



MASTER OF PUBLIC
HEALTH PROGRAM
STUDENT HANDBOOK
2016-2017

WVU Health Sciences Center
School of Public Health
P.O. Box 9190
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<http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu>

Purpose

Welcome to the West Virginia University School of Public Health (WVU SPH)! You are beginning a rewarding educational experience that will prepare you for an important role in promoting and protecting the public's health.

This handbook is designed to help make your journey through your preparation an uncomplicated and trouble-free adventure. It will assist you in understanding and applying the policies, procedures, and guidelines specific to your graduate program in the School of Public Health. It supplements and expands the West Virginia University Academic Catalog (<http://coursecatalog.wvu.edu/>) policies and procedures, which continue to serve as your official source of reference for all matters pertaining to your matriculation and graduation. Your successful matriculation through this program requires adherence to the policies, procedures, and regulations stipulated by the MPH program and the university. Please note that it is the students' responsibility to be aware of and follow related policies.

This handbook is reviewed and revised periodically. All approved revisions or updates made during an academic year will be posted to the School's website as soon as possible.

About the WVU School of Public Health

The **mission** of the West Virginia University School of Public Health is to improve the health of West Virginians through innovation and leadership in education, research, and service. We achieve this by:

- Implementing educational programs that produce highly qualified practitioners, educators, and researchers
- Promoting interdisciplinary research to understand and solve complex health problems with local impact and global significance
- Engaging communities, businesses and government partners in accomplishing our shared mission

The **vision** of the School of Public Health is to be internationally recognized for demonstrating how academic public health can transform lives.

The School of Public Health is guided by the following **values**:

- **Community Engagement:** we are proud of the communities we serve and recognize the importance of bidirectional participatory activities.
- **Collaboration:** we collaborate with partners who join us in improving the public's health.
- **Equity:** we promote equity and social justice in defining health and eliminating health disparities.
- **Integrity:** we adhere to the highest ethical standards of honesty and fairness and we recognize that integrity and ethical behavior are essential elements of our professions.
- **Respect:** we respect diverse points of view and the cultural heritage and traditions of all people.
- **Accountability:** we hold ourselves accountable to one another and to the many stakeholders who support the School of Public Health.

If you are interested in learning more about the School, as well as our accreditation, please see <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/About/>.

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Section 1: Curriculum Overview

Master in Public Health (MPH) Program Overview

MPH Students from throughout the world who choose West Virginia University begin making a difference even before graduation. We truly believe in learning by doing. The MPH curriculum is organized around the five core disciplines of public health: Biostatistics (BIOS), Epidemiology (EPID), Health Policy, Management and Leadership (HPML), Occupational and Environmental Health Sciences (OEHS), and Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBHS). Core courses provide students with a basic understanding of the breadth of public health. Departmental required courses in a student's major allow students to apply various principles of public health to specific public health disciplines. All MPH students have a practice-based experience and either a capstone or thesis (SBHS only) for their culminating experience.

MPH Core Courses—All Disciplines

COURSE #	TITLE	CREDITS	SEMESTER OFFERED
BIOS 601/ 602	Applied Biostatistics I & Applied Biostatistics Lab	3/1 (4)	Fall
EPID 601 EPID 611	Public Health Epidemiology --OR-- Concepts and Methods of Epidemiology (EPID majors only)	3	(601) Fall/ Spring (611) Spring
HPML 601	Foundations of Health and Policy	3	Fall/Spring
OEHS 601	Environmental Health	3	Fall/Spring
SBHS 601	Social and Behavioral Theory	3	Fall/Spring
PUBH 696	Public Health Graduate Seminar	1	Fall/Spring
Total School required Course credit hours		17	

Discipline Specific Core Courses

MPH in Biostatistics

The MPH degree in Biostatistics is meant for students with moderate to strong quantitative backgrounds and provides additional training in statistical data analysis and study design.

Course Number	Course Title	Credits	Semester Offered
BIOS 611	Data Management and Reporting	3	Fall
BIOS 603	Applied Biostatistics 2	3	Spring
BIOS 604	Applied Biostatistics 3	3	Fall
BIOS 623	Biostatistical Consulting	1	Spring
BIOS 629	Application of BIOS to Public Health Data/Capstone	3	Spring
BIOS 663	Introduction to Meta-Analysis	3	Spring
PUBH 622	MPH Practice-Based Experience	3	Fall/Spring/Summer
Total BIOS required major course credit hours		19	
Total MPH core course credit hours		17	
Electives		6	
Total Program Credit Hours		42	

BIOS Culminating Experience

BIOS 629. Application of Biostatistics to Public Health Data / Capstone: Students will develop research question(s) pertaining to an available public health related data set, determine the public health relevance of that question, plan analyses and implement that plan, and determine public health impact of analysis results. Students will gain practical experience integrating biostatistics concepts within a public health issue.

