasize application of nutrition science to improving individual and group health. Curriculums review nutritional needs of people under varying environmental, cultural, and economic conditions throughout a life cycle, and stress nutrition assessment. Also covered are: the public policy aspects of nutrition; the function of nutritional programs in health promotion and disease prevention; and the psychological and social aspects of food practices and their implications.

Preparation
Some programs are designed for those with undergraduate majors in foods and nutrition, while others are open to persons with biological science or health professional background.

Students learn how to develop nutrition education and nutrition programs. Graduates assume leadership positions in nutrition programs in community clinics, hospitals, volunteer organizations, government agencies, as well as in international health programs and industry.

Population sciences; population planning

Deals with reproductive health, maternal and child health, and family planning. Students are prepared for administrative, teaching, and consultant careers in public or private agencies. Curriculums are often interrelated with family health and health education. Minorities trained in this area can design, provide, and administer family planning programs that are more acceptable and effective for minority communities.

Preparation
A variety of backgrounds, usually including some course work in biology.

If reading this has interested you in pursuing a public health career, you should do several things.

Seek more information about the specialty in which you are interested to see if you would really like to pursue a career in that field. Establish and maintain contacts with local minority clinics, health organizations, and schools. Learn what each school and department requires. Determine the schools' policies and procedures. Your principal sources of information should be public health school catalogues, school officials, and students.

Counselors can refer you to sensitive, empathetic persons working in your chosen field in a local clinic, public health department, health agency, or hospital. Talk with these persons about their background and training, and the activities related to their work. This will provide you with ideas for additional contacts in that field.

Set a definite goal for yourself. However, if you find a particular career does not suit you, investigate other public health careers. All experience and contacts will be helpful for admissions by showing that you are serious about public health, and that you have experience. The contacts you make can be sources of letters of recommendation.

When you decide on a career, write to schools of public health and request catalogues and other information. You can obtain copies for review from your college library or counselor. This will give you much more information and tell you the prerequisites (bachelor's degree, *etc*) for your chosen field.

If possible, visit public health schools. Talk with students and professors to get a feel for the curriculum, procedures, and prerequisites.

The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is currently required by all schools of public health. The application form, available at any career counseling office,

APPLYING FOR

SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

LAW • NUTRITION AND HEALTH • NUTRITION EDUCATION AND TRAINING: THIRD WORLD CONSIDERATIONS • NUTRITION PROGRAMS AND POLICIES FOR FAMILIES

provides dates for the exam (usually six times a year). You can receive an application directly from the Educational Testing Service:

GRE
Educational Testing Service
Box 955
Princeton, NJ 98540

The GRE is given at all California State University and University of California campuses, as well as some armed services bases and private colleges. To learn the nearest college that gives the GRE, call the counseling office of your school. Take the test no later than the summer before your senior year. You should receive your scores by the time you apply for admission to public health school.

