Program: The Health Studies Scholars program teams up an interdisciplinary group of undergraduate students with an interdisciplinary faculty team to work together for two years on a collaborative research project focused on a health-related problem.

Goals: Collaborative research with faculty is a high impact learning experience for students, who apply course knowledge in original research, gain expertise in problem-based inquiry that positions them well for employment, graduate school, and future leadership. Funded projects are expected to produce dissemination through peer-reviewed conference presentations and publications with undergraduate student co-authors. As well, given that all major funding agencies increasingly expect submissions from interdisciplinary research teams on major proposals, this program will seed interdisciplinary faculty research and build capacity for success on external funding applications.

Faculty Selection: Faculty teams representing at least two of Fairfield’s academic schools/College will develop a project and apply for funding in the fall semester to support a two-year project focusing on a health-related issue. The project will commence in the summer and must include deep engagement of a team of undergraduate students who will work on all aspects of the project including dissemination. Faculty and students will develop specific objectives for student engagement in the research project. Funding for the project includes faculty course release time and summer salary support as appropriate and determined by the Deans. An interdisciplinary faculty group will recommend faculty recipients to the Deans.

Applications should include 1) needs statement, 2) research question and how the research will be conducted, 3) outcomes of the research, 4) description of the specific interdisciplinary approach (es) proposed for conducting the research, 5) strategies for dissemination of project results, and 6) a budget.

Students: Undergraduate students in the spring semester of their sophomore year will be notified of the project chosen through this initiative. Students interested in working with the identified faculty team for their junior and senior years will submit an application to the faculty. The application will include a statement of their interest in the Health Studies Scholar program and the particular research project. The faculty conducting the project will choose up to three students (representing at least two academic Schools/College at the University) to be part of the research team. Selected students and faculty will work together to develop student objectives for the two years of the project.