



THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH

Department of PUBLIC HEALTH

GRADUATE HANDBOOK

2023-2024
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College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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He {and she and they} who has health, has hope; and he who has hope has everything.

Thomas Carlyle

1. WELCOME

Beginning graduate study is an exhilarating experience for most students. New challenges are anticipated, some uncertainties are present, and yet there is a reinforcing belief that many benefits are to be gained from earning a graduate degree. The faculty in the Department of Public Health (DPH) are committed to assisting you in securing a meaningful, rewarding graduate experience, which will further develop your career potential. As course instructors and advisors, we consider ourselves to be student-oriented; you are, after all, the reason why we are here. We will endeavor to provide appropriate and reliable academic and career guidance.

Included in this handbook are professional competencies and ethical beliefs which are central to your practice in public health and we take them very seriously. It is these competencies that will define your practice, shape your programs, and sharpen your outcomes.

We extend our best wishes for your success as you begin, or continue with, graduate education at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

2. INTRODUCTION

A. Graduate School Introduction

In order to serve the mission and vision of the Graduate School and preserve the integrity of Graduate Programs at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, information related to the process of graduate education in each department is to be provided for all graduate students.

Based on Best Practices offered by the Council of Graduate Schools, it is important that detailed articulation of the information specific to the graduate degrees offered in each department/program be disseminated.

The Department Graduate Handbook does not deviate from established Graduate School Policies (tiny.utk.edu/grad-policies) noted in the Graduate Catalog, but rather provides the specific ways in which those policies are carried out.

Graduate students are expected to be aware of and satisfy all regulations governing their work and study at the university. For more information on these regulations and policies, please see the following resources, which are located on the Graduate School website:

[Graduate Catalog](#)

[Hilltopics Student Handbook](#)

[Graduate Student Appeals Procedure](#)

B. Purpose of the Graduate Handbook

The Graduate Handbook serves as a detailed guide to regulations and procedures pertinent for graduate students in the Department of Public Health (DPH) at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. All regulations are consistent with the general requirements of The Graduate School of The University of Tennessee, Knoxville found in the current Graduate Catalog. The regulations are subject to change as program revisions occur. Typically, the handbook is updated bi-annually to reflect such changes. Students will also be alerted by the director of graduate studies of any changes to this handbook. Please bring any questions to the attention of the director of graduate studies.

The degree programs covered in this handbook are the Master of Public Health (MPH) and the PhD in Public Health Sciences. The specific requirements for these graduate degrees in the DPH are described in this handbook.

Graduate students need to keep this handbook readily available; please take it to any planning conferences that you may have with your faculty advisor and/or graduate committee members.

The Handbook reflects a continuing process and its contents represent long-standing policy as well as any changes that occurred this year. Recommendations for the Handbook's improvements are welcomed and they may be presented to your faculty advisor, other members of the faculty, or DPH staff.

We hope you enjoy your graduate studies. This Handbook has been compiled to facilitate the process.

Students should be familiar with the appropriate guides, handbooks, and forms that are most easily available at:

[Forms Central](#)

[Forms and Documents](#)

C. Departmental Description

1. Directional Statements for the Department of Public Health, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Vision

The Department of Public Health will be nationally recognized for academic excellence, the expertise and talents of its faculty, and its dedication to preparing students for practical and academic careers in public health. Our alumni and students will improve the health of communities through outreach, support and research, reducing health disparities, and positively influencing health policy and resource development.

Mission

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville's Department of Public Health prepares and mentors its students for exceptional careers in academia, public health research, administration, and practice that promote optimal health of individuals and communities.

Guiding Principles

As a Department of Public Health at a land grant university, the following guiding principles support our mission:

- We are committed to providing an academically challenging, state-of-the-art education that bridges and integrates community health with epidemiology, health behavior and health education, health planning, administration, and environmental sciences.
- We seek to understand the common interests of societies and to promote social justice through focused efforts on equity and fairness.
- We engage in outreach, service, and research that directly benefit the communities we serve.
- We respect and strongly advocate ethnic and cultural diversity.

- We foster interdisciplinary collaboration across departments within and outside the university and with other health promoting institutions worldwide.

The values ascribed to by the DPH in its educational mission are also those values that provide the foundation for the [Public Health Code of Ethics](#)

- *Humans have a right to the resources necessary for health.*
- *Humans are inherently social and interdependent.*
- *The effectiveness of institutions depends heavily on the public’s trust.*
- *Collaboration is a key element to public health.*
- *People and their physical environment are interdependent.*
- *Each person in a community should have an opportunity to contribute to public discourse.*

2. Departmental Structure

Department Head..... Dr. Thankam Sunil
 Associate Department Head/MPH Program Director..Dr. Jennifer Russomanno
 Distance Education MPH Program DirectorDr. Jennifer Perion
 Doctoral Program Director.....Dr. Laurie Meschke

A listing of all faculty can be found in Appendix B

Staff:

Business Manager Melissa Walker
 Administrative Support Specialist..... Wendy Smith
 Financial Associate..... Tara Walker
 APEx Coordinator.....Peyton Prothero

Contact Information:

Address..... Room 390 HPER
 1914 Andy Holt Ave.
 Knoxville, TN 37996-2710
 Telephone number..... (865) 974-5041
 Fax..... (865) 974-6439
 Email Address publichealth@utk.edu
 URL <http://publichealth.utk.edu>

3. GENERAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF FACULTY AND ALL GRADUATE STUDENTS

A. Faculty

It is the responsibility of the faculty to provide scientifically sound, up-to-date academic coursework; guide students in their academic preparation; and prepare students to be successful in practice and academic careers in public health. Faculty also provide research opportunities to students, engage students in outreach and service learning opportunities, and involve students in professional conferences and meetings.

B. Student

Students are responsible for knowing and abiding by procedures and policies described in this handbook, maintaining academic integrity throughout their graduate studies, and knowing and satisfying all university regulations in a timely fashion.

4. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR THE MPH

A. Admission

Applicants to the MPH program will be evaluated for admission based on the following criteria:

- General requirements set forth by [The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Graduate School](#)
- A GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, as evidenced by official transcripts.
- A statement of the applicant's educational and career goals.
- Three rating forms completed through the application portal by faculty members, academic advisors, employers, or professional colleagues. At least two letters must be from persons able to assess academic capacity.
- MPH Data Admissions form (the departmental application)
- Admission to the University of Tennessee Graduate School

Preferential consideration for admission to degree status shall be given to those with at least one year of professional experience in a public-policy or health-related occupation. As a restricted program, non-degree admission requires department recommendation and approval. Deadlines for completed applications for the Campus-based Traditional MPH are February 1st for summer term and April 1st for fall semester and October 1 for spring term (spring admission is restricted to part-time students only). Deadlines for the Distance Education (DE) MPH are May 17 for fall semester, November 15 for spring semester, and for summer semester, please visit the [department website](#).

All applications must be submitted electronically. [Click here to access the link to our "How to apply" web-page](#) Examples are provided in Appendix B.

Prospective students who wish to apply for an assistantship are encouraged to apply earlier to maximize their chance to acquire an assistantship (campus-based program only).

International students should consult the Graduate School for applicable deadlines.

An [online application](#) must be submitted to the Graduate Admissions Office.

B. Non-Degree Seeking Status

Students who do not plan to work toward a graduate degree but who wish to enroll in occasional courses for such purposes as personal enrichment, professional development, and meeting special interests may, with the permission of the department, register as a “non-degree student.” Admission to the Graduate School is required. Students may accrue a maximum of 15 hours graduate credit in a non-degree status. All students who enroll in graduate courses, whether or not they are seeking degrees, are required to maintain a 3.0 GPA on all graduate-level courses taken at The University of Tennessee. Students who fail to maintain this average will not be permitted to continue registering for graduate courses.

5. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR THE PHD

A. Admission

The PhD in Public Health Sciences is designed for students who enter with a Master of Public Health (MPH) from a Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) accredited institution. The program is offered on both a full and part-time basis. The program is designed to be completed within three to four years for full-time students who already have an MPH degree or an MS in public health. Applicants without the MPH may be admitted to the program; however, these students may need to complete additional coursework requirements in consultation with a faculty advisor and the Directors of the program to ensure a firm foundation in the MPH competency domains. Hence, additional time may be required to complete the degree.

All applicants must meet the following admission requirements:

- General requirements set forth by [The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Graduate School](#)
- GPA of at least 3.2 (on a 4.0 scale) on Master’s degree coursework, shown in official transcripts. For students without a Master’s degree or coursework, a required GPA of 3.2 for the undergraduate degree
- International students must meet graduate school’s requirement for a satisfactory score on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or

the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). GRE scores must be taken no more than five years before the intended semester of entry.

- Three letters of reference completed within the past 12 months by faculty members, academic advisors, employers, or professional colleagues. At least two letters must be from persons able to assess applicant's academic, research capacity, job performance, or professional promise.
- A personal statement to demonstrate the evolution of your interest in public health, which faculty member your research interests best align with, and how the program will prepare you to work in the field of public health.
- Ability to clearly articulate a defined research area and/or career pathway upon interview.
- Demonstrated skill in a professional, research, or academic writing sample. A writing sample of scientific writing of approximately 2,000-3,000 words should be submitted (preferably the applicant is either the sole author or first author). A published article is acceptable only if the applicant discloses the nature of his/her contribution(s).
- A current curriculum vitae.

The following admission criteria are preferred:

- MPH degree obtained from a CEPH-accredited school or program of Public Health. Public health or relevant work experience at local, state, or federal level is highly desirable.
- Applicants without the MPH degree may be admitted to the program. For example, applicants who meet either of the following requirements may be considered for admission:
 - Applicants have a Master's degree or an advanced professional degree in a field related to public health from an officially recognized domestic or international institution. The graduate degree must be conferred prior to enrollment to the PhD.

An online application must be submitted to the Graduate Admissions Office. All admission forms are available on line on the Graduate School's website.

Submission deadline: Applications can be submitted between September 1 and March 1, which will coincide with the review process each year. Limited financial support is available for highly competitive, full-time students. Applications must be completed by December 20 if applicant is interested in competing for all available financial support, including that from the Graduate School.

Please send all inquiries to: Director of the Doctoral Program, Department of Public Health, 390 HPER, 1914 Andy Holt Avenue, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN 37996; Phone: (865)-974-5041, Fax: 865-974-6439, E-mail: dph@utk.edu

B. Non-Degree Seeking Status

Students who do not plan to work toward a graduate degree but who wish to enroll in occasional courses for such purposes as personal enrichment, professional

development, and meeting special interests may, with the permission of the department, register as a “non-degree student.” *Admission to the Graduate School is required.* Students may accrue a maximum of 15 hours of graduate credit in a non-degree status. All students who enroll in graduate courses, whether they are seeking degrees, are required to maintain a 3.0 GPA on all graduate-level courses taken at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Students who fail to maintain this average, will not be permitted to continue registering for graduate courses.

6. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

A. Graduate Assistantships

For specific instructions on how to apply for an assistantship, see section 6.A.6 for MPH students and section 6.A.7 for PhD students.

An assistantship is a financial award to a graduate student for part-time work in teaching, administration, or research while pursuing study toward an advanced degree. The applicable policies governing Graduate Assistantships are in the [Graduate Catalog](#).

The department has several types of assistantships available. These include Graduate Assistant (GA), Graduate Teaching Assistant/Associate (GTA), and Graduate Research Assistant (GRA). The work hours are 10-20 hours per week, excluding organized class time, depending on the specific appointment.

Students on academic year appointments for the fall and spring terms receive 12 equal monthly payments for the nine months of service and a waiver of fees for three terms (including the summer). Students appointed to an academic year appointment beginning in the spring term have the option of receiving seven equal monthly payments for the January-July period or six equal payments for the February-July period. In both cases, a fee waiver is provided for spring and summer terms. Graduate students on academic year appointments have no assistantship responsibilities in the summer term. Students appointed to 12 month or other appointments receive equal monthly payments for the months of the appointments and have assistantship responsibilities for the full period of the appointment. All GAs, GTAs, and GRAs must be full-time graduate students to retain eligibility for assistance.

Work responsibilities of the different assistantships vary as described below, but all provide tuition, maintenance fee, health insurance, and a monthly stipend (paid over 12 months). Salary (stipend) is subject to federal income tax.

The number of departmental graduate teaching assistantships (GTAs) with tuition waivers is very limited and are highly competitive. Preference for assistantships is given to first year PhD students. If qualified PhD student applicants are not available, assistantship opportunities will be extended to MPH students. Students who receive

departmental GTA positions will be notified by the end of April for the following Academic Year.

1. *Responsibilities of Graduate Assistants*

Graduate Assistants are funded typically with DPH funds or through grants or contracts from the public, private, or voluntary sectors. Graduate Assistants (GA) assist with administrative work and/or research and are supervised by faculty members who have primary responsibility for the specific projects. GAs are also expected to assist with various Departmental and College activities. The GA's tuition, maintenance fee, health insurance premium, and stipend are generally provided by the funding source or the Department. All other fees are paid by the GA. GAs must maintain at least a B average and be full-time graduate students to retain eligibility for assistance.

