

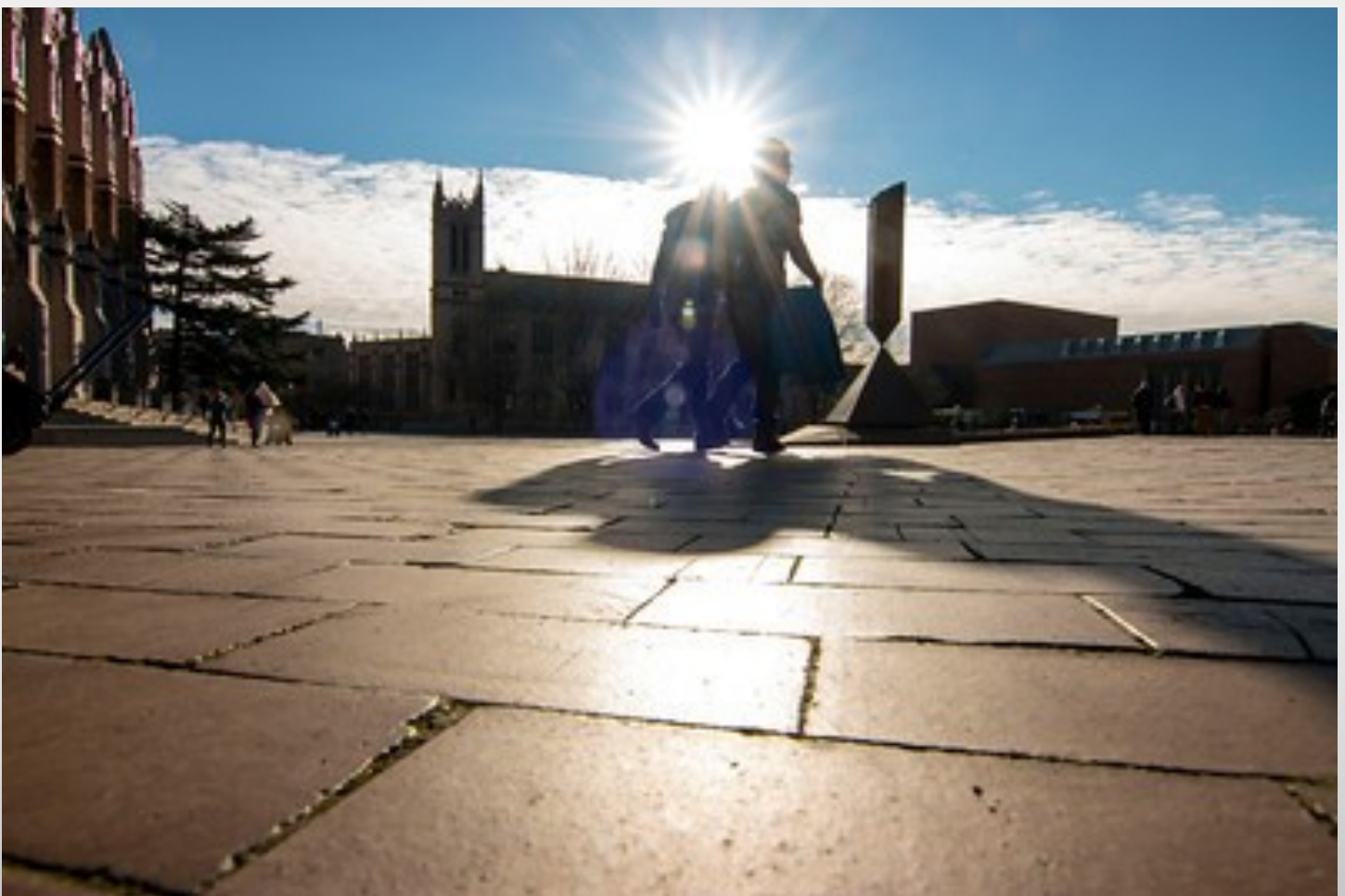


SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

# Department of Epidemiology

MPH Student Handbook

2018-2019



# University of Washington School of Public Health

## Department of Epidemiology



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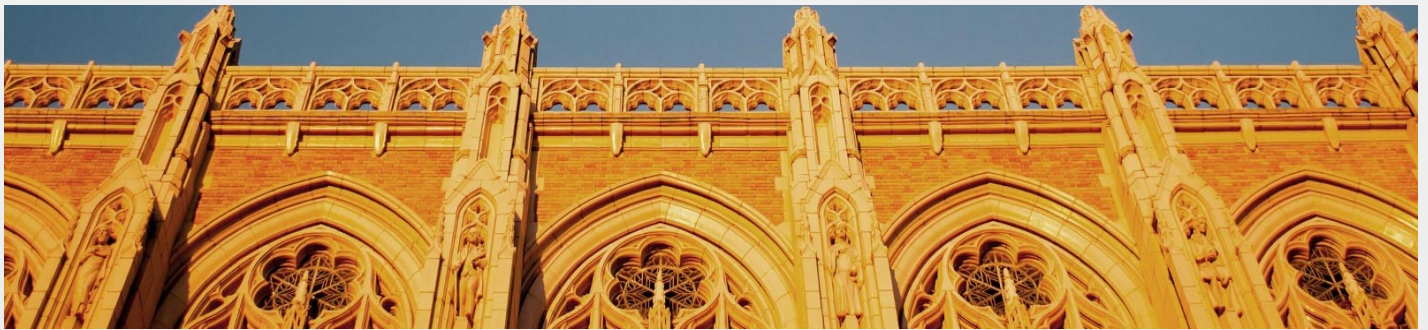


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This handbook describes the academic requirements and policies for the Department of Epidemiology Master of Public Health degree. The contents of this handbook are a supplement to the requirements and policies of the [University of Washington](#) , the [UW Graduate School](#), and the [UW School of Public Health](#). Epidemiology students are responsible for knowledge of, and adherence to, the policies and requirements of all four entities.



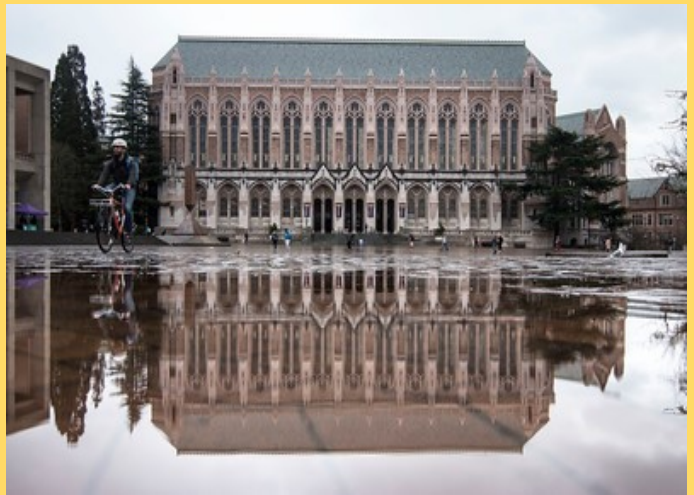
The Department of Epidemiology reserves the right to update the information published in the Handbook as necessary. All information is correct at the time of publication.



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The MPH degree program combines broad training in public health with specific training in the principles and methods of epidemiology. The degree requirements include course work in epidemiology, biostatistics, health services and environmental health; an applied practice experience (practicum) in a public health agency; and completion of a research-based thesis.



The UW School of Public Health lists both a set of Core Competencies for all SPH students as well as a set of MPH Foundational Competencies for all MPH students on their [Competencies for All Degrees](#) website.

In addition to the Competencies for All Degrees, each of the three MPH degree tracks offered in the Department of Epidemiology has a unique set of degree competencies defined by the department. They are listed in the Appendix of this handbook.

All Epi MPH students must fulfill the following credit and GPA requirements:

1. At least 63 total credits are required
2. At least 18 credits must be numerically-graded, UW graduate courses.
3. Minimum passing course grade: 2.7



A student who receives a grade lower than 2.7 in a required course must retake the course and earn a 2.7 or better in order to graduate. A student who receives a grade below 2.7 in an elective course is not required to retake it; however, the course will not count toward a degree.

4. GPA required to graduate: 3.0

A student must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 to graduate. If a student falls below a 3.0 GPA for a quarter, the Graduate Program Director will review their academic record and decide whether to take "No Action", write a "Warn Letter" or place the student on probation until both the quarterly and cumulative GPA are restored to 3.0.

# MPH Epidemiology: General Track Course Requirements

The MPH General Track provides broad based training in public health combined with in-depth training in epidemiologic principles and methods. The degree may be tailored to the student's specific interests through elective coursework, the practicum, and the thesis.

All courses with an \* must be taken for a numerical grade.

