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# PUBLIC HEALTH

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## About the Program

The mission of the University of Puget Sound Master of Public Health (MPH) program is to prepare culturally responsive graduates who promote health equity and community wellness, and work to prevent injury and illness. The program fosters students to develop a passion for life-long education, research, and public health practice that is trans-disciplinary, translational, and undergirded by active critical reflection. Graduates employ a diverse set of theoretical orientations in parallel with multiple sources of evidence to make sound professional judgments, resulting in science-based and creative solutions to the challenges of public health issues that impact diverse populations. The program will engage students in an experiential-based learning environment where they collaborate with academic and professional public health partners throughout the Pacific Northwest.

This MPH program at Puget Sound (1) aligns with our institutional mission and philosophies, including fostering critical thinking, apt expression, social justice and community engagement, (2) builds on our expertise in providing excellence in health professions education and, (3) reflects our deep commitment to being community- and service-centered, and (4) will prepare professionals to provide our region with high quality public health care.

## Foundational Knowledge and Core Competencies

Graduates of the MPH program will be grounded to public health knowledge in the profession and science of public health and in factors related to human health, as defined by the Council for Education in Public Health. Grounding in foundational public health knowledge will be measured by student achievement of the following learning objectives in the course *PH 601 Foundations of Public Health*:

### *Profession & Science of Public Health*

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

### *Factors Related to Human Health*

1. Explain effects of environmental factors on a population's health
2. Explain biological and genetic factors that affect a population's health
3. Explain behavioral and psychological factors that affect a population's health
4. Explain the social, political and economic determinants of health and how they contribute to population health and health inequities
5. Explain how globalization affects global burdens of disease
6. Explain an ecological perspective on the connections among human health, animal health and ecosystem health

Graduates of the MPH will also be expected to demonstrate competence in 22 core areas of public health (also known as foundational

competencies), as defined by the Council for Education in Public Health. While the competencies are integrated throughout courses, the program will evaluate students' demonstration of competency within specific courses, and each of the competencies and the corresponding course in which it will be evaluated is listed next.

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

1. Apply epidemiological methods to the breadth of settings and situations in public health practice
  - Evaluated in *PH 606 Fundamentals of Epidemiology*
2. Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context
  - Evaluated in *PH 605 Qualitative Research Methods* and *PH 606 Fundamentals of Epidemiology*
3. Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming and software, as appropriate
  - Evaluated in *PH 602 Introduction to Biostatistics* and *PH 605 Qualitative Research Methods*
4. Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice
  - Evaluated in *PH 602 Introduction to Biostatistics*

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

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

\*Evaluated in *PH 605 Qualitative Research Methods*

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

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

\*Evaluated in *PH 607 Program Development & Evaluation Public Health*

### *Policy in Public Health\**

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

\*Evaluated in *PH 605 Qualitative Research Methods*

### *Leadership\**

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

\*Evaluated in *PH 621 Public Health Leadership and Interprofessional Practice*

### Communication\*

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

\*Evaluated in *PH 622 Health Campaigns: Behaviors & Education*

### Interprofessional Practice\*\*

21. Perform effectively on interprofessional teams

### Systems Thinking\*\*

22. Apply systems thinking tools to a public health issue

\*\*Evaluated in *PH 621 Public Health Leadership and Interprofessional Practice*

In addition to the key areas of learning expected of graduates of MPH programs, the MPH program at Puget Sound develops competencies in general public health and health equity consistent with the mission of the program. University of Puget Sound MPH Program competencies and the course in which it will be evaluated is listed next.

1. Evaluate how environmental and social influences contribute to health and health inequities in populations
  - Evaluated in *PH 620 Environmental Health*
2. Compare causes of morbidity and mortality across economically and geographically different world regions
  - Evaluated in *PH 623 Global Health*
3. Develop culturally appropriate strategies to improve health and minimize disparities in populations
  - Evaluated in *PH 604 Health Disparities & Vulnerable Populations*
4. Synthesize data and literature to identify health disparities in populations
  - Evaluated in *PH 604 Health Disparities & Vulnerable Populations*
5. Demonstrate high-quality writing for public health-related audiences
  - Evaluated in *PH 624 Special Topics*

## Experiential Learning

MPH graduates will also demonstrate competency in public health through experiential learning through an Applied Practice Experience and Integrative Learning Experiences. The Applied Practice Experience will be completed as a fieldwork experience and may involve governmental, non-governmental, non-profit, industrial and for-profit settings or appropriate university-affiliated settings. To be appropriate for applied practice experience activities, university-affiliated settings must be primarily focused on community engagement, typically with external partners. The applied practice experience allows each student to demonstrate attainment of five competencies, of which at least three must be foundational competencies. The competencies need not be identical from student to student, but the applied experiences must be structured to ensure that all students complete experiences addressing five foundational and program competencies. Students will prepare for their Applied Practice Experience in *PH 630 Public Health Professionalism and Ethics*, and the Applied Practice Practice will be completed as part of the course *PH 633 Applied Practice Experience*.

