

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

FALL 2006

IS ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH THE RIGHT CHOICE FOR YOU?

What is environmental health?

According to the World Health Organization environmental health comprises those aspects of human health and disease that are determined by factors in the environment. It also refers to the theory and practice of assessing and controlling factors in the environment that can potentially affect health.

What is the role of the environmental health practitioner?

Environmental health practitioners (EHPs) help ensure that the vulnerable areas of our environment are protected from accidental or intentional contamination.

The emergence of many new issues and threats, such as food and water security, exposures to hazardous chemicals, building environments, radiation, vectors, biologic and infectious wastes, and terrorism threats, establishes the need for an educated and well-prepared environmental health workforce.



“Environmental health professionals find themselves facing new responsibilities. While their mission has always been to preserve and improve environmental factors for the achievement of optimum health, safety, and well being of the public, the challenges within that mission have expanded to include security and counter-terrorism.

- National Environmental Health Association

Where do environmental health practitioners work?

Jobs can be found in both the public and private sector and can range from hospitals and other health care facilities, to government agencies (i.e., Food and Drug Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, town and community water authorities, private companies such as airlines (food and air quality safety) and laboratories (water quality and ground contamination).

Is there a demand for environmental health practitioners?

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, there are several crises in the nation right now: toxic waste, hazardous chemical and physical agents and unintentional injuries. There are shortages of qualified professionals dealing with chemicals, toxins, environmental epidemiology and environmental engineering.

What is the salary range?

Entry level salaries for people with bachelor's degrees range from \$32,000 to \$52,000 depending on related work experience, internships and geographic location.

What else should I know?

EHPs have vast career opportunities as “generalists” or “specialists”. The private sector is creating more and more advisory roles, which suit the “generalist” EHP perfectly, as are many local government agencies (food safety, housing, environmental protection). You could also work your way towards specializing in food safety (ensuring proper preparation, handling and storage), occupational health (ensuring safe work environments), housing (ensuring proper maintenance and installation of fire escapes, smoke alarms, etc) or environmental protection (maintenance of air and water quality and ground contaminants).

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

What are the requirements of the Environmental Health concentration?

Health Science majors must successfully complete the fall semester coursework during their senior year before enrolling for the spring courses in the Environmental Health concentration.

Coursework during the spring semester will provide students with the knowledge to: recognize, identify and control environmental contaminants in the workplace and prevent and prepare for hazardous material incidents and be able to comply with various regulatory agencies.

Required courses in the concentration include:

- **Environmental Health, Radiation Safety & Safety Engineering** - Presents an overview of the field of occupational health and safety. Focuses on 3 key areas: radiation

protection, environmental health and safety engineering

- **Industrial Hygiene** - Introduces basic concepts of industrial hygiene. Presents the methodology and procedures that professionals in the field use to identify, measure and correct hazards in the work environment.
- **Hazardous Materials, Emergency Response and Environmental Auditing** - Concentrates on the nature of hazardous materials and how they are handled in the workplace. Presents the fundamentals of emergency response planning and how to perform environmental audits.
- **Independent Study** - Proposals for special projects involving advanced readings, reports and

discussions on selected environmental health topics must be approved. A research paper on the selected topic will be submitted to an assigned faculty sponsor.

Completion of the major and concentration courses provides students with the knowledge and skills to work in one of the fastest growing fields in the healthcare industry.

Advising sessions are conducted on both campuses, as early as possible, to assess student interest and provide information on prerequisites. For additional information about the major please contact:

Traci Thompson—Advising

HSC, Level 2, Room 453

Phone: 631.444.2407

Fax: 631.444.1515

Régine Verrier—Advising

• Mon/Fri, HSC, L2, Rm 453

Phone: 631.444.6858

• Tu/Wed/Thur

Academic Advising Office-
Melville Library

Phone: 631.632.4689

OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:

www.uhmc.sunysb.edu/shtm



HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER
School of Health Technology & Management

PLEASE VISIT THE FOLLOWING WEBSITE FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Professional Organizations:

American Society of Safety Engineers
www.asse.org

Environmental Protection Agency
www.epa.gov

National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
www.niehs.gov

Occupational and Employment Information

www.labor.state.ny.us

www.dol.gov
www.Neha.org/CareerOp.html

www.salary.com

www.salary.monster.com



HOW TO BECOME A HEALTH SCIENCE STUDENT

Students can declare the Health Science major at any time during their academic career. All major courses are taken during the senior year.

•In order to begin your senior year courses in the major, you must have a G.P.A. of at least 2.0 and have successfully completed 91 credits.

•You must also have met all D.E.C. requirements, including at least 16 credits in natural sciences (D.E.C. E), 21 credits of related electives, and 10 upper division credits.

•Successful completion of the following courses during the fall semester of your senior year is required:

Healthcare Issues

Professional Ethics

Communication Skills

Professional Writing

Health Informatics

Medical Terminology (2 credit elective may also be taken)