## EPI METHODS

EPI 512*	Epi Methods I (4 cr)	Autumn, Year 1
EPI 513*	Epi Methods II (4 cr)	Winter, Year 1
EPI 510	Epi Data Analysis (3 cr)	Winter, Year 1
EPI 514*	Application of Epi Methods (5 cr)	Spring, Year 1

## BIOSTATISTICS

Choose either this 3 course sequence ([which is the best choice?](#))

BIOST 511*	Med Biometry I (4 cr)	Autumn, Year 1
BIOST 512*	Med Biometry II (4 cr)	Winter, Year 1
BIOST 513*	Med Biometry III (4 cr)	Spring, Year 1

Or this 2 course sequence

BIOST 517*	Applied Biostatistics I (4 cr)	Autumn, Year 1
BIOST 518*	Applied Biostatistics II (4 cr)	Winter, Year 1

## HEALTH SERVICES/GLOBAL HEALTH

EPI 539A*	Research and Eval Methods in GH (3 cr)	Autumn, Year 1
HSERV 511* (MD/MPH students can sub HUBIO 555)	Intro Health Serv & Pub Health (3 cr)	Winter, Year 1 or Year 2

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

ENV H 511A*	Intro Envir/Occup Health (4 cr)	Spring, Year 1 or Year 2
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## PRACTICUM, SEMINAR, AND THESIS

EPI 595	Practicum (3-6 cr)	Variable
EPI 700	Thesis (max 18 cr total recommended, 9 cr minimum)	Variable
EPI 583	Epi Seminar (minimum of 3 cr total, 1 cr per quarter)	Variable

## EPI ELECTIVES

6 credits total from the electives (marked M or D/E or NI or I) on the [Epi Course Planning Sheet](#)

- At least one elective must be Disease/Exposure Focus (marked D/E on the list)
- Each course must be at least 2 credits



# MPH Epidemiology: Global Health Track Course Requirements

This program is for health professionals who intend to devote a significant part of their careers to global health issues. The program is interdisciplinary, focusing on research and community health in the developing world. The thesis must focus on international health.

All courses with an \* must be taken for a numerical grade.

## EPI METHODS

EPI 512*	Epi Methods I (4 cr)	Autumn, Year 1
EPI 513*	Epi Methods II (4 cr)	Winter, Year 1
EPI 510	Epi Data Analysis (3 cr)	Winter, Year 1
EPI 514*	Application of Epi Methods (5 cr)	Spring, Year 1

## BIOSTATISTICS

Choose either this 3 course sequence ([which is the best choice?](#))

BIOST 511*	Med Biometry I (4 cr)	Autumn, Year 1
BIOST 512*	Med Biometry II (4 cr)	Winter, Year 1
BIOST 513*	Med Biometry III (4 cr)	Spring, Year 1

Or this 2 course sequence

BIOST 517*	Applied Biostatistics I (4 cr)	Autumn, Year 1
BIOST 518*	Applied Biostatistics II (4 cr)	Winter, Year 1

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

ENV H 511*	Intro Envir/Occup Health (4 cr)	Spring, Year 1 or Year 2
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## GLOBAL HEALTH

GH 511*	Problems in International Health (4 cr)	Autumn, Year 1
EPI 539 (section B or C)*	Research and Eval Methods in GH (3cr)	Autumn, Year 1
GH 593	Global Health Workshop (Take as a 3 quarter sequence, 1 cr per quarter)	Autumn-Spring Year 1

## PRACTICUM, SEMINAR, AND THESIS

EPI 595	Practicum (3-6 cr)	Variable
EPI 700	Thesis (max 18 cr total recommended, 9 cr minimum)	Variable
EPI 583	Epi Seminar (minimum of 3 cr total, 1 cr per quarter)	Variable

## EPI ELECTIVES

6 credits total from the electives (marked M or D/E or NI or I) on the [Epi Course Planning Sheet](#)

- At least one elective must be Disease/Exposure Focus (marked D/E on the list)
- Each course must be at least 2 credits

## GH ELECTIVES

Minimum 6 credits required from the [GH Course List](#) (each course must be at least 2 credits)

- Courses dual listed in EPI and GH can be counted simultaneously toward Epi and GH elective requirements

# MPH Epidemiology: Maternal and Child Health Track Course Requirements

The MCH Program is designed to provide students the opportunity to develop expertise in the design, conduct, and analysis of MCH research. This track combines advanced training in research methodology with comprehensive background knowledge in the public health aspects of U.S. MCH problems. The applied practice experience and thesis must focus on U.S. MCH.

