PUBLIC HEALTH, MPH: PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION

Public health policy includes local, state, and federal policies that directly or indirectly impact the level and distribution of health in the population. At the Zilber School, we take a broad inter-sectoral view that includes a “Health in All Policies” approach. This framework recognizes that the level and distribution of health and wellbeing in the population are fundamentally shaped by public policies that create the social and economic conditions that underlie population health and health equity.

What makes our program distinct?

The Public Health Policy & Administration (PHPA) track is nationally distinct in its inter-sectoral, systems-level, and justice focused curriculum. Emphasizing the social, political, and economic determinants of health, students in the PHPA track gain foundational understanding of social and policy theories, and their relevance to public health practice and policymaking in various contexts.

The PHPA track also uniquely trains students in both quantitative, econometric policy analysis and qualitative research methods, with application to real-world public health policy problems.

Related Certificate


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

If at any time you are unsure about a published date or deadline (http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/program-deadlines), call the Registrar’s Office at (414) 229-3800 or submit a contact form (http://uwm.edu/registrar/contact-us) online.

Admission

An applicant must meet Graduate School requirements plus as 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 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, Community and Behavioral Health Promotion, Environmental Health Sciences, Epidemiology, or Public Health Policy and Administration. The MPH degree varies from 46-48 credits depending on the track. Students must maintain a cumulative G.P.A. of 3.0 or better in order to progress through the program.

Unless noted, all courses are 3 credits.
MPH Required Common Core Courses (at least 24 credits)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<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>
<tr>
<td>PH 706</td>
<td>Perspectives on Community &amp; Behavioral Health</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 708</td>
<td>Health Systems and Population Health</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 790</td>
<td>Field Experience in Public Health (See following section for details)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 800</td>
<td>Capstone in Public Health (See following section for details)</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total Credits 24

1 Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory; may be taken for 1, 2, 3, or 4 credits in a given semester.
2 Completed in the final year of study.

Field Experience

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 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. One foundational competency is required of all students:

- 19. Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation

Students complete at least two products as agreed upon with the Site Preceptor.

In addition to the three credits/240 hours with an organization, students complete a one-credit module as part of the Field Experience designed to integrate competencies in leadership, negotiation, and interprofessional teamwork. 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 fulfill these competencies through a series of activities including forums, workshops, case studies, an 8-week course, or specific projects at the organization. Students from at least two professions constitute an interprofessional team. Assessments for the leadership, negotiation and interprofessional team competencies may be presentations in a forum, written reflections, or other written and/or oral exercises.

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.

Public Health Policy and Administration Concentration

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PH 700</td>
<td>Structures of Inequality and Population Health</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 776</td>
<td>Qualitative Approaches in Public Health Policy and Administration</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 759</td>
<td>Intro to Regression for Understanding the SDOH (Social Determinants of Health)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 777</td>
<td>Quantitative Research Methods for PH Policy &amp; Administration</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PH 779</td>
<td>Public Health Policymaking and Policy Analysis</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 781</td>
<td>Public Health Administration</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 785</td>
<td>Principles of Public Health Economics</td>
<td>3</td>
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Content Electives 3

Choose at least one

- PH 769 Critical Perspectives on Nutritional Epidemiology and the Food System
- PH 774 Violence and Health
- PH 784 Social and Economic Policy as Health Policy
- PH 820 Maternal and Child Health Foundations, Policy and Practice
- PH 859 Racial/Ethnic Health Disparities in the United States

Other classes as approved by advisor

Methods Electives 3

Choose at least one

- PH 726 Community Health Assessment
- PH 727 Program Planning & Implementation in Public Health
- PH 728 Program Evaluation in Public Health
- PH 729 Survey Research Methods in Public Health
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PH 763</td>
<td>Epidemiology for Equity</td>
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<tr>
<td>BUSMGMT 718</td>
<td>Concepts and Practice of Nonprofit Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>ED POL 601</td>
<td>Foundations of Community-Based Organizations</td>
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<td>ED POL 602</td>
<td>Proposal Writing and Fundraising Skills for Community-Based Organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>ED POL 711</td>
<td>Community Change and Engagement Strategies:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NONPROF 791</td>
<td>Nonprofit Advocacy and Public Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUB ADM 630</td>
<td>Budgeting and Finance in the Public Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URBPLAN 791</td>
<td>Introduction to Urban Geographic Information Systems for Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Credits</td>
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* For those students who elect to take PH 759, the Elective Methods course must be approved by both Professors Do and Hussein for appropriate quantitative level and content. Alternatively, the student may elect to complete an independent study under Professor Do and/or Professor Hussein.

**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 1) their faculty advisor in December during their advisor-student meeting and 2) a letter in May signed by their faculty advisor and program director confirming progress and noting any guidance for subsequent years, including plans and timetable for remediation when necessary.

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.