

Epidemiology

MPH Degree Program

Division of Epidemiology and Community Health

2008-2009 Student Guidebook

UNIVERSITY
OF MINNESOTA

**School of
Public Health**

Welcome to the University of Minnesota School of Public Health!

All students are responsible for knowing the rules and policies that govern their academic program. To this end, we are providing you with this guidebook which covers your specific academic program requirements. Please keep it with you and refer to it often.

In addition, you are responsible for knowing University of Minnesota and School of Public Health policies and procedures that pertain to all students. Links to these policies/procedures can be found by clicking on the "Current Students" link at www.sph.umn.edu <<http://www.sph.umn.edu/>>

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This publication can be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities. Direct requests to Students Services Center, School of Public Health, MMC 819 Mayo, 420 Delaware St SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455; 612-626-3500 or 800-774-8636; sph-ssc@umn.edu.

School of Public Health Directory

Note: All phone numbers are in area code “612”.

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Student Affairs Office **626-3500** **sph-ssc@umn.edu**
Carol Francis, Asst Director of Student & Acad Services 624-6952 franc004@umn.edu
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Micaela Kucinski, Principal Office and Administrative Specialist 624-7660 kuci0005@@umn.edu
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Division of Epidemiology and Community Health

Division Head – Bernard Harlow, PhD, MPH 626-6527 harlow@umn.edu
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Major Coordinators (general) **626-8802** **epichstu@umn.edu**
Andrea Kish – Senior Coordinator (Clinical Research MS and Epi PhD) 626-9989 kish@umn.edu
Shelley Cooksey – Major Coordinator (Epi MPH and PubH Nutrition MPH) 626-8803 cooks001@umn.edu
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1. DIVISION OF EPIDEMIOLOGY AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

1.1 Welcome

Epidemiology and Community Health is one of four Divisions that make up the School of Public Health at the University of Minnesota. The Division of Epidemiology and Community Health is home to six majors in the School of Public Health:

- Clinical Research MS
- Community Health Education MPH
- Epidemiology MPH
- Epidemiology PhD
- Maternal and Child Health MPH
- Public Health Nutrition MPH

The Division Head is Bernard Harlow, PhD.

The Major Coordinators are here to assist students in the Division. Students are invited to contact any one of them with questions or concerns.

Shelley Cooksey

Andrea Kish

Kathryn Schwartz

E-Mail.....epichstu@umn.edu

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Fax612-624-0315

Campus MailWBOB, #300, Delivery Code 7525

US Mail 1300 South Second Street, Suite 300, Minneapolis, MN 55454

1.2 The West Bank Office Building (WBOB)

The offices are located in the West Bank Office Building (WBOB) at 1300 South 2nd Street in Minneapolis. Students can find directions to WBOB at <http://www.epi.umn.edu/about/directions.shtm>.

Epi Shuttle

Students can travel back and forth between the East Bank campus and WBOB by using the Epi Shuttle. The shuttle route starts on the hour and half- hour at WBOB and travels to the main entrance of the Mayo Building on the East Bank and leaves for the return trip to WBOB at quarter past, and quarter to, the hour. Once each morning and afternoon the shuttle does take a trip to the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). Please check the schedule to see when those trips occur. The schedule will be emailed to students, staff and faculty. The Summer schedule is usually less frequent.

Parking Options for WBOB

- Park on the East Bank and use the EpiCH shuttle.
- Affordable ramp parking (approximately \$5 day) is available across from Guthrie Theatre located just blocks from WBOB.
- Meter parking is available on South 2nd St for \$.50 - \$.75 per hour with a limit of 8 hours. These meters are enforced from 8:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m.
- Parking is also available in the public parking lot attached to WBOB at \$2.50 per hour or portion thereof. This lot is also available after hours, on weekends, and holidays free of charge. The booth is staffed between the hours of 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. Students who will be in WBOB after dark are encouraged to move their car to this lot for security purposes.

Student Mailboxes

Students who have RA and/or TA positions will have mailboxes located near the receptionist on the third floor. Students who do not have RA or TA positions will be able to receive mail in the folders located next to Shelley Cooksey's cubicle (398E). Students who work on campus and have trouble getting to WBOB should email epichstu@umn.edu for alternative ways to get their mail. Student mail can be sent to a campus mail address, but

cannot be sent via regular U.S. Mail. Most information is distributed via e-mail using your U of M student e-mail account.

Forms

We have PDF versions of forms at <http://www.epi.umn.edu/students/guidebook.shtm>. All forms needed for student degree programs are also available on the wall rack outside of cubicle 398B on the third floor of WBOB. Microsoft Word documents of all the forms are also available upon request. Contact the Major Coordinators at epichstu@umn.edu to obtain the Word documents via e-mail.

Evening and Weekend Access

Division graduate students who do not have a paid appointment in the Division can have access to the student computer lab and student mailboxes after work hours and on weekends. Students obtain access by filling out a form to have their UCard programmed for access to the third and fourth floors of WBOB. Students are given the option to sign up for building access at Orientation. After orientation, contact a Major Coordinator for information.

NOTE: There is approximately a one-week turnaround time to get a student's UCard programmed, so please plan accordingly.

Computer Lab

The Division computer lab in WBOB includes four PC's available for student use. The computer lab is located in cubicle 397F, at the north end of WBOB. The general policy for use of these computers is that they are for Division graduate students for work pertaining to their degree program. All four of the computers have SAS and two of them have STATA. Printers are available.

Copier and Fax Access

The Division does not allow copy machines or fax machines to be used for personal use. Personal copies can be made for a cost at various locations throughout campus. Unfortunately, there is not a copier for use in WBOB.

1.3 Division Communication with Students

The Division communicates information to students in the following ways:

- **E-mail:** Students should read their e-mail daily or at a minimum twice a week. We cannot stress enough how important e-mail has become. Communication between the Major Coordinators and students regarding changes in programmatic requirements or announcements, as well as advisor, faculty, and student-to-student contacts is usually through e-mail. Further, the University of Minnesota has expanded technological capacity to allow access to your account for up to five years after your graduate. To keep the account active, you must access it at least every six months. If you let it go dormant, you can reactivate it through the Alumni Association for a fee.
- **My U Portal:** This is a form of communication and information exchange within the University. Students are expected to check their portal regularly. Access to the portal is available at <https://www.myu.umn.edu/>.
- **Weekly SPHere:** A weekly electronic publication for students. This publication contains important deadline reminders as well as updates on students and faculty research and activities.
- **Division Newsletter:** The Division administrative staff produces a more extensive monthly newsletter titled EpiCHNews. EpiCHNews is available on the Epi web site at <http://www.epi.umn.edu/news/epichnews.shtm>
- **Student Mailbox:** All students have access to a mail folder where print materials are distributed; see *section 1.2* for mailbox locations in WBOB.
- **Bulletin Boards:** There is a student bulletin board to the right of the reception desk on the third floor of WBOB.
- **School/University News:** The School of Public Health distributes a monthly electronic newsletter. The University of Minnesota student newspaper is called The Daily and is available campus-wide.

1.4 Seminars

The Division of Epidemiology and Community Health sponsors weekly scientific seminars between September and June to exchange ideas and research findings pertinent to the field. Because the Division has a large faculty, staff and student body, the seminar provides a forum for exchange of information among people who may not otherwise meet or work together. All faculty and students are strongly encouraged to attend regularly.

Division faculty members and other scientific staff are asked to present at least one seminar every two years. Each year, the seminar brings in about 10 scientists from outside the Division.

Weekly notices are posted in the Division's third floor reception area as well as sent out electronically. Most seminars are held 10:00-11:00 a.m., Fridays, in Room 364 of WBOB. Seminars by visiting scientists may be at other times.

Students having questions or comments about the seminar series should contact David Jacobs, Seminar Director, at 612-624-4196. Students can also check the EpiCH Web site for seminar information by going to <http://www.epi.umn.edu/news/seminars.asp>,

1.5 Academic Credit for Independent or Directed Coursework

Independent and directed coursework can be taken to fulfill elective credits and can take many forms depending upon the student's interests and needs. All independent/directed coursework needs the support of a faculty member who agrees to serve as an "instructor/advisor" for the independent or directed course. The expectation is that the student has something specific to propose prior to approaching a faculty member.

To fulfill the course requirements, the student and instructor should agree on the type, scope, and length of a final academic "product" whether it is a paper(s), an annotated bibliography, curriculum, training modules, media piece(s), etc. It is expected that the faculty member and student will meet regularly during the term.

It is very unusual for students to take more than four credits total of independent or directed coursework (over and above any credits earned for the field experience or master's project/thesis requirement). Students are expected to fulfill the majority of their elective credits through regularly-scheduled courses.

Examples of Independent and Directed Coursework

1. Students interested in a theory, an evaluation method, or a skill not covered in depth in a specific course could arrange for an independent study course with a faculty member knowledgeable in that area and/or willing to work with the student.
2. The student wants to attend a conference, workshop, or mini-course, but there is no academic credit involved. The student must find a faculty member willing to work with the student to develop academic work over and above the actual event to fulfill some elective credits. This must be arranged ahead of time, not after the event has occurred.

Additional comments

Arranging an independent/directed course depends upon the student putting together an academically rigorous proposal and finding a faculty member to serve as an instructor. The faculty instructor does not have to be the student's academic advisor or master's project advisor. The instructor must be a member of the major associated with the course number; see below.

The student should also receive prior approval from their academic advisor to count the independent/directed work as an elective course.

Choosing Course Numbers

Independent study, directed study, and readings courses are available within the Division of Epidemiology and Community Health. The student and instructor should agree on the course number/title that most closely matches the work being proposed. Course options are:

- PubH 7091 Independent Study: Community Health Education (only CHE faculty can serve as instructor)
- PubH 7391 Independent Study: Epidemiology (only Epi MPH or Epi graduate faculty can serve as instructor)
- PubH 7392 Readings in Epidemiology (only Epi MPH or Epi graduate faculty can serve as instructor)
- PubH 7691 Independent Study: Maternal and Child Health (only MCH faculty can serve as instructor)
- PubH 7991 Independent Study: Public Health Nutrition (only PubH Nutr faculty can serve as instructor)
- PubH 8392 Readings in Clinical Research (only Clinical Res. graduate faculty can serve as instructor)
- PubH 8393 Directed Study: Clinical Research (only Clinical Res. graduate faculty can serve as instructor)

NOTE: Other majors in the School of Public Health may have independent/directed coursework opportunities in their areas. Check with the Divisions of Environmental Health Sciences, Health Policy Management, and/or Biostatistics. You could also do an independent/directed course with another graduate-level program. Remember that your academic advisor has to approve it as an elective.

Procedures

1. Student meets with the faculty member to discuss the requirements for the independent/directed course.
2. Student fills out an *Independent/Directed Study Contract* form outlining the requirements for the course and has the form signed by their academic advisor and Independent/Directed Study instructor. This information is vital to receive proper credit for this course (i.e., a grade). The instructor needs to agree to work with the student and both need to agree on the requirements. The form can be downloaded from the web at <http://www.epi.umn.edu/students/guidebook.shtm>.
3. Student gives the completed/signed *Independent/Directed Study Contract* to a Major Coordinator. She then enters in electronic permission enabling students to register for the course.
4. At the end of the semester, the instructor assigns a final grade. The grade will then be entered on the official transcript. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that all requirements are completed so a grade can be submitted.

1.6 Division Resources and Policies

Incomplete Grades

For MPH students, all required courses (with the exception of field experience, internship, or master's project/thesis credits) must be completed during the term of registration. Students must complete all course requirements by the end of the registered term so that faculty can submit a grade by the appropriate due date. A grade of incomplete "I" shall be assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances, the student was prevented from completing the work of the course on time. The assignment of an incomplete grade requires a written contract between the instructor and student specifying a deadline by which the student will complete the course requirements. The student must contact a Major Coordinator to receive the required contract. In no event may the written agreement allow a period of longer than one year to complete the course requirements. If the instructor submits an "I" without a written contract a hold will be placed on the student record, barring the student from registering. If the requirements of the contract are not met by the contract deadline, a hold will be placed on the student's record unless a new deadline has been renegotiated. Field experience, internship, and master's projects that are not completed by the end of the term of graduation will receive a grade of "K" indicating "work in progress."