All courses with an \* must be taken for a numerical grade.

## EPI METHODS

EPI 512*	Epi Methods I (4 cr)	Autumn, Year 1
EPI 513*	Epi Methods II (4 cr)	Winter, Year 1
EPI 510	Epi Data Analysis (3 cr)	Winter, Year 1
EPI 514*	Application of Epi Methods (5 cr)	Spring, Year 1

## BIOSTATISTICS

Choose either this 3 course sequence ([which is the best choice?](#))

BIOST 511*	Med Biometry I (4 cr)	Autumn, Year 1
BIOST 512*	Med Biometry II (4 cr)	Winter, Year 1
BIOST 513*	Med Biometry III (4 cr)	Spring, Year 1

Or this 2 course sequence

BIOST 517*	Applied Biostatistics I (4 cr)	Autumn, Year 1
BIOST 518*	Applied Biostatistics II (4 cr)	Winter, Year 1

## HEALTH SERVICES/GLOBAL HEALTH

EPI 539A*	Research and Eval Methods in GH (3 cr)	Autumn, Year 1
HSERV 511* HUBIO 555 can sub for MD/MPH students	Intro Health Services & Pub Health (3 cr)	Winter, Year 1 or Year 2

## MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

EPI 521*	Maternal and Child Health Problems (4 cr)	Winter, Year 1
EPI 592A	MCH Research Seminar Series (4 cr total, 1 cr per quarter)	Autumn and Spring, Years 1&2

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

ENV H 511A*	Intro Envir/Occup Health (4 cr)	Spring, Year 1 or Year 2
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## PRACTICUM, SEMINAR, AND THESIS

EPI 595	Practicum (3-6 cr)	Variable
EPI 700	Thesis (max 18 cr total recommended, 9 cr minimum)	Variable
EPI 583	Epi Seminar (minimum of 3 cr total, 1 cr per quarter)	Variable

## EPI ELECTIVES

Minimum of 3 credits total Disease/Exposure or Methods elective (marked D/E or M on the [Epi Course Planning Sheet](#))

- Each course must be at least 2 credits

# Master's Thesis

The master's thesis should be evidence of the student's ability to carry out an epidemiologic investigation and to present the results in clear and systematic form. The thesis must be submitted to the Graduate School by the end of the quarter in which degree requirements are completed or by the deadline specified in the [Graduate Registration Waiver Fee](#).

**Recommended Timeline:** Some Epidemiology master's degree programs have thesis deadlines that may be a little earlier than this timeline suggests. For example, in the Maternal and Child Health Program students have to present on a thesis topic and submit a proposal in the 1st Spring quarter. However, both are expected to be preliminary. As another example, a student hoping to submit an abstract of a thesis project to a conference may have an earlier timeline than the one below.

Activity	1 <sup>st</sup> Fall	1 <sup>st</sup> Winter	1 <sup>st</sup> Spring	Summer	2 <sup>nd</sup> Fall	2 <sup>nd</sup> Winter	2 <sup>nd</sup> Spring
Meet with faculty, advisor and others, to learn about research opportunities; attend events and seminars with faculty							
Meet with faculty to discuss a thesis project; pick project and thesis Chair/committee (see next page for Chair/committee eligibility requirements); complete the <a href="#">Human Subjects form</a> and the required <a href="#">Human Subjects Division IRB training/review</a> . Submit forms to the <a href="#">Epi Students</a> Canvas site.							
Write and submit a <a href="#">thesis proposal</a> , that has been approved by your committee, via the Epi Students Canvas site							
Bulk of the data analysis; regularly meet with Chair and, if necessary, other members of your committee							
Write thesis							
<a href="#">Electronically submit your thesis</a>							
Pay attention to all of the things you have to do to graduate in June - <a href="#">lots of steps!</a>							



[Here is the definitive master's thesis development and writing guide for Epi students.](#)



# Master's Thesis Committee

## Master's Thesis Committee

*(Membership = Chair plus 1 or more additional faculty. The Department recommends a total committee membership of between 2 and 4 but it may be larger if necessary as judged by you and your Chair.)*

**Chair:** Usually the Chair will be the faculty member who is providing the data, or other resources, you will use for your thesis. A faculty member must fulfill 3 basic criteria in order to serve as Chair of an Epi Department master's thesis committee.

