

# Georgia State University School of Public Health

## Master of Public Health and Graduate Certificates Student Handbook 2021-2022

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# About the Master of Public Health and Graduate Certificates Student Handbook

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The School of Public Health (SPH) faculty is committed to providing a supportive academic environment that promotes the growth and progress of students engaged in graduate studies. This handbook contains information that will be helpful to a student while enrolled in Master of Public Health (MPH) graduate degree program, or the Graduate Certificate in Public Health program (GCPH), or the Maternal and Child Health Graduate Certificate program (MCHGC) at Georgia State University (GSU).

The MPH and GCPH Student Handbook provides the most recent SPH policies and procedures; thus, this handbook supersedes any publication regarding policies and procedures related to graduate degrees in public health. It covers topics such as degree and program requirements, registration procedures, standards of academic performance and conduct, grievance procedures, guidelines for submitting theses and capstones, and graduate school and university policies and regulations. The MPH and GCPH Student Handbook is the authoritative document of the SPH academic and conduct policies, and updated versions of the MPH and GCPH Student Handbook will be available on the website and in the Office of Academic Assistance and Career Services (OAA). The handbook is revised each summer, with the new edition published in August each year, before the start of the fall semester.

## **Georgia State University Graduate Catalog**

In addition to the graduate student policies contained in this handbook, students, faculty and administrators are subject to applicable university-wide policies. This handbook does not replace published university requirements and should be used in conjunction with the GSU Graduate Catalog: [catalogs.gsu.edu](https://catalogs.gsu.edu) to answer policy and procedural questions regarding your program of study. The faculty and administration encourages you to review the Georgia State University Graduate Catalog for the year in which you were admitted.

*The School of Public Health reserves the right to change information contained within this handbook without prior notice.*

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*Georgia State University, a unit of the University System of Georgia, is an equal opportunity institution and is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.*

**Georgia State University School of Public Health  
MPH and GCPH Student Handbook 2021-2022**

**Table of Contents**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Administration & Staff .....  | 5  |
| Academic Departments and Faculty .....  | 6  |
| About the School of Public Health .....   | 9  |
| Degree Requirements .....   | 12 |
| MPH Curriculum.....   | 12 |
| MPH Competencies .....  | 15 |
| MPH Concentration Requirements & Concentration Competencies .....   | 16 |
| JD-MPH Dual Degree Requirements.....  | 31 |
| PhD Community Psychology-MPH Dual Degree Requirements .....   | 35 |
| Graduate Certificate in Public Health .....   | 39 |
| Maternal and Child Health Graduate Certificate.....   | 40 |
| Program Policies & Procedures .....   | 42 |
| Registration Procedures .....   | 52 |
| Advising in the School of Public Health .....   | 56 |
| <br>APPENDICES.....   |    |
| <br>Appendix A - MPH Graduate Petition .....  | 60 |
| Appendix B - Applied Practice Experience Guidelines .....   | 62 |
| Appendix C - MPH Thesis/Capstone Handbook.....  | 68 |
| Appendix D - Policy on Academic Honesty .....   | 80 |
| Appendix E - Procedures for Student Complaints, Petitions for Policy Waivers & Variances, and Appeals ..... | 82 |

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## Academic Departments and Faculty

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The graduate programs in the School of Public Health (SPH) are comprised of two academic departments. Each department is headed by a Department Chair, with faculty assigned to specific concentrations. Academic Departments provide academic mentoring, course offerings, and research opportunities for students in SPH.

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# About the School of Public Health

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## Mission

*The School of Public Health provides the high quality and relevant teaching, research and service needed to evolve public health practice in a changing world. By investigating the contemporary problems that challenge diverse urban communities, the School is preparing the next generation of public health professionals to make a difference through leadership, scholarship and practice in Georgia communities and around the globe. The School's mission is strengthened by the objective of the University System of Georgia, through its Strategic Plan for Public Health Education, Research and Service, "to ensure that the System becomes one of the national leaders in public health education, research and service."*

## Vision

*The School's vision is to be a leading public health research institution dedicated to understanding and solving contemporary health problems. The School will be the destination of choice for students seeking an affordable and meaningful public health education.*

## Values

*Six values were determined in a School-wide review process. All values were developed with input from the administration, faculty, staff and students and are reaffirmed or revised during each subsequent review process. The values are succinct and specific in nature and are reflected in faculty, staff and students' instruction, service and learning activities. The values are:*

- 1. Integrity, accountability, and transparency in our operations*
- 2. Scholarship and inquiry*
- 3. Respect for all aspects of diversity*
- 4. Health as a human right*
- 5. Prioritizing health in all policy decisions*
- 6. Sustainable healthy environments*
- 7. Student Success*

## Evolution of the School and Accreditation

During the 2002-2003 academic year, the then *Institute* of Public Health began offering the Graduate Certificate in Public Health to provide an introduction to public health concepts, methods and theory. In January 2004, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia approved the Master of Public Health (MPH) degree program, and the first MPH class enrolled in Fall 2004. In June 2007, the MPH program received five-year accreditation from the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). The School launched its Doctor of Philosophy in Public Health degree program in 2011 and enrolled its first cohort of Ph.D. students in Fall 2011. The School launched its Bachelor of Science in Public Health degree program in 2016 and enrolled its first undergraduate students in Fall 2016, and then launched its Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) degree program in 2018 and enrolled its first DrPH students in Fall 2018.



The then *Institute* of Public Health was reaccredited as a public health program (MPH) in 2012 for a seven-year term, through 2019. In June 2013, the *Institute* of Public Health was accepted as an applicant for school accreditation by CEPH and was renamed the School of Public Health in that same month. The School began the rigorous process to transition from its Master of Public Health (MPH) *program-level* only accreditation to its new full *school-level* accreditation in 2013. **In June 2016, The CEPH Board of Councilors accredited the School of Public Health at Georgia State University.** The school received a ‘met’ finding, the highest possible, on all criteria evaluated and the school’s initial school-level accreditation is for a five-year term, extending through July 1, 2021.

With a focus on instruction, scholarship and research in urban health and health disparities, the school's mission is strengthened by the objective of the University System of Georgia, through its Strategic Plan for Public Health Education, Research and Service, "to ensure that the System becomes one of the national leaders in public health education, research and service."

## Goals

The School of Public Health is guided by the following goals:

- **Research:** Advance public health sciences and our understanding of the causes and prevention of disease.
- **Education:** Prepare students to use multi-disciplinary skills to address contemporary public health problems.
- **Service:** Promote service activities and initiatives by implementing community-based projects, educating professional and lay audiences, and collaborating with the public health workforce to advance health promotion and disease prevention.

## Objectives

### **Research**

1. *Exceed \$20 million annually in in sponsor-funded research.*
2. *Establish a new Center to promote interdisciplinary research and training around non-communicable diseases (NCD) and other contemporary global health problems.*
3. *Receive University-wide recognition for our ability to contribute to excellence in interdisciplinary research methodologies.*
4. *All junior tenure track faculty to obtain sponsored funding within their first three academic years of service--lead the University in career development awards.*
5. *Double the number of our peer-reviewed publications.*

### **Education**

1. *Attract and retain a diverse student body, staff, and faculty.*
2. *Successfully graduate 70% of our bachelor's students within six years, 80% of our MPH students within four years, and 60% of our doctoral students within seven years.*
3. *Double the number of our online and hybrid course offerings.*
4. *Increase external support for graduate students by emphasizing training grants, student fellowships and graduate student support through our faculty's grant-seeking activities.*
5. *Develop and offer a professional doctoral program (DrPH) and targeted executive education offerings for public health workers hoping to increase their knowledge and skills.*

### **Service**

1. *Promote and expand the involvement of faculty and staff in university, community-based and professional education projects so that service activities will be greater than 3 times the number of faculty.*
2. *Better recognize those who contribute to public health practice and education communities through service.*
3. *Offer at least two continuing education activities for the workforce each year, aligned with needs identified in our communities' workforce.*

# Degree Requirements

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## Master of Public Health (MPH) Degree Requirements: 42 credit hours

The MPH program requires a minimum of 42 credit hours of study at the master's level beyond the bachelor's degree. All MPH students must also select a public health concentration.

- Public Health Foundational Core Courses: 16 credit hours
- Concentration Courses: 21 credit hours
- Public Health Applied Practice Experience: 2 credit hours
  - Includes 240 field hours at an approved applied practice experience site
- Thesis, Capstone Project, or Integrative Learning Experience: 3 credit hours

## Curriculum

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Courses Required by All MPH Students

*Each course must be successfully completed within two (2) attempts.*

### MPH Foundational Core Courses - 16 credit hours

- PPHH 7010 Foundations of Public Health (3)
  - MPH students who have completed a CEPH-accredited bachelor's degree may replace this PPHH 7010 Foundations of Public Health course with three (3) credit hours of concentration-approved elective course(s) from their chosen concentration. Students should confirm with OAA that their bachelor's degree waives this course before taking another course.
- Select one (1) epidemiology course appropriate for the chosen MPH concentration (3):
  - PPHH 7011 Epidemiology for Public Health (3)
  - PPHH 7711 Epidemiologic Methods I (3)
    - Biostatistics, Environmental Epidemiology, and Epidemiology concentrations must select PPHH 7711 Epidemiologic Methods I (3)
    - Environmental Health, Health Management and Policy, and Health Promotion and Behavior concentrations may choose either PPHH 7011 or PPHH 7711.
- PPHH 7017 Fundamentals of Biostatistics I (4)
- PHPB 7140 Health Promotion Planning, Administration, and Evaluation (3)
- PHPB 7160 Fundamentals of Health Systems, Leadership, and Policy (3)

### MPH Concentration (Required and Elective) Courses – 21 credit hours

*Students must select one concentration and complete all required and elective courses for that concentration detailed below.*

Department of Population Health Sciences

- Biostatistics concentration courses (21)
- Environmental Epidemiology concentration courses (21)
- Environmental Health concentration courses (21)
- Epidemiology concentration courses (21)

Department of Health Policy and Behavioral Sciences

- Health Management and Policy concentration courses (21)
- Health Promotion and Behavior concentration courses (21)

**MPH Applied Practice Experience - 2 credit hours**

*Select appropriate Applied Practice Experience course for the MPH concentration (2):*

- Biostatistics, Environmental Epidemiology, Environmental Health, and Epidemiology concentrations must choose:
  - PHPH 7960 MPH Applied Practice Experience (2)
- Health Management and Policy and Health Promotion and Behavior concentrations must choose:
  - PHPB 7960 MPH Applied Practice Experience (2)

**MPH Culminating and Integrative Learning Experience Courses - 3 credit hours**

*Select appropriate Culminating and Integrative Learning Experience course for the MPH concentration (2):*

- Biostatistics concentration (select one):
  - PHPH 7990 Thesis (3)
  - PHPH 7991 Capstone (3)
- Environmental Epidemiology, Environmental Health, and Epidemiology concentrations (select one):
  - PHPH 7990 Thesis (3)
  - PHPH 7991 Capstone (3)
  - PHPH 7992 Integrative Learning Experience (3)
- Health Management and Policy and Health Promotion and Behavior concentrations (select one):
  - PHPB 7990 Thesis (3)
  - PHPB 7991 Capstone (3)
  - PHPB 7992 Integrative Learning Experience (3)

**Total MPH Requirements – 42 credit hours minimum**

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# MPH Foundational Public Health Knowledge

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## **Foundational Public Health Knowledge for all MPH Graduates**

All MPH graduates are grounded in the following foundational public health knowledge learning objectives (and the course where the learning objective is assessed is noted in parenthesis):

### **Profession & Science of Public Health**

1. Explain public health history, philosophy and values. (PHPH 7010)
2. Identify the core functions of public health and the 10 Essential Services. (PHPH 7010)
3. Explain the role of quantitative and qualitative methods and sciences in describing and assessing a population's health. (PHPH 7010)
4. List major causes and trends of morbidity and mortality in the US or other community relevant to the school or program. (PHPH 7010)
5. Discuss the science of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention in population health, including health promotion, screening, etc. (PHPH 7010)
6. Explain the critical importance of evidence in advancing public health knowledge. (PHPH 7010)

### **Factors Related to Human Health**

7. Explain effects of environmental factors on a population's health. (PHPH 7010)
8. Explain biological and genetic factors that affect a population's health. (PHPH 7010)
9. Explain behavioral and psychological factors that affect a population's health. (PHPH 7010)
10. Explain the social, political and economic determinants of health and how they contribute to population health and health inequities. (PHPH 7010)
11. Explain how globalization affects global burdens of disease. (PHPH 7010)
12. Explain an ecological perspective on the connections among human health, animal health and ecosystem health (eg, One Health). (PHPH 7010)

# MPH Foundational (Core) Competencies

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All MPH graduates demonstrate the following MPH foundational competencies (and the course where the competency is assessed is noted in parenthesis):

## **Evidence-based Approaches to Public Health**

1. Apply epidemiological methods to the breadth of settings and situations in public health practice. (PHPH 7011/7711)
2. Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context. (PHPH 7011/7711 and 7017)
3. Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming and software, as appropriate. (PHPH 7011/7711 and 7017)
4. Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice. (PHPH 7017)

## **Public Health & Health Care Systems**

5. Compare the organization, structure and function of health care, public health and regulatory systems across national and international settings. (PHPB 7160)
6. Discuss the means by which structural bias, social inequities and racism undermine health and create challenges to achieving health equity at organizational, community and societal levels. (PHPB 7160)

## **Planning & Management to Promote Health**

7. Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities' health. (PHPB 7140)
8. Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design or implementation of public health policies or programs. (PH 7140)
9. Design a population-based policy, program, project or intervention. (PHPB 7140)
10. Explain basic principles and tools of budget and resource management. (PHPB 7140)
11. Select methods to evaluate public health programs. (PHPB 7140)

## **Policy in Public Health**

12. Discuss multiple dimensions of the policy-making process, including the roles of ethics and evidence. (PHPB 7160)
13. Propose strategies to identify stakeholders and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes. (PHPB 7160)
14. Advocate for political, social or economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations. (PHPB 7160)
15. Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity. (PHPB 7160)

## **Leadership**

16. Apply principles of leadership, governance and management, which include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration and guiding decision making. (PHPB 7160)
17. Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges. (PHPB 7160)

## **Communication**

18. Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors. (PHPB 7140)
19. Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation. (PHPB 7140)
20. Describe the importance of cultural competence in communicating public health content. (PHPB 7140)

## **Interprofessional Practice**

21. Perform effectively on interprofessional teams. (PHPB 7140)

## **Systems Thinking**

22. Apply systems thinking tools to a public health issue. (PHPB 7160)

## **Additional GSU Content**

23. Recognize the ways diversity influences public health education and training, policies, programs, services, and the health of the nearby community. (PHPB 7160)

## MPH Concentration Requirements and Competencies

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Students in the MPH program must select one of the six concentrations offered by the School's two departments, and complete twenty-one (21) hours of required and elective coursework in that concentration. Any requests for course substitutions or other curriculum exceptions must be requested through a petition process handled by the Graduate Advisor in the Office of Academic Assistance & Career Services, and approved by the Department Chair. Prior to degree completion, students may take additional electives to expand their knowledge base or enhance special skills.

## Biostatistics Concentration – 21 credit hours

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The MPH Biostatistics (BSTP) program concentration trains students to apply statistical principles and methods to problems in public health, medicine, and biology. The MPH BSTP program includes the development of analytic thinking and skill, with an emphasis on applications of research and evaluation in public health. Coursework in this concentration covers the span of biostatistics knowledge, including study design, data management, data analysis, interpretation, statistical reporting, and use of statistical software. MPH BSTP concentration graduates can look forward to excellent career opportunities in academia, government, nonprofits, non-governmental organizations, or private industry. Applicants to the biostatistics concentration should have strong aptitude for quantitative thinking and interest in biomedical and public health applications.

### Required BSTP Concentration Courses (12 credit hours):

- PHPH 7027 Fundamentals of Biostatistics II (3)
- PHPH 7525 Statistical Computer (3)
- PHPH 8820 Generalized Linear Models (3)
- PHPH 8830 Advanced Statistical Topics (3)

### BSTP Concentration Elective Courses (9 hours):

Select at least three (3) pre-approved\* elective courses focusing on advanced statistical techniques and quantitative research methods from the following list:

- PHPH 7019 Research Methods (3)
  - *Required pre-requisite for* PHPH 7990 Thesis
- PHPH 7150 Environmental Health (3)
- PHPB 8260 Spatial Population Health I (3)
- PHPH 8721 Epidemiologic Methods II (3)
- PHPH 8840 Statistical Modeling with Latent Variables I: Structural Equation Modeling (3)
- PHPH 8850 Statistical Modeling with Latent Variables II: Finite Mixture Modeling (3)
- PHPH 8860 Multilevel Models in Public Health (3)
- PHPH 8885 Fundamentals of Clinical Trials (3)
- PHPH 8890 Special Topics in Biostatistics (3) (may be repeated)

\*The above listed pre-approved BSTP elective courses do not need further approval to satisfy the BSTP elective requirement. However, there are *other* academic departments at the university that *may* offer satisfying courses including, but not limited to the following departments: Math/Statistics, Decision Sciences, Marketing, Sociology, Policy Studies, Psychology, and Educational Policy Studies Research. Other courses that *may* be approved to satisfy this elective requirement generally have course titles including, but not limited to: Structural Equation Modeling, Finite Mixture Modeling, Hierarchical Linear Modeling, Longitudinal Modeling, Survival Analysis, Bayesian Inference, Survey Sampling, Causal Inference, Missing Data, or Nonparametric Statistics. Students should seek written, pre-approval of any course(s)—beyond the above listed pre-approved BSTP elective courses—to count towards the BSTP elective requirement. Approval must come from both the Department Chair and OAA.



