



The BSc Degree in Health and Community Studies

Faculty of Public Health
Health Sciences Center - Kuwait University



For a Healthy Population in Kuwait!



This booklet gives you the

Answers
to common

Questions

about the new Bachelor of Science degree in
Health and Community Studies



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Public Health

So what is this degree about?

This degree focuses on **Health** and the **Community**.

Graduates with this degree will be prepared to contribute to efforts in the community that are designed to Promote Health.

These efforts include

- Encouraging people to adopt healthy behaviors and lifestyles
- Researching the health needs of a community
- Developing programs and laws to promote health in the community
- Promoting healthy environments in homes, neighborhoods, schools, workplaces, businesses and the community

Come take a quick tour with us to get to know this degree!



A letter for you . . .

Dear Student,

Congratulations on completing high school! This is an exciting time of life for you. But it also can be challenging to figure out what career to choose.

This booklet will introduce you to a new degree program at Kuwait University, the Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Health and Community Studies. It provides answers to common questions high school students have about this new, exciting program.

As you read through this booklet, we hope that you will find it interesting and helpful. **Maybe this is the career for you!**

Please give this booklet to your parents to read. Even if you don't choose this degree, you and your parents can learn about an important field of work that will help promote health in Kuwait's populations.

Wishing you all the best in your future,

Prof. Harri Vainio
Dean
Faculty of Public Health

Dr. Joseph Longenecker
Vice-Dean for Academic Affairs
Faculty of Public Health

How does this degree differ from a medical degree?

The BSc degree in Health and Community Studies is a **4-year** program.

**Doctors
Nurses
Lab Techs**
treat **SICK** people
in hospitals and clinics



Up to **12 years**
of training before
starting a medical
specialty practice



Public Health has a different focus than medical care.

Take the example of **diabetes**. Doctors treat diabetic patients to reduce bad diabetes outcomes (heart attacks, kidney disease, or eye disease). The Community Health view, on the other hand, asks the question, "Where did these diabetes patients come from, and why did they get diabetes in the first place?"

The answer is that diabetics come from the **community**. Diabetes comes as a result of what is happening in the community: the homes, schools, workplaces, businesses and leisure spaces. NOT what happens in hospitals and clinics.

Community Health workers think about diabetes at its source: the things in the community that result in people becoming overweight. This is an increasing problem in adults in Kuwait, but is especially a concern among the children.

Can **you** think of reasons why obesity is an increasing problem among children in Kuwait? Would more hospitals and doctors reduce obesity in the community?

Keep reading, and you will discover the **Community Health view** of how to prevent diabetes.

Public Health
helps **WELL** people to increase
their well-being, and to reduce
their **RISK** for diseases.

Public Health

Prevention is better than cure!

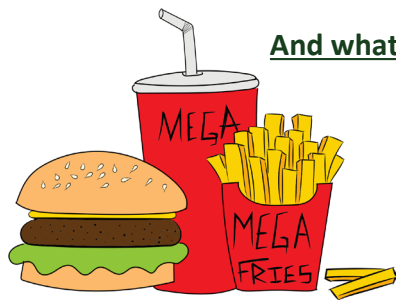
Some causes of obesity and diabetes:



Do you know . . .

How many **calories** a "mega" meal of a hamburger, fries and cola drink has?

Over 1600 calories



And what is the DAILY number of calories needed by:

A typical 17-year-old boy?
Only **2400 calories** per **DAY**

A typical 17-year-old girl?
Only **1800 calories** per **DAY**

How to solve the problem of diabetes in Kuwait:

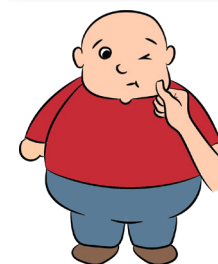
We all know that obesity is the main cause of diabetes. In order to solve the problem of diabetes in Kuwait, we need to do **RESEARCH** to understand **WHY** people are becoming so fat these days, and develop **PROGRAMS** and **GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES** based on the research results to help people reduce their weight. This is the focus of Public Health.

There are MANY reasons for diabetes - even more than are shown here on the left.

For example, one research study in Kuwait found that **75% of mothers of overweight children think their children are "normal" weight or even "underweight."** This is just one of the many reasons for obesity and diabetes in Kuwait.