1. The Chair must be a [core Epidemiology faculty member](#).\*
2. The Chair must have an earned doctoral degree (or foreign equivalent).
3. The Chair must be a member of the [Graduate Faculty](#). Don't assume your potential Chair is a member of the Graduate Faculty. Search at the linked Graduate Faculty page to be 100% sure. Faculty who need to obtain Graduate Faculty status should contact Angie Buck, the Department's Academic Human Resources coordinator (ambuck@uw.edu) for advice on the application process.

\*An Epi faculty member with an adjunct, affiliate, clinical, senior lecturer or emeritus appointment may chair a master's committee only with prior approval of the Graduate Program Director. To request permission for this exception first check to be sure the proposed chair is a member of the Graduate Faculty (few are). If not, see #3 above. Once the faculty member has Graduate Faculty status send a petition to the Graduate Program Director providing the following information:

1. A brief description of the proposed project
2. A brief explanation of why the faculty member is especially appropriate to chair your committee based on your topic and their expertise
3. The name(s) of the core Epidemiology faculty member(s) who will also serve on your committee

**The committee** profile must conform to the following criteria:

1. At least one-half of the total membership of the committee (including the Chair) must be members of the Graduate Faculty.
2. One committee member may be below the rank of Assistant Professor. In this case the committee must contain two other faculty members at the rank of Assistant Professor or higher.
3. All thesis committees must have at least one core Epidemiology Department faculty member.
4. Affiliate and clinical faculty, and faculty from any department or institution are eligible to serve on the committee, subject to the limitations above.
5. Appointing a non-UW affiliated committee member requires approval. To request permission for a non-UW affiliated committee member please email the following information to the Graduate Program Director.
  1. A brief description of the proposed project
  2. A brief explanation of why the person is especially appropriate to serve on the committee based on the topic and their expertise
  3. The proposed committee member's CV

**Documentation** you must submit via the [Epi Students](#) Canvas site (instructions and links to forms can be found there)

1. Thesis Chair/Committee update form (any changes made subsequent to submitting the original form require resubmission of an updated form)
2. Use of Human and Animal Subjects for UW Graduate Student Theses and Dissertations form (before registering for EPI 700)
3. The IRB approval or exemption cover page (before research begins)
4. Thesis proposal signed by all committee members (at least one quarter before graduation)

# MPH Practicum

The Master of Public Health is a practitioner-oriented degree that emphasizes the improvement of policy and practice. The Practicum is an integral component of professional training in public health and is required of all MPH students in accredited programs such as those offered by the University of Washington's School of Public Health.

The Practicum provides MPH students with the opportunity to integrate and apply classroom learning with professional experience. It allows them to observe and learn from practicing professionals and to engage with real-world public health challenges and to do so concurrent with their academic experience. At the same time, organizations pursuing public health missions can draw on fresh perspectives and a wide range of public health skills from students as they contribute to a community's resources and to solving active public health problems. Working under the guidance and expertise of faculty and site supervisors, students develop practical skills and confidence as public health professionals while gaining first-hand exposure to public health work.



It is each student's responsibility to find, arrange, and complete a satisfactory field experience that fulfills the Practicum requirements. The faculty, departments and the Office of Student Affairs are all here to help but the student is ultimately responsible for finding a Practicum that will meet their particular needs. Scheduling a meeting with your advisor and/or the Epidemiology Graduate Program Director and/or the SPH Manager of Experiential Learning is a good way to begin the process of identifying a Practicum faculty advisor and a site coordinator. A comprehensive discussion of Practicum requirements and resources can be found on the [SPH Experiential Learning website](#).



# Concurrent Degree Programs and Graduate Certificates

## FORMAL CONCURRENT DEGREE PROGRAMS IN EPI

\*Students in these four programs may count 12 UW credits toward both degrees if approved by both departments

- [MPH/MD](#)  
Follows MPH General Track course requirements with one exception: Students may take either HSERV 511 or HUBIO 555 (must be taken for a numerical grade). Students must fulfill all MD requirements.
- [MPH/MPA](#) (Public Administration)  
Students must fulfill the course requirements of the track to which they were admitted (General Track, Global Health Track, Maternal and Child Health Track). Course requirements for the MPA can be found [here](#).
- [MPH/PhD Anthropology](#)  
Students must fulfill the course requirements of the track to which they were admitted (General Track, Global Health Track, Maternal and Child Health Track). Course requirements for the PhD can be found [here](#).
- [MPH/MAIS](#) (International Studies)  
Students must fulfill the course requirements of the track to which they were admitted (General Track, Global Health Track, Maternal and Child Health Track). Course requirements for the MAIS can be found [here](#).