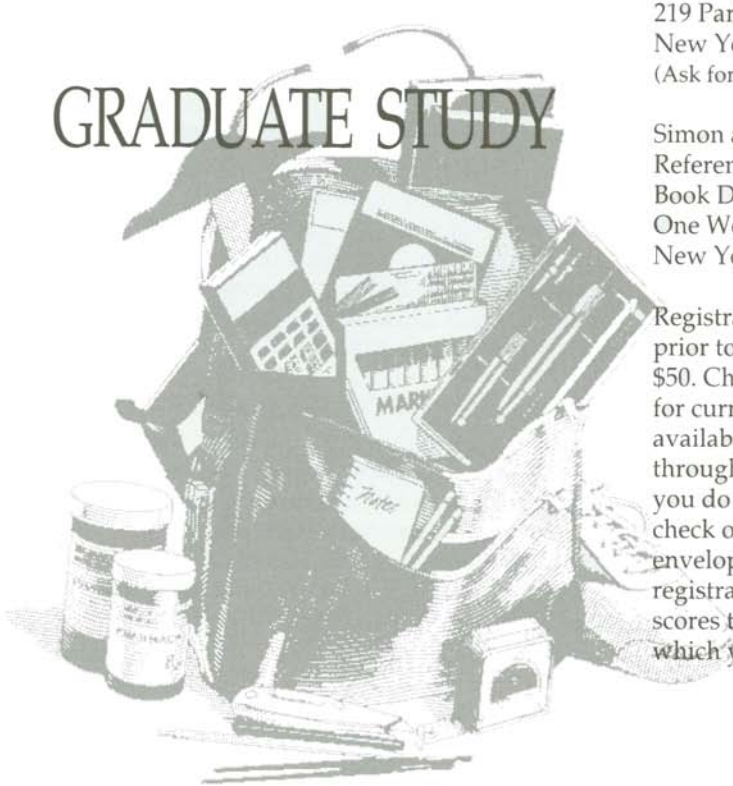
The GRE has two parts: a general test (verbal, quantitative, and analytical ability) and a subject test. Generally, only the general test is required for entrance to California public health schools. The general test lasts about four hours.

Study guides can be found at most campus bookstores or by writing to the publishers[3]:

ARCO Publishing Co., Inc.
219 Park Ave. S.
New York, NY 10003
(Ask for the GRE Aptitude Test Review)

Simon and Schuster
Reference, Technical and Review
Book Division
One West 39th St.
New York, NJ 1018

Registration deadline is usually one month prior to the exam date. The fee is about $50. Check with your financial aid office for current fees and dates. Fee waivers are available for financial aid recipients through the college financial aid office. If you do not qualify for a waiver, pay by check or money order in your application envelope. In the spaces provided on your registration form, be sure to specify the scores to be reported to the schools to which you are applying.



SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

IN THE THIRD WORLD • NUTRITIONAL ASSESSMENT; LABORATORY ASSAYS • OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH • OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH • ORGANIZATION

Most schools have application deadlines, ranging from December through March, for fall admission (Some programs permit admission in the winter and spring, but positions are usually limited during those periods). Apply early during your college senior year (September or October). Many positions are filled several months before the deadline. A person who does not apply early will have to compete for the few positions left and be at a disadvantage.

Applications should be filled out *neatly* and *completely*.

Fee waivers are available at some schools. Ask individual schools about the availability and process for obtaining them.

The diverse nature of public health opens opportunities for you to work in a variety of settings:

- **community clinics**
- **state and county health departments**
- **hospitals**
- **state water quality, air-pollution, or occupational-health programs**
- **federal health agencies**
- **international health organizations**
- **private consulting**

Seek guidance from persons in each school's minority affairs office.

Make an appointment to speak (face-to-face, if at all possible) with a member of the department to which you are applying.

Some programs encourage or require such interviews. Admissions decisions are usually made by the individual divisions or departments to which you are applying. You can explain your plans and reasons for applying.

While at the school, make contact with students who can share their views of the program and career you have chosen. Through HPCOP, you can get a list of such persons to contact. Your contacts may also be helpful with admissions information.

Most graduate programs require a 3.0 (on a scale to 4.0) undergraduate GPA for admission. However, some schools use the grades from the last two years of college to compute the GPA. But many students with lower GPAs are admitted and complete their degree program.

At some schools, the GPA requirement may be waived or modified. However, the higher your GPA, coupled with a sincere desire to pursue public health, increases your chances of admission. Relevant jobs or volunteer experience are also important. Many programs require voluntary or paid experience in your field before you are considered.

SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

THEORY AND HEALTH INSTITUTIONS • OVERSEAS REFUGEE HEALTH PROGRAM • POLITICS OF HEALTH CARE • POLITICS OF INTERNATIONAL HEALTH •

Kathleen Torres

Kathleen Torres, Deputy Chief of Staff to California State Senator Charles M. Calderon — a member of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee — received her MPH with a speciality in health administration and planning from the UC Berkeley School of Public Health. She is responsible for issues in the areas of health, women's concerns, and the Latino community. She represents Senator Calderon in his district in southern California.