MPH students will complete an integrative learning experience (ILE) that demonstrates synthesis of foundational and program competencies. Students in consultation with faculty select foundational and program-specific competencies appropriate to the student's educational

and professional goals. The ILE represents a culminating experience and may take many forms, such as a practice-based project, essay-based comprehensive exam, capstone course, integrative seminar, etc. Regardless of form, the student produces a high-quality written product that is appropriate for the student's educational and professional objectives. Written products might include the following: program evaluation report, training manual, policy statement, take-home comprehensive essay exam, legislative testimony with accompanying supporting research, etc. Ideally, the written product is developed and delivered in a manner that is useful to external stakeholders, such as non-profit or governmental organizations. The Integrative Learning Experience will be completed as part of the course *PH 634 Integrative Learning Experience*.

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## MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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### Degree Requirements

The degree requires successful completion of 16 units: 14 core requirements and 2 rotating special topics. Students are required to complete the degree requirements with an average GPA of 3.0 or higher in order to graduate.

### Continuation toward MPH Degree

Once degree candidacy has been granted, a student is expected to complete all degree requirements within six years. All courses to be counted in the degree must be taken within the six-year period prior to granting the degree.

Any course in which a student receives a F grade will be required to be repeated. Students can repeat a course a maximum of two times. Inability to pass a course after two times will result in eligibility for dismissal from the MPH program. The majority of courses in the MPH program are offered once per year and failing a course may result in a delay for time to degree completion.

Students can earn a maximum of 2 C's (or lower) grades. Earning more than 2 C's or lower will result in eligibility for dismissal from the MPH program.

Students will be responsible for securing transportation to Applied Practice Experience sites and obtaining and adhering to any requirements of the site (e.g. vaccinations, CPR certification).

### Course Sequence

Students can complete the degree in full-time or part-time status. An example course sequence for students in full-time status is provided here. Students needing to complete the program in part-time status should consult with their faculty advisor to develop a suitable course sequence.

#### Fall, Year 1

PH 601 Foundations of Public Health  
PH 605 Qualitative Research Methods  
PH 606 Fundamentals of Epidemiology  
PH 623 Global Health

#### Spring, Year 1

PH 602 Introduction to Biostatistics  
PH 605 Qualitative Research Methods  
PH 607 Program Development & Evaluation  
PH 622 Health Campaigns: Behaviors & Education

#### Summer, Year 1

PH 620 Environmental Health  
PH 630 Public Health Professionalism and Ethics

## Fall, Year 2

PH 604 Health Disparities and Vulnerable Populations  
PH 621 Public Health Leadership and Interprofessional Practices  
PH 624 Special Topics

## Spring, Year 2

PH 624 Special Topics  
PH 633 Applied Practice Experience  
PH 634 Integrative Learning Experience

## Course Offerings

Unless otherwise specified, each course carries 1 unit of credit and is offered at least once each academic year. Please see “Frequency of Course Offerings” on page 20.

### Public Health (PH)

**601 Foundations of Public Health** This course introduces students to the broad field of public health, professional roles, and the basic principles of disease prevention and health promotion among communities and populations. Students examine historical trends in the field, the 10 Essential Public Health Services, and how public health services are designed and delivered within the public health infrastructure. The course introduces students to the upstream causes of morbidity and mortality across the lifespan and how the public health system in the United States addresses these causes. *Cannot be audited.*

**602 Introduction to Biostatistics** This course introduces the use of statistics in public health. Topics include descriptive statistics, probability distributions, parameter estimation, hypothesis testing, regression models, and sample size and power considerations. Students develop the skills necessary to perform, present, and interpret statistical analyses using statistical software. *Cannot be audited.*

**603 Healthcare Systems and Policy** This course introduces the making, understanding, and consequences of public health and healthcare policies and systems. Students will assess the design and performance of the health care system, including organization, financing, and delivery in the United States. Students will explore fundamental concerns—such as cost, access, and quality—that shape the development of health policy and health systems worldwide, and compare approaches to understand advantages and disadvantages. Students will explore the population-level impacts of health policy with systems-level view. *Cannot be audited.*

**604 Health Disparities and Vulnerable Populations** This course introduces students to disparities in health care and public health in the United States and around the world that occur as a result of demographic and socioeconomic factors. Students will explore the existence and impact of these disparities on individual and population health. Students will integrate knowledge to develop culturally appropriate strategies to improve health and minimize population health disparities. *Prerequisite: PH 607. Offered every year.*

