



BEHAVIORAL AND COMMUNITY
HEALTH SCIENCES

MPH HANDBOOK
2022-2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1

Welcome to BCHS

5

**PPH Policies and
Procedures**

15

**Accelerated
Bachelor's/Master's
Program**

24

Essay/Thesis

31

FAQ

2

BCHS Core Courses

6

Joint Programs

17

Community Practicum

30

Graduation

34

Appendix

WELCOME TO BCHS

This handbook is designed to help you navigate your time in the MPH program. Generally, we've designed it to go in chronological order, but we recognize each student is unique. Regardless, the expectation is that students will use this document as a guide throughout their program and consult it frequently. The answers to most of your questions can be found herein.

ORIENTATION

For students admitted in the fall, orientation might begin when they meet with their academic advisor during the summer to register for the first time. But usually, students' first orientation experience will be the school-wide orientation held the week before classes begin in the fall. At this orientation, students can “plunge” into Pitt Public Health with brief seminars, tours of campus and Pittsburgh, and meet faculty, staff, and continuing students in department-specific break-out sessions. It's a fun way to get to meet friends and get to know Pittsburgh, Pitt Public Health, and BCHS. An orientation event is held in early January for those beginning their studies in the spring semester, though this is much smaller.

COURSE OF STUDY

All master's students complete a set of school core courses, a set of departmental required courses, and a few electives. The program is designed to be completed in four semesters of full-time study (Fall, Spring, Fall, and Spring), though with careful scheduling and full-time study, the degree can be finished in three semesters. Full-time study is considered to be 9-15 credits. Part-time students are also welcome; however, your course of study will take more planning because of core course scheduling and your schedule. Students cannot complete the MPH program without registering for some daytime courses.

You are responsible for knowing what you need to do to fulfill the requirements for the MPH program. We will support you in making course-related decisions by posting checklists and information online and by posting sequencing guidelines. But ultimately, the responsibility lies with you.

PITT PUBLIC HEALTH CORE COURSES

All students must fulfill the Pitt Public Health core requirements. You can waive school core courses if you took an equivalent graduate-level course before coming to Pitt Public Health. However, note that granting of the waiver is up to the discretion of the core course instructor and that you are still responsible for fulfilling the credit hours (e.g., if you get an exemption for EPID 2110 you still need to take 3 credit hours in its place). Applications for waiver of school

PPH CORE COURSE REQUIREMENTS

	CREDITS	Fall	SPRING	SUMMER
PUBHLT 2033 Foundations	1	X		
PUBHLT 2034 PHC	2	X	X	X
PUBHLT 2015 PH Bio	2	X		X
PUBHLT 2035 Applications	2	X	X	X
PUBHLT 2022 (X2) Ground Rounds	0	X	X	
BIOS 2011 Preferred for most	3		X	
BIOS 2041 w/strong stats background	3	X		
EPID 2110	3	X		X
EOH 2013	3	X	X	
HPM 2001	3	X	X	

requirements are at:

<https://publichealth.pitt.edu/Portals/0/notes/Student%20Services/1FINALMPH%20Core%20Course%20Exemption%20Form.pdf?ver=2022-06-22-150618-110>

The Appendix contains a checklist of required courses. (Joint degree students see the Joint Degree chapter.)

BCHS CORE COURSES

All students must complete a) the following departmental core courses:

BCHS CORE COURSE REQUIREMENTS

	CREDITS	FALL	SPRING
BCHS 2520 Theories	1		X
BCHS 2992 Systems Approaches	1		X
BCHS 2990 Social Dynamics	1		X
BCHS 2525 Applied Research	3	X	X
BCHS 2554 Community Health	3	X	X

b) Approved electives: students must choose a minimum of six credits from an approved list of courses (see Appendix for checklist)

c) Additional electives: students choose elective courses to reach the minimum of 45 credits required for the degree. Electives can be

chosen from among departmental courses, offerings in other public health departments, and other University departments.

d) Experience in applying theories and methods through Practicum (BCHS 2503) (1-3 credits)

e) Essay/thesis (BCHS 2521) (1-3 credits) (Students are allowed to register for a maximum of 4 essay/thesis credits over the course of their studies.)

ELECTIVES

In addition to the required courses listed above, you will choose elective courses to meet the required minimum of 45 credits. You can use elective credits to enhance your knowledge in an academic or methodological area of interest or to pursue a certificate (see chapter on certificates).

You can take electives in other Pitt Public Health departments or in other University schools or departments with the permission of the academic advisor. Permission from the instructor may also be required.

If you have completed graduate work in another program you may request that credits from that program be transferred and applied to the MPH. Courses must be relevant to the MPH. Complete the request for advanced standing credit with your advisor; final approval is given by the Office of Student Affairs. **A maximum of 6 credits can be transferred in.**

INDEPENDENT STUDY

When students choose to register for independent study credits, they must identify a faculty member who will work closely with them to design a course of study and oversee the work involved. When students take this option for earning credits, they must complete the independent study form found in the Appendix, which involves identifying the faculty advisor, outlining the work to be completed, and establishing a timeline. You will not be allowed to register for independent study credits without this paperwork. Upon completion of

the agreed-on work, you can request that independent studies be given a formal name, to reflect the content of the work completed more accurately. Paul Markgraf can issue you a permission number to register for an independent study and can also complete the name change form.

SUGGESTED COURSE SEQUENCING

There are many ways to complete the program. One of the more common ways for students to complete the program is shown below. With careful scheduling, you can also complete the program in three semesters.

SUGGESTED COURSE SEQUENCE: FT STUDENTS, 4 SEMESTERS

COURSES	FALL I	SPRING I	FALL II	SPRING II
School Core	EPID 2110 (3) PUBHLT 2015 (2) PUBHLT 2033* (1) PUBHLT 2022	BIOST 2011 (3) PUBHLT 2022	PUBHLT 2034 (2) HPM 2001 (3)	PUBHLT 2035 (2) EOH 2013 (2)
BCHS Core & required electives	BCHS 2554 (3) BCHS 2525 (3) BCHS 2521 (3)	BCHS 2520 (1) BCHS 2992 (1) BCHS 2990 (1) BCHS 2503 (3) (3) credits approved elective	(3) credits approved elective	
Electives	Certificate students: Check required sequencing	(3) credits	(3+) credits	

*PUBHLT 2033 MUST be taken first Fall semester
Evaluation Certificate students must take BCHS 2525 in their first fall semester.

This is a suggested sequence only. Students can take most courses in the semester that works with their schedule, certificate requirements, and joint program guidelines.

MEETING CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

A full credit load is 9-15 credits per term. With advance approval, enrolled graduate students can take courses not available at the University of Pittsburgh at other institutions and transfer those credits, assuming the total number of transfer (advanced standing) credits does not exceed six. At least three terms, or 39 credits, must be completed at the University of Pittsburgh.

Undergraduate quality points and undergraduate credits (except for upper-level courses taken with your academic advisor's approval) do not count toward graduation.

If your cumulative QPA falls below 3.0, or if you fail (a grade lower than a C) a core course at any time during the course of study, you will automatically be placed on academic probation. Students and their advisors will be informed in writing of procedures to remove the probation in an appropriate period. Typically, you will be given two full-time semesters to clear the probation. You cannot graduate with a cumulative QPA below 3.0 or a failing grade in any required course.

A grade of B or better is encouraged for all school-wide core courses; if you earn a B-, C+, or C in a school core course, the school's Educational Policies and Curriculum Committee recommends that you and your advisor discuss the grade and that you are strongly encouraged to re-take the course. However, the committee does leave the final decision to the advisor and the student.

You must earn a grade of B or better in departmental core courses.

INCOMPLETES AND CLASS WITHDRAWALS

To graduate, outstanding incomplete grades ("I" or "G") must be changed to letter grades or S/H. Check with your advisor if you have an incomplete grade in a class that is not required for graduation and you have met the 45-credit program minimum.

A "G" grade is given when personal circumstances prevent students from completing coursework during the semester in which they are registered. Students must arrange with the course instructor for this option. According to University policy, the student has one year to complete the work and have the grade changed; however, the instructor can set the time frame within which to complete the work.

A "W" is given when the student requests permission to submit a "monitored withdrawal" form for a course. This is arranged with the course instructor and may be done up to the deadline specified in the Academic Calendar. If the course is required for graduation, the student must register again for the course at a later time when it is offered.

An "I" is assigned for non-classroom "courses" in cases when work is likely to take more than one semester to complete. Only practicum, independent studies, and thesis are given "I" grades.

PITT PUBLIC HEALTH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students have an obligation to exhibit honesty in carrying out academic assignments. If you violate this obligation, adjudication proceedings by University policy may be undertaken. In all cases, the objective is to provide fundamental fairness to the student and an orderly means for arriving at a decision, starting first with the individual instructor and then designated administrative officers or bodies. Academic integrity guidelines address issues of plagiarism, collaboration on assignments when individual work is required, and the use of ideas of others without proper citations. Students are required to complete an online academic integrity module in their first semester. **No student will be allowed to graduate until this module is completed.**

See: <https://publichealth.pitt.edu/home/academics/academic-requirements/academic-integrity-and-plagiarism> for more information.

