

# Global Consortium on Climate and Health Education



## Need

The effects of climate change are already harming health around the world, and impacts will only intensify in the coming years. Heat waves and rainstorms are becoming more deadly, disease outbreaks last longer and are seen in new regions, wildfire smoke from tinder-dry forests reduces air quality, and food and water security are threatened by extreme weather.

There is an imperative for quick action on many fronts: to recognize and respond to climate-health threats; prevent climate change at its source by reducing heat-trapping greenhouse gas emissions; support “greener” systems throughout the economy, including healthcare; understand the health co-benefits of adaptation and mitigation; and communicate effectively about these issues.

However, the climate and health field is still young, with a modest number of experts, significant gaps in knowledge, and few developed educational programs or curricula in health professions schools. To bridge this gap, we must provide the **next generation of global health leaders** with the knowledge and tools to help protect human health and well-being from climate change and other planetary changes.

## Origin

Launched in early 2017, the Global Consortium on Climate and Health Education (GCCHE) was developed over the course of 2016, born from a meeting at the December 2015 COP-21 conference in Paris.

## VISION

All health professionals will be trained to prevent, mitigate, and respond to the health impacts of climate change.

## MISSION

Our goal is to secure commitments from all health professions schools around the world to educate their students on the health impacts of climate change and other planetary changes that impact human health and well-being, and to provide the curricular resources and guidance needed to implement those commitments.

## GLOBAL CONSORTIUM ON CLIMATE AND HEALTH EDUCATION

At COP-21, the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health (the Mailman School) partnered with the United States White House on a special session to highlight the need for greater investment in the study of and planning for the health impacts of climate change. The White House and partners spearheaded a pledge that was announced at the session, which was carried forward by the Mailman School and signed by 115 health professions schools and programs around the world, to educate tomorrow's leaders on the health impacts of climate change. The GCCHE will help health professions schools around the world implement this pledge.

### Structure

**Host institution:** Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, home to the nation's first program in climate and health in a school of public health, serves as GCCHE's host institution. Mailman School faculty members Dr. Jeffrey Shaman and Dr. Kim Knowlton lead the GCCHE. Dr. Shaman is Associate Professor of Environmental Health Sciences and Director of the Mailman School's Climate and Health Program. Dr. Knowlton is Assistant Professor in the Climate and Health Program.

**Advisory Council:** The Advisory Council provides high-level, strategic guidance and direction to the GCCHE, and is comprised of global leaders on health education, climate change, and community resilience. Dr. Linda P. Fried, Dean of Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, serves as Chair.

**Coordinating Committee:** The Coordinating Committee, comprised of experts in building climate resilience and climate-health training, works closely with GCCHE leadership in advising on developing educational aims, crafting curricula, and carrying out the other activities.

**GCCHE Members:** Health professions schools and programs, including schools and programs of public health, nursing, and medicine, comprise the membership of the GCCHE, with each appointing an individual to serve as their representative. Members participate through periodic conference calls and webinars and an interactive web portal that provides resources and tools, including model climate and health curricula for information sharing and discussion. Periodic conference calls and emails provide opportunities for members to discuss strategies, challenges, and success stories.

### Support

The launch of the GCCHE was made possible by start-up funding from the Rockefeller Foundation.



### AIMS

- Obtain commitments from health professions schools throughout the world to educate their students on the health impacts of climate change and bring together member institutions to share best scientific and educational practices for doing so;
- Develop a core global knowledge set on the health impacts of climate change that all graduates of health professions schools should possess, as well as model curricula that member institutions can utilize for this purpose;
- Build a pipeline of health professionals who focus their work on the health impacts of climate change; and
- Support the development of global academic partnerships to foster mutual learning, particularly in under-resourced countries.

### MORE INFORMATION

For more information and to join on behalf of your health profession school, please visit:

[gcche.mailman.columbia.edu](http://gcche.mailman.columbia.edu)

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