

A Closer Look at Research Clusters

URBAN HEALTH AND PUBLIC POLICY

Overview	Urban health and public policy research entails interdisciplinary studies investigating the unique challenges present in the urban environment with the goal of improving treatment modalities and health outcomes and influencing public policy. Issues include: the impact of the social environment (housing, employment) on health; health disparities related to inadequate physical activity, poor nutrition, and obesity in socio-economically diverse youth and families; and healthcare disparities among immigrants, the elderly, persons with disabilities, children, and racial/ethnic groups.
Focus of Research at UMass Boston	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State and local policy issues for regional healthcare including the effect of such issues as housing and employment• Isolation and access to healthcare of the elderly• Mental health policies, racial and ethnic disparities• Social impact on medical and legal issues• HIV/AIDS action studies for the Haitian community in Boston
UMass Boston Departments Involved	College of Nursing and Health Sciences, McCormack Graduate School of Policy Studies, Gerontology Department, Gerontology Institute, Institute for Community Inclusion, Sociology, Psychology, Center for Survey Research, Africana Studies Department, Institute for Asian American Studies, Mauricio Gaston Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy, Trotter Institute for the Study of Black Culture, Center for Social Development and Education
Collaborations Established and Potential	Dana Farber/Harvard Cancer Center, Children's Hospital Boston, Mass General Hospital, Boston Public Schools, outreach to immigrant communities, outreach to ethnic communities in the greater Boston region. Potential to broaden collaborations with academic health centers and healthcare organizations.
Distinctive UMass Boston Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A comprehensive approach to the health care of urban, underserved populations with a unification of investigations into social, behavioral, and physical impediments to healthcare access and delivery.• Emphasis on health disparities and health risks to identified population groups.• Application of qualitative research principles to social and behavioral research through collaborations with major academic medical centers to translate social behavior to treatment modalities.• Add a new capacity for clinical and translational research assessment, including clinical research education, management and design; evaluation of new and experimental treatments and therapies; and overall health outcomes research and biostatistics• Link with policy programs to promote change in the public arena