Department of Behavioral Health and Nutrition

Program Type: 

Degree Type: 

If proposing a new Degree Type, enter it in this field.

Health Behavior Science and Promotion (HBSP PhD)

Provide a brief summary of the proposed program changes and describe the rationale for the change(s):

The PhD in Health Behavior Science and Promotion is a tertiary degree requiring the completion of a minimum of 48 credits that are designed to be completed over a 4-year period. Admitted students will complete 15 credit hours of content courses, 15 credit hours of research courses, three credit hours of elective course(s), 3 credit hours of independent research, and 9 credit hours of dissertation research. Students will also participate in a 0 credit hour Department seminar course. All students will be required to complete and pass a preliminary examination requirement, a Dissertation proposal defense, and a Dissertation defense.

The rationale for the proposed program is as follows:

 In a College of Health Sciences 2016 town hall meeting, President Assanis identified growing graduate program offerings as a priority for our University and College; the proposed PhD in Health Behavior Science and Promotion goes toward meeting this challenge.

 Currently, the health of Delaware residents ranks 32nd in the nation, with the goal of being in the top 5 by 2019. Achieving this improvement will require the training of a more versatile and mobile workforce in health behavior science and promotion.

 The current Health Behavior Science program within the Department of Behavioral Health and Nutrition has the resources necessary to successfully implement this program and train the next generation of Health Behavior Science and Promotion professionals. Specifically, the program has XX faculty, and generated $$$ in research dollars last year.

Together, this need for the improvement in the health of Delawareans, the need to grow graduate programs in the College, along with the well-resourced (in terms of intellect and funding) Health Behavior Science program, justify the proposed PhD in Health Behavior Science and Promotion.

List new courses required for the new curriculum. How do they support the overall program objectives of the major/ minor/ concentrations)?

BHAN820 Social and Environmental Determinants of Health Behavior

Graduate-level training in social and environmental determinants of health specific to health behavior, health promotion, and nutritional science is needed. Currently, there are no courses in the Department of Behavioral Health and Nutrition, or in the College of Health Sciences, that focus on social and environmental determinants of health, despite this contextual knowledge being critical to the study and practice of health professionals. This course is designed to be taken by doctoral students but also suitable for master’s degree students in the department and potentially across the College. While there are other graduate-level courses across the University including NURS881, that include curricular elements dedicated to social and environmental determinants of health, the content is secondary to the class focus. For example, NURS881 focuses on population health. There are also research and community based entities across the University whose mission is to address social determinants of health (e.g., Center for Community Research and Service), this is not part of direct academic programming. We do not expect that the addition of this course will impact the enrollment in other courses within the University and instead fill a curricular void at the graduate level.

BHAN855 Qualitative and Mixed Methods Research in Health Sciences

Graduate-level training in qualitative and mixed methods research specific to health behavior, health promotion, and nutritional science is needed. Currently, there are no courses in the Department of Behavioral Health and Nutrition that focus on qualitative and mixed methods research despite these approaches being commonly used in the field. This course is designed to be taken by doctoral students but also suitable for master’s degree in the department and potentially across the College of Health Sciences. While there are other graduate-level qualitative research courses across the University including EDUC850, NURS816, SOCI676 and UAPP808, these classes have a small student cap size (between 4 and 15 students), are specific to the respective academic fields, and do not consider mixed research methodologies also. BHAN855 will offer discipline specific training on the qualitative and mixed research methods and skills pertinent to the fields of health behavior, health promotion and nutrition sciences.

BHAN856 Multivariable Biostatistics for Population Health

Higher level graduate-level training in biostatistics for population health is needed. Currently, there are no higher-level biostatistics courses in the Department of Behavioral Health and Nutrition, despite biostatistics being critical to the field of health behavior science, health promotion, and nutritional science. This course is designed to be taken by doctoral students but also suitable for quantitatively strong master’s degree students in the department and potentially across the College. While there are other graduate-level biostatistics courses across the University including EDUC812 Regression and Structural Equation Modeling, PSYC861: Psychological Statistics II, PSYC878: Hierarchical Linear Modeling, and PSYC867: Structural Equation Modeling, these courses do not cover the regression, GEE and repeated measures approaches that are particularly relevant to the health field. Moreover, the application of these approaches to the population health context is not used. We do not expect that the addition of this course will impact the enrollment in other courses within the University and instead fill a curricular void at the College of Health Sciences graduate level.

HLPR969 Dissertation Research

The dissertation is a critical component of a doctoral degree. Currently, no course exists that provides the student the opportunity to engage in original research in Health Behavior Science and Promotion at the doctoral level. This course is specifically designed to meet the needs of doctoral students in the PhD in Health Behavior Science and Promotion.

Identify and justify any effect on other courses in your department or in another department. Specifically list other departments' chairpersons and/or faculty consulted and summarize results of discussion.

This course fulfils the PhD in Health Behavior Science and Promotion program goal to develop effective scientific practitioners with the capacity to conduct independent research in health-related outcomes and promotion.

