



Multidisciplinary Master of Public Health

Student Handbook

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Mission and Objectives of the MMPH Program

The mission of the Multidisciplinary Master of Public Health (MMPH) degree program is to prepare doctoral level health professionals to practice in community, public, and global health settings. They will use population-based concepts, health education, health promotion and the preventive components of public and personal health care and practice. The educational program provides these individuals who have varied health science backgrounds with the advanced public health training in which they can incorporate and apply the public health knowledge and skills in a public or private setting. The program is designed to foster a comprehensive overview to bridge the gaps among public health disciplines and subdisciplines. The MMPH is uniquely designed for individuals with advanced degrees (MD, RN, DDS, DO...) and allows them the freedom to self-design their MPH. Comprised of the Pitt Public Health core curriculum (17-19 credits) the students are encouraged to choose electives from varied public health departments to form an area of focus of relevance to them. They are also required to develop advanced competencies that specifically apply to their program and personal goals. This self-designed degree gives the student the flexibility necessary to work around busy clinical schedules. Upon completion of the MMPH, students will have an understanding of statistics, health policy, research design and the ability to contribute to new research in their chosen fields of interest.

Office of the Multidisciplinary Master of Public Health

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Prerequisites for Admission

In addition to the standard Pitt Public Health admission requirements:

- The applicant must have earned a doctoral degree in a health science OR be currently enrolled in a United States doctoral/masters level clinical health training with preferably two years of this program having been completed.
- The GRE or US clinical equivalent is required. For applicants who already have a doctorate at an American university, but who no longer have documentation of the GRE or the clinical equivalent, this requirement may be waived at the discretion of the MMPH director. For graduates of foreign universities, the GRE is still required.
- Admissions to the MMPH program are for fall, spring or summer term. Applications are reviewed when the application and all supporting documents are received.

International Graduates:

Graduates of foreign medical or dental schools, to be eligible for consideration should:

- Hold a valid dental or medical license in the United States or be eligible for dental or medical licensure in the United States, e.g., passed all necessary examinations and served required time in an approved residency program, or
- Be currently in a residency or fellowship program, or
- Be an outstanding candidate with appropriate clinical and/or research training to justify consideration for admission, e.g., a visiting scholar clinician who will return to his or her native country.

More information on the application process can be found on the Pitt Public Health website: <http://www.publichealth.pitt.edu/apply#degree>

I. Program of Study

The Multidisciplinary Master of Public Health Program is a 42 credit program. The majority of incoming students will work with the program director to ensure that they receive appropriate advanced standing credits for graduate degrees earned prior to admission, or relevant graduate degrees pursued concurrently with the MMPH, but in all cases students must earn a minimum of 36 credits to complete the MMPH degree.

A. Pitt Public Health MMPH Core Requirements:

BCHS 2509	Social & Behavioral Sciences and Public Health	3 Credits
BIOST 2011	Principles of Statistical Reasoning	3 Credits
or		
BIOST 2041	Intro to Statistical Methods I	3 Credits
EOH 2013	Environmental Health and Disease	3 Credits
EPIDEM 2110	Principles of Epidemiology	3 Credits
HPM 2001	Health Policy and Management in Public Health	3 Credits
PUBHLT 2015	Public Health Biology	2 Credits
PUBHLT 2016	Capstone Course	2 Credits
PUBHLT 2022	Dean's Public Health Grand Rounds	0 Credits

B. The MMPH Program and Electives

Including the core requirements and [common cross-cutting competencies](#), the MMPH curriculum is flexible. The student should work with the program director **upon admission or shortly thereafter** to identify advanced competencies (goals) for his or her program, and suggested courses for achieving those advanced competencies. Students should meet with the program director as part of initiating to the program and then at minimum, twice yearly. Moreover, the program director is available at any time to help direct the trajectory of each individual program and help develop further specific advanced competencies for each student. The advanced competencies worksheet should be completed as early as possible as part of the program design during or before the end of the first semester.

[Advanced competencies worksheet](#)

C. Practicum

All students are required to complete a practicum. Practica will be individually arranged between the student and the MMPH program director, depending on the individual interests of the student, and may blend the student's existing clinical or professional work with additional experience that has a public health focus. The MMPH practicum is a minimum of 150 hours with no upper limit on the hours performed and usually 1 – 3 elective credits. Evaluation of the practicum experience is completed by both the student and the preceptor (see forms below). The site

agreement form should be completed **before** initiating the practicum experience. Deliverables for the practicum experience should also be clearly developed before the practicum starts.

[Site Agreement](#)
[Preceptor Evaluation Form](#)

D. Essay Requirement

All MMPH students must complete a masters essay, and register for 1-2 credits of PUBHLT 2002 (essay) as a requirement before graduation. The essay serves as the synthesizing document and should demonstrate a mastery of public health concepts, principles and practice. The essay may be based upon the practicum experience, or may be another related or unrelated research product, program proposal, or literature review. The essay topic and committee [readers] must be chosen in concert with the program director, **ideally, as early as possible** in the student's path in the program. Research involving human subjects must be approved by the University of Pittsburgh [Institutional Review Board](#).

