

# ACHELOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH STUDENT HANDBOOK



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# THE DEPARTMENT, THE BPH DEGREE, AND THE PEOPLE

## *Introduction*

The Department of Public Health Sciences Bachelor in Public Health (BPH) degree program has been in existence since the late 1970s. The program is accredited through December 31, 2025 by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), the nationally recognized accrediting body for public health programs, website <https://ceph.org/>. The BPH program aims to educate and train students to pursue careers working in community and public health in a variety of settings, including departments of health, international agencies, community health and social agencies, hospitals, school districts, and non-governmental agencies (NGOs), as well as in voluntary, private or governmental agencies.

The faculty of the BPH program has expertise in public health and community health education as well as many diverse specialty areas. BPH program courses are offered in the traditional classroom format at the main campus in Las Cruces, and in online format. All students are expected to complete courses in sequence so that prerequisite knowledge and skills are developed before taking advanced courses.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information essential to your success in the program. Please review the information and refer to it periodically throughout the program, as it includes important program policies and procedures. This information is supplemental to that which exists for University regulations specified in the NMSU catalog, available on-line at <https://nmsu.edu/>.

## *Health Educator – Standard Occupation Classification*

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) defines health educators (21-1091) as those who promote, maintain, and improve individual and community health by assisting individuals and communities to adopt healthy behaviors. Health educators also collect and analyze data to identify community needs prior to planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating programs designed to encourage healthy lifestyles, policies and environments. Health educators may also serve as a resource to assist individuals, other professionals, or the community, and may administer fiscal resources for health education programs. (Occupational Employment and Wages, BLS, US Department of Labor, May 2016).

As a health educator, you may develop and present programs on topics such as nutrition, HIV prevention, stress management, prenatal care, fitness education, sexual health, and substance abuse. Graduates are qualified to participate in the Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) examination given annually by the National Commission on Health Education Credentialing, Inc. Information can be found online at <http://www.nchec.org/credentialing/responsibilities/>

## *Department of Public Health Sciences Mission Statement*

To provide academic professional, and service excellence in preparing community health professionals who will demonstrate competent leadership, innovation, and technical expertise at local, state, national, and international levels, with particular emphasis on border and rural health problems in communities along the U.S./Mexico border.

## ***Research***

This rich research and service environment has enhanced NMSU's ranking as a RU/H (Research University with high research activity) by the Carnegie Foundation. The University's total external research expenditures exceeded \$163 million for the fiscal year 2010. NMSU has the distinction of being a US Department of Education-designated Minority Institution, Hispanic Serving Institution, and a NASA Space Grant University. Within the Department, faculty is involved in research spanning a wide range of public health issues.

## ***US/Mexico Border Emphasis***

NMSU is located approximately 50 miles from the international border between El Paso, Texas and Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico. This border spans 2,000 miles, from San Diego, CA to Brownsville, TX, and is comprised of 6 Mexican states and 4 US states. The population of the area is presently 12 million and is expected to double by 2025. NMSU's proximity to the border shapes and directs many of the research and service activities undertaken by the university and the BPH program relating to border health.

## ***The Bachelor of Public Health (BPH) Degree Program***

The BPH degree program prepares public health specialists to function in a variety of settings, including health programs at the local, state, and federal government levels; profit and nonprofit organizations and agencies; worksite settings; and educational institutions.

## ***BPH Program Professional Objectives***

- Prepare individuals to pursue a career working in community and public health programs and education in voluntary, private and governmental agencies.
- Successfully participate in the professional certification examination process.
- Encourage and promote public health education within the framework of legal, ethical, moral and professional standards.
- Provide leadership within the public health profession.
- Collaborate with other professionals, staff, communities and consumers in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of health education programs.
- Conduct and incorporate research findings in health education into practice settings.
- Establish and maintain a personal commitment to intellectual inquiry, self-directed learning, and professional growth.

## ***Department of Public Health Sciences Undergraduate Minors***

The NMSU Department of Public Health Sciences offers three undergraduate academic minors: 1) Public Health; 2) Gerontology; and 3) US-Mexico Border Health. Required and elective courses for each of these minors are available on the NMSU Department of Public Health Sciences website and from the BPH advisor.

## ***Department of Public Health Sciences Faculty***

**Elizabeth England-Kennedy, Ph.D.** (Assistant Professor) received her Ph.D. from the University of Arizona. She specializes in intersections of health and culture, health equity, social and environmental justice, behavioral health, suicide and suicidality, and homelessness.  
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**Joe Tomaka, Ph.D.** (Professor and Graduate Coordinator) received his doctorate from SUNY, Buffalo in Social and Health Psychology. He also serves as the Director for Crimson Research at NMSU and in that capacity is involved in areas of research design, data analysis, and program evaluation efforts.  
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## ***BPH Advisors***

**Letty Gallegos, MS, MA** serves as academic advisor and assists Pre-BPH and BPH students with their degree plans and course selections. Her office is located in the Center for Academic Advising and Student Support, Garcia Annex. [lettyg@nmsu.edu](mailto:lettyg@nmsu.edu) 575-646-2537

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## ***Academic Advising***

The advising office is located in the Center for Academic Advising and Student Support, Garcia Annex. Academic advisor(s) are available by appointment from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Monday-Friday.

It is the student's responsibility to meet with the advisor to discuss their course plans for each semester, field experience plans, plus any challenges or concerns they have with the program, classes, etc. If a student chooses to work through the BPH program without communicating regularly with his/her advisor about their course sequencing, course load, etc., they proceed at their own risk. They will assume the risk for their inability to possibly complete required responsibilities and graduate within a set time frame.

