PUBLIC HEALTH, MPH: EPIDEMIOLOGY

The Epidemiology track emphasizes the application of epidemiologic theory and methods for promoting social justice and health equity. The integrated, multidisciplinary curriculum bridges theory, research, and practice to prepare students to engage in rigorous, collaborative, evidence-informed and reflexive public health practice. Through both didactic and experiential learning, students acquire foundations of applied epidemiological methods, epidemiologic data analysis, theories of social inequality, social epidemiology, and community partnership building. Graduates are able to collect, analyze, and interpret epidemiological information, generate theory-driven hypotheses and research questions, and work in true collaboration with diverse community partners to create social change to improve the public’s health and reduce health inequities.

Related Certificate
- Interprofessional Graduate Certificate in Public and Population Health (http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/interprofessional-graduate-certificate-in-public-and-population-health/)

The Zilber School of Public Health (SPH) offers a Master of Public Health (MPH), a PhD in Public Health with a Concentration in Community and Behavioral Health Promotion, a PhD in Public Health with a Concentration in Biostatistics, a PhD in Environmental Health Sciences, and a PhD in Epidemiology.

Master of Public Health
The Master of Public Health offered by the Zilber SPH is a professional master’s degree program with five distinct tracks of study. The MPH program provides students with a broad understanding of public health practice and allows specialization in Biostatistics, Community and Behavioral Health Promotion, Environmental Health Sciences, Epidemiology, or Public Health Policy and Administration.

Like most MPH programs, the Zilber SPH’s program imparts knowledge and skills in each of these core disciplines in public health, helping prepare all students to analyze information and consider solutions to public health problems using a social justice lens at the community, institutional, and societal levels. Courses have been designed to teach program- and track-level competencies as defined by Zilber SPH faculty. Program-level competencies reflect key public health skills including systems thinking, ethics, analytical methods, communications/informatics, diversity/culture, leadership, and professionalism. In addition, students engage in a specific track of study, gaining deeper competency in one of the five areas. Upon graduation students are prepared for positions in a range of population health settings and/or for doctoral-level study.

Admission Requirements

Application Deadlines
Application deadlines vary by program, please review the application deadline chart (http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/program-deadlines/) for specific programs. Other important dates and deadlines can be found by using the One Stop calendars (https://uwm.edu/onestop/dates-and-deadlines/).

Admission
An applicant must meet Graduate School requirements plus the desired track of study requires: the following program requirements to be considered for admission to the program. These materials will be considered in a holistic admissions process with special attention to ensure a diverse student body.

1. Three letters of recommendation from persons familiar with the applicant’s academic experience and potential for graduate work in public health.
2. CV or resume.
3. Score report from the General Test of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) (http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/admission/#gre), taken within the last five years.
4. The admissions committee may consider GMAT (http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/admission/#gmat), LSAT, MCAT scores in place of GRE (http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/admission/#gre) scores. Students requesting this or any other exception should apply in writing for consideration by the Applications Review Committee.
5. Address the following two Short Essay questions, limiting responses to no more than 500 words (approximately 250 words per question):
   - Describe how your professional, volunteer, and educational background has led you to seek a degree in Public Health.
   - How will your desired track of study help you reach your personal and professional goals in Public Health?
6. International applicants must also meet admission standards set and monitored by UWM’s Center for International Education.
7. MPH applicants must use SOPHAS (https://sophas.org/) to apply. When applying applicants must select their track of which they are applying; Biostatistics, Community and Behavioral Health Promotion, Environmental Health Sciences, Epidemiology, or Public Health Policy & Administration.
8. Tracks may have additional admission requirements, which can be found here (http://uwm.edu/publichealth/faqs/).

Credits and Courses
All students enrolled in the MPH program take a common set of core classes designed to give basic skills and knowledge of public health concepts. The core curriculum consists of at least 24-25 credit hours, including at least a four-credit Field Experience and a two-credit capstone seminar. In addition to the common core, students complete the required coursework in one of five specialization tracks: Biostatistics (48 credits), Community and Behavioral Health Promotion (48-49 credits), Environmental Health Sciences (47 credits), Epidemiology (49 credits), or Public Health Policy and Administration (48 credits). Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better in order to progress through the program.

Unless noted, all courses are 3 credits.