For more information on BIOS and approved electives, and possible certificates, please see <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/biostatistics>.

MPH in Epidemiology

The MPH degree in Epidemiology is designed for students who wish to develop basic research skills for the study of correlates and determinants of injury, disease and other health conditions.

Course Number	Course Title	Credits	Semester Offered
EPID 612	Applied Epidemiology for Public Health	3	Spring
BIOS 603	Applied Biostatistics 2	3	Spring
BIOS 611	Data Management and Reporting	3	Fall
EPID 629	Epidemiology Capstone	3	Spring
EPID 696	Graduate Seminar	1	Fall
PUBH 622	MPH Practice-based Experience	3	Fall/Spring/Summer
Total EPID required major course credit hours		16	
Total MPH core course credit hours		17	
Electives		9	
Total Program Credit Hours		42	

EPID Culminating Experience

EPID 629. Capstone Project: The Epidemiology Capstone is the culminating experience for MPH students in epidemiology. It requires students to demonstrate their ability to synthesize and integrate the core public health and epidemiology knowledge and competencies via a paper and oral presentation. Grading will be on a pass/fail basis. Upon completion of the capstone course, students will be able to:

- Synthesize and integrate core public health and epidemiology knowledge and competencies.
- Write a formal epidemiologic paper that clearly communicates epidemiologic findings and implications.
- Effectively present an epidemiologic paper to their peers (fellow students) and faculty.

For more information on EPID and approved electives, and possible certificates, please see <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/epidemiology>.

MPH in Health Policy, Management and Leadership

The MPH degree in Health Policy, Management and Leadership is designed for students interested in population-based policy and management issues at multiple levels such as those in local, state and national governments and in both for-profit and not-for-profit agencies.

Course Number	Course Title	Credits	Semester Offered
HPML 610	Health Economics for Population Health	3	Fall
HPML 620	Public Health Leadership & Management 1	3	Fall
HPML 622	Analytic Methods for Health Policy, Management & Leadership	3	Spring
HPML 624	Policy Tools for Population Health	3	Spring
HPML 629	Capstone	3	Spring

Course Number	Course Title	Credits	Semester Offered
HPML 696	Graduate Seminar	1	Spring
PUBH 622	MPH Practice-based Experience	3	Fall/Spring/Summer
Total HPML required major course credit hours		19	
Total MPH core course credit hours		17	
Electives		9	
Total Program Credit Hours		45	

HPML Culminating Experience

HPML 629. Capstone: Through this course, students are required to demonstrate their ability to synthesize and integrate knowledge and competencies across the full breadth of the MPH-HPML curriculum. Additionally, students are required to demonstrate professional skills and development commensurate with the expectations of a public health professional. Specifically, by the completion of this course, students will:

- Critically evaluate and present to peers how their practice-based experience applied and enhanced the theory, knowledge, skills, and competencies gained throughout the MPH-HPML course of study.
- Develop and defend a substantive work that presents a novel and original evaluation of a contemporary problem in health policy, management, or leadership that demonstrates the ability to integrate and synthesizes the theory, knowledge, skills, and competencies gained throughout the MPH-HPML course of study.
- Articulate how a contemporary problem in health policy, management, or leadership could be improved through the synthesis of the theory and knowledge that is the foundation for health policy, management, and / or leadership.
- Develop a revised (updated) professional development plan.

For more information on HPML, approved electives, and possible certificates, please see <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/hpml>.

MPH in Occupational and Environmental Health Sciences

The MPH degree in Occupational and Environmental Health Sciences provides students with the practical skills needed to understand occupational and environmental processes, assess their health consequences and develop ways to address and resolve them.