## MPH Biostatistics Concentration Competencies and Course Alignment

Students in the Master of Public Health program with a concentration in **Biostatistics** will be expected to demonstrate competence in the following areas:

- MPH BSTP 1. Describe basic concepts of probability, random variation and commonly used statistical probability distributions.
- MPH BSTP 2. Apply basic (univariate and bivariate) descriptive and inferential techniques commonly used with public health data.
- MPH BSTP 3. Apply advanced (multivariate) descriptive and inferential techniques used with public health data.
- MPH BSTP 4. Describe preferred methodological alternatives to commonly used statistical methods when assumptions are not met.
- MPH BSTP 5. Distinguish among the different measurement scales and the implications for selection of statistical methods to be used based on these distinctions.
- MPH BSTP 6. Apply basic informatics techniques (storage, access, management, organization, visualization, and evaluation of public health data) in public health research.
- MPH BSTP 7. Describe different public health study designs, measures, and the appropriate statistical analyses for answering particular research questions.
- MPH BSTP 8. Interpret results of statistical analyses found in public health studies.
- MPH BSTP 9. Develop written and oral presentations based on statistical analyses for both public health professionals and educated lay audiences.

| Required MPH Biostatistics Courses (12 hours) |  | BSTP Concentration Competencies |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|--|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Course #                                      | Course Title   | 1                               | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| PHPH 7027                                     | Fundamentals of Biostatistics II                     |                                 |   | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| PHPH 7525                                     | Statistical Computing                                |                                 |   |   |   |   | X |   |   |   |
| PHPH 8820                                     | Generalized Linear Models                            |                                 |   |   | X | X |   |   |   |   |
| PHPH 8830                                     | Advanced Statistical Topics                          |                                 |   |   |   |   |   | X | X | X |
| PHPH 7017                                     | <i>Fundamentals of Biostatistics I (Core Course)</i> | X                               | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

## MPH Environmental Epidemiology Concentration – 21 credit hours

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The concentration in Environmental Epidemiology (ENEP) will prepare students for research and practice in identifying and analyzing the distribution and determinants of disease with a particular focus on diseases that are linked to a broad range of environmental conditions and exposures. The concentration will provide students with foundational knowledge in epidemiologic methods together with fundamental skills and disciplines essential to the practice of environmental health. The knowledge and skills obtained in environmental epidemiology will allow MPH ENEP graduates to seek employment in areas that require: a) fundamental understanding to characterize the environmental contribution to the epidemiology of non-communicable and communicable disease, b) formulate strategies to evaluate the impact of environmental health related interventions and c) foster the application of epidemiologic methods to investigate and address environmental problems.

### Required ENEP Concentration Courses (12 credit hours):

- PHPH 7150 Environmental Health (3)
- PHPH 7294 Exposure Assessment (3)
- PHPH 7027 Fundamentals of Biostatistics II (3)
- PHPH 8721 Epidemiologic Methods II (3)

### ENEP Concentration Elective Courses (9 hours):

Select at least one (1) course from the following List A of ENEP concentration approved elective courses:

- PHPH 7525 Statistical Computing (3)
- PHPH 7293 Environmental Health Toxicology (3)
- PHPH 7345 Introduction to Risk Assessment (3)

Select at least two (2) courses from the following List B of ENEP concentration approved elective courses:

- PHPH 7019 Research Methods (3)
  - *Required pre-requisite for* PHPH 7990 Thesis
- PHPH 7155 Air Quality and the Environment (3)
- PHPH 7265 Epidemiology and the Prevention of Violence (3)
- PHPH 7275 Chronic Disease Epidemiology (3)
- PHPH 7280 Infectious Disease Epidemiology (3)
- PHPH 7297 Global Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (3)
- PHPH 7300 Urban Health (3)
- PHPH 7340 Built Environment and Health (3)
- PHPB 7425 Foundations of Maternal and Child Health (3)
- PHPB 7460 Forced Migration and Health (3)
- PHPH 8310 Environmental and Occupational Epidemiology (3)
- PHPH 8330 Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology: Using Information and Data Systems (3)
- PHPH 8350 Biological Basis for Disease (3)
- PHPH 8690 Special Topics in Environmental Health (3)
- PHPH 8790 Special Topics in Epidemiology (3)
- PHPH 8880 or PHPB 8880 Public Health Study Abroad (3)
  - *up to 3 credits of PHPB/PHPH 8880 may count here*
- Any course from the above ENEP list A of approved elective courses not used to satisfy ENEP list A requirements (6)

# MPH Environmental Epidemiology Concentration Competencies and Course Alignment

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Students in the Master of Public Health program with a concentration in **Environmental Epidemiology** will be expected to demonstrate competence in the following areas:

- MPH ENEP 1. Interpret the implications of regulations, laws, standards, and various types of policy on activities aimed at protecting environmental health.
- MPH ENEP 2. Evaluate how human health is impacted by exposure to environmental and occupational contaminants that interact with the environment.
- MPH ENEP 3. Evaluate key sources of data for epidemiologic purposes and their strengths and limitations.
- MPH ENEP 4. Assess risk factors and their relationship to health outcomes.
- MPH ENEP 5. Demonstrate the application of advanced epidemiologic methods to the design of epidemiologic studies of both infectious and noninfectious disease.
- MPH ENEP 6. Assess, synthesize and critically evaluate epidemiologic literature for strengths and weaknesses.
- MPH ENEP 7. Evaluate interventions to reduce prevalence of major public health problems.
- MPH ENEP 8. Identify and weigh ethical dilemmas in epidemiologic research.
- MPH ENEP 9. Examine policy implications of epidemiologic research findings.

| Required MPH Environmental Epidemiology Courses (12 hours) |                          | ENEP Concentration Competencies |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Course #   | Course Title             | 1                               | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| PHPH 7150  | Environmental Health     | X                               |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| PHPH 7294  | Exposure Assessment      |                                 | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| PHPH 7525  | Statistical Computing    |                                 |   | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| PHPH 8721  | Epidemiologic Methods II |                                 |   |   | X | X | X | X | X | X |

## MPH Environmental Health Concentration – 21 credit hours

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The concentration in Environmental Health (EVHT) will prepare students for research and practice in the field of EVHT, which is the understanding of environmental factors, including biological, physical and chemical factors that affect the health of a community. EVHT focuses on the human health effects of agents encountered in the environment, from the molecular to the ecological level, as well as the effects of natural and human-created environments on health. The concentration will provide students with knowledge in the core EVHT disciplines of exposure assessment, toxicology, risk assessment, air pollution, and water pollution. In addition to these core knowledge areas, additional areas of specialization within EVHT include food safety, occupational health, infectious diseases, environmental epidemiology, and urban health.

### Required EVHT Courses (12 credit hours):

- PHPH 7150 Environmental Health (3)
- PHPH 7293 Environmental Health Toxicology (3)
- PHPH 7294 Exposure Assessment (3)
- PHPH 7345 Introduction to Risk Assessment (3)

### EVHT Concentration Elective Courses (9 credit hours):

Select at least three (3) courses from the following list of EVHT concentration approved elective courses:

- PHPH 7019 Research Methods (3)
  - *Required pre-requisite for PHPH 7990 Thesis*
- PHPB 7025 Health Disparities (3)
- PHPH 7155 Air Quality and the Environment (3)
- PHPH 7280 Infectious Disease Epidemiology (3)
- PHPH 7297 Global Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (3)
- PHPH 7300 Urban Health (3)
- PHPH 7325 Urban Health Seminar (1)
- PHPH 7340 Built Environment and Health (3)
- PHPB 7425 Foundations of Maternal and Child Health (3)
- PHPB 7460 Forced Migration and Health (3)
- PHPH 7525 Statistical Computing (3)
- PHPH 7600 Global Health (3)
- PHPH 8330 Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology: Using Information and Data Systems (3)
- PHPH 8350 Biological Basis for Disease (3)
- PHPB 8880 or PHPH 8880 Public Health Study Abroad (3)
  - *up to 3 credits of PHPB/PHPH 8880 may count here*
- GEOS 6532 Introduction to Geographic Information Systems (4)
- GEOS 6538 Urban Health Geographic Information Systems (4)
- GEOS 6644 Environmental Conservation (4)
- GEOS 6784 Climatic Change (3)
- BIOL 6428 Medical Microbiology (4)
- BIOL 6451 Aquatic Pollution and Toxicology (4)
- BIOL 6480 Principles of Toxicology (4)
- BIOL 6484 Laboratory Techniques in Applied and Environmental Microbiology (4)
- NUTR 6170 Food Safety (3)

## MPH Environmental Health Concentration Competencies and Course Alignment

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Students in the Master of Public Health program with a concentration in **Environmental Health** will be expected to demonstrate competence in the following areas:

- MPH EVHT 1. Interpret the implications of regulations, laws, standards, and various types of policy on activities aimed at protecting environmental health.
- MPH EVHT 2. Describe approaches to risk assessment for a wide variety of environmental hazards.
- MPH EVHT 3. Evaluate how human health is impacted by exposure to environmental and occupational contaminants that interact with the environment.
- MPH EVHT 4. Apply biological, chemical, physical and public health principles to develop approaches for designing and maintaining health-promoting physical environments, and for assessing, preventing and controlling environmental hazards that pose risks to human health.
- MPH EVHT 5. Identify important susceptible human sub-populations with respect to environmental exposures and the sources of variability.

| Required MPH Environmental Health Courses (9 hours) |                                 | EVHT Concentration Competencies |   |   |   |   |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Course #  | Course Title                    | 1                               | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| PHPH 7150   | Environmental Health            | X                               |   |   |   |   |
| PHPH 7293   | Environmental Health Toxicology |                                 |   |   | X |   |
| PHPH 7294   | Exposure Assessment             |                                 |   | X |   |   |
| PHPH 7345   | Introduction to Risk Assessment |                                 | X |   |   | X |

## MPH Epidemiology Concentration – 21 credit hours

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Epidemiology (EPID) is a scientific discipline commonly defined as the study of the distribution and determinants of disease and injury in human populations. This broad scope includes understanding the distribution, patterns and causes of adverse health outcomes as well as those associated with their control and prevention, and the complex interaction of factors that play a role in these processes. MPH with a concentration in Epidemiology will afford students choice in the in-depth study of substantive issues such as cancer, cardiovascular diseases, STDs and HIV. Students will also have to opportunity to focus on prevention methods. The knowledge and skills obtained in epidemiology will allow MPH EPID graduates to seek employment in areas that: (1) characterize community health status, (2) critically assess determinants of health-related events, (3) formulate strategies to evaluate the impact of health related interventions and (4) foster the application of epidemiologic methods for health promotion and disease prevention activities.

### Required EPID Concentration Courses (9 credit hours):

- PPHP 7027 Fundamentals of Biostatistics II (3)
- PPHP 7525 Statistical Computing (3)
- PPHP 8721 Epidemiologic Methods II (3)

### EPID Concentration Elective Courses (12 credit hours):

Select at least one (1) course from the following List A of EPID concentration approved elective courses:

- PPHP 7265 Epidemiology and the Prevention of Violence (3)
- PPHP 7275 Chronic Disease Epidemiology (3)
- PPHP 7280 Infectious Disease Epidemiology (3)
- PPHP 7365 Epidemiology of Adolescent and Young Adult Health Risk Behaviors (3)

Select at least three (3) courses from the following List B of EPID concentration approved elective courses:

- PPHP 7014 Epidemiology of STDs and HIV (3)
- PPHP 7019 Research Methods (3)
  - *Required pre-requisite for PPHP 7990 Thesis*
- PPHP 7150 Environmental Health (3)
- PPHP 7290 Case Studies in Epidemiology (3)
- PPHP 7355 Prevention Methods (3)
- PHPB 7425 Foundations of Maternal and Child Health (3)
- PHPB 7460 Forced Migration and Health (3)
- PHPB 8260 Spatial Population Health I (3)
- PHPB 8261 Spatial Population Health II (3)
- PHPB 8285 Social Determinants of Public Health (3)
- PPHP 8330 Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology: Using Information and Data Systems (3)
- PPHP 8790 Special Topics in Epidemiology (3)
- PPHP 8860 Multilevel Models in Public Health (3)
- PHPB 8880 or PPHP 8880 Public Health Study Abroad (3)
  - *up to 3 credits of PHPB/PPHP 8880 may count here*
- Any course(s) from the above EPID List A of approved elective courses not used to satisfy EPID List A requirements (3-9)

## MPH Epidemiology Concentration Competencies and Course Alignment

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Students in the Master of Public Health program with a concentration in **Epidemiology** will be expected to demonstrate competence in the following areas:

- MPH EPID 1. Assess risk factors and their relationship to health outcomes.
- MPH EPID 2. Demonstrate the application of advanced epidemiologic methods to the design of epidemiologic studies of both infectious and noninfectious disease.
- MPH EPID 3. Assess, synthesize and critically evaluate epidemiologic literature for strengths and weaknesses.
- MPH EPID 4. Evaluate key sources of data for epidemiologic purposes and their strengths and limitations.
- MPH EPID 5. Demonstrate the application of data analysis techniques and appropriate interpretation of results.
- MPH EPID 6. Design, analyze, and evaluate an epidemiologic study.
- MPH EPID 7. Evaluate interventions to reduce prevalence of major public health problems.
- MPH EPID 8. Identify and weigh ethical dilemmas in epidemiologic research.
- MPH EPID 9. Examine policy implications of epidemiologic research findings.

| Required MPH Epidemiology Courses (9 hours) |                                  | EPID Concentration Competencies |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Course #                                    | Course Title                     | 1                               | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| PHPH 7027                                   | Fundamentals of Biostatistics II |                                 |   |   |   | X | X |   |   |   |
| PHPH 7525                                   | Statistical Computing            |                                 |   |   | X |   |   |   |   |   |
| PHPH 8721                                   | Epidemiologic Methods II         | X                               | X | X |   |   |   | X | X | X |

## MPH Health Management and Policy Concentration – 21 credit hours

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Health Management and Policy (HMGP) concentration is concerned with the administration and management of public, not-for-profit, and community-based health care organizations, formulating and implementing health care policy, analyzing the distribution of and access to health care services, financing and reimbursement of health care services, and evaluating quality and outcomes of health care services and programs. The Health Management and Policy concentration draws upon a variety of disciplines, including health administration, health policy, public administration, business, public health law, health ethics, and economics.

### **Required HMGP Concentration Courses (9 credit hours):**

- PHPB 7170 Public Health Leadership and Policy (3)
- PHPB 7330 Health Care Management and Finance (3)
- PHPB 8250 Health Economics and Policy (3)

### **HMGP Concentration Elective Courses (12 credit hours):**

Select at least one (1) course from the following List A of HMGP concentration approved elective courses:

- PHPB 7521 Evaluation Research (3)
- PHPB 7522 Qualitative Research (3)
- PHPB 8410 Economic Evaluation (3)
- PHPB 8260 Spatial Population Health I (3)
- Other appropriate research methods/statistics courses may be approved by the Department Chair on the Master of Public Health Graduate Petition form. Students should receive approval from the Department Chair prior to enrolling in, paying for, and completing the course.

