

Master of Public Health

The Master of Public Health (M.P.H.) educational degree program at the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health at Georgia Southern University prepares professionals for broad-based practice in public health, through the integration of core competencies in the five areas of knowledge basic to public health (biostatistics, environmental health, epidemiology, health policy and community health) with specialized knowledge and expertise in one of these areas. The program serves both the full-time student preparing for a career in public health, as well as currently employed health professionals seeking an advanced education to augment their existing skills and background.

Purpose

The purpose of the M.P.H. is to prepare graduate level public health practitioners capable of applying practice-based skills to promote the concepts of the field.

A comprehensive public health education program should provide skills enabling students to assess the magnitude and potential impact of the multiple problems facing populations, as well as recognize existing community capacities or resources. In conjunction with assessment skills, students enrolled in a public health program should understand the role of community empowerment, community mobilization, networks, and partnerships in the development of comprehensive public health policies designed to impact the priority areas identified in the assessment phase. Lastly, student skill sets in a public health program should focus on the task of assuring a presence of services and infrastructure necessary to address problems identified in the assessment phase, as well as enforce policies developed in response to the assessment. Specific skill sets related to the core functions of public health practice are as follows:

- Monitor health status to identify community health problems;
- Diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community;
- Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues;
- Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems;
- Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts;
- Recognize the importance of the enforcement of laws and regulations necessary to protect health and ensure safety;
- Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable;
- Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services; and
- Research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.

The M.P.H. program is committed to producing public health practitioners that possess the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to produce an effective public health workforce.

CEPH M.P.H. Competencies

At the completion of the M.P.H. degree program all students will be able to:

Evidence-based Approaches to Public Health

1. Apply epidemiological methods to the breadth of settings and situations in public health practice
2. Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context

3. Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming and software, as appropriate

4. Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice

Public Health & Health Care Systems

5. Compare the organization, structure and function of health care, public health and regulatory systems across national and international settings

6. Discuss the means by which structural bias, social inequities and racism undermine health and create challenges to achieving health equity at organizational, community and societal levels

Planning & Management to Promote Health

7. Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities' health

8. Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design or implementation of public health policies or programs

9. Design a population-based policy, program, project or intervention

10. Explain basic principles and tools of budget and resource management

11. Select methods to evaluate public health programs

Policy in Public Health

12. Discuss multiple dimensions of the policy-making process, including the roles of ethics and evidence

13. Propose strategies to identify stakeholders and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes

14. Advocate for political, social or economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations

15. Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity

Leadership

16. Apply principles of leadership, governance and management, which include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration and guiding decision making

17. Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges

Communication

18. Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors

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

20. Describe the importance of cultural competence in communicating public health content

Interprofessional Practice

21. Perform effectively on interprofessional teams

Systems Thinking

22. Apply systems thinking tools to a public health issue

Biostatistics Competencies

M.P.H. Concentration Competencies

Competencies for each concentration are outline below:

Biostatistics

1. Provide the biostatistical components of the design of a public health or biomedical experiment.
2. Demonstrate proficiency in SAS programming to solve biomedical problems.
3. Demonstrate comprehension of ethical issues in biomedical studies, such as treatment efficacy and patient safety.
4. Translate the biomedical experimental objectives into biostatistical questions via hypothesis testing or confidence interval framework.
5. Describe key concepts and theory underlying biostatistical methodology used in probability and inferential, analytical and descriptive statistics.

Environmental Health

1. Describe the direct and indirect environmental and occupational health hazards with respect to infectivity, toxicity, and physiological impacts on communities and the adverse effects on the ecosystem.
2. Explain exposure pathways, and transmission mechanisms by which environmental/occupational agents influence human and the ecosystem health.
3. Analyze environmental and occupational health risk assessment methods, directed towards prediction and management of these hazards to address community concerns, including environmental justice and equity, while adhering to pertinent regulatory guidelines.
4. Specify appropriate environmental monitoring and impact assessment methods and intervention strategies to support or advocate for environmental/occupational health policy development.
5. Develop age-appropriate educational material to relay public health risk information to lay audiences

Epidemiology

1. Identify, utilize, and interpret routinely collected epidemiologic data from a variety of settings.
2. Apply descriptive and analytic data analysis methods to epidemiologic data using statistical software, as appropriate.
3. Draw valid inferences from epidemiologic data at an intermediate level to assess the burden of disease or exposure-disease associations.
4. Evaluate the strengths and limitations of epidemiologic reports.
5. Engage in the dissemination of epidemiologic findings suitable to professional or lay audiences.

Health Policy and Management

1. Apply quantitative analysis to evaluate health policy data.
2. Explore the legal and ethical dilemmas in public health systems.
3. Apply principles of healthcare financing, reimbursement methodologies, and budgeting to public or private health settings.
4. Apply principles of informatics, data management, and using data to inform decision making.

