

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **How do I apply for the Public Health Nutrition Specialty?**

Once you are accepted in one of the other concentrations at the School of Public Health – MCH, HSB, HPM, Epi/Bios, EHS, depending on your undergraduate background and career interests, you take the PHN courses (including the PHN Core class) as electives in your program - for a PHN Specialty.

### **What do I have to do to be in the Public Health Nutrition specialty?**

You take the Public Health Nutrition Core Class – PH 206 – Critical Issues in Public Health Nutrition (2 units) and then elect 7 or more units of Public Health Nutrition classes for the Public Health Nutrition specialty area.

Select a Public Health Nutrition related summer internship

Select a Public Health Nutrition topic for your comprehensive exam/research project.

### **I do not have an undergraduate nutrition science or biologic science background, can I still apply?**

Yes – but take a few science courses (biology, chemistry, organic chemistry, biochemistry) and a basic nutrition course before you come. Our PHN courses build on an undergraduate nutrition sciences background. In addition, it is helpful to have social science and/or behavioral science coursework, such as courses in psychology, sociology or anthropology, and economics.

### **Where should I take the science and nutrition courses?**

You can take the courses at any college, university or community college, or through our University of California Extension program. UC Extension offers post baccalaureate Health Sciences courses to help students prepare for admission to a health professions graduate school like the School of Public Health. <http://extension.berkeley.edu/spos/premed.html>

### **I want to counsel individuals about nutrition and healthy lifestyles. Can I get the courses I need to do this at Berkeley with the PHN specialty?**

The MPH at UC Berkeley trains students who have already had experience working with individuals, to work on a population level to plan, implement, direct, and evaluate programs, conduct research, identify policy needs, and work to implement new policies.

If you are more interested in working with individuals, consider a program that offers didactic nutrition and dietetics courses and adult education theory, and ideally a coordinated dietetic internship to gain the skills you need to be a Registered Dietitian. Go to the American Dietetic Association website, <http://www.eatright.org/students/education/cpd.aspx> for a listing of academic programs that offer Masters' degrees and coursework needed to prepare to be a Registered Dietitian.

### **Can I take the nutrition and science courses at the same time as I get my masters' degree?**

The courses and field work required for the 2 year MPH in each of the concentrations are very demanding, and require the full 2 years. Upper Division Nutrition Science and Toxicology (NST) Courses

can be taken as electives, but most have biology, organic chemistry and biochemistry as prerequisites, so you should take these courses (if you did not take them already) before you start your MPH. Here is the listing of the NST courses:

[http://sis.berkeley.edu/catalog/gcc\\_list\\_crse\\_req?p\\_dept\\_name=Nutritional+Science+and+Toxicology&p\\_dept\\_cd=NUSCTX](http://sis.berkeley.edu/catalog/gcc_list_crse_req?p_dept_name=Nutritional+Science+and+Toxicology&p_dept_cd=NUSCTX)

### **What are you looking for in applicants?**

High grades, excellent GRE scores, relevant work experience and a good match between what the program offers and students' goals are all important for admission.

### **Could you suggest some relevant work experience?**

Most students admitted for the MPH have already worked – to confirm their interests and career directions. Many have served in the Peace Corps, Americorps (<http://www.americorps.gov/>) or Teach for America or have worked in health departments, Cooperative Extension, WIC clinics, and local food banks. Check out the new Food Corps <http://www.food-corps.org/>.

All provide excellent opportunities to see public health and nutrition needs in action, and help prospective students to have a better idea of the direction for graduate work.

### **Could I go directly into the DrPH program and complete nutrition coursework at UC Berkeley rather than getting a Master's Degree first?**

Rather than an individual department program, the DrPH at the School of Public Health is a school-wide program. Students must first have a Masters degree and 2 or more years of experience before applying for the DrPH. More information is on the UC Berkeley DrPH Website: <http://drph.berkeley.edu/>

DrPH students with interests in nutrition can elect the PHN specialty, and develop a nutrition-related research project.