PhD Students only: The symbol "I" may be assigned by an instructor to indicate "incomplete," in accordance with the provisions announced in class at the beginning of the semester, when in the instructor's opinion there is a reasonable expectation that the student can successfully complete the work of the course. An "I" remains on the transcript until the instructor replaces it with a final A-F or S-N grade. Course instructors are encouraged to establish a time limit for the removal of incomplete grades.

Six Credit Minimum Exemption

The University of Minnesota has a policy that students must register for a minimum of six credits in order to hold a graduate assistant position. The policy states that "exemption from [this requirement] is determined on a semester by semester basis" and that "eligibility criteria are to be determined by each graduate program...these criteria will be well publicized and administered equitably among all Graduate Assistants in the program."

The Division Training Committee (DTC) approved the following policy: "Students will almost always be granted a one semester exemption so they can finish their work toward the end of their degree program, but must petition the DTC for more than one semester's exemption and this would be given under only extraordinary, extenuating circumstances. Extending coursework in order to remain a graduate assistant will not be sufficient reason." Students who wish to request an exemption should contact Andrea Kish. It may take several weeks for this request to be reviewed so please submit your request at least one month prior to the start of the term.

Graduate Assistants who wish to be exempt from FICA withholding must register for at least three credits per term (one credit for PhD candidates working on a dissertation).

Sitting in on a Class

Students are not permitted to attend a class for which they are not registered. This means that if you are unable to register for a class before it begins for any reason you may not attend the class.

Support for Student Travel

The current Division policy is as follows:

1. The Division will provide up to \$800 per student in a 12 month period [a maximum of \$3,200 available for all students during the fiscal year] for travel to a scientific meeting under the following conditions:
 - The student is currently enrolled in the Epi PhD/MS/MPH, CHE MPH, MCH MPH, PubH Nutr MPH, or Clinical Research MS program and must be the presenter of the paper or poster.
 - The meeting is at a national or international level and has scientific relevance to the student's field of study.
 - There are no other sources of support specifically allocated for such travel. For example, whenever a training grant provides funds for travel for its fellows, those fellows will not be eligible for travel support under this policy. However, students whose work was supported by a research grant with no funds specifically for student travel will be eligible for travel support under this policy. Principal Investigators are encouraged to provide support for student travel from their grants since their grants benefit as well as the students.
2. All requests for travel support must be in writing. The request should be addressed to the Chair of the Division Training Committee and given to a Major Coordinator, who will process the request. The request should include:
 - The dates, location and purpose of the meeting and describe the student's role.
 - A copy of the abstract and letter of acceptance must be attached to the request. In addition, a letter from a member of the Division's faculty indicating that he/she is familiar with the student's work, judges it to be of good quality, and supports the student's request.
 - The request must be made in advance of the scientific meeting. Since the DTC only meets once per month, it is suggested that complete requests be submitted at least six weeks prior to the scientific meeting.
 - A summary of the travel expenses (cost of air fare, hotel price, registration fees, etc).
3. Allocations under this policy will of course be subject to the availability of funds for this purpose.

Payment for TA English Program

If a nonnative English-speaking Division student is required by their degree program to fulfill a teaching assistantship position (i.e. Epidemiology PhD students), the Division will pay one-half the cost of instruction the first time the student takes the course (the University's Office of Academic Affairs pays the other half). Students not passing the exam must pay the costs of any additional instruction.

SAS Access

Students can purchase the SAS program for a fee if it is necessary for them to complete research. Additional information on ordering the software is available <http://www1.umn.edu/adcs/site/sasWinMac.html>. Please note that all 4 of the computers in the student computer lab (397F WBOB) have SAS.

One computer (the one furthest to the East) has the SAS Learning Edition 4.1 (an easy to use personal learning tool). The book, The Little SAS Book for Enterprise Guide 4.1 is a guide to a point-and-click interface that is part of the Learning Edition. Using Enterprise, you generate SAS code without writing it. It is available for checkout from Laurie Zurbey, in cube 398C.

For additional help with SAS, you can schedule an appointment with Judy Baxter, an experienced SAS programmer. Judy is available a few days a month and sends out a monthly schedule of the exact days via email to all current students with instructions on how to schedule an appointment. You may contact Judy at baxte003@umn.edu.

J.B. Hawley Student Research Award

The Division has established the J.B. Hawley Student Research Award, a small grant mechanism to support research projects. This is a wonderful opportunity for students and post-doctoral fellows to obtain funds for their research, gain experience in grant proposal writing, and receive faculty feedback on their ideas. During the academic year, we will have two separate award categories. The standard award is open to all students and post-doctoral fellows; we anticipate two rounds of requests for proposals (one per semester). The doctoral award is only open to doctoral students in Epidemiology; we anticipate one request for proposals in the fall semester. The chair of the Research Awards Committee will distribute an e-mail announcement with further details.

STANDARD AWARD

Who May Apply?

Students currently enrolled in degree programs in Epidemiology, Community Health Education, Maternal and Child Health, Clinical Research, or Public Health Nutrition or post-doctoral fellows in Epidemiology. Proposed projects do not have to be thesis or masters projects, and may be for any research that involves the applicant (e.g., evaluation of a program for a field experience). Those who have received previous funding from a Hawley Award will not be eligible for further support until they have submitted the required one-page report for their prior award (see below).

How Much?

\$3,500 maximum, including fringe benefits when applicable.

How Can It Be Used?

The award may be used to support research activities including supplies and equipment. It cannot be used for stipends or salary support for the applicant.

Please note that before making any expenditure with the award (i.e., ordering, purchasing, hiring, or contracting for services) the applicant must meet with accounting personnel in the Division to ensure that procedures are followed.

How Long?

Normally projects are funded for one year.

What is the Format for the Proposal?

1. Cover Letter
Please indicate in the letter whether the project will help support a master's project, master's thesis, PhD thesis, or field experience.
2. Face Page (1 page)
 - a. Title
 - b. Investigator information, including name, address, telephone, and e-mail address
 - c. Collaborating investigators (faculty, staff, students), if any
3. Research Proposal (4 pages maximum; font: 12-point Times or larger)
 - a. Background and Significance (1 page maximum):
Describe the background and justification for the study and state the research questions/hypotheses.
 - b. Research Methods (2 pages maximum):
Describe the study design and detailed methods. Be sure to include information on each of the following issues (and others, as appropriate):
 - Study population
 - Sample selection and recruitment
 - Measurements
 - Data analysis plan (required for both quantitative and qualitative research)
 - Timeline
 - Sample size (justified by formal statistical calculations or other means)
 - c. Human Subjects (no page limit):
All proposals must address protection of human subjects and have the project approved by the University of Minnesota's Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to receiving funds. However, a project will be reviewed by the Research Awards Committee prior to receiving final IRB approval.
4. Detailed Budget (1 page maximum):
The proposed budget should include precise amounts requested in various categories (e.g., postage, supplies, printing, personnel, etc.). Provide a brief justification for the amount requested in each category and state why these funds are needed to conduct the proposed research. The budget should clearly itemize and justify expenditures. If the request is part of a larger project, the proportion to be supported by this award and the rationale and need for this funding mechanism, should be specified clearly.

The following items are NOT allowed: computer purchase, publication costs (e.g., page charges, reprints), and presentation costs (e.g., travel to a conference, conference fee).
5. Letter of Support from Faculty Advisor (1 page):
A primary or adjunct faculty member in the Division of Epidemiology and Community Health must provide a brief letter to accompany the proposal, specifically endorsing the applicant's request. Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their proposals with a faculty advisor, who should review the proposal before it is submitted.
6. Appendices, if needed (no page limit)

Submission

Submit your proposal to the Chair of the Research Awards Committee (TBA), Division of Epidemiology and Community Health, Suite 300, 1300 South Second Street, Minneapolis, MN 55454-1015

Review Process

All applications will be reviewed by the Division of Epidemiology and Community Health Research Awards Committee, which includes faculty members representing the major fields. Each proposal will be evaluated according to its scientific and technical merits and public health implications.

If you have questions regarding preparation of a proposal, please contact the Chair of the Research Awards Committee Chair. Information regarding the status of human subjects (IRB) applications must be provided to the Committee. Award funds will not be released until Division of Epidemiology and Community Health Accounts Administration has received notification of Human Subjects Committee approval.

Final Report

A one-page report to the Research Awards Committee on progress and outcome is due on the one-year anniversary date of the award.

DOCTORAL AWARD**Who May Apply?**

Students currently enrolled in the doctoral program in Epidemiology. Proposed projects do not have to be thesis projects, and may be for any research that involves the applicant. Those who have received previous funding from a Hawley award will not be eligible for further support until they have submitted the required one-page report for their prior award (see below).

How Much?

\$7,000 maximum, including fringe benefits when applicable. There will be one award available in 2007-08.

How Can It Be Used?

The award may be used to support research activities including supplies and equipment. It cannot be used for stipends or salary support for the applicant.

Please note that before making any expenditure with the award (i.e., ordering, purchasing, hiring, or contracting for services) the applicant must meet with accounting personnel in the Division to ensure that procedures are followed.

How Long?

Normally projects are funded for one year.

What is the Format for the Proposal?

The Chair of the Research Awards Committee will distribute an e-mail announcement with detailed instructions.

Submission

Submit your proposal to the Chair of the Research Awards Committee (TBA), Division of Epidemiology and Community Health, Suite 300, 1300 South Second Street, Minneapolis, MN 55454-1015

Review Process

All applications will be reviewed by the Division of Epidemiology and Community Health Research Awards Committee, which includes members of the graduate faculty. Each proposal will be evaluated according to its scientific and technical merits and public health implications.

If you have questions regarding preparation of a proposal, please contact the chair of the Research Awards Committee Chair. Information regarding the status of human subjects (IRB) applications must be provided to the Committee. Award funds will not be released until Division of Epidemiology and Community Health Accounts Administration has received notification of Human Subjects Committee approval.

Final Report

A one-page report to the Research Awards Committee on progress and outcome is due on the one-year anniversary date of the award.

Other Division Awards and Scholarships

The Division of Epidemiology and Community Health also has several other awards that are granted each year:

- The **Colleen Berney Scholarship** is given to an incoming first-year student in the Maternal and Child Health major who has demonstrated a strong academic background and an interest in child welfare. The scholarship consists of a \$2,000 award.
- The **Henry Blackburn Award** recognizes the writing and presentation of scholarly work among students in the Master's programs within the Division. The recipient of the award will receive a certificate and a check for \$1,000.
- The **Lester Breslow Award** is awarded to a public health student(s) pursuing a graduate degree in the Division of Epidemiology and Community Health who has demonstrated academic excellence in the area of health promotion and disease prevention. The recipient of the award will receive a plaque and a check for \$1,000.
- The **Betty J. Hallstrom Award** is awarded to a graduating nurse in the Maternal and Child Health major who had demonstrated research competence by completing a project in an MCH area and has displayed innovative and creative planning for MCH care. The recipient of the award will receive a certificate and check.
- The **Marguerite J. Queneau Research Assistantship** (25% appointment for one year) is awarded to incoming public health nutrition students who portray the characteristics of Marguerite Queneau, a nationally and internationally accomplished nutritionist.
- The **Ruth Stief Award** recognizes a current Public Health Nutrition student for her/his leadership qualities, academic excellence and potential for an exemplary career in public health. The recipient of the award will receive a certificate and a \$500 check.
- The **Ruth Stief Research Assistantship** (25% appointment for one year) is awarded to incoming public health nutrition students.
- The **Henry Taylor Scholarship** is awarded to help support the expenses of students who are attending the American Heart Association Council on Epidemiology. Students presenting papers at this conference are encouraged to apply for this financial support. One student will be selected to receive a \$400 stipend to attend this meeting.
- The **Robert ten Bensel Scholarship** is awarded to a full-time incoming Maternal and Child Health student that has demonstrated leadership, human equity, and social justice in MCH.