REGISTRATION - FORMS AND DEADLINES

Pitt Public Health (PPH) places an advisement hold on your account at the beginning of every enrollment period. PPH uses the "advisement hold" service indicator to track registration. This means that before you can register, you must do the following:

1. **Complete an enrollment worksheet;**
2. **Review it with your academic advisor;**
3. **Turn in the signed worksheet to Paul;**
4. **Paul lifts the advising hold;**
5. **You can then self-register through your Student Center.**

To summarize, you cannot self-register until you have had your enrollment form approved by your academic advisor and the hold is released by Paul.

CEPH COMPETENCIES

The PPH school core fulfills the 22 foundational and cross-cutting competencies required by CEPH. Additionally, BCHS core classes fulfill 5 advanced competencies. For a list of these competencies, see: <https://publichealth.pitt.edu/behavioral-and-community-health-sciences/academics/mph>

PERMISSION NUMBERS

If you need a permission code to register for a BCHS class, please email Paul Markgraf (pjm111@pitt.edu). Because permission codes can be issued only by the department offering a particular course, if you need a number for a course in another department, you will have to contact that entity directly. For PUBHLT courses, please contact Adrianna Gradisek in Student Affairs (ADG146@pitt.edu).





JOINT PROGRAMS

JOINT PROGRAMS

BCHS collaborates on joint programs, through which students earn an MPH in BCHS and an additional graduate degree in the School of Social Work, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, and Anthropology (School of Arts and Sciences).

More information about ALL joint degrees:

- Already admitted MPH students who decide to apply to a joint program must apply to the other participating program so no later than the middle of their second semester and must notify Paul Markgraf of their intention. You register through Public Health at least two semesters during your tenure as a student.
- You fulfill all requirements as described below for the program.
- You may waive any public health core courses if you have equivalent graduate coursework AND complete the waiver forms in your first semester. Waivers are not accepted after the first semester. A waiver does not give you the credits, only the opportunity to take other courses.
- You graduate with both degrees simultaneously, after completing all requirements.
- Faculty in both schools share advising responsibilities.

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH/DOCTORAL DEGREE IN SOCIAL WORK (MPH/PHD)

- This degree program prepares you to assume leadership positions in federal, state, and local public health systems as well as academic settings
- The joint degree program requires 72 credits, of which 42 credits need to be in Public Health, including the School and Departmental Cores, and 6 credits of approved electives.
- You receive 6 Advanced Standing Credits for Social Work courses. This means you take 36 credits of Public Health classes.

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH/MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK (MPH/MSW)

- This degree program prepares you for roles in state and local public health systems, social welfare organizations, and other areas of practice related to public health social work, especially where social determinants of health are a concern, based on the impact of identifiable social problems.
- This joint program requires 87 credits in total, of which 39 credits need to be in Public Health, including the School and Departmental Cores, and 6 credits of approved electives; (use the checklist for the MPH, page 31).
- You get 3 credits for courses in Social Work, as Advanced Standing Credits. This means you take 36 credits of Public Health classes.
- Field Placements through Social Work count as the MPH practicum requirement. However, you are required to submit the required Public Health Practicum paperwork.

MPH/DOCTORAL DEGREE IN ANTHROPOLOGY (MPH/PHD)

- This degree program prepares you for an academic career that encompasses the interdisciplinary competencies of anthropology and public health.
- The joint degree requires 87 credits. The program requires 42 credits in Public Health, including the School and Departmental core courses, and 6 credits of approved electives.
- You get 3 credits for courses in Anthropology, as Advanced Standing Credits. This means you take 39 credits of Public Health classes.
- The Anthropology fieldwork fulfills the MPH practicum requirement, and the dissertation fulfills the essay/thesis requirement. You need to submit the required Public Health Practicum paperwork.
- You can register for Thesis and Practicum credits in Public Health.

MPH/MASTER OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, MASTER OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS OR MASTER OF PUBLIC AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS (MPH/MID/MPA/MPIA)

- These programs prepare you to obtain leadership positions in governmental and non-profit organizations providing public health services or positions in organizations with an international development and health focus.
- The joint degree programs require 78 credits, of which 42 are in Public Health. Three credits of GSPIA coursework can be used toward the 42 if the course is not required for the GSPIA degree. GSPIA requires joint program students to be full-time.
- The joint degree requires 6 semesters of study. You register in Public Health for 3 semesters.
- The joint programs require a 300-contact hour practicum that meets the requirements for Practicum in both schools. You typically arrange practicums through GSPIA, which has numerous valuable contacts for such opportunities. You register for BCHS 2503 to receive public health practicum credits. You need to submit the required Public Health Practicum paperwork.

PRACTICUM REQUIREMENTS

(see Practicum Chapter for additional information)

Practicum Site Selection (start any time after first semester of study—
practicum may begin after 18 hours of coursework)

- ☐ Student schedules appointment with faculty advisor to discuss potential sites
- ☐ Student prepares the [Practicum Planning Form](#) before meeting
- ☐ [Student contacts site to confirm the practicum opportunity is available & obtains required signatures on Planning Form and Learning Agreement Form before the start of the practicum](#)
- ☐ [Submit completed Planning Form and Learning Agreement to Paul Markgraf and advisor for student file](#)

Practicum Progress

- ☐ Student completes required hours and continues to report on progress to faculty advisor
- ☐ Submit [Mid-point Evaluation Form](#) and [End of Practicum Evaluation Form](#) to advisor & to Paul Markgraf for student file
- ☐ Give preceptor the [Mid-point Preceptor Evaluation Form](#) and [End of Practicum Preceptor Evaluation Form](#) to complete and mail to advisor & to Paul Markgraf.
- ☐ Give advisor [End of Practicum Advisor Evaluation Form](#) to complete and email to Paul Markgraf.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS: JOINT MPH(BCHS)/master's degrees (MSW) or PhD (Social Work)

Program total in Public Health: minimum 39 credits (MSW)/42 credits (PhD)

MPH students must submit waivers for school and BCHS core courses by the end of the first semester of study.

COURSE	OFFERED	CREDITS	SEMESTER TAKEN
SCHOOL CORE COURSES (18 credits)			
BIOST 2011 Principles of Statistics (strongly preferred) OR BIOST 2041 Intro to Statistical Methods (only for students with a strong math background)	Spring Fall	3 3	
EOH 2013 Environmental Health & Disease	Spring	2	
EPID 2110 Principles of Epidemiology	Fall, Summer	3	
HPM 2001 Health Policy & Management in Public Health	Fall, Spring	3	
PUBHLT 2033 Foundations in Public Health*	Fall	1	
PUHLT 2015 Public Health Biology	Fall, Summer	2	
PUBHLT 2034 Public Health Communications	Fall, Sp, Sm	2	
PUBHLT 2035 Applications in Public Health **	Fall, Sp, Sm	2	
DEPARTMENTAL (BCHS) CORE COURSES (11+ credits)			
BCHS 2520/2992/2990 Theories of Health Education and Health Promotion/ Systems Theories and Approaches/ Social Dynamics	Spring	1/1/1	
BCHS 2525 Introduction to Applied Research	Fall	3	
BCHS 2554 Intro to Community Health	Fall	3	
BCHS 2503 Practicum	Fall, Sp, Sm	1-3	
BCHS 2521 Essay/Thesis	Fall, Sp, Sm	1-3	
APPROVED ELECTIVES (Pick a minimum of 6 credits)			
BCHS 2504 Health Communication	Spring	3	
BCHS 2516 Video for Health Promotion	Alt. Fall	3	
BCHS 2523 Program Plan & Proposal Writing	Spring	3	
BCHS 2524 Overview of Health Equity	Spring	3	
BCHS 2551 Social Networks & Health	Fall	3	
BCHS 2558 Health Program Evaluation	Spring	3	
BCHS 2572 Risk Communication	Alt. Fall	3	
BCHS 2660 Harm Reduction Approaches in Health & Public Health Settings	Fall	1	
BCHS 2608 Intro to CBPR	Spring	1	
BCHS 2609 Translating Research for Policy and Practice	Spring	1	
BCHS 2610 Concept Mapping	Spring	1	
BCHS 2612 Project Management	Alt. Fall	2	
BCHS 2991 Multilevel Analysis	Fall	1	
BCHS 3002 Survey Methods	Fall	3	
BCHS 3003 Advanced Evaluation Techniques	Fall	3	
BCHS 3007 Ethnographic and Qualitative Methods	Spring	3	
BCHS 3015 Comm Mapping & Intro Spatial Analysis	Fall	3	
BCHS 3021 Computer Methods for Social Networks	Spring	1	
BCHS 3506 Implementation Science in Public Health	Fall	3	
PUBHLT 2501 Health Equity Research: Methods and Interventions	Fall	3	
BCHS 2605 Community Development & Focus Groups	Summer	1	
ELECTIVES – Students choose courses from BCHS, other departments, and/or schools			
Advanced standing/transfer credits (if applicable)			
TOTAL credits			

*Students must complete Foundations in their first fall of study.

