MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH IN BIOSTATISTICS

The Master of Public Health (MPH) is a multi-disciplinary professional degree program for graduate level practical training. It provides grounding in foundational public health knowledge and core competencies, as well as depth of training in concentration areas of specialized public health practice. The MPH in Biostatistics focuses on the application of statistical methods in studies related to public health, medicine, and biological sciences to test hypotheses and engage in quantitative analysis of population-based public health problems and interventions.

The MPH in Biostatistics prepares students to:

- Translate research questions or aims into testable hypotheses and propose appropriate statistical methods to test those hypotheses.
- Apply statistical methods that assure a study is adequately powered for achieving scientific aims or testing a specific research hypothesis.
- Evaluate and recommend study designs based on identified strengths and weaknesses and desired study goals.
- Analyze and interpret data using a variety of advanced analytical tools.
- Communicate commonly used statistical ideas and methods to collaborators in non-technical terms.

The program has several major academic components:

- The introductory Integrated MPH Core classes, along with students of all MPH concentrations, for exposure to foundational principles and methods in public health practice
- Required and elective concentration coursework in biostatistics theory and methods
- The potential for additional public health related elective course work.

Though the MPH is a non-thesis degree program, it includes culminating experiences:

- A practicum that provides an *applied practical experience* with a field-based preceptor, for students to demonstrate overall public health and concentration focused problem-solving skills
- A capstone *integrative learning experience* for students to bring together and apply foundational and concentration competencies, including production of a high-quality written professional product.

Effective public health professionals must work across multiple disciplines and systems to address population health problems. All MPH students are expected to participate in an interprofessional team practical activity during their degree programs. See the *IPE Learning Opportunities* at the Texas A&M Health Office of Interprofessional Education and Research. (https://health.tamu.edu/iper/)

An individual with a baccalaureate degree or a physician licensed to practice medicine in the United States may apply for admission to the program. No coursework prerequisites exist for making a successful application to this degree program.

For more details on the degree program, see the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics (https://public-health.tamu.edu/departments/epi-bio/).

Program Requirements

Program Requirements

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- Degree Plan (p. 1)
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Student Advisory Committee

The Student Advisory Committee for the MPH consists of an assigned faculty advisor. After receiving admission to the program and before enrolling for coursework, the student will consult with their assigned faculty advisor to receive additional information related to curriculum and processing of the degree plan. The faculty advisor must have graduate faculty membership in the academic program. If at any point of the student's time in pursuit of the degree the assigned advisor is no longer available, the department will assign a new advisor and require a comprehensive advisory session to ensure the student is making progress according to degree program requirements.

Degree Plan

The student's advisor, in consultation with the student, will develop the proposed degree plan. The degree plan must be completed and filed with the Graduate and Professional School prior to the deadlines imposed by the student's college, and no later than the dates announced in the Graduate and Professional School calendar of deadlines for graduation.

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

Credit Requirement

A minimum of 45 hours of coursework is required for the Master of Public Health 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 take SOPH 680 as part of the culminating experience requirement to graduate. 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 Master of Public Health 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 Graduate and Professional School. Courses taken in residence at an accredited U.S. institution or approved international institution with a final grade of B or greater may be considered for transfer credit if, at the time the courses were completed, the courses would be accepted for credit toward a similar degree for a student in degree-seeking status at the host institution. Otherwise, the limitations stated in the preceding section apply. Coursework in which no formal grades are given or in which grades other than letter grades (A or B) are earned (for example, CR, P, S, U, H, etc.) is not accepted for transfer

credit. Courses appearing on the degree plan with grades of D, F, or U may not be absolved by transfer work. Credit for coursework submitted for transfer from any college or university must be shown in semester credit hours or equated to semester credit hours. An official transcript from the university at which the transfer coursework was taken 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 Graduate and Professional School.

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

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 MPH as transfer credit is 9.
2. Courses previously used for another degree are not acceptable for credit.
3. A zero credit 684 or 685 course is only allowed for non-thesis option master's students. A zero credit 681 course can be used for either thesis or non-thesis option master's students. Other courses, including 691 research hours, are not eligible for zero credit.
4. A maximum of 6 hours of 684 (Professional Internship/Practicum), and 9 hours of 685 (Directed Studies), if approved on the degree plan.
5. Undergraduate courses are not allowed to transfer to the MPH degree program.
6. Continuing education courses may not be used for graduate credit.
7. Extension courses are not acceptable for credit.
8. For non-distance degree programs, no more than 50 percent of the credit hours required for the program may be completed through distance education courses.
9. To receive a graduate degree from Texas A&M University, students must earn one-third or more of the credits through the institution's own direct instruction. This limitation also applies to joint degree programs.

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

Additional Requirements

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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 for a master's degree must be completed within a period of seven consecutive years. Coursework which is over seven calendar years old may not be applied to master's degree. Time limits for coursework on the degree plan may also apply to transfer coursework.

Scholastic Requirements

To maintain good academic standing, a MPH student must maintain a minimum cumulative 3.000 GPA. If a student fails to attain a cumulative 3.000 GPA, he or she is placed on academic probation. A student on academic probation must raise his/her cumulative GPA to a 3.000 or above according to requirements to be set forth in the probation letter. Typically, this means raising the cumulative GPA to a 3.000 or higher by the end of the next long semester (fall/spring). If this requirement is not met, the School of Public Health's Academic Affairs Office will recommend that the Graduate and Professional School block the student from further enrollment. If a student is blocked from further enrollment in the MPH program, he or she shall not be permitted to enroll in other MPH courses.

Foreign Languages

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

Internship or Practicum

Students in the MPH 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 (http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/#degreerequirementstext) section.