Select at least two (2) courses from the following List B of HMGP concentration approved elective courses:

- PHPB 7635 Health Policy and Health Equity (3)
- PHPB 7640 Comparative Health Systems (3)
- PHPB 8261 Spatial Population Health II (3)
- PHPB 8290 Population Health Informatics (3)
- Any course(s) from the above *HMGP List A of approved elective courses* not used to satisfy HMGP List A requirements (3-6)

Select at least one (1) course from the following List C of HMGP concentration approved elective courses:

- PPH 7019 Research Methods (3)
  - *Required pre-requisite for PHPB 7990 Thesis*
- *Required pre-requisite for PHPB 7990 – Public Health Thesis*
- PHPB 7025 Health Disparities (3)
- PPH 7150 Environmental Health (3)
- PPH 7300 Urban Health (3)
- PPH 7325 Urban Health Seminar (3)
- PPH 7340 Built Environment and Health (3)
- PHPB 7425 Maternal and Child Health (3)
- PHPB 7460 Forced Migration and Health (3)
- PPH 7525 Statistical Computing (3)
- PHPB 7535 Dissemination and Implementation Science (3)



- PHPB 7555 Disability and Public Health (3)
- PHPB 7565 Disability Policy (3)
- PHPB 7570 Childhood Obesity Prevention (3)
- PHPH 7600 Global Health (3)
- PHPB 8255 Health Communication (3)
- PHPH 8330 Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology: Using Information and Data Systems (3)
- PHPB 8331 Implementation and Scale-Up of Evidence-based Practices for Maternal and Child Health Populations (3)
- PHPB 8332 Maternal and Child Health Advocacy: From Rights to Justice (3)
- PHPB 8880 or PHPH 8880 Public Health Study Abroad (3)
  - *up to 3 credits of PHPB/PHPH 8880 may count here*
- Any course from the above HMGP List A or HMGP List B of approved elective courses not used to satisfy HMGP List A or HMGP List B requirements (3)

## MPH Health Management and Policy Concentration Competencies and Course Alignment

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Students in the Master of Public Health program with a concentration in **Health Management and Policy** will be expected to demonstrate competence in the following areas:

- MPH HMGP 1. Demonstrate application of economic principles to analyze public health issues.
- MPH HMGP 2. Understand the market structure and the underlying sources of market power in the context of interlocking market segments in the health care system.
- MPH HMGP 3. Apply the principles of program and financial management across the health care and public health systems.
- MPH HMGP 4. Use strategic and business planning principles to develop and align the mission, vision, goals, and objectives for operating a public health or health care organization, and assure that plans align with evidenced-based approaches to improve population health.
- MPH HMGP 5. Explain key elements of human resource management in the public health and health care contexts.
- MPH HMGP 6. Describe public health and health care financing in the U.S., including revenue sources and reimbursement methods, historical origins and current policy, and their impact on health service delivery and population health.
- MPH HMGP 7. Describe and demonstrate the attributes of effective leadership and the skills of effective leadership including decision making, vision setting, team building, conflict management, and strategic collaboration.
- MPH HMGP 8. Evaluate the challenges and opportunities for health policy leadership to improve population health and advance health equity.
- MPH HMGP 9. Utilize commonly used frameworks and theories of policymaking to develop policy proposals that address public health challenges, health equity, and improve population health.
- MPH HMGP 10. Apply strategies for analyzing, evaluating, and advocating for public health and health care policies and programs.

| Required MPH Health Management & Policy Courses (9 hours) |                                     | HMGP Concentration Competencies |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| Course #  | Course Title                        | 1                               | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| PHPB 7170   | Public Health Leadership and Policy |                                 |   |   |   |   |   | X | X | X | X  |
| PHPB 7330   | Health Care Management and Finance  |                                 |   | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |    |
| PHPB 8250   | Health Economics and Policy         | X                               | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |

## MPH Health Promotion and Behavior (HPMB) Concentration – 21 credit hours

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The concentration in Health Promotion and Behavior (HPMB) will provide MPH students with the skills, knowledge, and experiences to promote health and prevent diseases within populations and communities. This concentration will also provide students with a strong foundation for developing expertise in health promotion by specifically emphasizing public health, ecological, and behavioral contexts throughout the curriculum. Courses are designed to integrate theory, practice, and research.

### Required HPMB Courses (12 credit hours)

- PHPB 7022 Health Behavior Theory for Public Health Research (3)
- PHPB 7410 Intervention Development for Public Health (3)
- PHPB 7521 Evaluation Research (3)
- PHPB 7535 Dissemination and Implementation Science (3)

### HPMB Concentration Elective Courses (9 credit hours)

Select at least three (3) courses from the following list of HPMB concentration approved elective courses:

- PPHP 7014 Epidemiology of STDS and HIV (3)
- PPHP 7019 Research Methods (3)
  - *Required pre-requisite for PHPB 7990 Thesis*
- PHPB 7020 Principles of Tobacco Control (3)
- PHPB 7025 Health Disparities (3)
- PPHP 7027 Fundamentals of Biostatistics II (3)
- PPHP 7150 Environmental Health (3)
- PHPB 7170 Public Health Policy (3)
- PPHP 7265 Epidemiology and the Prevention of Violence (3)
- PPHP 7275 Chronic Disease Epidemiology (3)
- PPHP 7300 Urban Health (3)
- PPHP 7340 Built Environment and Health (3)
- PPHP 7365 Epidemiology of Adolescent and Young Adult Health Risk Behaviors (3)
- PHPB 7425 Maternal and Child Health (3)
- PHPB 7460 Forced Migration and Health (3)
- PHPB 7522 Qualitative Research (3)
- PPHP 7525 Statistical Computing (3)
- PHPB 7555 Disabilities and Public Health (3)
- PHPB 7565 Disability Policy (3)
- PHPB 7570 Childhood Obesity Prevention (3)
- PPHP 7600 Global Health (3)
- PHPB 8255 Health Communication (3)
- PHPB 8260 Spatial Population Health I (3)
- PHPB 8261 Spatial Population Health II (3)
- PHPB 8275 Health Literacy (3)
- PHPB 8285 Social Determinants of Public Health (3)
- PPHP 8330 Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology: Using Information and Data Systems (3)
- PHPB 8331 Implementation and Scale-Up of Evidence-based Practices for Maternal and Child Health Populations (3)

- PHPB 8332 Maternal and Child Health Advocacy: From Rights to Justice (3)
- PHPB 8880 or PHPH 8880 Public Health Study Abroad (3)
  - *up to 3 credits of PHPB/PHPH 8880 may count here*

## MPH Health Promotion and Behavior Concentration Competencies and Course Alignment

Students in the Master of Public Health program with a concentration in **Health Promotion and Behavior** will be expected to demonstrate competence in the following areas:

- MPH HPMB 1. Identify basic theories, concepts and models from a range of social and behavioral disciplines that are used in public health research and practice.
- MPH HPMB 2. Describe how social and behavioral risk factors contribute to health outcomes.
- MPH HPMB 3. Describe steps and procedures for the developing, planning, implementing and evaluating public health programs, policies and interventions.
- MPH HPMB 4. Apply evidence-based principles and the scientific knowledge base to critical evaluation and decision making in public health.
- MPH HPMB 5. Develop a logic model for use in program development, implementation, and evaluation.
- MPH HPMB 6. Differentiate among goals, measurable objectives, related activities, and expected outcomes for a public health program.
- MPH HPMB 7. Differentiate the purposes of formative, process, and outcome evaluation, and explain how findings from each are used.
- MPH HPMB 8. Collaboratively assess individual, organizational, and community concerns and resources for public health programs.
- MPH HPMB 9. Assess evaluation reports in relation to their quality, utility, and impact on public health.

| Required HPMB Courses (9 hours) |   | HPMB Concentration Competencies |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Course #                        | Course Title                                      | 1                               | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| PHPB 7022                       | Health Behavior Theory for Public Health Research | X                               | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| PHPB 7140                       | Intervention Development for Public Health        |                                 |   | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| PHPB 7521                       | Evaluation Research                               |                                 |   |   |   | X | X | X | X | X |
| PHPB 7535                       | Dissemination and Implementation Science          |                                 |   |   | X |   |   |   |   |   |

## JD-MPH Dual Degree Program

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The College of Law and the School of Public Health offer a Juris Doctor (JD)/ Master of Public Health (MPH) in the Health Management and Policy (HMGP) concentration dual degree program. This dual program provides an opportunity to pursue studies in law and public health concurrently. The JD/MPH-HMGP enables students to earn both degrees in a shorter timethan would be possible if students pursued each degree separately. Dual degree programs include separate, but affiliated degree programs that are linked through shared curricular offerings and collaborative administrative processes.

Credit hours earned in one degree program satisfy some requirements of the other degree program. No credit hours for the MPH courses will be applied toward the JD requirements until a student has completed the MPH; similarly, no credit hours for the JD courses will be applied toward the MPH requirements until completion of the JD. In other words, a student cannot graduate from the JD and MPH in the same semester—a student must graduate from either program in a given semester, and then the second program in a subsequent semester. To participate in the JD/MPH dual degree program, students must apply separately for admission to the College of Law and the School of Public Health. Students are strongly encouraged to apply to both programs simultaneously. However, there is some opportunity to apply and enroll in the dual degree program after admission to only one of the schools, if a student has not proceeded too far in that school’s program. . Students who gain admission into both programs and become dual degree JD/MPH students should self-disclose their dual degree status to the Graduate Advisor at the School of Public Health and the Associate Director of the Center for Law, Health and Society at the College of Law immediately upon admission into their second program of study (either JD or MPH). An email from the student to both the Graduate Advisor and CLHS Associate Director is preferred. Failure to send this notification to their two advisors may result in the student having to complete both programs in their entirety and become ineligible for the dual JD/MPH degree program opportunity. Students must complete the dual degree program within six years of the initial semester of enrollment. Students should be able to complete both degrees in four years.

# JD-MPH Dual Degree Requirements

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## **MPH Foundational Core Courses for dual JD/MPH HMGP program - 16 credit hours**

- PHPH 7010 Foundations of Public Health (3)
  - *MPH students who have completed a CEPH-accredited bachelor's degree may replace this PHPH 7010 Foundations of Public Health course with three (3) credit hours of concentration-approved elective course(s) from their chosen concentration. Students should confirm with OAA that their bachelor's degree waives this course before taking another course.*
- PHPH 7011 Epidemiology for Public Health (3) or PHPH 7711 Epidemiologic Methods I (3)
- PHPH 7017 Fundamentals of Biostatistics I (4)
- PHPB 7140 Health Promotion Planning, Administration, and Evaluation (3)
- PHPB 7160 Fundamentals of Health Systems, Leadership, and Policy (3)

## **MPH HMGP Concentration Courses for dual JD/MPH HMGP program - 9 credit hours**

- PHPB 7170 Public Health Leadership and Policy (3)
- PHPB 7330 Health Care Management and Finance (3)
- LAW 7240 Health Law: Finance and Delivery (3)
  - *in lieu of* PHPB 8250 Health Economics and Policy (3)

## **MPH HMGP Concentration Elective Courses for dual JD/MPH HMGP program - 12 credit hours**

Select at least one (1) course from the following List A of dual JD/MPH HMGP concentration approved elective courses:

- PHPB 7521 Evaluation Research (3)
- PHPB 7522 Qualitative Research (3)
- PHPB 8410 Economic Evaluation (3)
- PHPB 8260 Spatial Population Health I (3)
- Other appropriate research methods/statistics courses may be approved by the Department Chair on the Master of Public Health Graduate Petition form. Students should receive approval from the Department Chair prior to enrolling in, paying for, and completing the course.

Select at least three (3) courses from the following List B of dual JD/MPH HMGP concentration approved elective courses:

- LAW 7244 Public Health Law (3)
- LAW 7239 Health Law: Quality and Access (3)
- Other SPH approved health law electives with "B" grade (3.0) or better (3-9 hours)

## **MPH Applied Practice Experience for dual JD/MPH HMGP program - 2 credit hours**

Select one *Applied Practice Experience* course:

- PHPB 7960 MPH Applied Practice Experience (2)
- Public Health-Related Lawyering Skills Course (2+)\*

Public Health-Related Lawyering skills course, such as clinic or externship, and must specifically be HeLP, a health law related externship, or HLA (in lieu of PHPB 7960 - MPH Applied Practice Experience) (2). Standard MPH HMGP students complete two (2) credit hours of PHPB 7960 MPH Applied Practice Experience; however, JD/MPH HMGP dual degree students may satisfy this PHPB 7960 requirement by completing 3-6 credit hours of a College of Law lawyering skills course: specifically in the Health Law Partnership (HeLP) Legal Services Clinic at Georgia State University [[law.gsu.edu/clinics/help-legal-services-clinic/](http://law.gsu.edu/clinics/help-legal-services-clinic/)], a health law related externship [[law.gsu.edu/experiential-learning/externships/](http://law.gsu.edu/experiential-learning/externships/)], or Health Legislation and Advocacy clinical program [[law.gsu.edu/clinics/](http://law.gsu.edu/clinics/)]. For either a traditional PHPB 7960 MPH Applied Practice Experience or for a lawyering skills course in lieu of a MPH Applied Practice Experience, the student must FIRST complete all MPH core courses, LAW 7240, and LAW 7244 before beginning the MPH Applied Practice Experience or lawyering skills

course. If a lawyering skills course is taken prior to completing those required MPH core courses, it will not count for the PHPB 7960 MPH Applied Practice Experience requirement. This is simply because the MPH curriculum design requires the MPH Applied Practice Experience to be an opportunity for students to demonstrate the specific MPH knowledge and skills they learned in their MPH courses; therefore, students cannot apply the knowledge and skills acquired through their MPH courses of study in the MPH Applied Practice Experience until after they have completed those MPH courses. Students must submit a Waiver/Substitution form to the School of Public Health for the lawyering skills course to be counted in lieu of the PHPB 7960 MPH Applied Practice Experience requirement [[publichealth.gsu.edu/students/practicum/practicum-forms/](http://publichealth.gsu.edu/students/practicum/practicum-forms/)], and the form must indicate how the student will demonstrate attainment of at least five public health competencies, of which at least three must be foundational competencies, in at least two products. The School of Public Health will make the final decision on if a completed lawyering skills course fulfills the PHPB 7960 requirement. Alternatively, JD/MPH student may elect to complete the standard public health Applied Practice Experience course .

**MPH Culminating and Integrative Learning Experience Courses for dual JD/MPH HMGP program - 3 credit hours**

*Select one course:*

- PHPB 7990 Thesis (3)
- PHPB 7991 Capstone (3)
- PHPB 7992 Integrative Learning Experience (3)

**Total MPH Requirements for dual JD/MPH HMGP program – 42 credit hours minimum**

**Total JD Requirements for dual JD/MPH HMGP program – 78 additional College of Law credit hours minimum.** Twelve (12) or more law-related credit hours taken for the MPH *may* be eligible to also count toward the JD. Students should refer to the College of Law for the specific JD requirements of this dual degree program.



## MPH/Ph.D. Community Psychology Dual Degree Program

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The Department of Psychology and the School of Public Health offer a dual Master of Public Health/Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Psychology. Students enroll in either the Health Promotion and Behavior or the Epidemiology concentrations of the MPH program in the School of Public Health and in the Community Psychology concentration of the Department of Psychology. This dual program provides an opportunity to pursue studies in public health and community psychology concurrently. The MPH/Ph.D. Community Psychology enables students to earn both degrees in a shorter time than would be possible if they pursued each degree separately.

### Admissions

To participate in the MPH/Ph.D. Community Psychology dual degree program, prospective students are strongly encouraged to apply separately for admission to the College of Arts and Sciences, Department of Psychology (Community Concentration) and the School of Public Health, but are not required to do so. Applicants may complete a single application to the College of Arts and Sciences, Department of Psychology (Community Concentration) and indicate on the application their interest in the dual degree program on their Ph.D. Community Psychology application — if admitted into the Ph.D. Community Psychology program, applicants should email their assigned Ph.D. Community Psychology advisor to ensure their interest in the dual degree program has been noted, and their application is now being considered by the other program of interest (the MPH in the School of Public Health).

Prospective students are **strongly encouraged** to apply to both programs simultaneously for the same entry term/semester. This gives students the best opportunity to apply the maximum number of dual degree (having credit hours earned in one degree program satisfy some requirements of the other degree program). Still, there is some opportunity to apply and enroll in the dual degree program after admission to only one of the schools, if a student has not proceeded too far in that school's program. If interested in pursuing a MPH/Ph.D. Community Psychology, **students must be admitted into both programs and enroll in the dual degree program prior to completion of 30 hours of MPH coursework or 30 hours of Ph.D. Community Psychology coursework.**

Applicants must take the GRE to apply to the Ph.D. in Community Psychology program. The GRE is not required for the MPH program. Admission into one program does not presume admission to the other. Students who gain admission into both programs and become dual degree MPH/Ph.D. Community Psychology students should self-disclose their dual degree status to their Ph.D. Community Psychology advisor and the Graduate Advisor immediately upon admission into their second program of study (either Ph.D. Community Psychology or MPH). A joint email from the student to both their Ph.D. Community Psychology advisor and the Graduate Advisor is preferred. Failure to send this notification to their advisors may result in the student having to complete both programs in their entirety and become ineligible for the dual MPH/Ph.D. Community Psychology degree program opportunity.

Once admitted to the dual program students will be enrolled in both the School of Public Health and the College of Arts and Sciences concurrently. A student cannot graduate from the Ph.D. Community Psychology and MPH programs in the same semester—a student must graduate from either program in a given semester, and then the second program in a subsequent semester. Students are expected to complete your dual degree program within six years of the initial semester of enrollment (and must complete it in no longer than 8 years). The MPH program must be completed within 6 years of initial enrollment. Students should be able to complete both degrees in five to six years.

### What can a graduate do with a dual degree in public health and psychology?

- University/College appointments in higher education in public health, psychology, or allied disciplines
- Research, evaluation, and/or program roles in international, federal, state, and local government agencies

- Research, evaluation, and/or program roles in public and private research and evaluation firms, foundations, and advocacy organizations
- Variety of roles in policy and advocacy organizations
- Independent consulting

In addition to major organizations in Public Health (e.g., American Public Health Association, APHA) and Community Psychology (Society for Community Research and Action, SCRA), several interdisciplinary professional organizations like the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE), American Evaluation Association (AEA), and the Society for Prevention Research (SPR) provide links to similarly trained individuals throughout the country through conferences, training, and networking.