**Students must have completed all SCHOOL core courses to register for PUBHLT 2035 (concurrent reg. for one is ok).

Additional Requirements:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Thesis/ Essay paperwork completed submitted | ☐ Academic Integrity module completed/paperwork submitted |
| ☐ ePortfolio completed/evaluated by advisor/submitted | ☐ Title IX module completed/paperwork submitted |
| ☐ IRB modules completed/paperwork submitted | |

Milestone Checklist

PRACTICUM (consult *student handbook* for practicum requirements)

Practicum Site Selection (start after first semester of study-practicum may begin after 18 hours of coursework)

- ☐ Student schedules appointment with faculty advisor to discuss potential sites
- ☐ Student prepares the [Practicum Planning Form](#) before meeting
- ☐ [Student contacts site to confirm the practicum opportunity is available & obtains required signatures on Planning Form and Learning Agreement Form before the start of the practicum](#)
- ☐ [Submit completed Planning Form and Learning Agreement to Paul Markgraf and advisor for student file](#)

Practicum Progress

- ☐ Student completes required hours and continues to report on progress to faculty advisor
- ☐ Submit [Mid-point Evaluation Form](#) and [End of Practicum Evaluation Form](#) to advisor & to Paul Markgraf for student file
- ☐ Give preceptor the [Mid-point Preceptor Evaluation Form](#) and [End of Practicum Preceptor Evaluation Form](#) to complete and mail to advisor & to Paul Markgraf.
- ☐ Give advisor [End of Practicum Advisor Evaluation Form](#) to complete and email to Paul Markgraf.

THESIS/ESSAY (consult *student handbook* for thesis/essay requirements)

- ☐ Establish a thesis(essay) chairperson (main reader) and committee (readers) with advisor at least 1 semester before graduation
 - ☐ Adhere to Pitt Public Health [Committee Composition Rules](#)
- ☐ Complete the [Thesis/Essay Planning Form](#) and obtain appropriate signatures & copy to Paul Markgraf.
- ☐ Email Paul Markgraf for approval of committee (readers).

Thesis/Essay Committee Meeting & Proposal Approval

- ☐ Schedule meeting with committee (readers).
- ☐ Submit thesis proposal to all committee members 2 weeks before 1st scheduled meeting
- ☐ Hold meeting semester before graduation

Thesis/Essay Writing

- ☐ Obtain IRB approval prior to beginning study (append to final document) (if applicable)
- ☐ Develop a timeline for draft completion & communicate with advisor
- ☐ Send drafts and update advisor on thesis writing periodically throughout the writing process, per agreed upon schedule

If completing an essay:

Essay Submission

- ☐ Submit essay electronically as a "Long Paper" through [D-Scholarship](#)
- ☐ Submit all other paperwork and satisfy requirements by deadlines

If completing a thesis:

Defend Thesis

- ☐ Organize a date/time all committee members can meet
- ☐ See BCHS Student Services Coordinator to schedule a room for the agreed date/time
- ☐ Submit thesis to committee at least two weeks prior to defense date

Thesis Submission

- ☐ Submit thesis electronically through [D-Scholarship](#)
- ☐ [Submit all other paperwork and satisfy requirements by deadlines](#)

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS: JOINT MPH(BCHS)/PhD(Anthropology (post 2018)

Program total in Public Health: minimum 42 credits

MPH students must submit waivers for school and BCHS core courses by the end of the first semester of study.

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SCHOOL CORE COURSES (18 credits)			
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PUHLT 2015 Public Health Biology	Fall, Summer	2	
PUBHLT 2034 Public Health Communications	Fall, Sp, Sm	2	
PUBHLT 2035 Applications in Public Health **	Fall, Sp, Sm	2	
DEPARTMENTAL (BCHS) CORE COURSES (11+ credits)			
BCHS 2520/2992/2990 Theories of Health Education and Health Promotion/ Systems Theories and Approaches/ Social Dynamics	Spring	1/1/1	
BCHS 2525 Introduction to Applied Research	Fall	3	
BCHS 2554 Intro to Community Health	Fall	3	
BCHS 2503 Practicum	Fall, Sp, Sm	1-3	
BCHS 2521 Essay/Thesis	Fall, Sp, Sm	1-3	
APPROVED ELECTIVES (Pick a minimum of 6 credits)			
BCHS 2504 Health Communication	Spring	3	
BCHS 2516 Video for Health Promotion	Alt. Fall	3	
BCHS 2523 Program Plan & Proposal Writing	Spring	3	
BCHS 2524 Overview of Health Equity	Spring	3	
BCHS 2551 Social Networks & Health	Fall	3	
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DEGREE REQUIREMENTS: JOINT MPH(BCHS)/master's degrees GSPIA (post 2018)

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BCHS 2525 Introduction to Applied Research	Fall	3	
BCHS 2554 Intro to Community Health	Fall	3	
BCHS 2503 Practicum	Fall, Sp, Sm	1-3	
BCHS 2521 Essay/Thesis	Fall, Sp, Sm	1-3	
APPROVED ELECTIVES (Pick a minimum of 6 credits)			
BCHS 2504 Health Communication	Spring	3	
BCHS 2516 Video for Health Promotion	Alt. Fall	3	
BCHS 2523 Program Plan & Proposal Writing	Spring	3	
BCHS 2524 Overview of Health Equity	Spring	3	
BCHS 2551 Social Networks & Health	Fall	3	
BCHS 2558 Health Program Evaluation	Spring	3	
BCHS 2572 Risk Communication	Alt. Fall	3	
BCHS 2660 Harm Reduction Approaches in Health & Public Health Settings	Fall	1	
BCHS 2608 Intro to CBPR	Spring	1	
BCHS 2609 Translating Research for Policy and Practice	Spring	1	
BCHS 2610 Concept Mapping	Spring	1	
BCHS 2612 Project Management	Alt. Fall	2	
BCHS 2991 Multilevel Analysis	Fall	1	
BCHS 3002 Survey Methods	Fall	3	
BCHS 3003 Advanced Evaluation Techniques	Fall	3	
BCHS 3007 Ethnographic and Qualitative Methods	Spring	3	
BCHS 3015 Comm Mapping & Intro Spatial Analysis	Fall	3	
BCHS 3021 Computer Methods for Social Networks	Spring	1	
BCHS 3506 Implementation Science in Public Health	Fall	3	
PUBHLT 2501 Health Equity Research: Methods and Interventions	Fall	3	
BCHS 2605 Community Development & Focus Groups	Summer	1	
ELECTIVES – Students choose courses from BCHS, other departments, and/or schools			
Advanced standing/transfer credits (if applicable)			
TOTAL credits			

*Students must complete Foundations in their first fall of study.

**Students must have completed all SCHOOL core courses to register for PUBHLT 2035 (concurrent reg. for one is ok).

Additional Requirements:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Thesis/ Essay paperwork completed submitted | ☐ Academic Integrity module completed/paperwork submitted |
| ☐ ePortfolio completed/evaluated by advisor/submitted | ☐ Title IX module completed/paperwork submitted |
| ☐ IRB modules completed/paperwork submitted | |

Milestone Checklist

PRACTICUM (consult *student handbook* for practicum requirements)

Practicum Site Selection (start after first semester of study-practicum may begin after 18 hours of coursework)

- ☐ Student schedules appointment with faculty advisor to discuss potential sites
- ☐ Student prepares the [Practicum Planning Form](#) before meeting
- ☐ [Student contacts site to confirm the practicum opportunity is available & obtains required signatures on Planning Form and Learning Agreement Form before the start of the practicum](#)
- ☐ [Submit completed Planning Form and Learning Agreement to Paul Markgraf and advisor for student file](#)

Practicum Progress

- ☐ Student completes required hours and continues to report on progress to faculty advisor
- ☐ Submit [Mid-point Evaluation Form](#) and [End of Practicum Evaluation Form](#) to advisor & to Paul Markgraf for student file
- ☐ Give preceptor the [Mid-point Preceptor Evaluation Form](#) and [End of Practicum Preceptor Evaluation Form](#) to complete and mail to advisor & to Paul Markgraf.
- ☐ Give advisor [End of Practicum Advisor Evaluation Form](#) to complete and email to Paul Markgraf.

THESIS/ESSAY (consult *student handbook* for thesis/essay requirements)

- ☐ Establish a thesis(essay) chairperson (main reader) and committee (readers) with advisor at least 1 semester before graduation
 - ☐ Adhere to Pitt Public Health [Committee Composition Rules](#)
- ☐ Complete the [Thesis/Essay Planning Form](#) and obtain appropriate signatures & copy to Paul Markgraf.
- ☐ Email Paul Markgraf for approval of committee (readers).