**It is strongly recommended that students meet with their advisor during the semester prior to the anticipated semester of graduation for a complete review of coursework and degree requirements.**

## ***Faculty Office Hours***

Each faculty member establishes his/her own office hours each semester. Students are responsible for communicating with faculty/advisors and establishing times to meet, as needed.

## ***The Department List-Servs***

The Department list-serv is a common and good way in which information is shared among faculty, students, and staff. To get on the list-serv if you are not already on it, please send a request by email to Mary Rasp at [mrasp@nmsu.edu](mailto:mrasp@nmsu.edu) or Jessica Vedamanikam at [jv2015@nmsu.edu](mailto:jv2015@nmsu.edu) providing your NMSU email and full name.

# AS A BPH STUDENT, YOUR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

## ***Student Expectations***

Students are expected to adhere to the highest level of professional and personal ethics at all times, in their personal demeanor, conduct, performance, plus their written and oral works. Please refer to the BPH Student Code of Conduct, towards the end of this document.

## ***Student Behavioral Standards***

All students are expected to honor and respect faculty, staff, guest speakers, and other students in the program. If a student has concerns about a particular assignment, grade, or anything else related to their academic program, they are asked to make an appointment and meet with the faculty member.

Plagiarism is a severe issue and students will be held to the highest standards. The NSMU Library has an excellent site addressing plagiarism; students are encouraged to visit the site and use it as a reference.

<http://lib.nmsu.edu/plagiarism/>

## ***Student Performance Standards***

Students are expected to attend and actively involve themselves in all class sessions. Students should become proficient in and use the American Psychological Association (APA), the latest edition, when formatting their written work. This is the recognized formatting style for the field of public health. Students are encouraged to purchase the APA manual. Students are to carefully proof all assignments, checking for grammatical errors, punctuation and other errors, before submitted assignments.

## ***Student Outcomes***

The program prepares students to work as community health educators. The skills acquired through the degree complement the Seven Areas of Responsibility & Competency for a Certified Health Education Specialist, which include:

- Area I: Assess Needs, Assets and Capacity for Health Education
- Area II: Plan Health Education
- Area III: Implement Health Education
- Area IV: Conduct Evaluation and Research Related to Health Education
- Area V: Administer and Manage Health Education
- Area VI: Serve as a Health Education Resource Person
- Area VII: Communicate and Advocate for Health and Health Education

For a complete list of the Competencies and Sub-competences from the National Commission for Public Health Education Credentialing (NCHEC) please refer to

<http://www.nche.org/credentialing/responsibilities/>

## ***BPH Application Requirements***

Students seeking admission to the Bachelor of Public Health degree in the Department of Public Health Sciences at NMSU are first admitted as pre-public health students. Students keep this designation until they have met the following admissions requirements:

- A cumulative grade point average of 2.5 after completing specified general education course work (Common core) and department pre-requisites.
- A grade of C or better in all departmental required courses (PHLS 150, PHLS 375 and PHLS 395).
- A grade of C or better in MATH 120, Math 121 or Math 142. A grade of B- or better in STAT 251 or A ST 311.
- Submission of an application packet that includes (1) a two-page statement of interest in the profession and the program, and (2) the formal application for the Bachelor of Public Health degree.

The Bachelor of Public Health degree program accepts applicants during both the Spring and Fall semesters.

Upon completion of the admission requirements, the student's application will be reviewed by the Public Health Sciences Undergraduate Admissions Committee for a final admission decision.

Applicants may receive a conditional acceptance into the program if they are currently enrolled in the last of the required pre-requisites at the time that they submit an application to the Bachelor of Public Health degree program. Such conditional acceptance will be revoked if the applicant does not successfully complete each of the pre-requisites.

The following courses are required of all BPH students:

### **NMSU Graduation Requirements (6 credits)**

Viewing a Wider World (3 credits) Viewing a Wider World (3 credits)

### **Departmental Math Requirements (6 credits)**

Math 1215, Intermediate Algebra (3 credits)

Math 1350G, Introduction to Statistics or Math 2350G, Statistical Methods (3 credits) with a grade of B- or higher

### **PHLS Requirements (9 credits)**

PHLS 1110G, Personal Health and Wellness (3 credits)

PHLS 375, Foundations of Community Health Education or PHLS 2110, Foundations of Health Education (3 credits)

PHLS 395, Foundations of Public Health or PHLS 2120 Essentials of Public Health (3 credits)

### **Community Health Education Core Courses (25 credits)**

PHLS 459, Infectious and Noninfectious Disease Prevention (3 credits)

PHLS 471, Health Informatics (3 credits)

PHLS 473, Health Program Planning (3 credits)

PHLS 475, Methods of Community Health Education (3 credits)

PHLS 478, Health Program Evaluation and Research (3 credits)

PHLS 496, Field Experience (6 credits)

PHLS 497, Public Health Seminar in Community Health Education (1 credit)

PHLS 499, Problems in Health Education (3 credits)

**Public Health Core (15 credits)**

PHLS 450, Epidemiology (3 credits)

PHLS 451, Biometrics and Health Research (3 credits)

PHLS 452, Environmental Health (3 credits)

PHLS 457, Administration of Health Programs (3 credits)

PHLS 476, Theory-Based Interventions (3 credits)

**Cultural Foundations Requirement (3 credits)** PHLS 461-69, (select one) (3 credits)

**Course descriptions and prerequisites:** <https://catalogs.nmsu.edu/nmsu/health-social-services/public-health-sciences/public-health-bachelor-public-health/>

The degree requires a minimum of 120 credit hours with 48 upper division credits.

