Department of Public Health Science

Stockholm University

Education plan

for

Master's programme in public health sciences: societal and individual perspectives
Masterprogram i folkhälsovetenskap: samhälleliga och individuella perspektiv

120.0 Higher Education Credits
120.0 ECTS credits

Programme code:	PHSAN
Valid from:	Autumn 2022
Date of approval:	2021-10-04
Department:	Department of Public Health Sciences

Decision

This educational plan has been determined by the Faculty Board of the Social Sciences 2021-10-04.

Prerequisites and special admittance requirements

A degree comprising at least 180 credits, and English proficiency equivalent to English Course B or English 6.

Programme structure

The programme comprises 120 credits, organised into six subsequent blocks (A-F). It is given by Department of Public Health Sciences, which has a social science profile. The programme includes four terms of full-time studies. The language of instruction is English.

The programme offers two tracks; Societal perspectives on public health, and Individual perspectives on public health. The courses within blocks A-D and F are the same for both tracks, whereas block E differs depending on the track.

The first block (A) presents social science perspectives on public health, focusing on the historical developments of the discipline. The block ends with theory of science and a review of different methodological approaches.

The second block (B) focuses on the distribution of (poor) health in the population with regard to occupational class, education, income, gender, and ethnicity, as well as explanations for how the social world can influence people’s physical and mental health.

The third block (C) includes a series of short courses based on practical work with different types of data material (e.g. interviews, documents, images, surveys, and registers) and analytical methods (e.g. text analysis, discourse analysis, visual analysis, descriptive statistics, and analysis of associations).

The fourth block (D) applies a life course perspective on health from two angles: on the one hand, how living conditions early in life are related to health development in the short term and long term, and, on the other hand, how health, sickness, and mortality across adulthood and old age can be understood based on living conditions during earlier phases of life.

The fifth block (E) differs between the two tracks, and offers either in-depth courses on societal perspectives

on public health, where the content relates to sociological and demographical issues around population development, social change, welfare systems, social and public health policy, and global health, or in-depth courses on individual perspectives on public health, where the content reflects psychological issues linked to e.g. stress, sleep, behaviours, as well as prevention, intervention, and health promotion.

The sixth block (F) starts with an elective course, for which it is possible to choose either an individual in-depth course or to do a traineeship at an agency, organisation, or another workplace related to public health. The remaining part of this block is devoted to the master thesis in public health sciences.

A seminar series runs throughout the programme, with the purpose of enhancing the students' theoretical and methodological knowledge within public health sciences, strengthening their abilities to apply this knowledge to solve complex problems, issues, and situations, as well as offering the opportunity to identify and reflect on the need for own knowledge and competence development.

The programme prepares the students for postgraduate education and qualifies them to work with e.g. investigations and policy measures at the national, regional, and local levels, practical public health work within governmental agencies and in the private sector, as well as issues relating to health care international aid.

Goals

In addition to the general objectives stated in Chapter 1 9§ in the Higher Education Act, the objectives stated in the Higher Education Ordinance apply as follows:

Knowledge and understanding

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall:
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including both broad knowledge of the field and a considerable degree of specialised knowledge in certain areas of the field as well as insight into current research and development work.
- Demonstrate specialised methodological knowledge in the main field of study.

Competence and skills

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall:
- Demonstrate the ability to critically and systematically integrate knowledge and analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations even with limited information.
- Demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues critically, autonomously and creatively as well as to plan and, using appropriate methods, undertake advanced tasks within predetermined time frames and so contribute to the formation of knowledge as well as the ability to evaluate this work.
- Demonstrate the ability in speech and writing both nationally and internationally to clearly report and discuss his or her conclusions and the knowledge and arguments on which they are based in dialogue with different audiences.
- Demonstrate the skills required for participation in research and development work or autonomous employment in some other qualified capacity.

Judgement and approach

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall:
- Demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the main field of study informed by relevant disciplinary, social and ethical issues and also to demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work.
- Demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used.
- Demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for his or her ongoing learning.

Courses

The following courses are mandatory and offered by the Department of Public Health Sciences unless otherwise specified. All courses are at the advanced level.

Year 1

Block A: Introduction to theory and method
An introduction to public health sciences (7.5 credits)

Research methodology (7.5 credits)

Block B: Public health: Distributions and explanations
Social inequalities in health (7.5 credits)
Embodiment of the social world (7.5 credits)

Block C: Qualitative and quantitative analytical methods
Qualitative data sampling, materials, and collection (2.5 credits)
Coding and analysing qualitative materials (2.5 credits)
Analysing qualitative text and visual data materials (2.5 credits)
Management and description of quantitative data (2.5 credits)
Basic statistical analysis (2.5 credits)
Statistical data modelling (2.5 credits)

Block D: Development of (poor) health across life
Early life conditions, health development, and child public health (7.5 credits)
Life-course perspectives on ageing and health (7.5 credits)*□

Year 2

Block E: Social perspectives on public health
Population development and social change (7.5 credits)**
Health and policy in the welfare state (7.5 credits)
Global health in a changing world (7.5 credits)
Or
Block E: Individual perspectives on public health
Psychological perspectives on health (7.5 credits)
Stress, recovery, and health (7.5 credits)***
Prevention, intervention, and health promotion (7.5 credits)

Block F: Practical work in public health sciences
Individual in-depth course in public health sciences (7.5 credits) or Traineeship in public health sciences (7.5 credits)
Master thesis in public health sciences (30 credits)

* Given in collaboration with Aging Research Center, Karolinska Institutet, within the main field of public health sciences
** Given by the Department of Sociology, Stockholm University, within the main field of demography
*** Given in collaboration with the Department of Psychology, Stockholm University, within the main field of public health sciences

Degree

The programme leads to a Master of Science in Public Health Sciences. The main field of study is public health sciences.

Misc

Students who have been accepted to the programme but do not complete it within the two planned study years may ask to complete the programme even after the syllabus has ceased to be valid. In such cases the restrictions stated in the syllabus for each of the programme courses apply.