
The Certificate in Public Health Fundamentals & Principles is designed to give students a first look at public health or to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the field. Since coursework is taken primarily online, it is structured to accommodate working professionals.

ADMISSIONS INFORMATION

Q: How do I apply?
A. Admission criteria includes:
   - Proof of a Bachelor’s degree (official transcript) from academic institution(s) attended*;
   - Completion of a college-level pre-calculus course;
   - Letter of intent describing your background and reasons for pursuing the certificate;
   - Completed application and payment of fee;
   - Supplemental Application recommended [http://www.albany.edu/graduate/PCH_CERT_Supplemental_Application_Form.pdf]
   - Current resume;
   - Evidence of proficiency in English (International applicants ONLY)

*must have an official English translation if the original is not in English

Q: What are the application deadlines?
A: The deadlines to apply each semester are:

   *July 1 (Fall Admission)  *November 1 (Spring Admission)  *April 1  (Summer Admission)

Since these are “soft” deadlines, applications may be accepted past the deadline dates, based on space in courses.

Q: Do I need to take the GREs?
A. GRE scores and letters of recommendation are NOT required for the certificate program. However, GREs are required for admission into the MPH or MS program if students decide to apply once they complete the certificate. If a certificate student maintains a GPA of 3.0 or above during their coursework with a minimum of 3 courses with a B or above, students may request a waiver of the GRE requirement for entry into the MPH program. The Admissions Committee reserves the right to require the GRE scores on a case-by-case basis. GREs are NOT waived for the MS.

Q: Can International students apply?
A: Yes, international students can apply for the certificate program.

Q: Do I need to have previous public health experience to be accepted into the program?
A: No, previous public health experience is not required. Although many students in the program may be working in public health settings, the program is designed to introduce students to different aspects of public health.

Q: What does the program cost?
A: Tuition varies for in-state and out-of-state graduate students. Generally students enrolled in this program take 3 or 6 credits each semester (1-2 courses). More information about the current University at Albany tuition and fees can be found on the Student Financial Center homepage. [http://www.albany.edu/studentservices/].
**Q:** If I apply and do not get accepted, can I reapply?

A: Yes! However, you will be required to submit an application through the main University at Albany Graduate Admissions Office (via the Apply Now! site) each time you apply, with applicable fees.

**COMPLETING THE PROGRAM**

**Q:** How long does it take to complete the program?

A: That depends. The certificate program schedule is compiled well in advance so that instructors can be identified within the departments to teach the online courses. The program is structured so that students can typically complete the coursework in 18 months, since it is designed to be completed on a part-time basis. As such, classes are generally offered every other semester. Because of the workload involved in completing an online course, it is recommended that students take no more than 2 courses (6 credits) each semester.

Please refer to the current Certificate Program Chart to see when courses are offered to complete the program.

**Q:** How many credits do I need to complete the program?

A: The program of study includes six (6) Master of Public Health (MPH) core courses, totaling 18 graduate credits:

- EPI 501 Principles and Methods of Epidemiology I (3 credits)
- EPI 503 Principles of Public Health (3 credits)
- EPI 551 Principles of Statistical Interference I (3 credits)
- HPM 525 Social and Behavioral Aspects of Health (3 credits)
- HPM 500 Health Care Organization, Financing and Delivery (3 credits)
- EHS 590 Introduction to Environmental Health (3 credits)

Course descriptions can be found at: [http://www.albany.edu/sph/phfcourses.php](http://www.albany.edu/sph/phfcourses.php)

**Q:** Can I transfer credits from an outside institution?

A: Students who have taken coursework at an outside institution may transfer one course (3 credits) into the program and must complete a Request for Transfer of Credit to a Master’s Degree or Graduate Certificate Program form. The courses must be considered equivalent to the course offered at the University at Albany School of Public Health and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

**Q:** What does “online” mean? Will I be expected to travel?

A: The program is designed to allow you to complete your coursework in the convenience of your own home, office or workspace. You will not need to travel.

Our online coursework is in an asynchronous learning environment, using a tool called Blackboard. Communication is commonly facilitated through e-mail and discussion boards. It supports the relationship between students and instructors even when participants cannot be online at the same time, making it very flexible and accommodating for those juggling work, family, and other commitments. Asynchronous e-learning makes it possible for students to log on to an e-learning environment at any time and download documents or send messages to instructors and fellow students in the course. However, there will be specific dates and deadlines for most course activities.

**Q:** Can I take the certificate courses both online and on-campus?

A: Although the certificate program is designed for classes to be completed fully online, many students are local and want to take the courses on campus. Certificate students receive priority in registering for the certificate program courses offered online. Full-time matriculated students enrolled in the traditional (on-campus) MPH program are given priority for the in-class courses. If certificate students are interested in taking a course in-class, they are placed on a waiting list and are accommodated only if space is available.
Details on course registration policies can be found at [http://www.albany.edu/sph/30480.php](http://www.albany.edu/sph/30480.php)

**Q:** Are the same courses offered every semester?

**A:** No, the same courses are NOT offered every semester. Generally, there are three (3) online certificate courses offered each fall, spring and summer. Here is the current schedule of online certificate course offerings.

