



Marshall University MPH Student Handbook

Website: <http://www.marshall.edu/public-health/>

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Introduction

Marshall University Master's in Public Health (MPH) program has been developed to provide students with both the breadth and depth of academic training and professional experience to equip students for a long and productive career in public health. This student handbook is designed to provide valuable resources which will help students optimize their success in graduate study.

This handbook includes specific requirements for the completion of the MPH degree. This handbook serves as a source of information regarding coursework, practicum, capstone, examinations, and requirements for graduation. It is critical to note that University and MPH Program policies may change from semester to semester or from year to year. Such changes are inherent in any program in which a process of improvement exists. The MPH Program will make every effort to keep students informed of any changes in program requirements, procedures, or policies that arise and that may impact the completion of the MPH degree. This is one reason why it is critical to participate in orientations, academic advising sessions, and other activities where information will be shared about changes, new initiatives, and opportunities for students. In addition, students are expected to review memorandums and emails from the program, and from the department chair and advisors.

MPH Program Mission

“The mission of the Marshall University MPH program is to prepare a competent public health workforce, promote scholarly activities, and reduce the burden of disease and health disparities particularly in West Virginia and the Appalachian region.”

MPH Program Vision

“Through education, research, community engagement and health promotion, the Marshall University MPH program will be a leader in advancing health equity and eliminate health disparities particularly in West Virginia and Appalachian region.”

MPH Program Goals

The goals of the Marshall University MPH program are as follows:

1. Educate graduates prepared for the public health workforce as well as to address the burden of disease and health disparities, particularly in West Virginia and the Appalachian region.
2. Promote scholarly activities among faculty and students to address the burden of disease and health disparities particularly in West Virginia and the Appalachian region through

research and grantsmanship.

3. Engage communities in advancing public health through workforce development, service, health promotion and partnerships, particularly in West Virginia and the Appalachian region.

MPH Program Values

Our core values are:

- Excellence and leadership;
- Respect, collegiality and teamwork;
- Diversity and inclusion;
- Critical thinking;
- Health promotion;
- Community engagement and service;
- Scientific integrity and responsibility

General Policies / Regulations / Guidelines

Students are expected to comply with Marshall University Policies, including standards on academic honesty, which are available at: <http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/policies/> Students accused of being in violation of these policies will be required to participate in the procedural processes outlined.

Confidentiality

Students will work with health-related data within and outside the University and must be cognizant of the issues of consent and confidentiality. Students are prohibited from distributing any such data – whether individually identified or “de-identified” – without consent and review by authorized faculty or designated staff. Students are also advised that posting and “live streaming” of information from classrooms, training sites and laboratories via phones, laptops, or other electronic devices is prohibited without written release from individuals at the affected sites as well as review by the student’s faculty advisor prior to any recording. Failure to comply with these restrictions may result in disciplinary action or expulsion from the program.

Marshall University equal opportunity policy statement

It is the policy of Marshall University to provide equal opportunities to all prospective and current members of the student body, residents, faculty and staff based on individual qualifications and merit without regard to race, sex, religion, sexual orientation, age, handicap or national origin. This nondiscrimination policy also applies to all educational programs and activities as they pertain to admission, employment, and other related activities covered under Title IX which prohibits sex discrimination in higher education. Marshall University neither affiliates with nor grants recognition to any individual, group or organization having policies that discriminate on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, handicap or national origin.

Grievance Policy and Procedures

GRIEVANCE

A formal statement from a student expressing a circumstance which he/she feels resulted in unjust or injurious treatment from a functioning unit and/or staff/faculty employed within said unit of Marshall University. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to, a misapplication, or a misinterpretation of the statutes, policies, rules, regulations, or written agreements that are part of the functioning procedure of the University and/or behavior or actions of staff/faculty employed within a functioning unit of Marshall University.

POLICY

Every attempt is made to resolve complaints within the Department of Public Health at the lowest possible administrative level. However, when a grievance about a policy, program, or practice cannot be resolved with informal discussion, a more formal complaint procedure is to be followed.

PROCEDURE

The purpose of this procedure is to provide all students with a systematic policy for the resolution of grievances which may arise with a functioning unit and/or policy of the University.

