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OU's Master of Public Health program earns accreditation from CEPH

The Master of Public Health (MPH) program at Oakland University, which prepares students for public health leadership roles, has been granted accreditation by the [Council on Education for Public Health](#) (CEPH) following an extensive evaluation process.

The accreditation is for a five-year term, extending to July 1, 2023.

“Being accredited further demonstrates the strength of our MPH program in that it shows that we meet the high standards of the Council on Education for Public Health,” said [Rebecca Cheezum](#), M.P.H, Ph.D., assistant professor of public health and director of the Master of Public Health program at Oakland University.

According to Cheezum, the MPH program at OU prepares graduates to help improve the health of individuals and communities by training them via a skills-based, hands-on approach.

Using an innovative teaching model, the program incorporates service-learning opportunities and community-based participatory research throughout the curriculum, partnering with local non-profit, corporations and healthcare agencies to provide students with opportunities to conduct research, determine community needs and develop initiatives to make a positive impact all while completing coursework in pursuit of a degree that will equip them with the skills and knowledge to excel in a variety of public health settings.

“We have heard from employers, community partners and alumni that our small class size, cohort model, curriculum that is rich with community-based service learning opportunities and personalized attention sets the stage for superior training,” Cheezum said.

To be considered eligible for accreditation review by the CEPH, a public health program must demonstrate the following characteristics:

- The program must be a part of an institution of higher education that is accredited by a regional accrediting body recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or its equivalent in other countries.
- The program and its faculty and students must have the same rights, privileges and status as other professional preparation programs that are components of its parent institution.
- The program must function as a collaboration of disciplines, addressing the health of populations and the community through instruction, research and service. Using an ecologic perspective, the public health program should provide a special learning environment that supports interdisciplinary communication, promotes a broad intellectual framework for problem solving and fosters the development of professional public health values.
- The public health program must maintain an organizational culture that embraces the vision, goals and values common to public health. The program should maintain this organizational culture through leadership, institutional rewards and dedication of resources in order to infuse public health values and goals into all aspects of the program's activities.
- The program must have faculty and other human, physical, financial and learning resources to provide both breadth and depth of educational opportunity in the areas of knowledge basic to public health. At a minimum, the program should offer the Master of Public Health degree, or an equivalent professional degree.



Pictured (from left): Dr. Mozhgon Rajaei, assistant professor of public health; student Ashley McCullough; Janice Eaton, MPH program coordinator; Dr. Caress Dean, assistant professor of public health; student Arfah Anjum; and Dr. Kwame Sakyi, assistant professor of public health.

- The program must plan, develop and evaluate its instructional, research and service activities in ways that assure sensitivity to the perceptions and needs of its students and that combines educational excellence with applicability to the world of public health practice.

“To be granted accreditation, we spent four years collecting evaluation data about our program,” Cheezum said. “We submitted a self-study as evidence that Oakland University's MPH program aligns with the criteria of the CEPH.

“This self-study document and supporting materials were reviewed by an assessment team, which included a CEPH staff member and two public health experts — one representing academia and one representing public health practice,” she added. “This team visited us in September and met with faculty, students, alumni, community partners, and university leadership to further assess the program.”

At the time of the site visit, the MPH program had a total of 33 students enrolled. Students applying for admission to the program must graduate from a regionally accredited undergraduate institution, have a 3.0 GPA, three letters of recommendation and a personal statement highlighting their reasons for pursuing the MPH along with their long-term goals ; prior public health experience.

The MPH Admissions Committee reviews applications in the spring of each year. The committee accepts students who are qualified and whose personal statements reflect synergy with the program's values and interests. Students can be granted conditional admission, which requires that students maintain a 3.0 GPA.

To learn more about the Master of Public Health program at Oakland University, visit www.oakland.edu/shs/public-and-environmental-wellness/master-of-public-health.