5. Develop strategies to motivate others for collaborative problem solving, decision-making, and evaluation.

Social and Behavioral Sciences

1. Apply basic theories, concepts and models from a range of social and behavioral disciplines in public health research and practice.
2. Evaluate the contribution of logic models in program development, implementation, and evaluation.
3. Develop a culturally appropriate social marketing plan to address a social or behavioral issue in the target population.
4. Develop intervention recommendations based on community analysis of determinant sequencing and causal diagrams.
5. Evaluate a variety of participatory methods that can be used in community health analysis and assessment.

Applied Public Health

1. Apply data-driven decision making in individual, program or organizational performance.
2. Develop a lesson plan as part of a health promotion program for a targeted population.
3. Apply social marketing theory/approaches to individual behavior change and community health problem- solving.
4. Deliver a health promotion seminar for a target population by using a formative evaluation method.
5. Participate with stakeholders in identifying key public health values and a shared public health vision as guiding principles for community action.

The Curriculum

The M.P.H. is an applied professional/graduate degree designed for highly motivated students who have a substantial interest in public health. Unique sequencing of courses, community-based program activities, and field/ laboratory research provide students with multiple opportunities to develop the public health competencies.

The M.P.H. program requires a minimum of 45 credits and is offered on both a full-and part-time basis. The overall curriculum model includes:

	Credit Hours
Public Health Core	18
Concentration	21
Electives	0-3
Practicum in Public Health	3
Integrated Capstone Experience	3
Total Credit Hours	45

The M.P.H. core course requirements provide a broad overview of the disciplines of public health and the basic principles of public health practice. Specialty coursework develops the skills and knowledge upon which to build or enhance a career in public health. Selective courses are available in each of the five core areas of concentration: Epidemiology, Environmental Health Sciences, Biostatistics, Health Services Administration, and Social and Behavioral Sciences/Community Health Education.

In addition, all students are required to take an introduction to public health. An important practical experience in a public health venue is a field practicum in a community, a public health facility, a government agency,

or related setting. The culminating experience is a course that requires the student integrate their specialization with public health practice.

Admission Requirements

Admission into the graduate programs within the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health (JPHCOPH) is competitive and decisions are based on the application as a whole. The Master of Public Health (MPH) admission requirements apply to the following MPH degrees in the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health at Georgia Southern University:

- Public Health M.P.H. (Concentration in Biostatistics)
- Public Health M.P.H. (Concentration in Community Health)
- Public Health M.P.H. (Concentration in Environmental Health)
- Public Health M.P.H. (Concentration in Epidemiology)
- Public Health M.P.H. (Concentration in Health Policy and Management)
- Public Health M.P.H. (Concentration in Applied Public Health)

Degree Admission Requirements

Regular

1. Application - Completion of an application in Schools of Public Health Application Service (SOPHAS).
2. Degree - Completion of a Bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited institution.
3. Transcripts - Official transcript(s) from each college or university previously attended. A transcript is required even if the courses from one school appear on the transcript of another school. (NOTE: SOPHAS will NOT process your application without receiving all official transcripts. Please refer to the SOPHAS FAQs page for instructions on HOW TO SEND TRANSCRIPTS.)
 - All foreign transcripts must be evaluated by World Education Services (WES). Visit <http://www.wes.org/> to view which documents are required for your country and to request an International Credential Advantage Package (ICAP) Course-by-Course Report
4. Grade Point Average (GPA) - Minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75/4.0 scale in either:
 - Upper division undergraduate courses; OR
 - Upper division graduate courses
5. Graduate Record Examination (GRE) - Official scores on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), taken within the last five (5) years sent to school code 8560.
6. English Language Proficiency - International applicants and U.S. Citizens whose native language is not English must demonstrate English proficiency. Prior to consideration for admission, international applicants whose native language is not English must take and post acceptable scores on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) (<http://www.ets.org/toefl>) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) (<http://www.ielts.org>) unless they have received a degree from an accredited college or university in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada (except Quebec), Australia, or New Zealand. The TOEFL and IELTS examinations are administered at various times of the year and in many centers throughout the world.
 - A score of at least 75 (internet-based test, IBT) or 537 (paper-based test) on the TOEFL and 6.0 on the IELTS is normally required to be considered for regular admission. The official TOEFL and the official IELTS scores may not be more than two (2) years old. Those who do not meet the minimum proficiency standard may be recommended for enrollment in University English courses or for English courses offered by the English Language Program (ELP) on campus. Successful completion of Intensive English Programs (IEPs) at other English Language

Program (ELP) providers will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Request that your official TOEFL scores be sent directly to SOPHAS. Official IELTS scores should be sent to: Georgia Southern University, Office of Graduate Admissions, P.O. Box 8113, Statesboro, GA 30460-8113.

