



Public Health Student Handbook

Public Health Program

Faculty of Health Science

2022 - 2023

The Policies and Procedures Described Herein Apply to the 2022-2023 Academic Year

In cases of discrepancies between this document and the [Academic Calendar and Course Catalogue](#), the Academic Calendar and Course Catalogue shall prevail.

University of
Lethbridge



Faculty of Health Sciences

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Preface

The Public Health major is available via the following degree programs at the University of Lethbridge:

- 1) Bachelor of Health Sciences (BHSc),
- 2) Bachelor of Health Sciences (BHSc)/Bachelor of Management (BMgt) combined degrees program,
- 3) Post-Diploma Bachelor of Health Sciences (BHSc) with a health leadership minor

These undergraduate programs in public health prepare students for non-clinical work and graduate study in the field of public health. Graduates will have the skills and theoretical knowledge needed for employment in a variety of public health roles including: health promotion, disease prevention, health data surveillance and analysis, health policy, program evaluation, advocacy, and community development. Students will also be qualified to apply for graduate studies, either in public health or another related discipline.

Within this program, health is explored as a multidimensional concept, with emphasis placed on the economic, social, political, and cultural dimensions of health. Exposing students to both the biological and social sciences provide a solid foundation for the critical thinking and analytic skills required for practice within the broad and rapidly changing field of public health. The program is designed to support students in the development of Core Competencies for Public Health, as outlined by the Public Health Agency of Canada (Appendix I).

Students have the option to engage in a variety of learning opportunities as they progress toward their undergraduate degree. These include: a practicum, applied studies, independent studies, co-op placements, or an undergraduate thesis. The practicum experience, which allows students to gain professional experience while developing their skills and competencies for public health practice, is the most frequently accessed *optional* learning opportunity. Please see the Faculty of Health Sciences [Academic Advisor](#) or [Program Coordinator](#) for details regarding these opportunities.

Vision

The Vision of the BHSc Public Health Program(s) is to:

- Strengthen public health capacity and advance public health science to improve **health for all**¹.

Mission

The mission of the BHSc in Public Health Program(s) is to promote health for all by:

- Providing students with a solid foundation in public health
- Engaging students in practical experiences in interdisciplinary public health
- Modelling and teaching BHSc Public Health core values
- Fostering environments that are conducive to learning, growth, and critical thinking
- Partnering with local and global communities to advance the science² of public health and support knowledge translation and exchange
- Engaging with internal and external stakeholders to build capacity to improve population health

¹ Declaration of Alma-Ata, WHO (1978)

² Public health science includes qualitative, quantitative, and critical research

Values

The values of the BHSc Public Health Program(s) are:

Equity

Promote health equity and social justice by demonstrating respect for all, ensuring conditions that are inclusive, addressing social inequalities, and promoting social change.

Engagement

Uphold the view that “everyone owns public health”; we are global citizens and leaders in advancing health for all.

Continuous Improvement

Participate in ongoing evaluation and quality improvement activities that demonstrate accountability and enable optimum outcomes for students, partners, and communities.



Letter from the Dean

**Welcome from Dr. Chris Hosgood,
Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Lethbridge**

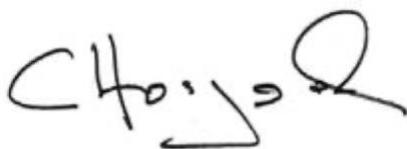
It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Public Health major in the Bachelor of Health Sciences program. My colleagues and I are delighted that you have selected our Public Health major, the only undergraduate degree in public health within the province of Alberta. This unique program will provide you with many opportunities to gain knowledge, skills and competencies, preparing you for future employment and graduate study in the interdisciplinary field of public health.

I know that you will enjoy your studies and experience both intellectual growth and personal development. We are committed to offering a dynamic and innovative curriculum that will engage you, and encourage you to think critically about the world around you, expose you to the complexities of promoting the health of individuals and populations and immerse you in settings that will prepare you for public health practice in a complex and challenging global environment.