Research Grants

An up-to-date listing of current and pending grants is available upon request, or at <http://www.epi.umn.edu/research/index.asp>.

Division of Epidemiology and Community Health Student Support Policies

Doctoral Student Support Policy, for those matriculating Fall 2003 or later

1. Students can be accepted to the program with varying levels of support including no guaranteed support, guaranteed support for the initial year, or support for multiple years.
2. Support levels will be set at the level of an NIH Pre-Doctoral Fellow or, if not an NIH Fellow, not more than 50% RA/TA position. This means that those who accept a pre-doctoral fellowship may not also accept an RA or TA position in the Division. Scholarship or block grant awards are not included.
3. Students on fellowships perform their TA requirement as part of the fellowship, with terms to be negotiated with the training director.
4. Requests may be made to the DGS for levels of RA/TA support up to 75% for students who have passed their preliminary examinations and are working on their thesis. These requests are required to show that such additional work does not delay the thesis defense and graduation.
5. Physicians who are licensed to practice medicine in the United States will have an RA/TA stipend set at the doctoral level. Those who are not licensed to practice will be paid at the Masters level RA/TA position stipend.
6. There is no limit on the number of years of support; however, adequate progress toward degree completion is required for continued support.
7. Students may increase support to 75% during the Summer term.
8. This policy only applies to positions held within the Division. For example, a student with a 50% research assistantship in the Division would also be able to hold a 25% research assistantship in the Medical School.

Approved 7/1/03, revised 06/08

Doctoral students matriculating prior to Fall 2003 should see a Major Coordinator to discuss their student support policy.

Master's Student Support Policy

No one may hold a graduate assistantship of more than 50% (75% in the Summer) in the Division of Epidemiology and Community Health. Adopted 12/17/03, and applies to students matriculating Fall 2004 and after. This policy only applies to positions held within the Division. For example, a student with a 50% research assistantship in the Division would also be able to hold a 25% position in Medical School because that is not in the Division.

Policy for Graduate Assistant Pay Scale for Post-Baccalaureate Professional Students

Post-baccalaureate professional students in doctoral-level programs (e.g. dental, medical, law, veterinary students) who have completed two years of their professional studies will be paid at the rate of those who have completed a master's degree. Those who have not completed the first two years will be paid at the rate of those whose highest degree is a bachelor's degree. This policy is effective beginning Spring semester, 2004. Adopted 12/17/03.

Division of Epidemiology and Community Health Websites

EpiCH website.....	http://www.epi.umn.edu
EpiCH Student Guidebook and Forms.....	http://www.epi.umn.edu/students/guidebook.shtm
EpiCH course grid.....	http://www.epi.umn.edu/students/coursegrid.shtm
Course syllabi.....	http://www.epi.umn.edu/students/syllabi.shtm
Job Tip Sheet.....	http://www.epi.umn.edu/students/pdf/jobtipsheet.pdf
EpiCH faculty information.....	www.epi.umn.edu/people/index.asp
EpiCH seminar.....	http://www.epi.umn.edu/news/seminars.asp
EpiCH telephone directory.....	http://www.epi.umn.edu/people/index.asp
Grant writing information.....	http://www.epi.umn.edu/support/grants.shtm

1.7 Division Advising Information

Guidelines for Faculty/Student Interactions

Faculty members often develop close working relationships with students, especially advisees. Often a relationship is formed that provides benefits to both the faculty member and the student. Faculty should be cognizant of the power differential in these types of relationships and set appropriate boundaries. Although faculty members may not intend that a request of a student be an obligation, they should be aware that such requests might place a student in a difficult position. Some students are intimidated by faculty members and may not feel free to decline such requests. Since faculty/student interactions often are situations that are ambiguous, included below are examples to help you think through a variety of situations that you may encounter:

- **Asking a student to drive you somewhere, including the airport, home, or main campus.** Such a request does not fall under a student's duties. A situation when this may be acceptable is when the student has the same destination.
- **Asking student to work extra hours or late hours.** Students should be expected to work the hours for which they are paid. Students may volunteer to work extra hours to gain more experience (e.g. grant writing), gain authorship on a paper or help meet a deadline – but you should not expect a student to work these extra hours.
- **Asking an advisee to housesit, take care of your children or pets, or help you move.** While some students may not mind house sitting, taking care of children or pets, or helping someone move, others may only agree to do these jobs because they feel obligated or worry that saying no will somehow affect their relationships with faculty members. To avoid problematic situations, a faculty member may post a flyer requesting a sitter or mover for pay without the faculty member's name attached to the request – ensuring that respondents really want the job.

Faculty members who are uncertain about the appropriateness of requests they have for students should consult with the DTC Chair. Students should talk with their Major Chair, DGS, or Major Coordinator if they have concerns about the appropriateness of requests from faculty members.

The University of Minnesota's Board of Regents policy on Nepotism and Consensual Relationships (including student and faculty relationships) can be found at www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/humanresources/Nepotism&Personal.html.

Confidentiality

Student records—including materials related to advisees—are protected under Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99; 1974) and the Student Data Privacy Act. Student information should be secure – not left in an unlocked location. If advisors have a concern about a particular student, only student support staff, appropriate Major Chair/DGS, or DTC Chair should discuss the situation and have access to records. Any confidential information shared by a student with a faculty member must remain confidential – whether the student approaches you as an advisor, instructor, Major Chair, DGS, or DTC Chair. Talking about individual students in hallways and other public areas should be avoided.

If a faculty member feels he/she must consult with another faculty member about a student, consider talking about the issue without providing the name of the individual student. If the student's name must be shared, tell the student ahead of time that you intend to talk with the Major Chair (or other appropriate person) about the issue in question. Some issues, such as sexual harassment, are governed by law and require faculty members to report the problem to the Division Head. In these situations, explain to the student that you are required to report the incident/problem.

Guidelines for Changing Advisors

Master's Students

At the master's level, students may change academic advisors if they have serious personality or other conflicts with their assigned advisor. In that case, they should discuss their reasons and their preferences for a different advisor with the program chair. The program chair will then consult with both faculty members (new and old advisors) to obtain agreement before approving the change. The program chair will notify the Division Major Coordinators of the change.

PhD Students

Many PhD students shift their courses of study and focus over their graduate careers, but doing so does not necessarily require a change in advisors. Faculty advisors can facilitate students' academic development, by working directly with them or by encouraging them to gain experience with other faculty members (e.g., through research or teaching assistantships or grant-writing opportunities). Sometimes students work more closely with one (or more) members of their committees than with their advisors. Faculty advisors can also suggest changes in committee membership to accommodate a change in dissertation focus.

Once PhD students have begun work on their dissertation, changing advisors should be rare, and limited to circumstances of personality conflicts, major ethical problems, or substantial shifts in areas of interest. Students wishing to change graduate advisors should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). Likewise, faculty who are considering a change in their role as an advisor should consult with the DGS. Changes in graduate advisors should be approved by the DGS and forwarded to the Division's Major Coordinators who will file the change with the Graduate School.

Student Guide to Mission, Definitions and Expectations of Advising

Mission Statement

The School of Public Health strives to provide advising that promotes collaboration among students, staff and faculty to enhance students' academic and professional development in the field of public health. The School's goal is educational and experiential excellence that prepares students for successful careers improving the health of populations.

Defining Advising

The School of Public Health is committed to creating and sustaining high quality advising in the following four areas:

1. **Administrative Advising:** advising on course planning and scheduling, policies, procedures and benchmarks of the degree program/major, SPH, and the University.
2. **Academic Advising:** general guidance on topics related to program/major including, but not limited to program focus (may include identifying appropriate course work options), project selection and career planning.
3. **Field Experience/Internship/Practicum Advising:** specific and targeted advising for field experience/internship/practicum development, placement and completion.

4. **Masters Project/Thesis/Plan A&B/Dissertation Advising:** specific and targeted direction on a master's project or a PhD dissertation including, but not limited to development, completion and in some cases publication.

Advising Expectations for Students

SPH students are expected to...

- Regularly read and respond to University email (ideally once per day); email is the official mode of communication at the University of Minnesota
- Review program objectives and educational documents at least once per semester, (i.e. Student Guidebook, etc.), or when directed by major coordinator or major chair/DGS; students are responsible for knowing the requirements of the degree program
- Actively contribute to a welcoming and supportive SPH climate
- Initiate meetings with advisor(s) at least once per semester; regularly communicate with faculty advisor(s) and/or major coordinator about program progress
- Respond to inquiries from faculty or staff in a timely manner (ideally within 5 – 7 business days)
- Behave in a professional and courteous manner; fulfill educational and advising commitments, such as appointments, project deadlines, etc.

Faculty Guide to Mission, Definitions and Expectations of Advising

Mission Statement

The School of Public Health strives to provide advising that promotes collaboration among students, staff and faculty to enhance students' academic and professional development in the field of public health. The School's goal is educational and experiential excellence that prepares students for successful careers improving the health of populations.

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4. **Masters Project/Thesis/Plan A&B/Dissertation Advising:** specific and targeted direction on a master's project or a PhD dissertation including, but not limited to development, completion and in some cases publication.

Advising Expectations for Faculty

Faculty advisors are expected to...

- Refer advisee to Major Coordinator for course planning/scheduling, policy and procedural information
- Review program objectives and educational documents at least on an annual basis, (i.e. Student Guidebook, etc.), or when directed by major coordinator or major chair/DGS
- Actively contribute to a welcoming and supportive SPH climate
- Initiate meetings with advisee at least once per semester; regularly communicate with students on program progress
- Respond to student inquiries in a timely manner (ideally within 5 – 7 business days)
- Provide reasonable office hours and/or appointments and be generally available to student inquiries; communicate with students about extended absences or travel
- Serve as a model and example of respectful behavior
- Provide referrals to school and university resources when appropriate (e.g. Student Mental Health Services)

1.8 Division Courses 2008-2009

Number	Title	Credits	Offered	Instructor(s)
60xx	Obesity and Eating Disorders: Treatment, Prevention & Policy	2.0	Spring	Pereira/French
6000	Topics: E-Public Hlth: On-line Interventions	3.0	Fall	Rosser and Others
6015	HIV/AIDS: Epi & Pub Hlth Interventions	2.0	Fall	Rosser
6020	Fundamentals of Social and Behavioral Science	3.0	Fall	T. Nelson
6020	Fundamentals of Social and Behavioral Science (web course)	3.0	Fall/Spring /Summer	Multiple Instructors
6034	Program Evaluation For Public Health Practice	3.0	Spring	Harwood
6035	Applied Research Methods	3.0	Fall	Hennrikus
6040	Dying and Death in Contemporary Society	2.0	Spring	Rothenberger
6045	Skills for Policy Development	1.0	Spring	Toomey
6049	Legislative Advocacy Skills for Public Health	3.0	Spring	Forster/Toomey
6050	Community Health Theory and Practice I	3.0	Fall	Lytle
6051	Community Health Theory and Practice II	3.0	Spring	Toomey
6055	Social Inequalities in Health	3.0	Spring	Jones-Webb
6060	Motivational Interviewing	1.0	May '09	Patterson
6066	Building Communities, Increasing Health: Preparing for Community Health Work	2.0	Fall	Axtell
6074	Mass Communication and Public Health	3.0	Spring	Ijzer
6078	Public Health Policy as a Prevention Strategy	2.0	Spring	Forster
6080	Seminar: Policy/Politics/Ethics of PubH Decision Making	2.0	Spring	Humphrey
6085	Prevention and Control of Tobacco and Alcohol Problems	3.0	Fall	Jones-Webb
6301	Fundamentals of Clinical Research	3.0	Fall	Luepker/Hirsch
6303	Clinical Research Project Seminar	2.0	Spring	Luepker/Thomas
6305	CR: Introductory Seminar for Health Professionals	2.0	Spring	Luepker
6309	Clinical Research Career Development	1.0	Fall/Spring	Luepker
6320	Fundamentals of Epidemiology (web course)	3.0	Summer	Anderson
6320	Fundamentals of Epidemiology	3.0	Fall	Lazovich
6320	Fundamentals of Epidemiology (web course)	3.0	Fall/Spring	Punyko
6325	SAS Programming for Data Management	1.0	Fall/Spring (January)	Oakes
6333	Human Behavior I	2.0	Fall	Lytle
6334	Human Behavior II	2.0	Spring	Hennrikus
6336	Adv. Seminar in Infectious Disease Epidemiology	1.0	Fall	Ehresmann
6341	Epidemiologic Methods I	3.0	Fall	Flood/Spector
6342	Epidemiologic Methods II	3.0	Spring	Pankow/Munoz-Zanzi
6343	Epidemiologic Methods III	4.0	Fall	Duval/Schreiner
6344	Epidemiologic Methods IV	2.0	Fall	Steffen/Yuan
6348	Writing Research Grants	2.0	Fall	Luepker/Harlow
6355	Pathophysiology of Human Disease	4.0	Fall	Oberg/Crow
6360	Obesity & Eating Disorders: Etiology/Epidemiology	2.0	Fall	French
6363	Community Trials	3.0	Spring	Oakes/Hannan
6381	Genetics in Public Health	2.0	Fall	Demerath
6385	Epidemiology and Control of Infectious Diseases	2.0	Spring	Lifson
6386	Public Health Aspects of Cardiovascular Disease	2.0	Fall	Folsom