**605 Qualitative Research Methods** The course covers qualitative research skills to discern how and why humans behave relative to their health, and emphasizes planning, design, and evaluation. Students gain an understanding of qualitative research techniques by articulating a phenomenon of interest, identifying a target population, employing proper data collection strategies, and selecting proper techniques for results verification. *Cannot be audited. Offered every year.*

**606 Fundamentals of Epidemiology** This course introduces epidemiological principles and methods to study, quantify, and assess the

distribution and determinants of disease among populations. Students examine the influence of biological and social factors on population health. Students evaluate epidemiologic study designs and apply measures of association as methods for determining relationships. *Cannot be audited.*

**607 Program Planning and Evaluation** In this course, students will gain an understanding of how to implement public health programs and evaluate their effectiveness. Students will learn careful planning and evaluation of public health programs through assessing community needs, critique of existing programs, and proposing a new program. In order to support the interdisciplinary nature of public health programs, students will discuss and practice skills for cultural competence and building effective teams for public health program planning and evaluation. *Cannot be audited. Offered every year.*

**620 Environmental Health** This course introduces students to the interrelationship between human health and the natural and built environments. Students examine current environmental issues and the human activity that affects public and global health, such as climate change, disease transmission, urbanization, pollution, as well as the impact of these changes over time. Students also study the implications of environmental strategies related to community design, occupational health, and policy influencing health. *Cannot be audited.*

**621 Public Health Leadership and Interprofessional Practice** This course applies the principles of strategic leadership and interprofessional practice in public health services within different sectors. Cultural and organizational differences in leadership and management are explored to build partnerships leveraging community and organizational strengths. Students learn how to align public health programs with organizational mission, vision, and objectives for sustainability and growth. There is particular emphasis on the collaborative and interprofessional nature of public health, developing cultural competence, and the unique aspects of leadership within various types of agencies. *Prerequisite: Completion of 8 units in the MPH program. Cannot be audited. Offered every year.*

**622 Health Campaigns: Behaviors, Theory, and Education** This course introduces the historical perspectives of health campaigns, provides insights into various theories which inform campaign work, and reviews the methodological considerations of researching, implementing, and evaluating health campaigns. In this course, students explore the design and analysis of health campaigns, utilizing theory, practice, and methods to critique past, present, and future campaigns. This course stresses practical applications as students develop a hypothetical health campaign to understand ways that campaigns are planned, organized, executed, and evaluated. *Cannot be audited. Offered every year.*

**623 Global Health** The course provides an overview to issues surrounding global health. Students explore multiple mechanisms that lead to health inequities around the world. Students examine policies and interventions that aim to address issues of morbidity and mortality at national or global scale. Topics covered may include: impacts of globalization on population health, socioeconomic contexts of disease, infectious disease, nutrition, relationships between culture and health, ethical and human rights concerns, and the role of nongovernmental organizations in global health. *Cannot be audited.*

**624 Special Topics** Special topics courses will rotate. Relevant theory and current research are examined related to the topic. Students will be taught writing and presentation skills relevant to public health audiences. *May be repeated for credit. Cannot be audited. Offered every year.*

**630 Public Health Professionalism and Ethics** This course prepares students to thoughtfully select their Applied Practice Experiences. The course is designed to provide students an opportunity to observe how theory applies to practice in professional context. The course also provides an examination of moral issues in the field of public health and covers methodological approaches to ethical decision-making. Students will discuss the application of theory and concepts in practice, identify personal strengths, describe professional development opportunities, and develop a plan for their Applied Practice Experiences. *Prerequisite: Completion of 8 units in the MPH program. Cannot be audited. Offered every year.*

**633 Applied Practice Experience** This applied practice experience course is designed to provide students an opportunity to transition from theory to practice in public health. The student reinforces, integrates, and applies concepts, principles, and skills gained during coursework towards further developing competencies in selected areas. Students are required to complete a minimum of 150 hours of field experience in an approved public health setting under supervision from a qualified preceptor approved by the program. Students reflect on their practice experience, discuss the application of theory and concepts in practice, identify personal strengths, describe professional development opportunities, and develop a professional portfolio. Practicum/field experience hours: 150 hours. *Prerequisite: PH 630. Cannot be audited. Offered every year.*

**634 Integrative Learning Experience** Students will demonstrate synthesis of selected public health competencies through an integrated learning experience. Students will demonstrate communication skills through the development of a high-quality written document useful to public health stakeholders. The written document may take on a variety of forms and is tailored to the students' educational and professional goals. *Prerequisite: PH 621. Cannot be audited.*