Minor Option: Students may select a minor from another university department. The student should contact that department for requirements. The 18 credit hours of an approved minor may be counted as part of the 31 credit hours of electives required for graduation.

***Course Expectations***

Students are expected to apply themselves intensively to the study of the material covered by the courses in which they are enrolled. Accordingly, a high level of performance is required. The student must earn a grade of C or higher in all PHLS required courses in order to graduate. The undergraduate GPA required for graduation from NMSU is 2.0 cumulative; BPH students must have a departmental GPA of 2.0 to graduate from the program.

Courses transferred from the undeclared program at NMSU or from other institutions will be included in determining grade-point averages.

Students must attain a grade of C or better in all required PHLS core courses.

Any student who receives two or more grades of D or F in the required PHLS core courses must petition, in writing, to continue as a major. Unsuccessful petitioners will be dismissed from the program.

D and F Grades: Courses in which a student earns only a D or F may not be counted toward the BPH degree, although such grades are calculated in determining the grade-point average.

## ***Petition Guidelines***

Any student who has been previously admitted to the BPH program and who then receives two (2) or more grades of D or F in the required PHLS core courses must petition, in writing, to continue as a BPH major. Unsuccessful petitioners will be dismissed from the program.

Students who successfully petition to keep their seat in the BPH program must repeat the courses in which they previously received a letter grade of D or F. Should said student receive any further grades of D or F they will be irrevocably dismissed from the BPH program.

A complete petition to continue as a BPH major must be submitted to a BPH Academic Advisor, the Public Health Sciences Program Coordinator, or the Public Health Sciences Undergraduate Coordinator by the date given in the petition notification letter.

### **The petition process is as follows:**

- Write a 500-700 word statement indicating 1) what course(s) the student received the D(s) or F(s) in; 2) what caused the situation that led to the poor grade(s); and 3) how the student has addressed the situation so that it will not occur again.
- Submit the completed petition, electronically or in person, to the BPH Advisor who by the date given in the petition notification letter.
- The petition will be reviewed by the Public Health Sciences Undergraduate Coordinator, who will consult with the BPH Academic Advisor.
- The student will be notified of the outcome by email addressed to their NMSU email address, between 2-4 weeks after the petition is submitted.

## ***Independent Study (PHLS 490)***

Students interested in pursuing a specific topic or issue for credit may elect to take PHLS 490, Independent Study for 1-6 credits. Individual studies must have prior approval of department head. Students must identify a faculty member with whom they wish to conduct the Independent Study, establish a plan of action, complete an Independent Study form, and obtain the necessary signatures on the form before they may enroll in the PHLS 490 Independent Study course.

## ***Field Experience (PHLS 496)***

The field experience is a required and integral part of the BPH degree program in the NMSU Department of Public Health Sciences. A field experience allows you, the student, the opportunity to apply classroom learning to real-world problems and solutions. Placements are made according to your career goals and location preferences. The field experience should occur after the completion of junior year.

Students are encouraged to seek creative field experience placements that allow you to apply skills acquired in the classroom setting, assist a group or community with a public health/education issue, and promote personal and professional growth. Sites may be at local, regional, national, or international organizations or facilities. Students are to work with their academic advisor, undergraduate program coordinator, and the field experience coordinator in the selection of a placement.

BPH program students register for PHLS 496 (6 credit hours). Most BPH students complete 250 hours of Field Experience during this six-credit course. BPH students who previously completed Service Learning Experience as part of the AAS degree in Public Health from Doña Ana Community College complete 190 hours of Field Experience during their BPH program studies.

Complete information about the required field experience is located on the department website at: <http://publichealth.nmsu.edu/field-experience/>

## ***University Deadlines & Forms***

Refer to the NMSU website for forms and deadlines, which are specific for each semester. It is the student's responsibility to know the different deadlines and complete the necessary paperwork and activities, in order to graduate. **Important deadlines include: Registration; Last day to add a course; Last day to Drop with a W; Application for degree (graduation).** Website <https://records.nmsu.edu/>

## **DEPARTMENT RESOURCES FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS**

### ***Scholarships, College of Health and Social Services***

Refer to this site to learn of available scholarships available within NMSU.

A helpful scholarship timeline can be found at <http://chss.nmsu.edu/scholarships/>

### ***Smallwood Emergency Fund***

The Smallwood Emergency Fund exists for students in need of additional financial support due to an emergency situation. For application information:

<https://publichealth.nmsu.edu/undergraduates/current-students2/emergency-fund-undergraduates/>

### ***Public Health Student Organization (PHSO)***

The student organization is open to all students interested in health education and public health.

The organization meets throughout the year and participates in various events and activities in at the university and the community.

### ***CHSS Student Ambassadors***

The CHSS Student Ambassadors at New Mexico State University are an elite group of students who serve as liaisons to the NMSU campus and Las Cruces community. They are considered the face, hands and feet of the College. The students involved in this program come from our health-related majors including Nursing, Public Health and Social Work. This program is designed to further develop this select group of students' abilities as leaders, mentors, philanthropists and public servants as they engage in the life of our College, campus, city and state.

For more information or to inquire about the application process, please contact Patrick Mendoza, Student and Academic Program Coordinator in the College of Health and Social Services (CHSS) at [pmendoza@nmsu.edu](mailto:pmendoza@nmsu.edu) or 575-646-5549.

