The Health Promotion Major’s CHES Track prepares students for careers in health promotion and disease prevention from a community health perspective. Students who are interested in the health and allied health areas, but do not want to be involved with direct patient care may find great satisfaction and fulfillment working in these areas. “This major prepares students to educate diverse adult populations concerning wellness, illness prevention, behavioral change techniques and contemporary health issues.” (Liberty University website) “…demand has increased for workers who have background specifically in health education.” (Occupational Outlook Quarterly. Summer, 2007).

1. CHES stands for Certified Health Education Specialist, and students who graduate with this major will be qualified to take a national credentialing exam. (See www.nchec.org).

2. The Health Promotion CHES track students take courses in nutrition, community and personal health, program planning and evaluation, behavioral change theory, and other topics.

3. Students are required to complete a 180 hour, three-credit internship in a Health Promotion/Health Education capacity. LU students have interned in facilities such as corporate wellness programs, voluntary agencies like the American Cancer Society and American Lung Association, Public Health Departments, Health System/Hospital community outreach programs, Cardiac Rehabilitation, YMCA/YWCA facilities, community-wide health related coalitions, and others.

4. Students who have an interest in health and allied health careers, but are unsure of a specific profession, are encouraged to enroll in HLTH 105 – Introduction to the Health Professions.

5. Students who desire to teach health in public schools would need to take additional courses through the School of Education following completion of their Health Promotion degree; however, they may teach in private schools.

6. Students planning to attend graduate school are encouraged to meet with the Career Center staff during their junior year for assistance with those plans. The Career Center is able to assist students preparing for graduate school, as well as those who will seek employment upon graduation.

Please feel free to direct any additional questions to the following individuals:

1. Sara Norman (Professional Advisor)-- sdnorman@liberty.edu (434) 592-3544
2. Dr. Ralph Linstra (Department Chair & Professor) – rlinstra@liberty.edu
3. Dr. Beverly Mahoney (Department Liaison & Professor) – bmahoney@liberty.edu
4. Dr. Joseph Mix (Health Promotion Professor)-- jamix@liberty.edu
1. **What does CHES stand for?**
   CHES is an acronym for Certified Health Education Specialist. Health promotion students in the CHES track may sit for a national certification examination during their senior year, or shortly after graduation, to become certified. Once a health educator becomes certified, the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, Inc. (NCHEC) requires ongoing continuing education units to maintain active CHES status. More employers each year list available positions as “CHES preferred” or “CHES required.”

2. **What careers are available for CHES graduates?**
   Health educators work within a scope of practice and professional areas of responsibility that involve assessment of health needs, planning, implementation, and research and evaluation of health strategies and programs within a variety of settings. They also communicate health information, advocate, act as resource persons, and coordinate activities. They provide their clients with the knowledge and supports needed to make healthy lifestyle choices. Community health agencies, health care systems, voluntary agencies, and corporations are among those who hire certified health education specialists. Students are encouraged to visit the NCHEC website (www.nchec.org) to learn more.

3. **May I use Health Promotion-CHES to become a dietician?**
   Liberty University does not currently have a nutrition major. Students can complete a Bachelor of Science degree in Health Promotion and attend an accredited graduate program to become a registered dietitian. Depending on student interests, either the Clinical or CHES track is suitable. Students are encouraged to explore their options for graduate school and complete any additional prerequisites as electives.

4. **May I use Health Promotion – CHES to become a nurse?**
   Nursing is a clinical profession requiring state licensure in order to practice, while health education is an allied health profession that is certified nationally. Students wishing to pursue nursing will need to attend an accredited nursing program.