Course Number	Course Title	Credits	Semester Offered
OEHS 620	Occupational and Environmental Hazard Assessment	4	Fall
OEHS 610	Environmental Practice	3	Spring
OEHS 622	Public Health Toxicology	3	Spring
OEHS 623	Occupational Injury Prevention	3	Fall
OEHS 629	Capstone	1	Spring
OEHS 696	Graduate Seminar	1	Spring
PUBH 622	MPH Practice-based Experience	3 or 6	Fall/Spring/Summer
Total OEHS required major course credit hours		18 or 21	
Total MPH core course credit hours		17	
Electives		8 or 5	
Total Program Credit Hours		43	

OEHS Culminating Experience

OEHS 629. Capstone: This course is the culminating experience for OEHS Master's students through which they will demonstrate their ability to integrate and synthesize the MPH and OEHS competencies in relation to the occupational/environmental public health problem on which their Practice-based Experience was focused. By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Apply the competencies they have achieved during their studies;
- Reflect on the knowledge, skills and insights they gained from their Practice-based Experience; and
- Integrate and synthesize all of this into a comprehensive paper about the occupational/environmental public health problem on which their PBE was focused.

Students have two options for the culminating experience, usually completed during the last year of the program. These options are either a 3 credit hour Practiced-based Experience and a 1 credit hour Capstone, or a 6 credit hour Practiced-based Experience and a 1 credit hour Capstone. Both options require a paper and presentation in the Capstone. Students who have not worked in the field of OEHS are expected to take the 6 credit PBE while those with significant experience in this field may take the 3 credit PBE.

For more information on OEHS, approved electives, and possible certificates, please see

<http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/oehs>.

MPH in Social and Behavioral Sciences

The MPH degree in Social and Behavioral Sciences provides students with the ability to address behavioral, social and environmental factors related to individual and population health and health disparities over the life span. This degree is offered both on-campus and on-line.

Course Number	Course Title	Credits	Semester Offered
SBHS 610	Public Health Research Methods	3	Fall
SBHS 611	Community Assessment OR	3	Spring
SBHS 660	Survey Research Methods (web)		
SBHS 615	Intervention Design OR	3	Fall
SBHS 614	Community-Based Participatory Research Methods (web)		
SBHS 613	Public Health Program Evaluation	3	Fall
SBHS 629 OR SBHS 697 & 698	Capstone Course OR Supervised Research and Thesis	2 or 5	Spring
SBHS 696	Graduate Seminar	1	Spring
PUBH 622	MPH Practice-based Experience	3	Fall/Spring/Summer
Total SBHS required major course credit hours		18 or 21	
Total MPH core course credit hours		17	
Electives		9 or 6	
Total Program Credit Hours		44	

SBHS Culminating Experience

SBHS 629. Capstone or Thesis: There are two options for the culminating experience, dependent on the student and available opportunities. These include either a Capstone Course or Thesis (as described below) that focuses on SBHS. The student will be expected to engage in meaningful synthesis and integration of the core and SBHS departmental competencies (Capstone Course) or behavioral sciences research project (Thesis).

Option 1:

Capstone Course (two credit hours)

- The SBHS capstone is the culminating experience for social and behavioral sciences majors in the MPH program and requires students to demonstrate their capacity to synthesize and integrate the core and SBHS departmental competencies via a paper and poster presentation.

Option 2:

Thesis (five credit hours)

- The thesis requirement is designed to provide the student with an opportunity to integrate and synthesize the major components of the MPH/SBHS learning experience and to apply the principles of public health by engaging in an applied research project of a specific topic area. The student is expected to demonstrate verbal and technical proficiency in expository writing. The topic must be one of public health significance. Students are required to make an oral proposal and defense, and produce a manuscript of publishable quality that can be submitted to an appropriate peer-reviewed journal mutually agreed upon between the committee Chair(s) and the student.

Thesis Entry Requirements:

- Student acceptance into the thesis option depends on the student being able to acquire a committee chair from the SBHS Graduate Faculty and a full committee. Individual thesis committee chairs/members may use a variety of methods for evaluating potential thesis candidates that include, but are not limited to, past academic performance, current academic performance, writing samples, and match between student-faculty research interests.

For more information on SBHS, approved electives, and possible certificates, please see

<http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/sbhs>.

Electives

Students consult with their faculty advisors to select electives appropriate for their professional goals.

Students may choose pre-approved electives for their major, those offered in other SPH department or those offered in other programs and schools. They may also elect to complete an independent study with a faculty member of their choice for a maximum of three credit hours. (See policy on independent studies).

