



University of
Connecticut

Master of Public Health Program

STUDENT HANDBOOK

“Preparing public health professionals to achieve high standards of leadership through exemplary education, public service and research.”

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1. Handbook Overview

This handbook has been created to be a practical guide for current students in the University of Connecticut Master of Public Health Program. It is filled with information that will be helpful during your graduate studies. Matters such as class registration, course schedules, official forms, and preparing for graduation are covered. The MPH Student Handbook is designed to be used in conjunction with the UCHC Graduate School Student Handbook found on the Graduate School website at:

http://grad.uchc.edu/current/student_handbook/student_handbook.pdf

In addition, a great deal of the information reviewed here is available on the web at the MPH homepage found at:

http://publichealth.uconn.edu/acprgms_mph_currentstd.php

2. Values, Mission, Goals and Objectives

Program Values Statement

Social Justice

- Belief in health as a public good and fundamental right

Diversity and Respect

- Recognition and respect for differing beliefs, cultures and needs

Collaboration

- Cooperation and promotion of participatory approaches to enhance research, service and educational activities

Advocacy

- Generation and dissemination of information to increase awareness and foster support for the public health agenda

Integrity

- Promoting the highest standards of objectivity, accountability, transparency and professionalism in all activities

Program Mission Statement

The University of Connecticut MPH Program prepares public health professionals to achieve high standards of leadership through exemplary scholarship in teaching, application, discovery and integration¹ of public health knowledge in order to benefit the well-being of Connecticut residents and others through organized, comprehensive, effective and just action.

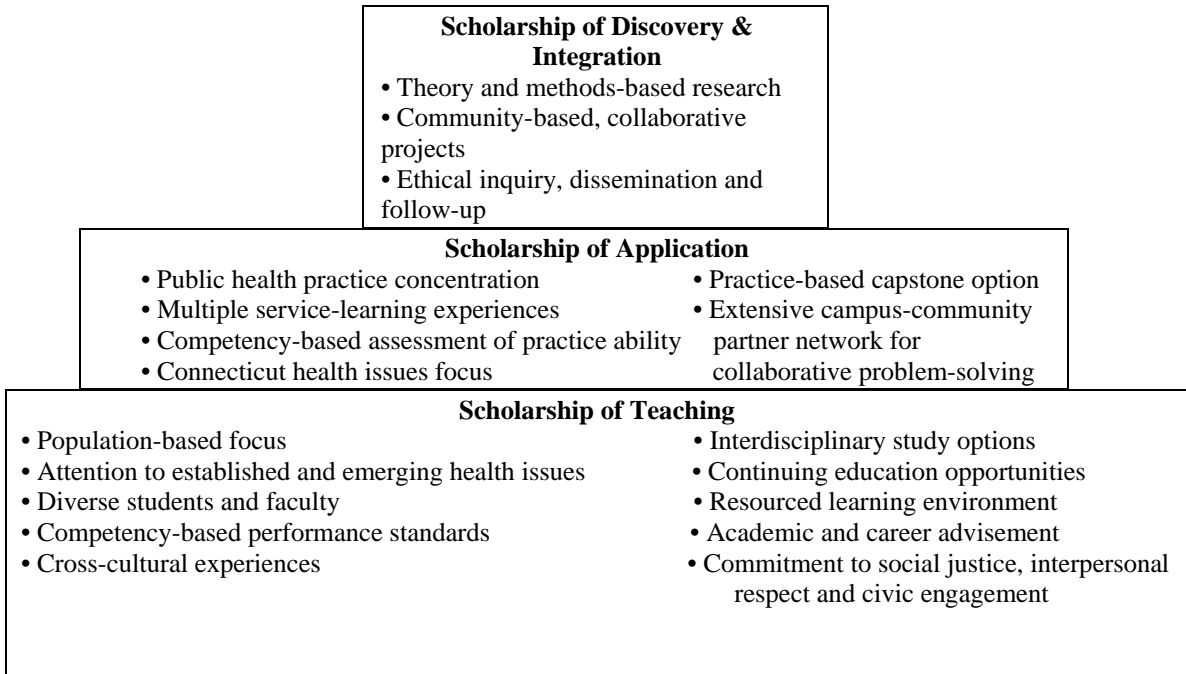
¹ These dimensions of scholarship are drawn from concepts developed by Ernest L. Boyer, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professorate*, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, October 1997.

Program Goals

Scholarship of teaching (Education Goal) The scholarship of teaching is our program’s fundamental priority. Relevant activities include the development and application of innovative teaching practices, evaluation of instructional and learning tools and methodologies, and dissemination of effective teaching methods. Our education goals seek to develop, provide and assess an exemplary generalist education experience for students that will lead to competence in the core areas of public health necessary for careers in public health practice. Furthermore, we seek to develop, provide and assess exemplary continuing education experiences for the public health workforce, community stakeholders and citizens at-large that will advance their knowledge and appreciation of core public health disciplines and practice within the field. Our program identifies 7 educational objectives related to the above goals.

Scholarship of application (Service Goal) The scholarship of application builds upon and reflects our program’s educational priorities. Relevant activities include advocacy and policy development to improve social conditions and public health practice, participation with community-partners to address immediate threats to the public’s health, participation in program planning and evaluation, and development and dissemination of methodological tools and strategies for effective community health action. Through collaborative service learning among students, faculty and community partners, our service goal seeks to foster applied learning experiences that validate knowledge acquired through the curriculum and expand the social capital available within our community. Our program identifies 1 service objective related to this goal.

Scholarship of discovery and integration (Research Goal) The scholarship of discovery and knowledge integration assures that pure and practical knowledge of social, behavioral, physical and biological factors that underlie population health and health service delivery is developed and conveyed to academic and professional partners. Our research goal is to develop materials and methods as aides to the discovery process and bring disparate knowledge and practices together in fuller understanding of the causes and control of disease, injury, illness and mortality within populations. Our program identifies 3 research objectives related to this goal. The relationship among these goals is illustrated below.



Measurable Program Objectives

In support of our mission and goals, the program has adopted the following objectives:

Educational Objectives:

- 1: Design, implement and evaluate a competency-based core curriculum.
- 2: Assure graduates are competent practitioners of public health.
- 3: Nurture diversity of experience and interest among faculty and program staff.
- 4: Offer continuing and interdisciplinary education opportunities.
- 5: Improve student retention and matriculation.
- 6: Secure necessary institutional and extramural support to deliver excellent curriculum
- 7: Identify and retain qualified faculty.