## INFORMAL CONCURRENT DEGREE PROGRAMS IN EPI

Students may also pursue informal concurrent degrees that include the Epi MPH. In these cases the Graduate School does not allow 12 credits to be counted toward both degrees. However, if a student earns more than the credits required by the Graduate School, it may be possible to count certain relevant courses toward both degrees with the approval of both departments. Consult [epi@uw.edu](mailto:epi@uw.edu) and your current degree program office for more information.

Additionally, for concurrent master's degrees, the student's Epidemiology thesis requirement cannot be met with a thesis from another department.

## GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

**[Graduate Certificate Programs](#)**: Any student enrolled in a graduate degree program at the University of Washington who meets the prerequisites and qualifications may apply for a graduate certificate program. There is usually time to earn one graduate certificate during the standard MPH time frame.

Rules governing all certificate programs:

- The Graduate Certificate will appear on your transcript
- At least 9 credits applied toward the certificate must be taken for a numeric grade
- Up to 6 credits may overlap with your degree program if they are elective credits for both programs
- Core degree requirements may not be used in fulfillment of a certificate program
- A cumulative GPA of 3.0 is required for all courses counting toward the certificate, and a grade of 2.7 or above is required for any individual course.
- Students earning both a degree and a certificate must submit a manual degree audit to the Graduate School by the end of the quarter in which they graduate. Find concurrent program instructions for a manual audit on the [Epi Students](#) Canvas site.
- Individual Certificate Programs may have additional requirements.

The additional, specific requirements for any Graduate Certificate program may be found on the program's website (application requirements, course and credit requirements). See the Graduate Certificate Programs link above for the website containing a listing of all programs and links to program websites.



# Student Resources and Information



**How do I waive a course?** Epi policies and instructions are [here](#).

**Can I transfer previously earned graduate credits?** You may transfer up to 6 graduate, quarter credits (4 semester credits) with approval of the Epi Department and the Graduate School. First complete the waiver form linked above and submit to Epi Student Academic Services. If approved by Epi, then petition the Graduate School through [MyGradProgram](#). Up to 12 credits earned as a [Graduate Non-Matriculated](#) student may be applied to a UW degree program.

**How can I find a tutor?** Email Kevin Schuda in the Epi SAS Office at [epcourse@uw.edu](mailto:epcourse@uw.edu). Free writing tutoring can be scheduled through the [Health Sciences Library](#).



**I'm looking for funding. Where can I search?** Start with the [Epi Student Opportunities](#) website. The [SPH website](#) posts funding opportunities advertised to the Dean's Office. Other, Graduate School resources include the [Student Funding](#) Graduate School webpage and the [Graduate Funding Information Service](#) (GFIS) website.

**Can I request a leave of absence?** Yes, if you are eligible and fulfill all requirements for going on leave. You can find more Graduate School policy detail [here](#). A guide for the process of requesting leave is [here](#).



**Does the Epi Department fund travel to conferences?** Any Epi student presenting a paper, whether in oral or poster format, at a major conference in the field may [apply for limited travel funds](#). There are also travel funds available through GFIS linked above.

**Where can I find information about:**

[Tuition costs](#)? Contact info for Student Fiscal Services can be found [here](#).

[Course Registration](#)? Contact info for the Registration Office can be found [here](#).

[Washington State Residency](#)? Contact info for the Residency Office can be found [here](#).



**Are there resources for helping enhance the mentoring relationship between me and my advisor?** A meeting with the Epi Graduate Program Director is often helpful. The Graduate School [Mentoring](#) website also provides information and resources.

**Are there mental health professionals I can speak with on campus?** The [Counseling Center](#) offers mostly free services including brief counseling sessions, assessments, referrals, and crisis intervention. The [Health and Wellness](#) department also provides mental health support for students.



# Get Involved!

## STUDENT REPRESENTATION

[Graduate & Professional Student Senate](#): The Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS) is the official student government representing the 15,000 graduate and professional students at the University of Washington.

[Epidemiology Department Student Representatives](#): These positions provide you the opportunity to represent your fellow Epidemiology students in areas such as our curriculum, admissions, diversity, and social opportunities. Contact any representative at the link above to present ideas for improvement in the department or to inquire about becoming a representative yourself.