Torres has been a community health advocate for 14 years. She is active in women's reproductive health rights and community health issues.

Appointed by the Board of Supervisors to the Los Angeles County Commission for Women, she chairs the Health and Mental Health Committee. She also serves on numerous boards of directors, including Planned Parenthood, World Population Los Angeles, and the American Lung Association of California. She is a member of the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services "Healthy LA 2000" Advisory Council. In addition, she is a member of the Consultant Committee on Systems Planning and Development for the LA County Managed Care Planning Council and the Greater Los Angeles Coalition for Reproductive Rights.

Previously, Torres had served for 8-1/2 years as director of the Health Careers Opportunity Program at the UCLA School of Public Health. She managed ambulatory health-care centers for five years prior to joining UCLA.

SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

PRACTICAL EPIDEMIOLOGIC INVESTIGATIONS • PRACTICUM IN HEALTH EDUCATION • PREVENTIVE MEDICINE IN PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICES • PROGRAMS AND

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

An important part of your application is the *Statement of Purpose*. This statement is carefully scrutinized by the admissions committee to decide if you should be accepted into the program. *Answer the questions asked. Follow the outline given.* And give your statement considerable time and attention.

Clearly, concisely, and honestly state why you want to study public health and what you plan to accomplish after completing your studies. You can also point out any special interests, past experiences, or special abilities that may be relevant.

Type a draft copy before the final. Go over it with a person who is *strong in written English.* Revise as necessary. Circulate your draft to supportive contact persons for comments and opinions. Once you have gone through as many drafts as necessary, type the final product on the application form.

In summary, the Statement of Purpose should be an honest, straightforward account of your reasons for wanting to pursue a public health career. It should provide compelling information on why the particular division or department should want you to be one of its students and alumni.

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

Ask for letters of recommendation from persons who are familiar enough with you and your work to say supportive things about your ability, character, and potential. Include a letter from an employer with letters from faculty.

FINANCIAL AID

Adequate financial aid is available to minority public health students. For the one year to two years you will dedicate to your studies, finances should not be a barrier.

Many minority graduate students receive public health training grants through U.S. National Health Service Corps, Indian Health Service, or other sources. These grants may range widely in benefits plus tuition and fees for each academic year. In addition, there are various loan repayment programs. Some minority students supplement this with part-time research or survey work that is often related to their career choice. Ask each school's financial aid office about the selection of possibilities.

SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

SERVICES FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN AND YOUTH • PROPERTIES AND MEASUREMENT OF AIRBORNE PARTICLES • PUBLIC HEALTH IN THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC

MESSAGE FROM HPCOP

This brochure, prepared by the Health Professions Career Opportunity Program (HPCOP) of the California Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, is primarily intended to motivate African-American, Hispanic, and Native American students and health workers to consider and pursue public health careers.

Collectively, underrepresented minorities comprise about 30 percent of California's population and are projected to become a majority within 20 years. The state's primary rationale for supporting such a program is to better meet the health care needs of these underserved minority persons and communities in California.

Minority students and minority health workers already have the cultural, experiential, and linguistic skills needed to identify, design, plan, evaluate, and provide effective health care services for California's increasing minority population. Once recruited and trained, a high proportion of minority health professionals do provide health care services to underserved barrios, ghettos, rancherias, and reservations.

Much of the information offered here on public health graduate programs is applicable to the undergraduate and graduate programs of other schools. For detailed information on the preparation, admission requirements, and curriculums for each program, refer to catalogs and other sources.

We hope this brochure helps to motivate underrepresented minority students to consider pursuing public health professional careers. We also hope the study of public health becomes an attractive alternative or addition for minority students pursuing other health careers.