2. *Responsibilities of Graduate Teaching Assistants*

Graduate Teaching Assistants without prior college teaching experience are required to participate in the Graduate Teaching Assistant Seminar offered each fall by the Graduate School. Students appointed to teaching assistantships will receive information on the seminar from the Graduate School. GTAs assist with courses and generally are supervised by faculty members who have primary responsibility for the specific courses. GTAs also are expected to assist with various Departmental and College activities. A waiver of tuition and the maintenance fee plus payment of health insurance and a stipend are provided by the University and Department. All other fees are paid by the GTAs. GTAs must maintain at least a B average. In accordance to the Graduate School requirements, prior to serving as a GTA, doctoral students for whom English is the not their first language must pass the Oral Proficiency Interview by Computer Test (OPIc) exam. Please refer to the Graduate School website and notifications for updates on when the exam is offered and how to register.

3. *Responsibilities of Graduate Research Assistants*

Graduate Research Assistants are funded typically by contracts or grants from specific businesses, government or other agencies, and foundations, or other extramural sources. In general, GRAs are appointed for a one-year term, with renewal at the discretion of the faculty research advisor and contingent on sufficient sources of funding. The primary functions of GRAs are as follows:

- a. To work under the direction of faculty members in specified approved project areas.
- b. To contribute to the specific research projects and at the same time, acquire training in research techniques and methods.

The GRA's tuition, maintenance fee, health insurance premium, and stipend are generally paid by the funding source. All other fees are paid by the GRA.

4. *Guidelines for Making Assistantship Awards*

- a. Assistantships should be used to foster mentorships with faculty who can provide oversight, supervision, and mentoring of students' educational goals.
- b. Assistantships should be used to support faculty with ongoing projects capable of external funding.
- c. Assistantships should be used to support students with demonstrated potential for academic excellence (incoming students) or demonstrated excellence of academic achievement within the program.
- d. The maximum number of years that a graduate student can be appointed to a 25% or more assistantship is three years as an MPH student, five years as a doctoral student or eight years in doctoral programs when students enter with a baccalaureate degree only.
- e. The monitoring of student performance during an assistantship is the responsibility of the faculty supervisor.
- f. Assistantships that involve assistance in a course may involve attendance at all class meetings, a weekly coordination meeting with the supervisor, assistance in course preparation and evaluation under the direction of the faculty supervisor, or other discretionary assignments that assist the faculty member's instruction.
- g. Assistantships that involve independent teaching of a course involve: attendance at all class meetings, a bi-weekly coordination meeting with the faculty supervisor (or a mutually agreed-upon frequency), responsibility for class preparation (lectures, activities, assignments) and course evaluation (the design of tests and exams) with the guidance and oversight of the faculty supervisor, providing for and meeting with students during regularly scheduled office hours, plus any other discretionary tasks that enable the GTA to provide excellent undergraduate instruction and to develop as a potential member of a baccalaureate faculty.
- h. In general, graduate assistantships are awarded on an annual basis.
- i. Graduate assistantships may be withdrawn for non-performance or unsatisfactory performance of duties at any time as evaluated by the responsible faculty supervisor in consultation with the department head.

****Note:** Attendance at the university's GTA seminar held prior to Fall semester is recommended for all GTAs, GAs, and GRAs.

5. *Graduate Assistantships and Course Load Requirements*

Students receiving a 50% Graduate Assistantship should enroll for 6-11 hours; those receiving a 25% Graduate Assistantship should enroll for 9-13 hours. Exceptions must have prior approval from the Advisor and the Program Director. MPH students who hold Graduate Assistantship positions are strongly encouraged to complete their Applied Practice Experience (APEX) during the summer when feasible. Students on academic year appointments for the fall and spring terms receive 12 equal monthly payments for the nine months of service and a waiver of fees for three terms (including the summer). Students appointed to an academic

year appointment beginning in the spring term have the option of receiving seven equal monthly payments for the January-July period or six equal payments for the February-July period. In both cases a fee waiver is provided for spring and summer terms. Graduate students on academic year appointments have no assistantship responsibilities in the summer term. Students appointed to 12 month or other appointments receive equal monthly payments for the months of the appointments and have assistantship responsibilities for the full period of the appointment.

6. *Graduate Assistantships for MPH Students: Application Instructions*

Full-time MPH students may apply for Graduate Assistantships. The ***Graduate Assistantship Request Application*** is available on [our department's website](#). The deadline for applications is April 1st of each year; however, students are encouraged to apply for an assistantship much earlier, ideally after being admitted to the MPH program. Students will be notified of the graduate assistantship award in May for the following academic year. Assistantships are awarded on a yearly basis, subject to available funding.

7. *Graduate Assistantships for PhD Students: Application Instructions*

Applicants to the doctoral program may request a Graduate Assistantship upon completing their application. The ***Graduate Assistantship Request Application*** is available on [our department's website](#). Admitted doctoral students will be notified of their financial assistance with their letter of admission.

8. *Teaching Requirements for PhD Students with a Graduate Assistantship*

We recommend that doctoral students receiving an assistantship participate in the Graduate Teaching Assistant Seminar offered each fall by The Graduate School. All doctoral students receiving an assistantship will participate in teaching at the undergraduate level or will serve as a Teaching Assistant for a graduate level course. Qualified doctoral students not receiving an assistantship may also request to have paid teaching responsibilities. Requests should be made to the student's faculty advisor. The faculty advisor is responsible to ensure that the student has met all of the qualifying requirements (e.g., English language examine for students with English as a second language) to support a quality TA experience. The faculty instructor/mentor is responsible in developing and providing at least one full semester-long section of an undergraduate course (usually PUBH 201). Depending on the number of doctoral students in each cohort, the teaching assignment may be shared with one or more other doctoral students.

a. *Doctoral Student Responsibilities*

The following outlines the minimum expectations of a teaching assistantship, with the intention of ensuring that the TA gets an understanding of the effort required to prepare, implement, and assess an undergraduate course. Greater

responsibilities may be negotiated with the faculty mentor. The foundational tasks include, but are not limited to:

- Prior to TA, complete Graduate School GTA orientation
- Prior to TA, complete Oral Proficiency Interview by computer (OPIc) exam, if doctoral student has English as a second language
- Assist with update, revising, or developing course syllabus
- Assist with development of learning management site (e.g., Canvas)
- Assist with the development and grading of assignments and/or exams
- Develop and deliver 2 or more course lessons
- Assist in the final grading process

b. **Faculty Mentor Responsibilities**

The faculty instructors of record/mentors are responsible in ensuring that their GTA(s) are provided the opportunity to meet their responsibilities. The instructors of record are also responsible for supervision, critique, and mentorship of GTAs. At a minimum, this would include confirmation that the student had the opportunity to participate in the course from development to student assessment. The faculty mentor should complete the teaching rubric associated with the doctoral student assessment on two or more occasions. The faculty mentor is encouraged to schedule at least one other faculty member to conduct a teaching assessment of each GTA.

B. Scholarships and Fellowships from the College and Graduate School

General information on financial assistance is available from the [University of Tennessee Graduate School website](#).

Information on funding sources is available from the [Financial Aid Coordinator in The Graduate School, Student Services Building](#). Graduate students are encouraged to begin seeking outside funding about a year preceding the academic year for which funding is needed, as some deadline dates are very early. The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is required by many funding sources as well as for admission to departmental programs.

Fellowships and scholarships through the Graduate School and the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences generally are initiated through the [Director of the doctoral or MPH programs](#). To be considered for these awards, all interested applicants must have their complete application submitted to the Graduate School by January 15 of the intended enrollment year.

The Director of the MPH or Doctoral program and the faculty advisors of selected students will initiate the applications for college and Graduate School awards for continuing students.

C. On-Campus Employment

While the Department of Public Health recognizes that students may have significant additional financial obligations, additional outside employment for persons receiving an assistantship is strongly discouraged. With approval of the Department Chair, faculty advisor, and the Dean of the Graduate School, doctoral students can work 6 additional hours at the university outside of the assistantship, or a total of 26 hours. This process is initiated with the faculty advisor and the Department Chair, who will submit a written request and justification to the Graduate School.

D. Graduate Student Travel Support

As part of both the PhD and MPH academic programs, the faculty highly recommends that students present their research at scientific meetings when possible. Students should discuss these opportunities with their advisor.

Graduate Student Senate Travel Awards are available to support graduate students attending professional meetings to present original research. The awards, distributed three times a year, are made on the basis of both need and merit, and allow for partial reimbursement of transportation, lodging, and conference expenses. Information about these awards is available [using this link](#).

Other support for travel may be available from the professor mentoring you in the research, the college or the DPH, contingent on the availability of funds.

You should begin the process of requesting funds and completing the necessary paperwork well in advance to ensure proper reimbursement of expenses. Students on official University travel are responsible for adhering to University travel regulations and should consult the [following website](#) to ensure compliance with those regulations.

For **reimbursements**, UT only accepts ORIGINAL receipts. No receipts are required for per diem meal reimbursement.

7. REGISTRATION AND ADVISING

A. Registration Procedures

The University of Tennessee Knoxville has an [online registration system](#).

B. Types of Courses and Course Credit

Students are referred to the [online course catalog](#) for a full description of courses and course credit.

Some PhD courses within the DPH may be offered on an every-other-year basis. Students must plan coursework carefully because of the timing of course availability.

C. Course Load

According to the [Graduate Catalog](#), The University of Tennessee's policy on graduate course load is as follows:

The maximum load for a graduate student without an assistantship is 15 hours and 9 to 12 hours are considered a full load. Six credit hours is considered a full load for students with a .50 GA, GTA, or GRA. For the summer term, graduate students may register for a maximum of 12 hours in an entire summer term or for a maximum of 6 hours in a five-week summer session. Students may enroll in only one course during a mini-term session.

Students holding a one-half time assistantship normally should enroll for 6-11 hours. A one-fourth time graduate assistant normally should take 9-13 hours. A student on a one-half time assistantship who takes 6 hours will be considered full time¹. Refer to the Policy for the Administration of Graduate Assistantships for additional information.

Students receiving financial aid should consult with the department/program head concerning appropriate course loads. Courses audited do not count toward minimum graduate hours required for financial assistance.

Registration for more than 15 hours during any semester, or for more than 12 hours in the summer term, is not permissible without prior approval. The academic advisor may allow registration of up to 18 hours during a semester if the student has achieved a cumulative grade point average of 3.6 or better in at least 9 hours of graduate work with no outstanding incompletes. No more than 12 hours are permissible in the summer term without prior approval.

D. Student Advising

An initial faculty advisor will be assigned to each student upon admission. To the extent possible, this will be the faculty member requested by the student during the application and/or interview process. The initial faculty advisor will be one of the full-time faculty. Students may choose to change advisors on approval from the Department Head.

The advising process involves responsibilities of both the advisee and the advisor.

1. Responsibilities of the advisee are as follows:
 - i. Contact the faculty advisor to schedule an appointment prior to registration for classes for the subsequent semester.
 - ii. [Consult the University registration website](#). This site also has a link to the Timetable of Classes.
 - iii. [Consult the University Graduate School website](#). This site provides information on procedures and deadlines for graduation. In particular, students have found the “[Steps to Graduation for Graduate Students](#)” very helpful.

¹ Note, 6 units will be considered full-time for the Graduate School, but 9 will remain the standard for financial aid in relation to loans and fee waivers. Please consult with financial aid on their policies if dropping below 9 units.

- iv. Notify the faculty advisor and the MPH or Doctoral Program Director of any change in your address or telephone number.

2. Responsibilities of the advisor are as follows:

- i. Schedule advising appointments when contacted by the advisee.
- ii. Assist the advisee in the development of a plan of study that is commensurate with the advisee's background, interests, and goals that comply with the approved curricula and policies.
- iii. Provide guidance to the advisee on selection of committee members.
- iv. Assist the advisee in meeting Graduate School requirements and deadlines.
- v. Coordinate written and oral examinations, as required by the specific programs in which the advisee is a candidate.
- vi. Provide guidance and assistance in the selection of an Applied Practice Experience site.

8. **DEGREE REQUIREMENTS: MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

The Department of Public Health offers two graduate degrees, the Master of Public Health (MPH) and the Doctor of Public Health (see section 9 for information regarding the doctoral degree).

All MPH students complete a major in public health, which provides a solid foundation for professional employment in community-based settings. The public health model, emphasizing health promotion and health protection, uses the key strategy of prevention. Incorporated in the curriculum are the five public health specialty areas. These include biostatistics, epidemiology, environmental health sciences, health services administration, and social and behavioral sciences. In addition, Program Assessment and Planning and Fundamentals of Program Evaluation are required as foundation courses.

The Campus-based Traditional (on-ground) MPH program offers five concentrations: Community Health Education, Epidemiology, Health Policy and Management, Nutrition and Veterinary Public Health. The Distance Education (online) MPH program offers four concentrations: Community Health Education, Epidemiology, Health Policy and Management, and Veterinary Public Health.

A. Accreditation

The University of Tennessee MPH program is accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), which is the nationally recognized accrediting body for this discipline.