### ***Returned Peace Corps Volunteers Student Organization***

This group, established in 2009 is for RPCVs across campus to network, perform community service and maintain international connections. The organization is open to all undergraduates who have served in the United States Peace Corps. The organization also acts as a resource for students interested in serving in the Peace Corps after graduation from the BPH program.

## ***Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES)***

When students complete the BPH program, they are eligible to sit for the Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) exam. The exam is offered on the third Saturday, every April and October, at multiple testing sites around the nation. The earliest a person can sit for his/her CHES is at the exam date that would fall within 90 days of their graduation, e.g. May graduates can sit for the exam in April.

The mission of the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, Inc. (NCHEC) “is to improve the practice of health education, and serve the public and profession of health education by promoting professional development, strengthening professional preparation and practice, and certifying health education specialists.” (NCHEC, 2009).

Students are encouraged to prepare and sit for the exam. Obtaining one’s CHES is an indication of competency in the profession and continued commitment to growth, through the continuing education required to maintain one’s CHES. For more information, visit the NCHEC site at <https://www.nchec.org/>.



# GENERAL RESOURCES FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

## *Resources and Services Available on Campus*

There is a wide range of resources and support available to students on campus. Please visit <http://currentstudents.nmsu.edu/> to gain an overview of resources and links for:

- **Academic Resources:** For course schedules, catalogs, academic colleges, advising information and more: <http://advising.nmsu.edu>
- **Campus Media:** KRUX 91.5 FM, KRWG 90.7 FM, KRWG-TV, The Round Up
- **Careers and Employment:** Career Exploration Center, Career Services, On Campus Non-Workstudy
- **Computer and Web Services:** Accounts and Passwords, Canvas, Computing Labs, Email, Helpdesk, myNMSU, Network Access, Pete's one-stop-shop
- **Conduct and Policies:** Disciplinary Policies and Procedures, General Policies and Procedures, Student Code of Conduct, Student Judicial Affairs
- **Costs and Financial Aid:** Cost and Payment Options, Financial Aid, Scholarships, Tuition Waivers, Work Study
- **Health and Wellness:** Campus Health Center, Counseling Center, Emergency Planning and Preparedness, Student Health, Wellness, and Recreation; Wellness, Alcohol and Violence Education Program (WAVE)
- **Library Services** Article Search, Copy Center, Hours, Library Catalogs, Resources
- **On Campus Services:** Aggie Transit, Bookstore, Campus Dining, Housing and Residential Life, ID Card Services, Parking, Police Department, Recreational Sports, Special Events
- **Student Involvement:** Campus Activities, Family Resource Center, Greek Life, Interfaith Council, Student Government (ASNMSU), Student Organizations, Student Union (Corbett Center), Union Program Council
- **Support Programs:** American Indian Program, Black Programs, Campus Tutoring Service, Chicano Programs, Sexual and Gender Diversity Resource Center, Student Accessibility Services, Student Success Centers, Veteran's Programs

## *Computer Labs – Times & Locations*

Student Technology provides access to and assistance with computers and other technological needs that students may have. They also have an equipment rental program for students. They provide an online list of Las Cruces main campus technology resources and locations to help guide students. The ICT Student Technology & Planning is located in Hardman & Jacobs Undergraduate Learning Center (HJLC) 219, <https://ict.nmsu.edu/student-resources/>, 575-646-4857.

## *The Writing Center*

The Writing Center is a free service available for all NMSU students. Students can make an appointment, drop in at the Center, or seek help through their online consultation. Website - <https://towc.nmsu.edu/>  
Clara Belle Williams Hall (English Building), Room 102, (575) 646-5297

## ***Student Success Centers***

If you are an NMSU student who wants to maximize your learning potential and get better grades, or are seeking information on all support services across campus, from tutoring to academic advising the Student Success Centers can help at <http://ssc.nmsu.edu>

## ***Employment Opportunities on Campus***

Please visit for a current listing of job opportunities for students. This site has links for those who qualify for work study employment, non-work study opportunities and off campus openings. Website - <http://careerservices.nmsu.edu/>

Students may also refer to local newspapers, the Las Cruces Sun-News, the Bulletin, and the El Paso Times, for want ads. Bulletin board postings, faculty, the Department list-serve, and other students are good sources of information about jobs.

## ***Financial Aid Fellowship and Grant Information***

Refer to <http://fa.nmsu.edu/> to learn about NMSU financial aid services, download forms and accept awards.

## ***Campus Organizations***

Please visit a list the campus activities website at: <http://campusactivities.nmsu.edu/>

## ***Regional Public Health Organizations***

- New Mexico Public Health Association (NMPHA) <http://www.nmpha.org/>
- Paso Del Norte Society for Public Health Education (Paso Del Norte SOPHE) <https://www.sophe.org/event/paso-del-norte-promoting-health-health-equity-paso-del-norte-region/>
- Texas Public Health Association <https://www.texaspha.org/>

## ***National Public Health Organizations***

- American Public Health Association (APHA) <https://www.apha.org/>
- Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) (national organization) <http://www.sophe.org>
- American Association for Health Education <http://www.cnheo.org/aahe.htm>
- American College Health Association <http://www.acha.org>
- American School Health Association <http://www.ashaweb.org>
- Association of State and Territorial Health Officials <https://www.astho.org/>
- Society of State Directors of Health and Physical Education <http://thesociety.org/>

# **BPH STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

This departmental policy applies to all students pursuing any degree program, minor, or course offered by the Department of Public Health Sciences. This departmental policy is in addition to all relevant and related policies at New Mexico State University, including:

- **NMSU Student Code of Conduct** located on-line at <http://studenthandbook.nmsu.edu/>

Violations of this departmental policy will be reviewed by the Academic Department Head, and may involve a review and recommendation for action by others (e.g. a faculty review panel, a student review panel, etc.), at the discretion of the department head. Sanctions will depend on the severity of the violation, and can range from a written warning, to dismissal from the class, program, department, or university.