Competencies

All degree programs in the School of Public Health are based on competencies, which outline what students should know and be able to do when they graduate. The competencies guide the curriculum, course content, and learning objectives. At the end of MPH and discipline specific core courses, the faculty assess each student on the stated competencies. Course syllabi will contain competencies and how your instructor plans to assess these during each semester. A new SPH Competency Handbook is being developed.

Practice-based Experience

All MPH students complete a minimum of 180 contact hours in a practice-based experience with a public-health related agency or organization, supervised by an approved preceptor. ***The practice-based experience is a required course for all MPH students.***

The practice-based experience is an opportunity for students to explore public health careers, clarify their professional goals, and develop contacts for employment (networking). It allows them to apply their academic knowledge to situations, projects or tasks in the “real world” and make meaningful contributions to the agency or organization. The preceptor provides a professional role model; their practice experience and mentoring is vitally important to a successful student field rotation.

For more information, please see <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/ophpwd/practice-based-experience/>.

Other Degrees in the SPH

Master (MS) Degree in School Health Education

The MS degree in School Health Education is an online program that provides health education teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to prepare school-age students to make healthy decisions. *This program is open ONLY to applicants holding a professional teaching certificate/licensure. A copy of your teaching certificate is required for admission.*

For more information, see <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/academics/online-programs/ms-in-school-health-education/>.

Master Degree Biostatistics

The MS degree program in Biostatistics at WVU provides more mathematically-oriented students a strong background in biostatistical theory and computational skills as well as extensive practical experience. Graduates of this academic degree will be well-positioned for careers in the pharmaceutical industry, government, and other research institutions or they will be able to pursue doctoral education in biostatistics or other related fields.

For more information, please see <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/academics/ms-in-biostatistics/>.

Doctoral Degrees

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Public Health Sciences trains students in a research intensive curriculum that emphasizes both evidence-based primary prevention of disease and injury, and health promotion research and practice.

The program offers three majors in distinct areas of public health:

- PhD in Epidemiology
- PhD in Occupational and Environmental Health Sciences
- PhD in Social and Behavioral Sciences

For general information on the PhD program see <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/academics/doctor-of-philosophy-phd/>.

Section 2: Academic Resources

Electronic

Plan of Study

Each discipline has a Suggested Plan of Study (PoS) in the Graduate Catalog. A PoS lays out the curriculum from Section 1 in a semester by semester sequence. If you follow the suggested PoS, you can complete your degree in two years. The amount of time for individual students varies depending on a variety of factors related to course credit that may be transferred in to other time demands and overall career goals. Regardless of your discipline, all degrees must be completed within eight calendar years as specified by WVU Policy http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/advisingcoursesdegrees/degree_regulations/#timelimitstext.

DegreeWorks

DegreeWorks is an online resource that provides a check sheet for students and advisors to review and monitor progress toward degree completion. It organizes academic coursework into blocks of requirements to help you easily identify courses you have completed and what courses you still need in order to complete your degree. You access DegreeWorks through your MIX account, under STAR.

For more information and a student guide, please see <http://registrar.wvu.edu/r/download/143348>.

SOLE

SOLE (Study Observe Learn Engage) is the WVU Health Sciences Center's portal for online education and information. It is a web-based tool for students to access courses and for instructors to build and maintain those courses.

To access SOLE use the following URL <https://sole.hsc.wvu.edu/>.

Academic Calendar

The academic calendar provides dates for all important deadlines, including drop dates, dates to withdraw from the university, fall and spring breaks, holidays, midterm and finals, etc.).

Graduate Student should access the calendar through <http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/westvirginiauniversitycalendar/>.

MIX and STAR

The Registrar's Office maintains the STAR Information System, where students can register for classes, pay tuition, check final grades, review financial aid information, request transcripts and verify enrollment. **Visit the STAR system at <https://star.wvu.edu>**. You will need your WVU ID and personal identification number (PIN) to access STAR. Your STAR login information is the same as it is for MIX.

For more information on the Registrar's Office, please see <http://registrar.wvu.edu/>.

The Registrar also has a satellite office on the first floor of Health Sciences Center, North near the elevators: Room 1168E.

Web Registration Instructions

For complete, step-by-step instructions to register for courses, please see http://registrar.wvu.edu/web_registration.

Academic Policies

Academic and Professional Standards

Students in graduate programs are expected to perform at high academic standards and behave with professional integrity. The School of Public Health maintains School specific policies on the SPH website at <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/students/student-policies/graduate-c-or-below-grade-policy/>. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of and follow SPH and Graduate Student policies.

