OVERVIEW

The concurrent degree program offers an interdisciplinary curriculum in the fields of public health and anthropology leading to the Masters in Public Health (MPH) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Anthropology degrees. Students will matriculate in one of four MPH tracks:

1. Maternal and Child Health [2] in the Departments of Health Services and Epidemiology
2. The General Health Services track [3] in the Department of Health Services
3. The General Epidemiology track [4] in the Department of Epidemiology

Additionally, students will complete one of two PhD programs in the Department of Anthropology:

1. The Biological Anthropology Graduate Program [6]
2. The Sociocultural Anthropology Graduate Program [7]

The public health problems that characterize our world are distinguished by their complex relationship not only with the physical and biological environment, but also the cultural, economic and political environments in which they exist. The fields of anthropology and public health share a common interest in understanding factors that influencing human health and well-being in this broad context that extends well beyond a clinical focus. A deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the context and ultimate causes of public health problems requires an ability to bridge disciplinary boundaries, and to conceptualize comprehensive models of global health dynamics. Professional training in both public health and anthropology is viewed as one small but crucial step toward this goal.

The concurrent degree program is designed to prepare professionals who will function in multidisciplinary health settings in the areas of teaching, research, administration, planning, and policy development and implementation. Students admitted into the concurrent degree program will be those who have identified a strong commitment to devoting their careers to innovative approaches to solving the world’s most pressing global health issues.

The concurrent degree program facilitates interdisciplinary training that bridges traditional divides. Global health by definition involves cross-cultural initiatives that greatly benefit from anthropological expertise. Training in medical anthropology, evolutionary medicine, and biological approaches to health have become more relevant and valued as with the emergence of global health in recent years. The concurrent MPH/PhD degree coordinates the substantial health-related strengths found across the University of Washington. The Department of Anthropology has a number of faculty with specializations or interest in Medical Anthropology and Global Health [8]. Additionally, there are several adjunct medical anthropologists in other units at the University of Washington (Nora Kenworthy [9], Ali Murat Maga [10], and Joanna Crane [11]). The Departments of Epidemiology and Health Services are top ranked in the nation, and the new Department of Global Health has gained a reputation as especially distinct and innovative. Moreover, students completing both degree programs have been highly recruited on the job market for both academic and applied health positions.

The concurrent degree program coordinates the requirement of each degree program, allowing students to shorten the time to completion of both degrees.

ADMISSION

Prospective students apply to each program separately, but should indicate on their application forms and on their admission statement that they are also applying to one of the programs approved in the concurrent
degree program. Applicants are strongly encouraged to check the deadlines for the MPH and PhD applications as they will not necessarily be the same. Students admitted to both programs will qualify for the concurrent degree program.

For further information, please contact the Graduate Program Advisor (gradanth@uw.edu [12]).