Accreditation was first achieved in 1969, with the Tennessee MPH program becoming the first outside of a school of public health or medicine to receive this recognition. Since 1969, the program has been successful in securing extensions of accreditation through a self-study and review process that requires approximately two years to complete. Program accreditation offers substantial value to students, alumni, faculty and the University because of the distinction offered. This recognition of quality,

consistent with that of other accredited MPH programs, indicates that the professional preparation offered at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville has met the criteria defined by the Council.

B. Program Governance

The MPH Academic Program Committee (MPHAPC) includes faculty and student representatives from each concentration of study from the campus-based and distance education programs. The Committee provides program governance, curricular direction and integrity, and academic policy development. Student representatives have full discussion and voting privileges with all academic matters except review of student admission applications.

C. MPH mission, vision, goals, objectives, and values

MPH Mission Statement

The Graduate Public Health Program at The University of Tennessee provides quality education and leadership to promote health in human populations through interdisciplinary instruction, research and community service.

MPH Vision Statement

The MPH Program is recognized for its empowerment of students pursuing public health careers that focus on community health improvement.

MPH Program Goals

The goal statements listed below reflect major functions of the program and assist in the attainment of the mission, and movement toward the vision. The goal statements are linked to instruction, research, and service.

- **Instructional Goal:** Prepare future professionals competent in public health core content and methodological approaches.
- **Research Goal:** Engage public health faculty and students in research projects that address health concerns, contribute to community health improvement, and add to the knowledge base.
- **Service Goal:** Promote public health faculty and students' service in in community, government, and professional society to benefit populations at the local, state, national and global levels.

MPH Program Values

1. **Respect** - To engage in experiences that obligate a person to take responsibility for the public's good, to recognize human dignity, and to value the worth of individual and collective behaviors.
2. **Holistic Consideration** - To emphasize a socio-ecological systems approach for understanding and promoting optimal health and well-being of individuals, families and communities.
3. **Excellence** - To commit to highest quality in teaching-learning and in practice.

4. **Collaboration** - To advocate networking, partnering, consensus building and participatory approaches for improving population health.
5. **Diversity** - To optimize the benefits of diverse ethnic and cultural perspectives and prepare culturally competent public health professionals.
6. **Equity** - To promote equality of opportunity for individuals, families and communities.

D. MPH Concentrations

Each MPH student is admitted to a specific concentration of study. The five concentrations are:

Community Health Education

Epidemiology

Health Policy and Management

Nutrition (website in progress)

Veterinary Public Health

Each concentration includes required and elective coursework specific to the area selected. As a culminating event for the degree, students also complete an Applied Practice Experience (APEX) (internship) closely related to the concentration of study.

Note: The Epidemiology concentration has additional GPA requirements. Students must receive a GPA of 3.30 (B+) in PUBH 530 and PUBH 540, and a GPA in all epidemiology core courses of 3.0 (B) or higher to receive the Epidemiology MPH.

E. Dual Degrees

1. Dual MS-MPH

A coordinated dual program leading to both the MS in Nutrition (Public Health Nutrition concentration) and the Master of Public Health (MPH) is available. This program allows students to complete both degrees in less time than would be required to earn both degrees independently. Students applying for the dual MS-MPH program file separate applications for the MS (through the Department of Nutrition) and for the MPH (through the DPH). Students must be admitted to both the MS Program and the MPH Program to be considered dual-degree students. If a student is admitted and enrolled in either the MS in Nutrition (Public Health Nutrition option) or the MPH, but decides to apply for the dual program, then s/he must file a “Request for Change of Graduate Program” to the second program. The “Request for Change of Graduate Program” is available from the [Graduate](#)

[School's website](#). It is important to indicate on the form that you are applying for the dual program. Once admitted to the second program, the student immediately should notify the Director of Public Health Nutrition and their faculty adviser or Director of MPH Program and their faculty advisor. This is to assure proper advising and program management.

2. *Dual DVM/MPH*

The College of Veterinary Medicine and the Department of Public Health offer a dual-degree program that complements the DVM with a solid foundation in Public Health. The dual-degree graduate finds career options outside of clinical practice in the government, regulatory, and non-profit sectors. Students must be admitted to both the DVM and the MPH Program to be considered dual-degree students. For the MPH, students will complete the Veterinary Public Health concentration.

DVM students can enroll in the program at any time during years 1-3, but progress and time to completion will be affected by when they start and how many classes are completed each semester. Students would complete a total of 192 credits for both degrees including 15 “shared” credits. Students are expected to complete MPH-specific courses during the summers after their first and second years of veterinary school.

F. Minors

Campus-based MPH students can obtain minors in Statistics or in Epidemiology. The [Statistics minor](#) requires nine semester credit hours, and the [Epidemiology minor](#) requires twelve semester credit hours. MPH coursework hours may be used to partially satisfy credit hours needed for the respective minors. For those interested in both minors, please note that only three (3) credit hours may be applied to both the Epidemiology and Statistics minors. Similarly, for those in the Epidemiology concentration, only three (3) credit hours can be applied to both the MPH and the Statistics minor. Students must receive a GPA of 3.30 (B+) in PUBH 530 and PUBH 540, and an average GPA in all courses of 3.0 (B) or higher to receive the Epidemiology minor.

G. Course requirements

The MPH is a non-thesis program requiring completion of 42 hours of course work, and 240 hours of Applied Practice Experience (see section 8.J).

<i>Requirements</i>	<i>Credit Hours</i>
¹ Public Health Foundation.....	20
² Concentration of Study (Community Health Education, Epidemiology, Health Policy and Management, or Veterinary Public Health)	7 - 13
³ Electives	3 - 9
⁴ Applied Practice Experience (APEX).....	6
Total.....	42

¹ Public Health Foundation courses: Public Health 509 (2 semesters) 510, 520, 530, 537, 540, 552.

² Community Health Education: Public Health 555, 536, 556. Epidemiology: 536, 541, 630, 640.

Health Policy and Management: Public Health 525, 527 and 612. Veterinary Public Health: Comparative and Experimental Medicine 506, 507 or 508 and 611, plus 9 hours approved by advisor.

³ Listings of electives specific for each concentration are available in the MPH program office and on the department website.

⁴ Applied Practice Experience: Public Health 587 (internship with an affiliated health agency). Written guidelines stipulating eligibility criteria and expectations are available in the MPH program office and on the department website.

Required Courses in Each MPH Concentration

Components of Instructional Program	Community Health Education	Epidemiology	Health Policy/ Management	Nutrition	Veterinary Public Health
	Course Number (credit hours)	Course Number (credit hours)	Course Number (credit hours)	Course Number (credit hours)	Course Number (credit hours)
Public Health Foundation:					
Biostatistics	PUBH 530 (3)	PUBH 530 (3)	PUBH 530 (3)	PUBH 530 (3)	PUBH 530 (3)
Fundamentals of Program Evaluation	PUBH 537 (3)	PUBH 537 (3)	PUBH 537 (3)	PUBH 537 (3)	PUBH 537 (3)
Epidemiology	PUBH 540 (3)	PUBH 540 (3)	PUBH 540 (3)	PUBH 540 (3)	PUBH 540 (3)
Environ. Health	PUBH 510 (3)	PUBH 510 (3)	PUBH 510 (3)	PUBH 510 (3)	PUBH 510 (3)
Health Systems, Policy & Leadership	PUBH 520 (3)	PUBH 520 (3)	PUBH 520 (3)	PUBH 520 (3)	PUBH 520 (3)
Assessment and Planning	PUBH 552 (3)	PUBH 552 (3)	PUBH 552 (3)	PUBH 552 (3)	PUBH 552 (3)
Seminar in Public Health	PUBH 509 (1,1)	PUBH 509 (1,1)	PUBH 509 (1,1)	PUBH 509 (1,1)	PUBH 509 (1,1)
Concentration of Study:					
Community Health Education	PUBH 555 (3) PUBH 536 (3) PUBH 556 (4)				
Epidemiology		PUBH 536 (3) PUBH 541 (1) PUBH 531 (3) PUBH 542 (3)			
Health Policy and Management			PUBH 525 (3) PUBH 527 (4) PUBH 528 (3)		
Nutrition				NUTR 503 (2) NUTR 504 (2) NUTR 507 (3) NUTR 510 (3) NUTR 514 (2) NUTR 531 (1) NUTR 540 (3)	
Veterinary Public Health					CEM 506 (3) CEM 611 (1)

CEM 507 or 508
(3)

Electives:	6 hours	6 hours	6 hours	0 hours	9 hours
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Professional Skills Development:

Applied Practice Experience	PUBH 587 (6)	PUBH 587 (6)	PUBH 587 (6)	NUTR 587 (6)	PUBH 587 (6)
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NOTE: To meet program requirements, students must select courses in consultation with an assigned faculty advisor. Program totals are minimums and some students may be required to complete additional coursework to overcome background deficiencies.

H. MPH Foundational Competencies

Through their course of study, all MPH students are expected to achieve [22 competencies](#), listed by skill domain below:

Evidence-based Approaches to Public Health

1. Apply epidemiological methods to the breadth of settings and situations in public health practice.
2. Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context.
3. Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming and software, as appropriate.
4. Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice.

Public Health and Health Care Systems

5. Compare the organization, structure and function of health care, public health and regulatory systems across national and international settings.
6. Discuss the means by which structural bias, social inequities and racism undermine health and create challenges to achieving health equity at organizational, community and societal levels

Planning and Management to Promote Health

7. Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities' health.
8. Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design or implementation of public health policies or programs.
9. Design a population-based policy, program, project or intervention.
10. Explain basic principles and tools of budget and resource management.
11. Select methods to evaluate public health programs.

Policy in Public Health

12. Discuss multiple dimensions of the policy-making process, including the roles of ethics and evidence.
13. Propose strategies to identify stakeholders and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes.
14. Advocate for political, social or economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations.
15. Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity.

Leadership

16. Apply principles of leadership, governance and management, which include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration and guiding decision making.
17. Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges.

Communication

18. Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors.
19. Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation.
20. Describe the importance of cultural competence in communicating public health content

Interprofessional Practice

21. Perform effectively on interprofessional teams.

Systems Thinking Skills

22. Apply systems thinking tools to a public health issue.

I. Concentration-specific Competencies

In addition to the competencies listed above, each of the four MPH concentration areas has competencies specific to the discipline. These additional competencies are listed below, along with the relevant courses:

Competencies for Community Health Education concentration	
Student Competency	Course(s)
1. Demonstrate how fundamental social causes of health and disease produce differences in health and health inequity in specific health outcomes.	PUBH 555
2. Identify strategies designed to reduce structural bias and social inequities that produce health disparities	PUBH 555
3. Designs health education communications for specific public health issues and target audiences using appropriate channels and technologies	PUBH 555
4. Applies ethical principles to public health program planning, research, or implementation.	PUBH 536
5. Prepare a high-quality program grant proposal.	PUBH 556

Competencies for Epidemiology concentration	
Student Competency	Course(s)
1. Select appropriate study design(s) to investigate a public health concern given the strengths, limitations, and feasibility of the design(s).	PUBH 536
2. Critiques epidemiologic scientific literature.	PUBH 542
3. Applies epidemiologic methods to develop models predicting disease or exposure.	PUBH 531
4. Demonstrates proficiency in intermediate epidemiologic methods and principles	PUBH 542
5. Conduct a reproducible data analysis project.	PUBH 531

Competencies for Health Policy & Management concentration	
Student Competency	Course(s)
1. Apply the policy-making process to improve population health.	PUBH 528
2. Apply the principles of evidence-based public health in practice and policy formulation	PUBH 528
3. Apply appropriate strategic management approaches to improve the performance of healthcare organizations.	PUBH 527
4. Apply quality improvement or performance management concepts to organizational planning and management.	PUBH 527

5. Assess the value of existing or proposed programs, services or policies using financial management measures.	PUBH 525
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Competencies for Nutrition concentration	
Student Competency	Course(s)
1. Conducts a community nutrition needs assessment.	NUTR 503
2. Plans, implements, and evaluates a service, intervention, or outreach activity.	NUTR 504
3. Uses principles of behavioral health to design culturally appropriate services, interventions, or activities to improve the nutrition-related health of communities	NUTR 507
4. Demonstrates proficiency in detailing the link between human nutrition and health	NUTR 510
5. Designs and disseminates a policy brief on a current nutrition-related topic	NUTR 540

Competencies for Veterinary Public Health concentration	
Student Competency	Primary Course(s)
1. Assess health related benefits and/or risks to individuals and communities associated with zoonotic or emerging diseases, the human-animal bond, foodborne illness and/or injuries associated with animals.	CEM 507/508
2. Communicate health benefits and/or risks to individuals and communities associated with zoonotic or emerging diseases, the human-animal bond, foodborne illness and/or injuries associated with animals.	CEM 506
3. Apply techniques of surveillance, recognition, prevention, control and/or management of infectious diseases, including zoonotic or emerging diseases, food borne illnesses, and/or potential bio- or agroterrorism agents.	CEM 507/508
4. Evaluate programs and/or policy that aim to improve human health by fostering the human-animal bond or by reducing foodborne illness, zoonotic or emerging diseases, or hazards associated with animals.	CEM 506
5. Describe the role of the federal government in ensuring the safety of foods of animal origin.	CEM 506

J. Overview of Applied Practice Experience (APEX) Policies and Procedures

Six (6) of the 42 hours required for completion of the MPH degree are earned through the completion of an Applied Practice Experience (APEX) arranged with an affiliated health agency or organization involved in health-related programs. The APEX may be completed as a full-time block experience for six weeks or as a part-time involvement extending over a longer period of time. Of importance, the Applied Practice Experience allows the student to apply academic theories, concepts, and skills in an actual work setting. With very few exceptions (discussed later), MPH students complete an applied practice experience with a health-related organization as an extensive culminating experience. By design, two four-credit hour courses (PUBH 556 for CHE students and PUBH 527 for HPM students) and a one-credit course (PUBH 541 for EPI) have a community service-learning component that offers important preparation for subsequent Applied Practice Experience. These courses involve project completion, usually in direct consultation or partnership with community agencies. Examples of student projects are available for review.