Thesis/Essay Committee Meeting & Proposal Approval

- ☐ Schedule meeting with committee (readers).
- ☐ Submit thesis proposal to all committee members 2 weeks before 1st scheduled meeting
- ☐ Hold meeting semester before graduation

Thesis/Essay Writing

- ☐ Obtain IRB approval prior to beginning study (append to final document) (if applicable)
- ☐ Develop a timeline for draft completion & communicate with advisor
- ☐ Send drafts and update advisor on thesis writing periodically throughout the writing process, per agreed upon schedule

If completing an essay:

Essay Submission

- ☐ Submit essay electronically as a "Long Paper" through [D-Scholarship](#)
- ☐ Submit all other paperwork and satisfy requirements by deadlines

If completing a thesis:

Defend Thesis

- ☐ Organize a date/time all committee members can meet
- ☐ See BCHS Student Services Coordinator to schedule a room for the agreed date/time
- ☐ Submit thesis to committee at least two weeks prior to defense date

Thesis Submission

- ☐ Submit thesis electronically through [D-Scholarship](#)
- ☐ [Submit all other paperwork and satisfy requirements by deadlines](#)



ACCELERATED BACHELOR'S/MASTER'S PROGRAM

ACCELERATED PROGRAM-- OVERVIEW

The Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's Program (also known as the 4+1 program) allows University of Pittsburgh students to complete their undergraduate degree and MPH in a total of 5 years. Students in the 4+1 program complete a Crossover Year (Year 4) and a Graduate Year (Year 5). If all requirements are met, students in the 4+1 program receive a Bachelor's degree at the end of Year 4 and an MPH at the end of Year 5. The 4+1 program requires a fall start date (fall of Year 4, or the student's senior undergraduate year) and full-time student status.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Students in the 4+1 program will be charged undergraduate tuition in Year 4 and graduate tuition in Year 5. Students' undergraduate financial aid will continue during Year 4 of the program, but not Year 5. If needed, students should discuss their financial aid package with the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid (finaid@pitt.edu).

YEAR 4 COURSES AND REGISTRATION

Ideally, 4+1 students will complete most of their undergraduate requirements before beginning Year 4. Students should work with their undergraduate advisor to ensure they finish their undergraduate requirements (including electives) during Year 4. Students should work with Dr. Jaime Sidani (Program Director) and Paul Markgraf (Academic Administrator) to plan their Year 4 graduate coursework. Students should follow the Suggested Course Sequence (see page 3) for the MPH program as much as possible.

Registration for Year 4 should be done through the student's undergraduate program. Students will need permission numbers to register for graduate-level courses during Year 4. These are issued by Student Affairs and will be provided to students during registration.

Students are allowed to register for up to 15 credits per semester, which includes both undergraduate and graduate-level courses. Up to 20 graduate credits taken during Year 4 can be applied to the MPH degree (although special permission may be given for up to 24 graduate credits). With prior approval from the student's undergraduate program, 4+1 students may use graduate courses to fulfill undergraduate electives or required courses.

Students in the 4+1 program will complete their MPH practicum (see next chapter) between Years 4 and 5. All practicum opportunities available to other MPH students will be available to students in the 4+1 program.

YEAR 5 COURSES AND REGISTRATION

During Year 5, students will register as a graduate student during the graduate enrollment period. They must register as full-time students in both the Fall and Spring semesters. Students in Year 5 will follow the same procedures and guidelines as other students in the second year of their MPH.



COMMUNITY PRACTICUM

OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY PRACTICUM

The supervised community practicum (BCHS 2503) provides students with a practical public health field placement experience. You will apply the skills you have acquired in your studies and learn by doing. The field placement fills gaps in your experience and may augment and enrich your developing field of interest as well as allow you to understand how agencies interact with other entities in their communities and develop a full appreciation of how public health practitioners work in community settings with families, health and social service organizations, policy and governmental institutions and coalitions. Finally, the practicum introduces students to public health professionals who may play an important role in their career development. Commonly, students' practicum experiences lead to the essay or thesis work, though this is by no means required.

At least yearly the department will hold a community practicum workshop for master's students. This is an opportunity for you to get general information about the practicum and to ask questions. In addition, you should meet individually with their faculty advisor at least one semester before you plan to begin your practicum to plan practicum activities and complete paperwork in conjunction with their preceptor.



Each MPH student (see exceptions below) must complete at least 200 hours of work. Because this practical experience significantly contributes to your experience and integration of classroom learning, we encourage you to participate in more than the required 200 hours. The community practicum provides you with the opportunity to:

- 1) Apply knowledge and skills acquired in community and behavioral coursework to the real world of public health practice;
- 2) Experience the reality of community-based public health work from a provider's and community's perspective;
- 3) Develop as a public health professional in community and behavioral health;
- 4) Benefit the host agency or organization; and
- 5) Network with other public health professionals.

CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS AND JOINT DEGREE STUDENTS

A variety of certificate programs are available to Pitt Public Health students, each with its own practicum requirements. Practicums completed for certificates count towards the MPH requirements. Some certificates may require more than 200 hours of practicum; check with your certificate advisor. Joint degree students should see the Chapter on Joint Programs for more information and check with your academic advisor.

COMMUNITY PRACTICUM INFORMATION SESSION

At least once a year, usually early in the Spring semester, the department will hold a Community Practicum Information Session for students to learn more about the practicum and ask questions about practicum.

COMMUNITY PRACTICUM TIMING

There are coursework prerequisites for the practicum. However, you are strongly urged to have taken the equivalent of two full terms of credits (and must have a minimum of 18 credits) before undertaking their practicum. Remember, this is an opportunity to apply what you have learned.

The community practicum is usually completed in the term following two terms of coursework. Under some circumstances, with preceptor permission, the practicum can be completed over two terms or more. Students are expected, in the end, to complete at least 200 hours of work for the practicum; however, this can be completed in more than one agency or organization. For example, a student can complete 120 hours of a needs assessment at Agency A and write 80 hours of a health curriculum at agency B.

CHOOSING A SITE

You may be wondering, “How do I find a practicum site?” Sometimes, finding a site for a practicum may seem daunting. In truth, there are many ways that students identify a practicum. Students may locate practicum experiences on their own, in the area or outside of Pittsburgh, either domestically or internationally. In these cases, consult with your Academic Advisor to verify that the opportunity qualifies for practicum credit. Practicum sites can be places you already volunteer, work with, intern at, or are interested in learning more about. If you do not have an idea for a practicum, the next step is to speak to your Academic Advisor to help identify possible community agencies. Consider summer internship or fellowship programs such as Bridging the Gaps or the Pittsburgh Summer Institute. If your Academic Advisor cannot help find an appropriate venue, your MPH Director can help find practicum opportunities.

Another option is for you to assume additional unpaid responsibilities at your place of employment, with the permission of your employer (obviously!). This work must extend beyond or be something other than your regular duties and apply the knowledge and skills you have learned in the classroom. **Ultimately, it is your responsibility to find an appropriate practicum.**

Discuss your choice with your Academic Advisor, who is responsible for verifying that all paperwork about the practicum is up to date.

Some questions to think about when choosing a site are the following:

- 1) Will working with this agency offer you the kind of experience you want to gain?
- 2) Will doing your practicum with this agency allow you to apply what you have learned in your coursework?
- 3) Is this practicum placement aligned with your academic and career goals?

BCHS does not prohibit students from pursuing paid practica. In many cases, however, students should not expect to receive a stipend for the practicum. In all cases, the student must meet agency requirements, such as background checks and the like.

COMMUNITY PRACTICUM CONTENT

You must identify five competencies that will be addressed through your practicum work. At least three (but up to all five) competencies must be selected from the 22 CEPH MPH foundational Competencies available in the e-Portfolio, and two may be from the BCHS departmental competencies or developed by the student. Students will also have to produce two deliverables for their agency or organization, to be identified in collaboration with the preceptor.

The content of the community practicum is determined by several factors:

- 1) the student's interest;
- 2) the agency's focus;
- 3) the agency's need.

Practicum work may involve the design of evaluations, development of surveys, implementation of an evaluation plan, administration of surveys, critical literature reviews, design/implementation of health promotion initiatives, community-based participatory health planning, or an assessment of a community's strengths and/or needs.

Actual practicum work undertaken by BCHS students includes the following:

- 1) design and implement a telephone survey of clients of western Pennsylvania well-baby clinics, to determine where clients were seeking health care after the clinics' closing;
- 2) develop and implement an educational STD/HIV prevention curriculum for homeless women;
- 3) develop and implement an educational nutrition/exercise program for pregnant teens;
- 4) evaluate an HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment program in rural Tanzania using ethnography;
- 5) conduct a literature review on childhood obesity;
- 6) plan and coordinate a conference on schizophrenia for rural mental health care providers;
- 7) design, facilitate, and analyze focus groups evaluating an internship program.

REGISTRATION AND ADVISING

Register for BCHS 2503 with your Academic Advisor's section (note their specific CRN). You do not have to complete the community practicum when you register for it – your advisor will just give you an 'I' until you get it finished.

PRACTICUM E-PORTFOLIO

All MPH students at Pitt Public Health are required to complete an e-Portfolio. The e-portfolio is a tool to document your completion of competencies during your practicum. You are responsible for completing the requirements of the e-Portfolio and your Academic Advisor is responsible for verifying that all requirements have been met. For the latest requirements on the Practicum e-Portfolio, please see <https://www.publichealth.pitt.edu/home/academics/academic-handbook-degree-requirements/mph-e-portfolio>.

