Path of Distinction for Medical Students
GLOBAL HEALTH FIELD COURSES AND THE GLOBAL HEALTH CERTIFICATE

In 2012, the School of Medicine and Public Health established the Path of Distinction (PoD) to promote learning experiences for health sciences students who are seeking ways to better integrate medicine and public health in their future careers. This document outlines the process for students who wish to pursue a global health field experience to fulfill the PoD field experience requirement.

Students who wish to do more in-depth learning about global health are encouraged to apply for the Global Health Certificate (see below for details).

Summer Global Health Field Experiences Opportunities (Between M1/M2 years)

Global field experiences are ideal opportunities to develop public health leadership skills, because they expose students to contrasts in disease burden, health care systems, culture, environment, economics and socio-political factors. In addition to preparing for future global health practice, global health field experiences also provide medical trainees with skills that can help them to be responsive to health disparities and cultural diversity in Wisconsin.

The Global Health Institute (GHI) has created a range of global health field experiences for students in the health professions that may fulfill the PoD project requirement. These options include:

1. **Option #1: Faculty Led Field Experience** (select one of the options below)
   a. **Option #1a: Interdisciplinary Faculty-Led Experience**
   b. **Option #1b: Comparative Health Systems Faculty-Led Experience**

2. **Option #2: Independent Field Experience** (only for students with prior international experience)

All of these educational opportunities include cultural immersion, and some combination of observational activities and service-learning.

**Please Note:** Space is limited in each global health field experience option, so it is important to understand the requirements and timeline for each option. Applications will be reviewed based on quality of application materials.

Steps to Pursue a Summer Global Health Field Experience

All global health field experiences require registration for SMPH credit. The GHI programs coordinator can assist with this process. Students must also complete all study abroad-related administrative requirements through GHI. Each fall, GHI offers info sessions about all field study options during early October. After attending these sessions, students can contact GHI advisors for assistance in identifying sites and mentors.
Faculty-Led Field Experiences

If you are interested in a global health experience, you may wish to pursue a Faculty-Led Field Experience. Field experiences are offered in various regions of the world, and allow students to participate in a program that is organized by and with faculty. Within the Faculty-Led Field Experience, you can choose one of two options (described below).

OPTION #1a: Interdisciplinary Faculty-Led Experience (through International Academic Programs)

Interdisciplinary field courses offer the opportunity to learn with an interdisciplinary team of faculty and students who are training to be nurses, pharmacists, veterinarians, public health practitioners, and physicians. The focus of these courses is to understand health and disease in their socio-ecological and cultural context. Often, in addition to having some exposure to health systems, these courses will include lectures and experiential learning related to herbal medicine or alternative medicine, infectious diseases and the connection between human and animal health, and the role of food, nutrition and lifestyle in health. All courses include short-term immersion in the community and some service-learning experiences. This option is completed through International Academic Programs (IAP).

Details and Preparation: Students prepare during spring semester of M1 year through a one-credit course, PHS 644 Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Global Health and Disease, which is organized in country specific sections. Field sites for 2017 include Ecuador, Uganda and Thailand. Duration of these courses range from 2-3 weeks. Upon satisfactory completion of the field course, students will receive course equivalency for PHS 645: Global Health Field Study (NOTE: students should not register for this, it is posted by the study abroad office after proof of successful completion).

Extended Field Experience: Students have the option of working with a faculty mentor to extend their trip in order to engage in additional scholarly or service-learning activity.

Timeline to pursue this option:
1. Declare interest by December 2. Visit www.jotform.com/uwmadisonph/globalhealthdeclaration
2. Apply for the field course through International Academic Programs by December 2. Application can be found at: www.studyabroad.wisc.edu.
3. Submit your PoD application by January 15. Your PoD Project Proposal will be due at least 12 weeks before you depart for your trip.
4. Register for PHS 644 AFTER notification of acceptance to the program. PHS 644 registration details will be included in IAP acceptance letter.

