DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, BEHAVIOR AND SOCIETY

About

In the Department of Health, Behavior and Society (HBS), we develop, evaluate, and implement solutions to pressing public health challenges in Baltimore, throughout the U.S., and in some two dozen countries around the world. We believe that human behaviors are key determinants of health and well-being and that behavioral determinants reside at multiple levels, including:

- **The individual level**: people’s own attitudes, beliefs, and emotions.
- **The interpersonal level**: people’s social networks at home, the workplace, and elsewhere.
- **The policy level**: policies that promote or hinder access to healthy living, including access to healthcare, insurance, and housing.
- **The structural level**: structures of racism, inequity, and injustice.

Our research, practice, and pedagogy reflect this multilevel orientation, centering on factors occurring within and across each level.

Some of HBS’s areas of expertise include addiction, social justice, anti-racism, health equity, LGBTQ studies, chronic diseases, health communication, social factors, sex work, opioid use, tobacco control, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, and COVID-19 prevention and control. We are particularly known for our mixed methods (including qualitative) approaches.

We house several centers and institutes, including one of JHSPH’s largest centers, the Center for Communication Programs. Since our founding in 2005, our Department has grown to include 83 students and 58 full-time faculty members. We are proud to have a dedicated core of highly skilled staff members who support all aspects of the work in the Department of Health, Behavior and Society.

Programs

- Social Factors in Health, MHS (https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/public-health/departments/health-behavior-society/social-factors-health-mhs/)
- Health Education and Health Communication, MSPH (https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/public-health/departments/health-behavior-society/health-education-communication-msph/)
- Genetic Counseling, ScM (https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/public-health/departments/health-behavior-society/genetic-counseling-scm/)
- Health, Behavior and Society, PhD (https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/public-health/departments/health-behavior-society/health-behavior-society-phd/)
- Non-Degree Training (https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/public-health/departments/health-behavior-society/non-degree-training/)

Summer Institute

Our HBS Summer Institute offers short, intensive courses that provide students with an understanding of behavioral and societal impacts on public health—and specific strategies to address the challenges they present.

Overview - Explore how social context and behavior shape population health through our HBS Summer Institute courses. Institute courses offer the same rigor and quality of our full-term HBS classes, condensed into days instead of weeks. Our HBS faculty experts lead each of our classes, ranging in focus from risk communication to qualitative studies and more. HBS Summer Institute courses:

- Offer the same rigor and quality of full-term courses, condensed into days instead of weeks.
- Are taught by our HBS faculty experts.
- May be taken on a for-credit or non-credit basis (with reduced tuition available for courses taken not for credit).
- Are eligible for tuition remission under the terms of the Hopkins Tuition Remission Plan (https://hr.jhu.edu/benefits-worklife/tuition-assistance/tuition-remission/).
- Courses taken for credit may be applied towards the completion of many full-time and part-time degree programs at HBS and JHSPH.

Winter Institute

Our HBS Winter Institute offers compressed, intensive courses exploring behavioral and societal impacts on public health—and specific strategies to address the challenges they present.

Overview - Expand your knowledge of behavioral and societal impacts on public health through our winter institute classes. HBS Winter Institute courses:

- Offer the same rigor and quality of full-term courses, condensed into days instead of weeks.
- Are taught by our HBS faculty experts.
- May be taken on a for-credit or non-credit basis (with reduced tuition available for courses taken not for credit).
- Are eligible for tuition remission under the terms of the Hopkins Tuition Remission Plan (https://hr.jhu.edu/benefits-worklife/tuition-assistance/tuition-remission/).
- Courses taken for credits may be applied towards the completion of many full-time and part-time degree programs at HBS and JHSPH.

HBS Policies and Student Resources

HBS Policy on Advising

All students are assigned a faculty adviser at the time of admission to the program. Adviser assignments are based, in part, on compatibility of the student and faculty research or practice interests. Advisers play an important role in the student’s academic life. The adviser is expected to keep abreast of school and departmental degree requirements so that he or she can counsel students on courses and the proper progression towards the degree. Students should consult with their advisers prior to registering for courses each term. In addition, any special requests or petitions that a student submits to any of the administrative offices of the School will require the endorsement of the student’s adviser as well as that of the department chair.

As students move through their degree programs, they may elect to choose a different adviser, depending on their chosen area of concentration and the dissertation topic selected, or for other reasons. In that event, the student should contact the preferred faculty member to
determine if that person is able to assume responsibility as the student's adviser. If so, the student should notify the department in writing of an adviser change, obtaining the signatures of the prior adviser and the new adviser, and submit the signed notification to their respective program director for approval. Once approved, notify the Academic Program Administrator so that the change may be processed.

Each student is required to meet with his or her adviser at least once per academic term to discuss academic progress, to plan for fulfillment of degree requirements, and to review and modify course selection plans for the next term. These meetings are formally scheduled before each major registration period. **HBS students are responsible for scheduling these meetings with their advisers. See Milestones tables in each degree program description.** The Academic Administrator works closely with the faculty advisers and also provides guidance to students with the School and departmental academic policies and procedures.

- Students are expected to engage in pre-planning for these meetings.
- Both advisers and students should be aware of and understand curriculum policies and procedures.
- Students and advisers should identify future professional career goals and interests.
- The adviser and student should review the student's tentative curriculum and course schedule, and alternatives should be identified.
- Any major issues or questions about academic programs and non-academic problems should be identified and discussed.

HBS Program Directors for each respective program and the Academic Program Administrator are also available as resources within the department for students who have questions or concerns related to their own academic advisers. These individuals may be able to assist with mediation, coaching, facilitating co-mentoring, or switching advisers as needed. If these individuals are not available, the Vice Chair for Pedagogy and Academic Affairs is available to serve in this role.

**HBS Teaching Assistant Policy**

Any student, regardless of program, who wishes to serve as a Teaching Assistant (TA) in any Health, Behavior and Society course must first complete the self-paced, online "JHSPH Teaching Assistantship Training" course. CTL will provide you with a certificate of completion, which you must then submit to the HBS Academic Program Administrator.

**Introduction to Online Learning:** Students are now required to take the free, non-credit mini course "Introduction to Online Learning (IOL)" before beginning their first term.

**Funding**

The Department is committed to seeking opportunities that will allow it to provide financial support to its students. Most eligible accepted applicants will automatically be considered for School scholarship support. Departmental scholarship decisions are made during the admissions process and communicated to students in their letters of acceptance.

Federally funded institutional training grants may be available for eligible students. During the admissions process, admissions committees and program directors review and screen applications for appropriate candidates to be appointed. Appointees must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents according to federal law.

The individual NRSA (National Research Service Award, NIH) may provide partial tuition and stipend support for up to three years for doctoral candidates planning to undertake research in certain areas. Students interested in submitting a NRSA proposal should notify the Doctoral Program Director (Dr. Danielle German), with cc to the Academic Coordinator (L. Robin Newcomb) and Human Resources Coordinator (Marcella Afrobe-Manu) as early as possible to initiate this process. The internal review process requires submission of grant text one month prior to the official submission deadlines.

Once a student begins working on their dissertation proposal, the Department strongly encourages students to seek dissertation writing support. Government agencies and private organizations provide funding for students once they are working on an approved thesis topic. The award amount varies by agency and organization.

Application deadlines vary, but notices are posted on the student bulletin boards, and e-mail notices are also sent to eligible students.

Students interested in applying for dissertation support should watch for postings and application procedures and deadlines. The Department does have policies and procedures in place for student submission of grant applications.