COMMUNITY PRACTICUM SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

You will need to identify an agency or organization preceptor at your practicum site. This person must agree to be responsible for overseeing your work in the agency and to serve as the contact point for the practicum. Your Academic Advisor will work with you and the agency preceptor to define the student's responsibilities at the agency, and once agreed on, to complete the Practicum Learning Agreement form.

The preceptor acts as the student's supervisor in the field. In addition to receiving on-site guidance from the preceptor, you should meet regularly with your Academic Advisor.

If at any time problems with the agency arise, you should bring these to the attention of the Academic Advisor as soon as possible.

The placement preceptor completes an evaluation of the student's performance at the mid-point and conclusion of the practicum. The preceptor will be granted access to the online Mid- and Practicum Final Preceptor Evaluation and the student will be responsible for completing all relevant paperwork, including the Mid- and End of Practicum Student Evaluation. The required forms are available on the Pitt Public health website:

<http://www.publichealth.pitt.edu/home/academics/other-academic-resources/forms>. In

addition, BCHS students must also complete a log of hours worked on the practicum. While the exact format of the log is up to you, a sample form and sample log are listed in the Appendix. The purpose of the log is to provide the student with an opportunity to carefully record activities engaged in throughout the practicum experience. View the log not as a timesheet, but rather as a tool for recording specific tasks, skills, and challenges you encounter during your practicum to remember when constructing a resume or answering interview questions..

COMMUNITY PRACTICUM REQUIREMENTS

BCHS is strongly committed to developing students' ability to work closely and respectfully with communities. To that end, this handbook includes a Code of Ethics adapted from the Society of Public Health Educators (SOPHE) (see Appendix) so that students are kept aware of the issues in dealing with community agencies, public health practitioners, families, and others.

If the student's project involves research with human subjects, the student is required to complete the Research Integrity and Human Subject Modules and to submit an application for IRB approval. Modules and application information are available on Pitt's Human Subject Protection Office website (<http://www.hrpo.pitt.edu>).



COMMUNITY PRACTICUM CHECKLIST

Pre-Practicum Planning

- ☐ No later than the middle of the second semester (or the semester before the practicum will begin), meet with your Academic Advisor to plan the practicum.
- ☐ Contact the agency being considered to discuss possible practicum arrangements (at least 1 month before beginning work).
- ☐ The student, Academic Advisor, and agency preceptor agree upon practicum responsibilities and complete the Practicum Learning Agreement (at least 2 weeks before beginning work).
- ☐ If necessary, complete the IRB Research Integrity & Human Subjects modules (at least 2 weeks before beginning work) and IRB application (must be approved before starting research).
- ☐ Complete any forms required by the agency (such as liability release). Such forms must be approved by the Dean's Office (at least 2 weeks before beginning work).

Mid-Point

- ☐ Complete the online Practicum Mid-Point Self-Evaluation Form (after completing at least 75 hours of work and before completing 100 hours of work).
- ☐ The preceptor completes the online Practicum Mid-Point Evaluation Form for Site Preceptors (within 2 weeks of completion of work).

Completion

- ☐ The preceptor verifies the deliverables are submitted (within 2 weeks of completion of work).
- ☐ The preceptor completes the online End of Practicum Final Preceptor Evaluation Form (within 2 weeks of completion of work).
- ☐ The student completes the End of Practicum Student Evaluation Form (within 2 weeks of completion of work).
- ☐ The Academic Advisor verifies that the competencies were met (via ePortfolio).
- ☐ The student submits the time log (via ePortfolio).



ESSAY/THESIS

OVERVIEW

The essay/thesis requirement is designed to provide you with an opportunity to integrate the major components of the PPH experience and to apply the principles of public health to analyze a specific topic area. You are also expected to demonstrate verbal and technical proficiency in expository writing. Essays or theses are typically 40-80 pages long, double-spaced, and formatted using the University approved template. We strongly urge you to begin your paper in the ETD format. PPH has policies regarding the thesis/essay process that can be found here:

<https://publichealth.pitt.edu/home/academics/academic-handbook-degree-requirements/graduation-information/masters-essay>

<https://publichealth.pitt.edu/home/academics/academic-handbook-degree-requirements/graduation-information/masters-thesis>

<https://publichealth.pitt.edu/academic-handbook/details>

The topic must be one of public health significance, which is explicitly stated in the essay or thesis abstract. The master's essay/thesis is a scholarly work that reflects the student's acquisition of knowledge, ability to synthesize information into a well-organized, coherent document, and development as a professional.

THESIS/ESSAY INFORMATIONAL MEETING

At least once a year, the department will hold an informational session on the thesis/essay process, usually mid- Fall semester. Any student is welcome, but those planning on graduating the following semester should plan on attending.

ESSAY VS. THESIS



The essay and thesis are similar regarding expectations about length, quality, and type. Students may choose to do original research for either option. In BCHS, they differ in only two ways:

- 1) number of readers;
- 2) requirement for an oral defense (thesis).

Master's essays require two readers and do not require an oral defense. The thesis, on the other hand, requires a minimum of three readers and a public, oral defense with the committee composed of at least three faculty members and written copies submitted to the members two weeks before the scheduled defense. Both are submitted electronically using the University's ETD format. Essays and theses in BCHS do not differ concerning quality, content or length.

TYPES OF PROJECTS

i. Original research

This may involve the formulation of a hypothesis and the collection and analysis of data to test a hypothesis. Or it may be a formative or exploratory project. The data may already exist or come from the student's research. Consideration of the time and financial resources necessary might limit the scope of the research so that the paper takes the form of a demonstration or pilot project. The project could demonstrate a methodology, or structure, and/or process that could potentially have much wider applicability.

ii. Critical literature synthesis

In a critical literature synthesis, all of the relevant literature on a given topic is examined to create a definitive "state of the art" document about the topic. This is not the same thing as a literature review, which is required for the other types of papers as well. In the critical literature synthesis, the student's competence in analysis, evaluation, and integration of information must be demonstrated.

iii. Position paper

This kind of paper establishes a specific point of view on an issue. It must be closely reasoned and use all available evidence. The original contribution is the student's own understanding, analysis, and presentation of a point of view.

iv. Program development

The student chooses to develop a program or plan for an agency or institutional implementation. This plan is based on an analysis of agency services and policies; the paper would include an explanation of the logic of or need for the proposed program and its feasibility. The original contribution is the student's understanding of the agency's strengths, challenges, and ability to implement the program as outlined.

v. Program evaluation

The student uses tested and appropriate program evaluation methods to determine the success of a specific program in meeting its objectives. This approach requires that the student make suggestions for improvement in effectiveness or possibly a change in objectives.

vi. Case study

A case study is acceptable provided the student can find and analyze material from various sources to bring out a true and important set of lessons or conclusions to be drawn from the case. The case study could also fit the models under iv and v above, provided a single institution, agency, or other entity appropriate to the development of a case was used.

GENERAL STYLE

Essays and theses should be written in clear, concise prose and should not include an activist stance. If you need guidance, consult Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, William Strunk and E.B. White's *The Elements of Style*, *The APA 7th Edition Style Manual*, or another agreed-upon substitute as a final arbiter of style. You are permitted, and are indeed encouraged, to have someone, including a professional editor, edit your paper for writing style and clarity.

Variations in the internal design of the paper are expected, but all manuscripts must address an issue of public health significance, and most will include the following elements:

1. Introduction: the purpose of the study or research, description of the agency or environment of data collection (if relevant), public health significance, and scope or focus of the study or research, including, where appropriate, the hypothesis to be tested; chapter by chapter summary of the paper;
2. Literature review: major relevant findings from journal articles, books, and other sources and gaps in knowledge that the study may attempt to fill;
3. Methods: how information was collected, analyzed, and limitations or problems; definition of terms and statement of assumptions;
4. Findings: results of the data collection or research;
5. Discussion: implications of results, synthesis of major trends, analysis of the data and literature review;
6. Conclusions: summary of major findings, application, limitations of the study, recommendations for future steps;
7. Bibliography.

ONE-ARTICLE OPTION

Master's students may choose the one-article option for the master's thesis or essay. Students will produce an article of publishable quality and will work with their advisor to identify three suitable journals for submission of the article. The article must be logically connected and integrated into the thesis or essay coherently, and sufficient detail must be presented to satisfy the characteristics of a defensible thesis. Paper length may differ for this option.

PROCESS

Step 1

The first step in the process is to identify readers or form a committee. For reader/committee eligibility, students should consult Paul. Students are encouraged to form their committees(thesis) or readers (essay) for Spring graduation no later than September 1 the semester before, and for Fall graduation no later than January 1 the semester before.

Master's essay:

- Have at least 2 readers.
- One reader must be from the BCHS core faculty list. Most faculty with primary appointments in the Department are considered core faculty.
- One reader must NOT be a core BCHS faculty member. This can be a faculty member in another Pitt Public Health department or another University department.