6387	Cancer Epidemiology	2.0	Spring	Anderson
6389	Nutritional Epidemiology	2.0	Fall	Harnack
6390	Topics: Social Epidemiology	2.0	Spring	Oakes
6600	Topics: Global Reproductive Health	2.0	Fall	Hellerstedt
6605	Reproductive and Perinatal Health	2.0	Spring	Hellerstedt
6606	Children's Health: Issues, Programs & Policies	2.0	Summer	Oberg
6606	Children's Health: Issues, Programs & Policies (web course)	2.0	Spring	Oberg
6607	Adolescent Health: Issues, Programs & Policies	2.0	Spring	Hellerstedt
6617	Practical Methods – Secondary Data Analysis	3.0	Fall	Oakes
6627	Sexuality Education: Criteria, Curricula, & Controversy	1.0	Fall/Spring	Bretl/Turnham
6630	Foundations of Maternal and Child Health Leadership	3.0	Fall	Oberg
6634	Advocacy and Children's Rights	2.0	Spring	Oberg
6650	Community-Based Participatory Research	1.0	May	Hellerstedt/Call
6655	Principles and Programs in MCH (web course)	2.0	Summer	Patterson
6673	Grant Writing for Public Health	1.0	May	Toomey
6901	Public Health Nutrition: Principles & Programs	2.0	Fall	Stang/Story
6902	Maternal and Infant Nutrition	2.0	Fall	Stang
6902	Maternal and Infant Nutrition (web course)	2.0	Summer '09	Stang
6903	Child and Adolescent Nutrition	2.0	Fall	Story
6904	Nutrition and Aging	2.0	Sum	TBD
6905	Human Nutrition and Health	2.0	Fall	Nelson, M.
6906	Global Nutrition	2.0	Spring	Himes
6910	Critical Review of Research in Public Health Nutrition	1.0	May	Pereira
6914	Community Nutrition Intervention	3.0	Spring	Neumark-Sztainer
6915	Nutrition Assessment	2.0	Spring	Himes/Harnack/Gross
6933	Nutrition and Chronic Diseases	2.0	Spring	Robien
6945	Child/Adolescent Obesity	1.0	May	Stang/Nelson, M.
8377	Seminar: Chronic Disease and Behavioral Epi	1.0	Fall/Spring	Jacobs/Harlow

2. EPIDEMIOLOGY MPH DEGREE PROGRAM



2.1 Fall 2008 Program Curriculum

- Standard Program [48 credit minimum]
- Accelerated Program [42 credit minimum] for students who have a prior-earned doctoral level degree

Guide to Curriculum Notes

Some courses have very specific grade and grading basis requirements. For this reason, please pay close attention to the following notes.

- ① Epidemiology MPH students must take these courses on an A-F grade basis.
- ② Epi MPH students must earn a minimum grade of B- in the following courses: 6341, 6342, 6343, 6344, 6450 and 6451. Students who get less than a B- in these courses are required to repeat the course and cannot graduate until they earn at least a B-. The Major Chair of Epidemiology may override this rule based on evidence of exceptional circumstances, such as illness or family emergencies.

Epidemiology Courses [18 credits]				
Course	Notes	Title	Offered	Credits
PubH 6341	① ②	Epidemiologic Methods I	Fall	3
PubH 6342	① ②	Epidemiologic Methods II	Spring	3
PubH 6343	① ②	Epidemiologic Methods III	Fall	4
PubH 6344	① ②	Epidemiologic Methods IV	Fall	2
PubH 7394		Epidemiology Master's Project Credits (see section 2.6)	Any Term	2
PubH 7396		Field Practice: Epidemiology (see section 2.5)	Any Term	2
<i>Choose one of the following:</i>				
PubH 6385	①	Epidemiology and Control of Infectious Diseases	Spring	2
PubH 6386	①	Public Health Aspects of Cardiovascular Disease	Fall	2
PubH 6387	①	Cancer Epidemiology	Spring	2
Biostatistics Courses [8 credits]				
PubH 6450	① ②	Biostatistics I	Fall	4
PubH 6451	① ②	Biostatistics II	Spring	4
Public Health Core [8 credits]				
 Note: Courses designated as part of the Public Health Core must be taken for a letter grade (A/F) 				
PubH 6020		Fundamentals of Social and Behavioral Science	Fall/Spring/Summer	3
PubH 6101 or PubH 6102		Environmental Health Issues in Environmental and Occupational Health	Fall/Spring Spring/Summer	2 2
PubH 6741 or PubH 6742		Ethics in Public Health: Professional Practice and Policy Ethics in Public Health: Research and Policy	Fall/Spring/Summer Fall/Spring/Summer	1 1
PubH 6751		Principles of Management in Health Services Organizations	Fall/Spring/Summer	2
Basic Science Course [4 credits]				
Not required for students with a prior-earned doctorate in a health-related discipline. Nurses or other health professionals may be exempt; see <i>section 2.4</i> .				
PubH 6355		Pathophysiology of Human Disease	Fall	4
Electives [8-10 credits]				
10 credits required for the standard program. 8 credits required for the accelerated program.				

Recommended Competency Areas and Electives

Table 1. Summary of competency areas/skills that guide the Epidemiology MPH curriculum and courses that address these competency areas.

I. Descriptive Epidemiology		
Competency Area Skills	How Acquired	How Measured
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce descriptive epidemiology of a given condition • Calculate measures of incidence, morbidity and mortality • Calculate measures of excess risk • Make appropriate comparisons by person, place and time • List strengths and limitations of descriptive data • Identify data from existing national and international sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PubH 6341, 6342 • Field experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examinations • Assignments (exercises and papers) • Field experience preceptor assessment
II. Biology		
Competency Area Skills	How Acquired	How Measured
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe models of disease etiology and control • Describe pathophysiology of major diseases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PubH 6341, 6342, 6355 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examinations • Assignments (exercises and papers)
III. History of the Discipline		
Competency Area Skills	How Acquired	How Measured
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe general history of epidemiology • Recognize major epidemiologic studies of selected diseases • Identify major chronic and infectious diseases, leading causes of death • Recognize importance of epidemiology for informing scientific, ethical, economic and political discussion of health issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PubH 6341, 6342, 6387, 6385, 6386 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examinations • Assignments (exercises and papers)
IV. Principles of Screening and Surveillance		
Competency Area Skills	How Acquired	How Measured
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe conditions suitable for population screening • Evaluate validity and reliability of screening tests • Recognize types of bias that affect validity of screening evaluations • Describe study designs for evaluation of effectiveness of screening • List types of surveillance systems and approaches used in disease surveillance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PubH 6341, 6342, 6343 • Field experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examinations • Assignments (exercises and papers) • Field experience preceptor assessment
V. Problem Conceptualization		
Competency Area Skills	How Acquired	How Measured
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search the literature • Review and critically evaluate the literature • Synthesize available information • Make appropriate causal inferences from available information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PubH 6341, 6342, • Other courses that require literature reviews • Field experience • Master's project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examinations • Assignments (exercises and papers) • Field experience preceptor assessment • Master's project

VI. Study Design		
Competency Area Skills	How Acquired	How Measured
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe each study design Understand the advantages and limitations of each study design, including practical aspects of their use and trade-offs Select the most appropriate and efficient design for a specific problem Calculate sample size Identify and minimize sources of bias Describe the direction and magnitude of bias and effect on measures of association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PubH 6341, 6342, 6343 Field experience Master's project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examinations Assignments (exercises and papers) Field experience preceptor assessment Master's project
VII. Data Collection and Monitoring		
Competency Area Skills	How Acquired	How Measured
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify instruments appropriate for the research question Identify presence and magnitude of measurement error Monitor the conduct of data collection Design and assess quality assurance and control measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PubH 6342, Field Experience Master's project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examinations Assignments (exercises and papers) Field experience preceptor assessment Master's project
VIII. Data Analysis		
Competency Area Skills	How Acquired	How Measured
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use statistical computer packages to calculate and display descriptive statistics Analyze categorical data Perform multivariate regression Examine data for confounding and effect modification, and handle appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PubH 6343, 6344, 6450, 6451 Field experience Master's project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examinations Assignments (exercises and papers) Field experience preceptor assessment Master's project
IX. Interpretation		
Competency Area Skills	How Acquired	How Measured
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpret research results Make appropriate casual inferences based on results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PubH 6341, 6342, 6343, 6344, 6450, 6451 Field experience Master's project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examinations Assignments (exercises and papers) Field experience preceptor assessment Master's project
X. Communication		
Competency Area Skills	How Acquired	How Measured
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate research results orally and in writing to scientists and non-scientists Present data in tabular and figure formats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PubH 6343, 6344 Field experience Master's project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examinations Assignments (exercises and papers) Field experience preceptor assessment Master's project

XI. Ethics		
Competency Area Skills	How Acquired	How Measured
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand concepts of human subjects protections and confidentiality • Apply this understanding as evidenced in design and conduct of research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PubH 6742 • Field experience • Master's project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examinations • Assignments (exercises and papers) • Field experience preceptor assessment • Master's project

Sample Electives

5000-level or greater in courses related to health science or statistics; courses at the 4000-level may be allowed as electives but there are specific guidelines related to their approval. Contact a Major Coordinator **prior** to registering for a 4000-level elective. See *section 2.2* for more information.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public Health [PubH]
Including coursework in epidemiology, biostatistics, environmental health, health services research and policy. Note: Due to content overlap, Division students taking both 6325 and 6420 may only use one of the courses for degree credit. Due to the content overlap, Epi MPH students cannot use PubH 6320 as an elective if they are taking PubH 6341 ▪ Veterinary Medicine, Graduate [VMed] ▪ Health Informatics [HInf] ▪ Educational Psychology [EPsy]
Methods courses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Statistics [Stat] ▪ Philosophy [Phil]
Philosophy of science courses ▪ Biochemistry (BioC) ▪ Writing Studies (WRIT) ▪ Molecular, Cellular, Dev Biology and Genetics [MCDG] ▪ Genetics, Cellular and Developmental Biology [GCD] ▪ Microbiology [MicB] ▪ Microbiology, Immunology and Cancer Biology [MICa] |
|---|--|

2.2 Other MPH Degree Requirements

Public Health Core Area Requirements

Students working towards an MPH degree must satisfy competency requirements in the six core areas of public health – administration, behavioral science, biostatistics, environmental health, epidemiology, and ethics – by completing one of the following in each core area:

- Satisfactorily pass one of the pre-approved courses in the core area (see pre-approved course list below); OR
- Pass an equivalency exam in the core area. OR
- Pass an advanced course in the core area as approved by the respective division head or the Educational Policy Committee, OR
- Complete a graduate level course, with a grade of B or better, at an accredited university or college that meets the competencies defined by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). The School of Public Health Educational Policy Committee, upon petition of the student, will determine acceptance of a course for transfer.

