Master of Science in Public Health in Occupational Health

The Master of Science in Public Health (MSPH) is considered an equivalent professional public health master’s degree and requires additional coursework in research methods and statistics. Students can choose among the variety of multi-disciplinary public health options to navigate their public health interest.

The degree is offered in all core disciplines of public health; epidemiology, biostatistics, environmental health, occupational safety and health, and health promotion and community health sciences. The MSPH is a thesis degree program that has culminating experiences as part of the degree requirements. Students will also participate in a practicum demonstrating overall public health problem solving skills.

An individual with a baccalaureate degree may apply for admission to the program. No coursework prerequisites exist for making a successful application to this degree program.

Program Requirements

Program Requirements

• Student’s Advisory Committee
• Degree Plan
• Credit Requirement
• Transfer of Credit
• Limitations on the Use of Transfer, Extension and Certain Other Courses
• Thesis
  • Thesis Proposal
  • Final Examination

Student’s Advisory Committee

After receiving admission to graduate studies and enrolling, the student will consult with the head of his or her department concerning appointment of the chair of the advisory committee. The student’s advisory committee for the Master of Science degree will consist of no fewer than three graduate faculty representatives of the student’s fields of study and research. The committee chair or one of the co-chairs must be a member of Graduate Faculty in the student’s department.

Committee members must be comprised of at least one principal faculty member within SPH but external to the relevant department(s), all voting members must be members of the graduate faculty. The chair, in consultation with the student, will select the remainder of the advisory committee. The committee composition must be approved by the relevant department head.

If the chair of a student’s advisory committee voluntarily leaves the University and the student is near completion of the degree and wants the chair to continue to serve in this role, the student is responsible for securing a current member of the University Graduate Faculty, from the student’s academic program and located near the Texas A&M University campus site, to serve as the co-chair of the committee. The Department Head or Chair of Intercollegiate faculty may request in writing to the Associate Provost for Graduate and Professional Studies that a faculty member who is on an approved leave of absence or has voluntarily separated from the university, be allowed to continue to serve in the role of chair of a student’s advisory committee without a co-chair for us to one year. The students should be near completion of the degree. Extensions beyond the one year period can be granted with additional approval of the Dean.

The committee members’ signatures on the degree plan indicate their willingness to accept the responsibility for guiding and directing the entire academic program of the student and for initiating all academic actions concerning the student. Although individual committee members can be replaced by petition for valid reasons, a committee cannot resign in masse. The chair of the committee, who usually has immediate supervision of the student’s research and dissertation or record of study, has the responsibility for calling all meetings of the committee. The duties of the committee include responsibility for the proposed degree plan, the research proposal, guidance and supervision of the thesis study/research and the final examination. In addition, the committee, as a group and as individual members, is responsible for counseling the student on academic matters and, in the case of academic deficiency, initiating recommendations to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies.

Degree Plan

The student’s advisor, in consultation with the student, will develop the proposed degree plan. The final degree plan must be completed and filed with the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies prior to the deadlines imposed by the student’s college, and no later than 90 days prior to the date of the final oral examination.

The proposed/final degree plan should be submitted through the online Document Processing Submission System located on the website https://ogsdpps.tamu.edu.

Additional coursework may be added to the approved degree plan by petition if it is deemed necessary by the advisor to correct deficiencies in the student’s academic preparation. No changes can be made to the degree plan once the student’s Request for Final Examination or Request for Final Examination Exemption is approved by the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies.

Credit Requirement

A minimum of 45 hours of coursework is required for the MSPH degree. To demonstrate integration and application of subject matter learned and the development of written and oral communication skills, a student will be required to produce a thesis and participate in a Practicum. Concentration and elective courses vary among the core disciplines and will be addressed during advising and creation of the degree plan. Electives may be taken upon approval/advice from the student’s assigned advisor and will be listed by rubric, section, and description in the degree plan.