Students have the opportunity to gain valuable work experience and course credit by completing an optional, semester-long practicum. We work closely with administrators and staff members in Alberta Health Services, as well as a range of government and non-governmental organizations involved in promoting the health of the public, to support opportunities for student learning. Your education will place you amid faculty, health care researchers, and experts in public health practice who will provide you with a first-rate education. Such a partnership model fosters a learning culture that supports continuing professional development and lifelong learning.

On behalf of all faculty members in the Faculty of Health Sciences, I extend best wishes to each of you as you embark upon your educational journey.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Hosgood". The signature is stylized and cursive.

*Chris Hosgood, PhD
Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences*

Academic Standing

As per the [University Academic Calendar](#), to be in good standing, on academic probation or required to withdraw, a student must fall within the grade point averages (GPA) ranges indicated in the following table:

Number of Completed Courses (includes transfer courses) ¹	Good Standing	Academic Probation	Required Withdrawal
0-5	1.70 or higher	0.00-1.69	-
6-10	1.70 or higher	1.50-1.69	Below 1.50
11-20	1.85 or higher	1.70-1.84	Below 1.70
21-30	2.00 or higher	1.85-1.99	Below 1.85
31-40	2.00 or higher	-	Below 2.00

¹The number of completed courses is based on a standard 3.0 credit hour course. Post-diploma students and students coming from Lethbridge College in the collaborative nursing programs are considered to have a minimum of 20 completed courses.

Required Withdrawal

A student is required to withdraw from the Faculty of Health Sciences if any of the following occurs:

- The cumulative GPA falls below the required levels for two or more consecutive terms at the end of the spring term;
- The student fails any internship/practicum/clinical/field experience course; or
- The student fails to meet the [Standards of Professional Conduct](#)

A student dismissed for academic reasons may apply for readmission by the appropriate deadline after a lapse of one full year (see **Admission**, [Required to Withdraw](#)). Readmission is not guaranteed. Students dismissed for a second time will not be re-admitted to the program. Students are advised to contact an academic advisor as early as possible to discuss the possibility of readmission.

2. Faculty members who are supervising practice experiences may require a student to leave a practice setting at any time if, in the opinion of the faculty member, the student's practice threatens patient/client safety or is disruptive to patient/client care. The Dean will review the case in a timely fashion to determine whether, and under what conditions, the student may return to the practice setting.

This, and other important academic policies can be found in the 2022-2023 academic calendar:

<https://www.ulethbridge.ca/sites/ross/calendar/ug/index.html>

Health Requirements

It is recommended that all Public Health students review and maintain an up-to-date immunization status. Immunizations protect both the student and those they will encounter during classes, course assignments or a practicum placement. An annual influenza vaccination is recommended for all Public Health students. Influenza vaccines are usually available in the fall of each year and can be obtained from the Health Centre at the University of Lethbridge (SU020) or at immunization clinics on or off campus during the months of October and November.

Students are advised that certain health requirements necessitate annual or periodic updates. This is particularly important for students participating in a practicum placement (see the Practicum Handbook available [here](#)).

Please note that students who fail to complete the recommended immunizations may not be eligible for certain experiential learning and/or practicum placements, which may place the student at risk for not being able to complete certain course requirements.

Student Academic Planning

Program Planning

Consult the [Academic Advisor](#) regarding the selection of optional courses and career planning in relation to public health practice or graduate studies. Students are encouraged to review and track progress toward their degree using the appropriate Program Planning Guide (see Appendix II). Advanced planning is recommended to support optimal progression through the degree requirements. Students are also encouraged to follow the course sequencing plan outlined in the Program Planning Guides as closely as possible; this is to ensure that concepts and learning are appropriately levelled, that all students have fair advantage in their course work, and that all required course prerequisites are successfully meet.