# MPH/Ph.D. Community Psychology Dual Degree Requirements

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## **MPH Foundational Core Courses for dual MPH/PhD Community Psychology program - 16 credit hours**

- PHPH 7010 Foundations of Public Health (3)
  - *MPH students who have completed a CEPH-accredited bachelor's degree may replace this PHPH 7010 Foundations of Public Health course with three (3) credit hours of concentration-approved elective course(s) from their chosen concentration. Students should confirm with OAA that their bachelor's degree waives this course before taking another course.*
- PHPH 7711 Epidemiologic Methods I (3)
  - *Dual MPH/Ph.D. Community Psychology students should complete PHPH 7711, regardless of MPH concentration, so that they are prepared for the doctoral-level psychology statistics and methods courses.*
- PHPH 7017 Fundamentals of Biostatistics I (4)
- PHPB 7140 Health Promotion Planning, Administration, and Evaluation (3)
- PHPB 7160 Fundamentals of Health Systems, Leadership, and Policy (3)

## **Dual MPH/PhD Community Psychology program students must select one concentration: Epidemiology (EPID) or Health Promotion and Behavior (HPMB) – 21 credit hours**

- **MPH EPID concentration for dual MPH EPID/PhD Community Psychology program**
  - **MPH EPID Concentration Courses for dual MPH EPID/PhD Community Psychology program - 12 credit hours**
    - PHPH 7027 Fundamentals of Biostatistics II (3)
    - PHPH 7525 Statistical Computing (3)
    - PHPH 8721 Epidemiologic Methods II (3)
  - **MPH EPID Concentration Elective Courses for dual MPH EPID/PhD Community Psychology program - 6 credit hours**
    - Select at least one (1) course from the following List A of dual MPH EPID/PhD Community Psychology concentration approved elective courses:
      - PHPH 7265 Epidemiology and the Prevention of Violence (3)
      - PHPH 7275 Chronic Disease Epidemiology (3)
      - PHPH 7280 Infectious Disease Epidemiology (3)
      - PHPH 7365 Epidemiology of Adolescent and Young Adult Health Risk Behaviors (3)
    - Select at least three (3) courses from the following List B of dual MPH EPID/PhD Community Psychology concentration approved elective courses:
      - PSYC 8200 Introduction to Community Psychology (3)
      - PSYC 8420 Psychological Research Statistics II (3)
      - Choose one course (3 hours):
        - PSYC 8220 Community Interventions, Social Change, and Prevention (3)
        - PSYC 8060 Issues of Human Diversity (3)
        - PSYC 8230 Assessment, Consultation, and Evaluation I (ACE I)
        - PSYC 8260 Assessment, Consultation, and Evaluation in Community Psychology II (ACE II)
        - PSYC 8280 Psychology, Advocacy, and Organizing (3)
        - PSYC 9900 Qualitative Methods (3)
        - PHPB 7522 Qualitative Research (3)
- **MPH HPMB concentration for dual MPH HPMB/PhD Community Psychology program**

- **MPH HPMB Concentration Courses for dual MPH HPMB/PhD Community Psychology program - 12 credit hours**
  - PHPB 7022 Health Behavior Theory for Public Health Research (3)
  - PHPB 7410 Intervention Development for Public Health (3)
  - PHPB 7521 Evaluation Research (3)
  - PHPB 7535 Dissemination and Implementation Science (3)
- **MPH HPMB Concentration Elective Courses for dual MPH HPMB/PhD Community Psychology program - 6 credit hours**
  - PSYC 8200 Introduction to Community Psychology (3)
  - PSYC 8420 Psychological Research Statistics II (3)
  - Choose one course (3 hours):
    - PSYC 8220 Community Interventions, Social Change, and Prevention (3)
    - PSYC 8060 Issues of Human Diversity (3)
    - PSYC 8230 Assessment, Consultation, and Evaluation I (ACE I)
    - PSYC 8260 Assessment, Consultation, and Evaluation in Community Psychology II (ACE II)
    - PSYC 8280 Psychology, Advocacy, and Organizing (3)
    - PSYC 9900 Qualitative Methods (3)
    - PHPB 7522 Qualitative Research (3)

**MPH Applied Practice Experience for dual MPH/PhD Community Psychology program - 2 credit hours**

*Select appropriate Applied Practice Experience course for the MPH concentration (2):*

- Dual MPH EPID/PhD Community Psychology students should select:
  - PHPH 7960 MPH Applied Practice Experience (2)
- Dual MPH HPMB/PhD Community Psychology students should select:
  - PHPB 7960 MPH Applied Practice Experience (2)

**MPH Culminating and Integrative Learning Experience Courses - 3 credit hours**

*Select appropriate Culminating and Integrative Learning Experience course for the MPH concentration (2):*

- Dual MPH EPID/PhD Community Psychology students should select:
  - PHPH 7990 Thesis (3)
    - *MPH EPID/PhD Community Psychology dual degree students must complete PHPH 7990 Thesis; Other culminating experiences are not permitted for MPH/Ph.D. Community Psychology dual degree students.*
    - *Students should simultaneously register for PSYC 8999 Master's Thesis Research to fulfill psychology thesis requirements; however, this PSYC 8999 course does not count towards the MPH thesis requirement or MPH degree program.*
- Dual MPH HPMB/PhD Community Psychology students should select:
  - PHPB 7990 Thesis (3)
    - *MPH HPMB/PhD Community Psychology dual degree students must complete PHPB 7990 Thesis; Other culminating experiences are not permitted for MPH/Ph.D. Community Psychology dual degree students.*
    - *Students should simultaneously register for PSYC 8999 Master's Thesis Research to fulfill psychology thesis requirements; however, this PSYC 8999 course does not count towards the MPH thesis requirement or MPH degree program.*

**Total MPH Requirements for dual MPH/PhD Community Psychology program – 42 credit hours minimum**

**Total PhD Community Psychology Requirements for dual MPH/PhD Community Psychology program – 53 additional Psychology credit hours minimum.** Twelve (12) or more psychology-related credit hours taken for

the MPH may be eligible to also count toward the Ph.D. Community Psychology. Students should refer to the Department of Psychology for the specific Ph.D. Community Psychology requirements of this dual degree program.

# Graduate Certificate in Public Health

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The Graduate Certificate in Public Health (GCPH) is a 16-credit hour program of study. The content includes three foundational core courses taught in the Master of Public Health (MPH) degree program and two electives. The Certificate is designed and developed for students currently working in public health or related field who seek to maintain, upgrade, or advance their public health knowledge and skills.

The Graduate Certificate in Public Health offers strong foundations in public health theory, research, and practice, for example:

- Community Health Practice and Research
- Program Planning, Management, and Evaluation
- Human Communication
- Health Promotion and Education
- Environmental Health
- Health and Human Rights
- Health Policies

## **GCPH Core Courses – 10 credit hours**

- Select one (1) epidemiology course appropriate for to the student’s current or future career, or aspiring MPH concentration (3):
  - Environmental Health, Health Management and Policy, and Health Promotion and Behavior aspiring MPH concentrators or career areas may choose one:
    - PPHH 7011 Epidemiology for Public Health (3)
    - PPHH 7711 Epidemiologic Methods I (3)
  - Biostatistics, Environmental Epidemiology, and Epidemiology aspiring MPH concentrators or career areas should select:
    - PPHH 7711 Epidemiologic Methods I (3)
- PPHH 7017 Fundamentals of Biostatistics I (4)
- PHPB 7160 Fundamentals of Health Systems, Leadership, and Policy (3)

## **GCPH Elective Courses – 6 credit hours**

- Select at least two electives in consultation with either the Graduate Advisor in the Office of Academic Assistance and Career Services (OAA) or a faculty mentor. Electives must be approved, in writing, by OAA and should be geared toward maintaining, upgrading, or advancing public health knowledge and skills related to the student’s current or future career. Students considering in pursuing the Master of Public Health (MPH) degree at GSU should select the following courses as their GCPH electives:
  - PPHH 7010 Foundations of Public Health (3)
  - PHPB 7140 Health Promotion Planning, Administration, and Evaluation (3)

# Maternal and Child Health Graduate Certificate

Public health students who complete the Maternal and Child Health Graduate Certificate (MCHGC) will understand how the health of women, children, and families is impacted by several factors, including public health efforts, applicable policies, availability of resources, the health practices of individual groups, and the social determinants of health. Furthermore, they will learn how to effectively identify and use data to determine needs and positively affect those needs, and evaluate the effectiveness of public health interventions. Collectively, the MCHGC will allow students to gain the skills necessary to be effective leaders in the maternal and child health workforce and field.

Because four of the five MPH foundational core courses are required by or prerequisite to this MCHGC program, most MCHGC students are also MPH students or graduates. MPH students may apply to enter the MCHGC program upon entry into their MPH program or anytime thereafter; however, students hoping to earn the MCHGC certificate should gain entry into the program before taking the MCHGC core courses and applied practice experience.

While most students who complete the MCHGC program are public health graduate students, specifically students completing the MPH degree, maternal and child health leaders will come to the program from a variety of disciplinary areas, including but not limited to pediatrics, nutrition, nursing, psychology, counseling, social work, family, self-advocacy, etc. Leaders from these areas and other allied public health professions who want to build upon their expertise to reach this population through acquisition of maternal and child health specific knowledge and skills are encouraged to apply; however, they may be required to:

- apply and be admitted into the MPH program and complete the MPH foundational core courses that are prerequisite to this MCHGC program, or
- apply and be admitted into the Graduate Certificate in Public Health (GCPH) program which requires only five courses, which can be the same courses as the four MPH foundational core courses that are required by or prerequisite to the MCHGC program, or
- complete the MPH foundational core courses that are prerequisite to this MCHGC program, of which 7 credit hours do not apply to the MCHGC (specifically: [PHPH 7011](#)/[PHPH 7711](#) and [PHPH 7017](#)), or
- demonstrate to the SPH OAA that they have the equivalent prerequisite knowledge, either through a doctoral program or other coursework, or in rare cases, significant public health work experience.

## **MCHGC Prerequisite Courses – 7 credit hours**

*The following two public health foundational course are foundational core to the MPH and are prerequisite to the MCHGC. Students with or working toward a CEPH-accredited public health graduate degree may waive these two courses if they have already completed comparable courses in their public health graduate program. Similarly, student with or working toward a Graduate Certificate in Public Health at GSU may waive these two courses if they have recently (within 3 years of MCHGC certificate completion) completed these courses in their graduate certificate program. Students admitted to the MCHGC program who have not completed these courses should complete them within their first two semesters of the MCHGC program; however, these credit hours do not count toward the MCHGC.*

- [PHPH 7011 - Epidemiology for Public Health](#) **3 Credit Hours**

*or*

- [PHPH 7711 - Epidemiologic Methods](#) **3 Credit Hours**
- [PHPH 7017 - Fundamentals of Biostatistics](#) **4 Credit Hours**

## **MCHGC Public Health Foundational Courses – 6 credit hours**

The following two public health foundational course are core to the MPH and are also required for the MCHGC. Students with or working toward a CEPH-accredited public health graduate degree may waive these two courses if they have already completed comparable courses in their public health graduate program. Similarly, student with or working toward a Graduate Certificate in Public Health at GSU may waive these two courses if they have recently (within 3 years

of MCHGC certificate completion) completed these courses in their graduate certificate program.

- [PHPB 7140](#) Health Promotion, Planning, Administration and Evaluation (3)
- [PHPB 7160](#) Fundamentals of Health Systems, Leadership, and Policy (3)

#### **MCHGC Core Curriculum Courses – 12 credit hours**

- [PHPB 7425](#) Foundations of Maternal and Child Health (3)
- [PHPH 8330](#) Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology: Using Information and Data Systems (3)
- [PHPB 8331](#) Implementation and Scale-Up of Evidence-based Practices for Maternal and Child Health Populations (3)
- [PHPB 8332](#) Maternal and Child Health Advocacy: From Rights to Justice (3)

#### **MCHGC Applied Practice Experience – 2 credit hours**

Complete an applied practice experience [APE] within a maternal and child health [MCH] focused organization or community-based setting. The APE learning contract required for APE course registration must identify exactly how MCHGC students will demonstrate the MCHGC competencies in their MCH focused community-based setting, and the learning contract must be approved by the designated MCH-APE faculty representative for that semester. APE courses completed without a MCHGC-focused learning contract or experience will not count toward the MCHGC certificate. Students earning the MPH and MCHGC concurrently are only required to complete one APE, but those students must also identify on their APE learning contract how they will demonstrate both their MCHGC competencies and their MPH foundational and concentration competencies during their MCH focused APE, and the learning contract must be approved by the designated MCH-APE faculty representative for that semester.

Choose one APE course appropriate to MPH concentration:

- [PHPH 7960](#) Applied Practice Experience (2)
- [PHPB 7960](#) Applied Practice Experience (2)



## Policies & Procedures for MPH and Graduate Certificate Programs and Students

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**Course Descriptions.** Course descriptions for every GSU course, including SPH courses, may be found in the *GSU Graduate Catalog*<sup>5</sup> and the *GSU Schedule of Classes*<sup>6</sup>, and the GSU Course Description search website.<sup>7</sup>

**Faculty Mentors.** Students are strongly encouraged to research faculty within the School and identify faculty mentors who can provide academic, research, and career guidance. It is critical for all GCPH and MPH students to talk to faculty, instructors, and visiting lecturers to maximize their professional networks and to develop a career development plan while in the program.

MPH Students should actively interview and talk with faculty to learn about their research interests and areas of expertise, with the eventual goal of identifying a faculty member who may serve as a thesis or capstone chair, as well as a career mentor. MPH students are also responsible for verifying with their identified thesis or capstone chair that they have the appropriate Graduate Faculty Status required to chair the thesis or capstone.

**Online Academic Evaluation & Degree Works.** Degree Works (DW) is a web-based tool that provides real-time advice on degree or certificate progression (see <http://advisement.gsu.edu/self-service/academic-evaluations/>). This system is designed to aid and facilitate academic advising, but it is not intended to replace face-to-face advising or faculty mentoring sessions. Students can access DW through PAWS.

Here are some of the tasks you can accomplish with Degree Works:

- Learn the degree requirements for your program
- Identify courses needed to complete your degree or certificate
- See how the courses you have completed fulfill requirements for your program
- See what courses you have taken that do not count towards your program
- View the grades, transfer credits, or exceptions applied to your requirements
- Confirm your grade-point average (GPA)
- Find out, before you officially change your program or concentration, how the courses completed meet the new program or concentration requirements
- Select the right courses for next term

It is imperative that you monitor your Degree Works audit and speak to your Graduate Advisor in the Office of Academic Assistance about any discrepancies, since this audit will be the tool to determine your graduation eligibility by the university's Registrar.

**Core Courses: Limit on Number of Attempts.** Students must successfully complete each core course in the MPH or GCPH program within two attempts. Failure to pass a core course after two attempts will result in expulsion from the program. The minimum grade of B must be achieved to pass a core course.

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<sup>5</sup> GSU Graduate Catalog: <http://www.gsu.edu/enrollment/catalogs.html>

<sup>6</sup> GSU Schedule of Classes: [https://www.gosolar.gsu.edu/bprod/bwckschd.p\\_disp\\_dyn\\_sched](https://www.gosolar.gsu.edu/bprod/bwckschd.p_disp_dyn_sched)

<sup>7</sup> GSU Course Description search website: [https://www.gosolar.gsu.edu/bprod/bwckctlg.P\\_DisplaySubjects](https://www.gosolar.gsu.edu/bprod/bwckctlg.P_DisplaySubjects)

**Continuous Enrollment Policy and Degree Completion.** SPH students in all graduate degree and graduate certificate programs must maintain an enrollment totaling six (6) hours or more of degree applicable courses over any consecutive three (3) semester period (including summers) until degree completion. In other words, the total enrollment of the current term plus the two terms preceding it must add to six (6) hours or more at all times. The status of all students will be checked by the midpoint of each term for compliance with the Continuous Enrollment Requirement. Any student whose enrollment is out of compliance will receive a continuous enrollment registration hold preventing all current and future registration. Those students will be notified by an e-mail message sent to their official Georgia State University e-mail account. To resume their programs of study, students with continuous enrollment registration holds must apply for reentry admission by the published deadline (see section 8020.70), must be granted reentry admission, and must enroll at a credit hour level sufficient to satisfy the continuous enrollment requirement. For more information on the reentry process, see section 8020.70 or contact the Office of Academic Assistance and Career Services (OAA). Students who do not attend the semester for which reentry was originally required must complete a new reentry form for subsequent semesters.

All students who wish to reenter one of the graduate level programs or non-degree status after an absence of one year must meet the degree requirements and academic regulations of the graduate catalog current upon return, along with other reentry provisions that may be in effect.

All students who are approved to reenroll will be eligible to retain all Georgia State course credit (and already approved transfer credit, if any) earned previously if their program can be completed within the time limit that was applicable to their program before the absence. The cumulative graduate GPA calculations will include all attempts in all courses at Georgia State University. Time limits would apply.

Students who plan not to register for a particular semester but who intend to continue the program at some later semester should discuss such plans with the Graduate Advisor in order to facilitate reentry at a subsequent time. Failure to comply with this request may complicate reentry in the semester preferred. An absence from the program, whether planned or unplanned, does not exempt students from the requirement to complete the program within the appropriate time limit.