Student Code of Academic and Professional Integrity

This code applies to students enrolled in the degree programs at the West Virginia University School of Public Health. It was approved by the Academic Standards Committee on May 3, 2012, and approved on May 9, 2012, by the School of Public Health faculty.

This Student Code of Academic and Professional Integrity for the WVU School of Public Health governs student behavior in lectures, examinations, laboratories, and other academic spaces and settings within the School of Public Health and the University, and all other settings which reflect upon the integrity and suitability of the student to train in public health-related disciplines and to become practitioners, educators, or researchers in public health. Successful progression through the curriculum and graduation are contingent upon the student's compliance with this code. This code follows the procedures established in the Policy on Academic Standards Governing Graduate Degree Programs at the West Virginia University School of Public Health.

Public health disciplines are based on reverence for life, compassion and respect for persons and for healthy living, professional and cultural competence, and integrity. At the core of the student's repertoire are skills leading to assessment, intervention, and measurements of effectiveness of contributions to improved health among populations. Hence, the School of Public Health expects its students to exhibit compassion, empathy, and concern for suffering where it exists; to be considerate and respectful toward individuals, communities, populations, instructors, staff, and each other; to grow in knowledge and skills; and to act professionally at all times.

The complete policy and list of specific expectations are found at <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/students/student-policies/student-code-of-conduct-policy/>.

Academic Standing

Grades and GPA

ALL courses taken while a graduate student (including both undergraduate and graduate level courses) are calculated toward your graduate GPA, regardless of whether they are applied to your plan of study.

For information on grading and GPA calculations, please see <http://registrar.wvu.edu/academic-records/academic-progress>.

Appealing a Grade

Students have the right to appeal final course grades that they believe reflect a capricious, arbitrary, or prejudiced academic evaluation, or reflect discrimination based on race, sex, age, handicap, veteran status, religion or creed, sexual orientation, color, or national origin.

For more information, please see the Health Science Center catalog on <http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/enrollmentandregistration/#academicrightspenaltiesappealtxt>

School of Public Health Academic Policies

Grade and Grade Point Average (GPA)

All SPH candidates must maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA each semester to be in good academic standing. Students whose cumulative GPA fall below 3.0 may be subject to probation, academic suspension, and/or expulsion.

Core- (school) and departmental-required courses for which a student receives a D or F must be retaken (the original grade remains on the student's record and is used to calculate the student's overall GPA). No program requirements can be fulfilled by a course for which the student receives an F. A grade of D in an elective will count toward degree requirements.

For more information, please see <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/students/student-policies/graduate-gpa-policy-for-active-students/>.

Course Grade of Incomplete

The grade of I (Incomplete) is to be given only when the instructor believes that the course work is unavoidably incomplete. Student must discuss this with their professors and develop a written plan for completing all outstanding work within one semester.

For more information, please see <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/students/student-policies/graduate-incomplete-grading-policy/>.

Course Transfer

The School of Public Health has specific criteria for approving courses that students wish to transfer (from other WVU graduate programs, another graduate school or those taken as a non-degree student) toward MPH requirements. **These decisions are made in the first semester of the student's program.**

For more information, please see <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/students/student-policies/graduate-course-transfer-policy/>.

SPH Independent Study Process and Policy

No more than three credit hours of independent study will count toward degree requirements. The student and School of Public Health faculty member who directs the Independent Study must complete the Independent Study form prior to registering for it.

For more information please see <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/students/student-policies/graduate-independent-study-policy/>.

Changing Your Program (Department) or Faculty Advisor

Students wishing to change from one program to another, within the School of Public Health, or to request a change of faculty advisors must complete the **graduate** change of **program and/or** advisor form, <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/students/graduate-downloadable-forms/>, and **submit it to Leah Adkins, MPH Senior Program Coordinator**. Student must meet all entry guidelines for the new major and the transfer must be approved by the chair of the department the student wishes to transfer into. Students should seek advising assistance while making this decision as this can delay graduation.

University Policies and Procedures

Family Educational Right and Privacy Act (FERPA)

This act was designed to protect the privacy of education records, to establish the right of students to inspect and review their education records, and to provide guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data through informal and formal hearings.

For more information on WVU's FERPA policy, please see, <http://ferpa.wvu.edu/>.

Non-discrimination Policy

West Virginia University is committed to maintaining a diverse and equitable community, free from discrimination. To accomplish this goal, the University draws on a number of acts, laws, and policies that shape its core values.

