The Department of Health Behavior was founded in 1942 as the Department of Public Health Education. The mission of the department is to discover, develop, and disseminate knowledge that promotes the health of individuals and communities. The department’s more than 30 faculty and 55 adjunct faculty members have backgrounds in health education, behavioral science, international health, social psychology, medicine, medical sociology, and communications. The unifying factor for the various backgrounds of the faculty is a commitment to the disciplines of health education and the social and behavioral sciences. Active research topics include adolescent health, community-based participatory research, early detection and management of disease, health communication, health disparity reduction, HIV/AIDS prevention and control, obesity, diabetes and weight-related behaviors, tobacco control and regulation, violence prevention, and worker and workplace health promotion. The Department maintains close ties with the Gillings School of Global Public Health and with research centers, including the Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, the Injury Prevention Research Center, the Institute for Global Health & Infectious Diseases, and the Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention.

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