MPH Memos

HAPPY FALL SEMESTER!

For those of you new to the Department of Public Health, welcome to the MPH program and the University of Tennessee! Go Vols! For new students and as a refresher for those returning, the MPH Memos exist to connect, highlight, and inform MPH students at UTK. The memos will include staff, faculty, and student highlights, research and internship features, opportunities to get involved, public health resources, campus events, and more!

MEET THE EDITOR!

Hi everyone! My name is Peyton Prothero (she/her/hers) and I am delighted to serve as the editor for the MPH Memos Newsletters! I am a first-year MPH student in the Community Health Education concentration. I am new to Knoxville and my hometown is Portland, Oregon. I received my B.S. in Public Health from Oregon State University, and I am a Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES). My interests include college health and teaching and I hope to one day work at a university or a health department. In my free time I enjoy volunteering, watching documentaries on Netflix, hiking, and trying new food! There are three MPH Memos released per semester and due to most of us being virtual these will be distributed electronically through email and posted on the department website. Please feel free to reach out to me with ideas, feedback, or submissions at pprother@vols.utk.edu

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IMPORTANT DATES

- Flu Vaccine Clinics:
  Thursday, October 1st and Tuesday, October 20th. Registration required.
- MPH Comprehensive Exam on November 6th
ABOUT THE PHGSA

The PHGSA is a voluntary student organization for MPH and DrPH students at UTK. The PHGSA allows students to develop leadership skills, enjoy time together, and develop health-promoting initiatives for the university community and beyond. Activities include planning and leading the new student orientation each fall semester, participating in campus wellness events, and engaging in other service learning activities that promote health.

GRADUATE CERTIFICATES

Did you know that as an MPH student you are eligible to get a graduate certificate? The university offers many graduate certificates to complement your degree program. The Department of Public Health is a partner in two certificate programs:

1. Graduate Certificate in Health Policy
2. Graduate Certificate in Food Safety

Each of these has proven to be advantageous for students entering the workforce. Graduate Certificates require at least one course specific to the Certificate that is over and above the requirements of the MPH program, but many students use Certificate courses for electives. If you are interested in either Certificate or are considering one from another area, please consult with your advisor. The programs do not require any application fees, letters of recommendations, or essays. For information about the Certificate in Food Safety, you may contact Dr. Brown (kcbrown@utk.edu) and for the Certificate in Health Policy, you may contact Dr. Myers (cmyers6@utk.edu).

PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION (PHGSA)

Looking for a way to get involved, meet other public health students and most importantly, have fun? Consider joining the PHGSA! Only a $20 membership fee. For more information, contact Ahmad Mitoubsi at amitoubs@vols.utk.edu

Welcome Meeting: https://tennessee.zoom.us/j/92818347087
Comps Study Sessions: https://tennessee.zoom.us/j/91837682011
NEW FACULTY HIGHLIGHT: DR. DONNA DAVIS

We would like to give a warm welcome to Dr. Donna Davis who has recently joined the Department of Public Health!

Please introduce yourself!

Dr. Donna Davis, Assistant Professor of Practice. My credentials include a Doctor of Education (EdD), a Master of Public Health (MPH), and I am also certified (CPH) by the National Board of Public Health Examiners (NBPHE). I am a public health educator who seeks to build bridges between research, policy, and practice. I am also a volunteer leader serving on the Education Board of the American Public Health Association (APHA).

What courses do you teach in the department and what are your research interests?

Currently, I teach PUBH 552 Assessment and Planning and PUBH 350 Aspects of Aging; my research interests include implementation science, evidence-based policy development, and communicating the value of public health practice.

Are there ways for students to get involved with the work you are doing?

I encourage students to engage in the work of the American Public Health Association (APHA) by presenting at the annual meeting or serving as volunteers in one of the many sections and special interest groups.

What advice would you give new MPH students?

Keeping the public healthy requires diverse talents and a love of learning. I encourage students to learn as much as possible in their current roles and to also seek opportunities to learn throughout their career.

What is your favorite thing so far about Knoxville and UTK?

I appreciate the warm welcome and the spirit of innovation I’ve observed at UTK.

Applied Practice Experience

Dr. Davis is also the MPH Applied Practice Experience (APE) Coordinator! The APE is a minimum 240-hour work experience enabling graduate students to develop and demonstrate public health competencies while contributing to projects that benefit the organization. The site is selected by students based on their career and educational goals and typically occurs during the last semester in the MPH program.

For first-year MPH students, attend the APE Information Session with Dr. Davis on Friday, September 25th from 11:00 AM—12:00 PM. This will be an opportunity to get to know your classmates, learn how to optimize your first-year career planning, and get an overview of the APE process. Please bring a copy of your resume!

ZOOM Link: https://tennessee.zoom.us/j/97512245705
MEET JULIE GRUBAUGH!

Hi! I’m Julie Grubaugh. Do you like my lipstick? Just kidding! I chose a rainbow “love” ZOOM background because I want students, colleagues, and collaborators who identify as LGBTQ+ or any marginalized identity to know that they have an ally and safe place with me.

What is your background and role in the department?

