

Honors Thesis and Elon College Fellow Guidelines: Public Health Studies Major

The Process of Matching Students with Mentors:

The Public Health Studies (PHS) Department recognizes that some Honors and ECF students might know a particular faculty member who teaches within the Public Health Studies major with whom they feel most comfortable. If so, students should approach this faculty member as their initial contact with the program. If the student does not have such a relationship with a faculty member, he or she should contact the program coordinator. Following an exploration of student interests and skills, the coordinator will direct the student to further discussions with the appropriate faculty member.

PHS faculty mentors come from a wide variety of disciplines. It is incumbent upon students to ask potential research mentors about specific skillsets (e.g., qualitative analyses, lab techniques) or courses that are required in order to effectively complete an undergraduate research project within their discipline. The department chair will remain in contact with the Honors and ECF Program Directors regarding the student/mentor matching process.

What Constitutes Acceptable Honors Thesis and Elon College Fellow Projects in Public Health Studies

The PHS Advisory Committee also respects the interdisciplinary nature of PHS research and encourages students to pursue research in an area closely associated with their interests, coursework, and passions. To that end, honors theses and ECF research projects should follow the disciplinary conventions of their mentor's department. However, the student will need to integrate public health considerations as they develop their research question and this should be evident in the literature included in their proposal. Additionally, students will need to include a section of the final paper which addresses the public health implications of their research unless those implications are integrated into the body of the final paper. See details below.

- **Public health implications:** According to the Association of Schools and Programs in Public Health, public health is “the science and art of protecting and improving the health of communities through education, promotion of healthy lifestyles, and research for disease and injury prevention.” Public health focuses on the primary, secondary and tertiary prevention of health problems and seeks to protect the health of local and global communities. Honors and ECF students pursuing PHS research will include an approximately 800-1000 word section that articulates the public health implications of their research making linkages to relevant scholarly public health research. The department chair is available to offer guidance as necessary.

**Honors Fellows, Elon College Fellows, and Lumen Scholar
Substitution for Course Requirements Policy**

9/8/2017

Current second through fourth year PHS majors who are Honors/Elon College Fellows or Lumen Scholars may count 4 hours of their undergraduate research credits towards their focal area OR towards the required PHS 461 Senior Seminar. Students are strongly encouraged to take PHS 461 Senior Seminar.

Students matriculating to Elon in fall 2017 will be required to take PHS 461 Senior Seminar and may count 4 hours of their undergraduate research credit towards their focal area.

Rationale. The PHS major only has 6 core PHS courses. PHS 461 Senior Seminar covers content on program development and evaluation not included in other courses and not likely the focus of undergraduate research. Further, the smaller class size of PHS 461 allows students from both focal areas the opportunity to exchange ideas and develop a strong sense of community.