**Distinction FAQ**

**Can I be enrolled in both the Health Equity and the Global Health distinctions?**

You can only participate in one distinction program. While you can only get one distinction, you can still do components of each.

* Example 1: a student might get accepted into the Recognition of Distinction in Global Health program, but also participate in the Health Equity Scholars program. The student’s distinction would be in Global Health, but they would also get to have the Health Equity Scholars program on their CV. Some criteria of the Health Equity Scholars program may be used to fulfill requirements of the Global Health distinction program with approval of the Global Health distinction director.
* Example 2: a student may be accepted into the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship and wish to participate in the Distinction in Health Equity program, but also be interested in global health. Students could still participate in an independently structured international elective, while still completing the requirements to receive their distinction in Health Equity. All of the above would still be used to strengthen a student’s CV. (Please note: Students participating in independently structured international electives are not eligible for scholarship through the International Medical Education (IME) office.)

**Do I have to complete an application and be selected to earn a distinction?**

It depends on which distinction you want.

* Do you want the distinction in Health Equity? You can earn a distinction in Health Equity without being accepted into any program. If you are accepted into the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship, Health Equity Scholars, or CU2RE, many of the criteria for these programs will count toward the requirements to earn the Health Equity distinction. However, acceptance into any additional program is not required to participate in the Distinction in Health Equity. All you must do is email [rodriguez@uab.edu](mailto:rodriguez@uab.edu) and ask to be registered for the distinction portfolio so you can start logging your achievements.
* Do you want the distinction in Global Health? The distinction in Global Health does require students to apply, because they provide partial funding for your international elective. Since funding is limited, there is an application process. Students must be accepted into the Global Health distinction program to participate in an IME-structured international elective. Please note: Preference for scholarships will be given to students who have not yet done their international elective. Students who had already received a scholarship for a prior MSEP elective, or international elective will be considered after first-time students, pending remaining availability. Contact Victoria Patneaude at RDGH@uab.edu

**What is the difference between the Health Equity Scholars program and the Distinction in Health Equity?**

Health Equity Scholars is a competitive program for any student interested in a career working with historically marginalized populations. There is an application open to MS1s which was due Nov 22 (but may be extended), and if you are selected for the HES program, you will have most of the requirements for the distinction in Health Equity completed as a part of the program. That said, you will still have to register for the distinction program. If you are not in the HES program, you can absolutely also earn the distinction, being in HES is just one of multiple paths to earning the distinction. To register for the Distinction in Health Equity, please email [rodriguez@uab.edu](mailto:rodriguez@uab.edu).

**Is it possible to get a distinction if I am a third-year student?**

It depends. It is unlikely that most MS3s will be able to complete the requirements of the Distinction in Health Equity program, given the amount of time they have left in school. However, if you review the requirements on the websites and think you can accomplish them all by winter of your fourth year, please reach out to [rodriguez@uab.edu](mailto:rodriguez@uab.edu) for further information.

The Recognition of Distinction in Global Health program is open to MS1, and MS2. Students that are in the class of 2026 may be considered if there is interest. Contact [RDGH@uab.edu](mailto:RDGH@uab.edu) for more details.

**What if I have an idea for another distinction that I would like UAB to offer?**

There will be a process for approving new distinctions that will open in the fall of 2025. These will need to be proposed by faculty members who have the commitment and bandwidth to oversee the program, although technical support will be provided by the school. Students who have an idea for a new distinction will need to identify a faculty member to oversee it. Dr. Harada is available to answer questions about new distinction proposals.