Practicum Planning

Consult the [Internship Specialist](#) to discuss opportunities for completing a 12-week practicum placement. The optional practicum is highly recommended. Students are encouraged to contact the Practicum Coordinator one year prior to a practicum placement to begin planning, as a placement application will not be accepted later than 6 months prior to a practicum. For example, if you are interested in doing a practicum placement in the fall of your last year, you would contact the practicum coordinator in the fall of your Third year. See the practicum student handbook for more details.

Student Support Services

Insurance

The University of Lethbridge maintains a liability insurance program, inclusive of Comprehensive General Liability, Errors & Omissions Liability and Professional Liability. These coverages extend to public health students enrolled in the program and while acting within the scope of their academic requirements and duties.

The insurance provides coverage for activities required for completion of the course of studies including home visits, field trips, and contracted affiliations at other agencies. (Note any activities performed outside of the student's academic program or independent of the student's academic requirements is not insured under the University's liability insurance program. Also, the student is responsible for ensuring that they have insurance in place for their health and dental coverage as well as their personal effects as well as any automobile which they may operate). The University provides proof of this coverage to affiliated organizations in line with the student placement contract terms.

The University of Lethbridge is not responsible for public health students who are working as volunteers (apart from service learning or field studies completed as a part of a course requirement) or paid employees in other institutions. Students participating in functions for other agencies do so as private individuals unless there is a contractual agreement between the University and the agency.

Workers' Compensation

Section 7(1)(c) of the General Regulations to the Workers' Compensation Act of Alberta states that students registered in and physically attending an Alberta public post-secondary institution operating under the Post-Secondary Learning Act are considered workers of the Government of Alberta and have WCB coverage under the government's worker's compensation account. For more information on policy terms and exclusions, please visit <https://www.uleth.ca/risk-and-safety-services/student-wcb> .

Accident/Incident Reporting

For insurance purposes all incidents/accidents occurring in the course of the student's academic initiatives that result in injury and/or property damage to others or that may have the potential to give rise to a claim against, must be reported to Risk & Safety Services at 403-382-7176. For more information, please visit: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/risk-and-safety-services/incident-reporting-investigation-0>).

Indigenous Student Supports

The University of Lethbridge provides academic, cultural, and personal support services for self-declared First Nations, Métis and Inuit students who are interested in careers in the health sciences. An integrated approach is utilized involving Elders, mentors, and advisors as well as assistance in locating resources such as accessibility services, accommodated learning, tutors, and scholarship applications. Students are encouraged to meet with Elders for guidance, cultural support, and spiritual mentoring. Dedicated homework space is provided, and social networking opportunities help students adjust to student life and create peer support systems.

If you would like to access our services or have any questions, you are encouraged to call the Faculty of Health Sciences Learning Facilitator at 403-332-4579 or email marilyn.lamb@uleth.ca

Scholarships

The Public Health Travel Award (<http://www.uleth.ca/healthsciences/travel>) is available to Public Health majors registered in Public Health 4550 (Practicum). Students must be in academic good standing as measured by the Faculty of Health Sciences and have a confirmed practicum placement located outside of a 500 km commuting distance from Lethbridge. Students cannot receive this award more than once and recipients will be selected by the Faculty of Health Sciences. Submit applications one month prior to an approved practicum placement.

To inquire about other scholarships available to qualified public health students, please speak to Scholarships and Student Finance (AH115) or visit their website at: <https://www.uleth.ca/ross/student-finance>

Opportunities for Public Health Students

“Public Health Opportunities” Moodle course

Every student registered in our public health program(s) are recommended to enroll in a long-term Moodle course entitled “Public Health Opportunities”. This platform allows the program coordinator and other faculty members to communicate and store information related to public health student opportunities which may arise. It includes a listing of opportunities such employment positions, new practicum partnerships, notifications for new course offerings, educational events (e.g., conferences and training sessions), community volunteer work, and student association events. Please refer to this resource often.