Service Objective:

- 1: Offer coursework and service-learning experience focused on health and well-being in Connecticut.

Research Objectives:

- 1: Prepare students to design, undertake and disseminate relevant public health research.
- 2: Promote ethical, compassionate public health research.
- 3: Promote research focused on causes and control of health disparities.

3. Program Competencies

Mastery of skills is a cumulative experience that begins from the time of admission to the program and extends throughout a student's educational experience. The MPH Program has identified the following 15 competencies expected of all graduates to enable them to function as public health practitioners:

1. Describe the roles biostatistics and epidemiology play in informing scientific, ethical, economic and political discussion of health issues.
2. Identify vital statistics and other key data sources for describing socioeconomic conditions and health states of communities.
3. Use concepts of probability and random variation to draw appropriate inferences from data.
4. Apply basic methods and terminology to calculate and report measures of rate and risk.
5. Assess strengths and limitations of various research designs in interpreting results of public health studies.
6. Describe principles and limitations of population-based prevention efforts.
7. Describe the legal and ethical bases for public health systems and services.
8. Identify the main components and issues of the organization, financing and delivery of health services and public health systems in the US.
9. Explain methods of ensuring community health safety and preparedness.
10. Describe genetic, physiologic and psychosocial factors affecting susceptibility to adverse environmental health hazards.
11. Describe mechanisms of toxicity to explain direct and indirect effects of environmental and occupational agents on humans and ecology.
12. Identify basic social and behavioral theories, concepts and models about the causes, consequences and remedies for public health concerns.
13. Demonstrate leadership and team building in developing and advocating for effective policy and program change.

14. Apply evidence-based principles and scientific knowledge base to critical evaluation and decision-making in public health.
15. Use appropriate modalities, channels and technology effectively to communicate public health information to lay and professional audiences.

4. Assessing Competency of MPH Students

There are three broad domains of activity for which MPH students receive performance evaluations: course performance, experiential learning assessments and capstone activities. The program uses a number of quantitative and qualitative tools to assess students relative to our mission. We consider these tools to be real-time indicators of program effectiveness.

Individual course performance and grade point averages. MPH program courses typically carry 3 credits, although there are also some 1-credit offerings, generally during the summer. A 1-credit course requires the equivalent of 50 hours of academic effort and 15 contact hours; a 3-credit course requires the equivalent of 150 hours of academic effort and 45 contact hours. Students are graded (A-F or S/U) to reflect the quality of performance on course assignments (e.g., reading comprehension, discussion, papers, exams, and oral presentations). The program administration monitors grades each semester to identify students with deficiencies (grades of B- or lower, or U) and communicates with students and advisors if remediation is necessary. Students who do not earn a grade of B or above in core courses are often advised to retake the material; those with more than 1 deficient grade are counseled about the advisability of continued matriculation. Students who do not earn a satisfactory grade in elective coursework, who have a cumulative GPA below the University requirement for graduation (3.0), or who have an average GPA below 3.0 in the core courses are counseled about future course selections and/or the advisability of remaining in the program.

Experiential learning assessments. Students are required to complete a semester-long practicum and are encouraged to complete additional experiential learning opportunities prior to graduation. Activities undertaken within the program's practicum project are monitored and evaluated by the Practicum Project Director (and practicum instructors in the case of individualized projects) and appropriate community-based preceptors prior to awarding a course grade. The overall content and process for the program's practicum requirement is monitored by the Community Partnership Subcommittee and the Curriculum Committee. The practicum is graded as S/U; students receiving a U are required to retake the practicum to remediate the deficiency.

Capstone activities. Students must complete an independent capstone project (either a thesis or applied practice project). When the capstone project is completed and publicly presented, the student's advisory committee submits a grade (S/U for the thesis and a letter grade for the applied practice project) for that work to the Graduate School. The Advisory Committee signifies satisfactory completion of the capstone by signing off on the Final Examination Form, and when appropriate, nominates individuals for the program's Mulvihill Award (for academic excellence) and/or Susan S. Addiss Award (for exemplary public health practice).

Students enrolled in one of our interdisciplinary programs complete a minimum of 36 MPH credits, provided that they complete courses in their other programs that are relevant to public health. Requests to reduce credits follow procedures similar to those described above and are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

5. Getting Started

MPH students can obtain much of the necessary information on the Public Health at UConn website at:

<http://publichealth.uconn.edu>

Student IDs and **parking stickers** should be acquired during orientation. If you cannot attend the orientation session, go to the UConn Department of Public Safety Office near the UCHC police department between the hours of 8:30am and 3:30pm. You will need to bring identification and your Graduate School welcoming letter. Parking in reserved lots is restricted to cars with valid stickers.

Library: Once you have your ID badge, you may gain access to the Lyman Maynard Stowe Library at the UCHC by completing the Library Patron Registration form in your orientation handbook.

Proof of Immunization: Incoming students must satisfy the immunization requirements of the State of Connecticut. Specifically, Connecticut State Law requires that all full-time and part-time matriculating students born after December 31, 1956 who are enrolled in post-secondary schools be protected against measles and rubella. Minimum requirements are: one dose of rubella vaccine given on or after the student's first birthday and one dose of measles vaccine given after January 1, 1969 and on or after the student's first birthday.

Students born after December 31, 1956 will be required to show proof of two doses of measles-containing vaccine. One dose must have been administered on or after January 1, 1969 and the second dose must have been administered on or after January 1, 1980. The student has the option of obtaining a lab test of immunity to both diseases: if both are positive, the physician is to indicate the date and result of each blood test on the chart on the immunization form at:

<http://grad.uchc.edu/registration/index.html>

Tuberculosis: Students must have 2 Mantoux tests 2 weeks apart within the last 12 months or show proof of annual Mantoux testing. If ever positive, test proof of chest x-ray is required.

Submitting the required forms to the Department of Occupational and Environmental Medicine does not guarantee compliance and eligibility to register for courses. Students **MUST** contact Occupational Medicine after the forms have been submitted to ensure compliance with regulations and clearance for registration. To confirm, contact: Sandra Barnosky, 860-679-3744, e-mail barnosky@up.uchc.edu or Marlene Divinere at 860-679-3503, Divinere@adp.uchc.edu. Students requiring vaccinations or testing can schedule an appointment with the UCHC Employee Health Clinic at 860-679-2893 between the hours of 8:00am and 5:00pm.

