



PEOPLES-UNI

PEOPLE'S OPEN ACCESS EDUCATION INITIATIVE



BUILDING PUBLIC HEALTH CAPACITY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES USING INTERNET-BASED E-LEARNING



WHAT IS PEOPLES-UNI?

The People's Open Access Education Initiative (Peoples-uni – <http://peoples-uni.org>) is a UK-registered charity (Registration Number 1126265) with the mission to contribute to improvements in the health of populations in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC), by building public health capacity among health professionals, using Internet-based e-learning at very low cost.

WHAT MAKES PEOPLES-UNI UNIQUE?

- Peoples-uni is based outside the traditional higher education system making it more agile, responsive and economical, but is benchmarked to it in terms of quality;
- It utilises international volunteer experts, open educational resources, and an open source educational platform (Moodle) to ensure low fees for students as well as high quality;
- Our online tutors are experienced public health academics and professionals from many countries, who dedicate their time free of charge;
- Course content is focused on the needs of LMICs;
- Course delivery is deliberately low-tech to accommodate the needs of students working in LMICs. Only basic internet access and an e-mail address are required;
- Through an active alumni network, Peoples-uni continuously develops the capacity of its Masters-level programme alumni by involving them as tutors, and supporting their research efforts;
- Thus Peoples-uni provides opportunities for public health education from introductory to Masters level, using a train-the-trainer model;
- The courses and programmes are adaptable to specific target groups, populations, or public health problems.

OUR MAIN OFFERS

MASTER LEVEL COURSES

- A choice of 17 Masters-level modules are available for online study (the modules previously formed a Master of Public Health programme awarded by Manchester Metropolitan University).
- The modules cover both the Foundation Sciences of public health and LMIC-relevant Public Health Problems, as well as a Dissertation module.
- Modules are offered twice a year with each semester lasting 14 weeks, including assignment preparations. Online reading resources are combined with asynchronous discussion groups with a maximum of 30 students, facilitated by volunteer tutors. Formative and summative assessments are used.
- As of 2017, over 300 academics and public health professionals from over 50 countries have been tutors in our international volunteer faculty; 75 of these are based in developing countries themselves, including some of our own Master of Public Health (MPH) graduates.
- 1256 students from 80 countries have been enrolled, 464 have passed at least one module, 121 have so far graduated with a Master of Public Health, and a further 54 and 94 have achieved a Diploma and Certificate in Public Health respectively.
- We have capacity to offer approximately 500 module places per semester; most students take two modules per semester.

QUALITY AND GOVERNANCE

TRUSTEES

Professor Rajan Madhok,
MB BS MSc FRCS FFPH, Chair

Julie Storr,
BN(Hons) RGN RHV MBA

Professor Dick Heller,
MB BS MD FRCP FFPH FRACP FAFPHM,
Coordinator

The Trustees are supported by a Leadership Group involving senior tutors and public health academics and professionals, chaired by the Academic Coordinator.

OPEN ONLINE COURSES

- Peoples-uni Open Online Courses (<http://ooc.peoples-uni.org>) is a sister site for global learning through free self-paced courses in a wide range of subjects relevant to global health; 21 courses are currently available.
- So far there have been 1645 students, of whom 15% gained a certificate of completion. Students were from 100 countries with the largest single group from Africa.
- Some of these courses have been developed for, or by, partner organisations, and more courses may be added at any time.

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

- An Education Committee, involving all module leaders, the Academic Coordinator, and additional advisors functions as the examination board, and provides oversight on educational quality of the modules and programmes. Three student representatives also offer the Committee their perspective when necessary.
- Modules are reviewed at least every three years, and progress on revision is monitored by the Education Committee.
- Student feedback surveys are used every semester and reported to the Education Committee, module leaders, and tutors.
- Prior to enrolling in modules, students take a free "Preparing to Study" introductory course, and then can receive additional support in academic matters from designated Student Support Officers.
- Asynchronous online discussions are followed by the module leader, and reviewed by the Academic Coordinator. All exchanges are recorded on the online education platform (Moodle) and are thereby auditable.
- Tutors and students benefit from technical support available through our Helpdesk and IT team based in Lagos, Nigeria.



PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

- One of our long-standing partnerships is with the **UK Royal Society of Public Health** which accepts applications for its coveted Fellowship from our programme alumni, and from volunteer tutors at a reduced rate.
- We work with the **Public Health Africa Special Interest Subgroup of the UK Faculty of Public Health** on exploring and developing online public health education for Africa.
- We are the public health capacity-building partner for the **Health Education England Global Health Exchange**.
- We work with the **Sudan Public Health Institute** on developing online Masters-level education in public health.
- We are partners with **NextGenU.org** who share our goals of Public Health capacity building in LMICs.
- We have previously partnered with **Manchester Metropolitan University** which validated and accredited our MPH Programme.
- We also provide infrastructure for an online masters course for another organisation, develop and host open online courses in collaboration with other organisations, and have developed online undergraduate courses for a UK University.

OPPORTUNITIES

FOR STUDENTS

- Receive Masters-level public health education at very low cost, whilst continuing to live and work in their normal setting;
- Benefit from the international environment through studying with students from other LMICs, and tutors from around the world;
- Students from high income countries can also gain exposure to issues of global relevance through interaction with peers from LMICs;
- Teaching is provided in small groups, and additional support is available.
- Courses can be studied for Continuous Professional Development (CPD), and to gain specific public health competencies that are relevant to any country.

FOR HEALTH SYSTEMS / CHARITIES/ LOW- OR MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES

- Peoples-uni courses are available for employees who require general public health education at any level, or for a particular topic (e.g. epidemiology, communicable disease control, evaluation, health economics, HIV/AIDS, disaster management, maternal and child mortality prevention etc.);
- Customized online resources, short courses, postgraduate modules, and awards can be co-developed, commissioned, or delivered directly to particular target groups using Peoples-uni's online course infrastructure;
- Participation in the delivery of courses or programmes, e.g. through blended learning, or contributing to online teaching and resources.

CURRENT FEES

(June 2017 status; please check website for latest fees)

Low- and middle-income country students:

£50 per module;
£100 for the dissertation.

High-income country students:

£400 per module;
£800 for the dissertation.

Open online courses are free

(donations requested).

FOR PUBLIC HEALTH SPECIALISTS VOLUNTEERING AS TUTORS

- Share knowledge and skills within a friendly and enthusiastic international tutor and student community;
- An opportunity to 'give back', while gaining valuable teaching experience;
- Teach, learn, work, and network with colleagues internationally.

FOR POTENTIAL EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS

- Supplement own programmes with online courses from Peoples-uni;
- Co-develop, offer, or commission online public health programmes, or courses for particular audiences, such as for health professionals in training, or for continuous professional development.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

In the most recent semester feedback surveys, 95% of our students thought the course in question was “very relevant” to LMICs and would recommend their courses to others.

Below are quotes from some of our graduates:

“ Peoples Uni has a very good e-learning structure with a number of incredibly helpful materials and tutors that are ready to teach and help students through their path and thirst for knowledge. I hope one day I can also help student the same way.”

“ Throughout my course work, I have had the privilege of interacting with students and tutors from diverse backgrounds and cultures. This really helped me to sharpen my analytical and writing skills which were dormant before enrolling for the course.”

“The entire course with so many different topics was amazingly interesting and proved to be very useful in learning the various concepts and definitely sharpened the neurons to think critically. I learnt the importance of correct presentation of facts, methods of referencing...”

“ Of all things, the feedback and advices which I was receiving from the course tutors in each course work provided me a benefit to widening my horizon and analytical skills. The aid and reference materials posted under each course were also very helpful and supportive.”

CONTACT US:

You are welcome to contact us directly.

To discuss potential partnerships or collaborations, please contact education@peoples-uni.org

You can find out about registering as a student here:
<http://www.peoples-uni.org/content/how-enrol-course-module-first-time>.

For further enquiries please contact: helpdesk@peoples-uni.org

To enquire about becoming a tutor please contact education@peoples-uni.org or register directly at:
http://courses.peoples-uni.org/course/tutor_registration.php

DONATIONS AND FUNDRAISING:

We welcome any donations to support our continued work:
<http://www.peoples-uni.org/donate>
Thank you.

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