Public Health Student Association

The Public Health Student Association (PHSA) is a student-lead campus organization which aims to promote public health awareness, encourage collaboration and camaraderie among students and faculty, and provide opportunities for professional development (PHSA, 2018). Membership to the PHSA is available to all University of Lethbridge students, faculty, staff, and community members. For more information regarding the PHSA, please visit the U of L Students Union website: [PH Students Association](#) .

Social Media Communications

The Faculty of Health Sciences and the Public Health Student Association both have active Facebook pages. These can be found at:

UofL Public Health Students' Association: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/69038067436402/>

Faculty of Health Sciences: <https://www.facebook.com/facultyofhealthsciences/>

University of Lethbridge & Community Resources

UNIVERSITY OF LETHBRIDGE	
Student Success Centre AH148B student.success@uleth.ca http://www.uleth.ca/student-success-centre	The Centre offers workshops, events, tutoring, and access to resources designed to support your success with a focus on areas: 1) Study Skills and Learning Strategies, 2) Tutoring, and 3) Mental Health Awareness and Education.
Accommodated Learning Centre B760 University Hall Phone: 403-329-2766 alc@uleth.ca http://www.uleth.ca/ross/alc	The Accommodated Learning Centre offers registered students access to specialized supports including assistive technology, tutors, learning strategists, note-takers and educational that may be needed in order to achieve success in their program. A consultation with our Specialized Support is available.
Health Centre SU 020 Phone: 403-329-2484 http://www.uleth.ca/hr/health-centre	The Health Centre seeks to help students stay healthy. Offering Physician, Chiropractor, Registered Massage Therapist, and Dietician clinics as well as nursing assessment and care.
International Centre for Students	Provides services and programs to international admission

SU 060 Phone: 403-329-2053 http://www.uleth.ca/global	students, including English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English Language Services.
Scholarships & Student Finance AH151 Phone: 403-329-2585 http://www.uleth.ca/ross/student-finance	Students can access information and applications for scholarships and financial assistance.
Writing Centre L1010 http://www.uleth.ca/artsci/academic-centre	All students have access to the Writing Centre where students may book a session with a writing tutor, access online tutorials, and access online writing guides.
ULSU Food Bank SU 180 Phone: 403-329-2039 food.bank@ulsu.ca https://ulsu.ca/ulsu-food-bank	The U of L Students Union Food Bank supplies food to the neediest members of our university community. Please email food bank 24 hours in advance for a food hamper.

OTHER SERVICES

Interfaith Food Bank Society 1103 – 3 Avenue North Phone: 403-320-8779 http://www.interfaithfoodbank.ca/index.php/contact	Recognize the human dignity of people in need and to assist these people living in Lethbridge and the surrounding communities.
Lethbridge Food Bank Society 1016 – 2 Avenue South Phone: 403-320-1879 http://lethbridgefoodbank.ca/contact-us	Acknowledging the disparity in the availability of resources Canadians and recognizing that while food banks will be needed for the foreseeable future, they are a short-term response for those living with difficult circumstances.
Immigrant Services, Lethbridge Family Services 1107 – 2 Ave. A North Phone: 403-320-1589 https://www.lfsfamily.ca/content.php?p=43	Immigrant Services, a department of Lethbridge Family Services, provides support to help recently immigrated newcomers to into the community. Orientation sessions are open to all newcomers.

*For students on the Calgary Campus, please check with your Academic Advisor for information on Calgary Campus and Community Resources.

Public Health Directory

Contact information can be found at: <http://www.uleth.ca/healthsciences/content/contact-us>

Police Information Check

As per legislation and affiliation agreements, most health care and community agencies require police information checks of all students prior to participating in a service learning, practicum placement or work experiences. The University of Lethbridge is authorized to collect this information on their behalf. Contact the [Internship Specialist](#) for a letter before requesting a necessary police information check as a discount is available for students.

Once acquired, students are advised to **keep their original police information check** and bring a photocopy with them on the first day of a learning experience with any outside agency. Inability to produce a copy of the police information check, if requested, may result in a delay in starting your learning experience with an agency.