## DIVERSITY

[Samuel E. Kelly Ethnic Cultural Center](#): Home of the Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity, works to enrich the collegiate experience through resources and opportunities focused on increasing and promoting diversity on campus. The Graduate Opportunities and Minority Achievement Program [GO-MAP](#) specifically focuses on the graduate student experience.

The [Intellectual House](#) provides a multi-service learning and gathering space for Native American students, faculty and staff, as well as others from various cultures and communities to come together in a welcoming environment to share knowledge.

## RECREATION

The [Intramural Activities/Waterfront Activities Center](#) offer opportunities for students to take classes, participate in intramural sports, take advantage of the recreation center (pool, basketball, racquetball, weight training, indoor track, tennis, climbing wall, and more). The WAC rents canoes and rowboats.



## SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH SEMINARS AND EVENTS

View the [School of Public Health Events Calendar](#) to find an extremely wide variety of public health related events and seminars both on and off campus, as well as links to individual SPH department calendars.



## REGISTERED STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

The [EPIDEMIOLOGY STUDENTS GROUP](#) is an official UW Registered Student Organization. On the [Student Activities Office](#) website you can search the complete listing of UW RSO's and learn more about registering a new student organization.

# Appendix: Epi Department MPH Competencies

## ALL TRACKS

- Define and calculate measures of disease frequency and measures of association between risk factors and disease;
- Describe the major epidemiologic research study designs and their advantages and limitations;
- Describe the major sources of bias in epidemiologic research (confounding, selection bias and measurement error) and the ways to evaluate and reduce the bias;
- Evaluate effect modification;
- Apply criteria to support whether an association is causal;
- Understand the basic terms and methods used in outbreak investigation, infectious disease epidemiology, chronic disease epidemiology, disease prevention trials and evaluation of screening tests;
- Critically review the scientific literature, synthesize the findings across studies, and make appropriate public health recommendations based on current knowledge;
- Design an epidemiologic study to address a question of interest;
- Interpret results of an epidemiologic study, including the relation to findings from other epidemiologic studies, the potential biological and/or social mechanisms, the limitations of the study, and the public health implications;
- Write a clear description of the rationale, methods, results and interpretation of an epidemiologic investigation;
- Apply epidemiologic skills in a public health setting, specifically in the formulation or application of public health programs or policies



# Appendix: Epi Department MPH Competencies

## **GLOBAL HEALTH TRACK COMPETENCIES** (in addition to those listed for All Tracks)

- Describe the major influences on health in resource-poor settings and outline differences and similarities to Western settings;
- Describe the epidemiology of diseases of greatest burden in resource-poor settings and determine how social and economic development influences these diseases;
- Identify and interpret risk factors for diseases that are unique to resource-poor settings, including poverty, inequality, gender, and sociocultural characteristics of communities;
- Develop strategies to overcome the unique challenges of study design and data collection in resource-poor settings;
- Use quantitative and/or qualitative skills to assess effectiveness of health interventions in resource-poor settings; and
- Incorporate rigorous epidemiologic study designs in program evaluation and implementation science in resource-poor settings.

# Appendix: Epi Department MPH Competencies

## **MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH TRACK COMPETENCIES** (in addition to those listed for All Tracks)

- Define the MCH populations and describe MCH problems in terms of time, magnitude and severity, location, and co-occurrence and co-morbidity;
- Discuss the origin and development of a national interest in maternal and child health in relation to major social and political periods in U.S. history; describe the current organization and financing of health services for MCH population groups and the position and role of MCH agencies within the system;
- Use data and rigorous analytic methods to identify and evaluate the relative contribution of factors associated with a MCH health goal (e.g., immunization), illness or other health condition;
- Evaluate the integrity and comparability of data and identify existing gaps;
- Formulate hypotheses or research questions, develop and implement an analytic strategy;
- Develop the background and significance section of a research proposal, incorporating scientific, methodological, and practice knowledge and skills;
- Apply knowledge of demographic, health, social and environmental factors to design and evaluate MCH programs and policies;
- Identify the scientific underpinnings and determine the validity of evidence for interventions addressing MCH problems;
- Critically analyze health disparities based on race, class, and gender;
- Conduct research, program management, and data collection and storage in an ethical manner; and
- Communicate the worth of protecting the health and well-being of all women, children and families, in particular those with low income or limited access to quality health services, and children with special health care needs.