Transfer of Credit

A student may transfer up to 9 hours of graduate credit to the MSPH degree program on the advice and approval of the student’s advisory committee, department Chair, and school Academic Affairs Dean, and with the approval of the Office of Graduate and Professional.
Additionally, a signed approval form must be brought or mailed to the advisory committee and the head of the student's department, the student's advisor, department Chair, school Academic Affairs Office, the registrar at that institution stating that the course was not applied for graduate credit. If the course to be transferred was taken prior to the conferral of a degree at the transfer institution, a letter from the student to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies must be sent directly to the Office of Admissions.

Courses used toward another degree at another institution may not be applied for graduate credit. If the course to be transferred was taken prior to the conferral of a degree at the transfer institution, a letter from the registrar at that institution stating that the course was not applied for credit toward the degree must be submitted to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies.

Grades for courses completed at other institutions are not included in computing the GPR.

**Limitations on the Use of Transfer, Extensions, and Certain Other Courses**

If otherwise acceptable, certain courses may be used toward meeting credit-hour requirements for the master's degree with the following limitations.

1. The maximum number of credit hours allowed toward the MSPH as transfer credit is 9.
2. Courses previously used for another degree are not acceptable for credit.
3. A maximum of 3 hours of 684 (Professional Internship/Practicum), and 9 hours of 685 (Directed Studies), if approved on the degree plan.
4. Undergraduate courses are not allowed to transfer to the MSPH degree program.
5. Continuing education courses may not be used for graduate credit.
6. Extension courses are not acceptable for credit.

Exceptions will be permitted only in unusual cases and when petitioned by the student's advisor, department Chair, school Academic Affairs Office, and approved by the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies.

**Thesis**

An acceptable thesis is required for the Master of Science in Public Health degree. The finished work must reflect a comprehensive understanding of the pertinent literature and express in clear English, the problem(s) for study, the method, significance and results of the student's original research. Guidelines for the preparation of the thesis are available in the Thesis Manual, which is available online at http://ogaps.tamu.edu.

After successful defense (or exemption) and approval by the student's advisory committee and the head of the student's department, the student must submit his/her thesis in electronic format as a single PDF file. The PDF file must be uploaded to the website, http://ogaps.tamu.edu. Additionally, a signed approval form must be brought or mailed to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies. The PDF file and the signed approval form are required by the deadline.

Deadline dates for submitting the thesis are announced each semester or summer term in the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies Calendar (see Time Limit statement). These dates also can be accessed via the website https://ogdpss.tamu.edu.

Before a student can be “cleared” by Thesis and Dissertation Services, a processing fee must be paid through Student Business Services. This processing fee is for the thesis/dissertation services provided. After commencement, dissertations are digitally stored and made available through the Texas A&M Libraries.

A thesis that is deemed unacceptable by the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies because of excessive corrections will be returned to the student’s department head. The manuscript must be resubmitted as a new document, and the entire review process must begin again. All submittal deadlines must be met during the resubmittal process to graduate that semester.

**Thesis Proposal**

The student must prepare a thesis proposal for approval by the student's advisory committee and the head of the major department or chair of the intercollegiate faculty, if applicable. This proposal must be submitted to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies at least 20 working days prior to the submission of the request for the final examination.

Compliance issues must be addressed if a graduate student is performing research involving human subjects, animals, infectious biohazards and recombinant DNA. A student involved in these types of research should check with the Office of Research Compliance and Biosafety at (979) 458-1467 to address questions about all research compliance responsibilities. Additional information can be also obtained on the website http://rcb.tamu.edu.

**Thesis Defense/Final Examination**

A student must pass a final examination by dates announced each semester or summer term in the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies Calendar. The Office of Graduate and Professional Studies must be notified in writing of any cancellation. To be eligible to take the final examination, a student’s GPR must be at least 3.000 for courses on the degree plan and for all courses completed at Texas A&M which are eligible to be applied to a graduate degree, and there must be no unabsoled grades of D, F, or U for any course listed on the degree plan. To absolve a deficient grade, the student must repeat the course at Texas A&M University and achieve a grade of C or better. All coursework on the degree plan must have been completed with the exception of those hours for which the student is registered. Additionally, all English Language Proficiency requirements must be satisfied prior to scheduling the examination. If applicable, an approved thesis proposal must be on file in the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies according to published deadlines.