## ***Student Code of Conduct, Department of Public Health Sciences***

Each student is responsible for becoming familiar with the Department of Public Health Sciences Student Code of Conduct. If a student is unsure about the application or interpretation of the Student Code of Conduct, it is her or his responsibility to seek clarification from department administrators. The Code of Conduct addresses the department's expectations of students in five areas: discrimination, harassment, professional conduct, academic integrity, and acceptable use of electronic communication.

### ***Discrimination***

The Department of Public Health Sciences does not discriminate or tolerate discrimination by or against members of the department community on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, mental or physical disability, veteran status, marital status, or other protected characteristics in the admission to, access to, or treatment or employment in any of its programs or activities.

### ***Harassment***

The Department of Public Health Sciences is committed to maintaining an environment that is free of unwelcome and disrespectful conduct and communication and in which department members feel safe and comfortable. As such, it is a violation of this policy for any departmental employee, instructor, or student to engage in harassing conduct or communication directed toward another employee, instructor, student, or any other person affiliated with the department. Unwelcome conduct, directed at others and based on other protected characteristics, such as race, sexual orientation, gender, religion, age, and other characteristics as set forth in the department's nondiscrimination policy, violates both the harassment policy and the discrimination policy.

NMSU assists students in finding the resources needed to obtain assistance and guidance in resolving problems that students may encounter. The Office of the Dean of Students provides an online form that you can use to submit your concerns in order to assist you in finding the help that you need, or if you simply want to go on record letting the University's administration know about problems you have encountered. The form can be accessed at <https://www.nmsu.edu/studenthelp.html>. In addition allegations of wrongdoing of any kind, including illegal or unethical conduct, violations of Title IX or violations of university policy, can be reported through the confidential reporting line at

<http://www.ethicspoint.com> or 1-866-384-4277. The **Office of the Dean of Students** is located in Corbett Center Student Union, Room 207 and their phone number is 575-646-1722. The **Office of Institutional Equity** can be reached at 575-646-3635, and by email at [equity@nmsu.edu](mailto:equity@nmsu.edu). Their website is located at <https://equity.nmsu.edu/>.

## ***Professional Conduct***

As part of its commitment to integrity and respect in the community in which it operates, the Department of Public Health Sciences expects that its students will conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner at all times, both when interacting within the department community and when representing the department at events outside the institution. In that regard, students will not at any time engage in unduly disruptive, threatening, unethical, disrespectful, or abusive conduct toward other members of the department community, including fellow students, instructors, and staff.

## ***Academic Integrity***

The Department of Public Health Sciences considers academic integrity to be essential for each student's intellectual development. As an institution fundamentally concerned with the free exchange of ideas, the department depends on the academic integrity of each of its members. In the spirit of this free exchange, students and instructors of the Department of Public Health Sciences recognize the necessity and accept the responsibility for academic integrity. A student who enrolls in the department thereby agrees to respect and acknowledge the research and ideas of others in his or her work and to abide by those regulations governing work stipulated by the university, college, or academic program, and, in turn, the instructor. The department also recognizes that, in an educational community, the pressure to succeed can often be intense. Students who feel overwhelmed by their academic and personal obligations may be tempted to take shortcuts that may compromise their honesty and integrity. To help students derive the full benefit of the educational opportunity provided by the department, this section defines a violation of academic integrity and gives examples of actions that are considered dishonest. The department encourages students who may have questions or concerns about the definition and forms of academic integrity violations described herein to contact their course instructor or academic advisor. A violation of academic integrity is any action or attempted action that may result in creating an unfair academic advantage for the student or an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any other member or members of the academic community. Student work may be monitored for evidence of plagiarism, using an anti-plagiarism application, database, or service of the Department of Public Health Sciences' choosing. Students grant to the Department of Public Health Sciences permission to review work submitted for the purpose of comment, criticism, and grading of the work; to distribute the work to other Department of Public Health Sciences students for educational purposes; to submit the work to the anti-plagiarism application, database, or service of the Department of Public Health Sciences' choosing; to make and retain copies of the work; to image the work for computerized grading; and to archive certain work in a publicly accessible collection. Academic integrity violations include the following:

***Plagiarism:*** Plagiarism is defined as use of intellectual material produced by another person without acknowledging its source. For example:

- Wholesale copying of passages from works of others into an assignment, paper, discussion board posting, or thesis or dissertation without acknowledgment.

- Using the views, opinions, or insights of another without acknowledgment.
- Paraphrasing another person's characteristic or original phraseology, metaphor, or other literary device without acknowledgment

**Students' Use of Their Own Scholarly Work:** During their studies at the Department of Public Health Sciences, students may find themselves writing for a second, third, or fourth time on the same topic; regardless, their writing is expected to reflect new approaches and insights into that topic to demonstrate their intellectual growth.

The Department of Public Health Sciences recognizes that there may be some overlap between the requirements, assignments, and inquiry for different courses. In general, students may use only small portions of documents as background or foundational material for additional development in a subsequent assignment or research project. Students may not merely copy and paste substantial sections from one paper to another. Any use of prior work is at the discretion of the instructor: students must receive prior approval from their instructor, who may request a copy of the previous work. Fair use laws must be respected for published documents.

When using their own scholarly work in subsequent research, students should cite themselves as a primary author and their previous coursework as unpublished papers, as shown in the APA publication manual.