Pre-approved Courses Meeting Public Health Core Area Requirements

Administration

PubH 6751 Principles of Management in Health Services Organizations – 2 cr.

Behavioral Science

PubH 6020 Fundamentals of Social and Behavioral Science – 3 cr.

Biostatistics

- PubH 6414 Biostatistical Methods I – 3 cr.
- PubH 6415 Biostatistical Methods II – 3 cr.
- PubH 6450 Biostatistics I – 4 cr.
- PubH 6451 Biostatistics II – 4 cr.

Environmental Health

- PubH 6101 Environmental Health – 2 cr.
- PubH 6102 Issues in Environmental and Occupational Health – 2 cr.

Epidemiology

- PubH 6320 Fundamentals of Epidemiology – 3 cr.
- PubH 6341 Epidemiologic Methods I – 3 cr.

Ethics

- PubH 6741 Ethics in Public Health: Professional Practice and Policy – 1 cr.
- PubH 6742 Ethics in Public Health: Research and Policy – 1 cr.

Registration Requirement

Students are required to register for at least 2 semesters and 15 credits in the School of Public Health.

Course Numbers and Graduate Credit

5xxx, 6xxx, 7xxx and 8xxx-level courses are considered graduate-level. 1xxx and 3xxx-level courses are for undergraduates and will not receive approval for graduate credit. Under some circumstances – with approval of the student's Major Chair – 4xxx-level courses may also be applied toward a MPH degree as long as they are taught by a member of the graduate faculty.

SPH Grading Policies

Grade Point Average

Students must achieve a cumulative grade point average of no less than 3.0 (B) across their entire program to receive an MPH degree.

S-N Grade Option

MPH students may take no more than 20% of their coursework on an S-N grading basis, exclusive of those topics, seminars, and field experience courses offered only on an S-N basis.

Public Health Core Courses

Courses designated as part of the public health core must be taken for a letter grade (A-F). Students will be required to achieve no less than a B- grade in each course taken on an A-F basis. Students may retake public health core courses at their own expense until they achieve a grade of B- or better. However, a retaken course may be counted only once toward degree requirements in the student's study plan.

Each public health major may require higher levels of achievement for its own students in public health core courses that are also core to the major. This may include restrictions on retaking public health core courses that are also core to the major, or requiring more than a B- performance level. Students should consult their Major Coordinator for documentation of these requirements.

Field Experience

All students matriculating in a MPH program must complete a formal, supervised fieldwork experience; see *section 2.5*.

MPH Study Plan

Students are required to submit a completed MPH Study Plan to their Major Coordinator at least one semester prior to their anticipated completion of coursework. Earlier submission (e.g. in the second to last semester) is suggested to allow the Major Coordinators to review the study plan and notify students if they are missing any requirements prior to their last term of study.

Master's Project

MPH students must complete a master's project, demonstrating familiarity with the tools of research or scholarship in the major, the capacity to work independently, and the ability to present the results of the investigation effectively; see *section 2.6*.

Comprehensive Examination

MPH students must complete a written and/or oral examination as specified by the major; see *section 2.6*.

Time Frame

The maximum time allowed by the School of Public Health for completion of an MPH degree is seven years. The seven year period begins with the first term of enrollment after admission to a degree program within the School.

Course Transfer Credits

Effective with students entering the program in Fall 2007, a student may seek transfer of no more than 40% of their total graduate or professional program credits taken at the University of Minnesota or at another college or university prior to the MPH program matriculation. Course credits may be used to satisfy public health core or other program requirements as jointly approved by the Major Chair and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. No course credits older than 5 years from the date of the student's matriculation will be accepted for transfer. A grade of "B" or better is required for each course requested for transfer credit.

MPH students who have completed graduate-level coursework at the University of Minnesota or another college or university may petition to transfer those courses toward their MPH degree. To be considered for transfer, graduate level coursework must have been taken at an accredited graduate institution. Students must:

1. Meet with their academic advisor to discuss the petitioning process. If the petition is acceptable to the advisor, the student will complete and sign the *Petition* form, and attach an official transcript on which the final grade has been posted.
2. Submit the *Petition* form to the Major Coordinator for processing. The *Petition* form can be found at <http://www.epi.umn.edu/students/guidebook.shtm>

The Major Coordinator will forward the petition to the Major Chair and then to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for final evaluation and/or approval.

Course Substitutions and Waivers

All student requests that deviate from the degree curriculum requirements outlined in this Guidebook must be made on a *Petition* form. The *Petition* form can be obtained at <http://www.epi.umn.edu/students/guidebook.shtm>.

Students should note that the process for approving a course substitution or waiver could take up to one month, so plan accordingly.

Course Substitution Procedures:

The following process should be followed when requesting that a course substitute for a required course in the degree program.

1. Gather the course syllabi of the required course in your degree program and the proposed substitute course and a transcript on which the proposed course grade has been posted (if the proposed course has already been completed).
2. Complete the *Petition* form with the following information in each section:
 - REQUEST SECTION: describe the course requested for substitution including the course title, number of credits, term and year taken, and the name of the institution where the course was taken. Also list the course/requirement in your degree program for which you are asking for the substitution.
 - REASON/EXPLANATION SECTION: Indicate what skills and/or content overlaps between the required course(s) and the proposed substitute course(s).
3. Compile the above materials and have the request reviewed by your academic advisor. He/she will complete the Department section of the *Petition* form and indicate whether or not they approve of the request.
4. After the advisor has made his/her recommendations, the student should submit these materials to the Major Coordinator who will forward it to the appropriate Credentials Committee for review. The student will be notified via e-mail of the committee's decision.

- If the substitute course is to replace a School of Public Health Core course (administration-PubH 6751, behavioral/social science-PubH 6020, biostatistics-PubH 6414/6450, environmental health-PubH 6101/6102, epidemiology-PubH 6320/6341, ethics-PubH 6741/6742), there is an additional step to get School level approval. To complete this next step, provide two additional copies of the above materials. All of those materials should be submitted to your Major Coordinator. Upon receipt of those materials, the Major Coordinator will review the request with the Major Chair and then if approved by the Major Chair, all copies of the request will be forwarded to Guy Piotrowski to be presented to the appropriate SPH Educational Policy committee members. The student will be notified by Guy Piotrowski via e-mail of the committee's decision. If the Major Chair does not approve of the request, the Major Coordinator will inform the student that the request will not be forwarded to the SPH Educational Policy Committee for review.

Application for Degree

MPH students are required to complete an *Application for Degree* form. There are strict deadline dates before a student can be cleared for graduation. You must turn in the form by the end of the first business day of the month in which you want your degree cleared. Copies of this form can be obtained from <http://www.epi.umn.edu/students/guidebook.shtm>.

2.3 Standard Sample Schedules

Students are strongly encouraged to meet with their academic advisors each term prior to registration. Doing so will ensure that you are on track for graduation and will ensure that any complications are resolved in a timely manner.

Note: Part-time schedules are available upon request from one of the Major Coordinators. Careful planning must be considered when attending part-time to make sure courses that are sequential in nature are taken in the appropriate order. Contact a Major Coordinator at gradstudies@epi.umn.edu for assistance with your schedule.

Full-Time Standard Program Option [48 credits]

Fall Semester I

Course	Title	Credits
PubH 6101	Environmental Health (1 st half semester)	2
PubH 6341	Epidemiologic Methods I	3
PubH 6355	Pathophysiology of Human Disease	4
PubH 6450	Biostatistics I	4
PubH 6751	Principles of Management in Health Service Organizations (2 nd half semester)	2

Spring Semester I

PubH 6342	Epidemiologic Methods II	3
PubH 6451	Biostatistics II	4
	2 Elective Courses	4

May or Summer Session I

PubH 7396	Field Experience	2
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Fall Semester II

PubH 6020	Fundamentals of Social and Behavioral Science (on-line or in-class)	3
PubH 6343	Epidemiologic Methods III	4
PubH 6344	Epidemiologic Methods IV	2
PubH 6386	Public Health Aspects of Cardiovascular Disease*	2

Spring Semester II

PubH 6742	Ethics in Public Health: Research & Policy (online course)	1
PubH 7394	Master's Project: Epidemiology	2
	3 Elective Courses	6

* This course is only one of three options

Full-Time Accelerated Program Option [42 credits]

Fall Semester I

Course	Title	Credits
PubH 6101	Environmental Health (1 st half semester)	2
PubH 6341	Epidemiologic Methods I	3
PubH 6450	Biostatistics I	4
PubH 6751	Principles of Management in Health Service Organizations (2 nd half semester)	2
	2 Elective Courses	4

Spring Semester I

PubH 6342	Epidemiologic Methods II	3
PubH 6387	Cancer Epidemiology*	2
PubH 6451	Biostatistics II	4
PubH 6742	Ethics in Public Health: Research & Policy	1
	1 Elective Course	2

May or Summer Session I

PubH 6020	Fundamentals of Social and Behavioral Science (on-line)	3
PubH 7396	Field Experience	2
	1 Elective Course	2

Fall Semester II

PubH 6343	Epidemiologic Methods III	4
PubH 6344	Epidemiologic Methods IV	2
PubH 7394	Master's Project: Epidemiology	2

* This course is only one of three options

2.4 Waiver Request for Pathophysiology of Human Disease

Students with a prior-earned doctorate in a health-discipline are not required to take PubH 6355 Pathophysiology of Human Disease and do not need to request an exemption. The following procedures apply for students wishing an exemption from the course. It is the student's responsibility to:

1. Request the waiver at least two weeks prior to the start of the term the course is taught; and
2. Provide the Major Coordinator, Shelley Cooksey, with a copy of the syllabus (syllabi) of the course(s) already taken with equivalent content. The student also must supply a copy of their transcript(s). If the transcript was part of the application packet, the student can ask a Major Coordinator to make a copy. Shelley will forward the syllabus (syllabi) and transcript(s) to the course instructor(s) for approval.

The instructor(s) will then review the course packet to verify that previous course work fulfills the learning objectives for Pathophysiology of Human Disease. If, upon inspection, the instructor affirms the course content is similar, he/she will grant the waiver and provide the Major Coordinator with documentation for the student's file either approving or rejecting the request for exemption.

The granting of an exemption from 6355 does not reduce the total number of credits required in the student's program. However, it allows the student to take other elective credits.

Note: PubH 6355, Pathophysiology of Human Disease, is taught Fall semester. The deadline to provide materials to Shelley Cooksey is Friday, August 8, 2008.

