Undergraduate Major or Minor in Public Health

What is Public Health?
Public Health is a coordinated, committed effort that:

• Tackles current issues such as bioterrorism, West Nile Virus, violence prevention, health disparities, and obesity
• Prevents epidemics and the spread of disease
• Protects against environmental hazards
• Prevents injuries
• Promotes and encourages healthy behaviors
• Responds to disasters and assists community recovery
• Assures the quality and accessibility of health services

The achievements of Public Health have dramatically improved our quality of life: an increase in life expectancy, world wide reduction in infant and child mortality, and the elimination or reduction of many communicable diseases. Professionals with Public Health knowledge are increasingly called upon to address population-based health issues, and the demand for leaders in this field continues to grow.

Who should major in public health?
The major is an ideal option for students interested in learning about multidisciplinary approaches to preventing disease and promoting health on a population-level. Due to its liberal arts approach, the major is intended to provide students with a useful foundation for pursuing an advanced degree in a variety of fields. It is intended to convey technical information and analytic skills, but with a liberal arts philosophical base. Therefore, it has the educational objectives of nurturing critical thinking, analysis, and synthesis of information, and recognizing the historical and societal associations of current trends in public health and health care delivery, including an introduction to disease control and health promotion interventions, and determinants of health from a global perspective.

Who should minor in Public Health?
The minor in Public Health is designed for students who wish to complement their core major with some knowledge of Health. Due to its highly interdisciplinary nature, the field of Public Health is unique. It involves the knowledge and application of a variety of disciplines in its research, teaching, service and practice activities, including: biology, sociology, anthropology, public policy math, business, education, psychology, and many others. It has appropriately been described as a liberal art.

How can I get more information?
Please contact Lue Ellis, the Undergraduate Program Coordinator, for more information. She may be reached at (518) 442-3155 or via email at llellis@albany.edu. You may also check out our website at http://www.albany.edu/sph/undergrad.php.