Public Health Sciences

The Brown School’s PhD program in Public Health Sciences prepares students to think critically as public health scientists, succeed as independent investigators, and understand and address public health challenges for the nation and the world. It provides hands-on research experiences and mentoring from day one in the program; a curriculum that builds methodological and analytical skills, and deep knowledge of the field’s theoretical and conceptual underpinnings, philosophy and history; and professional acculturation and network building.

Our doctoral program involves intense study in population health and social science research methods and personalized mentoring by some of the leading scholars in the field. Our faculty are on the forefront of research in health disparities, chronic disease prevention, epidemiology and biostatistics, global health, health policy, systems science, urban design and the built environment, dissemination and implementation science, and mental health. Our curriculum prepares students for leadership in research in a rapidly changing society. We provide a diversity of experience and faculty with a cross-section of interests that enhance transdisciplinary learning. We have created a collaborative and entrepreneurial community with a strong commitment to conducting research that will have social impact.

A completed master’s degree in public health, social work, or related social or health science is required of all applicants for admission. The deadline for applications to the PhD in Public Health Sciences is December 1 of the year preceding enrollment.

For additional information, please refer to the Doctoral Programs Viewbook (https://brownschool.wustl.edu/Academics/PhD-in-Public-Health-Sciences/Pages/default.aspx) on the Brown School website.

Contact: Elizabeth Hahn
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Website: https://brownschool.wustl.edu/academics/PhD-in-public-health-sciences

Faculty

Dean
Mary McKernan McKay (https://brownschool.wustl.edu/faculty-and-research/pages/mary-mckay.aspx)
Professor; Neidorff Family and Centene Corporation Dean of the Brown School
PhD, University of Illinois at Chicago
Child mental health services; HIV prevention and care; poverty

Associate Dean for Doctoral Education
Renee M. Cunningham-Williams (https://brownschool.wustl.edu/faculty-and-research/pages/renee-cunningham-williams.aspx)
Associate Professor; Director, NIDA T32 (TranSTAR) Pre- and Postdoctoral Training Program
PhD, Washington University
Epidemiological, prevention, and intervention research; health and mental health disparities; pathological gambling and comorbidity; risk taking, substance use and antisocial behaviors; crisis intervention

Director, PhD Program in Public Health Sciences
Professor; Director, Center for Public Health Systems Science
PhD, University of Illinois
Systems science; evaluation of public health programs; tobacco control policy

Endowed Professors
Ross Brownson (https://brownschool.wustl.edu/faculty-and-research/pages/ross-brownson.aspx)
Bernard Becker Professor
PhD, Colorado State University
Evidence-based public health; dissemination and implementation research; chronic disease prevention

Joyce Wood Professor
PhD, Saint Louis University
Obesity prevention; diabetes prevention; health policy

Matthew Kreuter (https://brownschool.wustl.edu/faculty-and-research/pages/matthew-kreuter.aspx)
Kahn Family Professor of Public Health
PhD, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Health communication; health disparities
Vetta Sanders Thompson (https://brownschool.wustl.edu/faculty-and-research/pages/vetta-sanders-thompson.aspx)  
E. Desmond Lee Professor of Racial and Ethnic Diversity  
PhD, Duke University  
Health and mental health disparities; cultural competency; race, identity and health

Professors

Timothy McBride (https://brownschool.wustl.edu/faculty-and-research/pages/timothy-mcbride.aspx)  
PhD, University of Wisconsin-Madison  
Health policy; health economics; rural health care

Rodrigo Reis (https://brownschool.wustl.edu/Faculty-and-Research/Pages/Rodrigo-Reis.aspx)  
PhD, Federal University of Santa Catarina, Florianopolis, Brazil  
Physical activity; international health; urban design and health; transportation and health

Associate Professors

Derek Brown (https://brownschool.wustl.edu/faculty-and-research/pages/derek-brown.aspx)  
PhD, Duke University  
Health economics; health policy

Alexis Duncan (https://brownschool.wustl.edu/faculty-and-research/pages/alexis-duncan.aspx)  
PhD, Saint Louis University  
Psychiatric and genetic epidemiology; obesity and eating disorders

Amy Eyler (https://brownschool.wustl.edu/faculty-and-research/pages/amy-eyler.aspx)  
PhD, Oregon State University  
Physical activity; childhood obesity; prevention policy

Jenine Harris (https://brownschool.wustl.edu/faculty-and-research/pages/jenine-harris.aspx)  
PhD, Saint Louis University  
Social network analysis; social media in public health

Darrell Hudson (https://brownschool.wustl.edu/faculty-and-research/pages/darrell-hudson.aspx)  
PhD, University of Michigan  
Social determinants of health; health disparities

Lora Iannotti (https://brownschool.wustl.edu/faculty-and-research/pages/lora-iannotti.aspx)  
PhD, Johns Hopkins University  
Child nutrition; infectious diseases; poverty pathways

Kimberly Johnson (https://brownschool.wustl.edu/faculty-and-research/pages/kimberly-johnson.aspx)  
PhD, University of Minnesota  
Human genetics and cancer; epidemiology

Jason Purnell (https://brownschool.wustl.edu/faculty-and-research/pages/jason-purnell.aspx)  
PhD, Ohio State University  
Health disparities; economic determinants of health

Jean-Francois Trani (https://brownschool.wustl.edu/faculty-and-research/pages/jean-francois-trani.aspx)  
PhD, Institut d’Etudes Politiques de Paris, France  
Global health; human rights; disabilities

Degree Requirements

PhD in Public Health Sciences

- 72 credit hours; 21 credits transferable from a relevant master’s program
- Two years enrolled in full-time courses
- Complete and defend a dissertation
- Three teaching practicums for course credit
- Three research practicums for course credit