Bachelor of Science in Public Health

The Bachelor of Science in Public Health prepares graduates for entry-level positions in public health and equips them to pursue certificate and graduate degrees in the field. All of the options offer broad-based training in the five core areas of public health.

Students for whom the degree is appropriate include those interested in health careers and in dual graduate degree programs in medicine and public health. The degree is administered by the School of Human Ecology.

Option I students who plan to follow Option III must apply for admission. Admission requirements for Option III are given in The Bachelor of Science in Public Health, Option III. Students who plan to follow Option II must be admitted to the Dean's Scholars Honors Program.

Prescribed Work Common to All Options

In the process of fulfilling degree requirements, all students must complete:

a. Foundation courses:
   i. Public health: Public Health 317
   ii. Microbiology: Molecular Biosciences 326M or 326R, and 226L
   iii. Nutrition and physiology: Nutrition 312 or 312H, and Integrative Biology 365S
   iv. Social and behavioral sciences: One of the following: Economics 304K, 304L, Psychology 301, Sociology 319, 354K
   v. Political science/government: Government 358 or Management 320F
b. Public health core*:
   i. Biostatistics: Statistics and Data Sciences 320E
   ii. Environmental health sciences: Public Health 338
   iii. Epidemiology: Public Health 354
   iv. Global health: Public Health 334
   v. Health policy and health systems: Public Health 358D
   vi. Health behavior theory and practice: Public Health 356
c. Core curriculum†
d. At least 21 semester hours of upper-division coursework must be completed in residence at the University. All students must complete at least 36 semester hours of upper-division coursework.
e. One of the following:
   i. Public Health 137 (Topic 1: Senior Seminar in Public Health), or
   ii. An alternative cumulative, integrative, and scholarly or applied experience or inquiry project that serves as a capstone to the educational experience approved by the public health faculty (as described in Special Requirements).

Additional Prescribed Work for Each Option

Option I: Public Health

g. Mathematics 408C, 408N, or 408R.
h. Biology 311C, 311D, and 325 or Biology 315H and 325H. These courses must be completed before the student progresses to other upper-division biology and upper-division public health courses.
i. Chemistry 301 or 301C, 302 or 302C, 204, 320M, and Biochemistry 369.
j. Nine hours from the following list of advanced courses; courses counted toward requirement 1 may not be used to fulfill this requirement.
   i. Public Health 363 (required for Options I and II)
   ii. Six hours from the following courses:
      1. Public Health 341R, 361P, 362, 364, 365, 366 or
      2. Nine hours of graduate coursework completed at the School of Public Health at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston for students participating in the Option III: Advanced Program.
k. One of the following foreign language/culture choices:
   i. Beginning level proficiency coursework, or the equivalent, in a foreign language
   ii. First course in a foreign language and a three-semester-hour course in the culture of the same language area
   iii. Two three-semester-hour courses in one foreign culture area; the courses must be chosen from an approved list available in the dean's office and the college advising centers
l. Enough additional coursework to make a total of 120 semester hours

Option II: Public Health Honors

7. Breadth requirement: An honors mathematics course; Biology 315H and 325H; Chemistry 301C and 302C; credit by examination may not count toward this requirement
8. In fulfilling requirement 2a, students must complete Statistics and Data Sciences 325H
9. Chemistry 204, 320M, and Biochemistry 369
10. A section of Undergraduate Studies 302 or 303 that is approved by the program honors advisor
11. A section of Rhetoric and Writing 309S that is restricted to students in the Dean's Scholars Honors Program
12. Two semesters of Public Health 379H
13. Public Health 363
14. Nine additional hours of coursework approved by the departmental honors advisor
15. Six semester hours of coursework from the College of Liberal Arts and/or the College of Fine Arts
16. Enough additional coursework to make a total of 120 semester hours

Option III: Advanced Program

This program provides students with a foundation in the natural sciences applied to public health and advanced specialist training in preparation for a leadership position in public health practice. This program leads to the completion of the Bachelor of Science in Public Health and the Master of Public Health, awarded by the School of Public Health at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston.

During the senior year, students complete 16 hours of graduate coursework at the Austin Campus, to earn a graduate certificate in public health. If successfully completed, the courses in the graduate certificate program are applied to the Master of Public Health degree. The second year of the Master of Public Health is completed at one of five campuses of the school of Public Health: Austin, Brownsville, Dallas, El Paso, Houston, and San Antonio.

Prior to graduation with a Bachelor of Science in Public Health, Option III students must transfer in nine hours of graduate coursework earned at the UT Austin School of Public Health. Students may apply to graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Public Health prior to the completion of the graduate certificate in public health.

7. Mathematics 408C, 408N, or 408R.
8. Biology 311C, 311D, and 325; or 315H and 325H; these courses must be completed before the student progresses to other upper-division biology and upper-division public health courses
9. Chemistry 301 or 301C, 302 or 302C, 204, 320M, and Biochemistry 369
10. One of the following foreign language/culture choices:
    a. Beginning level proficiency coursework, or the equivalent, in a foreign language
    b. First course in a foreign language and a three-semester-hour course in the culture of the same language area
    c. Two three-semester-hour courses in one foreign culture area; the courses must be chosen from an approved list available in the dean's office and the college advising centers.
11. Enough additional coursework to make a total of 120 semester hours; a maximum of nine hours of graduate coursework completed at the School of Public Health at The University of Texas Health Science Center may be applied toward the Bachelor of Science in Public Health, Option III: Advanced Program, if needed to reach a total of 120 hours.

* Graduate coursework may not be applied toward the public health core requirements 2a through 2f.

Special Requirements

Students must fulfill both the University's General Requirements for graduation and the college requirements. All students must complete a cumulative, integrative, and scholarly or applied experience or inquiry project that serves as a capstone to the educational experience approved by the public health faculty. They must also earn a grade of at least *C-* in each foundation course, public health core course, the senior seminar in public health, public health advanced course, and mathematics and science course required by the degree, and a grade point average in these courses of at least 2.00. More information about grades and the grade point average is given in the General Information Catalog.

Additional Requirements for Option II

To graduate under Option II, students must remain in good academic standing in the Dean's Scholars Program, must submit an honors thesis approved by the departmental honors advisor, and present their research in an approved public forum, such as the college's annual Undergraduate Research Forum.

Additional Requirements for Option III

Students admitted to Option III are required to follow the admission schedule and policies of Master of Public Health program at the School of Public Health at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. Students are expected to make continuous progress toward the undergraduate and graduate degrees by completing required undergraduate and graduate public health coursework each semester of the fourth year. Students who fail to complete graduate coursework two fall/spring semesters in a row will be removed from the program and must re-enroll at The University of Texas at Austin to complete the Bachelor of Science in Public Health Option I. Students will be notified prior to removal from the graduate program. Students must earn the Bachelor of Science in Public Health in their fourth year to be eligible to continue in the Master of Public Health program in their fifth year.

† Effective April 2025, UT Austin no longer requires Skills and Experience flags.