I have an MPH in Community Health Education and hold the Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) credential. I also serve as a faculty lecturer in the Department of Public Health. I teach the undergraduate Introduction to Public Health (PUBH 201) a class that has grown from 30 students per year in 2018 to more than 1,070 students in 2020! This fall, I have added an anti-racist lens to class discussions with a goal of disrupting racism and increasing equity. Black Lives Matter. I have worked for UT full-time since 2004 in roles ranging from sign language interpreter to Academic Health Department coordinator (joint appointment with Knox County Health Department). Until this fall, I coordinated the MPH internships (now called Applied Practice Experience or APE).

How are you finding ways to have fun or practice self-care during the pandemic?

To be honest, the pandemic has been hard, and I have felt overwhelmed and super-stressed, even with the unearned privileges of being an able-bodied, educated, white, citizen with opportunity to telework. To cope with stress, I walk or run outside every day, try to get at least 7 hours of sleep per night, do a daily meditation in the morning, and reach out to friends.

What are your tips for being successful in the MPH program during the pandemic?

1. Prioritize sleep
2. Read the syllabus
3. Read the directions of assignments, and use the help feature of the software program or platform (Canvas, ZOOM, Excel, etc.)
4. Foster community with classmates. One idea is to take your zoom classes outside in the HPER breezeway with classmates, spaced out at the big tables.
5. Most importantly, spread kindness (not germs)
MEET KENNETH MAPP!

I’m Kenneth Mapp and I received a doctorate in pharmacy in 2015. I’m currently a first-year MPH student in the HPM concentration. I grew up in central Florida. I went to college in Nebraska and then studied pharmacy in California. I have worked in retail pharmacy settings, for a state health department, and as an adjunct college professor.

How are you finding ways to have fun or practice self-care during the pandemic?

Since my family lives in the area, I go down to Maryville three mornings a week to play pickle-ball. It’s great exercise and a lot of fun. Besides that, I’ve gone to the mountains multiple times to ride bikes or go for walks. It’s a beautiful environment and great physical activity. It also gets me out of the house which is always a good thing.

What has been the most exciting and challenging part of working towards a MPH degree during a pandemic?

Since it has been five years since I was in school, it’s taken me a little while to get back into the groove of being a student. Having assignments to complete weekly as well as many projects seems a bit daunting. It doesn’t help that we are having to do our courses online due to the pandemic. That makes it a bit harder for me because I don’t “feel” like I’m in school so therefore my mind doesn’t click like it should. However, finding people that I can study with and do homework together has helped me get more focused and overall helped me to understand the material better. Even though there is a lot to read for this program, being able to have discussions in class is very helpful and while it can sometimes be difficult working with others, I feel that having group projects helps to lighten the load a little bit!

PUBLIC HEALTH RESOURCES

- American Public Health Association (APHA) Webinars: Series on Racial Equity

- American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting is virtual this year! October 24th—28th. Discounted registration fee for students. Visit their website for registration and program information.

- Population Healthy Podcast. Produced by the University of Michigan School of Public Health. Listen on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify, or iHeartRadio.

- In honor of Sexual Health Month, Sex & Health Podcast hosted by the American Sexual Health Association (ASHA). Listen on Apple Podcasts or Soundcloud.
CAMPUS RESOURCES

- Need help with writing for a course, thesis, or dissertation? Make an appointment online with the Judith Anderson Herbert Writing Center.

- **Graduate Commons (Hodges Library, 131)** is a dedicated space for graduate students to meet, study, and get access to technology. Study rooms are available on a first come basis.

- **The Student Counseling Center (SCC)** is offering individual, group, and couples counseling via ZOOM. Students seeking services should call 865-974-2196 to arrange a brief assessment.

- Contact **One Stop Student Services** for information on financial aid, scholarships, tuition & fees, and registration.

- TRECS is offering free **Group Fitness Classes** via ZOOM to students who have paid their student activities fees. [Visit their website](http://) for a schedule.

- Check out the [Allyship and Antiracism Reading List](http://) compiled by the UTK Women, Gender and Sexuality Program and Dr. Patrick R. Grzanka.

CAMPUS EVENTS

- **Colloquium on Promoting Healthy Weight:** A Socio-Ecological Perspective on Infant Feeding. Hosted by the Department of Nutrition. September 25th 12:30-5:00 PM EST. [Register here](http://).

- **Child and Family Studies Lead Seminar Series:** Family structure, risks, and racial inequity in poverty: Towards a racial stratification approach. September 25th 1:00-2:00 PM. [ZOOM link](http://).

- **ACTive bystander training for Graduate Students.** Hosted by the Center for Health Education and Wellness (CHEW). September 25th 1:00-3:00 PM. Register here: [wellness.utk.edu/vols-act-sign-up/](http://wellness.utk.edu/vols-act-sign-up/)

- **IRB 101 workshops.** Multiple times offered: [https://research.utk.edu/training-workshops/](http://research.utk.edu/training-workshops/)

- **College of Arts and Sciences Allyship and Antiracism Conversations.** [Register here](http://). All sessions begin at 5:30 PM EST.
  - September 24th: Why, When, and How Implicit Bias Matters
  - October 8th: Scientific Racism: Historical Roots and Contemporary Manifestations

DON'T FORGET!

Election day is **Tuesday, November 3rd**. Check out [this article from NBC News](http://) to get your questions answered about voter registration, mail-in and in-person voting for each state.

NEXT EDITION OF THE MPH MEMOS COMING OCTOBER 2020!