History of Health Sciences PhD

The History of Health Sciences (HHS) program trains students to examine the history of health sciences (medicine, nursing, pharmacy, public health, alternative healing, and biomedical research) from a variety of critical approaches. With an emphasis on modern (late nineteenth to twenty-first century) American and European contexts, the program's faculty and students investigate how medicine, health, and illness are historically perceived, and how these perceptions reflect and shape culture and society.

The PhD program is structured as a five-year degree. Students first complete two years of full-time study in residence at UCSF, culminating with a qualifying examination in the second year. After successfully completing the exam, students will spend the next six quarters focused on their dissertation.

Students are admitted to the History of Health Sciences program biennially (in odd-numbered years). By admitting new students only every other year, the program ensures that the student to faculty ratio remains very low, enabling students to work closely with their faculty mentors.

Note that the Graduate Division also offers a [master's degree program](https://graduate.ucsf.edu) in HHS.

**faculty**

There are eight core faculty and three primary faculty members with other academic appointments in the HHS program; and 27 other affiliated faculty.

**specializations**

Public health, life sciences, gender, race and the body, alternative healing, social medicine, and health citizenship.

The History of Health Sciences program office at UCSF is located at the Laurel Heights campus. Visit the [program website](https://graduate.ucsf.edu) for more information.

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The History of Health Sciences program is offered by the UCSF Graduate Division administered by the UCSF School of Medicine delivered by faculty members in the UCSF School of Medicine

Image above shows a detail from the "History of Medicine in California? fresco, completed by Bernard Zakheim in 1936. The mural is located in UCSF's Toland Hall. (Photo by Barbara Bernstein)