



# Washington AHEC Scholars Handbook

[depts.washington.edu/ahec/](https://depts.washington.edu/ahec/)

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# Welcome to AHEC

## WHAT THE HECK IS AN AHEC?

Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) are federally funded, state-administered programs that work on improving healthcare access. Most states have at least one AHEC. There are four AHEC Centers in Washington State; AHEC of Western Washington in Bellingham, WA; Eastern Washington AHEC in Spokane, WA; Southwest WA AHEC in Olympia, WA and Central WA AHEC in Wenatchee, WA. Our mission is to improve the distribution and quality of the healthcare, especially in communities experiencing workforce shortages. One of the ways that we do this is by administering the AHEC Scholars Program. We are also committed to supporting continuing education events for health professionals and enrichment/pathway events for students who are interested in exploring health professions careers.

## VALUES

- Create opportunities for Washingtonians to advance in healthcare professions
- Create accessible avenues to care
- Interdisciplinary approaches to address community health priorities
- Alignment between healthcare professionals and community members



## HISTORY

The Washington Area Health Education Center (WA AHEC) Program Office of the University of Washington School of Medicine began its collaborative work with AHEC Centers in Eastern and Western Washington, Wyoming, Montana, Alaska and Idaho in the 1980s. We are still affiliated with Program Offices in Alaska, Idaho and Montana. The WA AHEC has been, and continues to be, an integral part of the larger UWSOM WWAMI program, a 40+ year old medical education program serving the five states. WA AHEC shares the mission and resources with the UWSOM WWAMI program to improve the quality and distribution of all health professionals in our mostly rural region.



# AHEC Scholars

## OVERVIEW

AHEC Scholars is a nationwide HRSA\*/AHEC branded certificate program to prepare and promote a diverse, skilled primary care workforce in rural and underserved communities.

\*U.S. Health Resources & Services Administration



## THE BASICS

- 2 year program for healthcare professions students\* designed to supplement and broaden their training experience.
- Interdisciplinary, team-based learning.
- Online evening classes are composed of a mix of students from around the state and across disciplines..
- Program administrated by the four WA AHEC Centers and the University of Washington's WA AHEC Program Office.

### \*WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| • Athletic trainer/Exercise Science MS                    | • Medicine MD/DO                          | • Public Health BS/MPH  |
| • Clinical Mental or Behavioral Health Counseling MA/PsyD | • Nursing ADN/RN/DNP                      | • Recreation Management/Therapeutic Recreation Concentration BA |
| • Community Health Worker                                 | • Nutritionist/Dietitian                  | • Respiratory Therapist   |
| • Dental Hygienists and Dental Assistants                 | • Pharmacy PharmD                         | • Speech-language Pathology                                     |
| • Dentistry   | • Pharmacy Technician                     | • Substance Use Disorder Professional/Addiction Counseling      |
| • Medical Assistant                                       | • Physical/Occupational Therapy Assistant |   |
|   | • Rehab Medicine (PT/OT/P&O)              |   |
|   | • Physician Assistant                     |   |

# Benefits

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

Your certification as an AHEC Scholar will signify that you have additional knowledge, skills, and experiences that will give you an advantage in moving forward in your chosen health profession.



- **There is no tuition for the WA AHEC Scholars Program.** Field trips and other events may also be paid for by the program.
- Learn how to work effectively in a team-based setting.
- Develop new skills, experiences, and strategies to improve both access and delivery of healthcare.
- Meet leaders in healthcare and interact with health care professionals to create an invaluable network for your future career.
- Make connections with other participants.
- Receive a certification, which will set you apart from other students in an increasingly competitive hiring environment.
- Network and receive mentoring opportunities with established leaders in primary care and rural and underserved healthcare in Washington.
- Attend Special Learning Events.
- 1 credit option for UW students.



# Timeline of AHEC Scholars Curriculum

## YEAR ONE



## YEAR TWO



*\*Both online class sessions take place in the second year of enrollment*



# Requirements

AHEC Scholars are required to complete a minimum of 40 hours of both educational and clinical training each year of the two-year program, for a cumulative total of 80 educational hours and 80 clinical hours.

## Didactic Training

- For each year of enrollment, completion of 30 hours of classroom training - 8 week online AHEC Scholars course
  - Year 1 - Introduction to Team-based Care in Rural and Under-resourced Settings (CONJ 515 for 1 UW credit)
  - Year 2 - Advanced Team-based Care in Rural and Under-resourced Settings (FAMED 516 for 1 UW credit)
- For each year of enrollment, completion of 10 hours of Self-Directed Learning (see Canvas site for details)
  - Focus on working with rural or under-resourced communities and enhancing interprofessional skills. There is a good deal of flexibility around this requirement and we welcome your ideas!

AHEC courses cover eight core topic areas including:

- Interprofessional Education
- Behavioral Health Integration
- Social Determinants of Health
- Cultural Competency
- Practice Transformation
- Connecting Communities & Supporting Health Professionals
- Virtual Learning & Telehealth
- Current and Emerging Health Issues.

## Clinical Hours

For each year of enrollment, completion of 40 hours of fieldwork.

- Experiential training gives students the opportunity to bring what they are learning in the classroom into a clinical setting.
- See Fieldwork Hours FAQ on the website ([ahecwa.org](http://ahecwa.org)) for more information!

## AHEC Scholar Surveys

We are required to gather data and report on the benefits of the program in order to maintain the grant funding that allows the AHEC Scholars program to be free to students.. Of particular importance is our One-Year Post Graduation survey which will ask you about your place of employment.

*Please respond in a timely manner to the surveys that you receive from your program administrator!*

# Technology

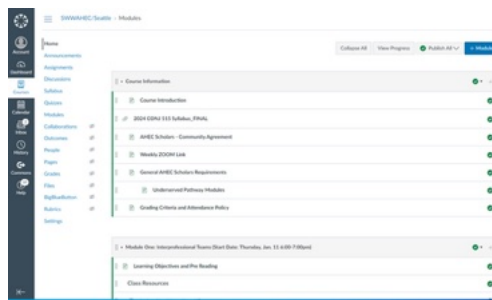
## Data Collection Surveys

Look out for REDCap survey links in your email. We use this secure system to collect participant and program data, including C/E/C hours.



## Canvas Instructure

Course materials are published on a version of Canvas called "Canvas Free for Teachers". Click on the image below to watch a video on how to set it up!



## Zoom

Virtual Classes are held on the Zoom platform. Some learning events will have hybrid options using Zoom.



## contact information

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