An initial police information check is usually sufficient for the duration of the program except in instances where an agency or experience may require a more recent check (e.g. practicums). Students who leave

the Public Health major for one semester or longer will be required to submit a new police information check upon returning to the program. **Students are obligated to inform the program of any changes to their Police Information check status while enrolled in the Public Health major** and most agencies require notification if there is a change that may affect your status during a learning experience with an outside agency. **Failure to inform the Faculty of Health Sciences office of a change of status is considered a breach of ethical student conduct.**

Optional Public Health Practicum

Public Health majors may choose to complete an on-site, full-time, unpaid, 12-week practicum placement (15 credit hours) as credit toward their degree. The practicum is the consolidated practical course in the Faculty of Health Sciences, Public Health degree. During the practicum, students will engage in an experiential learning placement in a public health practice setting under the direction of a preceptor (or shared preceptorship within a team).

PUBH 4550 is a pass/fail course. Student who are unsuccessful in the practicum may request to repeat the course. Such requests will be reviewed by a committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences. Repeat requests are subject to availability of placements and meeting pre-placement requirements.

All students registered in PUBH 4550 are required to meet and maintain certain requirements to participate in a practicum placement during the program. Students may be excluded from a practicum placement if all requirements are not met or maintained. Please refer to the Practicum Handbook available [here](#) for more details about the practicum option. Students must express interest in practicum at least 6 months prior to intended semester by reaching out to the Internship Specialist to be eligible.

Ethical Conduct for Public Health Practice

Public Health faculty members are committed to maintaining freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression among teachers and learners. We have the responsibility to foster academic freedom within the context of standards for ethical conduct. We are also committed to supporting your knowledge and skill development in the field of public health.

All students are expected to *review the principles of ethical practice of public health* as listed below⁵. A breach of ethical conduct may result in dismissal from a practicum, practice sites, and/or the Public Health major.

- Promoting and protecting the public's health, preventing disease and preventing adverse outcomes.
- Promoting population health in ways that respect the rights of individuals and communities (the common good and human rights).
- Engaging the public in the creation of healthy public policies, programs, and priorities (participation).
- Advocating for the empowerment of disenfranchised community members (health equity, social inclusion and social justice).
- Collaborating to address the social determinants of health (collaboration).
- Seeking the information needed to implement effective policies and programs.
- Creating accessible information to support individual and community decision-making (autonomy and self-determination).
- Taking timely action to prevent harm and promote health with available information (precautionary principle).
- Maintaining the public trust and informing the public of potential harm/risk (duty to inform).
- Anticipating and respecting the dignity of each person, diverse values, beliefs, and cultures in the

- community (human dignity and diversity).
- Acting to enhance and protect the physical and social environment (sustainable development).
- Protecting the confidentiality of individual information while acting to protect the public from significant harm (confidentiality and do no harm).
- Promoting competency and excellence in public health practice.

The following standards describe the characteristics for ethical public health practice that should be visible to instructors, patients, and colleagues in all classroom, practice settings, and practicum interactions.

- Act in a manner that respects the dignity and rights of all persons without prejudice as to race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, age, ancestry, physical characteristics, or place of origin.
- Treat clients, peers, and personnel in agencies and faculty with dignity and respect and be considerate of their circumstances.
- Act in a responsible manner that includes being punctual, dependable, trustworthy, consistent, and reliable.
- Demonstrate empathy for others by showing concern for and understanding of others' feelings and/or ideas.
- Respond to feedback by listening, evaluating and responding to suggestions.
- Maintain positive interpersonal relationships by contributing, cooperating, participating and working with others in a flexible and adaptable way.
- Show maturity and sound judgment.
- Show enthusiasm and initiative by being actively involved as a participant while encouraging the involvement and participation of others.
- Respect the confidentiality of information about clients and their families, agency personnel, peers, or faculty that has been received in confidence in the course of public health practice.
- Apprise your public health advisor and preceptor at an agency practicum site in advance of unavoidable absences in recognition that **attendance** at all hours of assigned practicum experiences is **expected conduct for ethical public health practice**.
- Report unethical conduct (e.g., risk of harm to others in a practicum setting) through appropriate channels.