2.5 Field Experience

Goals

School policy requires all MPH students to complete a supervised field experience consisting of at least 90 hours. The purpose of the field experience is to provide students with the opportunity to practice and apply their epidemiological knowledge and skills in a practice-based setting. The goals of the epidemiology field experience are to apply epidemiologic skills in the following areas:

1. Review scientific literature
2. Assist with proposal development
3. Design data collection forms
4. Collect epidemiologic data
5. Create databases/enter epidemiologic data
6. Analyze epidemiologic data
7. Write scientific reports
8. Participate in other community-based public health activities where epidemiologic skills are needed

The field experience must involve a project with defined objectives and evaluation criteria. The field experience should complement the epidemiology training and therefore must be done after completion of Epidemiologic Methods I and II. Students must develop a plan for the field experience with the consent of their academic advisor. For some students, the field experience may include aspects of study design and/or data collection and management. For other students with experience in data collection and management, it may be desirable to choose a field experience with greater emphasis on data analysis or grant preparation. However, **the field experience must be independent from the master's project and can not be started until the contract has been approved.**

Field Experience Requirements

1. A member of the Epidemiology MPH faculty must agree to act as the student's faculty field experience advisor. This faculty member need not be the student's academic advisor or master's project advisor. The Epidemiology faculty member can be either primary or adjunct faculty; see *section 2.9* for a list of faculty.
2. The site preceptor, who will supervise the field experience, must be an epidemiologist or other public health professional approved by the academic advisor, the faculty field experience advisor, or the Epidemiology Major Chair. The site preceptor does not have to have a doctoral level degree but should have at least a MPH or equivalent level degree. For example, someone in a Health Department who has an Epidemiology MPH could be the field preceptor. The site preceptor must be outside of the University of Minnesota.
3. The field experience must consist of at least 90 hours. Students must register to receive graduate credits (90 hours equals two semester credits). Depending on the length of the experience (i.e., more than 90 hours) and the faculty field experience advisor's evaluation of the scope of the work, an additional 1-3 credits (up to a maximum of five credits) may be earned. These additional credits can be applied to the total credit requirement for the MPH degree, resulting in a net reduction of elective credits needed to complete the degree. Students must register under PubH 7396: Field Experience. This course is graded on an S-N basis only. Students will be allowed to register **after** they have submitted a complete *Field Experience/Internship Contract* (see *How To Register below*).
4. Timing of the field experience is flexible. However, because the intent is to reinforce concepts learned in the classroom, **students must complete their first full year of coursework (the epidemiology and biostatistics core sequences) before beginning the field experience.** Students may wish to consider summer session as the most feasible period in which to complete the field experience requirement due to the time involved.
5. The responsibility of arranging for the field experience rests with the student. Although a paid field experience is permitted, students should not expect such arrangements as the norm.
6. If permission from the Human Subjects Committee (Institutional Review Board) is necessary based on the proposed field experience work scope, the student must secure such permission before beginning. The faculty field experience advisor should be consulted for direction.
7. Although students are responsible for arranging their own field experience, there are a number of resources available to help:
 - Epidemiology faculty;

- The School of Public Health Career Center;
- The School of Public Health Alumni Society;
- The Minnesota Department of Health (<http://www.health.state.mn.us/>);
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<http://www.cdc.gov/>);
- American Cancer Society (<http://www.cancer.org/>);
- American Heart Association (<http://www.americanheart.org>).
- Students who are interested in opportunities outside Minnesota are encouraged to network with Health Department officials in their hometowns, or in areas in which they eventually hope to work. International field experience is allowed;
- There are additional opportunities to work with local health-related industries, including managed care organizations, hospital research units, and other industries with a health emphasis.

How to Register and Complete the Field Experience

1. Identify a faculty advisor. The faculty field experience advisor must be a Epi MPH faculty member but does not have to be your academic advisor (see *section 2.9* for a list of faculty members eligible to serve as a faculty field experience advisor).
2. Once a potential placement has been identified, the student should make contact with the organization to identify and define a specific project or area, time commitment, and a site preceptor.
3. The *Field Experience/Internship Contract* form must be completed on-line, approved (with electronic signatures) by all parties and submitted to the Major Coordinator. The form is available at: <http://www.ahc.umn.edu/sphfieldexp/>. The contract must be submitted on-line before students will be given information on how to register and be eligible to begin the field experience. Once the signed *Field Experience/Internship Contract* form is submitted on-line, a Major Coordinator will contact the student via e-mail with specific registration information for PubH 7396.
4. Certain facilities are required by Minnesota law to submit paperwork for a criminal background check for all personnel with direct, unsupervised client contact. If their field experience, master's project, or dissertation is in such a facility, students may be asked by the institution to submit paperwork.
5. Some agencies may ask students to sign agreements concerning confidentiality of data or other data practices. This may be especially true in those settings where students will have access to personal identifiers.
6. Upon completion of the field experience the student and the site preceptor are required to submit an evaluation form on-line via the SPH Field Experience Portal at <http://www.ahc.umn.edu/sphfieldexp/>. Once the evaluation forms have been reviewed by the faculty advisor a grade change will be submitted.

Relationship Between Field Experience and Master's Project

The master's project and field experience should represent separate activities, though they may be related. The master's project should involve more independent work than the field experience. A master's project could evolve from a field experience with an organization, but should be defined separately; the same work cannot be counted for both. If they are related, careful consideration must be given in wording the contract to differentiate the requirements of the field experience from the master's project.

We suggest that students do an internship at one organization, and their master's project with a different organization. While it is not required, doing them with different organizations has several advantages. It gives the student an insight into two organizations, expands the number of people the student can use for future references for jobs, and increases the number of places they may turn for job opportunities.

2.6 Master's Project

Purpose

The purpose of the master's project is to enable students to demonstrate:

- Familiarity with the tools of research and scholarship in the field of Public Health;
- The ability to work independently;
- The ability to plan and carry out a systematic investigation related to a public health issue; and

- The ability to effectively present, in written form, the results of their investigation.

Project Options

The master's project for students in the Epidemiology MPH program may take one of three forms:

- A written report, often in the form of a manuscript suitable for publication in a peer-reviewed journal, that demonstrates the student's ability to do quantitative analyses, utilizing data collected by the student or obtained from another source. This option is chosen by the vast majority of students.
- A literature review, of publishable quality, which demonstrates the student's ability to critically review the literature and synthesize published findings on a medical or public health topic.
- A grant proposal to the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Students who have never done quantitative analysis outside of normal coursework are strongly encouraged to do a written report that includes quantitative analysis. Examples of quantitative analysis projects might include the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data collected by the student, or secondary analysis and interpretation of data collected by a research project within the Division or data from a public access source such as NHANES.

Examples of literature reviews include those articles published in epidemiologic review journals and other peer-reviewed journals. A review should follow guidelines for systematic review as developed by the following groups:

- Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews <http://www.cochrane.org/resources/handbook/>
- Human Genome Epidemiology Network(HuGENet)Handbook of Systematic Reviews http://www.genesens.net/intranet/doc_nouvelles/HuGE%20Review%20Handbook%20v11.pdf
- World Cancer Research Fund/American Institute for Cancer Research Systematic Literature Review Specification Manual http://www.wcrf.org/research/research_pdfs/slr_manual_15.doc

An excellent example of a systematic review:

Flodmark CE, Marcus C, Britton M. Interventions to prevent obesity in children and adolescents: a systematic literature review. *Int J Obesity* 2006; 30:579-589. PMID: 16570086

A grant application that includes a literature review and/or quantitative analyses also could serve as a master's project.

Choosing a Topic

When choosing a topic, students should seek a balance between interests, project feasibility, and skills to be gained.

- Interest in the topic: the project requires independent effort and self-motivation. Students who have a strong interest in the topic they choose will be more likely to complete the project in a timely fashion.
- Feasibility (availability of data, timeline): it is reasonable to expect that the project will require at least a full semester to finish (see timeline below), but there is substantial variability. For example, projects that require primary data collection may take longer to complete. Before embarking on the project, students and advisors should be aware of any potential factors that may slow or delay the project.
- Skills required or to be gained: The masters project is both a learning opportunity and an opportunity to demonstrate mastery of core competencies in epidemiology. It may provide an opportunity to develop new skills that may be useful in a career as an epidemiologist and public health professional.

Finding an Advisor/Project

All students must have a faculty advisor to guide and approve the steps in the masters project process. This project advisor does not have to be the same person as the student's academic advisor. However, the project advisor must be an Epidemiology MPH faculty member; see *section 2.9* for a list of eligible faculty.

Because of the extensive time commitment involved in advising masters projects, it is suggested that students seek a match of academic interests, community contacts and/or personal compatibility with a project advisor. It may take several months to identify a project advisor and topic that provide a good match for the student's interests and goals. Students who do not have someone in mind by the time they are ready to write the proposal should discuss potential project advisors with their academic advisor, the Major Chair, fellow students and/or the Major Coordinators.

Students can expect their project advisor to: (A) Be available, with reasonable advance notice, for consulting with the student at all stages of the project; (B) Review and approve all project protocols and methods; and (C) Provide guidance about the format and content of the final product.

There are a variety of strategies that students might use to find a project and project advisor.

- Find faculty working in your area of interest: make an appointment with a faculty member who may share your interests or introduce yourself to faculty who provide guest lectures in courses that you are taking.
- Identify research projects in your area of interest: There are many ongoing research projects both in and outside the Division that might provide the opportunity that you are seeking.
- Identify topics in connection to a research assistant position: Many students who have the opportunity to work as a research assistant are able to develop a research question within the context of a study with which they are working.
- Seek help from your academic advisor: Your advisor may be able to put you in touch with individuals working in your area of interest.
- Utilize the MPH Project Directory: This directory is on the Division of Epidemiology and Community Health web site at <http://www.epi.umn.edu/academic/pdf/mphprojectdir2007.pdf>. This document is updated each year and provides a list of primary and adjunct faculty with ongoing research that might lend itself to a masters project. If you are interested in working with someone who is not primary or adjunct faculty for the Epidemiology MPH program, be sure to discuss it with the major coordinator or major chair.

When a faculty member agrees to serve as the project advisor, the student should complete and submit the **Masters Project Approval Form**. Students must have this form approved and submitted to Shelley Cooksey, Major Coordinator before they can start work on their masters project. Students will not be allowed to register for PubH 7394 Masters Project: Epidemiology until this form is turned in to Shelley.

Authorship

Choosing a topic that may lead to a publishable paper is a potential benefit for both the student and the faculty members who work with them. Although not all projects will result in a publication, it is a good idea for students and project advisors to discuss authorship issues early in the process, preferably before embarking on the project.

Issues that should be discussed include:

- Publications procedures and policies that may exist for a given study
- Whether or not the student will be first author on the paper submitted for publication
- Expectations regarding co-authorship for members of the masters project committee
- Expectations regarding co-authorship for study investigators not on the masters project committee
- Whether or not the student will be responsible for submitting the paper to a journal, making revisions and handling responses to reviewers, and reviewing proofs
- Expectations for timely submission to a journal and contingency plans if timelines are not met

Forming the Master's Project Committee

The examination committee must include at least three faculty members:

1. The master's project advisor, who must be an Epidemiology MPH faculty member, will chair the committee.
2. The student's academic advisor must be the second member, and that person is always an Epidemiology MPH faculty member as well. If the academic advisor is also the master's project advisor, then the second committee member must be another Epidemiology MPH faculty member.
3. The third faculty member on the committee must be from "outside" the student's major--this is a School of Public Health policy. The third member can have either a primary or official adjunct appointment with the University, but the third faculty member cannot be an Epidemiology MPH faculty; see *section 2.9* for a list of faculty. If they are not on the list but have a University faculty appointment, they are eligible to be the "outside" member. Once the initial committee membership is put together, the student is strongly encouraged to check with the Major Coordinators to confirm the faculty members' roles. Note that exceptions are rare, and usually only given for adjunct faculty if the student exhausts all other possibilities. An Epidemiology MPH faculty with a primary appointment can never serve as an "outside" member.

Working with the Project Advisor and Committee

It is important for students to develop a strong working relationship with their committee and to keep them updated on their progress. To ensure that the process goes smoothly, student should consider the following:

- Reach an agreement with the project advisor on the appropriate scope and amount of work for the project before beginning the project.

- Meet with each committee member to learn about his/her expectations for the masters project. For example, some members will expect to review interim data analyses or early drafts of the written document. Others may wish to wait until there is a relatively polished version of the document to provide feedback.
- Get approval of methods section and data tables from all committee members before writing the results and discussion
- Allow sufficient time PRIOR to the 2-week deadline for oral exam to get comments from committee members so that revisions can be made; plan for multiple revisions.
- Recognize that the masters project is not ready to defend until the committee says it is ready.