**Cheating:** Cheating is defined as fraud, deceit, or dishonesty in an academic assignment. It includes using or attempting to use materials, or assisting others in using materials that are prohibited or inappropriate in the context of the academic assignment in question. For example:

- Copying or attempting to copy from others during an exam or on an assignment.
- Communicating answers with another person during an exam.
- Preprogramming a calculator to contain answers or other unauthorized information for exams.
- Using unauthorized materials, prepared answers, written notes, or concealed information during an exam.
- Allowing others to complete an assignment or portion of an assignment, including the use of a commercial term paper service.
- Submitting the same assignment for more than one course without the prior approval of all the instructors involved.
- Collaborating on an exam or assignment with any other person without prior approval from the course instructor.
- Taking an exam for another person or having someone take an exam for you.

**Providing False Information.** For example:

- Furnishing false information in the context of an academic assignment.
- Fabricating or altering information or data and presenting it as legitimate.
- Providing false or misleading information to an instructor or any other department staff member.

**Copyright Violation.** The Department of Public Health Sciences recognizes and respects intellectual property rights. As part of its mission to maintain the highest standards for ethical conduct, the department requires its employees, instructors, students, and other department community members to use copyrighted materials in a lawful manner. No employee, instructor, student, nor other department community member may reproduce any copyrighted work in print, video, or electronic form in violation of the law. The easiest way to avoid violating the law is by receiving the express written permission of the copyright holder. Copyright laws in the United States may protect works even if they are not registered with the U.S. Copyright Office and even if they do not carry the copyright symbol.

Copyrighted works include, but are not limited to, printed articles from publications, television and radio programs, videotapes, music performances, photographs, training materials, manuals, documentation, software programs, databases, World Wide Web pages, and CD-ROMs. In general, the laws that apply to printed materials are also applicable to visual and electronic media. The Department of Public Health Sciences directs its employees, instructors, students, and other department community members to obtain appropriate permission from copyright holders directly, or their licensing representative, when reproduction or duplication exceeds fair use. The fair use doctrine allows limited exemptions to copyright infringement liability when copyrighted works are used for purposes such as comment, criticism, teaching, scholarship, or research, particularly when the use of the work is limited in amount and scope and is for noncommercial purposes.

**Misrepresentation of Credentials.** Statements made and documents supplied by the Department of Public Health Sciences applicants and students must be complete and accurate. The department will not tolerate any misrepresentation by a student or applicant of past or current academic programs, degrees, or professional accomplishments. If unexplained discrepancies appear between statements or documents provided to Department of Public Health Sciences and information obtained otherwise, except in the case of misspellings and other such inadvertent errors, applicants may be rejected for admission and enrolled students may be dismissed.

**Theft or Damage of Property.** For example:

- Sabotaging or stealing another person's assignment, paper, project, electronic hardware, or software.
- Obtaining improper access to, or electronically interfering with, the property of another person or the department via computer or other means.
- Obtaining a copy of an assignment or exam prior to its approved release by the instructor.

**Alteration of University Documents.** For example:

- Forging an instructor's or department official's signature on any document.
- Submitting an altered transcript of grades to or from another institution or employer.
- Putting your name on, or copying, another person's paper or assignment.
- Altering a previously graded exam or assignment for purposes of a grade appeal or for gaining points in a regarding process.

## ***Acceptable Use of Electronic Communication***

Electronic communication networks, the Internet, and any NMSU Electronic Systems are not to be used to cause harm, no matter how minor, to any individual, entity, or facility.

### **The following electronic communication activities are specifically prohibited:**

- Harassing other users.
- Engaging in illegal activities.
- Contributing to unwelcome and/or unwarranted commercial pressure.
- Accessing and/or using accounts of others without their permission.
- Giving away or selling information about accounts to allow other non-owners to access or use accounts.
- Destroying or damaging equipment, software, or data belonging to others.
- Copying copyrighted materials without authorization.
- Disrupting service to other users or the system.
- Monitoring electronic communications without authorization.
- Disclosing passwords to others.
- Using illegally obtained software on the system.
- Copying, altering, or deleting someone else's files without that person's permission.
- Forging messages.
- Hacking passwords and systems.
- Sending harassing, unwelcome, or threatening messages.
- Sending unauthorized anonymous messages.
- Sending bulk unsolicited messages.
- Reading someone else's files without permission.
- Contributing to system attacks, denial of services, and other malicious uses of the network and systems.
- Libeling or slandering any person.
- Invading another person's privacy.

# CODE OF ETHICS FOR THE HEALTH EDUCATION PROFESSION

## *Preamble*

The Health Education profession is dedicated to excellence in the practice of promoting individual, family, group, organizational, and community health. Guided by common goals to improve the human condition, Health Educators are responsible for upholding the integrity and ethics of the profession as they face the daily challenges of making decisions. Health Educators value diversity in society and embrace a multiplicity of approaches in their work to support the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of all people.

The Code of Ethics provides a framework of shared values within the professions in which Health Education is practiced. The Code of Ethics is grounded in fundamental ethical principles including: promoting justice, doing good, and avoidance of harm. The responsibility of each health educator is to aspire to the highest possible standards of conduct and to encourage the ethical behavior of all those with whom they work.

Regardless of job title, professional affiliation, work setting, or population served, Health Educators should promote and abide by these guidelines when making professional decisions.

