



MAJOR PROGRAM MODIFICATION - MHSc

PROPOSAL BRIEFS FOR MAJOR MODIFICATIONS OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Faculty: Faculty of Health Sciences

Program: Masters of Health Science

1.	INTRODUCTION
a)	BRIEF BACKGROUND ON EXISTING PROGRAM
	<p>The Master of Health Sciences currently has a field in “Community health”. However this field name does not encompass the breadth of research and practice of the faculty teaching in that field, and is not fully reflective of current faculty expertise and research programs. In order to ensure that the field name better reflects the content and to attract a broader group of MHSc applicants it has been decided to change the name.</p>
b)	OVERVIEW OF NEW PROGRAM COMPONENT(S)
	<p>Change the MHSc field of Community Health to Community, Public, and Population Health</p> <p>The revised name “Community, Public and Population Health” better describes the research and graduate work occurring within this field. (i) It better complements our undergraduate program and is a more natural transition for students wishing to pursue graduate studies in the FHS; (ii) the three terms are more representative of the nature of health research and practice in Canada and abroad, and (iii) are more inclusive and representative of the diverse expertise and research interests in our Faculty.</p> <p>An overview of definitions and terminology for Community, Public and Population are included in Appendix A.</p> <p>The names of similar programs across the country are included in Appencis</p>
c)	DESCRIPTION OF FIT WITH EXISTING OFFERINGS
	Same as current program

2.	DEGREE REQUIREMENTS
a)	PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES
	No change to LO’s
b)	ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS
	Same as current program
c)	PROGRAM STRUCTURE

	No change
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3.	RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS
a)	FACULTY MEMBERS
	Note: This name change would better reflect current/existing Faculty expertise and research programs, but no additional faculty are required.
b)	ADDITIONAL ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC HUMAN RESOURCES
	None
c)	PHYSICAL RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS
	None

4.	BUSINESS PLAN
a)	STATEMENT OF FUNDING REQUIREMENTS
	No additional funding required
b)	STATEMENT OF RESOURCE AVAILABILITY
	The name change of the “Community Health” field in the MHSC to “Community, Public, and Population Health” would (i) better complement our undergraduate program and be a natural transition for students wishing to pursue graduate studies in the FHS; (ii) these terms are more representative of the nature of health res and practice in Canada and abroad, and (iii) are more inclusive and representative of the diverse expertise and research interests in our Faculty.

APPENDIX A

Background Information

- During the 1990s, there were only 5 public health programs in Canada. Since 2002 SARS pandemic, the number of Master's and PhD programs in Public Health available in Canada has grown to over 30 due to increased student demand and national expectations related to training and practice of public health professionals and workers as outlined by the PHAC (2016).
- Notable, that these programs all employ the terms public health and/or population health to attract graduate students, as opposed to the term community health per se.
- The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) (2008) has identified 36 core competencies deemed essential for all public health care professionals; which are organized under 7 broad categories: (i) Public health sciences; (ii) assessment & analysis; (iii) policy and program planning, implementation and evaluation; (iv) partnerships, collaboration and advocacy; (v) diversity and inclusiveness; (vi) communication and (vii) leadership.
- These competencies are addressed/ covered in our current master's stream already.
- The term "community health" has a regional/ local focus (e.g., neighbourhoods) which we want to retain because it reflects the regional focus of UOIT
- The population health approach is positioned in the PHAC as a unifying force for the entire spectrum of health system interventions -- from prevention and promotion to health protection, diagnosis, treatment and care -- and integrates and balances action between them. The approach is integral to the Department's broader role of improving the health of Canadians (PHAC, 2012).
- Population health would also better capture the expertise and research foci of our faculty and includes human biology, vulnerable populations (e.g., elderly, Indigenous people; homeless) and individuals with physical and or cognitive disabilities and conditions (e.g., autism, dementia patients).
- In sum, the revised name of "Community, Public and Population Health" would (i) better complement our undergraduate program and be a natural transition for students wishing to pursue graduate studies in the FHS; (ii) include terms that are more representative of the **nature of health** care in Canada and abroad, and (iii) are more inclusive and representative of the diverse expertise and research interest of our current faculty also.

Major Definitions

Core Competencies

Core competencies are the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for the practice of public health. They transcend the boundaries of specific disciplines and are independent of program and topic. They provide the building blocks for effective public health practice, and the use of an overall public health approach. Generic core competencies provide a baseline for what is required to fulfill public health system core functions. These include population health assessment, surveillance, disease and injury prevention, health promotion and health protection (PHAC, 2008).

Community

A permeable and dynamic collection of citizens who interact with each other and their environment, and who share common traits, culture, qualities, features, social structures and/or geographical boundaries (e.g., specific neighbourhoods) (Hitchcock, Schubert, Thomas & Bartfay, 2010).

