

Emerging School of Public Health

VCU has a strategic plan to develop Virginia's first school of public health. We seek to develop a vibrant school of public health that:

- offers innovative, rigorous educational offerings flexible to meet diverse student needs
- provides a thriving transdisciplinary research base in which students will participate
- works synergistically with state and local public health practitioners to provide opportunities for translating research to public health practice

In the midst of a rapid expansion plan, VCU is recruiting multiple faculty members in biostatistics, health administration, epidemiology, and social and behavioral health.

For more information, please contact the academic department chairs:

Biostatistics:

Shumei Sun, PhD, ssun@vcu.edu

Epidemiology:

Kate Lapane, PhD, klapane@vcu.edu

Health Administration:

Stephen S. Mick, PhD, micks@vcu.edu

Social and Behavioral Health:

Laura Simonoff, PhD, lasiminoff@vcu.edu

Located in the heart of Richmond

Richmond is located within two hours of Washington D.C., the Blue Ridge mountains, the Chesapeake Bay, and the Atlantic Ocean beaches. Health Magazine named Richmond "The Healthiest U.S. City," citing medical facilities, clean air, recreational areas, and low cancer rates, and Money Magazine, Inc., named Richmond as "the Best Place to Live in the South" in its mid-sized cities categories. Richmond offers many cultural and educational centers, while still enjoying beautiful surroundings. The city has many museums, historical houses and sites, and cultural activities.

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

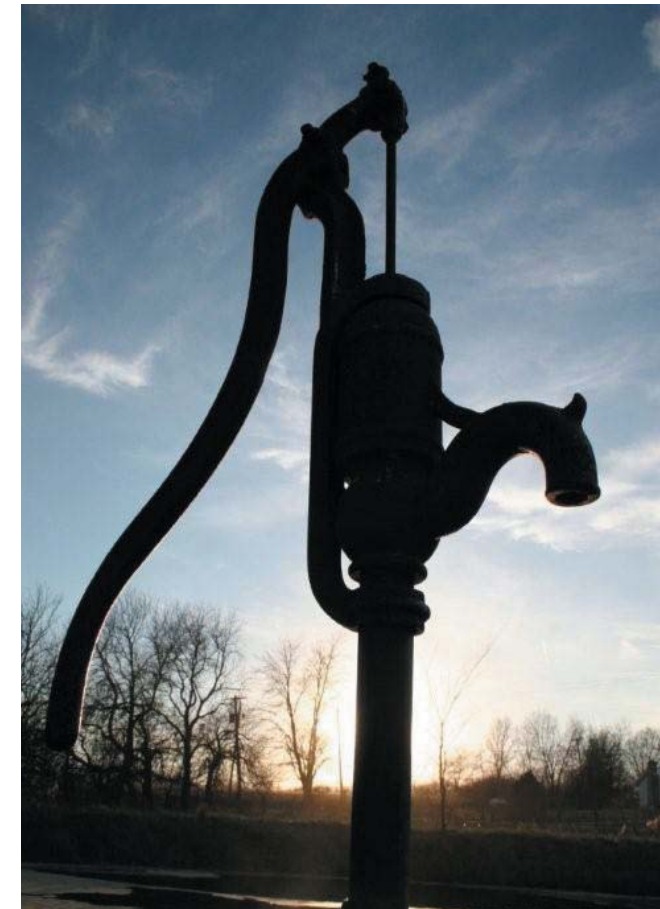
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PhD in Epidemiology



VCU Department of
Epidemiology
and Community Health

Frameworks grounding doctoral training in epidemiology at VCU:

VCU embraces a new paradigm to understand population patterns of disease and indices of health and well-being. Using a framework that acknowledges that risk and causal factors are nested one within another with environmental factors, genetic factors, behaviors and social contexts, scientists at VCU face public health challenges of this century using a team science approach. By recognizing the complex web of causation, coupled with emerging understanding of the interaction of genetic and biological factors with social and behavioral factors, VCU offers doctoral training that includes complex conceptual models, analytic strategies, statistical methodology, and epidemiologic design. To address these challenges, VCU offers redesigned, innovative strategy of training such epidemiologists that boasts:

- Doctoral training tailored to trainees' cumulative experiences on matriculation and career objectives
- Full-immersion approach
- Competency-based curriculum
- Solid epidemiologic methods foundation

Expected time-to-degree completion is 4 years. This doctoral program is fully funded, contingent on academic good progress (stipend: \$23,100 plus tuition, fees, and health insurance.)

Program Objectives

VCU seeks to:

- Develop scientists experienced in the use of state-of-the-art research methods for the purpose of advancing fundamental knowledge of issues central to the improvement of population health
- Cultivate public health professionals skilled in the communication of scientific knowledge
- Train scientists to optimally contribute as part of multidisciplinary teams
- Develop scientists equipped with leadership skills for the purpose of implementing transformative research programs, and influence equitable health

Research programs:

The Department of Epidemiology is seeking students interested in research agendas related to:

- Social epidemiology
- Environmental health
- Pharmacoepidemiology
- HIV/AIDS
- Health disparities
- Cancer screening

Upon matriculation, students will be linked to research working groups in their substantive area and will begin participating in research with the goal of significant contributions in manuscripts, grants, and technical reports. Early exposure to the research enterprise stimulates rapid student professional development. VCU's unique institutional culture of collaboration supports matrix programs which promote engagement of scientific inquiry across disciplinary boundaries, as well as center and institutional structures. These programs permit team science within a broader center structure which provides opportunities for the development of transdisciplinary research programs around broadly defined research themes. Examples include the Massey Cancer Center, the Center on Human Needs, the Institute for Women's Health, and the Center on Health Disparities.

Why VCU?

Selecting the right doctoral program for your educational needs and career objectives is critical. VCU wants to ensure an optimal fit for students. Consider the following highlights of VCU's training program:

- Careful matching of student to mentoring team
- Goal setting, strategic mapping of educational program
- Support for membership in professional organization
- Support for attending research meetings
- Workshops to hone teaching and oral presentation skills
- Teaching assistant requirement for one semester
- Dissertation format – 3 first author, peer-reviewed publications
- Leadership development and leadership opportunities
- Community of learning and supportive educational environment

Admission Requirements:

Students accepted into VCU's doctoral training program in epidemiology must embrace a collaborative style of learning, be committed to learning reflective practice, welcome a transdisciplinary approach to science, and accept non-traditional components to doctoral training in epidemiology such as leadership development. Applicants must have a master's degree in related field (e.g. MPH, epidemiology, sociology, psychology, biostatistics, etc.)

Applicant requirements are:

- Official report of the General Test of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE)
- Minimum 3.0 GPA in graduate courses
- Personal statement that should include:
 - Research interests
 - Career objectives
 - Why VCU's approach to doctoral training is a good fit for you
- Three letters of references (preferably academic)

Students interested in VCU's approach to training the next generation of epidemiologists are strongly encouraged to speak directly with Kate Lapane, PhD - Professor and Chair, Department of Epidemiology and Community Health (email: klapane@vcu.edu; phone: 804-628-2506).

