

New dual degree program combines wellness and health promotion with public health



September 25, 2019

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Oakland University's School of Health Sciences is rolling out an accelerated program that enables students to earn a bachelor's in Wellness and Health Promotion and a master's in Public Health in just five years.

In this "4+1" program, students complete the courses for a bachelor's in Wellness and Health Promotion, and also take graduate level public health courses, as undergraduates. An internship and practicum are also part of the program, which focuses on preparing students for a variety of careers in the health and wellness fields.

"Health and wellness is all around us," said Florence Dallo, associate professor and chair of OU's Public and Environmental Wellness department. "Students can work at the county health department, hospitals, clinics, community organizations, universities, insurance companies, and at both state and federal levels."

The program will save students money and time by enabling them to apply early to the graduate program and then count 12 credits in their undergraduate curriculum (specific pre-defined courses) towards their graduate degree.

Dallo noted that both the wellness and health promotion, and public health curriculum focus on health promotion and disease prevention.

“In Wellness and Health Promotion, students get an overview of many of the concepts in public health and with the Master of Public Health degree, they delve deeper into the material,” she said.

Rebecca Cheezum, associate professor and director of OU’s Public Health Program, said the program is unique in that it focuses on community-based participatory research, which “incorporates local knowledge and expertise into the planning and implementation of research, policies, or programs to improve health.”

“This is imperative for efforts to address health inequalities to be successful,” she added.

WHP students with a 3.2 GPA and who have completed a few required courses can apply to the “4+1” program. Incoming freshmen can declare WHP their major, but they will have to wait until their sophomore or junior year to apply, after completing some specific course work.

For additional information on the ‘4+1’ program in Wellness and Health Promotion and Public Health, contact Dr. Dallo at dallo@oakland.edu or Dr. Cheezum at cheezum@oakland.edu.