Prospective Curriculum:\*

New Core

Courses

HLPR 803 Advanced Health Promotion Programming and Evaluation (3cr.)

HLPR 804 Advanced Health Promotion Programming Evaluation (3cr)

HLPR 809 Health Behavior (3cr.)

HLPR 820 Social and Environmental Determinants of Health (3cr)

Core Elective N/A Core Elective (3cr)

BHAN 855 Qualitative and Mixed Methods in Health Sciences (3cr)

BHAN 856 Multivariable Biostatistics for Population Health (3cr)

General Elective N/A General Elective (3cr)

Statistics or Data Analysis Electives N/A Statistics or Data Analysis Electives (9cr)

HLPR 868 Research (3cr.)

HLPR 868 Research (3cr.)

HLPR 969 Dissertation Research (9cr)

Appendix B: List of Sample Elective Courses (not an exhaustive list; electives are approved by the student’s advisor)

HLPR813        Health of Older Adults

HLPR815        Health Behavior and Health Psychology

HLPR819        Social Marketing

UAPP804        Program Evaluation for Health and Social Services

UAPP808        Qualitative Methods for Program Evaluation

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| PHYT809 | Psychosocial Aspects of Health and Disease |

SOCI607         Sociology of Gender

COMM656      Communication in Organizations

COMM657      Children, Television, and Education

KAAP802        Human Cardiovascular Control

PSYC806        Social Cognition

PSYC614        Psychopharmacology

UAPP608        Poverty, Neighborhoods, & Community Development

UAPP676        Survey Research

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| UAPP640 | International Development Policy and Administration |
| UAPP653 | Politics and Healthcare |
| PHYT809 | Psychosocial Aspects of Health and Disease |

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| --- | --- |
| UAPP655 | Geographic Information Systems in the Public and Nonprofit Sectors |
| UAPP800 | Research Methods and Data Analysis |
| UAPP808 | Qualitative Methods for Program Evaluation |
| MEDT800 | Preparing Research Proposals |
| PSYC809 | Research Design |
| APEC806 | Research Techniques and Procedures |
| NURS812 | Responsible Conduct of Research |
| NURS814 | Advanced Quantitative Research in Nursing Science |
| NURS816 | Advanced Qualitative Research in Nursing Science |
| KAAP868 | Research |
| KAAP602 | Data Analysis and Interpretation in Health Sciences |
| BISC643 | Biological Data Analysis |
| KAAP801 | Graduate Seminar in Applied Physiology |
| HDFS 815 | Research Issues and Designs |
| EDUC 850 | Qualitative Research in Educational Settings |
| HDFS 615 | Research Methods |
| COMM603 | Communication Research Methods-Procedures |
| COMM604 | Communication Research Methods- Analysis |
| SOCI605 | Data Collection and Analysis |
| SOCI614 | Advanced Data Analysis |
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Appendix C: List of Sample Statistical Electives

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| PSYC809 | Research Design |
| UAPP808 | Qualitative Methods for Program Evaluation |
| BISC643 | Biological Data Analysis |
| EDUC812 | Regression and Structural Equation Modeling |
| EDUC856 | Introduction to Statistical Inference |
| ELEG815 | Analytics I: Statistical Learning |
| KAAP602 | Data Analysis and Interpretation in Health Science |
| PSYC860 | Psychological Statistics |
| PSYC878 | Hierarchical Linear Modeling |
| SOCI614 | Advanced Data Analysis |
| STAT608 | Statistical Research Methods |
| STAT656 | Biostatistics |
| STAT818 | Multivariate Analysis |
| STAT831 | Time Series Analysis |
| SOCI625 | Advanced Social Statistics |
| PSYC878 | Hierarchical Linear Modeling |

BHAN - 855 - Qualitative and Mixed Methods in Health Sciences (3cr)

BHAN - 856 - Multivariable Biostatistics for Population Health (3cr)

Core Elective - N/A - Core Elective (3cr)

General Elective - N/A - General Elective (3cr)

HLPR - 803 - Advanced Health Promotion Programming and Evaluation (3cr.)

HLPR - 804 - Advanced Health Promotion Programming Evaluation (3cr)

HLPR - 809 - Health Behavior (3cr.)

HLPR - 820 - Social and Environmental Determinants of Health (3cr)

HLPR - 868 - Research (3cr.)

HLPR - 868 - Research (3cr.)

HLPR - 969 - Dissertation Research (9cr)

Statistics or Data Analysis Electives - N/A - Statistics or Data Analysis Electives (9cr)

Expected Outcomes

The HBS PhD provides the highest degree for health promotion and behavioral science professionals. As such, the expected outcome from the completion of this degree are graduates who are ready for research careers in many settings, including academia, non-governmental organizations (business and non-profit), allied health fields, and public service at all levels of national government.   
  
Completion of this degree will enable graduates to become effective scientific practitioners with the capacity to conduct independent research in health-related outcomes and promotion, in applied and academic settings. Graduates will be able to lead the development, implementation and evaluation of high quality, theoretically-grounded and evidence-based health promotion interventions across multiple domains.

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