Tuition and Fees: Each semester or summer session, the tuition and fee schedule is listed on the MPH website:

http://publichealth.uconn.edu/acprgms_mph_courses.php

Scroll down the home page to the most recent course catalog.

Please pay close attention to the Registration and Semester Schedule. If you are not registered by **the last day to register** listed in the catalog, you will incur late fees and potentially reinstatement fees. The last day to register without penalty, the last day to drop or withdraw from a course without a “W” on your transcript, and the last day to add a course without permission of the Associate Dean of the Graduate School can be found on the academic calendar (see <http://grad.uhc.edu/calendars/index.html>).

Please check the online course catalog carefully for information on payment of tuition and fees.

Contact Information for the Graduate School’s Bursar’s Office at UConn Health Center:

Web Site: <http://studentservices.uhc.edu/bursar/index.html>

E-mail: crowland@uhc.edu

Telephone: (860) 679-1632

Blackboard: Most courses you will take at UConn Health Center are posted on the Health Center’s Blackboard system. Instructors use this portal to post syllabi, assignments, reading material, and announcements. General program information and news updates are also available under the course, Graduate Program in Public Health. Your username and password will be given to you at the orientation. If you are unable to attend or have lost your login information, please contact the MPH Office. If you take some courses on other UConn campuses (e.g., Storrs or Hartford) you will likely be using a different portal: WebCT, (Vista version, <https://vista.uconn.edu>).

Blackboard Website: <http://blackboard.uhc.edu>

or

For Blackboard support contact the Computer Education Center

(860) 679-8870

PeopleSoft: Please Note: **Degree students must use PeopleSoft to register for courses every fall and spring semester.** (Summer courses require “paper” registration.) Follow the PeopleSoft link on the right at the following URL:

http://publichealth.uconn.edu/acprgms_currentstd.php

Follow the links to the course offerings catalog for registration directions.

If you elect to pay for registration by credit card or e-check, you must do so on-line. Please follow the directions below to make payment on-line:

- >Log onto PeopleSoft at www.studentadmin.uconn.edu
- >Enter your user ID and password
- >Click on SA Self Service
- >Click on Finances
- >Click on Make a payment

The address the University has for you is the one you supplied on your application to the Graduate School. If it has changed, you need to update your personal information on PeopleSoft. After you log onto PeopleSoft and enter your ID and password:

- >Click on SA Self Service
- >Click on Student Center
- >Scroll to bottom to Personal Information

You can also enter new phone number information on this site. Please make sure to contact the MPH office of these changes as well to ensure that all Graduate School and MPH-specific messages and mailings get to you in a timely manner.

Registration for Summer Courses: Register for summer courses directly through the Office of Records and Registration:

In Person: Bring Graduate School Registration Form to the Office of Records and Registration (LM035) located on the main floor of the Health Center, right above the Academic Entrance.

By Fax: Send to Janice Gilkes at 860-679-1902

By Mail: Office of Records and Registration, UConn Health Center, MC-1827, 263 Farmington Ave., Farmington, CT 06030-1827

Payment must be made at the time the registration form is submitted.

MPH E-mail Address: All MPH students are assigned an e-mail address upon admission to the program. **You MUST use this email address for all Graduate School business.** No messages will be sent to your personal email address, so make it a habit to check your MPH messages frequently. **Due to UCHC HIPAA policies, forwarding MPH email addresses to outside accounts is not available.** Failure to do so will mean that you will miss important messages, fail to meet deadlines, incur costly late fees and after 30 days, be discontinued from accessing UCHC email. In addition, you will miss current notices on program happenings, internship and job opportunities, and other relevant news.

As an Outlook user, you can access your e-mail account from the Web as follows:

- >Go to <https://itnwa.uhc.edu/exchange>
- >Enter “username” and password

Once you have logged into the account you can view/respond to e-mail. You should also personalize your password. To change the password assigned to you:

- >Click on Options
- >Click on Password button
- >In the change password dialogue box...

DOMAIN>Replace contents of DOMAIN name with your domain name

ACCOUNT>Enter in your account name (mailbox name)

OLD PASSWORD>Enter your old password

NEW PASSWORD>Enter your new password (must be at least 6 characters)

CONFIRM NEW PASSWORD>Enter your new password again

Click OK

You should receive a message: “Password successfully changed”. You can now close all windows and your Web Browser and use your new password. Your old password will be cleared from the system in 20 minutes.

If you have problems, contact the Help Desk at: 860-679-4400.

HIPAA and IRB Training: All graduate students at UConn Health Center are required to complete training on:

- (1) The Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and
- (2) Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements, regardless of whether they have received prior training at other institutions.

HIPAA Training: Students are required to complete the following two University of Connecticut Health Center HIPAA training modules:

1. HIPAA Security: **HIPAA Security Quick Reference Guide**
2. HIPAA Privacy: **Student HIPAA Training and Summary of Relevant Policies**

You can access these training modules and certificates of completion on the MPH web site:

http://publichealth.uconn.edu/acprgms_mph_currentstd.php

MPH Specific Forms for the two training modules and the certificate of completion.

Once you have read the training modules and have a good understanding of the material, print out certificates of completion for each of them, sign them, and mail them to Barbara Case, Dept. of Community Medicine, MC-6325, UConn Health Center, 263 Farmington Ave., Farmington, CT 06030-6325.

IRB (Human Subjects) Training: Regardless of whether you will be participating in research that involves or affects human subjects, all students at UConn Health Center must complete the online IRB training program, which can be accessed at:

<https://www.citiprogram.org/default.asp>

Upon completion of the training, you will be able to print a certificate indicating that you have completed all requirements of the course. Send a copy to the MPH program, a copy to the Human Subjects Protection Office at the address below, and keep a copy for your records.