## *Article I: Responsibility to the Public*

A Health Educator's responsibilities are to educate, promote, maintain, and improve the health of individuals, families, groups and communities. When a conflict of issues arises among individuals, groups, organizations, agencies, or institutions, health educators must consider all issues and give priority to those that promote the health and well-being of individuals and the public while respecting both the principles of individual autonomy, human rights and equality.

**Section 1:** Health Educators support the right of individuals to make informed decisions regarding their health, as long as such decisions pose no risk to the health of others.

**Section 2:** Health Educators encourage actions and social policies that promote maximizing health benefits and eliminating or minimizing preventable risks and disparities for all affected parties.

**Section 3:** Health Educators accurately communicate the potential benefits, risks and/or consequences associated with the services and programs that they provide.

**Section 4:** Health Educators accept the responsibility to act on issues that can affect the health of individuals, families, groups and communities.

**Section 5:** Health Educators are truthful about their qualifications and the limitations of their education, expertise and experience in providing services consistent with their respective level of professional competence.

**Section 6:** Health Educators are ethically bound to respect, assure, and protect the privacy, confidentiality, and dignity of individuals.

**Section 7:** Health Educators actively involve individuals, groups, and communities in the entire educational process in an effort to maximize the understanding and personal responsibilities of those who may be affected.



**Section 8:** Health Educators respect and acknowledge the rights of others to hold diverse values, attitudes, and opinions.

## ***Article II: Responsibility to the Profession***

Health Educators are responsible for their professional behavior, for the reputation of their profession, and for promoting ethical conduct among their colleagues.

**Section 1:** Health Educators maintain, improve, and expand their professional competence through continued study and education; membership, participation, and leadership in professional organizations; and involvement in issues related to the health of the public.

**Section 2:** Health Educators model and encourage nondiscriminatory standards of behavior in their interactions with others.

**Section 3:** Health Educators encourage and accept responsible critical discourse to protect and enhance the profession.

**Section 4:** Health Educators contribute to the profession by refining existing and developing new practices, and by sharing the outcomes of their work.

**Section 5:** Health Educators are aware of real and perceived professional conflicts of interest, and promote transparency of conflicts.

**Section 6:** Health Educators give appropriate recognition to others for their professional contributions and achievements.

**Section 7:** Health educators openly communicate to colleagues, employers and professional organizations when they suspect unethical practice that violates the profession's Code of Ethics.

## ***Article III: Responsibility to Employers***

Health Educators recognize the boundaries of their professional competence and are accountable for their professional activities and actions.

**Section 1:** Health Educators accurately represent their qualifications and the qualifications of others whom they recommend.

**Section 2:** Health Educators use and apply current evidence-based standards, theories, and guidelines as criteria when carrying out their professional responsibilities.

**Section 3:** Health Educators accurately represent potential and actual service and program outcomes to employers.

**Section 4:** Health Educators anticipate and disclose competing commitments, conflicts of interest, and endorsement of products.

**Section 5:** Health Educators acknowledge and openly communicate to employers, expectations of job-related assignments that conflict with their professional ethics

**Section 6:** Health Educators maintain competence in their areas of professional practice.

**Section 7:** Health Educators exercise fiduciary responsibility and transparency in allocating resources associated with their work.

## ***Article IV: Responsibility in the Delivery of Health Education***

Health Educators deliver health education with integrity. They respect the rights, dignity, confidentiality, and worth of all people by adapting strategies and methods to the needs of diverse populations and communities.

**Section 1:** Health Educators are sensitive to social and cultural diversity and are in accord with the law, when planning and implementing programs.

**Section 2:** Health Educators remain informed of the latest advances in health education theory, research, and practice.

**Section 3:** Health educators use strategies and methods that are grounded in and contribute to the development of professional standards, theories, guidelines, data and experience.

**Section 4:** Health Educators are committed to rigorous evaluation of both program effectiveness and the methods used to achieve results.

**Section 5:** Health Educators promote the adoption of healthy lifestyles through informed choice rather than by coercion or intimidation.

**Section 6:** Health Educators communicate the potential outcomes of proposed services, strategies, and pending decisions to all individuals who will be affected.

**Section 7:** Health educators actively collaborate and communicate with professionals of various educational backgrounds and acknowledge and respect the skills and contributions of such groups.

## ***Article V: Responsibility in Research and Evaluation***

Health Educators contribute to the health of the population and to the profession through research and evaluation activities. When planning and conducting research or evaluation, health educators do so in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations, organizational and institutional policies, and professional standards.

**Section 1:** Health Educators adhere to principles and practices of research and evaluation that do no harm to individuals, groups, society, or the environment.

**Section 2:** Health Educators ensure that participation in research is voluntary and is based upon the informed consent of the participants.

**Section 3:** Health Educators respect and protect the privacy, rights, and dignity of research participants, and honor commitments made to those participants.

**Section 4:** Health Educators treat all information obtained from participants as confidential unless otherwise required by law. Participants are fully informed of the disclosure procedures.

**Section 5:** Health Educators take credit, including authorship, only for work they have actually performed and give appropriate credit to the contributions of others.

**Section 6:** Health Educators who serve as research or evaluation consultants maintain confidentiality of results unless permission is granted or in order to protect the health and safety of others.

**Section 7:** Health Educators report the results of their research and evaluation objectively, accurately, and in a timely fashion to effectively foster the translation of research into practice.

**Section 8:** Health Educators openly share conflicts of interest in the research, evaluation, and dissemination process.

## ***Article VI: Responsibility in Professional Preparation***

Those involved in the preparation and training of Health Educators have an obligation to accord learners the same respect and treatment given other groups by providing quality education that benefits the profession and the public.