For more information, please see <http://diversity.wvu.edu/ea/policies>.

Sexual Harassment

WVU Board of Governor's Policy 44 provides details regarding discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, sexual and domestic misconduct, as well as stalking and retaliation.

For more information, please see <http://diversity.wvu.edu/ea/policies>.

Research Compliance and Training

If you are assisting a professor with research, please review the information on the WVU Research Integrity and Compliance website. <http://oric.research.wvu.edu/>

Information for International Students

The Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS) help these students with their initial adjustment to the University and Morgantown, assist them throughout their entire stay by providing social, cultural and educational programs, and by answering questions and giving advice about personal concerns, cultural differences, immigration regulations, and financial matters.

For More information about international student policies and procedures, please see <http://oiss.wvu.edu/>.

Dropping a Class

You may drop a course with no consequences during the first week of courses (different deadline applies for the summer semester). You may withdraw from a course before the published deadline (academic calendar, <http://catalog.wvu.edu/undergraduate/westvirginiauniversitycalendar/>: usually about 2/3 through the semester), however, you will receive a W on your transcript. This will not affect your grade-point average, but does remain as a W on your transcripts.

For more information, please see http://registrar.wvu.edu/current_students/withdrawal_policies.

Leave of Absence or Withdrawal

The academic **leave of absence** is designed for the student who must be away from his or her academic endeavors at WVU for one or more semesters, but intends to return to complete the degree. Leave of absence status must be requested before the beginning of the semester for which the leave is desired.

For more information, please see

http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/advisingcoursesdegrees/advising_and_evaluation/#enrollmenttext

Section 3: Advising & Progression

Student Advising Guidelines

Each student is assigned an advisor at the beginning of their first semester. Your advisor will be a School of Public Health faculty member in your department. Advisors provide support, knowledge, and guidance throughout your journey. They will address issues related to your plan of study and answers questions about courses and electives, including your practice-based experience. To get the most from your time with your advisor, follow the suggestions below to be prepared.

Before meeting with your Faculty Advisor

- Review your DegreeWorks record for accuracy.
- Review the suggested plan of study listed in the Graduate Catalog. Check the Catalog for your degree to see the progression generally taken by students in your program.
- Review the Department's curriculum requirements and elective choices.
- Identify elective courses you are interested in and review the prerequisites. Carefully review the course descriptions in the catalog to ensure you are eligible to take your preferred electives when they are offered.
- Consider your professional goals.

During your first meeting with your Faculty Advisor

- Be prepared to discuss short and long-term professional and academic goals.
- If you are a new student in the program, discuss your plan of study and potential electives with your advisor.
- If you are a returning student, review progress in your program and update your plan of study with your advisor, if needed.
- Select courses for next semester with guidance from your advisor. If you are thinking of or plan to pursue a certificate or dual degree, discuss this with your advisor.
- Initiate discussion pertaining to your capstone and practice-based experience, specifically the type of experience you desire, the location and the timing.
 - Identify your strengths, weaknesses, and interests prior to choosing your culminating experience.

After meeting with your Faculty Advisor

- If another appointment has been scheduled, mark it in your calendar.
- If you did not make another appointment, know that **it is your responsibility** to schedule appointments with your advisor.
- Follow-up on any information that was suggested by your advisor.

Progression and Milestones

Graduate study requires students to be self-directed and independent learners. Using the suggested Plan of Study in the Graduate Catalog, the following guidance outlines key milestones to help students successfully navigate their journeys to graduation. Please note that each program is different and that this is intended as general guidance to be clarified with your advisor.

First Semester:

- **Orientation:** All students attend SPH Orientation and receive student handbooks, program competencies, and general information. You will meet with your Academic Department at Orientation or at a specified date to meet your faculty and learn more about your department.
- **Advisement:** You will be assigned a permanent advisor in the first week and will review the suggested Plan of Study for your degree program (these are located in the Graduate Catalog).
- **Plan of Study:** Work with your advisor to finalize your Plan of Study in DegreeWorks. Familiarize yourself with the Academic Calendar.
- **Transfer Credits:** If you are transferring any credits from previous academic courses, **this must be approved by the end of your first semester.**
- **Prepare for next semester:** Schedule appointments with your advisor for advisement for the Spring Semester. Start thinking about your **Practice-based Experience.**

Semesters between the First and Last:

- **Advisement:** Check your DegreeWorks record and make sure all information is listed correctly. Meet with your advisor with any questions.
- **Prepare for next semester:** Schedule appointments with your advisor for advisement for the Summer Semester.
- **Plan your Practice-based Experience:** Your practice-based experience is completed at or towards the end of your program and requires you to work with a preceptor in an approved site to apply your academic training on a real project. You'll need to follow the practice-based experience guidelines and have all paperwork completed and approved **BEFORE** you start your practice-based experience.

