

HEALTH PROMOTION, EDUCATION, AND BEHAVIOR

Department Website (<http://www.sph.sc.edu/hpeb/>)

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Programs leading to degrees in health promotion, education, and behavior focus on understanding how policy, environmental, institutional, and individual actions can improve the public's health. This work, usually done in partnership with organizations and communities, uses principles and methods from the social and behavioral sciences to promote health in diverse settings across South Carolina, the US, and the globe. Health promotion, education, and behavior is an activist field with a deep commitment to improving the health and welfare of the most disadvantaged people in our world. The field recognizes the importance of learning not just what should and can be done to improve the public's health, but also how it can be done in a way that is cost-effective, embedded in community structures and culture, and at a large enough scale to have real impact. Programs in health promotion, education, and behavior prepare practice and research professionals through courses, practical experiences, and research projects that emphasize understanding of learning, motivation, behavior change, program planning and evaluation, community development, organizational behavior, applied communications, and socio-political processes at multiple levels of societal organization. Students are prepared to engage in professional activities that will:

- influence individuals to adopt or maintain healthful practices through skill development, social support enhancement, and environmental and policy change
- foster teaching and communication skills in all those engaged in health promotion
- advocate changes in organizations and the environment which will facilitate healthful practices
- develop appropriate and effective programs aimed at promoting good health through change in behaviors at the intrapersonal, interpersonal, organizational, community, and public-policy levels
- enhance the health promoter's role as a model, advocate, and leader in public health
- evaluate health promotion programs to ensure they are meeting societal goals and program objectives
- develop and disseminate new knowledge through systematic research and evaluation
- inform people about health, wellness, illness, and disability, and ways in which they can protect and improve their health, including more efficient use of the health care delivery system.

The Department of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior offers programs that lead to the degrees of Master of Public Health, dual degree Master of Social Work/Master of Public Health, Doctor of Philosophy, and Doctor of Public Health and to the Graduate Certificate in Health Communication. Although no undergraduate degree is offered by the department, undergraduate students may complete a minor in health promotion, education, and behavior (18 hours). The following courses are available for undergraduate credit with permission of the faculty.