**Human Subjects Protection Office
UConn Health Center
Building 20
263 Farmington Avenue
Farmington, CT 06030-2806**

The MPH program requires certificates of both HIPAA and IRB training before approving an independent study or individual practicum project, and failure to complete the training could jeopardize your standing in the Graduate School.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):

FERPA affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. These rights include:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the University receives a request for access.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes is inaccurate or misleading.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the University to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Washington, DC, 20202-4605.
5. The University may disclose Directory Information without a student's prior written consent. The University designates the following as Directory Information: The student's name, University-assigned identifiers (PeopleSoft Number and NetID); date of birth; addresses; telephone number; school or college; major field of study; degree sought; expected date of completion of degree requirements and graduation; degrees, honors, and awards received; dates of attendance; full or part time enrollment status; the previous educational agency or institution attended; class rosters; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of athletic team members and other similar information. Except as noted in point #3 above, the roster for a class will not be released, except to students enrolled that class.
6. Students may restrict the release of Directory Information, except to school officials with legitimate educational interests and others as indicated in point #3 above. To do so, a student must make the request in writing to the Office of the Registrar, Wilbur Cross Building, Unit 4077G, Storrs, CT 06269-4077. Once filed, this request becomes a permanent part of the student's record until the student instructs the University, in writing, to have the request removed.

For additional details on FERPA guidelines go to:

<http://www.registrar.uconn.edu/ferpa.html>

U.S. Department of Education Family Policy Compliance Office home page:

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/index.html>

Questions regarding FERPA can be directed to the University Registrar:

jvon@uconn.edu

6. Program Administration

The MPH program faculty and staff are readily available to students in order to ensure a positive experience during their course of study. They are excellent resources, and students may contact them at any time.

| | |
|--|---|
| <u>MPH Program Office</u> Tel: 860-679-1510 Fax: 860-679-1581 mph@nso.uchc.edu | <u>Director</u> David Gregorio 860-679-5480 gregorio@nso.uchc.edu |
| <u>Associate Director</u> Joan Segal 860-679-1509 segal@nso.uchc.edu | <u>Program Coordinator</u> Wendy Walsh 860-679-5472 WeWalsh@up.uchc.edu |
| <u>Program Support</u> Barbara Case 860-679-1503 BCase@nso.uchc.edu | <u>Program Support</u> Lauri McCarthy 860-679-1510 LMccarthy@uchc.edu |

UCHC

Graduate School Office:

| | |
|---|--|
| <u>Associate Dean</u> <u>Graduate School</u> Lawrence Klobutcher Phone: 860-679-2816 fax: 860-679-3408 MC-3405 klobutcher@nso2.uchc.edu | <u>Registrar</u> Janice Gilkes Phone: 860-679-2990 fax: 860-679-1902 MC-1827 gilkes@uchc.edu |
| <u>Records & Registration</u> Swapna Das Phone: 860-679-3125 fax: 860-679-1902 MC-1827 | <u>Fiscal Services</u> Charley Rowland Phone: 860-679-1632 fax: 860-679-1902 MC-1829 crowland@uchc.edu |

7. Useful Websites

UConn home page:
www.uconn.edu

UConn Health Center (UHC) home page:
www.uchc.edu

UHC Graduate School home page:
<http://grad.uchc.edu>

MPH home page:
http://publichealth.uconn.edu/acprgms_mph_overview.php

UHC Graduate School MPH course offerings:
http://publichealth.uconn.edu/acprgms_mph_courses.php

UConn Graduate School Catalogue (PDF):
<http://catalog.grad.uconn.edu>

UHC Graduate School handbook:
http://grad.uchc.edu/current/student_handbook/student_handbook.pdf

Application on-line:
New students:
www.ctmentor.org/applications/University_of_Connecticut_Grad/apply.html

PeopleSoft:
www.studentadmin.uconn.edu

Blackboard:
<http://blackboard.uchc.edu>

MPH email:
<http://mph.uchc.edu/exchange>

IRB information and forms for approval of research projects:
<http://hspo.uchc.edu/irb/index.html>

Required IRB CITI Training:
www.citiprogram.org/default.asp

Directions to classrooms and campus maps:
<http://publichealth.uconn.edu/images/pdfs/maps1.pdf>

Academic Calendar:
<http://www.registrar.uconn.edu/acadcal.html>

8. Major Advisors – Master of Public Health Program

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|--|-----------------------------|----------|
| Robert Aseltine, PhD , Health sociology | aseltine@uchc.edu | 679-3282 |
| Thomas Babor, PhD , Alcohol and drug problems & related cultural factors | babor@nso.uchc.edu | 679-5481 |
| Tryfon Beazoglou, PhD , Health economics, applied microeconomics | beazoglou@nso1.uchc.edu | 679-3814 |
| Stacey Brown, PhD , Comm. based education | stbrown@uchc.edu | 679-2354 |
| Mary Elizabeth Bruder, PhD , Developmental, early intervention | bruder@nso1.uchc.edu | 679-4632 |
| Joseph Burleson, PhD , Substance abuse; research design & analysis | burleson@up.uchc.edu | 679-5483 |
| Audrey Chapman, PhD , Ethical & justice issues-genetics & stem cells, rights based hlth | achapman@uchc.edu | 679-1590 |
| Martin Cherniak, MD, MPH , Occupational health, ergonomics, environ'l. Epi | cherniak@nso.uchc.edu | 679-4916 |
| Jonathan Covault, MD, PhD , Alcohol abuse, behavioral health | covault@psychiatry.uchc.edu | 679-7560 |
| Kenneth Dangman, Ph.D, MD, MPH , Oc&environ. Health, repertory disease | dangman@up.uchc.edu | 679-8327 |
| Barbara Dicks, PhD , AIDS prevention, faith-based initiatives, women's health | barbara.dicks@uconn.edu | 570-9151 |
| Pamela Erickson, PhD, DrPH , Factors influencing health/disease in humans | erickson@uconnvm.uconn.edu | 486-1736 |
| Pouran Faghri, MD, PhD , Worksite & community health promotion programs | pouran.faghri@uconn.edu | 486-0018 |
| Ann Ferris, PhD , Community nutrition (maternal & child health), iron deficiency | ann.ferris@uconn.edu | 486-1796 |
| Judith Fifield, PhD , Social & physical functioning in chronic disease | fifield@nso1.uchc.edu | 679-3815 |
| Richard Fortinsky, PhD , Aging & health care | fortinsky@nso1.uchc.edu | 679-8069 |
| David Gregorio, PhD , Surveillance methods in cancer epidemiology | gregorio@nso.uchc.edu | 679-5480 |
| W. Penn Handwerker, PhD , Ethnographic research methods | w.handwerker@uconn.edu | 486-2137 |
| Dennis Heffley, PhD , Health economics | dennis.heffley@uconn.edu | 486-4669 |
| Charles Huntington III, MPH, PA , Health policy, workforce issues, planning | huntington@adp.uchc.edu | 679-7968 |
| Brenda Kurz, PhD , Prenatal depression among low income women of color | Brenda.Kurz@uconn.edu | 570-9153 |
| Zita Lazzarini, JD, MPH , Public health law, privacy, confidentiality | lazzarini@nso.uchc.edu | 679-5494 |
| Robin Leger, PhD , Pediatric onset chronic illness & disability | rleger@uchc.edu | 679-4932 |
| John Meyer, MD , Occupational health/epidemiology, reproductive hazards | meyer@uchc.edu | 679-4947 |
| Timothy Morse, PhD , Occupational health, ergonomics | tmorse@nso.uchc.edu | 679-4720 |
| David Pendrys, PhD , Oral epidemiology, cardiology | pendrys@nso1.uchc.edu | 679-3820 |
| Nancy Petry, PhD , Clinical research studies on addictive behaviors | petry@psychiatry.uchc.edu | 679-2593 |