OPTION #1b: Comparative Health Systems Faculty-Led Experience (through Global Health Institute)

Comparative systems experiences combine a mix of observation and a survey of clinical activities. While this includes some clinical activities, it is not the clinical service, but rather the opportunity to learn about comparative systems that makes this an appropriate option for public health study.

Students can fulfill the PoD requirement by taking the on-line PHS 640 class during spring semester and writing an academic paper under the supervision of a mentor that explores a health topic, policy or program in detail, comparing the country they are studying with the US situation, or between
settings within a single country or region. **Field sites for 2017 scheduled to be offered include China and Guatemala, and Belize for PA Students.** The duration of these programs is generally 2-3 weeks. In addition, students must participate in all orientation activities required of the course.

Upon satisfactory completion of the field course, students will receive course equivalency for 699: Independent Study in the department of the Course Faculty. Students will be registered for this course when they turn in their study abroad packet.

**Timeline to pursue this option:**
2. Apply for the field course and work with course leader to identify mentor for comparative systems study by January 15.
3. Submit your PoD application by January 15. Your PoD Project Proposal will be due at least 12 weeks before you depart for your trip.

**Option #2: Independent study**

Independent Study Field Experiences require extensive effort during the spring term to develop a scope of work for the summer project. Preliminary eligibility for this option depends on the student’s international experience, prior global health academic course work, and ability to define a topic and geographic area of interest.

**Timeline to pursue this option:**
2. Enroll in PHS 640 online for the spring term plus 1 hour Wednesday study seminar (Conway & DiPrete Brown).
3. Students receive field experience credit as an independent study 699 in the department of the Course Faculty mentor.

Upon receipt of this information, the PoD staff will refer selected students to meet with GHI to discuss next steps. Students may enroll in PHS 699 (Independent Study) through GHI Office Program Administrator after receiving approval from GHI advisor.

**Completion of a Global Health Certificate**

Some students may want to go beyond completing a summer experience to advance their understanding of global health issues. Find specific details regarding Global Health Certificate requirements at [http://ghi.wisc.edu/graduatecapstone-certificate-in-global-health/curriculum-requirements/](http://ghi.wisc.edu/graduatecapstone-certificate-in-global-health/curriculum-requirements/)

Any student who completes the Global Health Certificate and course PHS 712 will automatically meet the requirements of the Path of Distinction.
Financial Options for Global Health Study

Global Health study is a valuable experience that offers the benefits of increased exposure to health challenges and disparities, improved cultural competency, and comparative systems skills. These skills can be put to use locally and globally. Because our international colleagues are generous mentors, and UW SMPH tuition is affordable when compared to other medical schools, the expense of a global health field experience can be considered a very worthwhile investment. Nonetheless it is a significant expenditure that requires advanced planning. Unfortunately, grant funding for global health education is very limited and most students at SMPH self-finance all or part of global health field experiences. The following funding options make global health study affordable for most students:

1) Students are eligible to increase financial aid allotments for credit bearing global health work.
2) Farrell Public Health Scholar Project Stipends: Student must identify appropriate UW faculty mentor, have GHI approval and develop a tentative proposal (to be further refined in the field prep course) and apply for competitive funding (applications due February 1 and awarded by February 15).
3) Shapiro Summer Research- for additional information contact Lynne Cleeland, Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs imcleela@wisc.edu phone: (608) 265-6045
4) LACIS Tinker Short-Term Field Research Grants- For students working in Latin America and planning a field stay of 4 weeks or more.
5) Scholarship Chart at International Academic Programs, UW Madison includes several for graduate students.

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When making an advising appointment related to your global health interests, please review the websites for basic information prior to the meeting. Also, please consult the professional profiles of our staff to determine the best fit in terms of regional and disciplinary expertise. Finally, when querying for an appointment please provide some information about your interests and attach a resume. This will allow GHI staff to make best use of advising time, focusing on you and your needs and identifying appropriate mentors from the larger UW network.