Master's thesis :

- Have at least 3 committee members
- The committee chair must be on the BCHS core faculty list. Most faculty with primary appointments in the Department are core faculty.
- At least one of the additional committee members cannot be a BCHS core faculty.
- Half or more of the thesis committee members must be core members of at least one Pitt Public Health department.
- For example, the committee might be faculty from BCHS (chair), Epi, BCHS. Or BCHS (chair), Epi, HPM. Or BCHS (chair), BCHS, School of Social Work.

Step 2

The next step is to prepare a proposal. The proposal should address the following issues: the overall purpose of the study, the specific questions to be considered, the experimental and conceptual background the student brings to the topic, the research methodology, and the scheduling and timing of tasks.

This proposal must be approved by all readers or committee members (see forms) and submitted to Paul with the signed reader/committee page, indicating that readers/committee members have agreed to work with the student on the proposed paper.

You must also complete the Essay/Thesis agreement, available at:

https://publichealth.pitt.edu/Portals/0/Main/Academics/Forms/ILE_LEARNING%20AGREEMENT_FINAL_1.pdf?ver=2022-04-27-124545-737.

Step 3

Meet with your committee/readers: You need to meet at least once, in person or by teleconference, in the semester BEFORE you graduate. This meeting is intended to set expectations, discuss plans, agree to a timeline, and set you up for success.

If the essay or thesis schedule is not adhered to, faculty are under no obligation to ensure that students graduate in the desired term, meaning that students will have to register for additional credit in a later term and reapply to graduate.

ESSAY/THESIS DRAFTS

You must submit three drafts of your essay or thesis to your committee, and they may request additional drafts. Your readers have two weeks to read and return comments to you so schedule accordingly. Discuss any conflicting advice from your committee with your committee chair or advisor.

All drafts and revisions must have correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Check with your advisor for resources available in these areas.

ETD

Theses and essays are submitted electronically. A tutorial is available that outlines the submission requirements: <http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/etd/>.

The University offers an ETD workshop on electronic submission several times a semester. We strongly encourage you to attend, in addition to the thesis workshop offered by the department each year. Using any graphs, figures, or charts from original resources requires proper citation and in some cases may require permission from the holder of the copyright.

HUMAN SUBJECTS



When research for a practicum, paper, or thesis involves human subjects, the project must obtain clearance from the University of Pittsburgh Institutional Review Board (IRB). Guidelines for applying for IRB approval are available online at www.irb.pitt.edu. Students must also complete the human subjects research modules, available online through the IRB website; and their research proposals must undergo prior scientific review (approval of the Department Chair).

GRADUATION

Before you know it, graduation will be here!

The first thing you need to do is complete an official [Application for Graduation](#), available on the Pitt Public Health website, by the dates indicated. Deadlines related to graduation (application, submission of paperwork) are posted on the Pitt Public Health website and sent out in the Weekly Update. Pay close attention to these dates because there is a penalty for late filing, and if paperwork related to the thesis or essay is not submitted on time, your graduation can be jeopardized. As noted above, faculty are under no obligation to ensure that students graduate when they want to, especially if they have not adhered to agreed-upon timelines and deadlines.

You must be registered for at least one credit in the term in which you graduate. Additionally, you must have full (not provisional or conditional) status. Also, before you graduate, “I” and “G” grades in classes required for graduation must be changed to an S or a letter grade, so make sure you have cleared those up early.

Pitt Public Health has four graduation dates per year, in 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 same weekend as University graduation. Graduates from the previous June, August, and December are invited to participate in the spring ceremony. You will be sent information about obtaining caps, gowns, and other graduation paraphernalia available at Graduation Central.

Your diploma will come in the mail several weeks after the graduation ceremony whether you attend the ceremony or not.

SO, YOU'RE A GRADUATE NOW!

Upon completing the MPH program in BCHS, you join over 330,000 Pitt graduates and over 6,000 Pitt Public Health alums. As a graduate, you can continue your involvement with Pitt through several organizations. One of these is the Pitt Alumni Association whose mission is to support the University and enrich the lives of alumni worldwide. As a dues-paying member of the Pitt Alumni Association, you are entitled to many services, benefits, and programs, such as Alumni Travel, Alumni Publications, access to the University Libraries, discounts at the Book Center/University Press, reduced membership rates at the Pitt Club, and many more.

For more information, check out the Pitt Alumni Association website at www.alumni.pitt.edu.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Are there student study areas?

Yes! The BCHS room is 6121C, used by both doctoral and MPH students. We share this space with students from HPM. Mailboxes for all BCHS students are here.

The libraries BCHS students use most are Falk Library, located at 200 Scaife Hall, part of the Health Sciences Library System, and Hillman Library. The University provides several state-of-the-art computing laboratories; the closest is at B-06 Benedum Hall.

Where can I print?

Self-service printing is available from many on-campus locations:
<https://www.technology.pitt.edu/services/pitt-print#locations>

Can I switch academic advisors?

Absolutely! We try to match students with faculty whose interests are similar and to accommodate students' preferences. Academic advisors help students schedule courses each semester, advise about professional development, and generally help the students stay connected to the department. However, the responsibility for advising is shared by all faculty. If you feel that working with another advisor would enhance your academic experience, please make your request to Paul, who can help identify another advisor.

Can I get a GSR?

A limited number of GSRs may become available, but it is unusual in BCHS for MPH students to hold GSRs.

What scholarships are available?

Pitt Public Health Scholarships

Pitt Public Health offers several scholarships to students in a variety of situations. More information about scholarships at the school level can be found here:

<https://www.publichealth.pitt.edu/home/admissions-aid/tuition-and-financial-aid/types-of-aid/scholarships-and-awards>

Departmental Scholarships

Several small awards are available through the McAllister, Scholarship, Peterson Scholarship, and Ricci Scholarship funds. More information about scholarships at the school level can be found here:

<https://publichealth.pitt.edu/behavioral-and-community-health-sciences/admissions-aid/financial-aid>

How do I meet people or get involved?

One of the best ways to meet people and hone your public health and professional skills (to say nothing of having fun) is to get involved with some of the many student organizations available to students. The school maintains a list of some of the most popular here: <https://publichealth.pitt.edu/student-orgs>

Another valuable experience in helping students develop as a professional is serving on departmental and school committees. If you are interested in some aspect of the Department or School, such as curriculum development, ask how you can get involved. Another way to learn more about the Department and School is to participate in the faculty search process. This involves attending faculty candidate presentations and meeting with faculty candidates. Though this process occurs only occasionally, we urge you to take advantage of the opportunity.

How do I find a student job?

First, read your emails from Paul (always good advice!). He will email opportunities. Registered students can work in part-time positions up to 20 hours/week in the fall and spring terms, and 37.5 hours/week in the summer. Graduate students don't generally receive federal work-study funding. After creating a Talent Center account, students can access postings for summer jobs and regular student employment. Postings include positions within PPH, at other University departments, and through off-campus employers.

Can I have access to my files?

Students have the right to inspect all personally identifiable records maintained by the School and Department and may challenge the accuracy and content of the records through appropriate institutional procedures.

What if I need to take a little longer to get through the program?

If a student is not enrolled for at least one credit in a 12-month period, they must re-apply to the program. Acceptance for readmission may be granted but with the understanding that the student may be asked to meet some or all of the current program requirements. MPH students have five years from their first enrollment to complete the degree; extensions on the statute of limitations can be granted if the student is making significant progress towards completing the requirements.

The top half of the page features a vibrant orange background with a marbled, liquid-like texture. Swirls of lighter and darker orange tones create a dynamic, organic pattern. Small, white, bubble-like specks are scattered throughout the orange field, adding to the textured appearance.

APPENDIX

1. Checklist of Required Classes (MPH)
2. BCHS Required Course Waiver Form
3. Independent Study Form
4. Sample Practicum Time Log
5. Essay/Thesis Readers/Committee Form
6. Essay/Thesis Proposal Form
7. Code of Ethics for the Health Education Profession

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS: MPH, BCHS (2018-) – Program total = minimum 45 credits

MPH students must submit waivers for school and BCHS core courses by the end of the first semester of study.