Every fall, the MPH Applied Practice Experience (APEX) coordinator provides information sessions for students. These sessions, combined with consultation with each student's faculty advisor, equip the student to identify and obtain a placement relevant to their career interests and need for new learning exposures. The APEX coordinator and faculty advisor assist the student in recognizing that a broadening of experiences offers positive benefits for career advancement, rather than permitting the student to accept a setting very similar to past work situations. A student may complete an APEX with his/her employing organization, if that organization is large enough to assign a preceptor other than the work supervisor. Also, an employing organization must offer a set of APEX responsibilities that differ substantially from those associated with one's employment, resulting in a form of cross-training.

The APEX involves a minimum number of 240 hours, generally completed at 40 hours per week for six weeks or approximately 16 hours per week for 15 weeks, under the on-site guidance of a designated field preceptor who is a practicing health professional. Each preceptor provides a written profile of their credentials, position, and agency which must be acceptable to the MPH program. To achieve a desired match between the student's interest and the preceptor's area of work and philosophy, students arrange an interview with the preceptor before APEX arrangements are finalized by the APEX coordinator.

The Applied Practice is shaped by defined, individualized objectives. Students must produce at least two products that relate to three selected foundation competencies and two selected concentration competencies which are approved by the APEX coordinator. The typical experience provides for rotation among selected activities in the organization, with emphasis given to active student involvement with one or more projects. Students are required to submit written summary reports for each week to the coordinator and faculty advisor on a two-week cycle. The student's biweekly written

reports focus on progress toward the objectives and competency attainment. In addition, students submit a mid-point evaluation of progress toward objectives, a final evaluation of their accomplishments, a “APEX in Action” summary with photos, and a final report. This reporting not only permits coordinator and faculty monitoring of activities and progress, but also stimulates students to reflect more fully on the Applied Practice Experience and the achievement of competencies and to frame these reflections in perspective with his/her graduate studies, prior work experiences and future career interests. Students need to achieve a score of 80% or greater on all assignments to successfully pass the APEX.

Guidelines for the MPH Applied Practice Experience and the evaluation forms are available from the [DPH website](#).

Students are required to provide a professional quality presentation at the conclusion of their Applied Practice Experience. All public health faculty, students, and preceptors are invited to attend the presentations, which are graded by the APEX coordinator, the faculty advisor, and the program director using a rubric. Based on this systematic review, the presenting student receives a written statement clarifying strengths observed and areas for improvement that need continued attention.

K. Proper Use of 502: University Facilities

PUBH 502 is not often used but serves as a non-coursework related method to maintain necessary minimum of one credit hour to use university facilities. Students using university facilities, services, or faculty time, including summer semester, must be registered. Normally, students are registered for coursework or thesis/dissertation credit hours. Students who are not taking coursework and are not yet eligible to register for thesis or dissertation credit hours, must register for course PUBH 502 Use of Facilities if they wish to maintain borrowing privileges in the University Libraries or to use computer labs, other labs, or other university resources. Registering for PUBH 502 is only to maintain credit hours during a semester when no other credit hours, including PUBH 600, are not being taken.

L. Research Requirements

The MPH is a non-thesis degree and does not require students to participate in research outside of their formal coursework. However, MPH students are encouraged to participate in research opportunities. Interested students should consult the faculty pages on the [DPH website](#) (or in Appendix B) to explore potential mutual research interests and opportunities.

Please see section 11.A.5 for the University policy on research projects and studies involving Human Subjects.

M. Foreign Language Requirements

The MPH has no requirement that students know a language other than English. Applicants to the MPH program whose first language is other than English must

achieve a satisfactory score on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

N. Residency Requirements

The Graduate School sets forth the following policy regarding continuous enrollment:

All degree-seeking students are expected to make a full commitment to their graduate and/or professional study in order to ensure that they can complete all degree requirements without unnecessary delay. Graduate students are, therefore, required to maintain an active status through continuous enrollment from the time of first enrollment until graduation. Continuous enrollment is maintained by registering for a minimum of one graduate credit hour per semester (excluding the summer).

Special Note for International Students. The minimum enrollment for international students may be different, and international students always need to check with the Center for International Education (CIE) in order to determine what minimum enrollment they need to maintain.

O. Preparation for Certification in the Field

Students completing the MPH are encouraged to achieve certification status (Certification in Public Health, or CPH). More information is available [using this link](#).

Students completing the CHE concentration within the MPH program are also encouraged to become certified as Certified Health Education Specialist, or CHES. More information is available at the [NCHEC website](#).

P. Applicability of Coursework Taken Outside the Department or Program

Courses to be transferred for the MPH Master's degree must have been completed with a grade of B or better within a six-year period prior to receipt of the MPH Master's degree. Transfer courses to meet elective requirements must be reasonably related to the MPH concentration of study. Only courses from other accredited MPH programs or schools may be transferred to meet specified MPH course requirements. One-half of the total hours required must be taken at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Ordinarily, coursework from foreign institutions is not transferred because these institutions have not been accredited.

Q. Integrative Learning Experience (ILE)

A written comprehensive examination provides an Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) that is required of all MPH students, offered each semester (Fall, Spring and Summer). A cumulative score of 70% or higher is required to pass on the exam. The exam is comprised of two, multi-part, application-based essay questions that reflect an integration of knowledge and skills acquired through foundation and concentration coursework. Students are given two weeks to compose and submit their essay responses (via Canvas). Should a passing score not be achieved, the university permits students one opportunity to retake the exam the following semester.

R. Admission to Candidacy

Admission to candidacy indicates agreement that the student has demonstrated ability to do acceptable graduate work and that satisfactory progress has been made toward a degree. This action usually connotes that all prerequisites to admission have been completed and a program of study has been approved.

The admission to candidacy for the Master's degree is made as soon as possible after the student has completed any prerequisite courses and 9 hours of graduate course work with a 3.0 average or higher in all graduate work. The Admission to Candidacy form must be signed by the student's committee and the program director and all courses to be used for the degree must be listed, including transfer course work. The program director must submit this form to the Graduate School in the semester prior to planned graduation in accordance with graduate school graduation deadlines, found at [this site](#). This form is available online [using this link](#).

S. Timetable for Degree Completion

The MPH curriculum consists of 42 semester credit hours and is a non-thesis professional preparation degree program. The MPH degree can be completed in four academic semesters on a full-time basis, if few prerequisite courses are required. To meet the educational needs of working students, the MPH degree can be earned on a part-time basis with several classes offered during late afternoons and evenings or online. Based on the experience of other part-time students, enrolling in at least six hours per semester, the degree program typically can be completed in approximately three years. The time limit to complete the MPH degree is six years.

9. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS: PHD IN PUBLIC HEALTH SCIENCES

The PhD in Public Health Sciences degree is the terminal degree for students in public health at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The intent of the degree program is to produce graduates who will have the research skills and methodological capabilities to secure full-time academic appointments in institutions of higher learning; employment with major professional organizations, research agencies, public health-related non-profit organizations; and high-level positions with local, state, and federal public health agencies.

Competencies

- 1) Students will demonstrate mastery of scientific and technical writing.
- 2) Students will verbally respond to scientific questions clearly and accurately.
- 3) Students will demonstrate mastery of complex scientific and technical issues relevant to the student's area of research.

A. Foreign Language Requirements

The PhD has no foreign language requirement. Applicants to the Doctoral program whose first language is other than English must achieve a satisfactory score on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

B. Course Requirements

Requirements:	Credit Hours
¹ Foundations	20
² Core PhD	17
³ Cognate	9
⁴ Electives	2
Dissertation (PUBH 600)	24
Total Hours	72

¹ Foundations: PUBH 509 (2 semesters), PUBH 510, PUBH 520, PUBH 530, PUBH 537, PUBH 540, and PUBH 552, or equivalent courses if taken outside of the University of Tennessee and approved by the Director of the PhD.

² Core PhD: PUBH 609 (twice), PUBH 635, PUBH 640, PUBH 650, PUBH 656, and STAT 578 or PUBH 630.

³ Cognate: Courses must be approved by major professor.

⁴ Elective hours are required to get total hours to 72 hours, per Graduate School requirements.

NOTE: To meet program requirements, students must select courses in consultation with the student's major professor. Program totals are minimums and some students may be required to complete additional coursework to overcome background deficiencies or to increase skill in an area of identified specialization.

C. Cognate

The cognate is a collection of coursework that reflects a theme relevant to the training and future career aspirations of the student. The cognate requires a minimum of 9 graduate credit hours. These may be formal courses or independent study courses (again at the graduate level). Public health or other relevant faculty members may direct independent study courses. Students in collaboration with their faculty advisor will develop and propose a cognate in or before the second year of the student's doctoral coursework (see Cognate Designation Form in Appendix D3).

D. Proper Use of 502: University Facilities

PUBH 502 is not often used but serves as a non-coursework related method to maintain necessary minimum of one credit hour to use university facilities. Students using university facilities, services or faculty time, including summer semester, must be registered. Normally, students are registered for coursework or thesis/dissertation credit hours. Students who are not taking coursework and are not yet eligible to register for thesis or dissertation credit hours, must register for course PUBH 502 Use of Facilities if they wish to have borrowing privileges in the University Libraries or to use computer labs, other labs, or other university resources. Registering for PUBH 502 is only to maintain credit hours during a semester when no other credit hours, including PUBH 600, are not being taken.

E. Proper Use of 600 Dissertation Hours

Although there is no set maximum number of 600-level dissertation hours, the University encourages students to complete their degrees in a timely fashion, consistent with excellent scholarship. Doctoral students must continuously enroll in 3 or more credit hours of PUBH 600 until graduation, following their initial enrollment in PUBH 600. This includes summer enrollment.

F. Applicability of Coursework Taken Outside the Department

1. Transfer of Credits

All courses included in an individual's graduate program of study must be approved by the student's committee and the Dean of The Graduate School. The number of hours that may be transferred into a doctoral program is determined by the faculty advisor and the Directors of the Doctoral Program. All doctoral students must complete a minimum of 9 semester hours (exclusive of dissertation hours) of 600-level courses at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. These courses may not be transferred from another university.

2. *Doctoral Students Who Have Already Received a Master's degree.*

Doctoral students may be given credit for equivalent courses already taken in a Master's program. Doctoral students with a Master's degree must complete a minimum of 24 hours of graduate courses at UT (exclusive of course 600 Dissertation credit hours). Additional credit hours will be determined to meet the required minimum of 30 credit hours set by Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. (The SACSCOC minimum 30 credit hours may include dissertation credit hours).

G. Grades

Each student's Grade Point Average (GPA) during the graduate program is reviewed by the department and The Graduate School. Satisfactory/No Credit (S/NC) grading may comprise no more than one-fourth of the student's total graduate hours in the doctoral program.

A candidate must earn a cumulative grade point average of 3.00 on all graduate coursework taken at UT to receive the doctoral degree.

H. Residence Requirements

Residence requirements are those of the Graduate School. *Doctoral programs at the University of Tennessee require intensive study over consecutive semesters, including summers. Doctoral students may satisfy the residence requirement in either of two ways:*

- *Enroll in 2 consecutive semesters of 9+ credit hours*
- *Enroll in 3 consecutive semesters of 6+ credit hours*

I. Formation of Doctoral Committees

Doctoral students can submit a Doctoral Committee Plan to their Faculty Advisor as early as after completing one semester of doctoral level course work, but no later than after 18 hours of completed doctoral coursework. The plan must identify the proposed Dissertation Committee Chair (Major Professor), the other committee members, and rationale for selecting the specific committee members (i.e., relation to their cognate/area of focus). The Dissertation Committee Chair may be the same as the Faculty Advisor; however, the student is advised to select a chair for the dissertation committee whose areas of greatest interest/expertise coincide with the area(s) of research contemplated by the student. The Doctoral Committee Chair must be full-time faculty in the Department of Public Health at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The three Doctoral Committee members must include two additional UTK DPH faculty members, full-time or adjunct, who hold the rank of assistant professor or above. Finally, the fourth committee member must be from an academic unit other than Public Health. This criteria is outlined in the [Graduate Catalog](#).