**Enrollment in Approved Courses.** Students must enroll for courses that are part of the approved curriculum for the program to which they have been accepted. Students who do otherwise are subject to loss of credit and/or loss of eligibility to continue to register. Failure to register for degree applicable courses over the course of three consecutive semesters will result in unsatisfactory progress and the rules of Continuous Enrollment Requirement will apply.

**Policy on Responsible Conduct Research Training.** Georgia State University (GSU) is committed to promoting research ethics within the University community and modeling integrity across all disciplines and areas of empirical research. As research has become more complex, collaborative, and costly, issues of research ethics similarly have become complex, extensive and important. The federally mandated training of all levels of research students at GSU in the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) must prepare them to face these issues in their professional lives. The Scholarship and Research Integrity (SARI) program at GSU, developed in response to the America Competes Act requirements, is designed to offer students enrolled in undergraduate research, research graduate

degree programs, and post-doctoral research programs comprehensive training in the RCR in a manner that is tailored to address the issues faced by students in their respective programs. As part of the commitment and policy, graduate research students will be required to complete an online RCR training program provided by the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) and will also be required to engage in at least 5 hours of additional discussion-based RCR education.

<http://ursa.research.gsu.edu/ursa/responsible-conduct-in-research/>

The GSU SPH has devised a RCR program plan to be in compliance with GSU's RCR policy and to ensure students graduating from our GCPH and MPH programs complete the required CITI RCR training program and receive the additional 5 hours of education. For master-level students, all students enrolled in *PHPH 7011 Epidemiology for Public Health* or *PHPH 7711 Epidemiologic Methods I* will be required to complete the CITI RCR training and will receive 5 additional hours as part of in-class discussions during the course.

**Time Limit for Completion of the Program.** Before deciding to enroll in a graduate program of this school, students must examine seriously and realistically their abilities to adjust their personal and professional schedules to accommodate the challenge of graduate study. The maximum time limits set by the faculty for completing a graduate degree program are: six years from the first semester of admission for the master's programs; three years from the first semester of admission for the certificate programs; and nine years from the first semester of admission for the doctoral programs. Students or applicants with questions about the commitment needed to complete the graduate programs should schedule an appointment with the school's Office of Academic Assistance and Career Services.

**Final Course Grades.** The following course grades will be given as final grade options in most courses taught by public health faculty members. Any deviations, including the availability of plus/minus grading, will be at the discretion of the individual faculty member and specifically stated in the course syllabus.

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| A | 90-100   |
| B | 80-89    |
| C | 70-79    |
| D | 60-69    |
| F | below 60 |

Throughout the Catalog and this Handbook, there are noted grade requirements for certain courses in each program. It is important to note that if the grade requirement is a "B (3.0) or better," then a B- (2.7) grade does NOT meet that "B (3.0) or better" grade requirement. Likewise, if the grade requirement is a "C (2.0) or better," then a C- (1.7) grade does NOT meet that "C (2.0) or better" grade requirement.

**Grade Point Average Requirements.** A student must have a minimum GSU grade point average of 3.0 in order to receive a master's degree or certificate from the School of Public Health.

For MPH students, an overall institutional grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or better must be earned to receive the MPH degree. All core courses in the MPH degree must be completed with a grade of B

or better, and any student earning a grade of B- or below must repeat the core course. No more than six semester hours of grades less than B will be accepted for the degree in all other MPH program of study courses. No grade below a C will be accepted toward the degree. The records of students who fall below the 3.00 GPA requirement for all course attempts will be reviewed for continuation in the MPH program, and students may receive a scholastic warning or be scholastically dismissed from the MPH program.

For GCPH students, an overall institutional GPA of 3.0 or better must be earned to receive the Graduate Certificate. The three core courses in the GCPH must be completed with a grade of B or better. Any student earning a grade of B- or below must repeat the core course. No more than three semester hours of grades less than B will be accepted in the two Graduate Certificate program elective courses. No grade lower than C will count for credit towards the certificate, nor will more than one grade of C+ or C be allowed for credit towards the certificate. The records of students who fall below the 3.00 GPA requirement for all course attempts will be reviewed for continuation in the GCPH program, and students may receive a scholastic warning or be scholastically dismissed from the GCPH program.

**Academic Warning and Suspension.** Each student admitted into the MPH or GCPH program in the School of Public Health must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.00. A student whose cumulative institutional grade point average falls below 3.00 at the end of a semester will be placed on Academic Warning. The student will be notified of this standing by the School of Public Health. If a 3.00 cumulative grade point average is not achieved by the end of the next twelve semester hours or two semesters, whichever is longer, of completed course work approved by the Department Chair, the student will be suspended from the graduate program. Transient students must maintain a 3.00 cumulative grade point average in order to continue in that status. Transient students who do not maintain a 3.00 cumulative grade point average may be subject to Academic or Scholastic Suspension. A student may apply for reinstatement after one semester as a suspended student. Application for reinstatement must be made no later than six weeks prior to the first day of classes for the semester in which reinstatement is sought.

**Standards of Performance.** The dean, associate dean, or department chair of the school may require that a student withdraw from a particular course or courses, from a graduate program, or from the school because of unsatisfactory academic work or for other adequate reason. To continue in a graduate program, a student must make reasonable and timely progress in terms of grades, courses, and other requirements toward the degree concerned. The student's progress may be reviewed each semester. As a result of this review, any student whose scholastic performance does not indicate appropriate progress may be required to reduce the course load or may be required to withdraw from the program.

**Student Evaluation of Instruction (Course Evaluations).** Students are expected to participate in the university-coordinated course evaluation for each course in their program of study. Additionally, graduates will be asked to evaluate the total program at time of degree completion and one to three years following graduation.

**Transfer Credits.** A student may apply a maximum of three (3) semester hours transferred from another program or institution toward fulfilling GCPH degree requirements. **This includes public health courses that were taken as a transient, non-degree, or other-GSU-degree student, prior to matriculation into the Graduate Certificate in Public Health program.** GCPH Transfer credits are

processed and approved by the Office of Academic Assistance (OAA) and the corresponding Department Chair, and students should submit this form to have their transfer credits evaluated for approval: [http://publichealth.gsu.edu/files/2013/06/SPH\\_TransferCreditForm1.pdf](http://publichealth.gsu.edu/files/2013/06/SPH_TransferCreditForm1.pdf)

Transfer credits for the MPH program are processed and approved by the Office of Academic Assistance (OAA) and the corresponding Department Chair, and students should submit this form to have their transfer credits evaluated for approval: [http://publichealth.gsu.edu/files/2013/06/SPH\\_TransferCreditForm1.pdf](http://publichealth.gsu.edu/files/2013/06/SPH_TransferCreditForm1.pdf)

- **MPH Credits from another institution:** A student may apply a maximum of nine (9) semester hours of approved course credit transferred from other graduate programs or institution(s) toward fulfilling MPH degree requirements. In order to transfer, the course grade must be a grade of B or better. Transfer credits are processed by the School and must be approved by petition. Students requesting to petition for transfer of credits must work with the Graduate Advisor in the Office of Academic Assistance. Approval is at the discretion of the Department Chair of the student's home concentration. All credits, including transfer credits, presented for the MPH degree must have been earned within six calendar years of the date of degree conferral. Courses must be from CEPH-accredited schools or programs—exceptions to this are rarely made. With the exception of university-approved dual degree programs, if the course to be transferred in was used to satisfy another degree program either at Georgia State or elsewhere, the department chair reserves the right to require the student to complete a different graduate-level course prescribed by the department chair. That course will be substituted into the student's MPH program, so that the student completes the forty-two (42) unique total credit hours for their MPH degree.
- **MPH Credits earned at GSU in either transient, non-degree, or other-GSU-degree status:** A student may apply a maximum of nine (9) semester hours of applicable GSU course credit earned prior to MPH program admission (while taking public health courses as either transient, non-degree, or other-GSU-degree status) toward fulfilling MPH degree requirements. Courses that satisfy the MPH core courses must be completed with a grade of B or better, and courses that satisfy a concentration required or elective course must be completed with a grade of C or better. Credits are processed by the School—petition is not required, but students should confirm their previously completed courses are applicable. Students may work with the Graduate Advisor in the Office of Academic Assistance to confirm applicability. Approval of applicable courses is at the discretion of the Department Chair of the student's home division and concentration—it is not guaranteed. All GSU credits presented for the MPH degree must have been earned within six calendar years of the date of degree conferral.
- **MPH Credits earned at GSU in GCPH enrollment status:** Students who wish to change from GCPH enrollment to graduate degree seeking status must file an application for the graduate program desired and all supporting documents by the appropriate deadline for the semester for which admission is sought. Further information on application procedures for admission to degree programs in the School of Public Health may be obtained from the Office of Academic Assistance and Graduate Career Services: <http://publichealth.gsu.edu/academic/apply/>.

A GCPH student may apply a maximum of sixteen (16) semester hours of applicable GSU course credit earned while completing the GCPH and prior to MPH program admission toward fulfilling MPH degree requirements. Courses that satisfy the MPH core courses must be completed with a grade of B or better, and courses that satisfy a concentration required or elective course must be completed with a grade of C or better. Credits are processed by the School—petition is not required, but students should confirm their previously completed courses are applicable. Students may work with the Graduate Advisor in the Office of Academic Assistance to confirm applicability. Approval of applicable courses is at the discretion of the Department Chair of the student’s home concentration—it is not guaranteed. All GSU credits presented for the MPH degree must have been earned within six calendar years of the date of degree conferral. With the exception of university-approved dual degree programs, if the course to be transferred in was used to satisfy another degree program either at Georgia State or elsewhere, the department chair reserves the right to require the student to complete a different graduate-level course prescribed by the department chair. That course will be substituted into the student’s MPH program, so that the student completes forty-two (42) unique total credit hours for their MPH degree. An exception is made for students completing a Graduate Certificate in Public Health (GCPH) prior to MPH admission—please see that exception detailed below.

- **MPH Credits earned from another institution while currently enrolled:** Students who have been accepted into a School of Public Health program and who wish to take courses at another institution for credit must first obtain written approval via the graduate petition process. The first step in this approval process is to meet with the MPH Curriculum and Advisement Coordinator in the Office of Academic Assistance and Career Services. All credits, including transfer credits, presented for the Master’s degree must have been earned within six calendar years of the date of degree conferral, all credits presented for the graduate certificate must have been earned within three calendar years of graduate certificate completion, and all credits presented for the DrPH or Ph.D. must have been earned within nine calendar years of the date of degree conferral. Courses transferred-in for the doctoral degree may not be used in fulfilling the Doctoral Public Health Core Courses requirements or the doctoral residency requirement for either doctoral degree.
- **JD/MPH Dual Degree Credits earned at GSU just prior to joint degree (JD/MPH) status:** A student may only apply applicable GSU JD course credit earned toward fulfilling MPH degree requirements if the JD/MPH dual degree student is admitted into and enrolled in both degree programs prior to completion of 30 credit hours of MPH coursework and 60 hours of JD coursework. JD credits are processed by the School—petition is not required, but students should confirm their previously completed courses are applicable. Students may work with the Graduate Advisor in the Office of Academic Assistance to confirm applicability. Approval of applicable courses is at the discretion of the Department Chair of the student’s home division and concentration—it is not guaranteed. All GSU credits presented for the MPH degree must have been earned within six calendar years of the date of degree conferral.
- **MPH/ Ph.D. Community Psychology Dual Degree Credits earned at Georgia State University just prior to dual degree (Ph.D. Community Psychology/MPH) status:** A student may apply

MPH-applicable Georgia State University Community Psychology course credit (earned for the Ph.D. Community Psychology degree) toward fulfilling MPH degree requirements if the Ph.D. Community Psychology/MPH dual degree student is **admitted and enrolled** into both degree programs prior to completion of 30 credit hours of MPH coursework and 30 hours of Ph.D. Community Psychology coursework. Ph.D. Community Psychology credits applied to the MPH degree are processed by the SPH — petition is not required, but students should confirm (in advance) with the Graduate Advisor that their planned Ph.D. Community Psychology courses are applicable to the MPH, and are correctly populating in their PAWS electronic MPH program of study. Approval of applicable courses is at the discretion of the SPH OAA and the Department Chair of the student's home MPH division and concentration — it is not guaranteed. All Georgia State University credits presented for the MPH degree must have been earned within six calendar years of the date of degree conferral.

**Out-of-Residence Credit and Graduation.** Students who wish to take graduate courses at another institution to complete the coursework for their GSU degree or program should provide the information listed in the cross registration section below (except the transcript) to the Office of Academic Assistance and Career Services before enrolling at the other institution. Advance approval will ensure that the transfer credit can be granted if a grade of “B” or higher is earned in the course(s) and the coursework is completed within the time limit allowed for the student's degree program. Such students should plan to graduate at least one semester after the Out-of-Residence quarter/semester in which the last course to be transferred has been taken. This will allow adequate time for the necessary transcript to be received and for the transfer credit to be processed. Please refer to the graduation office website for complete instructions and information concerning applying for graduation and the graduation fee: [registrar.gsu.edu/graduation/](http://registrar.gsu.edu/graduation/). A letter certifying completion of degree requirements and stating the date the degree will be conferred can be furnished to the student by the OAA.

**MPH Change Program Concentration.** Students who have determined that their research and/or career interests align better with a different concentration may fill out a Graduate Petition form to change their concentration. Contact the Graduate Advisor in the Office of Academic Assistance for further information on completing this form. Department Chairs reserve the right to require the student to complete the full MPH application and admission process for the new concentration, if the Department Chair deems it necessary.

**Application for Graduation (MPH) or Completion (GCPH).** All candidates for the MPH degrees must file a formal application for graduation with the University's Graduation Office at least one semester in advance of the expected semester of graduation. Deadlines are published on the Georgia State website: <http://registrar.gsu.edu/graduation/>. The Graduation Office will inform the School when the application is filed by the student. At the start of the semester in which students are scheduled to graduate, the School of Public Health will then conduct an audit of any student on the tentative graduation list, and inform the student of any remaining requirements — these items will include any graduation clearance requirements. A number of different audits are performed on an ongoing basis by the university, OAA, and SPH up until the week degrees are conferred. A degree will be awarded only to a student who meets the university academic, residence, and graduation clearance requirements as well as the standards of performance and academic requirements for the MPH degree.

All candidates for the GCPH must file a formal application for graduation via Panther Access to Web Services: <http://paws.gsu.edu>. OAA will conduct an audit to confirm completion of the requirements and inform the student of any remaining requirements—these items will include any graduation clearance requirements. A graduate certificate will be awarded only to a student who meets the university academic, residence, and/or graduation clearance requirements as well as the standards of performance and academic requirements for the GCPH.

**Waiver Requests.** Students are required to fill out a Student Petition form when requesting a waiver of an established policy and procedure. The form is electronic and is available on the SPH website: <http://publichealth.gsu.edu/students/program/>. See Appendix A for a copy of this petition.

**Student Appeals.** The appeals procedure for graduate students in the School of Public Health will follow different paths, depending on the nature of the student’s appeal. The various types of situations and the appropriate appeals avenues are as follows:

#### **Petitions for Policy Waivers and Variances, and Appeals Procedure**

The petitions for policy waivers and variances, and appeals procedure for students will follow different courses depending on the nature of the student’s appeal. Please refer to Student Code of Conduct online: <http://codeofconduct.gsu.edu/> for details.

#### **Student Complaints, Concerns, or Grievances**

Similarly, the student complaints, concerns, or grievance procedure for students will follow different courses depending on the nature of the student’s appeal. Please refer to <http://enrollment.gsu.edu/assistance/>.

Terminated, dismissed or excluded graduate students with questions about their status should first discuss their situation with the Graduate Advisor in the Office of Academic Assistance and Career Services (OAA). Following this discussion, students who believe they have extenuating circumstances may submit a written appeal of their termination or exclusion to the Director of OAA. The director will review the information submitted in support of the appeal and the student’s total record. The director will then make a recommendation to the department chair, who will make the decision regarding acceptance or denial of the appeal. The student will receive a written response from the school normally within 10 workdays of the date the appeal is received. (Workdays are counted as Monday through Friday except university staff holidays.)

Requests for such consideration must be submitted, in writing, to the director of OAA within 10 workdays (defined as Monday through Friday except university holidays). Students should write their appeals completely, but concisely, and include all facts germane to their case. Documentation should be provided, where possible, to substantiate statements made. Specific dates of the beginning and ending of particular problems should be included. Having been enrolled in too many courses relative to job requirements or other responsibilities or having continued to enroll while experiencing personal, work, or health-related problems very rarely constitutes such extenuating circumstances. Only circumstances described in the written and signed appeal as initially submitted will be accepted from the student; oral appeals are not permitted, nor are requests to submit additional information after



the appeal has been reviewed. Appeals must be dated, signed, and include the student's home address and telephone numbers (work and home).

## MPH Milestones

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...Critical milestones are assessed based on credit hours and semesters completed within the MPH degree program.