COURSE	OFFERED	CREDITS	SEMESTER TAKEN
SCHOOL CORE COURSES (18 credits)			
BIOST 2011 Principles of Statistics (strongly preferred) OR BIOST 2041 Intro to Statistical Methods (only for students with a strong math background)	Spring Fall	3 3	
EOH 2013 Environmental Health & Disease	Spring	2	
EPID 2110 Principles of Epidemiology	Fall, Summer	3	
HPM 2001 Health Policy & Management in Public Health	Fall, Spring	3	
PUBHLT 2033 Foundations in Public Health*	Fall	1	
PUHLT 2015 Public Health Biology	Fall, Summer	2	
PUBHLT 2034 Public Health Communications	Fall, Sp, Sm	2	
PUBHLT 2035 Applications in Public Health **	Fall, Sp, Sm	2	
PUBHLT 2022 Grand Rounds	Fall, Spring	0	
DEPARTMENTAL (BCHS) CORE COURSES (11+ credits)			
BCHS 2520/2992/2990 Theories of Health Education and Health Promotion/ Systems Theories and Approaches/ Social Dynamics	Spring	1/1/1	
BCHS 2525 Introduction to Applied Research	Fall	3	
BCHS 2554 Intro to Community Health	Fall	3	
BCHS 2503 Practicum	Fall, Sp, Sm	1-3	
BCHS 2521 Essay/Thesis	Fall, Sp, Sm	1-3	
APPROVED ELECTIVES (Pick a minimum of 6 credits)			
BCHS 2504 Health Communication	Spring	3	
BCHS 2516 Video for Health Promotion	Alt. Fall	3	
BCHS 2523 Program Plan & Proposal Writing	Spring	3	
BCHS 2524 Overview of Health Equity	Spring	3	
BCHS 2551 Social Networks & Health	Fall	3	
BCHS 2558 Health Program Evaluation	Spring	3	
BCHS 2572 Risk Communication	Alt. Fall	3	
BCHS 2660 Harm Reduction Approaches in Health & Public Health Settings	Fall	1	
BCHS 2608 Intro to CBPR	Spring	1	
BCHS 2609 Translating Research for Policy and Practice	Spring	1	
BCHS 2610 Concept Mapping	Spring	1	
BCHS 2612 Project Management	Alt. Fall	2	
BCHS 2991 Multilevel Analysis	Fall	1	
BCHS 3002 Survey Methods	Fall	3	
BCHS 3003 Advanced Evaluation Techniques	Fall	3	
BCHS 3007 Ethnographic and Qualitative Methods	Spring	3	
BCHS 3015 Comm Mapping & Intro Spatial Analysis	Fall	3	
BCHS 3021 Computer Methods for Social Networks	Spring	1	
BCHS 3506 Implementation Science in Public Health	Fall	3	
PUBHLT 2501 Health Equity Research: Methods and Interventions	Fall	3	
BCHS 2605 Community Development & Focus Groups	Summer	1	
ELECTIVES – Students choose courses from BCHS, other departments, and/or schools			
Advanced standing/transfer credits (if applicable)			
TOTAL credits			

*Students must complete Foundations in their first fall of study.

**Students must have completed all SCHOOL core courses to register for PUBHLT 2035 (concurrent reg. for one is ok).

Additional Requirements:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Thesis/ Essay paperwork completed submitted | ☐ Academic Integrity module completed/paperwork submitted |
| ☐ ePortfolio completed/evaluated by advisor/submitted | ☐ Title IX module completed/paperwork submitted |
| ☐ IRB modules completed/paperwork submitted | |

Milestone Checklist

PRACTICUM (consult *student handbook* for practicum requirements)

Practicum Site Selection (start after first semester of study-practicum may begin after 18 hours of coursework)

- ☐ Student schedules appointment with faculty advisor to discuss potential sites
- ☐ Student prepares the [Practicum Planning Form](#) before meeting
- ☐ [Student contacts site to confirm the practicum opportunity is available & obtains required signatures on Planning Form and Learning Agreement Form before the start of the practicum](#)
- ☐ Submit completed [Planning Form](#) and [Learning Agreement](#) to Paul Markgraf and advisor for student file

Practicum Progress

- ☐ Student completes required hours and continues to report on progress to faculty advisor
- ☐ Submit [Mid-point Evaluation Form](#) and [End of Practicum Evaluation Form](#) to advisor & to Paul Markgraf for student file
- ☐ Give preceptor the [Mid-point Preceptor Evaluation Form](#) and [End of Practicum Preceptor Evaluation Form](#) to complete and mail to advisor & to Paul Markgraf.
- ☐ Give advisor [End of Practicum Advisor Evaluation Form](#) to complete and email to Paul Markgraf.

THESIS/ESSAY (consult *student handbook* for thesis/essay requirements)

- ☐ Establish a thesis(essay) chairperson (main reader) and committee (readers) with advisor at least 1 semester before graduation
 - ☐ Adhere to Pitt Public Health [Committee Composition Rules](#)
- ☐ Complete the [Thesis/Essay Planning Form](#) and obtain appropriate signatures & copy to Paul Markgraf.
- ☐ Email Paul Markgraf for approval of committee (readers).

Thesis/Essay Committee Meeting & Proposal Approval

- ☐ Schedule meeting with committee (readers).
- ☐ Submit thesis proposal to all committee members 2 weeks before 1st scheduled meeting
- ☐ Hold meeting semester before graduation

Thesis/Essay Writing

- ☐ Obtain IRB approval prior to beginning study (append to final document) (if applicable)
- ☐ Develop a timeline for draft completion & communicate with advisor
- ☐ Send drafts and update advisor on thesis writing periodically throughout the writing process, per agreed upon schedule

If completing an essay:

Essay Submission

- ☐ Submit essay electronically as a "Long Paper" through [D-Scholarship](#)
- ☐ Submit all other paperwork and satisfy requirements by deadlines

If completing a thesis:

Defend Thesis

- ☐ Organize a date/time all committee members can meet
- ☐ See BCHS Student Services Coordinator to schedule a room for the agreed date/time
- ☐ Submit thesis to committee at least two weeks prior to defense date

Thesis Submission

- ☐ Submit thesis electronically through [D-Scholarship](#)
- ☐ [Submit all other paperwork and satisfy requirements by deadlines](#)

Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences
School of Public Health, University of Pittsburgh
Request For Exemption from MPH Core Course Requirement

To: Designated Core Faculty Professor:
BCHS 2520 Theories of Health Behavior and Health Education – TBD
BCHS 2992 Systems Approaches – Robert Coulter
BCHS 2990 Social Dynamics – Kar-Hai Chu
BCHS 2525 Introduction to Applied Research Methods – Patricia Documét
BCHS 2554 Intro to Community Health - Jessie Burke

To be completed by the student:

Name: _____

BCHS Core Course for which exemption is requested: _____

Reason for exemption (courses, academic degrees, experience, etc. Use other side if necessary):

To be completed by Student's Advisor:

Recommendation: Approve/Deny

Signature: _____ Date: _____

To be completed by designated Core Faculty:

Signature and Date:

Original copy of signed form must be submitted to Paul Markgraf.

DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL AND COMMUNITY HEALTH SCIENCES

MPH Independent Study Pre-Registration Form

NAME: _____

TERM/SESSION REGISTERED: _____

DATE: _____ # CREDITS: _____

TITLE OF INDEPENDENT STUDY: _____

DESCRIPTION OF OBJECTIVES (attach additional pages if necessary): _____

EXPECTED FINAL PRODUCT (e.g., paper, article, poster): _____

EXPECTED COMPLETION DATE: _____

NAME OF STUDENT: _____

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT: _____

NAME OF FACULTY SUPERVISING INDEPENDENT STUDY: _____

SIGNATURE OF FACULTY MEMBER: _____

Sample Student Community Practicum Log

Student: _____

Agency:_____

[illegible]

BCHS Master's Essay/Thesis Readers:

a. Essay main reader/thesis chair:

Name	Degree	Dept.
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Signature/Date		
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b. second reader/committee members:

Name	Degree	Dept.
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Signature/Date		
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Required for thesis:

c. third committee members:

Name	Degree	Dept.
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Signature/Date		
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d. fourth reader (optional):

Name	Degree	Dept.
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Signature/Date		
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**Signatures above indicate that the readers approved the attached proposal/
timeline.**

Student's Name (print
please):_____

I, the undersigned, have discussed the attached proposal and timeline with
those indicated above and agree to submit work as indicated on the timeline.

Student Signature/Date

Master's Essay / Thesis Proposal

While variations in internal design of the final paper are expected, all manuscripts must address an issue of public health significance. The proposal must address the following elements:

- 1-The purpose of the study or research, description of the agency or environment of data collection (if relevant), public health significance, and scope or focus of the study or research, including, when appropriate, the hypothesis to be tested;
- 2- Background; an introduction to the literature on the topic and where relevant, theoretical foundation;
- 3- Methods: how information will be collected and analyzed, and limitations or problems;
- 4-Implications of the findings; why this topic is important;
- 5-Potential uses for the findings.

ALSO include scheduling/timeline of tasks/anticipated graduate date (as agreed to by the student and readers). Timeline should include a detailed outline and enough time for drafts and revisions (form attached).

Essay/Thesis Timeline

Proposal to readers:	_____
Initial committee meeting (at least 1 sem. before graduation)	_____
First draft to readers:	_____
Reader comments to student:	_____
Second draft to readers:	_____
Reader comments to student:	_____
Draft upload due in the ETD system:	_____
Third draft to reader(s)*:	_____
Reader comments to student:	_____
Defense scheduled (thesis only):	_____
Final version uploaded into ETD:	_____

*Per Pitt Public Health policy, **students MUST submit their final draft of their essay/thesis to committee members/ readers AT LEAST 2 weeks before** the defense date (thesis) or final upload date (essay). Failure to do so may mean delaying graduation and necessitating registration for an additional credit the following semester.

