

Educating Public Health Doctoral Students About Research Integration and Implementation: UC Berkeley Model

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The Problem...

- ✧ **To solve health issues** such as climate change, obesity and violence we must draw on many disciplines and involve stakeholders from many sectors.

But...

- ✧ Most doctoral programs focus on a narrow set of disciplines and do not provide enough opportunities for students to implement research in realistic settings.

Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) Program University of California, Berkeley



- In 2000, the School of Public Health transformed its DrPH program.
- The DrPH program includes **all disciplines**, such as engineering, business, law, policy—as well as traditional public health disciplines.
- Students focus on **“solving problems”** not just “testing theories.”
- Students **work with many stakeholders** from communities, government, and private industry.

The DrPH Program Goals Are...

- ✧ **“Trandisciplinary”**: Train students to develop new theories, methods, products and applications
- ✧ **“Translational”**: Train students to implement research findings into programs and policies
- ✧ **“Participatory”**: Train students to engage with many end-users, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers

Examples of DrPH Research & Action

- ✓ DrPH students from multiple disciplines helped the Mexican government revise HIV/AIDS policies.
- ✓ DrPH student developed a new video method to engage hurricane survivors to improve emergency preparedness.
- ✓ DrPH student created a novel way to apply Health Impact Assessments to school community planning.
- ✓ DrPH students worked with youth to integrate their voice into local health assessments and programs.



Health Research for Action center (HRA): A “Learning Lab” for Students



- HRA has been a program at the UC Berkeley School of Public Health for over 20 years.
- HRA staff include researchers, program experts, and policymakers linked to stakeholders worldwide.
- Doctoral, masters and undergraduate students from many disciplines have jobs and internships at HRA.
- HRA staff and students integrate research from all disciplines and apply it across all sectors.
- HRA focuses on participatory “action research”

Early DrPH Program Challenges

- ✧ **Disciplinary faculty: slow to understand, accept and participate in the program**
- ✧ **Hard to find academic funding**
- ✧ **Hard to link students to other schools and sectors**

DrPH Program Successes

- ✧ **Program reputation growing among faculty**
- ✧ **Resources are increasing and sustainable**
- ✧ **Nearly 100% employment for graduates**
- ✧ **Increasing demand**

Resources

1. Neuhauser, L., Richardson, D., Mackenzie, S., & Minkler, M. (2007). Advancing transdisciplinary and translational research practice: Issues and models of doctoral education in public health. *Journal of Research Practice*, 3(2), Article M19. Available at: <http://jrp.icaap.org/index.php/jrp/article/view/103/97>
2. University of California, Berkeley DrPH Program: <http://sph.berkeley.edu/students/degrees/areas/drph1.php>
3. Health Research for Action Center, UC Berkeley: <http://www.healthresearchforaction.org>

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