- **Milestone #1:** Students are expected to have their thesis/capstone (culminating and integrative learning experience) proposal accepted by their thesis/capstone chair and committee by no later than the completion of 36 credit hours in the MPH program. The approved thesis/capstone proposal form must be submitted to the Office of Academic Assistance and Career Services within the same 36 credit hours. Waivers to this credit rule are for students planning to complete *PHPB/PPH 7992 Integrative Learning Experience*, or by petition only and may be adjusted for approved leaves of absence, medical leave or disability as detailed elsewhere in school or university policies. Failure to submit an approved thesis/capstone proposal by the conclusion of 36 credit hours, with no intentions to complete *PHPB/PPH 7992 Integrative Learning Experience*, will place the student on academic probation.
- **Milestone #2:** Once a student initially enrolls in the thesis/capstone course, students are expected to successfully defend and publish (upload to GSU) their thesis/capstone within two academic semesters (including summer). Failure to complete the thesis/capstone within two academic semesters will place the student on academic probation. Failure to complete the thesis/capstone by the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester will result in a scholastic dismissal from the MPH program.
- **Milestone #3:** The maximum time limit set by the faculty for completing the MPH graduate degree program is six (6) years from the first semester of admission to the MPH. After six years, courses will begin to expire in order of first completed, and may require re-enrollment or replacement with advanced coursework to satisfy degree requirements.

If a student's progress indicates probation, the student will receive a notice of this from the Director of the Office of Academic Assistance and Career Services (OAA), and the notice will be sent by e-mail message to their official Georgia State University (GSU) e-mail account. Within fifteen (15) working days of receipt of this notice, the student should submit a memo to the Director of OAA (from the student's GSU e-mail account) documenting how the student intends to achieve the relevant milestone before reaching the criterion for initiating a dismissal action. If a student's progress indicates initiation of a scholastic dismissal action *or* if a student fails to submit a memo, the student will receive scholastic dismissal action notice of this from the Director of OAA.

Students may appeal the pending dismissal action by petitioning their Department Chair but they must do so before the end of the semester in which their progress first indicated initiation of a dismissal action. If they appeal, students are required to submit as part of their appeal an individualized plan, approved by their thesis/capstone chair, detailing dates by which they intend to meet any milestones yet unachieved.

At any time the student believes they may have difficulty meeting the critical milestones, they should immediately consult with their Graduate Advisor in the OAA.

# Registration Procedures for MPH and Graduate Certificate Students

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**How to Register.** Students can register for courses during Regular and Late Registration following instructions on the university's registration guide: <http://registrar.gsu.edu/registration/registration-guide/> The registration dates are available on the GSU Academic Calendar: <http://registrar.gsu.edu/registration/semester-calendars-exam-schedules/>

Students who wait until Late Registration to register for classes will incur a late registration fee. Any schedule revision after late registration must be done in the Office of the Registrar and may be refused by the faculty. At that time, you will also be charged a nonrefundable manual registration fee for each change.

1. Log in to [PAWS](#) with your Campus ID and password. You can look up or change your Campus ID or password at <http://campusid.gsu.edu>.
2. Go to the Enrollment tab for access to all of your records. Scroll down to the Registration block and select Add/Drop/Withdraw Courses.
3. Select the appropriate registration term.
4. Read the agreement carefully and select "I Agree" or "I Do Not Agree."
5. Select your course options, such as subject (to browse all classes in a particular subject), or course number if you know the specific course you are looking for. You can also further refine your search by selecting an instructor, time, or location.
6. Choose the course you would like to add and click "Register."
7. Review your status to make sure the course is registered correctly.
8. Select "Concise Student Schedule" under the Registration tab to review your current registration schedule.

**Registration Error Messages.** Some courses require special authorization from a department or have certain registration restrictions before you can register. The appropriate department must approve and enter the overflow or special authorization information into the registration system before you will be able to successfully register for the course yourself.

**Overflows, Authorizations, and Restrictions.** Before you can register, some courses require special authorization from a department or have certain registration restrictions. The appropriate department must approve and enter the overflow or special authorization information into the registration system before you will be able to successfully register for the course yourself. As shown in the online course listings found at PAWS, an asterisk precedes the course number for courses requiring special authorization and a plus sign precedes the course number for courses with registration restrictions. Overflow policies vary with each department. Contact the specific department for authorization and overflow information. See the "Course Authorization" in the General Information section of this guide for departmental locations and telephone numbers.

**Dropping a Class.** You drop a class when you remove the class from your schedule during Regular or

Late Registration. A dropped class does not appear on your transcript. Late Registration is the last time period for dropping a class without penalty. After the last day of Late Registration, only withdrawal will be allowed. Remember, to be certified as a full-time student, you must carry a minimum of 9 semester hours.

A student who is enrolled in less than a full-time course of study at Georgia State may be in jeopardy of:

1. losing insurance coverage under his or her parent/guardian's insurance policy
2. being out of compliance with the Department of Homeland Security if enrolled at Georgia State on a student visa
3. being placed on a loan payment schedule by a lender or guarantor if the student is the recipient of federal financial aid
4. losing a scholarship if the guidelines for receiving the scholarship require full-time student enrollment.
5. losing an out of state tuition waiver or a graduate assistantship if they require full-time student enrollment.

**When and How to Withdraw from a Course.** You must complete the procedure to withdraw from a class using PAWS. A withdrawal before the semester midpoint does not guarantee a grade of W. We encourage you to speak to your advisor or instructor before withdrawing from a course. For more detailed information on withdrawals, please refer to the "Revision of Class Schedule" section in the university graduate catalog.

Withdrawals appear on a student's permanent record and count towards a student's attempted hours. There is not a limit on withdrawals for graduate degree programs. The following provides a list of the different types of withdrawals.

- *Voluntary Withdrawal*  
Students may make a voluntary withdrawal from a class or classes using PAWS. Students will receive a grade of W or WF for any class dropped during this period depending on whether or not they have exceeded their limit of withdrawals with a grade of W. Further details on voluntary withdrawals can be found in the University catalog.
- *Involuntary Withdrawal*  
When an instructor determines that a student is in violation of one of the class policies (e.g., has missed a required assignment or has excessive absences), that instructor may withdraw the student from the course. Further details on involuntary withdrawals can be found in the University catalog.
- *Hardship/Emergency Withdrawal*  
Students may be granted hardship or emergency withdrawals when non-academic

emergency situations occur which prevent them from completing their coursework (e.g., severe medical problems, traumatic events/circumstances that cause them to miss numerous classes.). Further details on hardship withdrawals can be found in the University catalog.

- *Military Withdrawal*

A student who is on active duty or is a military reservist (including members of the National Guard) may withdraw from the university if called for active duty or reassignment. The student must officially withdraw and submit Official Orders to Active Duty to the Enrollment Services Center. Further details on military withdrawals can be found in the University catalog.

- *Non-Academic Withdrawal*

In the judgment of the Dean of Students, a student may be withdrawn from the university for non-academic reasons when it is determined that the student has demonstrated behavior that: (a) poses a significant danger or threat of physical harm to self or to the person or property of others; or (b) interferes with the rights of other members of the university community or with the exercise of any proper activities or functions of the university or its personnel.

**Auditing a Course.** Students who wish to audit a course need to contact Enrollment Services, 2nd floor, Sparks Hall to process an application for audit. Audit registration is not available through PAWS. Auditing is permissible only after prerequisite requirements are met and by permission of the instructor. *Tuition and fees will be assessed at the same rate* as for courses being taken for credit. Audited courses are not eligible for financial aid or tuition waivers offered through a graduate assistantship.

NOTE: After the official last day to register for course credit, students may not transfer from credit to audit status or vice versa. Individuals who have been accepted to the university as regular students may register for learning support courses either for audit or for institutional credit. Institutional credit will not count toward degree requirements and may not be calculated into a grade-point average but is included in the calculation of academic hours carried for tuition purposes. Students receiving financial aid should contact the Office of Student Financial Aid. No course grade will be awarded for students who audit classes. Students who register for institutional credit will be awarded a letter grade.

**Cross-Registration.** Georgia State University students may enroll in courses offered by member institutions of the Atlanta Regional Council for Higher Education (ARCHE) under a cross registration agreement: <http://registrar.gsu.edu/registration/cross-registration/>. Students who wish to cross register must meet all eligibility requirements under the ARCHE agreement and the University. Courses taken through Cross Registration are considered resident credit.

**Cross-Registration Application Deadlines**

- Fall Semester: July 15
- Spring Semester: November 15
- Summer Semester: April 15

### **Cross-Registration Eligibility Criteria**

- Students must be in good standing and have a minimum Georgia State University cumulative GPA of 2.0 and the required GPA to enroll in the Georgia State course which is most similar to the course the student wishes to cross register.
- Students must be concurrently enrolled in at least one Georgia State course.
- Students must meet prerequisites for requested course(s) as defined by Georgia State University and the host institution.
- Students must meet the host institution's immunization and health requirements.

### **Course Restrictions**

Students may not cross register for a course if:

- The course is offered at Georgia State that semester.
- The course has been previously attempted at Georgia State (including attempts which resulted in a withdrawal or an unsatisfactory grade).
- The course or an appropriate substitute is routinely available at Georgia State (that is, offered each semester or on a specified regular basis, such as every fall). Determination of whether the course is routinely available is made by the advisement office in consultation with the chair or director of the academic unit that offers the course.
- The College and/or degree program has restrictions or departmental requirements for the specific course.
- The student expects to graduate from Georgia State during the semester the student wishes to cross register a course.

Students are limited to two cross-registered courses per semester, and the combined course load at Georgia State University and the host institution may not exceed 18 credit hours. The student's transfer credit, cross registration credit, and credit by examination applicable to their degree program may not exceed a third of their degree requirements.

## Advising in the School of Public Health

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The School of Public Health (SPH) takes seriously its charge to provide a quality public health graduate education that improves the knowledge, skills, and abilities of public health professionals and researchers. Learning outcomes for individual students are monitored and assessed by authorized University and SPH faculty and staff.

**Faculty Mentors.** After enrolling in SPH's degree programs, each student is encouraged to seek out faculty mentors. Faculty mentors should serve as experts and practitioners in the field of public health and provide students more specialized counsel in determining elective courses and career advising. See above for more information on Faculty Mentors.

**International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS).** GSU's ISSS office provides support for Georgia State University's non-immigrant international student, faculty, and researcher population, their dependents, and any foreign-born citizens and permanent residents of the United States who may need services. The office staff serves as a liaison with all academic departments and informs academic departments if students are out of compliance or seek a program extension.

**Graduate Advisor.** All GCPH and MPH students receive academic advising from the Graduate Advisor in the Office of Academic Assistance (OAA). The role of the Graduate Advisor is to monitor program and degree progression, answer questions about registration or program requirements, and to direct students to faculty who can serve as their mentors. The Graduate Advisor is also responsible for monitoring graduation requirements and readiness as well as handling Thesis & Capstone processes.

**The Office of Academic Assistance & Career Services.** The Office of Academic Assistance & Career Services (OAA) provides SPH students with advisement and information on general academic and university policies and procedures, but it is not intended to handle substantive questions on public health course selection. This level of advisement and mentoring is coordinated in the academic department. The staff also works closely with the Department Chairs and Dean's Office in resolving academic issues.

The OAA Director is responsible for notifying the student in writing if the student falls below the required institutional GPA and is placed on academic warning. The Graduate Advisor will meet with the student to address any current academic issues and to develop a plan for raising the GPA during the two-semester time limit.

During the summer, the OAA audits student records to determine if any students are inactive or are due to move to inactive status. A student's record automatically becomes inactive if he or she has not registered for any classes for three consecutive semesters. Unless there is documentation related to a withdrawal from the program, the Graduate Advisor contacts these students to discuss options for reentry and successful completion of the degree program.

The OAA has the following key functions related to monitoring student progress:

Successful Completion of Core Courses, Final Course Grades, and Monitoring Grade Point Averages  
See *Grade Point Average Requirements* above.

Monitoring Continuous Enrollment Policy and Degree Completion  
See *Continuous Enrollment Policy and Degree Completion* above.

Monitoring Degree Progression and Milestone Benchmarks  
See *MPH Milestones* above.

Performing Graduation Audits  
See *Application for Graduation (MPH) or Completion (GCPH)* above.

### Evaluating Student Progress

Performance evaluations of applicable competencies and learning outcomes for all students will be conducted annually by the school's academic leadership in concert with the core faculty and affiliated faculty. Faculty, in consultation with students, will work together in a continuous quality improvement process to ensure that learning outcomes are understandable, measurable, properly linked with applied public health and research, and being achieved.

### MPH Applied Practice Experience Evaluations

Evaluation of the MPH Applied Practice Experience involves the student, preceptor, and practice coordinator. Informal evaluations will occur one-on-one with the APE instructor based on activity summaries and time sheets. Formal evaluation will be conducted through midterm and final evaluations completed by the student and the preceptor. The evaluation will assess student accomplishments of Applied Practice Experience goals and demonstration of MPH competencies. The student will also provide feedback on the preceptor and Applied Practice Experience site overall.

### MPH Thesis, Capstone, or Integrative Learning Experience Registration and Defense

All MPH students are required to complete a culminating and integrative learning experience in their last semester of course study. The thesis, capstone project, or integrative learning experience constitutes a significant part of the work toward a Master's degree and is the culmination of all degree program activities. The culminating experience must represent high standards of scholarly inquiry, technical mastery, and literary skill. It should be a contribution to the student's specialty area (concentration) and should reflect the student's independent efforts with only guidance and mentoring from the thesis/capstone committee. The goal of the culminating experience is to enhance students' public health knowledge and to improve students' proficiency in a specific public health area of interest. Students will integrate knowledge and skills acquired through their academic coursework (including concentration) and apply these principles and ideas to a particular public health problem or situation similar to that found in a professional work setting. Culminating experiences are assessed on a uniform rubric that confirms the student demonstrated achievement of each of their MPH (foundational core and concentration) competencies during their entire culminating experience (culminating experience planning, actions, writing, and oral defense).

Students who plan to complete a Thesis or Capstone should seek out faculty mentors during their first two semesters in the program and begin to narrow down on who they wish to have serve as their Thesis/Capstone Chair. Students are also responsible for verifying with their identified Thesis/Capstone Chair that they have the appropriate Graduate Faculty Status required to chair the thesis or capstone.



With your Chair's guidance, you both will select at least one additional committee member. The additional member must possess at least a Master's-level degree but does not need to be a faculty member in the School of Public Health. The Graduate Advisor in the OAA and the student's Department Chair must approve the composition of the committee by signing off on the Thesis or Capstone Application before you will be able to register for course credit.

The Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) is a hybrid course that serves as a third option for the culminating experience. ILE is currently approved for all MPH concentrations except Biostatistics. The main purpose of this Public Health Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) course is to provide a culminating, integrative learning experience for Master of Public Health program students during their final semester(s) prior to graduation. As such, the course draws on students' prior training in the MPH Foundational Public Health Knowledge and Foundational Competencies from the MPH core coursework, the Concentration Competencies from the additional required concentration course work in one of the MPH concentrations at GSU; and public health practice experience gained in the field through the Applied Practice Experience and other field-based coursework. The ILE is designed to challenge students to reflect and integrate their training and experience with the goal of demonstrating synthesis of foundation and concentration public health competencies as they prepare to enter the public health workforce. The ILE results in a high-quality written product (or course-based capstone) which is ideally developed and delivered in a manner that is useful to external stakeholders, such as non-profit or governmental organizations. At least one SPH faculty member reviews and assess each student's performance in the ILE and ensures that the experience addresses the foundational and concentration-specific competencies. Faculty assessment may be informed by assessments from other qualified individuals (e.g. preceptors).

The SPH has a Continuous Enrollment policy for the Thesis/Capstone course, which means that once you register for the course, you must continue to register each semester (including summer) until you defend and complete your final draft. You will need permission to register for the course each time. The Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) is a pass/fail course designed to be completed in one semester, so continuous enrollment does not apply. Contact the Office of Academic Assistance for registration authorizations for culminating experience courses.

## Student Services & Student Life

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**Career Services.** The School of Public Health provides career support and leadership development services to all current GCPH and MPH students and alumni. Students are invited to attend the School's career events and workshops as well as meet with our SPH Career Coordinator to discuss individual career questions. Career Services can help students with resume writing, interviewing, job searching, internship development, and networking. <http://publichealth.gsu.edu/students/career-resources/>

**Student Organizations.** The OAA also supports all SPH student clubs and organizations – so read about the various groups within the college, and join one today: <http://publichealth.gsu.edu/student-life/>.  
Make the most of your education by utilizing these great resources.

### **Biostatistics Student Lab**

**Location:** Urban Life Building, Room 645

**Description:** The purpose of the Biostatistics Computer Lab is to provide GSU SPH students with computer access and statistical software needed for class and research needs. All computers are equipped with standard statistical software, including SAS, STATA, SPSS and Mplus, as well as Microsoft Office tools and Internet access. The computer lab is supervised by a Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) Monday thru Friday, 9am-5pm. The GRA is available to assist students with questions related to *PHPH 7017 Fundamentals of Biostatistics I*, *PHPH 7027 Fundamentals of Biostatistics II*, and *PHPH 7525 Statistical Computing*, as well as basic computer assistance and questions related to the use of SAS.

