

The Master of Public Health (MPH) curriculum consists of four types of courses:

- Required Core Courses (PubH 201 – PubH 208)
- Required Program-Specific Courses
- Required Practicum and Culminating Experience
- Elective Courses

The MPH core courses are designed to provide students with a broad public health context as well as a critical foundation for subsequent coursework. Early completion of these core courses ensures that students will have the base of knowledge to successfully complete the program-specific courses and to get as much as possible out of them. As such, effective July 1, 2006, entering students are expected to enroll in MPH core courses in accordance with the following guidelines:

- We expect MPH students to complete the MPH core courses in their first year of graduate study (fall/spring/summer). This does not include PubH 208 (Management Approaches to Public Health), which should be taken in the second half of the program of study, and which requires every other core course as a pre-requisite.
- Further, we expect MPH students to complete the following MPH courses in the first two semesters of study:
 - PubH 201 – Biological Concepts for Public Health
 - PubH 202 (Biostatistics) **or** PubH 203 (Epidemiology)
 - PubH 205 – Policy Approaches to Public Health

These guidelines reinforce the principle that core courses should be taken early. However, since the core courses (minus PubH 208) consist of only 15 or 16 credits, it is also both feasible and desirable for full-time students (who are taking at least 9 credits per semester) to take introductory program-specific courses in their first year. For example, in addition to the required core courses, full-time Global Health students can take PubH 321 in their first year, while full-time Health Policy students can take PubH 281.

Part-time students (who generally take 6 or 7 credits per semester) will typically concentrate on taking core courses in their first year, and then take program-specific courses in their second and third years.

In order to facilitate the ability of students to complete core courses in the first year of study, the SPHHS will offer all core courses during all three sessions (fall, spring, and summer). The exception to this is PubH 206 (the 3-credit version of the health behavior core course), which will only be offered in the fall and spring semesters. This will allow students who wish to complete their MPH degree within two years to do so, and will allow every student to make steady progress toward completing the MPH degree.

We recognize that there may be exceptional circumstances that make it difficult for a student to complete core courses in the first year as outlined above. Any such student should discuss this situation with his or her academic advisor. If the advisor and student agree that an exception is needed, the student should complete a Graduate Petition Form explaining the circumstances, obtain the academic advisor's signature, and submit the Petition to the SPHHS Office of Student Records. The Associate Dean for Student and Faculty Development must approve such a petition before a student is permitted to defer any core courses.