Last Semester:

- **Advisement:** Check your DegreeWorks record and make sure all information is listed correctly. Meet with your advisor with any questions.
- **Complete your Practice-based Experience:**
- **Graduate:** Stay on top of all graduation deadlines: registration, purchasing gown and cap, attending functions, including Graduation!

Handling Issues

Despite everyone's best intentions and your efforts to manage your program, issues may arise in the classroom and the school. According to your comfort level, always try to problem solve proactively. For example, if you have issues with an instructor, talk with the instructor directly. If the issues aren't resolved, then bring the issue to the attention of your advisor or chair of your department. If the issues are still not resolved please contact Office of Student Services or Academic Affairs.

Section 4: Student Resources

Financial Resources

Financial Aid

For your convenience, there is a satellite office for financial aid located on the ground floor (Room G111) of the Health Sciences Center (304-293-3706). For more information, please see the Health Science Center Office at <http://financialaid.wvu.edu/home/hsc-office>.

For information on SPH tuition and fees, please see <http://tuition.wvu.edu/>.

To be eligible for financial aid students **must**:

- A) Maintain a 2.75 GPA at the conclusion of each term and
- B) Successfully complete 80% of all attempted credit hours

The satisfactory progress toward your degree can affect your financial aid eligibility.

For more information, please see http://financialaid.wvu.edu/maintaining-your-aid/academic_progress/sap-for-graduate-students.

SPH Tuition Waivers and Graduate Assistantships

Although the SPH observes the policies set forth by West Virginia University Board of Governors and the Office of Graduate Education and Life, the SPH has its own process for approving graduate assistantships. The SPH has begun to limit the number of graduate assistantships of all kinds (GA, GTAs and GRAs) both within and outside of the SPH. For more information regarding this and the SPH Employment, please see the SPH Student Employment website: <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/students/student-employment-opportunities-procedures/>.

Professional Development Opportunities for Students:

Graduate Education and Life

Graduate Education and Life offers a variety of development classes (career and professional) to help enhance a student's potential while in graduate school. The programs help graduate and professional students complete their degrees, teach and research effectively, and plan for their careers. For more information, please see <http://graduate.wvu.edu/>.

Career Services

The WVU Career Services Center is a University-wide student resource serving undergraduate and graduate students as well as alumni. The center offers services such as:

- Career counseling and career development
- Career fairs
- Mock interviews
- Workshops (i.e. resume writing, job search techniques)
- Other programs and events

For more information, please see <http://careerservices.wvu.edu/students>.

There are a lot of career websites that a recent graduate can search to find jobs (i.e. CareerBuilder.com, Indeed.com), but some good public health related job worksites are:

- American Public Health Association: <http://careers.apha.org/jobs>

- Emory Public Health Employment Connection: <http://cfusion.sph.emory.edu/PHEC/index.cfm?CFID=3905491&CFTOKEN=43715795>
- LinkedIn Public Health Job Search: https://www.linkedin.com/jobs/public-health-jobs?trk=amworks_jserp_redirect

Helpful Article: <https://sites.google.com/site/adviceforgraduatestudents/>

Parking and Transportation

To apply for a parking permit, go to the Mountaineer Station in the HSC parking garage, first floor, 304-293-5502. For more information, please go to: <http://transportation.wvu.edu/>.

Personal Rapid Transit (PRT)

It is an easy-to-use transportation solution for WVU students, faculty, staff, and the Morgantown community. There are five stations at which an electric powered, computer-driven car arrives to gather passengers.

For more information please see <http://transportation.wvu.edu/>.

WVU Graduate Resources

Please see <http://welcomegrad.wvu.edu/> for a compilation of resources for new and current graduate students.

WVU Libraries

WVU has four libraries that are open to students: Downtown Campus Library, Evansdale Library, Health Sciences Library, and the Law Library. Their services include:

- Research assistance (i.e. borrowing and renewing, interlibrary loan)
- Research tools (i.e. mobile web, databases)
- Teaching support (i.e. course reserves, term paper clinics)
- Facilities and Equipment (i.e. multimedia and small group study rooms)

For more information please see <https://lib.wvu.edu/>.