MPH Required Common Core Courses (24-25 credits)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PH 702</td>
<td>Introduction to Biostatistics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 703</td>
<td>Environmental Health Sciences</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 704</td>
<td>Principles and Methods of Epidemiology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 705</td>
<td>Principles of Public Health Policy and Administration</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Field Experience enables students to apply knowledge and skills learned in the classroom to public health problems in a community context. Students work with their Faculty Advisor and school staff to identify a placement that matches their public health interests and career goals. Possible placement settings include a local health department, state health department, non-profit agency, hospital system, or research institute. The experience is a mentored placement engaging both a Faculty Advisor and a Site Preceptor. Students complete at least two products as agreed upon with the Site Preceptor.

Students complete three credits (80 contact hours per one credit, 240 hours total) with the organization. The specified competencies, scope of work, and final products for the organization are defined in a learning agreement, which is signed by the student, preceptor, faculty advisor and course instructor. Students must demonstrate attainment of at least five competencies, three of which must be Foundational Competencies (see Field Experience Handbook), and two of which are identified from the track competency sets.

Two Foundational Competencies are required of all students:

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

Students choose their third Foundational Competency.

The fourth credit is designed to give students the opportunity to apply three specific Foundational Competencies related to the Field Experience. The required competencies are:

- **CEPH 16.** Apply principles of leadership, governance and management, which include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration and guiding decision making.
- **CEPH 17.** Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges.
- **CEPH 21.** Perform effectively on interprofessional teams. Students from at least two professions constitute an interprofessional team.

Students fulfill these competencies with readings and through a series of activities including case studies or scenarios/role playing exercises. Assessments for the leadership, negotiation and interprofessional team competencies will include participation in the sessions and written papers.

All four credits may be taken in one semester or spread out over two semesters.

**Capstone**

The capstone requires students to integrate the knowledge and skills learned in the classroom, Field Experience, and/or lab into some aspect of professional public health practice. Students work with their Faculty Advisor to write a project proposal the semester prior to the capstone reflecting the student’s interests and career goals. Students then implement the project during their final semester of the program. The project has both a written paper and oral presentation component, in addition to attending a weekly seminar. The capstone project is an opportunity for students to demonstrate public health competencies.

**Epidemiology Concentration**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PH 700</td>
<td>Structures of Inequality and Population Health</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 758</td>
<td>Social Epidemiology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 759</td>
<td>Intro to Regression for Understanding the SDOH</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 761</td>
<td>Epidemiology Field Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 763</td>
<td>Epidemiology for Equity</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Evaluates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S Electives</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Select one of the following:

- PH 762  Environmental Epidemiology
- PH 768  Cancer Epidemiology
- PH 769  Critical Perspectives on Nutritional Epidemiology and the Food System

Other classes as approved by advisor

**Evaluates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S Electives</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Select two of the following:

- PH 713  Analyzing Observational and Experimental Data
- PH 714  Statistical Genetics and Genetic Epidemiology
- PH 715  Applied Categorical Data
- PH 716  Applied Survival Analysis
- PH 717  Applied Longitudinal Data Analysis
- PH 727  Program Planning & Implementation in Public Health
- PH 728  Program Evaluation in Public Health
- PH 729  Survey Research Methods in Public Health (not both)
- or SOCIOL 752  Fundamentals of Survey Methodology
- PH 784  Social and Economic Policy as Health Policy
Program Requirements

Faculty Advisor
Each student will be assigned a track-specific Faculty Advisor during Orientation week preceding the first semester. Faculty Advisors assist the student in the development of an individual Plan of Study designed to advance the career goals of the student and be consistent with the track curriculum. The Advisor plays an important role in connecting the Field Experience, Capstone, and career goals for each student.

UWM’s Zilber School recognizes the importance of a strong faculty advising program coupled with a sound system for monitoring student progress in all programs. Each semester, students are asked to assess their own progress through a required survey. They also complete a progress form together with their advisor. Feedback to students will be provided by their faculty advisor in December during their advisor-student meeting.

Administrative offices of the Zilber School of Public Health have staff assigned on policies and procedures for admission, academic progression, and graduation. If deemed necessary, any student can petition to the Zilber SPH’s Office of Academic and Student Affairs for a reassignment of Faculty Advisor. Program track faculty will make every effort to accommodate requests to give all students opportunities for success in the program.

Thesis
Not required. See capstone for similar culminating experience.

Comprehensive Examination
Not required. See capstone for similar culminating experience.

Time Limit
The student must complete all degree requirements within five years of initial enrollment.