To address this issue, Community Health workers need to do further careful research in Kuwait to discover why mothers consider overweight in their children as "normal." They also would then plan effective programs to help mothers in Kuwait recognize obesity in their children. They also will provide strategies to the mothers to help them decrease their child's weight into a healthy range.

Can you see that changing things in the **COMMUNITY** will be the **ONLY WAY** to decrease diabetes in Kuwait? More doctors and hospitals can not do that!



Masha'allah!
You are
SO HEALTHY!

Obese Child
at **HIGH RISK** for
DIABETES



You're
TOO THIN!
Eat more
MACHBOOS!

Normal weight child
at **LOW RISK** for
DIABETES

What subjects would I study in this degree?

Health and Community Studies includes many subjects:

In this program, you will take courses in the five main areas of Public Health:

- **Health Policy, Management and Administration**
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences**
- **Research Skills: Epidemiology**
- **Research Skills: Biostatistics**
- **Environmental and Occupational Health**

In addition, you will learn concepts and skills in a range of cross-cutting areas necessary for promoting health in communities, including:

- **Communication and Presentation Skills**
- **Ethics**
- **Social Marketing**
- **Information Technology**
- **Organizing and Negotiating**

Within this BSc degree, there are **FOUR APPROVED MAJORS**, each of which has 32 credits of specialized courses in the fourth year. As with all the Faculties in the Health Sciences Center, instruction for all courses is in English. In the first few years as the Faculty of Public Health is starting, we will only offer two of these majors.

The Four Majors

BSc in Health and Community Studies / Public Health Practice	BSc in Health and Community Studies / Health Research
BSc in Health and Community Studies / Healthcare Management	BSc in Health and Community Studies / Community Health Development

Find out more about the courses and majors at our website:

<http://www.hsc.edu.kw/FOPH>

Subject Areas in Health and Community Studies



What kind of work could I do after graduation?

Community Health involves a WIDE range of activities

Take a look at the “Health Action Wheel” below. It starts with researching current health needs in the community or system needs in the healthcare system in which you work. After collecting the research data, you will be able to manage the data, analyze it, interpret it, and present it in written reports or presentations.

Based on the evidence, you could be involved in helping to design or administer programs or campaigns aimed at addressing health needs in the community or systems needs in a healthcare institution.

Once those programs or campaigns have been started, you could be involved in assessing whether or not they have been effective in addressing the needs it targeted.

The tables on the right show some specific competencies and skills that graduates with this BSc degree will have.



Competencies and Skills

PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE CONCENTRATION

Skills and Competencies

- Contributes to community needs assessments, program planning, management, and evaluation, using qualitative/quantitative methods.
- Assists in the investigation of health problems in the community, including outbreaks of infectious diseases.
- Contributes to the design and implementation of health promotion programs and health education materials.
- Contributes to workplace health and safety assessments; acts as an advocate for occupational health and wellbeing
- Understands the structure and function of health system databases and assists in their management
- Engages community leaders in a participatory process to achieve commitment, effectiveness and sustainability
- Promotes healthy lifestyles, preventive behaviors through health education and health promotion programs

HEALTH RESEARCH CONCENTRATION

Skills and Competencies

- Identifies relevant health and community-related research questions
- Collects and assesses the quality of currently-available health data
- Uses quantitative and qualitative research skills to assist in community-related and health-related research
- Creates high-quality questionnaires and data collection instruments
- Collects data in an unbiased manner
- Implements principles of quality control in data collection
- Assists in creating appropriate tables and figures using collected data
- Understands sources of error in research studies (bias and confounding)
- Writes logical reports regarding the research findings

HEALTHCARE MANAGEMENT CONCENTRATION

Skills and Competencies

- Supports administrative and management functions in public and private health organizations
- Works with health system managers to plan and organize health services
- Provides support in human resource management of health institutions
- Serves as an effective team player in financial planning, budgeting and management of health service organizations
- Organizes quality assurance and patient safety programs in hospitals and other health-related institutions
- Organizes the development and implementation of health management information systems in health organizations
- Assists in the development and implementation of private health insurance, managed care organizations, and public insurance systems.