The essay committee must consist of a minimum of two University of Pittsburgh graduate faculty members – a primary advisor and at least one additional reader. One of the two members must be on the [core list](#)* of a Pitt Public Health department; the second reader/committee member must not be on the same core list. (The second reader may be on the core list of a second Pitt Public Health department or may be a faculty member with an appointment in another school at the University.)

The MMPH program coordinator will submit a written memo to the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs requesting approval of the proposed composition of the essay committee.

It is expected that multiple preliminary drafts will have been reviewed by all or some of the readers before a final draft is submitted. The final document must be submitted to all readers for review and comments at a minimum of two weeks before graduation.

Thesis/Essay Format

The MPH thesis/essay must be in accordance with the specifications stipulated in the [Format Instructions for Pitt Public Health Essays, Theses, and Dissertations](#). For additional information regarding essay and thesis format and requirements, and committee composition please read the Pitt Public Health [academic handbook](#). In order to present a thesis instead of an essay for graduation, three readers will be required and the student will defend an oral presentation along with the written essay deliverable. Examples may be found on the site: <http://d-scholarship.pitt.edu/view/divisions/sch=5Fgsph/>

* Core faculty of a department are those faculty with primary appointments in the department, plus any other faculty included by the department on the core list because of significant involvement in the educational mission of that department.

**MULTIDISCIPLINARY MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH DEGREE PROGRAM
TOTAL MINIMUM PROGRAM CREDITS: 42**

Required Courses

CORE COURSES	COURSE TITLE	CREDITS	TERM	GRADE
BCHS 2509	Social & Behavioral Sciences of Public Health	3		
BIOST 2011 or BIOST 2041	Principles of Statistical Reasoning Intro to Statistical Methods I	3 3		
EOH 2013	Environmental Health and Disease	3		
EPIDEM 2110	Principles of Epidemiology	3		
HPM 2001	Health Policy and Management in Public Health	3		
PUBHLT 2015	Public Health Biology	2		
PUBHLT 2016	Capstone Course	2		
PUBHLT 2022	Dean's Public Health Grand Rounds	0		
	Total Credits			

Electives: Take as many of the following courses which should have arisen out of your meeting with Dr. Finegold as needed to bring your program total to the level that it needs to be:

Transfer Credits: Block: <u> 6 </u>, Other: <u> </u>; Credits Needed:	CREDITS	TERM	GRADE
Total Credits			

ESSAY/THESIS AND PRACTICUM REQUIREMENT

PUBHLT 2002 or 2012	MMPH Essay/Thesis - see guidelines	1 or 2		
PUBHLT 2029	MMPH Practicum	1 - 3		

Waivers of program requirements, transfer credits, core courses, and electives must be made with the consent of the Director.

F. School of Dental Medicine Requirements

Students may complete a maximum of 8 credits from the following list of courses, taken outside the Graduate School of Public Health, but which will apply **only to the MPH**, and not to a degree in the School of Dental Medicine:

- a) Contemporary Issues in Dental Public Health, CDENT 5916, 2 cr.
- b) Independent Study, CDENT 5900, 2-3 cr.
- c) Bridging the GAPS, SOM #xxx, 1-2 cr.
- d) Dental Epidemiology, CDENTxxxx, 2 cr.

Alternatively, students may elect a 6 credit path from the above and also apply these to the dental degree.

Dental Practicum

Students who are pursuing the MMPH simultaneously with the DMD at the University of Pittsburgh may fulfill the MMPH practicum requirement by completion of 130 - 160 hours in the dental school Scope 1 and Scope 2 experiences. Scope 1 community service experiences will be guided to include projects with potential public health relevance. These will be documented in the journals and writings of the students and will count towards the practicum. These experiences will then be more directly applied during Scope 2 clinical experience. This more extensive experiences of Scope 1 and 2 should account for 130-160 hours, fulfilling the majority of practicum requirements. Additional public health experiences may be approved by the MMPH director and Dr. Rubin. Such experiences may include community projects such as Bridging the GAP, high school career mentoring, oral hygiene instruction to refugees and immigrants, missionary work, etc. A reflective journal or short paper documenting these events should emphasize the practical public health aspects of the experience.

Students should register for one credit of MMPH practicum during the period in which they are completing the final hours of the practicum project.

For those students who wish to develop a comprehensive alternative practicum project, the MMPH program has sufficient flexibility to approve meritorious proposals that would fulfill the 150 hour minimum requirement. The MMPH program director and Dr. Rubin should approve such alternative projects.

G. Practicum for Periodontal Residents

Residents in the Department of Periodontics and Preventive Dentistry who are pursuing the MMPH simultaneously with completing the certificate in periodontics may fulfill the MMPH practicum requirement by completion of the approximately 250 hours rotation at the Veterans Administration Hospitals of Pittsburgh. As part of their training, periodontics residents serve veterans of the U.S. armed forces eight hours each week for eight months, providing periodontal and preventive dental treatment services to patients of the VA Pittsburgh at its H.J.Heinz Division in Aspinwall. The periodontics residents provide service by educating the veterans about periodontal disease and the relationship between periodontal inflammation and systemic health, teaching patients about the prevention of periodontal disease by treatment and subsequent diligent self-care at home, providing treatment for veterans with active periodontal disease and then follow-up care for those same patients, to reinforce self-care as an effective home routine to maintain established good oral health. This practicum experience may serve as one option for the master's essay required for the MMPH degree.

Periodontics residents should register for one credit of MMPH practicum during each semester they are in rotation at the Aspinwall VA.

H. School of Medicine Requirements

The MMPH degree provides a foundation of public health training for a medical student. A Masters degree would be conferred from either the MMPH program or a comparable departmental masters program within Pitt Public Health. The student would work closely with Pitt Public Health faculty and staff to determine when and in what department the Pitt Public Health application would be reviewed and the student matriculated so as to be blended seamlessly with the MD degree. Pitt Public Health and the School of Medicine will work closely together to ensure the integration of the two programs. The student would be able to join the program any time after completion of year one of medical school or after graduation but before residency training. The program targets fulfilling all degree requirements within a one year time span.

II. Policies and Procedures of Pitt Public Health

A. *Forms and Deadlines*

Registration for each term must be done with the advice of the student's academic advisor and the academic advisor must sign the registration form.

There are registration deadlines. Course schedules for the Pitt Public Health are available online at: <http://www.publichealth.pitt.edu/printable-course-schedules> or at the Pitt Public Health Office of Student Affairs (114 Parran Hall).

Registration and other forms related to enrollment are available in the Office of Student Affairs. Most forms require a faculty or administrator's signature.

Students who have any problems in accessing these forms should contact the MMPH Office, and we will be happy to make accommodations for them. Please return all registration forms to the MMPH Administrator who will then register you for class. Enrollment forms can be found here:

<http://www.registrar.pitt.edu/assets/pdf/Enrollment%20Worksheet.pdf>

Please note that a student can add or drop classes without penalty during the first ten days of each semester, but if he or she does not complete an initial registration by the deadline (noted on the University Academic Calendar, available online through the University's Calendar site, <http://www.provost.pitt.edu/information-on/calendar.html>), he or she will be assessed a late fee.

- **Graduation Application**

This form allows a student to apply for graduation from his or her program. The Pitt Public Health Office of Student Affairs sets an internal deadline for these applications to ensure that all paperwork is properly processed. Please note that these deadlines usually occur early in the semester that the student intends to graduate. Students can check these deadlines by contacting Joanne Pegher by phone at 412-624-3005 or by email at jpegher@pitt.edu.

B. *Application for Graduation*

Each candidate for graduation must file an official Application for Graduation in the Pitt Public Health Office of Student Affairs. Deadlines, usually posted outside the Office of Student Affairs, are usually three months before the date of graduation. The timetable for submission of documents pertaining to graduation must be strictly observed. There is a penalty for late filing.

Students must be registered for at least one credit in the term in which they graduate. Degree requirements must be completed in the semester the student

applied for graduation. If not, the student must re-apply for graduation in the term in which he or she completes these requirements. Before the degree can be posted, I and/or G grades must be changed.

There are four graduations per year: December, April, June and August. However, the University holds one ceremony per year, in late April or early May. Pitt Public Health holds a separate ceremony on the weekend of the University commencement event. Graduates of the previous June, August, and December are invited to participate in the spring ceremony. Diplomas are mailed to graduates. Diplomas are not ordered until after graduation and usually are received several months after graduation.

III. Departmental Contact Information

Behavioral and Community Health Sciences (BCHS)

Miriam Fagan
Student Liaison
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Department website: www.bchs.pitt.edu

Biostatistics

Renee Valenti
Student Liaison
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Environmental and Occupational Health (EOH)

Penny Weiss
Student Liaison
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Department website: www.eoh.pitt.edu

Epidemiology

Lori Smith
Student Liaison
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SmithL@edc.pitt.edu
Department website: www.epidemiology.pitt.edu

Health Policy and Management (HPM)

Jessica Dornin
Student Liaison
412-624-3625

jld115@pitt.edu

Department website: www.hpm.pitt.edu

Human Genetics

Noel Harrie
Student Liaison
412-624-3066

nce1@pitt.edu

Department website: www.hgen.pitt.edu

Infectious Diseases and Microbiology (IDM)

Abby Michael
Student Liaison
412-624-3331

idm@pitt.edu

Department website: www.idm.pitt.edu

Public Health Courses (PUBHLT)

Bernadette Foley
(412) 624-3002

foleyb@pitt.edu

From the Office of Disability Resources:

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services (address below) as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course:

*140 William Pitt Union
412/648-7890 or
412/838-7355 (TTY)*



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