A request to hold and announce the final examination must be submitted to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies a minimum of 10 working days in advance of the scheduled date for the examination. Examinations which are not completed and reported as satisfactory to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies within 10 working days of the scheduled examination will be recorded as failures. A student may be given only one opportunity to repeat the final examination for the master’s
degree and that must be within a time period that does not extend beyond the end of the next regular semester (summer terms are excluded).

For thesis students, the final examination covers the thesis and all work taken on the degree plan and at the option of the committee may be written or oral or both. The final examination may not be administered before the thesis is available to all members of the student’s advisory committee in substantially final form, and all members have had adequate time to review the document. The examination is conducted by the student’s advisory committee as finally constituted. A thesis option student must be registered in the University in the semester or summer term in which the final examination is taken. Persons other than members of the graduate faculty may, with mutual consent of the candidate and the major professor, attend final examinations for advanced degrees. Upon completion of the questioning of the candidate, all visitors must excuse themselves from the proceedings. A positive vote by all members of the graduate advisory committee with at most one dissension is required to pass a student on his or her exam. A department, or interdisciplinary degree program, may have a stricter requirement provided there is consistency within all degree programs within a department or interdisciplinary program.

A thesis candidate may petition to be exempt from his/her final examination provided his/her degree plan GPR is 3.50 or greater and he/ she has the approval of the advisory committee, the head of the student’s department, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and Office of Graduate and Professional Studies. It is required that the petition for exemption be submitted the same semester the student submits the thesis.

### Additional Requirements

#### Additional Requirements

- Residence
- Time Limit
- Scholastic Requirements
- Foreign Languages
- Internship or Practicum
- Application for Degree

#### Residence

No residence requirement exists; however, attention is directed to the rules regarding Limitations on the Use of Transfer, Extension and Certain Other Courses.

#### Time Limit

All degree requirements must be completed within a period of seven consecutive years for the degree to be granted. A course will be valid until seven years after the end of the semester in which it was taken. Graduate credit for coursework which is more than seven calendar years old at the time of the final examination (oral or written) may not be used to satisfy degree requirements.

A student who has a thesis must have the final corrected version of the thesis cleared by the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies no later than one year after the final examination, or approval of a petition for exemption from the final exam, or within the seven-year time limit, whichever occurs first. Failure to do so will result in the degree not being awarded.

### Scholastic Requirements

To maintain good academic standing, a MSPH student must maintain a minimum cumulative 3.00 GPR. If a student fails to attain a cumulative 3.00 GPR, he or she is placed on academic probation. A student on academic probation must raise his/her cumulative GPR to a 3.00 or above according to requirements to be set forth in the probation letter. Typically, this means raising the cumulative GPR to a 3.00 or higher by the end of the next long semester (fall/spring). If this requirement is not met, the School’s Academic Affairs Office will recommend that the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies block the student from further enrollment. If a student is blocked from further enrollment in the MSPH program, he or she shall not be permitted to enroll in other MSPH courses.

### Foreign Languages

No specific language requirement exists for the Master of Science in Public Health degree program.

### Internship or Practicum

Students in the MSPH are required to fulfill a practicum requirement. Specific course names and numbers by department are PHEB 684, PHEO 684, PHPM 684, and HPCH 684. Instructions on submission and successful completion of the practicum are posted on the School of Public Health practicum website as well as with the department’s practicum coordinator. Students are to work specifically with their department practicum coordinator on meeting this curriculum course requirement. Students must be in good academic standing, have completed all core public health courses, or be enrolled concurrently in no more than one core course at the time they enroll in the 684 course, and have no registration or university blocks related to enrollment.

### Application for Degree

For information on applying for your degree, please visit the Graduation section.