



Office of the Provost
224 Main Street
Farmington, Maine 04938

TO: Jeff St. John, Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs

FROM: Katherine Yardley, Co-Provost University of Maine at Farmington *Katherine Yardley*

RE: Program Name Change: B.S. in Health Promotion and Wellness to B.S. in Community and Public Health

DATE: February 24, 2025

The University of Maine at Farmington proposes to change the name of the B.S. in Health Promotion and Wellness to the B.S. in Community and Public Health beginning September 1, 2025.

- Current Program/CIP: Health Promotion and Wellness 51.0001
- Proposed Program/CIP: Community and Public Health 51.2208

Rationale for the change:

For several years, the Health Promotion and Wellness program at the University of Maine at Farmington (UMF) has faced challenges in attracting new students. The primary issue has been a lack of understanding of what the major entails. This issue existed when the program was previously named Community Health Education and has persisted under the current name. Prospective students often do not recognize the career paths or educational opportunities associated with the program, leading to a reliance on internal transfers and a small number of transfer students rather than incoming freshmen.

By renaming the program to **Community and Public Health**, we aim to:

- Increase name recognition and clarity for prospective students.
- Align the program more closely with national trends in Public Health and Community Health Education.
- Modernize the curriculum to reflect the evolving needs of health-related fields. For example, Lightcast data shows there has been an 11% increase in demand for those with expertise as Health Education Specialists. In 2024, there were over 500 job openings in the state of Maine. Data from 2020 shows that more than half of the job openings are outside of the Portland regional area.
- Enhance recruitment efforts by offering a clear and attractive program title that resonates with student interests and career aspirations. Lightcast data reveals programs in the state with the highest number of graduates in this area have the term "Public Health" in their title.

Vision for the New Community and Public Health Program

The new Community and Public Health program will provide a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach to both Community Health Education and Public Health. Students will receive a strong foundation in both areas while retaining the opportunity to sit for the Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) professional exam.

Core Course Requirements (Retained from Current Program)

- **HEA 123:** Introduction to Community and Public Health
- **HEA 218:** Health Communications and Theory
- **HEA 310:** Introduction to Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
- **HEA 350:** Principles of Epidemiology
- **HEA 410:** Resource and Grant Management
- **HEA 411:** Health Promotion Planning
- **HEA 495:** Field Experience in Community and Public Health

New Course Requirements to Enhance Program Focus

- **HEA XXX:** Introduction to the US Health System
- **HEA XXX:** Health Disparities and Social Justice

Flexible Learning Opportunities to Attract New Populations

- All required and elective courses will be fully available online. The addition of the online modality supports UMF's commitment to serving adult learners enrolled in our Degree Completion and Professional Studies programs. This change will also allow us to expand access to better support regional workforce needs.
- All required major courses will also be offered in-person at UMF for students who prefer an on-campus experience.

Strategic Collaboration with the University of Southern Maine

To further enhance the academic and professional opportunities for students, UMF seeks to establish a collaborative partnership with USM's Public Health Program. UMF and USM faculty met on February 7 to discuss the proposed name change and possible opportunities for collaboration. This partnership could involve:

- **Course Integration:** UMF students could fulfill the new program's HEA XXX course requirements by enrolling in USM's BPH 101: Introduction to the US Health System and BPH 210: Health Disparities and Social Justice. We consider the integration of these two USM courses as major requirements to be a strategic step toward fostering a long-term, intentional partnership between UMF and USM. However, if USM is unable to provide these courses for UMF Community and Public Health majors, UMF will be able to deliver the courses in-load.
- **A Seamless Pathway to Graduate Studies:** A collaboration, which could include courses taught or lectures given by USM faculty, will provide students with increased exposure to USM's Master of Public Health (MPH) Program, thereby fostering interest and facilitating a clear path from undergraduate to graduate study.

Conclusion

Renaming the program from Health Promotion and Wellness to Community and Public Health is an essential step in increasing student enrollment, program clarity, and professional opportunities. By modernizing the curriculum and integrating strategic collaborations with USM, we can ensure that the program meets the evolving needs of students at different stages of their lives while maintaining a strong academic and professional foundation.

This initiative represents an exciting opportunity to strengthen UMF's health-related offerings, increase visibility and recruitment, and foster a dynamic partnership with USM that benefits students, faculty, and the broader public health community.

There are currently 32 active students pursuing this program. Current students will be permitted to graduate under the current program name and requirements or switch to the new one. Re-entry students will be required to enroll in the program under the new name and meet the requirements of the new catalog.

The proposed name change and the addition of an online modality have been approved by the Division, the Curriculum Committee, the UMF Faculty Senate, and the co-provosts.

Signature Page:


Patricia Williams (Apr 23, 2025 12:54 EDT)

Division of Teacher Education, Health
and Rehabilitation Services Chair

Feb 10, 2025

Date


Scott Erb (Apr 23, 2025 11:51 EDT)

Curriculum Committee Chair

Feb 12, 2025

Date


Scott Erb (Apr 23, 2025 11:25 EDT)

Faculty Senate Chair/Faculty President

Feb 24, 2025

Date