Costs Associated with the Master's Project

Students are responsible for costs associated with completing their master's projects. These costs are sometimes offset in part by the organization with which the student is working. Funds may also be available from Division of Epidemiology and Community Health by applying for the J. B. Hawley Student Research Award; see *section 1.6*. Students who choose the data analysis project option may find the research project with which they are associated can cover the costs of their project. There are also resources available for statistical computing. The Division of Epidemiology and Community Health will provide MPH, MS and PhD students working on research projects free access to the Division's research computers. This policy is addressed to those students who need computer access for faculty-sponsored research that is part of their Master's or PhD project. The following rules apply:

- A sponsoring faculty member should initiate access for the student and specify the time period that the access is needed.
- Access beyond the initial time period is renewable at the request of the faculty member and subject to approval by the Computer Resources committee.
- To be courteous, the student should run only one job at a time.
- The computer may not be used for other coursework.
- This access is limited to the main research computers and does not necessarily include exclusive use of a PC or Mac (the student is assumed to need access to the specialized analysis software only available on the Epi main system).
- Any problems should be reported to the faculty sponsor, not the computer support staff or the Major Coordinators.

Human Subjects Information

All students at the University of Minnesota who conduct any research using human subjects are required to submit their research proposal to the University of Minnesota Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval prior to conducting their study. The approval process can take up to two months. This time must be accounted for when developing the proposal timeline. No contacts with potential or actual study participants, including recruitment or other research, may occur until final IRB approval. Please consult with your project advisor for information on IRB procedures.

Timeline

Although there are no formal data on the length of time students have taken to complete their masters project, experience indicates that they should plan for a minimum of one semester (four months). The actual length of the project will depend on a number of factors, including:

- Type of project: Projects requiring primary data collection, substantial data management activities, or sophisticated data analyses may require more time.
- External factors beyond student's control: Projects may be delayed because students have to obtain approval from parent study administrators, wait for access to data, or work around faculty schedules.
- Student's level of motivation and discipline
- Other obligations such as coursework, jobs, family, etc.

Students are generally too optimistic about the amount of time it will take to complete their project. It is best to be conservative and plan by working backwards from expected finish date. Here are some reasonable timelines for some of the important milestones, although the length of each step varies substantially, depending on the project:

- Finding project and project advisor (2-3 months)
- Reading research literature to determine research questions (1-2 months)
- Obtaining human subjects approval (1 month)

- Obtaining parent study approval, if necessary (1 month)
- Obtaining and preparing data set for analysis (1-2 months)
- Conducting analyses (1-2 months)
- Writing first draft of document (1-2 months)
- Obtaining feedback from committee members and making revisions (usually repeated multiple times) (1-2 months)
- Distributing final project to committee members (at least 2 weeks before oral exam)

Project Outline

There is no mandatory format for writing masters projects. Many take the form of manuscripts prepared for publication; a grant proposal would follow the specific format required by the NIH. Copies of former students' master's projects are located near cubicle 398E on the third floor of WBOB. Students may browse through these but cannot take them from the student study area. A list of master's project titles is available on-line at www.epi.umn.edu/academic/mstrproj.shtm.

A written report usually includes four main sections: introduction, methods, results, and discussion. Journals often place strict word or page limits on articles submitted for publication. By contrast, the masters project has no upper page limit and may be longer than a standard published article because students need to provide enough detail to convince their committee members that they have thoroughly reviewed the literature, understand the methods that they have used, and have conducted a systematic data analysis. A random survey of masters projects recently submitted for the epidemiology MPH found that the median length excluding references, tables, figures, and appendices was 20 pages, double spaced, with a range of 13-44 pages.

For projects reporting results from observational research, guidance on format and content can be found in the Strengthening the Reporting of Observational Studies in Epidemiology (STROBE) statement: guidelines for reporting observational studies (*Epidemiology* 2007; 18: 800-804).

The Introduction often includes:

- Statement of the problem
- Brief summary of evidence to date
- Gaps in evidence to be addressed by project
- Statement of purpose of project or hypotheses

Common subsections of the Methods include:

- Study description
 - Design of parent study, if applicable
 - Study design for project research question, if different from parent study design
- Description of participants
 - How identified and recruited
 - Response rates
 - Inclusions/exclusions
 - Final sample size
- Data Collection procedures
 - Methods of data collection
 - Types of data collected
- Definition of exposure/confounders/outcome
- Description of statistical analysis

The Results section typically provides:

- Basic description of study participants (e.g., Table 1)
- Description of results of each analysis

The Discussion usually will:

- State main findings

- Compare findings to current literature
- Discuss limitations and how limitations could affect interpretation of results
- Provide conclusions about contribution of project to current state of evidence

Writing

Many students have little experience with technical writing and find completing the masters project paper to be a greater challenge than previous writing activities, such as term papers or other academic exercises. Students should consider the following tips:

- Break the writing into manageable parts, e.g., by focusing on one section at a time. For example, some epidemiologists will first decide on the content and format of tables and figures, then write the results, methods, introduction, and discussion, in that order.
- Create a reasonable plan for writing: don't expect to be able to draft the whole document in one session.
- Keep track of ideas for the discussion section: Because the discussion is often the last section written, it is helpful to develop a list of discussion points that can be expanded later.
- Use active rather than passive tense
- Do not worry about perfection on the first draft, but make the best use of the committee's time by allowing them to focus on the science of the project and not forcing them to correct pervasive spelling, grammatical, and formatting problems. The project advisor is a good guide as to when the document is ready to distribute to other committee members.
- Follow-through on revisions provided by committee members: Committee members will become frustrated if they think that the student is ignoring their comments and suggestions.
- Avoid use of jargon; write in plain English

Study plan

- Students need to complete Part I (pages 1 & 2) of the *Study Plan* at least one semester before completion of their coursework. The form can be found at www.epi.umn.edu/academic/handbook.shtml.
- Part II of the *Study Plan* (page 3) can be left blank and will be filled in by a Major Coordinator upon completion of the degree program.
- Turn in the completed *Study Plan* to Shelley Cooksey (cubicle 398E WBOB), who will then review it to account for all degree requirements.
- Students are strongly urged to keep a copy of their *Study Plan* for their own files.

Scheduling the oral examination

- Students are responsible for scheduling the oral exam with their committee members. Because faculty have busy schedules, it is best to do this well in advance.
- Students also need to reserve a small conference room for a minimum of two hours. It is a good idea to reserve the room starting 30 minutes prior to the time that the presentation is to begin. Allowing that additional 30 minutes will ensure that any audio-visual equipment reserved has been set up and the presentation works as anticipated.
 - To schedule a room in the West Bank Office Building (WBOB), call 612-624-1818.
- Students need to arrange for audiovisual equipment that they may need for their presentation. To reserve an LCD projector and/or laptop, please notify Shelley Cooksey at least two weeks in advance. These arrangements can usually be accommodated in WBOB conference rooms with at least two weeks notice.
- At least two weeks prior to the exam, students must notify Shelley Cooksey, 612-626-8803, of the date of the oral exam so that the proper paperwork can be forwarded to the project advisor. Please note that students cannot show up on the day of the oral and expect the paperwork to be prepared with no advance notice. If this happens, the student would hold their examination but the committee would not have the paperwork to sign.
- Students should consider sending an e-mail to committee members the day before the exam reminding them of the day, time, and location of the examination.

Preparing for the Exam

- At least two weeks prior to the exam, students must forward a copy of their paper to their committee members for review.
- Some students may find it helpful to meet with committee members after members have had a chance to review their paper. This may help the student identify important issues that they should be prepared to discuss at the oral examination.
- Students should prepare a 20-30 minute audiovisual presentation that describes their project (background, research questions, methods, results, discussion). They may wish to have the project advisor review a written draft of this presentation in the days or weeks before the exam.
- Students should be prepared to discuss strengths and weaknesses of the methods and to interpret and defend the results
- Students should bring copies of presentation materials to distribute to committee members on the day of the exam.

During the exam

The material covered in the oral examination is comprehensive and includes the masters project, course materials and seminars, and issues of practical application. However, most examinations focus primarily on the project itself. Most exams will follow the process outlined below.

- The project advisor, who also serves as the chair, convenes the meeting
- Student initially leaves room so that committee members can review transcripts and plan for exam
- Student returns to the room and procedures for conducting the exam are discussed
- Student gives the presentation, possibly interspersed with questions from the committee if the student wishes to be interrupted
- Additional questions are asked at the conclusion of the presentation
- Once all questions have been asked and answered, the student leaves room so that committee members can discuss the outcome of the exam
- The committee decides whether the outcome is pass without revisions, pass with revisions, does not pass
- The student is invited back into room and informed of the results
- If the outcome is a pass or pass with revisions, the study plan is signed by the committee members
- If the student did not pass, the committee will explain what steps are necessary before they will approve the project
- The project advisor returns the study plan to the Major Coordinator

Finalizing the Paper

After successfully completing the oral examination, the student and project advisor must work together to ensure that the final document is prepared and submitted to the Major Coordinator.

- After the oral exam, the student and project advisor should meet to discuss any revisions that need to be made to the paper. Finalizing the paper as soon as possible after the oral exam is best way to assure that student will complete the process.
- The student should make changes according to committee expectations. In some cases, a final review by the project advisor on behalf of the committee may be sufficient. More extensive changes may require additional review by all committee members. The project is not completed until the committee is satisfied with the quality of the oral presentation and final paper.

2.7 Graduate Follow-up Survey

Students must submit the Graduate Follow-Up Survey prior to receiving their degree or certificate. Students may complete the process online at the appropriate link on the current student Web page http://sphsdb.ahc.umn.edu/gradsurvey/gs_login.cfm. Upon submitting the electronic survey, the student's relevant major coordinator will be notified by e-mail.

All graduates will receive a three-month and six-month e-mail message asking them to update survey information (e.g., employment). This is through secure access and coordinators will not be able to input data on students' behalf.

2.8 Program Faculty List

Primary Faculty

Name	Phone	E-Mail	Research Expertise
Alvaro Alonso, MD, PhD	626-8597	alonso@umn.edu	Epidemiology of hypertension, nutritional epidemiology, neuroepidemiology (multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis)
Kristin Anderson, PhD, MPH	626-8568	ander116@umn.edu	Cancer etiology; Laboratory-based cancer epidemiology; Pancreatic cancer; Adult solid tumors
Richard Crow, MD	626-9678	crowx001@umn.edu	Preventive cardiology programs, trials and methods; Cardiac rehabilitation and work psychology; Ambulatory ECG recording; Computer applications
Ellen W. Demerath, PhD	624-8231	ewd@umn.edu	Body composition and obesity assessment; Developmental determinants of cardiovascular disease risk; Lifecourse epidemiology; Genetic epidemiology of obesity, diabetes, and coronary heart disease; Biomarkers of biological senescence
Susan Duval, PhD	624-3392	duval002@umn.edu	Cardiovascular and diabetes epidemiology; Biostatistical methods; Meta-analysis; Publication bias; Statistical consulting
Darin Erickson, PhD	626-0516	erick232@umn.edu	Alcohol prevention and etiology; Latent variable analysis; Longitudinal and time series analysis
John Finnegan, Jr., PhD	624-5544	finne001@umn.edu	Media communication and public health; Community campaigns; The "Knowledge Gap" and health outcomes; Digital information technology and its impact on public health
Andrew Flood, PhD	624-2891	flood009@umn.edu	Nutritional epidemiology; Cancer epidemiology with emphasis on colorectal cancer; Insulin resistance; IGFs and their binding proteins
Aaron Folsom, MD, MPH	626-8862	folso001@umn.edu	Cardiovascular disease epidemiology; Heart disease surveillance and risk factors
Bernard Harlow, PhD, MPH	626.6527	harlow@umn.edu	Clinical and population-based reproductive epidemiology; the epidemiology of reproductive cancers; data collection methods; and influence of psychiatric disorders on reproductive function
Lisa Harnack, DrPH, RD	626-9398	harna001@umn.edu	Nutritional epidemiology; Nutritional assessment
Eileen Harwood, PhD	626-1824	harwo002@umn.edu	Social epidemiology; Policy evaluation of alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs
Wendy Hellerstedt, PhD	626-2077	helle023@umn.edu	Birth outcomes for underserved women; adolescent reproductive health and pregnancy prevention; pregnancy intention; relationship of parity to chronic disease and birth outcomes, women's health, perinatal and reproductive health, socioeconomic status and health disparities
John Himes, PhD	624-8210	himes001@umn.edu	Child growth and nutrition; Anthropometric assessment of nutritional status; Dietary assessment; Obesity and body composition
David Jacobs, Jr., PhD	624-4196	jacob004@umn.edu	Cardiovascular disease epidemiology; Nutritional epidemiology
Robert Jeffery, PhD	626-8580	jeffe001@umn.edu	Health behavior change; Dietary intervention; Obesity epidemiology, treatment, and prevention
Rhonda Jones-Webb, DrPH	626-8866	jones010@umn.edu	Alcohol studies; Alcohol policy as a prevention strategy; Minority health issues; Behavioral epidemiology
Harry Lando, PhD (on sabbatical June 08-May 09)	624-1877	lando001@umn.edu	Global issues in tobacco reduction; Smoking cessation; Treatment of medically compromised smokers
DeAnn Lazovich, PhD (on sabbatical January 09-December 09)	626-9099	lazov001@umn.edu	Cancer prevention and control; Cancer epidemiology
Alan Lifson, MD, MPH	626-9697	lifso001@umn.edu	HIV/AIDS; International health; Infectious disease epidemiology
Russell Luepker, MD,	624-6362	luepk001@umn.edu	Cardiovascular disease epidemiology and prevention;