When appropriate, students are encouraged to seek a fifth member in the field of specialization from outside the university to serve on their dissertation committee. The outside member must be ex-officio and his or her vita or resumé must be submitted

with a formal request for committee appointment. This request must be approved by the Chairs of the Doctoral Program.

How to establish the doctoral committee:

1. The student will go to the [Graduate School Forms page](#) and select the appropriate doctoral committee form.
2. The student will first submit the completed Doctoral Committee Appointment form to the Chair of the Doctoral Committee for review and approval.
3. After approval of the Chair of the Doctoral Committee, the form will go to the Directors of the Doctoral Program and the Public Health Department Head for approval and signatures.
4. After the departmental signatures of approval, the form will be submitted to the Graduate School for processing.

Following candidacy, the student is expected to maintain close consultation with the major professor and other members of the dissertation committee regarding progress in the doctoral program.

J. Annual Assessments and Qualifying Examination

1. Annual Assessments

The PhD follows the University's guidelines for student assessments in keeping with accreditation standards through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). Students will be assessed each year on the following SACS student learner outcomes, appropriate to their stage in the program:

Students will demonstrate mastery of scientific and technical writing.
Students will verbally respond to scientific questions clearly and accurately.
Students will demonstrate mastery of complex scientific and technical issues relevant to the student's area of research.

The current SACS assessment rubric and doctoral student evaluation/progress report form are in Appendix D2. For each learner outcome, students will be assessed by applying university-approved rubrics with increasing levels of attainment expected each year. Students will submit a complete and up-to-date curriculum vitae and Student Progress Form by December 15 annually. All faculty, including the student's Faculty Advisor/Major Professor, will meet annually in January to discuss student progress and provide feedback. The student's Faculty Advisor/Major Professor will then compile this feedback into a formal summary of findings letter and review findings with the student. This summary will include plans for future development or improvement as needed. This document should be placed in the student's file. If the faculty determines that the student is not meeting program expectations, the student will be referred for further assessment by the Doctoral Program directors.

2. Qualifying Examination

All doctoral students must take the qualifying exam within one semester of completing all required hours of core doctoral coursework, have maintained a 3.0 overall GPA and a 3.25 Public Health GPA, and the academic advisor must believe that the student is prepared and able to pass the exam.

The exam will be offered once each semester and have a similar format each offering, as follows: Students will be given a dataset and topic. They must analyze the dataset and write a mini-manuscript with a specific word limit. The exam will be a take-home exam, and students will have ten business days to complete it. It will be graded by the student's academic advisor and a Chair of the Doctoral Committee or a delegated representative.

The exam will be graded Pass/Fail, with a minimum total score of 22 points out of 30 for the qualifying exam considered passing (see the rubric in Appendix D2), and written feedback provided to further mastery and synthesis of concepts. If one of the graders recommends a Pass and the other a Fail, another member of the Doctoral Committee will grade the exam. If the student does not pass the written exam on their first attempt, they will have the option to re-write the exam and participate in an oral defense of their exam as a second attempt. If the student does not pass the exam after two attempts, they must exit the program.

K. Dissertation Proposal (Comprehensive Examination)

After approval of the formulation of the Doctoral Dissertation Committee and after successful completion of qualifying examination, the student will develop the dissertation proposal.

The dissertation proposal will consist of an NIH-type grant proposal for the student's dissertation research (i.e., written) and an oral defense of this proposal.

The dissertation proposal proceeds in three steps:

1. The student convenes a meeting with all dissertation committee members to agree on the research questions and general analytic approach for the dissertation. At this time, the student declares which dissertation format will be used. This decision should be made in consultation with the student's Dissertation Committee Chair.
2. After this meeting, the student will have 30 days to write the exam (NIH-type proposal) and submit to the committee members.
3. The student presents their proposal at an oral comprehensive exam. During the exam, the student may be asked questions on any portion of their dissertation proposal.

The student will provide the Dissertation Committee members with the final draft of the proposal no less than two weeks prior to the oral defense. The oral defense process will include the student's presentation of their work, a question and answer session, a period of deliberation by the Dissertation Committee, and a sharing of the pass/fail

decision with the student. The student can enroll in PUBH 600-level credit hours while working on the dissertation proposal.

The oral exam will include: (1) student presentation of the chapter(s); (2) committee questions regarding the dissertation chapters and foundations influencing the chapters; (3) committee discussion without student; and (4) committee sharing the outcome with student. The Chair of the Dissertation Committee is responsible for taking notes and writing up the report associated with the defense (synthesis of committee members' comments and assessment based on the rubric is Appendix D2).

The possible outcomes are pass (i.e., scoring 18 points or greater out of 25 on the rubric), fail (i.e., scoring 12 points or less), or pass conditionally (i.e., 12-18 points). At the end of the oral defense, the committee may be satisfied with the proposal and responses to other questions, or may grant a "conditional pass" contingent on the student making minor revisions. If major revisions or a new proposal is recommended, the student must pass a second oral comprehensive examination. It is strongly recommended that the second oral exam occur no more than three months after the initial attempt.

If the student passes the oral examination, the Dissertation Committee signs off on the Candidacy documents provided by the Graduate School. If the student passes conditionally, the committee will review changes that need to occur prior to the passing the comprehensive exam and determine whether a second meeting is needed following the submission of the changes. The committee will make this decision and record it in the meeting notes along with the conditions to be met. The Dissertation Committee Chair is responsible for keeping these notes and providing a copy in the student's file. If fail is the outcome, the student is dismissed.

The student must successfully complete (i.e., pass) the dissertation proposal before the full Dissertation Committee prior to conducting any subsequent dissertation work.

L. Admission to Candidacy

The admission to candidacy is a contract between you and the University. Under this contract, you and the University agree that your courses and grades fulfill the requirements of the PhD program. ***Candidacy fulfillment will be based on the current catalog at the time of submission.*** Once you, your committee, and the Dean of the Graduate School have signed this form, any changes to course requirements reflected in later catalog years will not apply to you.

A student may be admitted to candidacy for the doctoral degree after maintaining at least a B average in all graduate coursework, maintaining a 3.25 for courses in Public Health, passing the qualifying examination and successfully completing the dissertation proposal. Admission to candidacy indicates agreement that the student has demonstrated the ability to do acceptable graduate work and has made satisfactory progress toward completing the PhD. This action implies that the student has

completed all prerequisites to admission to candidacy and that a final, future dissertation plan has been approved.

Each student is responsible for filing the admission to candidacy form, which is found on the UTK Graduate School website. This document requires a list of all courses to be used for the degree, including courses taken at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville or at another institution prior to admission to the doctoral program, and is signed by the doctoral committee. Coursework should be listed in the order of completion, from your first to last semester of coursework. This will assist the analysis by the UTK Graduate School. Admission to candidacy must be applied for and approved by the Graduate School at least one full semester prior to the date the degree is to be conferred.

You must meet the residence requirements to apply (see [Residence Requirements section](#)). To maintain your candidacy, you must stay continuously enrolled in a minimum of three PUBH 600 Dissertation credit hours. This includes summer.

M. Dissertation and Format

The dissertation represents the culmination of an original major research project completed by the student. Students will have two options for the dissertation format:

- 1) The (traditional) five-chapter format.
 - I. Introduction, background, problem statement
 - II. Literature review
 - III. Methods
 - IV. Results
 - V. Discussion, including limitations and conclusion

- 2) The three-manuscript format, in which one manuscript can be a literature review (publishable quality). The other two manuscripts (original research, publishable quality) are to be submission ready.

Prior to initiating the dissertation proposal, the student must declare which dissertation format will be used. This decision should be made in consultation with the student's Dissertation Committee Chair. It is the responsibility of the major professor to assist the student in deciding.

The dissertation must be prepared according to the regulations in the most recent [Guide to the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations](#).

The dissertation must be accompanied by an [approval sheet](#) signed by all members of the dissertation committee. The approval sheet certifies to the Graduate School that the committee members have examined the final copy and found that its form and content demonstrate scholarly excellence. Students are primarily responsible for submitting all completed, required forms; students should regularly consult the Graduate Handbook

and the Guide to Theses and Dissertations available on the UTK Graduate School website. The requisite graduate forms otherwise available using [this link](#).

Research opportunities for graduate students in the department are linked to departmental faculty research interests. Students should consult the faculty pages on the directory on the DPH website and speak with individual faculty to explore potential mutual research interests and opportunities.

Please see the section on University policy on [Research Projects and Studies with Human Subjects](#).

N. Dissertation Defense

The student, in consultation with the Dissertation Committee Chair, will schedule a final oral examination, which will include an oral presentation of the completed dissertation.

At least one week prior to the scheduled oral examination, the student must submit the Dissertation Defense Scheduling form to the Graduate School, available on the UTK Graduate School website. All Doctoral Committee members must participate in the oral examination, which is also open to any faculty and students. People outside the university may also be invited to the oral examination. Upon successful completion of the final oral examination, a final electronic copy of the dissertation must be submitted to and accepted by the Graduate School.

Your advisor is responsible for announcing the dissertation defense to the college faculty. At your defense/final exam, there are two forms that must be present: the Report of Final Examination (Pass/Fail) form and the [Thesis/Dissertation Approval](#) form. The Report of Final Examination (Pass/Fail) form will be given to you by your graduation specialist, but you are responsible for ensuring that this form is present at your defense.

After the oral defense, your committee will provide the signatures on both forms, indicating whether you have passed or failed. You will be responsible for getting those original signed forms to the Graduate School by the deadline dates.

Once your dissertation is finalized, you are required to submit the final version to TRACE in PDF format by the deadline for your term. If you intend to publish your dissertation work, the DPH encourages you to request an embargo or delay on the publication of your dissertation on [TRACE](#). Some journals will not accept manuscripts for review if they have already been published on the TRACE system. The manuscript can be considered as self-plagiarizing. You must also deliver a copy of your approval form to the Graduate School.

O. Graduation

Submit your Graduation Application online at MyUTK and complete the [Survey of Earned Doctorates](#) to graduate.

P. Time Limits

There is no time limit in relation to the qualifying or comprehensive examinations; however, all doctoral degree requirements must be completed within eight years from initial enrollment in the doctoral program. Students who may have extenuating circumstances may request an extension beyond eight years. A request for extension must be initiated by the student, with the Doctoral Program directors submitting a letter of request to the Graduate School.

Q. Doctoral Completion Process Checklist

The following checklist can be used to help verify that all requirements are met.

- Completes required coursework
- [Submit doctoral committee form](#)
- Residency requirements are fulfilled
- Qualifying Exam
- Comprehensive Exam
- Proposal process to be guided by the dissertation chair and may occur before or after Candidacy
- [Candidacy application](#) (locks in catalog year) and requires listing of all courses to be completed toward the PhD degree.
- Continuously enroll in 600 Thesis/Dissertation credit hours (minimum 24 hours required; may enroll in PUBH 600 during coursework if approved by advisor)
- Schedule dissertation defense ([download form here](#)).
- Dissertation advisor is responsible for announcing the defense to the College.
- Provide dissertation to your committee no less than 2 weeks in advance.
- Dissertation defense ([download dissertation approval form here](#)).
- Report of Final Examination (Pass/Fail) form (this form will be given to you by your graduation specialist when you schedule your defense)
- Submit dissertation to Trace (contact thesis@utk.edu for submission instructions) – or submit embargo request to delay submission until after publication
- Graduation application (submit your Graduation Application online at MyUTK.)
- [Survey of Earned Doctorates](#)

10. EXAMINATIONS

A. MPH Comprehensive Exam

The written comprehensive examination provides an Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) that is required of all MPH students. The exam is offered at the end of each semester (Fall, Spring and Summer). To secure a faculty recommendation of “pass” on the exam (70% or higher), students must successfully respond to two, multi-part, application-based essay questions that reflect an integration of knowledge and skills acquired through foundation and concentration coursework. Students are given two weeks to compose and submit their essay responses, which are submitted via the Canvas learning platform. Students are notified of a pass/fail score (via a Pass/Fail form) usually within 2 weeks of exam completion. If a student fails the exam, they are notified in writing (via email) and will need to schedule a re-examination during the following semester. The university permits students one opportunity to retake the exam. If a student does not successfully pass the exam on their second attempt, they are dismissed from the program.

11. STANDING AND APPEALS

A. Requirements to Remain in Good Standing

1. GPA

The University policy on cumulative grade point average (GPA) requires graduate students to maintain a GPA of at least 3.0 on all graduate courses taken for a letter grade of A-F. The MPH Epidemiology concentration requires students receive a GPA of 3.30 (B+) in PUBH 530 and PUBH 540, and a GPA in all epidemiology core courses of 3.0 (B) or higher. The PhD program requires a GPA of at least 3.25 for doctoral degree coursework and at least 3.25 for doctoral courses with a PUBH prefix.

2. Evaluation

Evaluation of MPH students occurs as described in Sections 8.R, 8.S, and 10.A. Evaluation of Doctoral students occurs through the annual assessments and the comprehensive exams, as described in Sections 9.K and 10.B and 10.C. In addition, guidelines for evaluation are taken from the Graduate Catalog below:

Academic Standards Graduate education requires continuous evaluation of the student. This includes not only periodic objective evaluation, such as the cumulative grade point average, performance on comprehensive examinations, and acceptance of the thesis or dissertation, but also judgments by the faculty advisor of the student’s progress and potential. Continuation in the program is determined by consideration of all these elements by the faculty advisor, the MPH or the Doctoral Directors, and the head of the DPH.