Major Advisors – Master of Public Health Program (continued)

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|--|----------------------------|----------|
| Susan Reisine, PhD , Women's health, including arthritis & gender differences | reisine@nso1.uchc.edu | 679-3823 |
| Juan Salazar, MD, MPH , Pediatric & youth HIV treat.& prev., STD research | jsalazar@ccmckids.org | 679-6175 |
| Rex Santerre, PhD , Health economics and health insurance | rexford.santerre@uconn.edu | 486-6422 |
| Steven Schensul, PhD , AIDS risk (international), applied health research | schensul@nso2.uchc.edu | 679-1570 |
| Joan Segal, MA, MS , History of public health, gerontology | segal@nso.uchc.edu | 679-1509 |
| Jason Smith, JD, MTS , Law and public health | jasmith@uchc.edu | 679-5496 |
| Richard Stevens, PhD , Cancer epidemiology | bugs@neuron.uchc.edu | 679-5475 |
| Helen Swede, Ph.D , Cancer chemoprevention, cancer disparities | hswede@uchc.edu | 679-5568 |
| Howard Tennen, PhD , Stress, coping & adaptation to chronic illness | tennen@nso1.uchc.edu | 679-5466 |
| Edward Thibodeau, DMD, PhD , Recruitment of dental professionals | ethibodeau@nso.uchc.edu | 679-2125 |
| Minakshi Tikoo, PhD , Health services research | tikoo@uchc.edu | 679-5559 |
| Marcia Trape-Cardoso, MD , Occup'l health/migrant workers/employee health | trape@nso.uchc.edu | 679-4564 |
| Jane Ungemack, DrPH , Health services research/substance abuse | ungemack@nso2.uchc.edu | 679-5403 |
| Nicholas Warren, ScD , Occupational medicine | warren@nso.uchc.edu | 679-4023 |
| Scott Wetstone, MD , Instructional Methods, Theologies | wetstone@nso.uchc.edu | 679-4440 |
| Stanton Wolfe, DMD, MPH , Comm based program development | swolfe@uchc.edu | 679-5408 |

conditions for good health are met. In doing so, we place high priority on collaborative problem-solving through participatory student-faculty-preceptor experiences.

Our curriculum, as outlined above, is distributed according to core courses (21 credits), practicum (3 cr.), elective courses (15-21 cr.) and the capstone project (3-9 cr.). Beginning with the 2007-08 academic year, our elective course offerings will be organized around the 3 core functions of public health (see Appendix A for Core Functions of Public Health and Appendix B for 10 Essential Public Health Services). Initially, students will be expected, at a minimum, to select 1 course from within each domain listed in the following table with options for remaining electives to reflect the special interests they may have.

Elective Distribution for MPH Students Concentrating in Applied Public Health Practice

| Assessment | Assurance | Policy Development |
|--|--|---|
| 5430-Pub Health Informatics | 5410-Strategic Planning & Eval | 5451-MCH Services |
| 5434-Intermediate Biostatistics | 5412-Health Regulation | 5461-Health Care Law & Ethics |
| 5438-Invest. of Disease Outbreaks | 5414- Health Economics | 5463-Comparative Health Systems |
| 5452-Injury & Viol. Prevention | 5416-Quality Improvement | 5465-Occ/Enviro Health Policy |
| 5468-Occ/Enviro Epidemiology | 5419-Pub Health Agencies | 5467-Occ/Enviro Diseases |
| 5472-Disability & Pub Health | 5433-Health Program Evaluation | 5473-Women, PH & Reproduction |
| 5486-Infectious Disease Epi | 5453-Chronic Disease Control | 5497-Food, Health & Policy |
| 5497-Toxicology | 5455-Health Education | 5497-Human Rights & Health |
| 5497- Latino Health Disparities | 5466-Industrial Hygiene | 5497-Disability Law |
| 5497-Applied Regression Analysis | 5497-Ergonomics/Exposure Asses. | 5497-Policy & Legislative Development |
| 5497-Cancer Epidemiology | 5497- Health Communication | 5497-Field Experience in Public Health Sys. |
| 5497-Epi Research Appraisal | 5497-Field Experience in Public Health Systems | |
| 5497-Public Hlth Issues in Genetics | | |
| 5497- Nutritional Epidemiology | | |
| 5497-Intermediate Epidemiology | | |
| 5497-Health and the Built Env't | | |
| 5497-Field Experience in Public Health Systems | | |

A student's curriculum checklist developed at the time core courses are completed, with input from a major and 2 associate advisors and approval by the program director and the Graduate School. Until they have fulfilled their coursework requirements, students are expected to register for a minimum of 6 credits per semester and complete core requirements before enrolling in elective courses.

Students can graduate with less than the required 48 credits through transfer credits or advanced standing. Individuals who have completed courses outside the MPH program (e.g., UConn courses completed as non-degree students or courses completed at another institution) may request transfer of up to 12 credits to our program with evidence of appropriateness of content, equivalence of requirements, and minimum grades of B. Transfer credits are included in the student's curriculum checklist and counted toward the MPH degree.

Students seeking advanced standing must furnish a rationale for the request and evidence (i.e., course outline, catalog descriptions, etc.) that prior coursework was equivalent to that within a traditional public health curriculum regarding content (addressing 1 or more public health competencies) and scope of effort (approximately 50 hours of effort per credit). Each request for advanced standing is considered individually; the request must be approved by the student's major advisor and the program director and be accompanied by appropriate documentation. Individuals who have completed relevant post-baccalaureate study in medicine, dentistry, nursing, social work, business or the social sciences may receive "advanced standing," which lowers their required credit load (by 12 credits maximum).