**Student Health and Campus Life.** SPH students have access to various services around campus, including the Student Health Clinic<sup>11</sup>, Student Health Insurance<sup>12</sup>, mental health counseling and services<sup>13</sup>, recreation center<sup>14</sup>, and disability accommodation testing and services<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> GSU Student Health Clinic: <http://health.gsu.edu/>

<sup>12</sup> GSU Student Health Insurance: <http://sfs.gsu.edu/tuition-fees/student-health-insurance/>

<sup>13</sup> GSU Counseling and Testing: <http://counselingcenter.gsu.edu/students/services/counseling-services/>

<sup>14</sup> GSU Recreation: <http://recreation.gsu.edu/>

<sup>15</sup> GSU Disability Services: <http://disability.gsu.edu/about-us/rights-responsibilities/>

## **Appendix A**

### **Master of Public Health and Graduate Certificate Programs Petition**

**MPH and Graduate Certificate Programs Petition.** Students wishing to substitute a required course in the curriculum, request a continuous enrollment waiver (e.g., for Thesis/Capstone), or change MPH concentrations or graduate certificate programs may fill out the MPH and Graduate Certificate Programs Petition and submit it to the Graduate Advisor for review.

Students should not submit a petition without first discussing their situation with the Graduate Advisor. The most recent petition form may be found here:

<https://publichealth.gsu.edu/office-academic-assistance/forms-resources/>

## **Appendix B**

### **Master of Public Health**

### **Applied Practice Experience Guidelines**

**Georgia State University, School of Public Health**  
**Master of Public Health**  
**Applied Practice Experience Guidelines**

For more information, contact  
Jessica Howell Pratt, MPH – Practice & Career Coordinator  
Email: [jpratt@gsu.edu](mailto:jpratt@gsu.edu) or Phone: 404-413-1438

An integral part of the MPH curriculum is a required applied practice experience (APE). The goal of the APE is to provide students with the opportunity to apply public health academic theory and acquired skills from their specialty areas (concentrations) to community-based research and service in a practice setting. The APE has the following learning objectives:

- apply and test public health concepts and theories in practice settings;
- implement one or more of the ten essential public health services<sup>16</sup>;
- utilize problem-solving skills to assess and analyze public health issues and propose and implement effective intervention strategies;
- justify the importance of interdisciplinary teamwork to address public health problems; and,
- learn to function successfully as a public health professional in a work setting.

**Length and Credits.** Students must register for **two (2) academic credits**, which represent **240 hours** of field-based work. Field-based work can be performed in a concentrated fashion within one semester or carried out in two consecutive semesters. Additional content will be delivered through iCollege and consists of career and professional development-based instruction, the student’s summative poster, and a project highlight with reflection. Credits will be awarded by demonstrating achievement of all related requirements as outlined in this handbook, including those described in Section IV (Roles and Responsibilities).

**Positioning within the MPH program.** Students are eligible to begin the APE coursework following successful completion of the following core classes: PHPH 7010, PHPH 7011 or PHPH 7711, PHPH 7017, PHPB 7140, and PHPB 7160; and at least **two (2)** classes in the selected concentration. It is highly recommended that these two (2) classes in the concentration be required concentration courses, rather than concentration electives.

**Applied Practice Experience Topic Selection.** The APE topic selection process is a collaborative effort involving the student, the APE instructor, the practice coordinator, and the preceptor. The topic must relate to the student’s concentration and departmental faculty can serve as consultants in the selection process. APE activities may either be focused on practice-based research or a public health-oriented project.

**Relationship to Culminating and Integrative Learning Experience (Thesis or Capstone Project).** Although the APE and the culminating experience are two distinct MPH curriculum requirements, the two may be linked. For example, a public health practice-oriented APE can be developed into a central

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<sup>16</sup> The 10 Essential Public Health Services website: <http://www.cdc.gov/nphsp/essentialServices.html> was last accessed on August 15, 2014.

thesis theme. However, a full presentation documenting the results of the APE remains a separate and distinct requirement. Likewise, a research-based APE can yield a specific research aspect sufficiently robust for the development of a thesis. The resulting thesis would be distinct from the required final APE presentation. Decisions regarding thesis and capstone development are further specified in the MPH and GCPH Student Handbook.

**Enrollment and Grades for the Applied Practice Experience.** In order to begin the APE, students must enroll in **PHPH/PHPB 7960 MPH Applied Practice Experience** for a total of **two (2) hours**. The APE is an academic course; students register for the course, pay tuition, and receive academic credit that applies toward the degree requirements. Students only register once for the APE and credit hours are only applied once. If the APE is not completed in one semester, an instructor *may* permit a student to continue the fieldwork for up to two additional semesters until the hours are completed. Continuations beyond one semester are at the discretion of the student's *PHPH/PHPB 7960 MPH Applied Practice Experience* course instructor.

University rules state that no letter grades will be given for the APE course except "S" (satisfactory), "U" (unsatisfactory), or "IP" (in progress). An IP grade indicates that the student is continuing fieldwork for an additional semester. An IP will be assigned for a maximum of two semesters – therefore, hours must be completed within three semesters or student will receive a "U." Using the APE evaluation and in-class progress reporting, the APE instructor will evaluate student work and determine the appropriate grade for the APE period under review.

## APPLIED PRACTICE EXPERIENCE SITES

**Site Selection Criteria.** Exposure of future public health professionals to practice relies to an important extent on the collaboration of a diverse set of public, private, and not-for-profit organizations engaged in public health and other related disciplines. Eligible organizations are those that offer practice settings with the following characteristics:

- Field experiences that are commensurate with the student's concentration;
- Well-defined activities that enable students to apply academic theory in real world situations;
- Engagement of experienced preceptors or APE supervisors as outlined in the learning contract; and
- A work environment, including work space, conducive to successful performance.

**Affiliation Agreement.** A memorandum of understanding (MOU) concerning affiliation of students for applied learning experience, on file at GSU, establishes a formal relationship between the University and the APE organization and articulates the terms and conditions for the APE experience. Each prospective site will be required to enter into an MOU with GSU. Students should check with the practice coordinator to determine if an MOU is already in place or if one must be initiated.

**Preceptor Selection.** Skilled practitioners who are willing to serve as preceptors or APE supervisors represent a critical component of the APE experience. Effective preceptors are those that possess the following qualifications:

- Extensive experience in public health, health care or a related discipline;
- Engaged in work that fulfills the requirements of the APE;
- Experience as a mentor or supervisor;
- Ability to spend the required time with the student; and
- Ability to provide periodic feedback and guidance to the students through formal evaluations, regularly scheduled meetings and other means as described in the learning contract.

Student and preceptor will develop an individualized learning contract using the prescribed form. The parties will work together to fulfill the expectations set forth in the learning contract, which will identify joint responsibilities of the APE project; tangible, measurable learning objectives and competencies to be demonstrated; and available technical and programmatic support to achieve the objectives.

**Student.** In collaboration with the practice coordinator, the Graduate Advisor, and appropriate departmental faculty, students are responsible for the following:

- Identify potential APE sites based on the APE topic, area of specialization, previous experience, career interests, and career goals. The MPH program will provide a list of approved APE sites that offer diverse and effective opportunities. In some instances, students may propose an APE site; it is the student's responsibility to establish contact with that organization, identify a prospective preceptor, and propose the site and specific learning contract to the practice coordinator for review. The APE site can only be approved by the MPH program after a formal agreement has been signed between the MPH program and the respective APE site.



- Develop an APE plan including linking competencies to activities, a timeline, milestones, and final deliverables and secure approval of the plan by the preceptor, instructor, and the practice coordinator. Where indicated, the student’s faculty advisor or a departmental faculty member may be involved.
- Purchase Georgia State University Professional Liability Insurance. The purpose of Professional Liability Insurance is to cover you from alleged mistakes that may occur while you are completing your APE in a place of employment. Students who already have coverage must provide documentation; otherwise, students may purchase insurance for a one-time\* fee of \$13.00 through the GSU web store ([https://secure.touchnet.com/C20797\\_ustores/web/store\\_main.jsp?STOREID=70](https://secure.touchnet.com/C20797_ustores/web/store_main.jsp?STOREID=70)) Provide written progress reports to the preceptor and instructor.
  - Please note that summer APE students may need to purchase two policies, as the policy resets in the summer and the coverage dates may expire before the summer semester ends. All students should note the coverage dates on the policy purchased and purchase a new policy if they complete APE hours beyond their coverage dates.
- Maintain professional conduct such as keeping regular working hours, being punctual and respectful, and following dress codes
- Submit a final APE poster describing the project, activities undertaken, results, findings and recommendations.
- Submit a project highlight with reflection on how the project exemplifies foundation and/or concentration competencies
- Conduct a midterm and final evaluation of the APE experience.

**Practice Coordinator.** The practice coordinator provides overall management of the MPH APE program. In this role, the coordinator, in collaboration with other faculty, is engaged in the following activities:

- Identifies prospective sites in collaboration with MPH faculty
- Facilitates the development of formal agreements between the MPH program and the APE organization
- Serves as the liaison to the program, the student and the organizations formally approved as APE sites
- Provides advice to students regarding site selection, the development of the specific learning contract
- Facilitates any components that accompany the fieldwork

**Applied Practice Experience Sites.** Following the development of a formal agreement, APE sites are expected to accomplish the following actions:

- Identify prospective preceptor(s) who have expertise in the proposed APE topic and will serve as the organization’s representative and mentor for the student
- Allow the preceptor adequate time to serve as a mentor and supervisor
- Provide workspace and other workplace attributes to foster successful student performance
- Provide periodic feedback to the MPH program through formal evaluations, organized meetings etc.

**Preceptor.** Once selected to serve as preceptor, the preceptor’s responsibility includes the following:

- Provide technical and administrative oversight to the student throughout the APE period
- Provide periodic feedback and guidance to the student in writing and through meetings
- Review the student's progress through formal mid-term and final evaluations
- Collaborate with the practice coordinator to address overall project issues

**Instructor.** The *PHPH/PHPB 7960 MPH Applied Practice Experience* instructor:

- Approves APE contract
- Provides orientation to students and preceptors
- Maintains communication with preceptor for duration of APE; mediates any issues that arise
- Tracks student progress, provides feedback and guidance
- Assesses student's performance and assigns grade

### **APPLIED PRACTICE EXPERIENCE EVALUATION**

Evaluation of the MPH APE involves the student, preceptor, instructor, and practice coordinator. Informal evaluations will occur one-on-one with the instructor based on activity summaries and time sheets. Formal evaluation will be conducted through midterm and final evaluations completed by the student and the preceptor. The evaluation will assess student accomplishments or APE goals and demonstration of MPH competencies. The student will also provide feedback on the preceptor and APE site overall.

### **APPLIED PRACTICE EXPERIENCE FORMS**

Forms for APE students and preceptors are available from the Practice Coordinator or on the School's website: <https://publichealth.gsu.edu/graduate-student-resources/practicums/>

**Appendix C**

**Master of Public Health**

**Thesis/Capstone Handbook**

## Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| <u>Overview</u> .....   | 65 |
| <u>What is the difference between a thesis and a capstone?</u> .....  | 65 |
| <u>What is the difference between the capstone discussed in this handbook and the <i>integrative learning experience</i> course capstone?</u> ..... | 66 |
| <u>Choosing a Topic</u> .....   | 66 |
| <u>A Word on Data Analysis</u> .....  | 67 |
| <u>IRB Approval</u> .....   | 67 |
| <u>How many people are on a committee, and how is the committee formed?</u> .....   | 67 |
| <u>Registration for Credit and Timeline to Completion</u> .....   | 68 |
| <u>When should a student begin preparing for thesis/capstone?</u> .....   | 68 |
| <u>How does a student register for PHPH/PHPB 7990 or PHPH/PHPB 7991?</u> .....  | 68 |
| <u>How many semesters does the student have to complete and defend the Thesis/Capstone?</u> .....   | 68 |
| <u>Writing the Paper</u> .....  | 69 |
| <u>Thesis/Capstone Paper Formatting</u> .....   | 69 |
| <u>Suggested Format for Traditional Thesis</u> .....  | 70 |
| <u>Suggested Format for Manuscript Thesis</u> .....   | 70 |
| <u>Suggested Format for Capstone</u> .....  | 71 |
| <u>Student and Committee Roles</u> .....  | 71 |
| <u>Student Responsibilities</u> .....   | 71 |
| <u>Committee Chair Responsibilities</u> .....   | 72 |
| <u>Committee Member Responsibilities</u> .....  | 72 |
| <u>Thesis/Capstone Defense and Receiving a Final Grade</u> .....  | 72 |
| <u>Defense Format</u> .....   | 73 |
| <u>Uploading the Final Paper</u> .....  | 73 |

## Overview

The thesis/capstone, also referred to as the culminating or integrative learning experience, constitutes a significant part of the work toward a Master's degree and is the culmination of all other activities. The thesis/capstone must reflect high standards of scholarly inquiry, technical mastery, and literary skill. It should be a contribution to the student's area of study (concentration) and should reflect the student's independent efforts with guidance from the thesis/capstone committee. All MPH students should be able to describe how their culminating thesis/capstone is an integrative learning experience that demonstrates synthesis of foundational and concentration competencies.

### What is the difference between a thesis and a capstone?

The designation of a student's culminating experience as a "thesis" or "capstone" is determined by the student and committee. In most cases, for a topic to be eligible for a thesis, a student must develop a research question, generate a hypothesis based on existing research about the topic, and then systematically analyze primary or secondary data to determine whether or not the hypothesis is supported. The intent of a thesis should be to generalize the results to a larger population, so adequate data and sample size are paramount.

Some examples of acceptable Thesis titles include:

- *"Characteristics of Disease Transmission, Geography and Risk in an Urban Population with Endemic HIV."*
- *"Changes in Georgia Restaurant and Bar Smoking Policies Between 2006 and 2012."*
- *"An Examination of Attitudinal Differences Between Men Involved in Three Categories of Intimate Partner Violence: Bidirectional, Unidirectional, and No Violence."*
- *"A Comparison of Anthropometric Measures for Classification of Metabolic Syndrome and Cardiometabolic Risk Factors, NHANES 2007-2010."*

A capstone is often more applied in nature, and there is sometimes an end-product that provides some sort of materials, guide, plan, or evaluation that can be used by the community, agency, or group facing the issue or problem at hand. A capstone may or may not involve data analysis, but the objective is not usually to extrapolate the results to a larger population.

Some examples of acceptable Capstone projects include:

- **Grant Proposal/Research Plan:** This capstone should include a clearly defined research question, the specific objectives of the proposal, review of literature, study design, methods of analysis, and implications of the work. The research question should be one that is encountered in professional work such as the evaluation of a public health intervention.
- **Community Assessment:** Student will conduct an in-depth analysis of health factors of a defined population or community of interest.
- **Public Health Program Plan:** Student will design and develop a plan to implement a public health program. Management, fiscal, and ethical factors must be addressed.
  - Students will develop instructions, procedures, and manuals for the program.
- **Community Intervention:** Student designs and implements a community intervention.

- Program Evaluation: Student examines and evaluates the effectiveness and outcomes of a specific program.
- Analysis of a Public Health Problem: Student will conduct an in-depth analysis to assess a public health problem of interest. The capstone must describe the specific problem, its determinants and magnitude, and also include an assessment of the issue. Students are expected to include sections discussing methods of prevention and intervention.
- Video: Student may create a video documenting a public health issue for an organization.
- Comprehensive Resource Directory: Student create an extensive directory of resources related to a public health issue.
- Training Manuals
- Website Development
- Policy Analysis

Other Capstone formats may be acceptable, and these may vary by concentration. Previous student theses and capstones may be found at <http://scholarworks.gsu.edu/iph/>.

### What is the difference between the capstone discussed in this handbook and the *integrative learning experience course capstone*?

Depending on the MPH concentration, a capstone may be completed “independently” with the student working 1:1 with a chosen faculty committee chair or a capstone may be completed within the framework of an integrative learning experience course and instructor. **This handbook speaks to the requirements for the capstone completed independently with the student working 1:1 with a chosen faculty committee chair, where the student registers for the *PHPH/PHPB 7991 Capstone course*.** Students interesting in the requirements of a capstone completed within the framework of a *PHPH/PHPB 7992 Integrative Learning Experience* course should consult the instructor’s syllabus for their chosen *PHPH/PHPB 7992 Integrative Learning Experience* course section.

### Choosing a Topic

The thesis/capstone topic is the responsibility of the student. Normally, students will need to have a reasonably well-defined topic in mind before requesting faculty to chair or serve on their committees. In the thesis/capstone application, students must write a brief statement of their plan and receive approval of the topic before they will be able to register for thesis/capstone credit.

Students should aim to produce novel research or application material. Efforts should be unique and innovative to those in existing research and materials. In other words, there would be no reason to answer a research question that has already been answered, unless there were limitations or other considerations in current studies that would justify the student’s replicating those efforts. Likewise, there would be no reason to conduct a community assessment or public health program just like one that has already been developed, unless there were limitations or other considerations in current assessment or program that would justify the student’s building on those efforts.