West Virginia University Calendar

For a listing of all University activities, including sports and entertainment, please see <http://cal.wvu.edu>.

Student Recreation Center

The Student Recreation Center is located on the Evansdale campus. For more information please see <http://studentreccenter.wvu.edu/>.

Student ID/ Mountaineer Card

The Mountaineer Card is the official photo identification card for students that verifies your identity and manages your access to various university services and facilities, such as:

- Personal Rapid Transit (PRT) and campus/community buses
- Student Recreation Center (Rec)
- WVU Libraries
- Food Services
- University Health Service

- Athletic Events and Facilities

For more information please see <http://wvucard.wvu.edu/>.

Student Number/ WVU ID

West Virginia University issues a nine character number which is the primary identifier for all faculty, staff, and students. The university has made a commitment to eliminate the use of social security numbers as the primary identifier.

For more information please see https://myid.wvu.edu/self-service/dist/index.html#.

Computer Access/ My ID

A student must be registered for classes to have access to computers in the library. Your My ID username and password will be used to access library computers and the wireless WVU Encrypted network.

For more information, please see https://myid.wvu.edu/self-service/dist/index.html#.

Bookstore and Books

Barnes and Noble is the official campus bookstore to buy new and used books, rent and return textbooks, purchase eBooks, and get cash back from old textbooks. The bookstore is located on the downtown campus next to the Mountainlair. There is a small bookstore on the ground floor of the HSC.

For more information, please see <http://wvu-hsc.bncollege.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/BNCBHomePage?storeId=15071&catalogId=10001&langId=-1>.

WVU Alert

Students are able to sign up for the WVU Alert system, which will send urgent news to their cell phone (i.e. weather alert, crime alert, and emergency alert). Students will also receive alerts via the official WVU email address.

For more information, please see <http://emergency.wvu.edu/alert>.

Student Health and Well WVU

There are several services offered for students through Well WVU:

- Medical
- Mental Health
- Health Promotion

For more information and directions please see <http://well.wvu.edu/>.

Graduation

When the time comes for students to graduate from the MPH program, they will complete the application to graduate. An email announcement will go out at the appropriate time.

Additional information about commencement in the School of Public Health can be found on our website, <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/students/commencement/>.

SPH Student Resources

Biostatistics Consulting Group

The Biostatistics consulting group offers instruction and mentoring in research design, epidemiology, and biostatistics to students and faculty on statistical methods and analyses. As a student, you have the opportunity to receive 10 hours of assistance, at no cost. We recommend that you use this assistance in completing your culminating experience. In order to take advantage of this service, you must become a WVU CTSI member. To do so, go to <http://www.wvctsi.org/membership/>, read the information and go to Associate/Trainee member to complete the form.

SAPH

The Student Association of Public Health (SAPH) is a club of MPH students, PhD students, and faculty members in the School of Public Health who are dedicated to promoting public health issues throughout WVU and the community through service and education.

For more information, please see <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/student-association-of-public-health/>.

Delta Omega Honorary Society in Public Health - Gamma Mu

Students are eligible for induction into the honorary society after participating in 50% of SAPH events and 100% in Gamma Mu chapter events. Induction occurs at a ceremony prior to graduation and a student can only be inducted upon being approved to graduate. Membership in Delta Omega reflects the dedication of an individual to increase the quality of the field of public health to all people. Inductees must be in the top 25% of their class academically.

For more information, please see national website at <http://www.deltaomega.org/index.cfm>.

Dean's Ambassador Program

The Dean's Ambassador Program accepts a select group of 10 students (maximum), each year who will attend functions and activities representing the Dean and the School of Public Health. This group will also participate in special events with the Dean, at his request, to help promote the School within the state and in other communities beyond the campus of the Health Sciences Center and the University.

Members of the Program must be representative of the highest quality and ability of the School of Public Health and are required to meet and maintain high standards of eligibility.

Please see <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/students/deans-ambassador-program/> for eligibility requirements.

Section 5: School of Public Health Student Contacts

Sr. Administration

Interim Dean

Jeffrey Coben, MD

Associate Dean for Academic Affairs & Student Services

Linda Alexander, EdD

Contacts for Common Student Questions

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Administrative Associate, Office of Graduate Student Services

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