A student may request a waiver of a specific required course (e.g., if competency in biostatistics and/or epidemiology is acknowledged). A course waiver does not reflect a reduction in total credits and requires the student to substitute a more advanced course for the course being waived (e.g., Intermediate Statistics or Applied Regression Analysis *and* Investigation of Disease

Outbreaks or Epidemiological Research Appraisal as substitutes for Introduction to Epidemiology and Biostatistics I and II).

Requests for transfer credit, advanced standing or course waiver are only considered prior to students' completing the curriculum checklist. Advanced standing is not granted for prior work or volunteer experience. In no instance can advanced standing or transfer credits be substituted for the practicum or capstone project, nor can the practicum or capstone project be waived.

10. Experiential Learning: The Practicum Project

The MPH program emphasizes collaborative study and practice. From an individual's first days in the program, interaction among students is facilitated by a common core course sequence completed by all first and second year students that has the effect of building group identity and encouraging collaboration and social relationships within cohorts. Students are evaluated on their performance in various collaborative and experiential opportunities, as well as in more conventional academic activities.

Group or individual practicum experiences. All students are expected to complete a 3-credit, semester-long, practice-based experience during their second year of study. Waivers are not allowed regardless of the experience an individual brings to the program. The practicum is one of many opportunities to demonstrate the public health competencies gained through the academic experience. The objectives of the practicum include:

- Defining biological, social, cultural, economic and behavioral determinants of problems under study.
- Identifying individual and community resources available to address conditions.
- Recognizing performance of assessment, assurance and policy development functions by public health agencies.
- Engaging community-based practitioners and other stakeholders in public health action.
- Demonstrating the importance of writing and oral communication skills.

Students have the opportunity to complete the practicum through an individual or group project, however, they are highly encouraged to participate in the group practicum. The individual practicum is more appropriate for students pursuing a dual degree. Students enrolling in the group practicum (the default option) commit to working with other students and engaging in collaborative problem solving with community-based partners to address key public health issues within the state. This initiative serves to (a) strengthen connections between academic and experiential learning, (b) commence service learning earlier in the student's curriculum, (c) facilitate collaboration between students and preceptors, (d) assure comparable experiences and opportunities across students and projects, and (e) encourage students to pursue additional service-learning opportunities prior to graduation.

During the semester, students are expected to collaborate regarding 3 general questions: (1) What burden/challenges does the selected topic pose for Connecticut health? (2) What is the current capacity of practitioners, programs and services in Connecticut to address these issues? and (3) Can additional regulatory and policy strategies be put forth to ameliorate current conditions? The principle educational strategies utilized are self-directed learning, peer instruction and reflective self-assessment.

Students selecting the individual practicum experience first identify a community-based practitioner with whom they work to define a project, scope of activities, deliverables and timetable. Opportunities and contacts are frequently identified for students to consider through posting in our electronic newsletter. Students completing interdisciplinary degrees, medical residents and fellows and others with schedule/timing issues typically opt to complete an individual practicum project. Students are expected to select and start individual projects during the spring semester of their second year of study.

Throughout the course of the semester students, whether enrolled in the individual or group practicum activity, are expected to complete a number of required assignments.

Topic definition. Students must define and provide a rationale for undertaking a particular practicum activity. Students pursuing individual projects identify and meet with a field preceptor to specify a scope of work, timetable and deliverables. A proposal describing its rationale, procedures and expectations, along with a learning contract, is submitted by the student for review and approval by the preceptor, major academic advisor and practicum director. As required, students complete applications pertaining to protection of human subjects before starting activities. Students participating in the group practicum meet and define individual and collective activities and responsibilities. As do the other students (undertaking the individualized practicum), participants in the group practicum proceed to identify relevant field preceptors and submit learning contracts for review and approval.

Time and effort. Students are expected to complete approximately 100 hours of supervised field experience. Those engaged in individual practicum projects are also expected to have frequent face-to-face interaction with field preceptors and major advisors. In addition to service-learning hours, students who complete the group practicum project participate in 7 group sessions, during which the course director articulates project requirements and expectations, introduces them to course staff and field preceptors and engages them in discussion of recommended readings. This time also is used to define individual and collective project objectives and update one another about pertinent issues and accomplishments related to the project.

Self-assessment of practice-based performance. Before commencing and after completing the practicum, students undertake a self-assessment of their capacity to practice in the field. The instrument addresses the 15 program competencies specifically relevant to practice and requires students to judge their capability as “competent, somewhat competent, or not yet competent.” Students complete the self-assessment questionnaire again at the conclusion of the project to allow them and advisors to assess professional development attributable to practicum-related activities.

Performance monitoring. Communication between the program and students requires submission of a weekly activity log (via Blackboard®) that details what specific activities were undertaken, what time was committed to the activities, what was accomplished and what further steps would be required to complete tasks. Activity logs also provide a venue for students to submit work products to advisors for evaluation. Activity logs have been found to reduce redundancy and offer a normative standard for expected performance (logs are available to all students completing practicum projects during a given semester), and provide real-time feedback on progress toward project objectives.

Reflective feedback. Students are expected to submit confidential “reflections” that capture their perceptions, concerns and personal development throughout the semester. Topics for reflection include:

- “This project requires you to develop skills in public health practice with limited supervision from faculty and others. Do you feel prepared to undertake such responsibilities at this time? Do you have concern about your skill or experience to complete the work expected of you?”
- For group practicum project: “Working within a group has advantages and drawbacks. How well is your workgroup functioning at this time? Do you have specific concerns about what and how things are occurring?”
- “How responsible (accountable) do you feel regarding the work you’ve undertaken and the products you/your group is generating?”
- “Has the practicum reinforced or added to public health practice skills you’ve brought to the course?”

Course Evaluation. At the conclusion of the individual practicum project, students prepare a short paper (5-10 pages) summarizing the activities completed and end results along

with a reflection on how the experience relates to their academic program and the extent to which practice-based competencies were developed. Preceptors provide brief assessments regarding the quality of the experience and student performance which is used when assigning a pass/fail grade.

Students participating in the group practicum submit a group summary of activities accomplished as a complement to their individual work submitted within weekly activity logs. On the basis of individual and group work products, students return learning contracts to field preceptors for evaluation and comment. Preceptor comments and work products are then reviewed by project advisors, who assign a pass/fail grade to individuals. The group practicum utilizes expertise of the program's Community Partnership Subcommittee and its Chair to evaluate the overall performance of students during the semester.