Students are encouraged to utilize multiple resources to help generate and define a thesis/capstone topic – i.e., talk with faculty who have experience in the field of interest; conduct informational interviews with public health practitioners and researchers; talk with other students; attend lunch and learns and other SPH research events to learn about public health problems and efforts to

address them; conduct a literature review to highlight gaps in the literature that need to be addressed (many articles name or list areas of needed, future research in their discussion areas, which can provide some very direct suggestions of possible topics).

While students are encouraged to select a topic they are interested in, it should be noted that the choice of a thesis/capstone topic does not necessarily dictate an MPH graduate's career choices (i.e., a capstone that focuses on diabetes prevention does not limit one's career path to those related to diabetes prevention). The thesis/capstone is designed to be a demonstration of skills and knowledge gained from the foundational and concentration courses, including research and critical thinking skills, and all of those skills are translatable among an array of public health careers.

### A Word on Data Analysis

As previously mentioned, the thesis/capstone is a "culminating" or "integrative learning experience." This means that it is intended to be a demonstration of what students have already learned from their MPH classes and articulated in the MPH foundational and concentration competencies.

If the student's topic requires an advanced analysis that the student was not taught during the MPH program of study, the research question or methods will likely need to be modified. **This is not the time for a student to attempt an analysis that the student has never learned and is beyond the scope of the MPH level training.**

Neither the student nor the committee should *rely* on outside faculty (i.e., Biostatistics faculty), GRAs in the Biostatistics lab, or anyone else to conduct the data analysis. **One of the top reasons that a student's defense is delayed is a lack of knowledge and resources for the student's data analysis.**

### IRB Approval

Students participating in human subjects research will need to seek prior approval from the Georgia State University Institutional Review Board:

<http://ursa.research.gsu.edu/ursa/compliance/human-subjects/>. It is highly recommended that students planning to collect primary data submit their application to the IRB as early as possible. Students utilizing secondary data may still need to submit to the IRB, even if it is for exemption, although some publicly available data sets have already been pre-approved:

<http://ursa.research.gsu.edu/ursa/compliance/human-subjects/policy-for-publicly-available><http://ursa.research.gsu.edu/ursa/compliance/human-subjects/policy-for-publicly-available-archival-and-secondary-data/archival-and-secondary-data/>. If a student is utilizing a data set on that aforementioned list, the student does not need any further IRB approval.

Students who are not sure whether or not their research qualifies as human subjects research should consult their faculty committee chair.

### How many people are on a committee, and how is the committee formed?

The thesis/capstone committee is selected by the student. The committee must be comprised of a faculty chairperson and at least one additional member. The faculty chair for a thesis/capstone committee must hold primary faculty appointment in the School of Public Health at GSU, and for thesis committees specifically, the chairperson must hold the designation of "graduate research faculty." A capstone committee chairperson must hold the designation of "graduate research faculty" or "graduate professional faculty." Students should confirm with the faculty chairperson or contact

the Graduate Advisor if they are not sure whether a faculty member has these two designations (primary appointment in the School of Public Health at GSU and the appropriate graduate faculty status).

Together, the student and faculty chairperson will select at least one other committee member. This person should have the appropriate academic preparation and experience relative to the thesis/capstone topic to help guide the student through the process. This person does not need to be a faculty member in the School of Public Health. Practitioners and faculty from other institutions in the field of public health and outside of SPH are welcomed.

The Graduate Advisor and the student's Department Chair must approve the composition of the thesis/capstone committee by signing off on the Thesis/Capstone Application before students are permitted to register for thesis (PHPH/PHPB 7990) or capstone (PHPH/PHPB 7991) credit hours.

## Registration for Credit and Timeline to Completion

### When should a student begin preparing for thesis/capstone?

It is never too early to begin thinking of an appropriate topic. Students are required by the policy outlined in their student handbook to submit a Thesis/Capstone Application to the Office of Academic Assistance & Career Services by the time they have completed 36 credit hours. It is advisable for a student to begin forming their committee and finding a topic no later than midterm of the semester before the student seeks to register for Thesis (PHPH/PHPB 7990) or Capstone (PHPH/PHPB 7991) credit hours.

If the student plans to collect primary data, it is advisable to begin preparing even earlier and possibly submit materials to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) in the semester prior to registering for PHPH/PHPB 7990 or PHPH/PHPB 7991, to avoid delays in degree completion.

### How does a student register for PHPH/PHPB 7990 or PHPH/PHPB 7991?

After the committee and thesis/capstone topic are selected, the student must turn in the completed [Thesis/Capstone Application](#) to the Office of Academic Assistance & Career Services to obtain permission to register. Students can submit the application via e-mail ([publichealthadvising@gsu.edu](mailto:publichealthadvising@gsu.edu)), fax (404-413-1489), or in person (Urban Life, Suite 300).

The student will receive an e-mail to their GSU student email account when the application has been approved and permission to register has been granted. Students must register for a minimum of 3 hours of thesis (PHPH/PHPB 7990) or capstone credit (PHPH/PHPB 7991).

### How many semesters does the student have to complete and defend the Thesis/Capstone?

Students are expected to successfully defend and upload their final documents to ScholarWorks within two academic semesters from the time they first enroll in PHPH/PHPB 7990 or PHPH/PHPB 7991 (including summer). Failure to complete the thesis/capstone within two academic semesters will place the student on academic probation. Failure to complete the thesis/capstone by the end of the third semester may result in a scholastic dismissal from the MPH program.



For students who aim to finish their thesis/capstone in one semester, below is a general suggested timeline:

### Suggested Fall & Spring Thesis/Capstone Approval Timeline

|   |   |
|---|---|
| At least one week before the first day of class | Complete and submit Thesis/Capstone Application.<br><br>Register for PHPH/PHPB 7990 or PHPH/PHPB 7991 once application is approved. |
| Four weeks into the semester                    | First draft due to committee  |
| Seven weeks into the semester                   | Second or final draft due to committee.<br><br>Defense scheduled and announced.   |
| Ten weeks into the semester                     | Final draft due to committee.   |
| At least two weeks before last day of classes   | Thesis/Capstone defense.  |
| Last day of classes                             | Final thesis/capstone approved and submitted electronically.  |

## Writing the Paper

### Thesis/Capstone Paper Formatting

- Formatting style for the thesis/capstone is at the discretion of the student and their committee, and the chosen style must be consistent throughout the paper. Whether the student uses APA, AMA, Chicago-style, etc., is to be determined by the student and their committee.
- Font should be no larger than 12-point, and font choice should be easily readable (Times New Roman and Calibri are both acceptable).
- Use Roman numerals for chapter headings. Ex: Chapter I, Chapter II, etc.
- Margins should be consistent throughout the paper. 1-inch margins all around are suggested.
- Text should be 1.5- or double-spaced.
- There is no officially required paper length, although theses and capstones are rarely less than 35 pages. 35-50 pages is typical.
- Students can find templates for the initial pages (Abstract, Title Page, Approval Page, Acknowledgments, Author's Statement, Table of Contents, List of Tables, and List of Figures) on the [website](#). Look for "Initial Pages for Thesis/Capstone Final Document."

### Suggested Format for Traditional Thesis

The traditional thesis is written in five chapters: Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Results, and Discussion/Conclusion.

**Initial pages.** Use Roman numerals when assigning page numbers to the initial pages, until the body of the thesis begins.

- Abstract not counted or numbered
- Title page: number “i” is assigned but not typed
- Approval page: number “ii” is assigned but not typed
- Acknowledgments optional; if used, it should be listed in the Table of Contents.
- Author’s Statement required, but not numbered.
- Table of Contents may have more than one page
- List of Tables used if necessary
- List of Figures used if necessary

**Body of Thesis.** These pages are numbered with Arabic numerals beginning with “1”. All Chapters must begin on a new page.

- Chapter I – Introduction
  - i. Include the study purpose and research questions
- Chapter II – Literature Review
  - i. Utilize subsections for different topics
- Chapter III – Methods and Procedures
  - i. Include a description of study instrument, recruitment of study participants, ethical considerations (e.g., IRB approval and informed consent process), and methods of data collection and analysis.
- Chapter IV – Results
  - i. List results of data analysis and includes relevant tables
- Chapter V – Discussion
  - i. Include interpretation of results, study limitations, suggestions for future research, and a conclusion
- References
- Appendices

### Suggested Format for Manuscript Thesis

The manuscript format can be used when a manuscript prepared for publication is incorporated as a chapter into the thesis. The manuscript will be prepared according to the guidelines of the journal to which the manuscript will be presented. The student should reach out to their committee for guidance on the manuscript format, as these may vary by concentration.

**Initial pages.** Use Roman numerals when assigning page numbers to the initial pages, until the body of the thesis begins.

- Abstract not counted or numbered

- Title page: number “i” is assigned but not typed
- Approval page: number “ii” is assigned but not typed
- Acknowledgments optional; if used, it should be listed in the Table of Contents.
  - Author’s Statement required, but not numbered.
- Table of Contents may have more than one page
- List of Tables used if necessary
- List of Figures used if necessary

**Body of Thesis.** These pages are numbered with Arabic numerals beginning with “1”. All Chapters must begin on a new page.

- Chapter I – Introduction
- Chapter II – Literature Review
  - Include references at the end of this chapter
- Chapter III – Manuscript in style of journal
- Appendices

### Suggested Format for Capstone

Because Capstones vary so much in their approach, students are not required to utilize the five chapter or manuscript suggested formats (e.g., the traditional format may not appropriate if the student is creating a training manual). However, many students do utilize a suggested thesis format for their capstone, if the chapters are applicable to their approach. To see examples of how the suggested format has been adapted for Capstone papers, please visit

[http://scholarworks.gsu.edu/iph\\_capstone](http://scholarworks.gsu.edu/iph_capstone).

## Student and Committee Roles

### Student Responsibilities

- Select a thesis/capstone topic
- Secure a faculty committee chairperson
- Together, the student and committee chair should select at least one other committee member
- Complete [Thesis/Capstone Application](#) and submit to Office of Academic Assistance for registration authorization
- Submit an application for approval to the university IRB, if applicable
- Stay on track with the committee’s agreed-upon timeline, submitting drafts by their due dates
- Remain in regular communication with the faculty committee chair
- Work with all committee members to find a day/time for the defense (all committee members must be present at the defense in some capacity)
- [Reserve a conference room](#) for the defense
- Complete [Thesis/Capstone Defense Announcement](#) and submit to Office of Academic Assistance
- Bring thesis/capstone [Results of Defense form](#) to the defense for the committee to sign on the day of the defense

- Make any post-defense edits as requested by the committee
- Upload final paper to ScholarWorks to receive a final grade for PPH/PHPB 7990 or PPH/PHPB 7991

### Faculty Committee Chair Responsibilities

- Assess the student's topic and ability to carry out all components of the proposed thesis/capstone. Provide feedback and suggestions for modifications if necessary.
- Guide the student on whether or not IRB approval is necessary, and what kind of approval the student should seek
- Approve the student's additional committee member(s)
- Communicate with the student early in the process so that expectations are clear from the beginning (e.g., How should drafts be submitted to the committee? What kind of turnaround can the student expect on receiving feedback on those drafts?)
- Work with the student and other committee members to establish a realistic timeline for completion, and discuss how the student will be held accountable to the timeline □ Provide timely feedback throughout the semester
- Work with committee members to assess the student's progress and readiness to defend by the defense deadline. **If the committee determines that the student is not adequately prepared to successfully defend, the student should continue their progress in the following semester**
- Attend the defense, complete and sign the Results form, and explain to the student any edits that need to be made before uploading the final document to ScholarWorks
- Approve the final document of the Thesis/Capstone to be uploaded to ScholarWorks
- Complete the competency assessment rubric, in consultation with the committee member(s)

### Committee Member Responsibilities

- Read, advise on, and sign the Thesis/Capstone Application
- Agree upon a realistic timeline for completion, as guided by the committee chair
- Read the student's drafts and provide timely feedback, as guided by the committee chair
- Advise on specific aspects of the Thesis/Capstone in which the committee member has expertise
- Work with committee chair to assess the student's progress and readiness to defend by the defense deadline
- Attend the thesis/capstone defense, sign the Results form, and provide feedback and suggestions for edits to the final document, if necessary
- Provide any input requested by the faculty committee chairperson on the competency assessment rubric

## Thesis/Capstone Defense and Receiving a Final Grade

## Defense Format

Every student who has completed a thesis/capstone will complete a final oral examination of his or her work, also known as the defense. The thesis/capstone can only be defended in the student's final semester of the MPH program.

The student and thesis/capstone committee must agree upon the date, time, and place of the defense. The student is responsible for reserving a conference room for their defense. The reservation form can be found at <https://publichealth.gsu.edu/graduate-student-resources/thesis-capstone-dissertation/thesis-capstone-dissertation-defense-room-request-form/resources/thesis-capstone-dissertation/thesis-capstone-dissertation-defense-room-request-form/>. The student must submit the [Thesis/Capstone Defense Announcement](#) to the Office of Academic Assistance at least one week prior to its administration.

The defense must be attended by all members of the student's committee and will be open to the School of Public Health community (i.e., faculty, staff, and students). For students or committee members who cannot be physically present, Skype or teleconferencing capabilities can be arranged but must be requested ahead of time. In times of social distancing, provisions will be made by the college and university to allow for remote defenses. All remote defense must be approved by the faculty chairperson and comply with current university and local guidelines in place at the time of the defense.

Students should expect to deliver a 30-minute presentation (usually via Microsoft PowerPoint, but other presentation formats are acceptable), covering major aspects of their thesis/capstone, and then allot 30 minutes for questions from their committee and the audience. Since this thesis/capstone is considered a "culminating" or "integrative learning experience," students may also be asked to synthesize their respective MPH foundational and concentration competencies, particularly how they relate (or even do not relate) to their thesis/capstone project. This ensures that the thesis/capstone experience addresses the foundational and concentration-specific competencies.

Following questions, the committee will deliberate privately and then, if appropriate, sign off on the student's [Results of Defense form](#). Most students "successfully present pending revisions," meaning that edits need to be made before the final document can be uploaded.

It is *strongly* recommended that students attend at least one defense before their own to familiarize themselves with the format.

## Uploading the Final Paper

The last step uploading the final version of the thesis/capstone paper to the university's digital library, ScholarWorks. Uploading is mandatory. Detailed instructions will be sent to the student upon receipt of the Results of Defense form. For students who are interested in publishing their work in an academic journal, ScholarWorks offers an embargo option. MPH students can embargo their work for up to a year at a time. The Office of Academic Assistance will automatically be notified when a student has submitted a paper to ScholarWorks. The

Graduate Advisor will approve the submission and assign a final grade for PPHP/PHPB 7990 or PPHP/PHPB 7991.

## **Appendix D**

**Georgia State University**

**Policy on Academic Honesty**

## **Georgia State University Academic Conduct Policies and Procedures**

### **POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY**

All students must follow the most recent version of the Student Code of Conduct, and its academic conduct policies and procedures, including its policy on academic honesty. The most recent version may be found here: <https://codeofconduct.gsu.edu>



## **Appendix E**

**Georgia State University**

**Procedures for Student Complaints, Petitions for Policy Waivers  
& Variances, and Appeals**

## **GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY POLICY PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT COMPLAINTS, PETITIONS FOR POLICY WAIVERS AND VARIANCES, AND APPEALS**

The university provides policies and procedures students, faculty, and staff must follow regarding student complaints, petitions for policy waivers and variances, and appeals. The most recent version may be found here: <https://codeofconduct.gsu.edu>

The School provides avenues for student feedback and communication of student concerns following University policies, published in Graduate Catalog<sup>18</sup> and in the section *Policy Procedures for Student Complaints, Petitions for Policy Waivers and Variances, and Appeals* of the GSU Student Code of Conduct<sup>19</sup>. The above policy outlines the different types of appeals and waivers, and the procedures to follow when making requests at the university-, college- and unit-level. The appeals cover final course grades, admissions, financial aid, course loads, scholastic discipline, course substitutions, and academic regulations.

*Waiver Requests. Students are required to fill out a Student Petition form when requesting a waiver of an established policy and procedure. The form is electronic and is available on the SPH website: <https://publichealth.gsu.edu/office-academic-assistance/forms-resources/>. (see above and linked policies)*

*Student Appeals. The School of Public Health assures all students the right to due process in the appeal of a performance evaluation. This due process provides a way of receiving a fair determination of the School of Public Health Appeals procedure. (see above and linked policies)*

*Student Responsibilities. The student is responsible for stating the basis upon which the student evaluation or grade is questioned and for initiating and maintaining communication and compliance within the framework of the grievance process. (see above and linked policies)*

*Faculty Responsibilities. Each faculty member is responsible for being aware of the student's right of grievance of an evaluation or grade and for providing the student with guidance to initiate the process. The faculty is responsible for maintaining evaluation materials and providing materials necessary to the grievance process. (see above and linked policies)*

*Unit Responsibilities. The School of Public Health will ensure that the student's expected progression through the program is not interrupted during the grievance process. (see above and linked policies)*

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<sup>18</sup> GSU Graduate Catalog Section 1050.80: <http://catalog.gsu.edu/graduate20152016/university-information/#student-complaints-petitions-for-policy-waivers-and-variances-and-appeals>

<sup>19</sup> GSU Student Code of Conduct: <http://codeofconduct.gsu.edu/>

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