What can I do with a degree in...

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

What is **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCES?**

A degree in Environmental Health Sciences prepares students for professions in the field of environmental health and safety and includes foundational math and science courses such as physics, chemistry, biology, and pre-calculus. Students explore the relationships between humans and their environment in a proactive manner, as well as employ problem-solving methods, data-search strategies, analysis, evaluation, and prediction in their study of complex environmental issues. Additionally, environmental health is an excellent "pre-professional degree" for such disciplines as medicine, physical therapy, dentistry, and other healthcare fields.

The WCU Environmental Health Program is one of less than 30 nationally accredited programs. The accrediting body is the National Environmental Health Science and Protection Accreditation Council (EHAC).

What are the **DEGREE OPTIONS?**

Bachelor of Science in Environmental Health

What are the **CONCENTRATIONS?**

While there are no set concentration tracks, students will work with their academic advisors to identify elective courses which will enhance their degree and career aspirations.

What is the **ADMISSION PROCESS?**

In order to major in environmental health, students must first be accepted through the WCU Office of Admissions. Once admitted to the Program, students must maintain a GPA of at least a 2.0 in major coursework.

As with all programs in the School of Health Sciences, students with an associate's degree or community college credit are strongly encouraged to apply. For more information on transferring to WCU, contact the **Transfer Admissions Office.**

Declaring a major in Environmental Health does not guarantee admission into the program. Students must maintain an overall 2.3 GPA and earn a grade of C (2.0) or above in each of the core environmental health courses to remain in the program. In addition, students are expected to adhere to the technical and professional standards of the program.

What **JOBS ARE AVAILABLE?**

Environmental Health Professionals (EHP) are committed to improving public health. Presently, there is a severe shortage of EHP across the country. Excellent jobs exist in a variety of areas including Epidemiology, Biostatistics, Public Health Entomology and Vector Control, Environmental Regulation Compliance, Industrial Hygiene, Toxicology, Water Quality Control, Environmental Monitoring and Assessment, Environmental Consulting, Food Sanitation and Safety, Housing Sanitation and Safety, Environmental education, and Occupational Health and Safety.

Who employs **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH** graduates?

Although all EHP have public health at the heart of their job, they don't all work for the same sort of employer. Local authorities, such as the agencies concerned with the protection of public health (including food, housing, health and safety, environmental/pollution control), employ most environmental health professionals. However, there are plenty of other possibilities including federal and state agencies such as the U.S. Public Health Service, environmental protection agencies, cruise ships, military services, and private companies and manufacturers. Many EHP also work abroad for international health organizations such as WHO, C.A.R.E., The Peace Corps, and U.S. AID.

MAJOR MAP

How to use this map: Review the four categories and suggestions of activities and when you should consider engaging in them. Remember, these are just suggestions! There is a fillable space for you to add in any other ideas you have to set yourself up for success in life after college.

	1st YEAR	2nd YEAR
EXCEL IN ACADEMICS	Many first-year courses focus on Biology, Chemistry, Health, and Math. Check out the **8-semester plan** for your concentration and make an appointment with your advisor.	Courses your second year continue into the science fields such as Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and lower-level Environmental Health. Be sure to also get your liberal arts classes completed by your second year. Be sure to check out the **8-Semester Plan and consult with your advisor.** NOTE: Completion of core math and sciences courses by the end of 2nd year will prepare you for success throughout the Environmental Health Core Curriculum in your 3rd and 4th years.
GET HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE	Check out **WCU's DegreePlus program** and choose which events in any of the four categories you want to attend. Categories include: Professionalism, Teamwork, Leadership, or Cultural Responsiveness. See what on-campus employment opportunities are available by logging in to **JobCat 2.0.**	Get involved with the American Society for Safety Professionals (ASSP), the ENVH student organization If you are thinking about attending a health-related professional school, start engaging in hands-on experiences required in professional school admissions. Engage deeper with **DegreePlus;** choose an additional competency to complete
BE PART OF THE COMMUNITY	Connect with the **Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning** and ask about the **Lily Award,** a program aimed to encourage students to be connected with their community.	Develop deeper relationships with the organizations for which you volunteer. Ask for special projects or responsibilities that you can highlight on a resume. If you want to **study abroad,** this is a good year to have that experience. You might also consider opportunities like **Global Health Internships**.
PREPARE FOR LIFE AFTER COLLEGE	Further explore your career options or career interests using the **Center for Career and Professional Development's** online resources, **Vault**, **Focus 2,** and **Onet Online.** Connect with a career counselor early on to explore opportunities and experiences you can do while in college to further develop your professional resume.	Attend the **Catamount Career and Networking Day** to identify summer, part-time, or internship opportunities for additional hands-on opportunities. Start a spreadsheet of professional schools you wish to apply to in a few years; label your spreadsheet with each school's admission requirements and application materials so that you are aware of the expectations.