The academic records of all graduate students are reviewed at the end of each semester, including the summer term. MPH students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher. Doctoral students must maintain a GPA of at least 3.25 on all Doctoral-related graduate courses taken for a letter

grade of A-F and at least 3.25 on all doctoral-related courses with a PUBH prefix. Grades of S/NC, P/NP, and I, which have no numerical equivalent, are excluded from this computation.

3. *Adequate Progress and Inactive Status*

Continuous enrollment is maintained by registering for a minimum of one graduate credit hour per semester (excluding the summer); however, Doctoral students *who have started taking dissertation hours (course 600) must maintain a minimum of three credit hours per semester during all semesters*, including the summer, in order to comply with the Continuous Enrollment requirement for Doctoral Programs.

4. *Incompletes*

Students should consult the Graduate Catalog for a statement of the policy on the grade of “I” (incomplete). The grade of Incomplete is given only when a student has been performing satisfactorily in a course but cannot finish all requirements due to unforeseen circumstances. If the “I” grade remains unchanged for one year, the grade of “I” reverts to the grade of “F”, after which a change of grade is no longer possible or permissible.

5. *Research Studies with Human Subjects*

All research projects or studies that involve the use of human subjects must be reviewed by the University's Institutional Review Board or be certified as exempt from IRB review. All students involved in projects with human subjects should familiarize themselves with the information available from the [Office of Research and Engagement](#) on working with human subjects. No research with human subjects can be initiated until approval from IRB is acquired. Understanding the special nature of the human subjects research review system is important and required by federal regulations governing research with human subjects. To obtain copies of the regulations governing research with human subjects, graduate students should contact the Graduate Program Coordinator or the Coordinator of Compliances directly: Office of Research, 1534 White Avenue. Your faculty advisor or committee chair will guide you through this process.

The IRB requires each PI, Co-PI, and Faculty Advisor (if the PI is a student) listed on a human subjects application to provide certification of training in Human Subjects Research. The [CITI Human Subjects Research online course](#) is mandatory training for all faculty and students working on UTK IRB/Human Subjects Research protocols.

The departmental procedure is consistent with that of the University. All IRB applications must be submitted through iMedRIS. The appropriate human subject review forms should be completed and then routed first to the Chair of the IRB Committee in the Department of Public Health. The Departmental IRB Chair will conduct the first stage of review and either return the form for revisions to the student/investigator or forward it to the Department Head for review and

signature. Once signed (electronically) by the Department Head, the form is then forwarded to the Office of Research for review and approval/denial.

6. *Academic Honesty*

All students are expected to adhere to the honor code in all matters. It is given below:

“An essential feature of The University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.” (Graduate Student Handbook)

Students shall not plagiarize, and all students must understand exactly what plagiarism is, and is not. As described in the Graduate Catalog: Plagiarism is using the intellectual property or product of someone else without giving proper credit. The undocumented use of someone else’s words or ideas in any medium of communication (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge) is a serious offense subject to disciplinary action that may include failure in a course and/or dismissal from the university. Some examples of plagiarism are:

- Using without proper documentation (quotation marks and a citation) written or spoken words, phrases, or sentences from any source.
- Summarizing without proper documentation (usually a citation) ideas from another source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge).
- Borrowing facts, statistics, graphs, pictorial representations, or phrases without acknowledging the source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge).
- Submitting work, both in whole or in part, created by a professional service and used without attribution (e.g., paper, speech, bibliography, or photograph).
- Extreme caution should be exercised by students involved in collaborative research to avoid questions of plagiarism. If in doubt, students should check with the major professor and the Dean of the Graduate School about the project. Plagiarism will be investigated when suspected and prosecuted if established.

B. Consequences of Not Meeting Expectations

1. Probation for MPH Students

If after completion of 9 hours of graduate coursework, a student’s GPA falls below 3.0 or the GPA related to doctoral courses with a PUBH prefix falls below 3.0, then the student will be placed on academic probation. The student will be able to continue graduate study subsequently, if each semester’s GPA (both overall and for PUBH prefix courses) is 3.0 or greater. The student’s graduate degree status will be terminated by the Dean of The Graduate School, if the

student's semester overall GPA falls below 3.0 in a subsequent semester. The student will be dismissed from the Public Health doctoral program if the GPA for PUBH prefix courses falls below 3.0 in a subsequent semester.

2. *Probation for Doctoral Students*

If after completion of 9 hours of graduate coursework, a student's GPA falls below 3.25 or the GPA related to doctoral courses with a PUBH prefix falls below 3.25, then the student will be placed on academic probation. The student will be able to continue graduate study subsequently, if each semester's GPA (both overall and for PUBH prefix courses) is 3.25 or greater. The student's graduate degree status will be terminated by the Dean of The Graduate School, if the student's semester overall GPA falls below 3.25 in a subsequent semester. The student will be dismissed from the Public Health doctoral program if the GPA for PUBH prefix courses falls below 3.25 in a subsequent semester.

More complete information on this policy is described in the [Graduate Catalog section titled Academic Policies and Requirements for Graduate Students](#).

3. *Conditions Resulting in Termination from the Program*

Students may be terminated from the Public Health academic programs for the following reasons:

- Plagiarism or other form of academic dishonesty
- MPH students fail to maintain a GPA of 3.0. The student's graduate degree status will be terminated by the Dean of The Graduate School if, in the semester following being put on probation, the student's semester GPA falls below 3.00.
- Doctoral students fail to maintain a GPA of at least 3.25 on all coursework taken at UTK related to the PhD degree and 3.25 for all PUBH prefix courses associated with the doctoral degree. Students must achieve a "C" or better on each individual required course. If after completion of 9 hours of graduate coursework, a student's overall GPA falls below 3.25 or the GPA associated with the PUBH prefixed courses falls below 3.25, then the student will be placed on academic probation. The student's graduate degree status will be terminated by the Dean of The Graduate School, if the student's semester GPA falls below 3.25 in a subsequent semester or the GPA related to PUBH courses falls below 3.25.
- Failure to complete the degree within the required time limits
- Behavior that threatens the health and safety of, or is abusive towards other students, staff, or faculty
- Failure to pass expected progress as delineated in this Handbook
- Failure to pass the comprehensive exams as delineated in the Handbook
- Doctoral students: Failure to pass the final dissertation defense
- Judgments by the faculty advisor of the student's progress and potential.

4. *Termination process*

The termination process will be established in accordance to the general guidance as outline in the Graduate Catalog, as copied below:

If a student is on academic probation (see Section 11.F. above) or under circumstances as described under Section 11. H, the degree or non-degree status will be terminated by the Dean of the Graduate School unless when the particular circumstances are deemed to justify continuation, and upon recommendation of the appropriate academic unit and approval of the Dean of the Graduate School otherwise.

Dismissal of a graduate student by a department or program is accomplished by written notice to the student, with a copy to the Graduate School. In those cases where the department's requirements for continuation are more stringent than university requirements for graduate programs, the Dean of the Graduate School will evaluate the student's record to determine whether the student is eligible to apply for a change of status and register in another area of study. Registration for courses in a department from which a student has been dismissed will not be permitted, except by written authorization from that department.

C. Academic Appeals Procedures

1. *Department Appeals Process*

The purpose of this process is to provide graduate students in the Department of Public Health an opportunity to resolve academic complaints that may interfere with, terminate, or impede progress toward academic or professional degree goals. The complaints may include adverse outcomes on qualifying exams, course grades, or other academic decisions. The associated form is found in [Appendix D1](#).

Step 1

The student should first consult and attempt to resolve the concern with the faculty member associated with the concern and their academic advisor. If the resolution is not satisfactory, the student can appeal the resolution with the MPH or PhD committee.

Step 2

The second process must be initiated within 30 days after the student receives the initial decision by faculty member in consultation with the academic advisor. If an MPH or PhD committee faculty member(s) is/are involved in making the initial academic decision, an alternate faculty member from the Department of Public Health will be asked by the director of the MPH or PhD committee or by the department chair to join the process.

Step 3

Provided a mutually satisfactory resolution cannot be reached at the Program level, the complaint may be brought to the Department Head. The process must be initiated within 30 days after the student receives the decision from MPH or PhD committee. It is the responsibility of the Department Head to determine the circumstances surrounding the academic decision in consultation with faculty member(s), the academic advisor and the director of the MPH or PhD committee.

Step 4

If all departmental appeal processes resulted in an unsatisfactory outcome and the student wishes to pursue the appeal further, the student may appeal in writing to the Dean of the College of Education, Health and Human Sciences (CEHHS), however this step can only occur when the remedies afforded at departmental level have been exhausted.

Step 5

If the College level appeal process resulted in an unsatisfactory outcome, students can file a formal complaint with Graduate Council Appeals Committee following Graduate Council Appeal Procedure (see Section 9. L. below)

2. University Appeals Procedure

The University of Tennessee Graduate Student's Responsibility, Rights to Appeal and Graduate Council Appeal Procedure can be obtained at the Graduate School or using [this link](#).

D. Student Grievances and Complaints

Public health faculty interactions with students are based on respect, honesty, and fairness. Faculty seek to handle potential misunderstandings on a timely basis at the most direct point of concern. The recommended procedure for the student is to seek resolution with the involved faculty member, followed by consultation with the faculty advisor/major professor. Guided by the program culture of advocacy for students, Public Health faculty are responsive to student suggestions and requests, recognizing the experience, maturity, and different needs of working students. If a student should become dissatisfied with advising, instruction, or other areas related to degree pursuit, notification may be made to the MPH or PhD program directors for resolution of the issue or concern, subsequently to the department head, and then to the associate dean of the college. The University of Tennessee Graduate Student's Responsibility, Rights to Appeal and Graduate Council Appeal Procedure can be obtained [at the Graduate School's website](#). If not resolved by the program, department or college, the student may file a formal complaint with the graduate school.

Two types of grievances may be considered by the [Graduate Council](#). The first is concerns regarding the interpretation of and adherence to university, college and department policies and procedures as they apply to graduate education. In this case, the student files a formal complaint with the Graduate Council through the office of

the associate dean of graduate studies, but only after grievances have been duly processed, without resolution, through appropriate appeals procedures at the department and college levels.

The second type of grievances are concerns regarding academic performance evaluations (grades only on the basis of one or more of the following allowable grounds: (1) a clearly unfair decision (such as lack of consideration of circumstances clearly beyond the control of the student); (2) unacceptable instruction/evaluation procedures; (3) inability of the instructor to deal with course responsibilities; or (4) an evaluative process in a setting or situation which makes performance extremely difficult. The appeal procedure through the associate dean of graduate studies is the same as that outlined above.

Students with grievances related to race, gender, religion, national origin, age, or disability may file a formal complaint with the [Office of Equity and Diversity](#).

APPENDIX A: PERTINENT GRADUATE STUDENT WEB PAGES

- [Best Practices in Teaching](#)
- [Center for International Education](#)
- [Counseling Center](#)
- [Department](#) and [College](#)
- [Funding, Fellowships, Assistantships for Graduate Students](#)
- [Graduate School](#)
- [Graduate Catalog](#)
- [Graduate Student Appeals Procedure](#)
- [Graduate Student Senate](#)
- [Graduate Admissions](#)
- [International House](#)
- [Judicial Affairs](#)
- [Office of Equity and Diversity](#)
- [Office of Multicultural Student Life/Frieson Black Cultural Center](#)
- [Research Compliance/Research with Human Subjects](#)
- [SPEAK Testing Program](#)
- [Thesis/Dissertation Website](#)
- [Library Website for Graduate Students](#)
- [OIT](#)
- [Housing](#)

APPENDIX B: FACULTY AND MAJOR INTERESTS

Full-Time Faculty

Thankam S. Sunil, PhD, MPH

Professor and Department of Public Health
383 HPER
tsunil@utk.edu

Dr. Sunil received his Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of North Texas and MPH from the University of North Texas Health Sciences Center. He also holds another Ph.D. in Population Sciences from the International Institute for Population Sciences, India. His research interests are maternal and child health in developing countries and health disparities in the US. In particular, Dr. Sunil's recent research focuses on HIV/AIDS among minority youths and in the US military population.

Jiangang Chen, MD, PhD

Associate Professor
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Dr. Chen received his MD from Beijing Medical University and his PhD in Comparative Pathology from the University of California, Davis. He studies potential environmental impacts on human reproduction, with a special interest in effects of endocrine disruptors (EDS) on the homeostasis of endogenous hormones. A considerable part of Dr. Chen's research has focused on a wide variety of synthetic compounds with intrinsic hormonal activity that may have adverse effects on human health. Using animal models, Dr. Chen's group studies the *in utero* exposure of EDS during pregnancy to elucidate if early exposure could change the trajectory of the fetus in later life, which could considerably increase social and medical burdens. Dr. Chen's research interest also include developing new tools to detect environmental contaminants and emerging pathogens of public health importance.

