

# HEALTH AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES, PHD

Please click here (<http://catalog.ucdenver.edu/cu-denver/graduate/schools-colleges-departments/college-liberal-arts-sciences/health-behavioral-sciences/#text>) to see Health and Behavioral Sciences department information.

## Overview

The PhD in Health & Behavioral Sciences (HBS) prepares students to be leaders in the interdisciplinary field of population health. Our program draws on theories and methods from the social, behavioral, and health sciences, to understand health, health behaviors, and health care. A few recent research topics in our program include the AIDS epidemic, the social contexts of medical care, the diffusion of health behaviors through social networks, the ethics of health care, biases that shape decision making, the mechanisms that link social conditions to biological health, and the determinants of health disparities. Graduates from our program are leaders in analyzing the conditions that give rise to the inequitable distribution of health within and across populations.

These degree requirements are subject to periodic revision by the academic department, and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences reserves the right to make exceptions and substitutions as judged necessary in individual cases. Therefore, the College strongly urges students to consult regularly with their Health and Behavioral Sciences faculty advisor to confirm the best plans of study before finalizing them.

**Graduate Education Policies and Procedures apply to this program.**

## Program Requirements

There are three dimensions to the required curriculum:

1. A core curriculum that focuses on problem-oriented, interdisciplinary approaches to theory and method
2. Elective course work intended to provide the student with a solid base from which to launch the dissertation research
3. Dissertation research and writing

The curriculum is subject to change. What appears below is intended to give students a general idea of the extent, shape and content of the curriculum. Students should check with the program office for up-to-date information on specific course requirements and scheduling.

1. Students must complete a minimum of 62 credit hours with a minimum of 32 credits of coursework, and 30 credit hours of dissertation.
2. Students must complete all credit hours at the graduate (5000-level or higher) level.
3. Students must earn a minimum grade of B- (2.7) in all courses applied to the degree and must achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0. Courses taken using P+/P/F or S/U grading cannot apply to program requirements.
4. Students must complete all credit hours with CU Denver faculty.

Code	Title	Hours
<b>Complete the following required courses: <sup>1</sup></b>		
I.	Health and Behavioral Sciences Colloquium	2

Each fall, the HBSC program will organize a series of presentations by scholars working in the health and behavioral sciences. The presentations provide students with the most current science and theory in the field. Required of all first- and second-year students, who must take at least two times.

HBSC 7001	Colloquium Series in the Health and Behavioral Sciences	
<b>II. Theoretical Perspectives in the Health and Behavioral Sciences</b>		<b>6</b>
This series is designed to give students a thorough background in how the principles of the social and behavioral sciences have been applied to health issues. Topics include: the interplay between structure and agency in creating and maintaining health; social epidemiology; critical theory and social determinants of health; issues affecting Western biomedicine and public health systems; diffusion of healthy behavioral change among populations; social construction of health and illness; health policy and bioethics; social networks; and stress.		
HBSC 7011	Theoretical Perspectives	
HBSC 7071	Social and Behavioral Perspectives in Population Health	
<b>III. Human Ecology and Environmental Adaptation</b>		<b>3</b>
This course will emphasize the biological/physiological dimensions of human health and disease.		
HBSC 7031	Human Ecology and Environmental Adaptation	
<b>IV. Research Design and Methods in the Health and Behavioral Sciences</b>		<b>12</b>
Three HBSC core research design and methods courses, plus one additional advanced methods course of student's choosing. This series covers the philosophy of science and the structure of scientific inquiry, procedures for hypothesis-testing, quantitative and qualitative methodological strategies commonly employed in the field, epidemiology and program evaluation.		
HBSC 7041	Research Design and Methods in the Health and Behavioral Sciences I	
HBSC 7051	Qualitative Research Design and Methods	
HBSC 7061	Quantitative Methods in the Health and Behavioral Sciences	
HBSC 7161	Quantitative Methods in Health&Behavioral Sciences II	
<b>V. Applications of the Health and Behavioral Sciences</b>		<b>3</b>
This course offers students the opportunity to focus on individual research interests with guidance from faculty and input from peers.		
HBSC 7111	Applications of the Health and Behavioral Sciences	
<b>Complete six credit hours of elective coursework, drawn from the graduate level (7000 and above) health and behavioral sciences courses (HBSC) at CU Denver. Students will be expected to fulfill the necessary prerequisites for taking these courses, and final authority as to whether a student may enroll in the course will rest with the department in which the course is offered.</b>		<b>6</b>
<b>Complete Doctoral Dissertation Research, Comprehensive Exam, Dissertation and Final Exam</b>		<b>30</b>
Doctoral Research, Comprehensive Exam, Dissertation and Final Exam (p. 2)		
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>62</b>

<sup>1</sup> The required curriculum should be completed by students by the end of their second year of full-time study.

To learn more about the Student Learning Outcomes for this program, please visit our website. (<https://clas.ucdenver.edu/hbsc/degree-programs/phd-program/>)

## Doctoral Dissertation Research, Comprehensive Exam, Dissertation and Final Exam

Code	Title	Hours
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	<i>The doctoral dissertation research topic is chosen by the student.</i>	30
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*The student is expected to define a research question in health and behavioral science, identify the research strategy to be used for answering the question, conduct the research required and document the project in the form of a doctoral dissertation. The student will be guided in this process by a doctoral dissertation advisor and the additional members who comprise the student's doctoral dissertation committee (see below). A minimum of 30 semester hours of dissertation work is required. Students must register for a minimum of 5 dissertation credits each semester of their dissertation work. Students may not take more than a year's leave of absence or fail to enroll for semester hours more than three semesters before they are dropped from the program.*

### *Formal Review*

A formal review of each student's progress will be undertaken at the end of each year of study. Students who are deemed not to be making satisfactory progress will be informed in writing as to the nature and final result of the review before the end of June.

### *The Dissertation Prospectus and the Comprehensive Examination*

Before a student advances to candidacy, they must complete a dissertation prospectus and defend it successfully in the context of an oral comprehensive examination. The dissertation prospectus is a complete description of the question or hypothesis that the student wishes to research for the dissertation project, the research design and study techniques and an assessment of the proposed project's contribution to the field. It will include a comprehensive review of the relevant literature. If the student chooses to undertake research in a particular ethnic or cultural community, they must also demonstrate sufficient understanding of that setting including adequate knowledge of the language. This prospectus must be approved by the student's advisor prior to scheduling the comprehensive examination.

The comprehensive examination will be an oral format based in part on, but not restricted to, the material presented in the dissertation prospectus. This exam must take place before the student's advancement to candidacy and will typically occur by the end of the third year of study. A committee comprising the advisor and a minimum of three faculty members will supervise the completion of the dissertation prospectus. This committee will conduct the oral examination and will recommend to the faculty by a majority vote whether or not the student should be advanced to candidacy.

### *The Doctoral Dissertation and Final Exam*

After advancement to candidacy, the student in consultation with his or her advisor will appoint a dissertation committee comprising the chair and a minimum of three faculty members. The dissertation advisor and composition of the committee will be subject to approval by the faculty. The dissertation advisor will be responsible for overseeing the research and writing of the doctoral dissertation. The committee will review drafts of the dissertation and, when the dissertation is completed to its satisfaction, will conduct the final exam, which will be based on the doctoral dissertation and related materials. The final examination will be open to the public.