Global Health (Culture and Health), PhD

ASU is not currently accepting applications for this program.

When the evolving health needs of growing global populations beckon, few are better equipped to offer solutions than you with a global health degree. When you graduate, prepared for medical, commercial, governmental and academic careers, you can help improve and save thousands of lives at home and abroad.

Program Description

Degree Awarded: PHD Global Health (Culture and Health)
The PhD program in global health draws on the premise that sustainable and satisfying solutions to the most pressing global health challenges require a sophisticated understanding of how cultural context, social and ecological processes, and disease are really related.

The transdisciplinary graduate program trains students broadly in cutting-edge health social science research theory and methods. While it leverages the strength in medical anthropology at ASU, including the 15 medical anthropologists on campus, it also takes advantage of a much wider set of skills offered by such fields as medical sociology, demography, human geography and epidemiology. It is designed to train those who anticipate working in transdisciplinary academic settings, medical schools or nonacademic health settings, such as the commercial sector, government agencies or nongovernmental organizations.

Some particular thematic foci of the program are:

- biocultural approaches to human coping
- computer-based complexity modeling
- culture and health
- health in the Americas
- indigenous and minority health
- mathematical epidemiology
- nutritional anthropology
- social justice and vulnerable populations
- social networks
The program draws together some 80 faculty members from across the university to consider how cutting-edge social science can be applied not only to understand, but also to substantively improve the health of populations. The program favors community-based research and runs collaborative projects in which students are encouraged to gain experience and conduct research, from large U.S. cities to hunter-gatherer communities. Students generally enter the program with a master's degree in a relevant field.

The concentration in culture and health provides focused, specialized training in theories and methods for researching the relationship between culture and health. This concentration utilizes the perspectives of medical anthropology and sophisticated ethnographic methods to study and interpret the role of cultural and social differences in shaping health. Students investigate these methods in the context of the community-based, participatory approaches that tend to promote the most mutually meaningful and lasting health solutions. Graduates are thus particularly prepared for leadership in addressing health disparities in cross-cultural settings and with the most vulnerable populations. This includes very complex, difficult settings where particularly nuanced and sophisticated (often anthropological) understandings of health-related challenges are needed.

At a Glance

- **College/School:** The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
- **Location:** Tempe campus

Degree Requirements

84 credit hours, a written comprehensive exam, an oral comprehensive exam, a prospectus and a dissertation

**Required Core (3 credit hours)**
ASB 510 Health: Social and Biocultural Theories (3)

**Concentration (12 credit hours)**
ASB 503 Advanced Medical Anthropology (3)
ESS 513 Institutions (3) or ESS 514 Urban and Environmental Health (3)
SSH 503 Instructional Internship in Global Health (3)
SSH 511 Ethics in Health Social Science (3) or SSH 512 Social Science Applications in Community Health (3) or ASB 502 Applied Medical Anthropology (3)

**Electives (26 credit hours)**
Other Requirements (16 credit hours)
ASB 500 Ethnographic Research Methods (3)
ASB 591 Topic: Professionalism (1)
ASM 579 Proposal Writing (3)
SSH 591 Topic: Principles of Epidemiology for Global Health (3)
systematic methods courses (6)

Research (15 credit hours)
ASB 500 Ethnographic Research Methods (3)
SSH 792 Research (12)

Dissertation (12 credit hours)
ASB 799 Dissertation (12)

Additional Curriculum Information
For the concentration coursework, students select ESS 513 or ESS 514, and they also choose one course from SSH 511, SSH 512 or ASB 502.

For electives, students should see the academic unit for a course list approved by the chair.

Other requirement coursework may be substituted with the approval of the academic unit. At least two systematic methods courses in an area other than epidemiology or biostatistics and ethnography (such as nutrition, survey, archival analysis, demography, or geographic information system should be selected.

When approved by the student's supervisory committee and the Graduate College, this program may allow up to 30 credit hours from a previously awarded master's degree to be used for this program. If students do not have a previously awarded master's degree, the remaining coursework is made up of electives.

Admission Requirements
Applicants must fulfill the requirements of both the Graduate College and The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Applicants are eligible to apply to the program if they have earned a bachelor's or master's degree from a regionally accredited institution.

Applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in the last 60 hours of their first bachelor's degree program, or applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in an applicable master's degree program.

All applicants must submit:

1. graduate admission application and application fee
2. official transcripts
3. personal statement outlining educational and professional goals
4. current curriculum vitae or resume
5. three letters of recommendation
6. proof of English proficiency

Additional Application Information
An applicant whose native language is not English must provide proof of English proficiency regardless of current residency.

Suitable backgrounds for admission include a master's degree in the social sciences (i.e, anthropology or sociology), public health, human biology or related fields. Students entering directly from a bachelor's degree program should have already completed at least 15 credit hours of social science and six hours of human biology or equivalent at the senior level and should also have some background in statistics or epidemiology.

Applicants may include with their application materials an optional scholarly writing sample not to exceed 30 double-spaced pages.

Career Opportunities
Nationally and internationally, the health field provides enormous and varied career opportunities, and demand is high and growing for graduates with specific skills. The major supports the goals of those pursuing careers in academic research, teaching and health services. Sample employment venues include:

- departments of health
- government agencies
- international agencies (World Health Organization, Center for Disease Control, Global Health Council, World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank)
- nongovernmental organizations
- private sector
- universities

The degree program also provides a broad intellectual base for those who plan advanced specialist health training in fields such as:

- dentistry
- medicine
- nursing
- pharmacy

In Arizona and elsewhere, there is a pressing need for professionals with appropriate skills to work in cross-cultural settings or with underserved populations (such as migrants, minorities and those living in poverty), and many of these jobs are directly or indirectly related to health.
Contact Information

School of Human Evolution & Social Change | SHESC 233
shesc.grad@asu.edu | 480-965-6215

Admission Deadlines