For more information about careers in public health, contact:

Schools of public health in California:

School of Public Health
University of California Berkeley
Minority Enrollment Program
19 Warren Hall
Berkeley, CA 94720

American Indian Graduate Program
School of Public Health
140 Warren Hall
Berkeley, CA 94720

San Diego State University
Graduate School of Public Health
San Diego, CA 92182

Loma Linda University
School of Health
Recruitment Office
Loma Linda, CA 92350

School of Public Health
University of California-LA
41240 CHS
Los Angeles, CA 90024-1772

Ask about minority assistance programs such as the Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP).

Schools of public health outside California:

University of Alabama at Birmingham
School of Public Health
University Station, Tidwell Hall, Rm. 312
Birmingham, AL 35294

Boston University
80 E. Concord St.
Boston, MA 02118

Columbia University
School of Public Health
600 West 168th St.
New York, NY 10032

Harvard University
School of Public Health, Rm. G-4
677 Huntington Ave.
Boston, MA 02115

University of Hawaii
School of Public Health
Student Services Office, Rm. D-204
1960 East-West Rd.
Honolulu, HI 96822

University of Illinois at Chicago
School of Public Health
Office of Academic Affairs
PO Box 6998
Chicago, IL 60680

SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

PROMOTION AND EVALUATION • SOCIOCULTURAL ASPECTS OF HEALTH AND ILLNESS • STATISTICS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH • STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION OF

Johns Hopkins University
School of Public Health
Admissions Office, Rm. 1401
615 N. Wolfe St.
Baltimore, MD 21205-2179

University of Massachusetts
School of Health Sciences
Division of Public Health, Arnold House
Amherst, MA 01003

University of Michigan
School of Public Health
3524 School of PH S
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-2029

University of Minnesota
School of Public Health
Box 197, Mayo Memorial Bldg.
1360 Mayo Memorial Bldg.
Minneapolis, MN 55455

University of North Carolina
School of Public Health, Rosenau Hall
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

University of Oklahoma
College of Public Health
Health Science Center
PO Box 26901
Oklahoma City, OK 73190

University of Pittsburgh
Graduate School of Public Health
Student Affairs Office
11 Parran Hall
Pittsburgh, PA 15261

University of Puerto Rico
School of Public Health
Medical Sciences Campus
GPO Box 5067
San Juan, PR 00936

University of South Carolina
School of Public Health
Columbia, SC 29208

University of South Florida
Tampa, FL 33612

University of Texas
Health Science Center At Houston
School of Public Health
PO Box 20186, Astrodome Sta.
Houston, TX 77025

Tulane University
School of Public Health
& Tropical Medicine
1430 Tulane Ave., 17th Fl.
New Orleans, LA 70112

University of Washington
School of Public Health
SPH SC 30
Seattle, WA 98195

Yale University School of Medicine
School of Public Health
Registrars' Office
60 College St.
New Haven, CT 06510

See insert for names and phone numbers.

SOME POSSIBLE COURSE TITLES

HEALTH CARE FACILITIES • THE HOSPITAL AS A SOCIAL INSTITUTION • THERAPEUTIC NUTRITION • WATER QUALITY AND HEALTH

FOOTNOTES

* The figures for Native Americans may mislead because Native American populations are tribal and scattered. Also, over the years, total representation has been low. In 1986, only 18 out of 2, 721 public health graduates were Native American.

1 Curriculums at some schools may be completed in one year, while others may take up to two years (Consult individual catalogs and departments).

2 Although California public health schools do not have specific dental public health curriculums, many dentists and dental hygienists are well prepared through programs with other labels (*eg*, health services administration, health education, epidemiology, *etc*.)

3 Ask for GRE Complete Review, Verbal and Math; or GRE Math Review. A review of math, algebra, and geometry is especially useful for the GRE. Review courses are available at local universities & community colleges.

Planning for
California's Health Care Future

OSHPD

OFFICE OF STATEWIDE HEALTH PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT