

2025

Global Health Graduate Certificate Program

Student Handbook

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THE UNIFORMED SERVICES UNIVERSITY
OF THE HEALTH SCIENCES

Program Introduction

USU is pleased to offer a Global Health Graduate Certificate Program (GHGCP) via distance learning. Graduate certificates are an increasingly recognized and valued credential in global health and are often earned by mid-career professionals interested in obtaining formal education in this diverse and rapidly changing field. Prospective students who are interested in expanding their knowledge and skill set by taking only one or two courses are also welcome and encouraged to apply.

Starting AY 2024-2025 students can earn an accredited graduate certificate upon successful completion of at least 12.0 credit hours of coursework. The courses are offered in a *HyFlex* format to offer the most flexibility for students. Students can take the course asynchronously (watching recorded lectures and participating in activities such as discussion boards) or you can take the course synchronously (via video conference or in-person). All courses will include readings, videos, and various activities such as group discussions, presentations and final papers or exams.

The GHGCP offers coursework in global health science and policy with an extra emphasis on real-world applications relevant to the U.S. military, the U.S. federal government, and our allies and partners. Begun in 2016 and fully accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, the program's students earn a "Graduate Certificate in Global Health and Global Health Engagement" after successful completion of the coursework, all of which can be completed via distance learning.

Courses **required** to earn the graduate certificate are (must complete all four):

1. PMO 528	Fundamentals of Global Health	2.25 credits
2. PMO 547	Joint Health Operations	3 credits
3. PMO 1007	Advanced Seminar in Global Health Policy and Planning	2.25 credits
4. PMO 1037	Department of Defense Global Health Engagement	3 credits

Elective courses available to students include:

1. PMO 613	Public Health Issues of Disasters in Developing Countries	3 credits
2. PMO 1009	Domestic Disaster Management and Response	2.25 credits
3. PMO 1032	Practical Monitoring and Evaluation	2.25 credits

Other electives may be considered in lieu of the above three courses for graduation requirements, but must have sufficient Global Health content and also must be approved by the Program Director.

Program Mission

The program's mission is to prepare globally-minded U.S. military and related professionals to plan and execute health engagement in support of security cooperation, stability operations, complex humanitarian emergencies, and any health or medical engagement around the world as directed by the combatant command or appointed U.S. government authority in support of national security, in times of war and peace.

Why Global Health?

The U.S. military is constrained in the career path for global health, long-term staffing opportunities and adequate flexibility in the use of civilian experts. There is insufficient knowledge within DoD of nongovernmental organizations, USAID, and CDC, including their respective cultures and how to most effectively partner with each in delivering health services, training, and capacity-building.

There is a strong argument for systematically cultivating the small cadre of military officers and civilian personnel who lead military global health engagement, identifying opportunities to develop the unique competencies required to optimize success in these critical roles. Ideally this cadre would include medical representatives from a broad spectrum of clinical and administrative backgrounds representing all U.S. military services. In addition to proven competence in core specialties, specialized professional development can include a common educational foundation in global health and international relations as well as significant experience within U.S. civilian assistance agencies, nongovernmental partners, and multilateral institutions. This step should not require additional personnel, but rather rely on more systematic and thorough professional development of those personnel involved in health-engagement activities.



--ADM William Fallon and LTG James Peake



We stand, MSF and NATO, in the same volatile geographic locations, so we must deal with the reality of our coexistence in the tight and tense corridors of war. While we will never have a common understanding, we need to improve our mutual understanding in order to be clear about our different motivations, responsibilities, strategies, and purposes.

-- Christopher Fournier, International President of MSF (Doctors Without Borders)

Dean's Welcome

Among accredited allopathic medical schools in the United States, only the School of Medicine at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) is dedicated to “caring for those in harm’s way.” USU was established in 1972 to ensure that the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Public Health Service would have a steady supply of physicians, scientists, and public health leaders who would form the clinical and research backbone of the Military Health System. Our military medical mission is outlined in three goals that serve as the foundation for everything we do:



1. As the Nation’s military medical academy, the USU School of Medicine will produce military physician-leaders and scientists who will drive innovation in academia and federal service
2. The USU School of Medicine will be the focal point for military medical education and training throughout the military physician’s career lifecycle
3. As a key Federal research and graduate education center, the USU School of Medicine will serve as the nexus of biomedical science, health services research, and innovation for the MHS

Educating those who will lead global health engagements around the world is now an important part of our mission; and thanks to leading-edge technology, USU’s graduate education programs are available to students serving all over the world. Students enrolled in the Global Health Graduate Certificate program will take courses equal in quality and rigor to those offered to students here on campus. Our faculty, many of whom are active duty or retired military officers with extensive global health experience, will share the same enthusiasm, dedication, and individual attention that our in-residence students receive. Although the program is challenging, when you finish it, you will have acquired a strong foundation in the field of global health, which is critically important to military medicine.

USU’s hundreds of medical and graduate students are “learning to care for those in harm’s way.” As a component of the U.S. Department of Defense, the Uniformed Services University contributes to America’s national security by ensuring that the U.S. military has a “ready medical force” and a “medically ready force” — whenever and wherever they are needed. In addition, USU’s students, faculty, and staff are committed to defending the health security of the United States by generating high-impact scientific and clinical discoveries, by delivering compassionate and efficient patient care, and by advancing public health throughout the United States and around the world. Global health and global health engagement are vital to our military and public health missions. Welcome to the Uniformed Services University.

Eric Elster, MD, FACS, FRCS Eng (Hon.)

CAPT, MC, USN (Ret.)

Professor of Surgery

Professor of Molecular and Cell Biology

Dean, School of Medicine

Course Descriptions (Required Courses)

PMO 528 – Fundamentals of Global Health (FGH) – credits: 2.25

This is an introductory course in Global Health that examines the social, political and economic factors that affect health with an emphasis on the impact of disease on development in low-income countries. Students will explore methods of measuring health status and describing disease burden across populations and will become familiar with the various international organizations that influence health in the global setting. The objective of this course is to provide a foundational understanding on why Global Health is important. This course is a prerequisite for all other courses within the Global Health Concentration. Grading is by letter grade. Prerequisites: none.

PMO 547 – Joint Health Operations (JHO) – credits: 3.0

Joint Health Operations focuses on the Military Health System (MHS)'s core missions (force health protection and health service support) in the context of global health (GH) and security cooperation. It builds on the basic principles of PMO 528 Foundations of Global Health course. Areas of focus include understanding the development of GH as a core mission for the MHS, principles and practices of GH, one-health, assessment, monitoring, and evaluation; socio-cultural cross communication and basic cultural competencies, special operations engagements, and interorganizational coordination, among others. Through various exercises, the students will review the process for designing, planning and executing GH missions. The objective of the course is to prepare students to become future military leaders as staff officers at Service components, geographic combatant commands and other interagencies. Grading is pass/fail. Prerequisites: completion of Foundations of Global Health (PMO 528) with a grade of "C" or better.

PMO 1007 – Advanced Seminar in Global Health (ASGH) Policy and Planning – credits 2.25

The purpose of this course is to explore the complexity of global health policy. Students and Faculty examine the opportunities and challenges in global health policy and programs, health systems infrastructure, governance, population health disparities, diplomacy, institutions, national security guidance and policies, etc., and how they are applicable for the DoD and its Military Health System. Grading is pass/fail. Prerequisites: none.

PMO 1037 – Department of Defense Global Health Engagement (GHE) – credits 3.0

This course provides an introduction to the strategic, operational and civil-military considerations in conducting Global Health Engagement (GHE) activities within the DoD. It examines the framework for establishing the context of a health engagement and discusses the components of planning, executing and monitoring the activity. This course uses an interactive seminar-style format to present the content and skills critical to developing and conducting effective GHE programs and activities. It also includes assigned readings that highlight documents that guide the conduct of GHE. The course then builds an awareness of a complex set of variables that shape the development of GHE programs and the key principles to planning and conducting a GHE activity. Students also participate in a series of small group activities designed to reinforce and enhance the academic instruction. Grading is pass/fail. Prerequisites: completion of Foundations of Global Health (PMO 528) with a grade of "C" or better.

Course Descriptions (Electives)

PMO 613 – Public Health Issues of Disasters (PHID) in Developing Countries – credits 3.0*

This course focuses on the public health consequences of disasters in developing countries (natural, man-made and technological) and on the principal public health interventions needed to mitigate and respond to the disaster's effects. Students will learn epidemiological tools to assess and monitor the health of populations affected by disasters. The role of the medical community when planning for and/or supporting the response to complex humanitarian crises will be emphasized. The course will use guest speakers to support the course material. Prerequisites: none. *This class is not offered asynchronously.

PMO 1009 – Domestic Disaster Management and Response (DDMR) – credits 2.25

This course provides an overview of how the federal government responds to domestic disasters with a primary focus on the management of the public health and medical aspects. Subject matter experts from across the federal government will describe the complexity of disaster medicine and public health emergency response. Students will have the opportunity to examine examples of coordinated and multidisciplinary responses from local, state, and federal agencies. Students will also gain insight into Defense Support of Civil Authorities during domestic emergencies. At the end of the course, students will select a domestic disaster-relevant topic, write a brief research paper applying the frameworks and concepts covered, and present the research with an interactive component for their fellow students. Prerequisites: none.

PMO 1032 – Practical Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) – credits 2.25*

Per DODI 5132.14 (Assessment, Monitoring, and Evaluation Policy for the Security Cooperation Enterprise) AM&E is required for all significant security cooperation initiatives and will be consistent with U.S. Government and international standards and best practices. This course will be a multimedia course with a hands-on approach to aid in the understanding of the practices creating monitoring and evaluation plans. Students will work together to create logical frameworks and develop AM&E plans for various projects. The course uses a "flipped classroom" approach, and substantial research and reading is required outside of class. Prerequisites: none. *This class is not offered asynchronously.

- Other electives may be considered in lieu of the above three courses for graduation requirements, but must have sufficient Global Health content and also must be approved by the GHGCP Program Director.

Program Administration

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Please direct general questions to our GHGCP shared e-mail (org. box) at: GHGCP-ggg@usuhs.edu

Course Policies

Expectations for Course Participation

Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions as well as class presentations. Class participation will be graded on quantity and quality, reflecting not only the assigned material but also the ability to interpret and analyze the material. Class participation will help you learn the material covered in this class. Students are expected to have read the assigned materials in advance of the class session in order to participate meaningfully in class discussions.

Attendance

As already noted, the GHGCP is a *HyFlex* experience, which means that it is conducted in three modalities: in-person, synchronously (dialing into the class session via Google Meet), and asynchronously (distance learners participating in the course solely through Canvas). Asynchronous learners are expected to watch the recorded lectures (prior to the subsequent lecture) and complete associated activities. Despite the flexibility of this approach, the goal is to provide the learner with comparable learning experiences. You can participate in any of the formats that work best for you.

Preventive Medicine and Biostatistics (PMB) Ph.D. Student Pathway to Global Health Certificate

PMB Ph.D students may earn the Global Health Certificate by following the below process:

1. **Application:** PMB Ph.D. students who wish to apply for the Global Health Certificate program shall do so in their first (semester or year?) of doctoral studies. While USU PMB in-residence students get priority in the Global Health Certificate Program, annual enrollment may be limited.
2. **Approval from Advisor:** Any PMB Ph.D student wishing to apply for the Global Health Certificate program must get written approval from their Academic Advisor.
3. PMB Ph.D. students accepted into the Global Health Certificate program are expected to complete all required coursework in-person (unless special arrangements have been made in advance through the Global Health Certificate Director).
4. All PMB Ph.D. students enrolled in the Global Health Certificate program must complete the Global Health Certificate coursework *before graduating from USU*.
5. Credits counted towards the Global Health Certificate *will not* be counted towards the total credits required for the Ph.D.

Academic Standing Policy

Standards of performance and procedures regarding academic status for graduate students are contained in the Graduate Education Policy, "Academic Standing of Graduate Students" of September 2021. This policy can be found at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UgNcBT4TA6CV14O5jyVSWjEfyOOySIz_/view. These standards are:

- Satisfactory academic standing is defined as a cumulative grade point average of B (3.0), with no grade below "C" in any course. Pass/fail courses must have a grade of at least 70% to be considered passing.
- Satisfactory academic performance is determined both by performance in formal courses and by the aspects of academic performance, including skills and attributes judged by the graduate faculty to be important for success as a scientist.

GHGCP students will be disenrolled from the program for any of the following reasons:

- When a final grade of "D" or "F" is received in any course.
- When the cumulative grade point average is below 3.0 at the end of the third academic quarter or any time thereafter.
- For failure to maintain appropriate academic standing or violation of academic integrity.
- If the program director sends you an email (or otherwise tries to contact a student with their information on file) and there is no response within 90 days, the program director has the option to disenroll you.

Program Admission Requirements and Procedures

Students interested in taking graduate coursework in global health at USU must have successfully earned a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. Applications will be made available on the program webpage (<https://medschool.usuhs.edu/pmb/education/global-health-distance-learning-program>) on or about February 1st of each calendar year, and will remain open for approximately 4 weeks. Applications will then be reviewed by the committee on admissions in March and decisions emailed to students on or about April 1st, in preparation for an August start.

Candidates are evaluated for admission based on a variety of criteria. In addition to academic fitness for graduate work, applicants are assessed for how likely they are to use this education to further the tactical, operational, or strategic objectives of the DOD, or the broader U.S. government, with respect to global health engagement.

At this point the program primarily enrolls students who are in the U.S. military active-duty, with limited exceptions for Guard and Reserve. We hope to open the aperture in the future and allow a broader variety of students into the program.

Graduation Requirements

Students in this program earn graduate credits upon completion of each course, a formal record of which is maintained by the university registrar. Students may request their transcript at any time, or even transfer these credits to other universities or degree programs.

To earn the "Graduate Certificate in Global Health and Global Health Engagement" from USU, students must:

1. Successfully complete the four required courses; and
2. Complete one additional elective to earn a total of at least 12.0 credits or more.
3. Complete these requirements within three years of starting the program.

Course Drop/Withdrawl Policy

There is a specific date approximately two weeks after the start of each course that represents the end of the drop period. After that date, students who elect to drop from a course will receive a "W" on their transcripts for that course. This is the same policy that applies to the in-residence students at USU.

If a distance-student experiences exceptional circumstances that necessitate he or she withdraw from a course that are outside of the student's control (i.e., unanticipated deployment or non-voluntary TDY), then the student may author a memo addressed to the Graduate Education Office at USU explaining the circumstances. The purpose of this memo would be to explain, and document, why an exception to policy should be made to allow a "drop" (not recorded on transcripts) instead of a "W." Any supporting documentation can be attached to the memo.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How long does it take to complete the program and earn the certificate?

A highly motivated student without too many extra commitments could complete the program in one year. A typical student who takes one course per term will earn the certificate in about two years. Students must complete all requirements within three years to earn the certificate.

May I take coursework via distance learning at USU and then transfer the credit elsewhere?

Yes. Students will have a formal transcript maintained by the USU Office of the University Registrar. Upon successful completion of each distance learning course, there will be a letter grade recorded on the student's transcript along with the credit value of each course. Any student may, at any time, request a transcript be sent and credits transferred to any other university or program that accepts transfer credits. Some of the courses are Pass/Fail.

I am not a member of the U.S. military; may I apply to take global health courses at Uniformed Services University?

At this time, the program primarily enrolls members of the U.S. armed services who are on active duty or reserve status. We hope to expand this in the future.

What if I have a question that is not answered by one of these FAQs?

If this handbook does not answer all your questions, please email our GHGCP org. box at: GHGCP-ggg@usuhs.edu.

If you are interested in applying to the program, please see our program website for more details:

<https://medschool.usuhs.edu/pmb/education/global-health-distance-learning-program>

Thank you for your time.