**Section 1:** Health Educators select students for professional preparation programs based upon equal opportunity for all, and the individual's academic performance, abilities, and potential contribution to the profession and the public's health.

**Section 2:** Health Educators strive to make the educational environment and culture conducive to the health of all involved, and free from all forms of discrimination and harassment.

**Section 3:** Health Educators involved in professional preparation and development engage in careful planning; present material that is accurate,, developmentally and culturally appropriate; provide reasonable and prompt feedback; state clear and reasonable expectations; and conduct fair assessments and prompt evaluations of learners.

**Section 4:** Health Educators provide objective, comprehensive, and accurate counseling to learners about career opportunities, development, and advancement, and assist learners in securing professional employment or further educational opportunities.

**Section 5:** Health Educators provide adequate supervision and meaningful opportunities for the professional development of learners.

Approved by the Coalition of National Health Education Organizations, February 8, 2011

Coalition of National Health Education Organizations (2011). *Code of Ethics*  
Long Version Retrieved from <http://www.cnheo.org>

## **APPENDIX A**

### ***What Is Health Education?***

- Health education is a social science that draws from the biological, environmental, psychological, physical and medical sciences to promote health and prevent disease, disability and premature death through education-driven voluntary behavior change activities.
- Health education is the development of individual, group, institutional, community and systemic strategies to improve health knowledge, attitudes, skills and behavior.
- The purpose of health education is to positively influence the health behavior of individuals and communities, as well as the living and working conditions that influence their health.

### ***Why Is Health Education Important?***

- Health education improves the health status of individuals, families, communities, states, and the nation.
- Health education enhances the quality of life for all people.
- Health education reduces premature deaths.
- By focusing on prevention, health education reduces the costs (both financial and human) that individuals, employers, families, insurance companies, medical facilities, communities, the state and the nation would spend on medical treatment.

### ***Who Provides Health Education?***

- Some people specialize in health education (trained and/or certified health education specialists). Others perform selected health education functions as part of what they consider their primary responsibility (medical treatment, nursing, social work, physical therapy, oral hygiene, etc.). Lay workers learn on the job to do specific, limited educational tasks to encourage healthy behavior.
- Para-professionals and health professionals from other disciplines are not familiar with the specialized body of health education knowledge, skills, theories, and research, nor is it their primary interest or professional development focus. This will limit their effectiveness with clients and communities, and their cost-effectiveness.
- Health education requires intensive specialized study. Over 250 colleges and universities in the US offer undergraduate and graduate (Masters and Doctorate) degrees in school or community health education, health promotion and other related titles.
- Nationally, voluntary credentialing as a Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) is available from the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, Inc (NCHCEC).
- CHES competencies (health education needs assessment; program planning, implementation and evaluation; service coordination; and Health Education needs, concerns, resource communication) are generic to the practice of health education, whether it takes place in schools, colleges, workplaces, medical care settings, public health settings or other educational settings of the community. CHES are re-certified every five years based on documentation of participation in 75 hours of approved continuing education activities.

## ***Where Are Health Educators Employed?***

- In **schools**, health educators teach health as a subject and promote and implement Coordinated School Health Programs, including health services, student, staff and parent health education, and promote healthy school environments and school-community partnerships. At the school district level they develop education methods and materials; coordinate, promote, and evaluate programs; and write funding proposals.
- Working on a **college/university campus**, health educators are part of a team working to create an environment in which students feel empowered to make healthy choices and create a caring community. They identify needs; advocate and do community organizing; teach whole courses or individual classes; develop mass media campaigns; and train peer educators, counselors, and/or advocates. They address issues related to disease prevention; consumer, environmental, emotional, sexual health; first aid, safety and disaster preparedness; substance abuse prevention; human growth and development; and nutrition and eating issues. They may manage grants and conduct research.
- In **companies**, health educators perform or coordinate employee counseling as well as education services, employee health risk appraisals, and health screenings. They design, promote, lead and/or evaluate programs about weight control, hypertension, nutrition, substance abuse prevention, physical fitness, stress management and smoking cessation; develop educational materials; and write grants for money to support these projects. They help companies meet occupational health and safety regulations, work with the media, and identify community health resources for employees.
- In **health care settings**, health educators educate patients about medical procedures, operations, services and therapeutic regimens, create activities and incentives to encourage use of services by high risk patients; conduct staff training and consult with other health care providers about behavioral, cultural or social barriers to health; promote self-care; develop activities to improve patient participation on clinical processes; educate individuals to protect, promote or maintain their health and reduce risky behaviors; make appropriate community-based referrals, and write grants.
- In **community organizations** and **government agencies**, health educators help a community identify its needs, draw upon its problem-solving abilities and mobilize its resources to develop, promote, implement and evaluate strategies to improve its own health status.
- Health educators do community organizing and outreach, grant writing, coalition building, and advocacy, and develop, produce, and evaluate mass media health campaigns.

## ***What Does A Health Educator Do?***

- Assess individual and community needs
- Plan health education programs
- Develop health education programs
- Coordinate health education programs
- Implement health education programs
- Manage health education programs & personnel
- Evaluate health education programs
- Write grants
- Build coalitions
- Identify resources
- Make referrals
- Develop social marketing and mass media campaigns
- Organize/ mobilize communities for action
- Handle controversial health issues/content
- Advocate for health related issues
- Encourage healthy behavior
- Use a variety of education/training methods
- Develop audio, visual, print and electronic materials
- Conduct research
- Write scholarly articles

Coalition of National Health Education Organizations (2011). *What is Health Education?*

Retrieved from: <http://www.cnheo.org>