New Student Information

Epidemiology Department Location & Operating Hours

The Department of Epidemiology is located in the Graduate School of Public Health at the following address:

Graduate School of Public Health
Department of Epidemiology
Parran/ Crabtree Halls
130 DeSoto Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15261

Epidemiology Chair’s Office: (412) 624-3056
Dean’s Office: (412) 624-3001

Building Hours:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENTRANCE</th>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>TIME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parran Hall Lobby / DeSoto Street</td>
<td>Monday - Friday</td>
<td>7 AM – 6 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Avenue Handicap Entrance</td>
<td>Monday - Friday</td>
<td>7 AM – 10 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Avenue Entrance</td>
<td>Saturday, Sunday, Holidays</td>
<td>9 AM – 3 PM</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Students who wish to have recurring access to Crabtree or Parran Hall outside of regular building hours should discuss this interest with the Epidemiology Student Services staff. A form must be completed to submit the request. Requests will be considered/approved by the department’s administrator.

Advisor/Advisee Roles & Responsibilities

Epidemiology Department applicants who have accepted the Graduate School of Public Health’s (Pitt Public Health’s) offer of admission should contact the advisor identified in their offer letter as soon as possible to introduce themselves and discuss departmental programs and enrollment.

Advisors and advisees meet at intervals throughout the academic year that are mutually determined.
Advisors & advisees may discuss:

- Student academic or professional backgrounds, areas of emphasis & research interests
- Master’s and doctoral program content & requirements
- Term schedules (fall, spring or summer)
- Approval of courses for enrollment
- Course exemptions or credit transfers, as appropriate
- Milestone activity and exam completion
- Faculty committee composition
- Dissertation, thesis or essay development
- Academic progress and student performance
- Graduation requirements
- Career objectives
- Changing of advisors (Refer to the General Policies & Procedures section of the Student Handbook for additional information).

Student Services Office Assistance

Students interact consistently with Epidemiology student services staff throughout their study at Pitt Public Health, from admission and initial enrollment, throughout course work progress and milestone achievement, and finally, as degree completion and graduation approach.

Major responsibilities of the student services staff include:

- Communication with program applicants and students
- Liaison responsibilities on behalf of students with Pitt Public Health staff and faculty
- Responding to course enrollment questions
- Responding to policy and procedural inquiries from prospective, new and continuing students, faculty and staff via telephone, e-mail and office visits/appointments
- Maintenance of student academic files and databases
- Coordination of and participation in Pitt Public Health & departmental special events
- Assistance with student grievance resolution (a Suggestion Box for submission of anonymous inquiries, comments or suggestions is available, and is located on the student mailbox units)
- Forwarding of e-mail departmental policy updates, student events, special presentations, student internship/career-related opportunities
- Assistance with degree completion verification (as follow-up to discussions with assigned faculty advisors)
Epidemiology Student Services Offices

Graduate School of Public Health
University of Pittsburgh
A536 Crabtree Hall
A537 Crabtree Hall
130 DeSoto St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15261

Office Hours: Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM

Office Fax: (412) 383-5325

Student Services Office Staff:

Lori Smith  
Student Services Manager and Program Administrator  
Doctoral and Master’s Degree Programs  
Epidemiology Intranet Content Manager  
Pitt Public Health Department Liaison  
A537 Crabtree Hall  
(412) 383-5269  
smithl@edc.pitt.edu

Amy Rhodes  
Student Services Specialist  
Master’s Degree Programs  
Pitt Public Health Department Liaison  
A536 Crabtree Hall  
(412) 624-3060  
rhodesa@edc.pitt.edu

Rachel Neff  
Student Services Specialist  
Doctoral Degree Programs  
Academic Program Director Administrative Assistant  
A536 Crabtree Hall  
(412) 383-8730  
neffr@edc.pitt.edu

Pitt Public Health Term Codes and Academic Year Structure

Students use academic term codes when completing Pitt Public Health and Departmental forms. These codes are also used throughout all school scheduling information. They consist of four digits:
Digit 1 & Digit 2  Current century
Digit 3  Last digit of current school year*
Digit 4  1 = Fall  4 = Spring  7 = Summer

*The school year extends over a period of two different years. Digit 3 should reflect the last digit of the second year (e.g. last digit of school year 2006 – 2007 is 7).

Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR AND TERM</th>
<th>TERM CODE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>2151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2015</td>
<td>2154</td>
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</tbody>
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There are three terms in the Pitt Public Health academic year:

- Fall  September - December
- Spring  January - April
- Summer  May – August

**Epidemiology Graduate Programs**

The department offers master’s and doctoral degree programs as well as a joint program for students pursuing degrees in the University of Pittsburgh Medical School and the Epidemiology Department (MD/PhD program). Epidemiology also offers a PCMI-MPH program through which students may complete a master’s degree although with a Peace Corps experience. Students may be authorized to pursue two degrees within the Epidemiology (i.e. begin enrollment in an master’s degree program then progress into a doctoral program. Refer to the **Master's** and **Doctoral Degree Programs** sections of the Student Handbook and **MD/PhD Web page** for additional information.

**Student Communications**

Students receive informational updates via e-mail on an ongoing basis from the Student Services and the Pitt Public Health Student Affairs Offices, through Epidemiology newsletters, Pitt Public Health’s Weekly Update newsletters, and the school’s social media sites.

The Pitt Public Health, Department of Epidemiology, and University Web sites also communicate news and events pertaining to students. These Web sites are identified at the end of the Student Handbook’s **Table of Contents**.
Mailboxes for each student are located in the hallway leading from Parran Hall to Crabtree Hall on the fifth floor of Pitt Public Health. Students should check these periodically for departmental and school information.

Students are welcome to make suggestions regarding student communications to the Epidemiology Student Services Manager and Program Administrator, Lori S. Smith smithl@edc.pitt.edu.

Course Enrollment

Most students begin their graduate studies in the Epidemiology Department in fall term, although spring term matriculation for some internal Pitt Public Health students is possible.

Students may self-enroll in courses electronically. Refer to Enrollment in the Student Handbook’s General Policies & Procedures section for additional information. Information about the self enrollment process is also available on the University Registrar’s Office website (www.registrar.pitt.edu). Contact the Epidemiology Student Services Office staff (referenced above) for assistance with getting started with student self-enrollment.

Grades

Any Pitt Public Health course may be audited (not taken for a grade) on a space available basis, with advisor and course instructor approval. The grading basis (system) varies depending upon the course; some courses are taken only for letter grades, but performance may be designated in other courses as “satisfactory,” “honors” or “unsatisfactory.” To determine the grading basis utilized in a course, students should confer with their advisors at the time of enrollment authorization.

More information about grades may be found in the General Policies & Procedures section of the Student Handbook.

Graduation Requirement Tracking

Students must fulfill both school and departmental core course requirements prior to graduation, as well as complete the number of course credits required by their programs of study. These requirements may be modified over time by Pitt Public Health or as specified by school accreditation organizations.

Students are subject to the course requirements in effect at the time of their matriculation. It is recommended that they retain core course and program requirement
information in effect at the time of their initial enrollment to facilitate requirement tracking throughout their programs of study and upon application for graduation.

Pitt Public Health students may apply to graduate in December, April, June, or August.

**Course Exemptions**

Students may be exempted from certain Pitt Public Health or Epidemiology Department core course requirements based upon previous course work. Refer to **Course Exemptions** in the Student Handbook **General Policies & Procedures** section for additional information.

**Credit Transfers**

It is possible for some students to transfer previously earned graduate credits and apply them towards departmental or school credit requirements. However, it is generally not possible for undergraduate credits earned to be transferred towards graduate credit requirements in the department.

Refer to **Credit Transfers** in the Student Handbook **General Policies & Procedures** section for additional information.

**Student Jobs**

It is recommended that students talk with their academic advisors about their desire to find a job while pursuing graduate study to determine if they can make any recommendations or suggestions. Other informational resources for students would be the faculty master’s or doctoral program directors, or the Epidemiology Student Services manager and program administrator. Students may also obtain leads and position information by conferring with the Pitt Public Health Career Services director.

International students should make appointments to meet with University Office of International Services (OIS) staff members to confirm their work eligibility before seeking employment.

