



## GRADUATE STUDIES FACT SHEET

### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS IN PUBLIC HEALTH

#### GRADUATE CERTIFICATE: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS IN PUBLIC HEALTH

After the attacks of September 11, 2001 and the subsequent anthrax incidents across the nation, it became clear that many employees, emergency personnel, educators, managers, and public health professionals must have the necessary training to handle public health emergencies of all kinds. The Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparation and Response Act (June 2002) notes the need to better educate professionals regarding the protection of workers and the general population during emergencies.

This certificate is designed for public, environmental, and occupational health professionals; emergency personnel; and managers and educators who need to upgrade their skills to protect people during emergencies. Certificate courses provide a solid preparation in epidemiology and public health practice as well as the development of skills needed to identify, measure, and control environmental hazards. The program focuses on emergency preparedness and how to assess and communicate public health risks from chemical and biological hazards.

#### PROGRAM OF STUDY

This certificate program consists of six, three-credit courses for a total of 18 credits. In the fall and spring semesters, courses meet during convenient, once-a-week evening time slots designed to accommodate students' needs as working professionals. Special condensed course formats are often available during the summer, and students can complete all requirements for the certificate in a single calendar year. Each course in the certificate

program combines conventional classroom instruction and hands-on learning with Internet assistance to bring course materials, activities, and assignments directly to students at their place of study. The required courses are listed below:

- ENV 530 General Environmental Health
- ENV 545 Risk Assessment
- ENV 551 Environmental Toxicology
- ENV 570 Emergency Preparedness
- ENV 575 Bioterrorism and Public Health
- HEA 520 Public Health Epidemiology

#### ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENT

Students must hold a valid 40-hour certification in hazardous waste operations and emergency response (OSHA 29 CFR Part 1910.120) and a valid certificate in first aid/CPR at the time they receive the emergency preparedness certificate from WCU. These certifications are available at WCU or may be obtained elsewhere.

#### BENEFITS OF THE PROGRAM

The courses in this certificate program are designed to enhance students' expertise in all aspects of emergency management including mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. In particular, students will be better qualified to

- identify and assess threats and risks to various populations, both public and private, associated with major physical, chemical, and biological disease agents;
- anticipate and properly react to small and large environmental accidents;
- conduct thorough and effective planning to identify steps for emergency relief and rapid, appropriate

decision making and response during public health emergencies;

- effectively communicate risk to populations and actively develop, evaluate, and manage risk reduction strategies;
- lead business and community sectors through all elements of emergency preparedness and compassionately guide individuals and organizations through emergency recovery; and
- incorporate emergency preparedness into the daily fabric of public and private organizations, stressing integration with the work habits of other professionals.

#### ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND MASTER'S STUDIES

To be considered for the certificate in emergency preparedness in public health, applicants must meet all the admission requirements for WCU graduate study (a minimum 2.8 GPA in an undergraduate degree and 2.8 GPA in the major area of study). Applicants will typically have undergraduate and/or graduate degrees in a science, engineering, or health-related field although outstanding individuals from other areas may also be admitted. Once the certificate has been satisfactorily completed, students may elect to pursue the master's degree in public health (M.P.H.). Additional courses in public health and environmental health, as well as a six-credit individualized, applied learning experience are required for the degree. Applications are available online at [www.wcupa.edu/grad/](http://www.wcupa.edu/grad/).

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Write: Office of Graduate Studies and  
Extended Education

**LEARN MORE**

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Web: [www.wcupa.edu/grad](http://www.wcupa.edu/grad)

Visit: [www.facebook.com/wcugrad](http://www.facebook.com/wcugrad)

*Or contact the department:*

Write: Dr. Charles V. Shorten, Program  
Coordinator  
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E-mail: [cshorten@wcupa.edu](mailto:cshorten@wcupa.edu)

Web: [www.wcupa.edu/\\_academics/healthsciences/health/enhealth/certificate-eprep.asp](http://www.wcupa.edu/_academics/healthsciences/health/enhealth/certificate-eprep.asp)

The Graduate Catalog is available online at [www.wcupa.edu/\\_information/officialdocuments/graduate.catalog/](http://www.wcupa.edu/_information/officialdocuments/graduate.catalog/).

## ABOUT GRADUATE STUDIES

West Chester University offers high-quality graduate degrees in more than 70 disciplines or areas of study, as well as certificate and certification programs. The graduate studies program has grown remarkably since its introduction in 1960. West Chester University's program is the largest within the 14 institutions in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education enrolling more than 2,100 graduate students.

Programs can be taken on a part-time basis, and most of the graduate classes are scheduled during late afternoons and evenings for the benefit of in-service teachers and other employed persons.

## ABOUT WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY

A regional, public institution, West Chester University of Pennsylvania offers high-quality undergraduate and graduate degrees, as well as certification and certificate programs, in more than 100 subject areas. As the second largest member of the State System of Higher Education, West Chester offers a full and rewarding educational experience as well as reasonable tuition.

With a rich heritage dating back to the 19th century, West Chester University was

founded in 1871 as West Chester Normal School for the purpose of training teachers for the Commonwealth's newly established public schools. In 1960, West Chester State Teachers College expanded its programs to include liberal arts and graduate degrees and, as a result, dropped "Teachers" from its name. In 1983, West Chester State College became one of the 14 institutions in the State System of Higher Education. Along with its university status, the school acquired a new system of governance and the opportunity to expand its degree programs.

Today, more than 15,400 graduate and undergraduate students, as well as 1,500 faculty and staff, study and work on the 406-acre campus. Situated in the Borough of West Chester, the campus is a picturesque mix of Gothic, Victorian, and modern architecture with pleasant, tree-shaded walks.

Strategically located at the center of the mid-Atlantic corridor, West Chester University is just 25 miles west of Philadelphia and 17 miles north of Wilmington, Del. The campus is convenient to major cultural institutions, recreational activities, and commercial businesses, many of which provide internship opportunities for WCU's students.