7. Letters of Recommendation - Three (3) letters of recommendation. It is strongly advised that two letters be from individuals who can address your past academic performance and it is encouraged that the third letter is from a work or internship supervisor.
8. Curriculum Vitae/Resume - A CV/Resume that includes the following: a) educational experiences, b) professional goals and objectives, c) work history, d) professional experiences, memberships and/or participation in professional organizations, e) experiences in public health programs.
9. Statement of Purpose - A Statement of Purpose (500-1000 words) that conveys the applicant's reasons for pursuing graduate study in public health and how admission into the program relates to the applicant's professional aspirations.

*Some students may be required to take prerequisite coursework prior to beginning the program of study. Conditions of admission will be presented at the student's first advisement appointment.

Provisional

Admission may be granted to those individuals who do not fully satisfy the admission requirements. You must earn grades of "B" or better in your first nine (9) semester hours taken at Georgia Southern University following the effective admission term to obtain Regular Admission. A provisional student may enroll in graduate courses leading to a degree and such courses may count in a degree program once the student has changed to Regular Admission. Only credit earned in graduate courses at Georgia Southern University will satisfy provisional admission requirements. Failure to satisfy these requirements will result in an ineligibility to continue studies in the College of Graduate Studies. Provisional students are not eligible for Graduate Assistantship positions.

For more information on our programs, visit our website at <http://jphcoph.georgiasouthern.edu/degrees/>.

Non-Degree Admission Requirements

An applicant may be admitted as a Non-Degree (Master's) student to earn credit hours in MASTER'S-LEVEL Public Health courses without working towards a degree or certificate program. Applying to a graduate degree or certificate program is a separate process and different criteria must be met.

1. Application - Completion of an application in Schools of Public Health Application Service (SOPHAS) Express.
2. Degree - Completion of a Bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited institution.
3. Transcripts - Official transcript(s) from each college or university previously attended. A transcript is required even if the courses from one school appear on the transcript of another school.*
 - All foreign transcripts must be evaluated by World Education Services (WES). Visit <http://www.wes.org/> to view which documents are required for your country and to request an International Credential Advantage Package (ICAP) Course-by-Course Report.*
 - Upload transcript(s) from all institutions attended. (Do NOT send transcripts to SOPHAS Express)
4. Grade Point Average (GPA) - Minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75/4.0 scale in either:
 - Upper division undergraduate courses; OR
 - Upper division graduate courses.
5. Statement of Purpose - A Statement of Purpose (500-1000 words) that conveys the applicant's reasons for pursuing graduate study in public

health and how admission into the program relates to the applicant's professional aspirations.

*NOTE: Unofficial documents must be uploaded for review purposes. Official transcripts are only required if you are offered admission. Following notification of admission, official transcripts mailed in sealed envelopes directly from each university attended (or directly from WES) are required PRIOR to the first day of classes of the original semester of acceptance. Failure to provide the official transcripts following notification of admission will result in revocation of the admission offer. Official documents must be mailed to: Georgia Southern University, Office of Graduate Admissions, P.O. Box 8113, Statesboro, GA 30460-8113.

Advisement: M.P.H.

Graduate students are advised by the Academic Services Coordinator and mentored by a faculty member from the Student's concentration areas.

Grades

M.P.H. level degree-seeking students are required to maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 to remain in good academic standing and to be eligible to graduate. In the event the cumulative GPA falls below 3.0, the student will be placed on academic probation. Students have nine (9) credits to elevate the cumulative GPA to at least 3.0 or will be excluded from the program. Students earning grades of "D" or below will be excluded from the program.

Transfer Credit Hours

Students may request that up to, but no more than, six (6) graduate credits be applied toward the 45 credits required for the M.P.H. Transfer credit must also satisfy the same requirements as courses taught for masters training within the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health (e.g., minimum grade of "B"), be consistent with the student's approved program of study, and have been received from a regionally accredited college or university. Thesis and dissertation credits cannot be transferred. The student must provide documentation in support of equivalence, such as a course syllabus, transcript, term paper, and/or instructor testimony. Equivalence is determined by the Division Director. Credit hour reductions do not influence the residency and enrollment requirements or comprehensive examination procedures.

Course Time Limit

All requirements for the M.P.H. must be completed within seven academic years from the date of the first enrollment for study following admission to the master's program. For transfer students, the seven-year time limit commences with the semester during which transfer credit hour was earned.

Experiential Learning Opportunities

All M.P.H. students are required to complete a public health practicum and complete the Integrated Capstone Experience. The practicum permits the student to receive practical experience in a selected public health-related setting. The practicum requires 300 hours of service. The Integrated Capstone Experience requires students to integrate basic principles and practices of public health in a case-based format.