Looking for a minor? Consider these options:

Biology
Chemistry
Environmental Science
Geology
Natural Resource Management
Spanish

3rd YEAR

Third level courses focus heavily on ENVH courses such as Toxicology, Water Quality Control, and Food Protection. Students will also apply for an internship, typically taken the summer before their fourth year. Be sure to check the **8-Semester Plan and your advisor** for more information.

Engage with your internship site supervisors. Go above and beyond their expectations.

Consider networking with professionals in your field at national or regional professional conferences such as the **National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) Annual Educators Conference** and the **American Society for Safety Professionals (ASSP) Future Safety Leaders Conference.**

Continue to build relationships and volunteer with area organizations in your field.

Connect with alumni in your field through **LinkedIn**

Visit the CCPD to hone your professional resume and cover letter. Apply for internships. Utilize the **Writing and Learning Commons** for MCAT, GRE, and other professional exam preparation sessions.Take the MCAT, GRE, etc. Use **Big Interview** to learn more about professional interviews.

Schedule a visit to tour professional schools of your choice, if applicable.

4th YEAR

Courses in your final year will continue to focus heavily on ENVH topics such as Air Quality Control, Epidemiology, and Medical Entomology. Be sure to review the **8-semester plan,** make an appointment with your advisor, complete your degree audit, and **apply for graduation!**

Investigate requirements for full-time jobs. Assess what skills or experiences you're lacking and invest time in seeking additional opportunities such as certification programs, classes, or professional development workshops during your last year to fill that gap. Connect with your faculty advisor or career counselor.

Join professional organizations such as the **National Environmental Health Association (NEHA)** and the **American Society for Safety Professionals (ASSP)**

Network with employers and non-profits at the **Catamount Career and Networking Days.**

Apply to professional school, if applicable.

Look for and apply for jobs between 4 and 6 months before graduation. Connect with the CCPD on various job search strategies.

Polish your resume, cover letter, and interview skills by vising the **CCPD.**

DID YOU KNOW? Internships are still the number-one educational experience employers look for in a recent college graduate resume. (Chronicle of Higher Education's study on 50,000 employers)

MORE INFORMATION

INTERNSHIP Information

All students complete a required internship, and because of this field experience, graduates are credited with one full year of service toward North Carolina state and local health department employment.

SKILLS LEARNED in the classroom

The core competencies will center on developing skills, knowledge, and attitudes such as:

- independent thinking
- information handling and organization
- problem solving
- written and oral communication
- professional teamwork
- analytical and synthetical reasoning
- curiosity and creativity
- critical evaluation
- scientific research skills

KNOWLEDGE Base

This program will prepare students to:

- Integrate and synthesize information from personal experience, academic courses, experiential learning from laboratories, undergraduate research projects or work
- experience, as well as extracurricular studies to address real world problems.
- Solve complex problems by critically considering scenarios, sources of information/evidence, and evaluating implications of various solutions.
- Convey information in a variety of formats and contexts, identify intended audience and communicate appropriately and respectfully in a written and oral manner.
- Practice civic engagement as an educated, engaged citizen and environmental health professional to recognize the interdependence of diverse values and by acting responsibly to affect public health and policy.
- Examine personal career goals and aspirations and make informed and ethical judgments about bringing plans into action. Take responsibility for learning and observe personal decision making processes.

Professional **RESOURCES**

- National Environmental Health Association: https://www.neha.org
- Environmental Protection Agency: https://www.epa.gov
- Food and Drug Administration: https://www.fda.gov
- U.S. Public Health Service: https://www.usphs.gov
- International Association for Impact Assessment: www.iaia.org
- Occupational Outlook Handbook: www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-socialscience/environmental-scientists-and-specialists.htm
- Occupational Safety & Health Administration: www.osha.gov
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: www.usphs.gov
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov

QUESTIONS?

For questions, please call the Environmental Health program at 828-227-2654 or visit envh.wcu.edu.

To schedule an appointment with a career counselor, contact the Center for Career and Professional Development, 828-227-7133 or careerservices@wcu.edu.

Western Carolina UNIVERSITY