TYPES OF COMPLAINTS

Described below are steps to file a complaint or grievance filed through official university processes. All concerns regarding, but not limited to, the following shall be directed to the department chair:

- Public health personnel including faculty, staff, on-site and off –site supervisors/preceptors, adjunct faculty, and staff
- Program Policies and/or Procedures

If the grievance directly concerns actions or policies of the department chair, a written complaint is to be submitted to the dean of COHP or dean of the graduate college.

When complaints are directed to the department chair, the chair will meet separately with each of the parties involved and attempt to resolve the situation through mediation. The complainant will provide written documentation of concerns either prior to or during the initial meeting.

The chair will investigate the complaint, propose solutions, and notify those involved of the findings.

Students who have a complaint against a department/college policy or action, which is alleged to have violated the students' rights, should first contact the department chair. If the student is not satisfied that the matter is resolved at the chair level, the student may then forward the complaint to the dean of COHP.

The steps involved in the process are delineated as follows:

Step 1: The student will have no more than 30 days to appeal to the dean if the complaint is not resolved at the department chair's level. This appeal is to the dean of the College of Health Professions. The dean may uphold earlier decision of department chair and no further review will be necessary. If the dean does not uphold the chair's decision, steps two (2) and three (3) below will apply.

Step 2: The dean may appoint an Ad Hoc Committee to hear the appeal. The members of this committee shall be faculty members who have not been involved in the original decision in question. The Ad Hoc Appeal Committee, with the approval of the dean, may have legal counsel present.

Step 3: The Ad Hoc Committee shall be empowered to call appropriate members of the faculty and those involved, and shall have authority to review records pertaining to the student's appeal. The Ad Hoc Appeal Committee shall report its decision directly to the dean of the

College of Health Professions one week after the receipt of the appeal. The dean will inform the student in writing as to the outcome of the appeal. Students shall have the right to have their academic records treated in a confidential and responsible manner as required by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.

Record

All written grievances and the actions taken to resolve the complaint will be retained in the Department of Public Health administrative offices.

Marshall University MPH Concentration

Marshall University MPH program is designed to give students opportunity to focus on the pressing health concerns as well as workforce needs of West Virginia and Appalachian region. MU MPH Program offers a concentration in *Global and Community Health (GCH)*.

Global and Community Health (GCH) concentration provides training particularly suited to regions such as ours – in which urbanization is limited, median income and educational status are low, and care delivery challenges pose substantial obstacles to improving health status. It builds on the University's notable achievements in primary and rural care, focusing on the training of critically-needed community health professionals skilled in risk assessment, education, intervention, and program management in communities facing high disease burdens and limited resources.

The concentration is built upon the foundational curricula of public health training including, course work in epidemiology, biostatistics, public health services, health policy, environmental health, and the social and behavioral aspects of public health. The combination of a rigorous core curriculum and targeted specialization positions Marshall graduates to achieve success in professional public health practice. Opportunities also exist for interested students to engage in research which will advance public health practice. The high disease burden of our region, coupled with a local population with low income and educational attainment – combine to provide unique challenges and opportunities for our public health students.

Curriculum

Foundational curriculum

Foundational courses incorporate both foundational as well as critical “cross-cutting” competencies of public health.

Foundational courses in the MPH program include the following:

<u>Course #</u>	<u>Credits</u>	<u>Course Name</u>
PH 601	1	Introduction to Public Health
PH 602	2	Public Health Biology
PH 611	3	Epidemiology
PH 615	3	Health Systems Research
PH 621	3	Statistical Methods I
PH 631	2	Environmental Health
PH 641	2	Social and Behavioral Aspects of Public Health
PH 651	2	Health Services Planning, Administration & Evaluation
PH 655	2	Introduction to Health Care Policy
PH 693	3	Public Health Law and Ethics
PH 692	1	Seminar

All students in the MPH program are expected to achieve the following competencies after successful completion of the foundational courses.