MS			Health behavior; Community trials; Clinical trials
Leslie Lytle, PhD	624-3518	lalytle@umn.edu	Planning and evaluating eating behavior change interventions in children; Youth health promotion research; Theories of health behavior
Claudia Munoz-Zanzi, MV, MPVM, PhD	626-2849	munozzan@umn.edu	Infectious disease
Heather H. Nelson, PhD, MPH	626-9887	hhnelson@umn.edu	Cancer susceptibility and etiology using both laboratory and epidemiologic tools; gene-environment interactions; skin cancer, mesothelioma, and other exposure-related malignancies. Member: University of Minnesota Cancer Center
Melissa Nelson, PhD, RD	624-8832	nels5024@umn.edu	Environmental and behavioral determinants of excess weight gain and obesity during childhood, adolescence and young adulthood
Ruby Nguyen, PhD	626-7559	nguy0082@umn.edu	Women's health, etiology of reduced fertility, infertility and later disease, intersection of genital tract infections on reproduction, pregnancy-related morbidity, and epidemiologic methods in studies of fertility
J. Michael Oakes, PhD	624-6855	oakes007@umn.edu	Quantitative methods; Social epidemiology; Research ethics
Charles Oberg, MD, MPH	625-6616	oberg001@umn.edu	Health disparities; Childhood poverty; Health care access and finance
James Pankow, PhD, MPH	624-2883	panko001@umn.edu	Cardiovascular disease epidemiology; Genetic epidemiology; Diabetes epidemiology
Mark Pereira, MPH, PhD (on sabbatical Fall Semester 08)	624-4173	perei004@umn.edu	Nutrition and physical activity in the prevention of obesity; Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease
Kim Robien, PhD, RD	625-8279	robie004@umn.edu	Nutrition, molecular epidemiology, cancer survivorship, pharmacogenetics, evidence-based nutrition practice, medical nutrition therapy, parenteral nutrition, hematopoietic cell transplantation
Simon Rosser, PhD, MPH	624-0358	rosser@umn.edu	HIV prevention research; Human sexuality; Sex offending and religious identity
Pamela Schreiner, PhD	626-9097	schre012@umn.edu	Etiology of cardiovascular disease particularly as it relates to lipids, obesity, visceral fat accumulation and the perimenopausal transition; Osteoporosis
Lyn Steffen, PhD, MPH, RD	625-9307	steff025@umn.edu	CVD epidemiology and prevention; Nutritional epidemiology; Stroke surveillance; Diet relations with diabetes; Insulin resistance and obesity
Weihong Tang, PhD, MS, MD	626-9140	tang0097@umn.edu	Cardiovascular disease epidemiology, genetic epidemiology of chronic disease with an emphasis on cardiovascular disease, metabolic syndrome, diabetes, and obesity
Traci Toomey, PhD, MPH	626-9070	toome001@umn.edu	Policy research; Community organizing; Prevention of alcohol and tobacco-related problems; Intentional and unintentional injury prevention
Jian-Min Yuan, PhD, MD	625-8056	jyuan@umn.edu	Environmental and genetic factors in the etiology of cancer

Adjunct Faculty

Name	Phone	E-Mail	Research Expertise
Bruce Alexander, PhD, MS	625-7934	balex@umn.edu	Occupational and environmental epidemiology; environmental determinants of injury, cancer, respiratory health, reproductive health; global health; application of biological markers in epidemiological research; exposure models for occupational and environmental epidemiology
Jeff Bender, DVM	625-6203	bende002@umn.edu	Antimicrobial resistance; food safety; zoonoses and emerging diseases
Alan Berger, MD	625-9100	berge063@umn.edu	Interventional cardiology; Thrombolytic therapy
Sally Bushhouse, DVM, MPH, PhD	651-201-5374	sally.bushhouse@state.mn.us	Cancer epidemiology and surveillance
Timothy Church, MS, PhD	626-1494	churc001@umn.edu	Cancer screening, prevention, and causes; Epidemiologic study design; Cardiac disease and medical devices
Kathleen Daly, PhD	625-3259	dalyx002@umn.edu	Epidemiology of otitis media in children; Risk factors for otitis-media associated hearing loss
Richard Danila, PhD	651-201-5116	richard.danila@state.mn.us	Emerging infectious diseases including foodborne and bacterial diseases; Preparedness for bioterrorism
Kristen Ehresmann, RN, MPH	651-201-5507	Kristen.ehresmann@state.mn.us	Immunizations
Kristine Ensrud, MD, MPH	725-2158	ensru001@umn.edu	Osteoporosis; Women's health (epidemiology)
Howard Fink, MD, MPH	725-2501	howard.fink@med.va.gov	Chronic disease epidemiology; Health outcomes in the areas of osteoporosis and sexual dysfunction; Preparation, maintenance and dissemination of systematic reviews
Lael Gatewood, PhD	625-4909	lael@umn.edu	Health Informatics; Micropopulation; Simulation Health Services Research
Richard Grimm, PhD, MD	347-7756	grimm001@umn.edu	Clinical trials on hypertension, lipids, CV risk; Women's health; Complementary and alternative medicine
Myron Gross, PhD	624-5417	gross@umn.edu	The role of micronutrients in health and disease; Cancer pathobiology; Biomarkers of dietary factor consumption and cancer progression
Linda Halcon, PhD	626-6450	halco001@umn.edu	Adolescent health; Complementary/alternative healing practices; International health; Infectious diseases
Craig Hedberg, PhD	626-4757	hedbe005@umn.edu	Food safety and infectious diseases
Alan Hirsch, MD	863-3900	hirsc005@umn.edu	The pharmacotherapy of peripheral arterial disease and claudication; Thrombolysis for deep venous thrombosis
Neal Holtan, MD	651-266-1222	holt0231@umn.edu	History of medicine and public health; Public health policy
William Hueston, DVM, MS, PhD	625-8709	huest001@umn.edu	Epidemiology of risks and diseases affecting animals and man including transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, antimicrobial resistance; Foodborne disease; Food safety
Mike John, PhD, MPH, DDS	625-6521	johnx055@umn.edu	Tempromandibular disorders
Edward Kaplan, MD	624-1112	kapla001@umn.edu	Infectious disease and pediatric cardiology with a special interest in streptococcal infections (epidemiology, microbiology, and immune response)
Catherine Lexau, PhD, MPH	651-201-5283	catherine.lexau@state.mn.us	Antibiotic resistance, including methicillin resistant Staph aureus; pneumococcal disease
Ruth Lynfield, MD	651-201-5414	ruth.lynfield@state.mn.us	Infectious disease epidemiology; emerging infectious diseases, antibiotic resistance
George Maldonado, PhD, MSPH	626-2104	GMPHD@umn.edu	Epidemiologic methodology

Karen Margolis, MD, MPH	347-2179	margo006@umn.edu	Cardiovascular disease epidemiology and prevention; Women's health
Joseph Neglia, MD, MPH	626-2778	jneglia@umn.edu	Pediatric Hematology/Oncology
John Oswald, PhD, MPH	763-797-2765	John_w_oswald@optumhealth.com or oswal007@umn.edu	Health statistics
Melissa Partin, PhD, MS	725-2000 x3841	melissa.partin@med.va.gov	Cancer prevention and control; Patient education; Shared decision making
Judith Punyko, PhD, MS	651-201-3629	judy.punyko@state.mn.us	Epidemiologic methods and bias; disease surveillance systems and quality assurance; descriptive epidemiology in public health; chronic disease epidemiology in adult and pediatric populations; and maternal and child health/epidemiology – in particular health disparities, access to care, (most recently) autism and other developmental disabilities, and PRAMS data analyses (serve as the principal investigator for the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) in Minnesota.
Frank Rhame, MD	899-2610 (pager)	rhame001@umn.edu	HIV therapy
Julie Ross, PhD, MPH	625-5437	ross@epi.umn.edu	Molecular epidemiology; Childhood cancer; Adult leukemia
Alan Sinaiko, MD	625-8483	sinai001@umn.edu	Blood pressure/hypertension in children and adolescents
Randall Singer, DVM, MPVM, PhD	625-6271	singe024@umn.edu	Infectious disease epidemiology; Ecologic approach to disease systems
Logan Spector, PhD	624-3192	spector@epi.umn.edu	Etiology of childhood cancer; Design, conduct; Analysis of epidemiologic studies.
Brent Taylor, MPH, PhD	612-467-4941	taylorbc@umn.edu	Clinical epidemiology, particularly related to chronic geriatric diseases such as osteoporosis and prostate cancer, and quantitative methods
Beth Virnig, PhD, MPH	624-4426	virni001@umn.edu	Administrative data for cancer surveillance and studies of treatment patterns

2.9 Graduation Checklist

General steps for all MPH majors

1. Student submits completed *Study Plan* at least one semester prior to the anticipated completion of coursework; see *section 2.6*.
2. Student files the *Application for Degree* form (see *section 2.2*) at 200 Fraser Hall by the end of the first business day of the month in which they intend to graduate.
3. Student completes all coursework and requirements by noon on the last business day of the month in which they wish to have their degree conferred.
4. Student completes and circulates the Master's Project paper and schedules the oral exam at least two weeks before the scheduled oral examination date; see *section 2.6*.
5. **Student notifies Shelley Cooksey, cooks001@umn.edu, of the date of the oral exam at least two weeks prior to the exam so that their study plan can be forwarded to the project advisor; see *section 2.6*.**
6. After the oral exam, project advisor returns the student's study plan to the Major Coordinators; see *section 2.7*.
7. Student submits one unbound, unstapled copy of the Master's Project paper and abstract to Shelley Cooksey. See *section 2.6*.
8. Student submits the *Graduate Follow-up Survey*. See *section 2.7*

All Division of Epidemiology and Community Health students who fulfill, or anticipate fulfilling, the above requirements and deadlines for Fall 2008 through Summer Session 2009 are eligible to participate in the School of Public Health commencement ceremony on May 18, 2009. We encourage you to attend!

It is considered highly unethical and inappropriate to use or include in your title or professional signature any degree that you have not completed. This means you cannot use the MPH title prior to completing all your degree requirements and your degree has been conferred. The School does not recognize or confer the title "MPH Candidate".