CODE OF ETHICS FOR THE HEALTH EDUCATION PROFESSION

PREAMBLE

The Code of Ethics provides a framework of shared values within Health Education professions. The Code of Ethics is grounded in fundamental ethical principles, including: value of life, promoting justice, ensuring beneficence, and avoiding harm. A Health Education Specialist's responsibility is to aspire to the highest possible standards of conduct and to encourage the ethical behavior of all those with whom they work.

Health Education professionals are dedicated to excellence in the practice of promoting individual, family, group, organizational, school, community, public, and population health. Guided by common goals to improve the human condition, Health Education Specialists are responsible for upholding the integrity and ethics of the profession as they perform their work and face the daily challenges of making ethical decisions. Health Education Specialists value equity in society and embrace a multiplicity of approaches in their work to support the worth, dignity, potential, quality of life, and uniqueness of all people.

Health Education Specialists promote and abide by these guidelines when making professional decisions, regardless of job title, professional affiliation, work setting, or populations served.

ARTICLE I: CORE ETHICAL EXPECTATIONS

1. Health Education Specialists display personal behaviors that represent the ethical conduct principles of honesty, autonomy, beneficence, respect, and justice. The Health Education Specialist should, under no circumstances, engage in derogatory language, violence, bigotry, racism, harassment, inappropriate sexual activities or communications in person or through the use of technology and other means.
2. Health Education Specialists respect and support the rights of individuals and communities to make informed decisions about their health, as long as such decisions pose no risk to the health of others.
3. Health Education Specialists are truthful about their qualifications and the qualifications of others whom they recommend. Health Education Specialists know their scope of practice and the limitations of their education, expertise, and experience in providing services consistent with their respective levels of professional competence, including certifications and licensures.
4. Health Education Specialists are ethically bound to respect the privacy, confidentiality, and dignity of individuals and organizations. They respect the rights of others to hold diverse values, attitudes, and opinions. Health Education Specialists have a responsibility to engage in supportive relationships that are free of exploitation in all professional settings (e.g.: with clients, patients, community members, students, supervisees, employees, and research participants.)
5. Health Education Specialists openly communicate to colleagues, employers, and professional organizations when they suspect unethical practices that violate the profession's Code of Ethics.
6. Health Education Specialists are conscious of and responsive to social, racial, faith-based, and cultural diversity when assessing needs and assets, planning, and implementing programs, conducting evaluations, and engaging in research to protect individuals, groups, society, and the environment from harm.
7. Health Education Specialists should disclose conflicts of interest in professional practice, research, evaluation, and the dissemination process.

ARTICLE II: ETHICAL PRACTICE EXPECTATIONS

SECTION 1: RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PUBLIC

Health Education Specialists are responsible for educating, promoting, maintaining, and improving the health of individuals, families, groups, and communities. When a conflict of issue arises among individuals, groups, organizations, agencies, or institutions, Health Education Specialists must consider all issues and give priority to those that promote the health and well-being of individuals and the public, while respecting both the principles of individual autonomy, human rights, and equity as long as such decisions pose no risk to the health of others.

A: Health Education Specialists advocate and encourage actions and social policies that promote maximal health benefits and the elimination or minimization of preventable risks and health inequities for all affected parties.

B: Health Education Specialists contribute to the profession by redefining existing practices, developing new practices, and by sharing the outcomes of their work.

C: Health Education Specialists actively involve individuals, groups, stakeholders, and communities in the entire educational process to maximize the understanding and personal responsibilities of those who may be affected.

SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PROFESSION

Health Education Specialists are responsible for their professional behavior, the reputation of their profession, promotion of certification for those in the profession, and promotion of ethical conduct among their colleagues.

A: Health Education Specialists recognize the boundaries of their professional competence and are accountable for their professional activities and actions.

B: Health Education Specialists maintain, improve, and expand their professional competence through continued education, research, scholarship, membership, participation, leadership in professional organizations, and engagement in professional development.

C: Health Education Specialists contribute to the profession by refining existing professional health-related practices, developing new practices, and by sharing the outcomes of their work.

D: Health Education Specialists give recognition to others for their professional contributions and achievements.

SECTION 3: RESPONSIBILITY TO EMPLOYERS

Health Education Specialists are responsible for their professional behavior in the workplace and for promoting ethical conduct among their colleagues and employers.

A: Health Education Specialists apply current, evidence informed standards and theories when fulfilling their professional responsibilities.

B: Health Education Specialists accurately represent and report service and program outcomes to employers.

C: Health Education Specialists maintain competence in their areas of professional practice through continuing education on a regular basis to maintain their competence.

SECTION 4: RESPONSIBILITY IN THE DELIVERY OF HEALTH EDUCATION/PROMOTION

Health Education Specialists deliver evidence informed practices with integrity. They respect the rights, dignity, confidentiality, inclusivity, and worth of all people by using strategies and methods tailored to the needs of diverse populations and communities.

A: Health Education Specialists remain informed of the latest scientific information and advances in health education theory, research, and practice.

B: Health Education Specialists support the development of professional standards grounded in theory, best-practice guidelines, and data.

C: Health Education Specialists adhere to a rigorous and ethical evaluation of health education/promotion initiatives.

D: Health Education Specialists promote healthy behaviors through informed choice and advocacy, and do not use coercion or intimidation.

E: Health Education Specialists disclose potential benefits and harms of proposed services, strategies, and actions that affect individuals, organizations, and communities.

F: Health Education Specialists actively collaborate with a variety of individuals and organizations, and demonstrate respect for the unique contributions provided by others.

G: Health Education Specialists do not plagiarize.

SECTION 5: RESPONSIBILITY IN RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Through research and evaluation activities, Health Education Specialists contribute to the health of populations and the profession. When planning and conducting research or evaluation, Health Education Specialists abide by federal, state, and tribal laws and regulations, organizational and institutional policies, and professional standards and ethics.

A: Health Education Specialists ensure that participation in research is voluntary and based upon the informed consent of participants. They follow research designs and protocols approved by relevant institutional review committees and/or boards.

B: Health Education Specialists respect and protect the privacy, rights, and dignity of research participants and honor commitments made to those participants.

C: Health Education Specialists treat all information obtained from participants as confidential, unless otherwise required by law, and inform research participants of the disclosure requirements and procedures.

D: Health Education Specialists take credit, including authorship, only for work they have performed and give appropriate authorship, co-authorship, credit, or acknowledgment for the contributions of others.

E: Health Education Specialists report the results of their research and evaluation objectively, accurately, and in a timely manner.

F: Health Education Specialists promote and disseminate the results of their research through appropriate formats while fostering the translation of research into practice.

SECTION 6: RESPONSIBILITY IN PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

Those involved in the professional preparation and training of Health Education students and continuing education for Health Education Specialists, are obligated to provide a quality education that meets professional standards and benefits the individual, the profession, and the public.

A: Health Education Specialists foster an inclusive educational environment free from all forms of discrimination, coercion, and harassment.

B: Health Education Specialists engaged in the delivery of professional preparation and continuing education demonstrate careful planning; state clear and realistic expectations; present material that is scientifically accurate, developmentally appropriate and inclusive; conduct fair assessments; and provide reasonable and prompt feedback to learners.

C: Health Education Specialists provide learners with objective and comprehensive guidance about professional development and career advancement.

D: Health Education Specialists facilitate meaningful opportunities for the professional development and advancement of learners.

CODE OF ETHICS TASKFORCE MEMBERS:

Christopher Ledingham, MPH, PhD (Co-Chair) Keely Rees, PhD, MCHES® (Co-Chair) Andrea L. Lowe, MPH, CPH, Elisa “Beth” McNeill, Ph.D., CHES®, Fran Anthony Meyer, PhD, CHES®, Holly Turner Moses, PhD, MCHES®, FESG Larry Olsen, MAT, MPH, Dr. P.H., MCHES®, Lori Paisley, B.S., MA., Kerry J. Redican, MPH, PhD, CHES®, Jody Vogelzang, PhD, RDN, CHES®, FAND Gayle Walter, PhD, CHES®

SUGGESTED CITATION

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The Code of Ethics for the Health Education Profession® update by the CNHEO Task Force: Christopher Ledingham, MPH, PhD (Co-Chair) Keely Rees, PhD, MCHES® (Co-Chair) Andrea L. Lowe, MPH, CPH Elisa “Beth” McNeill, Ph.D., CHES® Fran Anthony Meyer, PhD, CHES® Holly Turner Moses, PhD, MCHES®, FESG Larry Olsen, MAT, MPH, Dr. P.H., MCHES®, Lori Paisley, BS, MA, Kerry J. Redican, MPH, PhD, CHES® Jody Vogelzang, PhD, RDN, CHES®, FAND, Gayle Walter, PhD, CHES®. The Task Force was organized by the CNHEO Committee in 2019. Significant contributions to the Code were also made by the broader CNHEO members and full memberships. This Code was updated from a Task Force in 2011 and adopted by the CNHEO in February 2020. This Code may be published without permission as long as it is not changed in any way and it carries the copyright notice. Copyright (c) 2020 by the CNHEO