1. Explain public health history, philosophy and values.
2. Identify the core functions of public health and the 10 Essential Services.
3. Explain the role of quantitative and qualitative methods and sciences in describing and assessing a population’s health.
4. List major causes and trends of morbidity and mortality in the US or other community relevant to the school or program.
5. Discuss the science of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention in population health, including health promotion, screening, etc.
6. Explain the critical importance of evidence in advancing public health knowledge.
7. Explain effects of environmental factors on a population’s health.
8. Explain biological and genetic factors that affect a population’s health.
9. Explain behavioral and psychological factors that affect a population’s health.
10. Explain the social, political and economic determinants of health and how they contribute

to population health and health inequities.

11. Explain how globalization affects global burdens of disease.
12. Explain an ecological perspective on the connections among human health, animal health and ecosystem health (eg, One Health).
13. Apply epidemiological methods to the breadth of settings and situations in public health practice
14. Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context
15. Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming and software, as appropriate
16. Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice
17. Compare the organization, structure and function of health care, public health and regulatory systems across national and international settings
18. 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
19. Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities' health
20. Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design or implementation of public health policies or programs
21. Design a population-based policy, program, project or intervention
22. Explain basic principles and tools of budget and resource management
23. Select methods to evaluate public health programs
24. Discuss multiple dimensions of the policy-making process, including the roles of ethics and evidence
25. Propose strategies to identify stakeholders and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes
26. Advocate for political, social or economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations
27. Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity
28. Apply principles of leadership, governance and management, which include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration and guiding decision making
29. Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges
30. Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors
31. Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation
32. Describe the importance of cultural competence in communicating public health content
33. Perform effectively on interprofessional teams
34. Apply systems thinking tools to a public health issue

Global and Community Health Concentration

Global and Community Health concentration is designed to equip students with skills in such areas as risk assessment, education, intervention, and program management to meet needs of communities facing health challenges – including those in resource-limited environments.

Global and Community Health concentration courses in the MPH program include the following:

<u>Course #</u>	<u>Credits</u>	<u>Course Name</u>
PH 642	2	Health Communication
PH 661	3	Chronic Disease
PH 662	3	Control of Infectious Disease
PH 671	3	Community Health
PH 672	3	Global Health

Students who opt to complete their concentration in Global and Community Health are expected to achieve the following competencies after successful completion of the courses in this concentration.

1. Analyze mechanisms of development, risk, diagnosis and interventional strategies for prevention and control of major chronic diseases in populations.
2. Analyze the impact of complex emergencies on populations and health systems.
3. Develop a general infectious disease control plan for use in a public health facility.
4. Analyze social determinants of health disparities in a global context and propose solutions to address the health disparities in various countries.
5. Apply social marketing and strategic communication principles to prevent morbidity and mortality in populations that are at risk for natural or man-made disasters.
6. Analyze an outbreak investigation and critique on the approach/methodology, results and recommendations.

Applied Practice Experience (APE)

Each student is required to undertake an applied practice experience prior to completing the MPH program. The Applied Practice Experience (APE) is achieved by completing the PH 694-practicum (3 credits) course. As part of this requirement students will be placed at a practicum site where they will be expected to work under the supervision of an experienced public health professional in the performance of assigned job responsibilities. Practicum sites include those which are engaged in public health practice, service and/or policy such as health departments, non-profit agencies, laboratories, government agencies, industries in the biomedical sector, and many others.

Applied practice experience is distinguished by its emphasis in developing skills and experience and includes a minimum of 160 hours of time engaged at the designated practicum site.

All students in the MPH program must successfully complete an applied practice experience.

Students are evaluated on their applied practice experience by a committee of faculty consisting of no less than 2 faculty members and the preceptor who supervises their work at the practicum site. The scheduling of committee meetings, assurance of timely notices to members, and prompt filing to meet university and MPH deadlines are the responsibility of the student. Specific details about the applied practice experience can be found in the **practicum handbook**.

Integrative Learning Experience

The public health capstone (PH 696- 3 credits) also called as integrative learning experience is an essential component of the MPH program that will assess the graduate student with respect to their ability to demonstrate synthesis of selected foundational and concentration specific competencies. The course is designed to be flexible, with the specific setting activities and outcomes negotiated between the student and the faculty advisor (s).