**REGISTERING FOR COURSES**

**Q:** Should I take the certificate courses in a specific order?

**A:** Since there is no “sequencing” of courses in the certificate program, you can take the courses in any order. But, if you are looking to complete the program within a particular timeframe, it is important to keep in mind that the same courses are not offered each semester.

**Q:** How many courses can I take each semester?

**A:** Due to the workload involved with online courses and because most students are balancing other work/personal commitments, it is recommended that you register for no more than 2 classes each semester.

**Q:** How many hours per week should I expect to spend on each online course?

**A:** Students should plan to dedicate 15-20 hours per week for each online course.

**Q:** How many people will be in my online classes?

**A:** Enrollment in online classes is 20-25 students.

**Q:** How do I register for my courses?

**A:** Each semester, students will need to login to their MyAlbany account with their NET ID and PIN to register. Contact the Information Technology Services (ITS) helpdesk at (518) 442-3700 for assistance. Students will also need an Advisor Verification Number (AVN) each semester, and permission numbers for each course. The AVN and permission numbers for the online certificate courses will be issued by the Program Coordinator.

Students who are full-time matriculated in the MPH programs are given priority for in-class courses. Certificate students are placed on a waiting list and are accommodated if space is available.

Details on course registration policies can be found here: [http://www.albany.edu/sph/30480.php](http://www.albany.edu/sph/30480.php)

**Q:** Do I have an advisor in the certificate program?

**A:** There is a Program Coordinator to assist you each semester in registering for classes and to answer any general questions. Since the certificate program is limited to completing the six courses, there is usually minimal advisement. However, there is a Faculty Advisor who can assist with any academic concerns you may have such as specific course content, determining particular order of courses to take or discussing future career options after completing the certificate program.

**Q:** What materials do I need in the certificate program?

**A:** Since coursework is completed online, you will need to have an updated computer with access to the internet.

Minimum requirements:
Operating Systems: Windows 7 or 8 professional, 64-bit version with current patches OR Macintosh OSX with current patches and with Windows 7/8 Pro installed via bootcamp/virtual (Vmware, Virtualbox, etc.);
Processor: Intel 3rd Gen Core i5 or higher;
RAM: 4GB or higher, 8GB recommended;
Hard Disk: at least 50GB of free space;
Ethernet 10/100/1000;
Software: Acrobat Reader (free), Microsoft Office, OpenOffice (free), or LibraOffice (free) and AntiVirus.
Optional: Wireless 802.11 b/g/n;

Additional Recommendations:

• DVD-R: students may need a DVD-R to install software not included with their bundles. Occasionally software is bundled with a textbook.
• Printer: although a printer is not required, most students prefer to have their own printer. There are printers available on campus but availability, method of paying and access vary by location.
• USB Flash Memory/Flash Drive: students often use memory sticks to move files between computers and for presentations in class.

Q: How and when do I get my books?
A: The instructor opens the course on Blackboard generally two weeks before the course starts and will list the course syllabus and books you will need.

APPLYING TO AN SPH MPH PROGRAM

Q: I am currently enrolled in the Certificate Program. Can I apply to the Online MPH Program?
A: Students are required to complete all six courses in the certificate program prior to entering the traditional MPH (on-campus) or online MPH program. Students may apply while in their final semester of the certificate program.

It is strongly recommended that applicants have a B+ or better in the analytical courses (EPI 501 and EPI 552).

**For students who want to concentrate in MPH in Epidemiology, you need to take the IN-CLASS versions of EPI 501 and STA 552, which are offered in the FALL ONLY.

Q: I have completed the Public Health Fundamentals & Principles Certificate Program. Can I apply to either the traditional MPH (on-campus) or Online MPH Program?
A. Yes, students who have completed the certificate program can apply to either the Traditional (on-campus) MPH program or the Online MPH Program. It is strongly recommended that applicants have a B+ or better in the analytical courses (EPI 501 and EPI 552).

Q: What is the best time to apply to the MPH programs?
A. Students should apply when they are in their final semester of their certificate program coursework. All applications must be submitted via SOPHAS. Students applying for Spring semester admission must consult with the School of Public Health Admissions Office to discuss the application process.
If you have additional questions about the Certificate program, please contact:

Susan Bernardi-Bain, Program Coordinator
George Education Center, Rm. 118
One University Place, Rensselaer, NY 12144
E-mail: phcertificate@albany.edu
Phone: (518) 408-2341

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If you have additional questions about the School of Public Health Admissions, please contact:

School of Public Health Admissions
George Education Center
One University Place, Rensselaer, NY 12144
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For more information on the School of Public Health, visit www.albany.edu/sph.