**Student Full Time/Part Time Status**

- Students desiring full-time status must take a minimum of 9 credits in the fall and spring terms, with the exception of doctoral students enrolled in the Full-Time Dissertation Research course, FTDR 3999. See Lori Smith, Epidemiology Student Services Manager and Program Administrator for more information.
concerning this research enrollment classification.

- International students must have full-time status in fall and spring terms. Requests for exceptions to this policy should be directed to the University’s Office of International Services (OIS) www.ois.pitt.edu.

- Part-time students may take from 1 – 8.5 credits in the spring and fall terms.

- There is no minimum number of credits that must be taken for summer term (for students who are US Citizens or permanent residents, or international students), with the exception of those doctoral program students who have Graduate Student Researchers (GSR) appointments in summer. These students must take a minimum of 3 credits in this term.

- Note that part-time student status policy related to financial aid is different than status policies related to enrollment. The University’s Office of Admissions and Financial Aid Web site provides additional details concerning this.

### New International Students

The Office of International Services (OIS) provides new international students with a full complement of informational materials and programs to facilitate their transition to life at the University of Pittsburgh. Student services available through the Office are detailed on the OIS website, www.ois.pitt.edu.

New international students must follow required check-in procedures mandated by OIS prior to enrolling in classes.

University policy requires some students to take the English Language Proficiency Test administered by the university’s English Language Institute at the start of their first term, based upon TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) test scores submitted. Depending upon test performance, students may be recommended to take remedial English courses. Students will be contacted if they are required to take the Proficiency Test and if remedial English coursework is recommended.

Academic advisors will also be notified if remedial language instruction is recommended for their advisees.

### Write Placer Diagnostic

As of fall 2014, all new Pitt Public Health degree-seeking students are required to complete the WritePlacer diagnostic exam during their first semester.

This diagnostic gives students (and their advisors) an early evaluation of how much
training they will need in order to achieve the writing competency necessary to graduate from Pitt Public Health.

WritePlacer is an online, computer-graded short essay evaluation. More information about it is available on the Pitt Public Health Web site.

**Academic Integrity Module/Plagiarism and University Internal Review Board (IRB) Module Completion Requirements**

All Pitt Public Health students must complete the school’s online Academic Integrity Module and submit completion certificates to their departments’ Student Services Offices. Epidemiology also requires its students to complete several online IRB modules and to submit completion certificates to Student Services.

Completion of the above modules is a graduation requirement.

**University of Pittsburgh Writing Center**

**University of Pittsburgh Counseling Center**

**Student Organization Participation**

There are several Pitt Public Health graduate student organizations that provide group support and a forum for information exchange, as well as informal networking opportunities.

One of these groups, the Doctoral Student Organization (DSO) coordinates a graduate student match program to foster mentoring relationships among continuing and incoming students.

To learn more about the DSO and other student organizations, please review the Pitt Public Health Web site.

**Pitt Public Health New Student Orientation**

In August, Pitt Public Health holds an orientation program for students matriculating in the fall to welcome them to the school and provide additional information concerning the school and its resources.
Continuing student volunteers will be available to share their experiences and insights with new students. Additionally, near the conclusion of the orientation the Epidemiology Department facilitates a session where new students may meet and ask other questions.

An all-school picnic is also held so that faculty and staff may welcome new and continuing students as they begin the academic year.

Other information concerning these and other school/departmental events is available on the Pitt Public Health calendar.

**Department of Epidemiology New Student Fundamentals Workshop**

This annual workshop is facilitated early in fall term by the Epidemiology Student Services staff. It provides new students with a forum for learning about departmental and school-wide operational processes and resources in greater detail, in addition to degree-program progression, milestone exam requirements, culminating research project development, graduation procedures, effective problem resolution and communication strategies, and other processes that will streamline and simplify life for new students.

**Department of Epidemiology Annual Reception**

Each academic year at the beginning of fall term, the Epidemiology Student Services Office staff hosts a reception to welcome new and continuing students. Faculty and other staff members who work closely with students also attend.

This event is held to kick off the new academic year and provides an opportunity for informal social and professional networking for all who attend.