Integrative Learning Experience (capstone) builds on the knowledge acquired by students through their coursework and (or) applied practice experience. The capstone course is designed to assist students in preparation and presentation of a professional-quality product which applies the knowledge and skills gained in various public health competencies during classroom and practice experiences.

Registration for capstone course requires successful completion of the first year MPH curriculum, a minimum of 30 credits of coursework in the program, plus previous completion of or co-registration in PH 694 (Practicum).

Students should begin planning and preparing for the integrative learning experience project well in advance of registering for the course. Two months' advance preparation is recommended. The work produced by the student in the integrative learning experience would ideally be useful to meet a need in the community or the setting in which the student has completed his/her applied practice experience. For specific details, please refer to **capstone handbook**.

Courses required for Regular MPH students

Marshall University MPH Program requires 44 credits for graduation. Following is the list of courses that students in the MPH program have to take to earn an MPH degree.

Foundational Courses- 30 credits

- PH 601- Introduction to Public Health (1 credit hour)
- PH 602- Public Health Biology (2 credit hours)
- PH 611- Epidemiology (3 credit hours)
- PH 615- Health Systems Research (3 credit hours)
- PH 621- Statistical Methods I (3 credit hours)
- PH 631- Environmental Health (2 credit hours)
- PH 641- Social and Behavioral Aspects of Public Health (2 credit hours)
- PH 651- Public Health Services (2 credit hours)
- PH 655- Introduction to Health Care Policy (2 credit hours)
- PH 692- Seminar (1 credit hour)
- PH 693- Public Health Law and Ethics (3 credit hours)
- PH 694- Practicum (3 credit hours)
- PH 696- Capstone (3 credit hours)

Concentration

Global and Community Health (GCH) Concentration- 14 credits

- PH 642- Health Communication (2 credit hours)
- PH 661- Chronic Diseases (3 credit hours)
- PH 662- Control of Infectious Diseases (3 credit hours)
- PH 671- Community Health (3 credit hours)
- PH 672- Global Health (3 credit hours)

Course Waivers

Course Waiver: The chair of the Public Health Department may waive certain courses for students in the MPH Program under certain circumstances. However, they do not reduce the total credits required to complete the MPH degree. A course waiver provides an opportunity for elective credit without exceeding minimum credit hour requirements.

Important Steps Towards MPH Degree Completion

- **Selection of an Advisor.** Students have the right to choose their advisor unless their admission is provisional in which case they are assigned an advisor by the department. Note: Adjunct faculty are not permitted to serve as primary advisors.
- **Study plan.** In consultation with the advisor, students in the MPH Program are required to submit a plan of study to the Graduate College listing the sequence of course work that they plan to take to meet the requirements for the completion of the MPH degree program. The plan must be submitted before the completion of 12 credit hours of course work.
- **Successful completion of required course work.**
- **Exit interview-** All students must complete an exit interview before graduation.

Opportunities for Research and Service

Students in the MPH Program have the opportunity to engage in research and scholarly activities along with service to the profession and the community. The department chair and faculty will periodically notify students of such opportunities during orientation, meetings, in class and via email.

Appendix A: Course Descriptions

PH 601 – Introduction to Public Health (1)

An introduction to public health, including its foundation and history, principles and characteristics of the discipline, professional roles, and individual career development and planning.

PH 602 – Public Health Biology (2)

Review of critical knowledge and principles related to public health practice, including biologic theory, principles of disease development, and key aspects of genetics, oncogenesis, and immunology. Students will gain an understanding of the biological bases of many disorders significant in public health practice. Course may be waived for those holding appropriate degrees in biologic or clinical sciences.

PH 611 – Epidemiology (3)

An introduction to the basic concepts of epidemiology including risk and analytical techniques, study design, and evaluation. Students will apply these techniques to preventive strategies, as well as infectious and chronic disease. Course includes lectures, readings, homework assignments, and introduction to software tools commonly used in both research design and disease investigation.