Samantha F. Ehrlich, PhD, MPH

Assistant Professor
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Dr. Ehrlich received her MPH in maternal and child health and PhD in epidemiology from the University of California, Berkeley School of Public Health. Dr. Ehrlich is a reproductive and perinatal epidemiologist whose research focuses on pregnancy exposures, behaviors, and outcomes related to obesity and diabetes in women and children. In addition to her appointment in the Department of Public Health, she is a

member of the faculty of Intercollegiate Graduate Statistics Program at the Haslam College of Business and adjunct investigator at the Kaiser Permanente Northern California Division of Research.

Julie Grubaugh, MPH, MCHES

Lecturer & Director of the Undergraduate Public Health Program
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Mrs. Grubaugh holds an MPH in Community Health Education from the University of Tennessee. She currently serves as the Director of the Undergraduate Public Health program and as an undergraduate public health lecturer. Her practice experience at a local health department facilitates real-world application to her teaching. She is interested in engaging and connecting students with public health employers and career opportunities.

Daleniece Higgins Jones, MPH, PhD

Assistant Professor
390 HPER
dhiggin6@utk.edu

Dr. Jones received her MPH in Environmental Health and PhD in Epidemiology from the University of Memphis. She is a molecular epidemiologist whose research focus is on molecular microbial food safety epidemiology. Dr. Jones has several years of research experience in bacterial genomics and molecular diagnostics of pathogens. She has expert experience in sampling and laboratory analysis of a variety of environmental and clinical samples. Her laboratory is equipped with instruments capable of analysis from culturing methodology to molecular analysis such as QPCR. She has substantial interests in environmental epidemiology and disparity issues. She has completed various research projects that characterize the socioeconomic disparities in environmental sample

Laurie Meschke, PhD, MS

Associate Professor & PhD Program Director
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llmeschke@utk.edu

Dr. Meschke received an MS and PhD in Human Development and Family Studies from Penn State with a minor in demography. Dr. Meschke utilizes both qualitative and quantitative methodology in addressing adolescent and perinatal health issues. Her two current projects include the statewide evaluation of Rape Prevention Education and directing two programs to enhance the quality and quantity of the workforce professionals who serve to reduce the impact of opioid use disorder in East Tennessee.

Ashley Parks, DrPH, MPH, MBA, MTech, CPH, MCHES

Assistant Professor of Practice

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Ashley V. Parks, DrPH, MPH, MBA, MTech, CPH, MCHES, is an assistant professor of practice in public health. Dr. Parks has over 20 years' of practice and research based experience working in community health and health services administration across acute, ambulatory, and managed care settings. Dr. Parks has been teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in public health and health services administration for over a decade and enjoys making "difficult concepts" accessible to students seeking to work in health services administration practice and research. Having obtained over a dozen public health and healthcare related certifications, Dr. Parks' is passionate about teaching students how to apply key concepts in healthcare financial analysis, quality analysis and performance improvement, data reporting and information technology, health policy, health services research, and project management.

Jennifer Perion, PhD, CHES

Assistant Professor of Practice & Director of the Distance Education MPH Program

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Dr. Perion received a PhD in Health Education with a Public Health cognate and a Graduate Certificate in Biostatistics and Epidemiology from the University of Toledo. Prior to coming to the University of Tennessee, Dr. Perion taught public health and aging courses at the University of Toledo and Indiana State University. She has a Graduate Certificate in Contemporary Gerontological Practice and her research interests are focused on aging, especially the needs of family and professional caregivers and the social experiences of older adults with dementia. Currently she is investigating a multi-sensory technology designed to deliver engagement opportunities for older adults with moderate or severe dementia. Dr. Perion is a Certified Higher Education Course Reviewer for Quality Matters.

Angela Fidler Pfammatter, PhD, MS

Methodologist (CEHHS) & Associate Professor

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Dr. Pfammatter the Senior Methodologist for the College of Education, Health, and Human Science, and Associate Professor of Public Health. She earned her MS (2006) and PhD in clinical health psychology (2012) at Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science. She completed a clinical postdoctoral fellowship (2013) at the Capital District Health Authority in Halifax, Nova Scotia and a research postdoctoral fellowship in Behavioral Medicine (2015) at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. Prior to coming to UTK, she was faculty in Preventive Medicine at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine where she maintains an Adjunct Associate Professor appointment. Her research is focused on using mHealth tools and optimization research methodology to develop behavioral interventions for the purpose of preventing

chronic disease. Her work is currently funded by several grants from the National Institutes of Health.

Jennifer Russomanno, DrPH, MPH, CHES

Associate Department Head

Assistant Professor of Practice & Director of the MPH Program

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Dr. Russomanno received an MPH in Community Health Education and DrPH with a cognate in Qualitative Research Methods from the University of Tennessee. Prior to coming to the University of Tennessee, she has served in many varied roles throughout her career from film producer and editor in New York City, to corporate meeting planner, to personal trainer, to medical education coordinator. Her research examines food inequities among under-represented populations including sexual minority and gender minority people. Dr. Russomanno co-owns and operates a farm in Jefferson County, TN (2 Chicks and a Farm).

Brittany Shelton, MPH, DrPH

Assistant Professor

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Dr. Shelton is a health disparities researcher who earned her MPH (2014) in health policy and DrPH (2022) in health policy and organization from the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). While at UAB, Dr. Shelton began her research career studying chronic diseases, particularly end-stage organ disease and the need for transplantation. As a health disparities researcher, Dr. Shelton's work has examined access to both kidney and liver transplantation for people with HIV and for African American and Black individuals. Dr. Shelton's HIV research has subsequently informed national policy, specifically the HOPE Act which permitted organ donation from people with HIV for the first time in United States history. Similarly, her research examining disparities in liver transplantation and in pediatric transplantation have resulted in modifications to the liver and kidney organ allocation systems. She intends to continue her health disparities work by examining knowledge of and barriers to organ donation among LGBTQ+ young adults and by assessing access to the kidney transplant waitlist for people with HIV. Dr. Shelton has experience with big data and enjoys employing econometric methods such as cost-effectiveness, interrupted time series, regression discontinuity, and fixed effects analyses.

Kenneth Smith, PhD

Assistant Professor

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Dr. Smith is a health economist and public health practitioner. He received his doctorate from The Johns Hopkins University, Bloomberg School of Public Health, where he studied economic demography and health economics. His post graduate research focused on risk adjustment, healthcare financing, pharmaco-economic evaluation, provider practice

behavior, health professional supply and demand, and the evaluation of large national healthcare demonstration projects for persons with chronic disease.

Dr. Smith became a public health practitioner after he was appointed the Director of Chronic Disease Prevention, Philadelphia Department of Public Health. There, he oversaw the City's Tobacco Control Program; helped implement the City's Clean Indoor Air Act and trans fats ban; and drafted a plan to improve access to fresh, affordable produce. As a result of Dr. Smith's efforts, and with the assistance of community stakeholders, Philadelphia passed the nation's most comprehensive menu labeling ordinance.

Phoebe Tran, PhD, MS

Assistant Professor

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Dr. Tran is a cardiovascular disease epidemiologist. She believes in an epidemiological approach that combines the power of large datasets with input from community stakeholders. Her research focuses on improving secondary cardiovascular disease prevention in medically underserved US populations. She is especially interested in identifying ways to improve access to care and quality of life among individuals with cardiovascular disease living in rural Tennessee. She has received funding from the National Institute on Aging to conduct research examining the influence of air pollution on stroke outcomes, trends in antihypertensive medication use in rural stroke survivors, cardiac rehabilitation use in rural heart survivors, and heart attack symptoms recognition in older adults with cognitive impairment. This research has provided her with opportunities to work with national survey data and administrative claims data.

Amy Wotring, PhD, MPH, CHES

Assistant Professor of Practice

awotring@utk.edu

Dr. Wotring is an Assistant Professor of Practice in Public Health. She received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Public Health from the University of Toledo; her Masters of Public Health Degree from the Northwest Ohio Consortium of Public Health; her Graduate Certificate in Contemporary Gerontological Practice; and her Doctoral Degree in Health Education from the University of Toledo.

Prior to joining the University of Tennessee, Dr. Wotring was an Assistant Professor of Public Health at Indiana State University in Terre Haute, Indiana for three years and a doctoral student at the University of Toledo. She has taught 26 different courses over her career and earned a Quality Matters online teaching certificate. Her research interests are focused on health promotion in the community, especially in older adults.

APPENDIX C: COURSE LISTING

PUBH 401 – Global Public Health (3)

Discussion of the social, economic, political, environmental, and cultural determinants of health including measurements of health and burden of disease. This course can be taken for Graduate credit, with additional assignments.

(RE) Prerequisite(s): PUBH 201.

PUBH 502 – Registration for Use of Facilities (1-15)

Required for the student not otherwise registered during any semester when student uses university facilities and/or faculty time before degree is completed. Grading Restriction: Satisfactory/No Credit grading only. Repeatability: May be repeated. Credit Restriction: May not be used toward degree requirements. Credit Level Restriction: Graduate credit only. Registration Restriction(s): Minimum student level – graduate.

PUBH 509 – Graduate Seminar in Public Health (1)

In-depth discussion of timely topics reflecting scope of public health as discipline and its interrelation with many other academic and professional disciplines. Speakers both internal and external. Cross-listed: (Same as Kinesiology 509; Nursing 509; Nutrition 509; Social Work 509.) Grading Restriction: Satisfactory/No Credit grading only. Repeatability: May be repeated. Maximum 4 hours.

PUBH 510 – Environmental Health Sciences (3)

Health risks and complexities of macro and micro environments impacting population health as well as individual's health and response to a diverse and dynamic world. Principles of environmental health and potential exposures. Survey of contemporary environmental issues and their implications for healthful living.

Comment(s): Admission to MPH or public health nutrition (MS) programs or consent of instructor required.

PUBH 520 – Health Systems, Policy and Leadership (3)

Exploration of public health and healthcare systems, health policy formulation, and associated implications for management and Leadership.

PUBH 525 – Financial Management of Health Programs (3)

Financial management concepts and practices applied to health services programs. Fundamentals of budgeting, costing, financing, rate setting, financial reporting and control. Opportunities to apply techniques. (RE) Prerequisite(s): 520 or consent of instructor.

PUBH 527 – Healthcare Organizations: Behavior and Management (4)

Development of effective managers and leaders through understanding the interaction across individuals and groups within health and public health organizations. We will employ system-level thinking for problem-solving and strategic planning. Students will complete a service-learning component providing experience in a health-based organization and focused on planning or change management.

PUBH 528 – Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change for Public Health Practitioners (3)

An examination of the role of policy, systems, and environmental change strategies (PSE) for achieving population health and health equity from a public health perspective. PSE across settings (e.g., schools, worksites, community, etc.) and within local, state, and national jurisdictions. Role of advocacy, public health leadership, coalition development, and cross-sectoral collaboration for achieving regional and multijurisdictional systems change. Application of tools and approaches such as health impact assessment, health equity assessment, and health in all policies.

PUBH 530 – Biostatistics (3)

Application of descriptive and inferential statistical methods to health-related problems and programs. Microcomputer applications, use and interpretation of vital statistics and introductory research methodology preparatory for first course in epidemiology.

Recommended Background: Introductory statistics course. Comment(s): Admission to MPH or public health nutrition (MS) programs or consent of instructor.

PUBH 531 – Biostatistics II (3)

Biostatistics is the application of statistics to biological problems. Offers advanced instruction in biostatistics, including the application of inferential statistical methods to public health practice. Will cover a variety of multivariable modeling approaches, data management, and analysis planning and development.

(RE) Prerequisite(s): PUBH 530 or permission of the instructor.

PUBH 536 – Research Methods in Health (3)

Research design, sampling, basic quantitative and qualitative research techniques.

Development of research skills, data collection instruments, and problem identification for research topic. Requires at least 15 hours of community service learning.

(RE) Prerequisite(s): 530, an equivalent, or consent of the instructor.

PUBH 537 – Fundamentals of Program Evaluation (3)

Familiarizes students in different types of program evaluation, including needs assessment, formative research, process evaluation, monitoring of outcomes, impact assessment, and cost analysis. The course covers experimental, quasi-experimental, and non-experimental study designs, including the strengths and limitations of each. (RE) Prerequisite(s): 530 or Statistics 531; and 540.

PUBH 540 – Principles of Epidemiology (3)

Distribution and determinants of health-related outcomes in specified populations, with application to control of health problems. Historical origins of discipline, hypothesis formulation, research design, data and error sources, measures of frequency and association, etiologic reasoning, and disease screening.

PUBH 541 – Student Outbreak Rapid Response Training (1)

Disease outbreak investigation, prevention, and control. Basic instruction on the steps involved in investigating a real disease outbreak, working in partnership with the Tennessee Department of Health, the Knox County Health Department, and the East Tennessee Regional

Health Office. Following the initial session, students will be available throughout the semester to assist these public health offices in response to a call for expanded capacity to investigate and address a real disease outbreak. Requires at least four hours of community service learning. Grading Restriction: Satisfactory/No Credit grading only. Repeatability: May be repeated. Maximum 2 hours. Registration Permission: Students must be in a graduate degree program sponsored by the Department of Public Health, or the Department of Food Science and Technology/UTIA. Students in other graduate degree programs or the Graduate Certificate in Food Safety may be enrolled by consent of instructor.