11. Service Learning Opportunities

Given the program's emphasis on applied practice, students are encouraged to participate in as many practice experiences as possible. In 2004, the MPH program signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the CT DPH establishing a formal internship program. Before each fall and spring semester and the beginning of the summer sessions, the DPH Office of Workforce Development submits information to the program on projects currently available and announcements are published in the program's electronic newsletter, *Public Health Happenings*. Interested students submit a completed Interest Form along with their resumes to Workforce Development, and that office tries to match student interests and experience with departmental opportunities and needs. Before the projects begin, students and their preceptors sign off on the scope of activities to be undertaken and their mutual responsibilities. Students receive an orientation to the department near the beginning of their work there and a student internship handbook (prepared by 1 of our MPH students as an internship project). At the end of the semester or session they present an overview of their projects to their preceptors, other students, and DPH staff. There is also a formal evaluation process in which both students and their preceptors analyze the experience. In addition to the MOA with DPH, the program is working with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and with Qualidigm, Inc. to institute similar relationships. On a less formal basis, students gain public health practice experience in other state agencies; local health departments and districts throughout the state and beyond; private, non-profit agencies; pharmaceutical and insurance companies; and hospitals and universities.

12. The Capstone Requirement

All students are required to complete a capstone project. Students may opt for a 9-credit thesis exemplifying scholarship of discovery (i.e., answering questions) or a 3-6 credit applied practice project demonstrating the scholarship of application (i.e., resolving problems). The capstone should address a significant public health concern, pursue novel inquiry and/or initiative and demonstrate the student's mastery of 1 or more of our program competencies. The product should be clear, concise, accurate and valid. It should yield generalizable knowledge relevant to the practice of public health. Excellence in scholarship of capstone projects is encouraged through selection of annual Mulvihill (for research excellence) and Addiss (for performance excellence) award winners.

Students in good academic standing at the time they complete our core course sequence (GPA \geq 3.0) must submit a revised curriculum checklist to the MPH office indicating coursework completed/ anticipated toward the MPH degree and selection of an advisory committee of 3 of which the major advisor and 1 associate member must hold appointments within our Public Health Field of Study**. The second associate advisor must have at a minimum a relevant

graduate degree and a background appropriate for the student's capstone project. A copy of the associate advisor's Curriculum Vitae must be sent to the Graduate school for approval if the advisor does not hold a faculty appointment in Public Health. Upon acknowledgement by the Graduate School, the major advisor has responsibility for guiding students in the selection of remaining courses and the capstone format and topic. The associate advisors are responsible for helping to guide the capstone and for reviewing and approving the final product. Before commencing their projects, students prepare a brief prospectus (Thesis Approval Form or Applied Practice Approval Form) summarizing their area of focus, method of inquiry/activity, timetable and expectations for review. Approvals by the advisory committee and MPH program director must be in hand and assurances (as required) pertaining to fair and ethical practices (e.g., IRB, HIPAA training, etc.) must be secured before students can begin their work or register for project.

A completed thesis conforms to the University's manual of style, procedures and timetable; an applied practice project must follow comparable MPH Program standards. Further guidance is available through the *Graduate Catalog*, University and Program websites and consultation with program and university personnel.

Once the student's advisory committee considers the capstone project ready, students must schedule oral presentations of their work for their committee and other interested parties. After the presentation, agreement among the advisory committee that written and oral products meet program requirements results in signatures on a Final Examination Form whereby they recommend degree conferral to the Dean of the Graduate School.

Students pursuing a thesis must adhere to Thesis Guidelines of the Graduate School. These guidelines are available at the following URL:

http://publichealth.uconn.edu/acprgms_mph_courses.php

Scroll down the page to *Graduate School Forms*; select *Masters Thesis Guidelines*.

The only portion of these guidelines that pertain to students pursuing an Applied Practice Project (essay or project) relate to the setup of the Title Page and Approval Page. Insert "An Essay" or "A Project" for "Thesis" on those pages. For both the thesis and essay/project, the title page and approval page should be separated by a blank page. The final paper on the applied practice project must include a literature review of the topic on which that project is based.

** Students admitted prior to Fall 2004, must submit 1 official copy of the plan of study to the University.

13. Public Health Degree Options

The UConn program of study leads to a MPH degree, conceived as a professional rather than academic degree. Because it is a generalist program, all students are expected to develop competencies in the applied practice of public health principles. It is designed for working professionals who wish to pursue part-time evening study, although an increasing proportion of applicants are full-time, some specifically attracted by the applied practice focus.

The program also offers interdisciplinary education for students desiring dual study in Medicine (MD/MPH), Dental Medicine (DMD/MPH), Nursing (MSN/MPH), Law (JD/MPH) and Social Work (MSW/MPH). Interdisciplinary study typically is accomplished by respective programs recognizing 12 credits of coursework completed within the other program (i.e., public health credits waived for specified courses completed within the schools of medicine, dental medicine, nursing, law or social work). We also have had a few students who have combined

their coursework in health systems management (a concentration in the MBA program) or their doctoral study in nutritional sciences or anthropology with our public health program. In addition, we offer 2 programs that combine the study of public health with a residency or fellowship. The MPH degree is a requirement for physicians in the Preventive Medicine Residency in Occupational and Environmental Medicine. Medical residents and fellows, particularly those in the Primary Care - Internal Medicine and Family Medicine Residency Programs, can combine their clinical medical training with the MPH degree program.

More information can be found on pages 14 – 19 in your Policies and Procedures Book.

14. Major Advisor

In most cases, your welcoming letter also provided you with the name of your assigned major advisor. It is advisable to communicate with your major advisor in person (or via e-mail) to discuss registration and the possibility of Advanced Standing, Transfer Credit, or Course Waiver. Your initial advisor is responsible for helping you as you begin your program. Once you have determined an area of emphasis and the general focus of your capstone project, you need to identify faculty in that particular area who will service as your major advisor and guide you through program completion. A list of faculty advisors appears in this handbook in section eight.