⁵ Adapted from the Public Health Leadership Society (2002). *Principles of the ethical practice of public health*. Retrieved from: https://www.apha.org/-/media/files/pdf/membersgroups/ethics/ethics_brochure.ashx

Policies

Additional policies (i.e. attendance and student dress policies) for public health students are available at: <http://www.uleth.ca/healthsciences/PHpolicies>

Appendix I: Core Competencies for Public Health⁶

- 1. Demonstrate knowledge of the core theoretical foundations for public health including the social determinants of population health and principles of health promotion.**
 - a. Knowledge of the determinants of health and illness.
 - b. Knowledge of and able to identify trends in population health status.
 - c. Knowledge of concepts, models, and theories related to the health status of populations, inequities in health, and the determinants of health and illness.
 - d. Knowledge of strategies for health promotion and disease and injury prevention.
 - e. Knowledge of policies and legislative strategies for health protection.
 - f. Aware of a range of disciplines, interdisciplinary roles and services in public health at community, provincial, national and global levels.
- 2. Demonstrate knowledge of approaches to public health assessment and surveillance to support evidence-informed decision-making.**
 - a. Recognize and identify public health issues.
 - b. Identify applicable information, assets and resources to address public health issues.
 - c. Identify and collect appropriate information.
 - d. Respects confidentiality and privacy.
 - e. Store, retrieve and manage information based on applicable guidelines or policies.
 - f. Participate in information analysis and interpretation with assistance
- 3. Demonstrate the ability to appraise information and evidence to guide planning, policy, implementation and evaluation.**
 - a. Identify applicable literature on a public health issue.
 - b. Identify strategies and options to promote health and prevent disease/injury with community members/partners.
 - c. Reviews applicable legislation, regulations and policies.
 - d. Participate in collaborative planning.
 - e. Participate in evaluating and adapting health promotion strategies and interventions.
- 4. Demonstrate the ability to collaborate with partners in addressing public health issues.**
 - a. Identify partners in the community with shared public health issues.
 - b. Work effectively in teams/groups.
 - c. Identify differing interests and group dynamics.
 - d. Co-facilitate group discussions with prepared questions.
 - e. Identify healthy public policies with community members and partners and support advocacy efforts.
- 5. Demonstrate respect for diversity among peoples.**
 - a. Recognize and identify how the determinants of health impact the health and wellbeing of specific population groups.
 - b. Respect for diversity and human dignity in interactions.
 - c. Adapts written and oral communications for literacy and population diversity.
 - d. Engage community members and vulnerable groups in identifying assets/issues to promote health equity and social justice.
- 6. Demonstrate effective communications (oral and written) in working with clients (individuals, groups and communities) in practice settings.**
 - a. Communicate effectively as part of an interdisciplinary team, partners and community members.
 - b. Communicate effectively with clients, groups, and community organizations/agencies
 - c. Utilize technology to communicate effectively.
 - d. Design presentations with appropriate media, materials and presentation approaches.
 - e. Knowledge of strategies for community mobilization and social marketing.
 - f. Knowledge of and use of vocabulary of terms used in the field of public health.
 - g. Effective written communications.
- 7. Demonstrate leadership and ethical practice in promoting the capacity of organization and communities to create healthy workplaces and environments.**
 - a. Apply public health ethical principles and standards and demonstrate ethical conduct.
 - b. Contribute to collaborative planning.
 - c. Contribute to team projects by sharing knowledge, tools, and resources.
 - d. Reflect on and apply knowledge in public health practice settings.
 - e. Work independently and with supervision.

⁶Adapted from the Public Health Agency of Canada Core Competencies for Public Health (2008). Available at <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/php-ccph-ccsp/pdfs/cc-manual-eng090407.pdf>

Appendix II: Program Planning Guides

See the link for the appropriate program planning guide: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/ross/ppgs>