PH 615 – Health Systems Research (3)

This course provides students with an introduction to techniques for research. Topics explored include the use of sources such as government and private payer claims databases, public data from state and federal agencies such as CDC and FDA, and disease registries. Issues in data mining, GIS study, and behavioral profiling techniques will be addressed. Prerequisites: PH 611, PH 621

PH 621 – Statistical Methods I (3)

Introduction to statistical principles and methods in public health. Includes descriptive statistics, probability and probability distributions, confidence intervals, one and two sample hypothesis tests, ANOVA, non-parametric tests, linear regression, and survival analysis. Students will gain experience in the use of SPSS software.

PH 631 – Environmental Health (2)

Introduction to current issues and practices in environmental and occupational health, including the assessment of exposure and risk. Students will gain knowledge of chemical and physical exposures affecting health.

PH 641 – Social and Behavioral Aspects of Public Health (2)

An overview of social and behavioral sciences in public health. Students will be introduced to relevant social and behavioral theories and a range of assessment and planning models used by public health professionals. Students will enhance their knowledge and awareness of the role of social and behavioral sciences in public health and its relevance to their specific discipline.

PH 642 – Health Communication (2)

This course will provide students a practical introduction to the principles underlying the effective communication of health information, including addressing disparities in education and language, utilizing different forms and channels of communication, and creating actionable and motivational communications. Students will develop skills to communicate appropriately in different roles: one-on-one in the provider context, in facilitating small groups, and in professional presentations. Students will gain understanding of the role of internal media staff as well as appropriate interaction with external media professionals.

PH 651 – Health Services Planning, Administration & Evaluation (2)

Students are introduced in health planning, implementation and evaluating principles and introduced to tools which are used to give practical experience. Through lecture, discussion, assignment, and in class activity, students confront practical issues of program implementation, including the needs for budgeting, timelines, and evaluation processes. Students will gain experience in presenting proposals in both written and oral reports.

PH 655 – Introduction to Health Policy (2)

Students will gain an understanding of health policy principles, development, and implementation. Basic aspects of U.S. and state health care regulation and finance are introduced and contrasted. Students will develop skills in preparing policy analysis and briefing, and the essentials of effective policy communication, advocacy and management.

PH 661 – Chronic Disease (3)

Examination of major chronic diseases including mechanisms of development, risk, diagnosis and interventional strategies. Scope of the course includes cardiovascular, respiratory and neurodegenerative disorders, as well as diabetes and cancer. Prerequisite: PH 611.

PH 662 – Control of Infectious Diseases (3)

Examination of infectious diseases from a public health perspective, including strategies for prevention, treatment, control and eradication. Prerequisites: PH 611.

PH 671 – Community Health (3)

This course prepares students for public health practice in a community setting. Through classroom experience, assignments, and community-based experience, students gain skills in appropriate means of engagement to facilitate programs and capacity building to enable communities to identify and effectively address health issues. Students will gain skills in surveys and interviewing, as well as conducting community health assessments using primary and secondary data.

PH 672 – Global Health (3)

This course examines public health at the global level, with emphasis public health disparities in developing countries and the impact of economic and social development on health status. The relationships between governments, NGOs and citizens will be examined, including the impact of human rights and social stability on health. Students will become familiar with the health data sources for developing countries, and will gain skill in the collection and interpretation of health and economic data, and gain skill to produce a report on public health priorities on a country level including a course of action on a high priority issue including activities, partners, and metrics for evaluation. Prerequisites: PH 611.

PH 692 – Seminar (1)

Introduction to health science literature review and critique, as well as presentation of research and practicum reports.

PH 693 – Public Health Law & Ethics (3)

Students will be introduced to the legal and ethical framework governing the practice of public health. The implications of key statutes and regulations will be introduced including such applications as the regulation of public health agencies; food, drugs, and devices; medical information; as well as the impacts of health reform legislation. Students will gain an understanding of the ethical foundation upon which both statute and practice is based, and will gain experience in confronting specific common ethical and legal requirements and dilemmas they may encounter in public health practice.

PH 694 – Practicum (3)

Short term field placement relevant to student career interest in an agency or other organization.

PH 696 – Capstone (3)

Course provides a structured and mentored process to produce written and oral components of a capstone project on a selected topic or question.