15. Academic Calendar

Both current and future semester academic calendars can be found online at:

<http://www.registrar.uconn.edu/acadcal.html>

16. Registration

Graduate Student Services Center

The Office of Records/Registration is located within the Student Services Center at the University of Connecticut Health Center and is a branch office of the Graduate School at Storrs. The Student Services Center (Room LM035) is responsible for admissions, records and registration, financial services, student affairs and student activities. Responsibilities specific to the Office of Records/Registration are to compile the schedule of classes and produce course offering booklets for degree and non-degree students, distribute appropriate material for timely completion of academic parameters, provide guidance to students for completing their course work and thesis, provide bursar services to students for their tuition and fee bills, and other related duties.

All official Graduate School forms required during a student's period of enrollment can be obtained from the Registrar or online at the Center for Public Health and Health Policy website at:

http://publichealth.uconn.edu/acprgms_mph_courses.php

Degree students are required to register online with the **PeopleSoft** system, during **every** fall and spring semester. The registration process can be completed on line by following the steps at:

Online registration is not available for summer sessions. During the summer, students may register in person, by fax, or by mail. Registration form should be returned to:

**University of Connecticut Health Center
Graduate School, Office of Records/Registration – MC1827
263 Farmington Avenue
Farmington, CT 06030-1827
Or, Fax to: (860) 679-1902**

Registration for an individualized Practicum requires an *Authorization for Independent Study* form, which must be signed by the Practicum Instructor (the major advisor or one of the program directors), the Major Advisor, and the Program Director. **Registration for the individualized Practicum cannot be done on PeopleSoft.**

Registration for the Independent Study (PUBH 5495) must be done in person at the MPH Office. The process requires the completion of an Independent Study form and a description of your project.

17. Scholastic Standards/Timeline

All current student information and official forms can be found online at:

http://publichealth.uconn.edu/acprgms_mph_currentstd.php

- Earn a minimum of 6 credits per fall and spring semester (exceptions only with written approval)
- Maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher; check grades on PeopleSoft
- Maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher in core courses
- If admitted before 2004, submit Plan of Study to MPH office after completion of 12 credits. See Plan of Study directions at:
<http://publichealth.uconn.edu/images/pdfs/PlanofStudy.pdf> and Plan A-Thesis at:
[http://www.grad.uconn.edu/document.php?id=226&\\$=.pdf](http://www.grad.uconn.edu/document.php?id=226&$=.pdf) or Plan B-Non-Thesis at
[http://www.grad.uconn.edu/document.php?id=227&\\$=.pdf](http://www.grad.uconn.edu/document.php?id=227&$=.pdf)
- Submit a revised curriculum checklist to the MPH office after completion of core course requirements
- Select thesis, essay, or applied practice project for Capstone project and submit Capstone Proposal to advisory committee a minimum of 4 weeks before registration. See Thesis Approval Form at:
http://publichealth.uconn.edu/PageContent/MPH_Forms/THESIS_Approval_Form.doc or Applied Practice Approval form at:
http://publichealth.uconn.edu/PageContent/MPH_Forms/APPLIED_PRACTICE_Approval_Form.doc
- File advisor-approved Capstone proposal in MPH office
- Certify completion of IRB/HIPAA requirements before initiating Independent Study, Practicum or Capstone project activities. See HIPAA documents at:
http://publichealth.uconn.edu/images/pdfs/Student_HIPAA_PRIVACYFinal_06.pdf

and

http://publichealth.uconn.edu/images/pdfs/StudentCertForm_HIPAASECURIT_206_061.pdf

- Submit a **FINAL** draft of (capstone) paper a minimum of 4 weeks prior to the university graduation date (**preferably 6 weeks**).
- Schedule oral defense (final examination) in consultation with advisory committee
- Sign up for graduation on PeopleSoft by the deadline
- Make appointment with Office of Records and Registration to review thesis draft for adherence to University guidelines before printing out the required 4 copies on the correct paper stock. Be sure that the approval page has been signed before sending thesis draft to the Office of Records and Registration. See Master's Thesis Guidelines at: http://www.grad.uconn.edu/pdf/thesis_specs.pdf.
- Confirm completed degree requirements with Graduate Records Office

18. UConn/UCHC Policy Statements

See Graduate Student Handbook online at:

http://publichealth.uconn.edu/acprgms_mph_currentstd.php

UConn Graduate Catalogue at: <http://catalog.grad.uconn.edu/>

MPH Policies and Procedures online at:

http://publichealth.uconn.edu/PageContent/MPH_Forms/MPH_Policies.pdf

19. International Guidelines

The Office of International Students and Faculty (679-4430) provides assistance to foreign students, faculty, research scholars and visitors to the Health Center and its affiliated hospitals. It provides immigration support and is responsible for issuing necessary documentation for obtaining visas and keeping international persons in status while they are associated with the Health Center. The office serves as the immigration record-keeping center answerable to the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and operates under federal regulations. The Office is located in the Human Resource Department in the Administrative Services Building. Upon arriving on campus, international students must sign in with the international office and notify them immediately of any change in address.

20. Preparing for Graduation

As graduation approaches, students should check with the Graduate Records Office on the status of their degree requirements and make sure that all requirements are completed by the deadline. The three possible dates for completion are in May, August and December. Students must notify the MPH office of their intended graduation date and schedule a defense of their capstone project as early as possible to allow ample time to make any required revisions by their advisory committee. Students must also check their transcripts on PeopleSoft to be sure that all courses are graded. The major advisor is responsible for timely submission of the Report on the Final Examination to the MPH office.

At least two months prior to graduation, students must apply on PeopleSoft for graduation.

Appendix A

Core Functions of Public Health

Assessment

Assessment and monitoring of the health of communities and populations at risk to identify health problems and priorities

Policy Development

Formulating public policies, in collaboration with community and government leaders, designed to solve identified local and national health problems and priorities

Assurance

Assuring that all populations have access to appropriate and cost-effective care, including health promotion and disease prevention services, and evaluation of the effectiveness of that care

See ASPH website:

<http://www.asph.org/document.cfm?Page=300>

Appendix B

10 Essential Public Health Services

1. **Monitor** health status to identify community health problems.
2. **Diagnose and investigate** health problems and health hazards in the community.
3. **Inform, educate, and empower** people about health issues.
4. **Mobilize** community partnerships to identify and solve health problems.
5. **Develop policies and plans** that support individual and community health efforts.
6. **Enforce** laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.
7. **Link** people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable.
8. **Assure** a competent public health and personal healthcare workforce.
9. **Evaluate** effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services.
10. **Research** for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.

See the APHA website:

<http://www.apha.org/programs/standards/performancestandardsprogram/resexentialservices.htm>

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