

PUBLIC HEALTH

Public Health is an interdisciplinary program that explores all the perspectives, roles, institutions, and policies required to keep our populations safe from illness and injury. Unlike the medical field, which focuses on the health of individuals, Public Health focuses on the health of communities and populations at local, national, and global levels. It covers a broad range of topics such as the safety of food, water, and highways, and the prevention of infectious disease. It examines how individual behaviors and environmental factors contribute to the prevention of chronic health conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.

STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Learn and Do More at RWU

With a focus on experiential learning at RWU, Public Health majors:

- Partner with organizations and government agencies to improve the health of communities. Students have conducted research, influenced policies, and assisted with the administration of public health initiatives at the local and state levels. They have engaged in projects such as conducting a field study of Rhode Island public bus transportation, studying the impact of community cooking classes with the Bristol Health Equity Zone, and examining state policies on addressing Lyme disease.
- Gain real-world experience through two semester-long practicums that explore contemporary public health issues. The senior field experience can be conducted as either a faculty-guided internship or a research project.
- Study abroad to explore other cultures and the public health issues they face. A course in Jamaica focuses on promoting mental health well-being among the local youth. Faculty-guided programs with the Foundation for International Medical Relief of Children (FIMRC) have brought students to Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic to assist with public health initiatives at medical centers and elementary schools.

- + **Are you interested in exploring the diverse perspectives involved in disease prevention?**
- + **Are you fascinated by complex ethical questions about individual freedom, social responsibility, and human rights?**
- + **Are you a creative thinker who seeks evidence to come up with solutions that are practical and effective?**

CAREER OUTLOOK

RWU **Public Health** alumni are working as:

- Emergency response and preparedness manager
- Epidemiologist
- Health and safety inspector
- Data analyst
- Community outreach specialist
- Health Department administrator

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Isabella Fabrizio '19

Public Health B.A., minor in Psychology
Enrolled in the Accelerated Nursing Program at Duke University

Bella participated in Public Health initiatives with FIMRC in Nicaragua, a study abroad course in Jamaica, and interned at the R.I. Department of Health, Rise for Hunger, and Clinica Esperanza.

CURRICULUM

Students can earn a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) or a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Public Health.

Bachelor of Arts in Public Health

The B.A. degree is a 49-credit interdisciplinary program that explores the social, behavioral, cultural, economic, and administrative dimensions of health and health policy. B.A. students build a strong foundation in the principal competencies of Public Health and choose a specialization in either Health Policy and Administration, or Community and Health Equity. Both specializations examine how the social environment affects population health outcomes, but each track emphasizes a different dimension of the health-society relationship.

- **Health Policy and Administration**

This specialization prepares students for careers related to health advocacy, policy analysis, health legislation, and public administration. Students who pursue this specialization complete a range of electives that reflect the breadth of knowledge and skills relevant to the fields of health policy and health administration. Competency areas include: public policy, health policy and law, social dynamics and organization, market economics, and administration and management.

- **Community and Health Equity**

This specialization prepares students for careers related to community health education, community outreach and assessment, health communication, and project management. Students who pursue this track choose a variety of electives that reflect the breadth of knowledge and skills required in public health practice and research at the community level. Competency areas include: human behavior and development, communication, social and cultural diversity, social justice and inequalities, and social and behavioral determinants of health.

Bachelor of Science in Public Health

The B.S. degree is a 56-credit interdisciplinary program designed for students interested in biomedical and epidemiological research and their applications to public health. The program explores the following domains of public health: foundations of scientific knowledge (including biological and life sciences and the concepts of health and disease), application of biological principles in public health, interventions to promote and protect health, and the fundamental methods and tools of public health data collection, use, and analysis. The degree prepares students for careers in biomedical laboratory research, health education, occupational health and safety, and public health preparedness and for graduate work in public health, research, medicine, or the health professions.

Practicum and Internship Opportunities

Public Health majors benefit from guaranteed field experience. RWU students have worked at:

- American Lung Association
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- National Alliance on Mental Illness
- R.I. Department of Health
- Lifespan Health Systems

Prepare for Graduate and Medical Studies

Many students continue their studies in graduate school in Public Health and related fields. Students interested in a career in the health professions develop an academic and experiential plan with guidance from faculty health profession advisors. Our students pursue a wide range of professional training and our alumni include physician assistants, physicians, veterinarians, occupational therapists, nurses, and physical therapists.

Last Updated: July 2021

**OVER 80% OF
RWU STUDENTS
GRADUATE WITH
MORE THAN JUST
A SINGLE MAJOR**

Design your experience with your passion and have a unique career advantage with a minor or double major. Many students combine **Public Health** with:

- Psychology
- Biology
- International Relations
- Management
- Sustainability Studies