PUBH 542 – Epidemiology II (3)

Biostatistics is the application of statistics to biological problems. Offers advanced instruction in biostatistics, including the application of advanced inferential statistical methods to public health practice. Will cover a variety of multivariable modeling approaches, data management, and analysis planning and development.

(RE) Prerequisite(s): 540, an equivalent, or consent of the instructor.

PUBH 552 – Assessment and Planning (3)

Applies an ecological framework to health assessment and program planning to address health disparities.

PUBH 555 – Health and Society (3)

Understanding of social and behavioral factors which influence health status and care in America. Application to behavior in health-related organization. Social and psychological aspects of disease, sociological aspects of health care delivery systems, political economy of health and illness, impact of social movements on health, and social consequences of health legislation.

PUBH 556 – Grant Proposal Writing for Health and Social Programs (4)

This project-based course covers the complete process of grant proposal development: identification and assessment of viable funding sources, funder relations, proposal writing, budget development, preparation of a full proposal for submission, and proposal submission. Students gain an understanding of the nonprofit philanthropic, state, and federal funding environments and how they differ.

PUBH 580 – Special Topics (1- 3)

Repeatability: May be repeated if topic differs. Maximum 6 hours. Credit Level Restriction: Graduate credit only. Registration Restriction(s): Minimum student level – graduate. Registration Permission: Consent of instructor.

PUBH 587 – Applied Practice Experience (3-6)

Applied Practice Experience in an approved organization under the supervision of a designated preceptor. Students must complete a total of 6 credit hours.

Grading Restriction: Satisfactory/No Credit grading only.

Repeatability: May be repeated. Maximum 6 hours.

Comment(s): One semester advance notice required.

Registration Permission: Consent of major advisor.

PUBH 593 – Directed Independent Study (1-3)

Grading Restriction: Satisfactory/No Credit or letter grade.

Repeatability: May be repeated. Maximum 6 hours.

Registration Permission: Consent of instructor.

PUBH 600 – Doctoral Research and Dissertation (3-15)

Grading Restriction: P/NP grading only. Repeatability: May be repeated. Registration

Restriction(s): Minimum student level – graduate.

PUBH 609 – Public Health Doctoral Seminar (1)

Will further prepare the public health doctoral student for the dissertation process, including proper framing of a research question, conducting the literature review, and specification of methods. Students will lead discussions and presentations on methods being used in their dissertations and early results. Will also include an exploration of current health behavior and health education-related research being conducted across the University. Repeatability: May be repeated. Maximum 4 hours. (RE) Prerequisite(s): 509 and 510 and 520 and 540 and 555 and 536 and 537 and 530 or 531. Registration Restriction(s): Minimum student level – graduate.

PUBH 630 – Advanced Biostatistics (3)

Biostatistics is the application of statistics to biological problems. This course offers advanced instruction in biostatistics, including the application of advanced inferential statistical methods to public health practice. This course covers a variety of multivariable modeling approaches, data management, and analysis planning and development. (RE) Prerequisite(s): 530 and 540 or consent of instructor. Registration Restriction(s): Minimum student level – graduate.

PUBH 634 – Physical Activity and Positive Health (1)

Cross-listed as Kinesiology 635. Review of clinical, epidemiological, and experimental evidence concerning relationship and effects of exercise on health-related components of fitness.

PUBH 636 – Advanced Research Methods (3)

Application of multivariate statistics to research questions in health behavior; analysis of public health data. (RE) Prerequisite(s): 536 and Statistics 531 and, Statistics 532 or Statistics 537, and Statistics 538. Registration Restriction(s): Minimum student level – graduate.

PUBH 640 – Advanced Epidemiology in Public Health (3)

A detailed examination of the epidemiologic methods used in cohort, case-control, and experimental studies. Particular emphasis in critiquing and understanding epidemiologic methods in the professional literature. Application of higher-level methods that can be utilized in the public health practice setting. Analytic methods will include multiple logistic regression and survival analysis. (RE) Prerequisite(s): 540 or consent of instructor. Registration Restriction(s): Minimum student level – graduate.

PUBH 656 – Comparative Theories in Health Behavior (3)

Theoretical models of health behavior; analysis, synthesis, and discussion of historical, contemporary and cross-cultural relevance of models; application of theory to research,

prevention and intervention in public health; critical reading and evaluation of theory-based research on health behavior. (RE) Prerequisite(s): 555. Registration Restriction(s): Minimum student level – graduate.

PUBH 650 – Dissemination and Implementation Science (3)

Design a system-level intervention, emphasizing best pedagogical practices in delivering an educational experience in a community setting.

PUBH 680 – Special Topics (3)

Repeatability: May be repeated if topic differs. Maximum 6 hours. Registration Restriction(s): Minimum student level – graduate. Registration Permission: Consent of instructor.

PUBH 693 – Independent Study (1-3)

Individual study of selected issues. Repeatability: May be repeated. Maximum 6 hours. Registration Restriction(s): Minimum student level – graduate. Registration Permission: Consent of instructor.

APPENDIX D: FORMS

Appendix D1: Appeal Form

Department of Public Health Graduate Appeal Form

Step 2

Instructions: Please read [The University of Tennessee Graduate Council Appeal Procedure](#), revised 2017) regarding graduate student rights, responsibilities and right of appeal, before completing this form. Be sure to file the appeal within 30 days after the initial academic decision on student has been issued. If the action being appealed occurred within your graduate program, you must complete the informal or formal appeal process at program level through the doctoral committee before requesting department head consideration.

To be completed by student with an appeal.

Name of student: _____ Student ID number _____

Mailing address: _____

Phone number: _____ Academic Advisor: _____

The decision being appealed was rendered by: _____

The date you received the decision: _____

The names of the individuals whose actions you are appealing:

Please provide a short description of the decision you are appealing under the Graduate Appeal Procedure:

Please state the grounds upon which the appeal is based.

Please provide the outcome of step one of the appeals process (meeting with faculty involved and academic advisor) and the persons involved in this decision.

Please state the relief you are requesting:

Please submit any additional background information that will be beneficial in resolving your appeal

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

To be completed by the chair of the appeals process.

What was the decision about the appeal? _____

Appeal was reviewed by:

Date of Graduate Program level appeal: _____

Date that appeal decision shared with student: _____

Appendix D2: SACS Assessment Rubrics (for Qualifying Exam and Dissertation Proposal) and Annual Doctoral Student Progress/Evaluation Form

Doctoral Student Rubric: Qualifying Exam and Dissertation Proposal (i.e., Results not included for Proposal)

The student:	1	2	3	4	5	SCORE*
1. Presents sound <u>scientific justification</u> for the research question(s)	3 or more errors of fact	2 errors of fact	1 error of fact, with remaining content sound but basic	Content reflects developed knowledge	Content reflects well-developed knowledge, allowing for elaboration	
2. Proposes <u>methods</u> appropriate for the research question(s)	3 or more errors or methodological omissions	2 errors or methodological omissions	1 error or methodological omissions, with remaining content sound but basic	Content adequately describes appropriate methods	Content reflects well-developed knowledge of advanced methodologies	
3. Appropriately presents and interprets <u>results</u>	3 or more errors in presentation or interpretation	2 errors in presentation or interpretation	1 error in presentation or interpretation	Adequately presented and interpreted	Superiorly presented, interpretation reflects well-developed knowledge	
4. Appropriately acknowledges <u>strengths and limitations</u>	3 or more errors of fact	2 errors of fact	1 error of fact, with remaining content sound but basic	Content reflects developed knowledge	Content reflects well-developed knowledge, allowing for elaboration	
5. Provides logically-<u>structured</u> explanations	Rambles and has no obvious structure	Lacks sound organization of major points	Adequate introduction and organization of test, but lacks summary or conclusion	Structured sufficiently that it can be understood with one reading	Structured superiorly (understood in-depth with one reading)	
6. Quality and accuracy of <u>citations</u>	Citations are overall absent from the response; the arguments are solely the views of the responder	Less than half of the citations are accurate or used effectively to support the arguments	About half of the citations are accurate or used effectively to support the arguments	Almost all of the citations are accurate or used effectively to support the arguments	Quality citations are used accurately and effectively to support the arguments of the response	

*Minimum total score to Pass is 22 points for Comp Exam and 18 points for Proposal **Points:** _____

DOCTORAL STUDENT PROGRESS FORM

Please send your updated, formatted CV along with this form to your faculty adviser no later than December 15.

STUDENT/COMMITTEE

Student Name:

When did you meet with your committee members? At least one meeting required per year. (Note you are required to choose the three departmental committee members in your first year and add the external member and formalize the committee by the end of the second year.)

Chair Name:

Meeting date(s):

Committee Member 1:

Meeting date(s):

Committee Member 2:

Meeting date(s):

Committee Member 3:

Meeting date(s):

Committee Member 4:

Meeting date(s):

COGNATE AREA

Identify your cognate area and all cognate courses taken to date (i.e., course name, credit hours and semester taken).

MILESTONES

When did you (or when do you expect to) complete each milestone? Please answer question with **Month and Year** (e.g., September 2019).

Coursework:

Doctoral Qualifying Exam:

Dissertation Proposal, Written Exam (written exam is mini-NIH style grant proposing your dissertation):

Dissertation Proposal, Oral Exam (defense of dissertation grant proposal above):

Dissertation Defense:

Graduation:

PROGRESS/GOALS

What progress have you made over the past year towards completing your doctoral education?

Indicate any publications, presentations, teaching experience, and/or other accomplishments you've had this year:

Publications Participation (describe papers in process and work under review, and identify your role on them):

Presentations (both internal and external, include abstract submissions, and identify your role on them):

Teaching (if applicable):

Research Experience:

Other Accomplishments:

Do you have any incompletes? If so, how are you preparing to resolve them?

What are your academic and professional goals for the coming year?

JOB MARKET

What kind of post-PhD job do you plan to look for (e.g., if **academic**, research- or teaching-focused; if **non-academic**, what kind)?

Do you plan to be on the job market in the upcoming year?

FUNDING

Indicate your next year's funding source and/or any other UT employment (e.g., paid hourly on a grant or some other way). Please indicate % time if a GRA or GTA (e.g., 25%) and/or hours per week if UT employment. If next year's funding source is currently unknown, please explain.

QUESTIONS, CONCERNS, IDEAS

What questions or concerns do you have about your progress through the PhD program?

What other needs do you have to succeed in the program?

What ideas do you have for improvement or change?

Doctoral Student Assessment Summary

To be completed jointly by the student and their advisor and/or other PUBH faculty member, as appropriate. Please provide the dates (MM/YYYY) the criteria are completed.

STUDENT: _____

FACULTY ASSESSOR: _____

ACADEMIC YEAR: _____

Objective 1: Students will demonstrate clarity of scientific writing skills

- Emerging – student receives B or better on all papers for PUBH courses, DATE: _____
- Intentional – student passes (i.e., > 75%) Qualifying Exam, DATE: _____
- Professional – student successfully completes written portion of dissertation proposal (i.e., mini-NIH style grant proposing dissertation), DATE: _____
- Mastered – student’s dissertation approved by committee and filed in TRACES, DATE: _____

Objective 2: Students will demonstrate clarity of verbal expression and the ability to respond to scientific questions in a clear and accurate manner

- Emerging – student expresses him/her/their-self clearly and professionally in PUBH courses, DATE: _____
- Intentional – student is able to clearly and professionally respond to scientific questions from faculty and/or as a graduate student teaching assistant/associate, DATE: _____
- Professional – student passes oral examination of dissertation proposal (i.e., oral defense of mini-NIH style grant proposing dissertation), DATE: _____
- Mastered – student successfully defends doctoral dissertation, DATE: _____

Objective 3: Students will demonstrate mastery of complex scientific and technical issues relevant to the student’s area of research

- Emerging – student receives B or better in all cognate courses, DATE: _____
- Intentional – student submits/has accepted scientific abstract in their area of research to an on-campus research conference/event, DATE: _____
- Professional – student submits/has accepted scientific abstract in their area of research to a professional conference (i.e., outside UTK), DATE: _____
- Mastered – student submits/has accepted first or co-authored manuscript in their area of research, DATE: _____

Appendix D3: PhD Cognate Designation Form

PhD Cognate Approval Request Form

The PhD students should complete sections A and B. Following approval of the faculty advisor, the form should be submitted to the PhD Director for review. Ideally the proposed cognate should be approved by the faculty advisor and Director of PhD prior to initiating coursework.

This is an initial cognate approval request This a cognate revision request.

A. PhD Candidate Information	
Student name:	Faculty advisor:
Student email:	Completed PhD credit hours (excluding advanced field placement and dissertation hours):
B. Proposed Cognate Information	
Name of Cognate:	
1) Course number and name:	1) Date of completion (expected):
2) Course number and name:	2) Date of completion (expected):
3) Course number and name:	3) Date of completion (expected):
C. Approval Status	
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Denied	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Denied
Faculty Advisor Signature	PhD Director Signature
Date:	Date:
COMMENTS	