COMMUNITY HEALTH DEVELOPMENT CONCENTRATION

Skills and Competencies

- Conducts assessments of health and social service needs in the community, using appropriate research methods.
- Analyzes and interprets information to compare community needs. Promotes volunteerism in community settings.
- Develops community-based programs for key community groups, such as youth and the elderly. Collaborates with key stakeholders to assess community needs.
- Engages key stakeholders in community development efforts.
- Applies skills to access information from variety of data bases and generates community needs profiles. Initiates programs focused on behavioral change in the community.
- Applies communication skills in a multicultural community setting.

Where could I work with this degree?

400 MINISTRY of HEALTH Positions

This degree will give graduates competencies for functioning in public health, healthcare, and community-based organizations.

But **in addition**, graduates will also have a set of concrete transferrable skills and attributes which can make them attractive to any organization – public or private. These transferrable skills include:

- Information technology
- Good communication Skills
- Problem solving
- Working with data and numbers
- Research skills
- Organising
- Working to deadlines
- Management and leadership
- Negotiating
- Motivating people
- Making decisions



POTENTIAL WORK PLACEMENTS

Ministry of Health (needs 400 graduates)

- Department of Public Health
- Health Development department
- Department of Healthcare for the Elderly
- Department of School Health
- Department of Nutrition
- Department of Primary Care
- Occupational Health Department
- Health Media Center
- Department of Preventive Medicine
- Primary Healthcare Centers
- Public Hospitals

Institutes, Authorities, and Ministries

- Dasman Diabetes Institute
- Public Authority for Food and Nutrition
- Public Authority for Manpower
- Environmental Public Authority
- Civil Defense Authority
- Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor
- Ministry of Defense (Health Services Department)
- Parliament

POTENTIAL WORK PLACEMENTS

Non-Governmental Organizations

- United Nations Development Program
- World Health Organization
- Public Service Organizations

Kuwait University

- Teaching assistant in the faculties of the Health Sciences Center (after obtaining a Master's degree)

Kuwait Oil Companies

- Occupational Health
- Environmental Health
- Healthcare Services departments

Private sector

- Private hospitals
- Private companies that provide healthcare services
- Private companies that provide community services
- Private industrial companies

The Cadre . . .

The Civil Service has tentatively approved a cadre for graduates with this BSc degree. They have referred the cadre to the Ministry of Finance for approval of the salary structure and benefits. A final decision about the Cadre will be made in the near future.



What do our BSc students say about the program?

"Pursuing a Public Health degree brings me closer to helping better our community health-wise, and create a better environment for the public."

"The best part about studying in Public Health is the major focus on study skills. We learn how to conduct research and how to be involved in our field of work."

"What I think is a positive aspect of studying here is being given a lot of opportunities to go to seminars and field trips. This approach is more hands on, as opposed to other colleges where students only attend lectures."



"Our study program is very well-established. We are exposed to experienced specialists that we can learn from."

"Working in groups is pivotal in the methods of research in Public Health. This brings us closer to the subject of study in involving our interests."

"The instructors are strict, yet very friendly. They show that they care by making sure that we absorb the material and are able to apply it."

"Medicine focuses on individuals, but Public Health focuses on the care of the community. And the latter, I feel, is even more important than the former."

What are the *Admission Requirements?*

Students will be admitted to the Bachelor of Science Program in Health and Community Studies in the Faculty of Public Health according to the Kuwait University and Faculty admission criteria, as follows:

- Students who hold secondary school certificate (Science major), or its equivalent, with a **minimum percentage of 75%** are eligible for admission into the BSc program.
- Priority of admission will be given to applicants who have the highest secondary school cumulative GPA based on the secondary school percentage and the results of aptitude tests according to the following weightings:
 - Secondary School Grades Weight..... **65%**
 - English Language Aptitude Test Weight..... **20%**
 - Mathematics aptitude test Weight..... **15%**

Major Selection

Requests for selection of the major will be made after completion of Year 2.

Transfer Policy

Students may transfer into the BSc program from other programs, either into the Year 1 program, or into the Year 2 program if they have met all the prerequisites. Detailed information about transfers is available at the FOPH website address:

www.hsc.edu.kw/FOPH