Members of the community gain their personal and social identity by sharing common beliefs, values and norms which have been developed by the community in the past and may be modified in the future. They exhibit some awareness of their identity as a group, and share common needs and a commitment to meeting them WHO, 1998).

Community Health

A discipline within public health which concerns itself with the study and improvement of the **health** characteristics of biological **communities**. While the term **community** can be broadly **defined**, **community health** tends to focus on geographical areas rather than people with shared characteristics (WHO, 2004; Goldman, Brunnell, & Posner, 2014).

Public Health

Is defined as a holistic and evidence-informed discipline that seeks to promote; maintain, and/or restore the health and quality of life of individuals, families, communities, and/or entire populations over the lifespan through health promotion and prevention and various primary health care initiatives, activities, policies, and/or legislations (Bartfay & Bartfay, 2016).

Is an organized activity of society to promote, protect, improve, and when necessary, restore the health of individuals, specified groups, or the entire population. It is a combination of sciences, skills, and values that function through collective societal activities and involve programs, services, and institutions aimed at protecting and improving the health of all people. The term “public health” can describe a concept, a social institution, a set of scientific and professional disciplines and technologies, and a form of practice. It is a way of thinking, a set of disciplines, an institution of society, and a manner of practice. It has an increasing number and variety of specialized domains and demands of its practitioners an increasing array of skills and expertise (PHAC, 2010)

Population Health

Population health entails understanding the health of populations and the factors that underlie health and health risks. This is frequently manifested through community health profiles and health status reports that inform priority setting and program planning, delivery and evaluation. Assessment includes consideration of physical, biological, behavioural, social, cultural, economic and other factors that affect health. The health of the population or a specified subset of the population can be

measured by health status indicators such as life expectancy and hospital admission rates (e.g., A public health system core function.) (PHAC, 2008, 2010).

In January 1997, the Federal, Provincial and Territorial Advisory Committee on Population Health (ACPH) defined population health as follows: Population health refers to the health of a population as measured by health status indicators and as influenced by social, economic and physical environments, personal health practices, individual capacity and coping skills, human biology, early childhood development, and health services. As an approach, population health focuses on the interrelated conditions and factors that influence the health of populations over the life course, identifies systematic variations in their patterns of occurrence, and applies the resulting knowledge to develop and implement policies and actions to improve the health and well-being of those populations. Population health is therefore an approach to health that aims to improve the health of the entire population and to reduce health inequities among population groups. (PHAC, 2012).

Select References

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9. Goldman, R.A., Brunnell, R. & Posner, S. F. (October, 2014). What is “community health”? Examining the meaning of an evolving field in public health. Preventative Medicine, vol. 67, Supp. 1: S58-S61.

APPENDIX B

Names of Health Sciences Master's Degrees Across Canada

Institution	Degree
University of Saskatchewan	MSc Community and Population Health - https://grad.usask.ca/programs/community-population-health-sciences.php
University of Western Ontario	MSc Epidemiology & Biostatistics http://www.schulich.uwo.ca/epibio/
University of Western Ontario	MSc Health & Rehabilitation http://www.uwo.ca/fhs/hrs/fields/index.html
University of Western Ontario	Master of Public Health http://www.schulich.uwo.ca/publichealth/
McMaster University	MSc Global Health https://globalhealth.mcmaster.ca/
Brock University	MSc Applied Health Sciences https://brocku.ca/applied-health-sciences/future-students/future-grad-students/graduate-studies-in-applied-he
Dalhousie University	MSc Community Health & Epidemiology https://www.mcgill.ca/epi-biostat-occh/academic-programs/grad/mscph
UofT	MSc Community Health https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/prospectivestudents/Pages/Programs/Community-Health.aspx
Uof T	MSc Public Health Sciences MPH http://www.dlsph.utoronto.ca/program-type/mph/
University of Calgary	MSc Community Health Sciences - http://wcm.ucalgary.ca/gse/programs/community-health-sciences
University of Alberta	MSc General Public Health https://www.ualberta.ca/public-health/programs/mph-programs
UBC	MSc Population & Public Health - https://www.grad.ubc.ca/prospective-students/graduate-degree-programs/master-of-science-population-public-health http://spph.ubc.ca/
University of Waterloo	Master of Public Health - https://uwaterloo.ca/public-health-and-health-systems/future-graduate-students/professional-programs/master-public-health
University of Guelph	Environmental Public Health; Public Health Policy & Administration https://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/programs/phlt
Simon Fraser University	MPH Environmental & Occupational Health; Population Health Science - https://www.sfu.ca/fhs/future-students/graduate/master-of-public-health/concentration-requirements.html

Also, useful link: Educational Programs in Public Health - http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/php-ppsp/master_of_php-eng.php