

*Department of
Epidemiology and Biostatistics*

**Graduate Student Handbook
2018-2019**



*Arnold School of Public Health
University of South Carolina*



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH CAROLINA

Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics
Arnold School of Public Health

Welcome from the Chair

Dear incoming students,

Welcome to the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the University of South Carolina's Arnold School of Public Health! We are so pleased that you have selected us as you embark upon this new and exciting next stage of your professional journey. It is my greatest hope that we can provide you with an exceptionally rewarding educational experience that helps you to fulfill your career aspirations.

After more than 40 years of dedication to high quality teaching and research, our department has a proud tradition of excellence. You are now part of this tradition. The department's long-term success is rooted in a deep, abiding commitment to advance the public's health through research and by training the next generation of epidemiologists and biostatisticians. We seek to offer rigorous training in a collegial, supportive environment. Our training program includes learning that takes place in the classroom, faculty mentorship, practicum in teaching and consulting, and rich opportunities to take part in top-tier research. This multi-faceted educational program will hopefully be personally transformative for you. Taken in combination, our intention is that the skills you acquire forge you into a graduate poised to be a public health leader not only prepared to control today's health threats but also prepared to lead in tackling the unforeseen public health challenges of the future.

During your time here, I encourage you to embrace the full spectrum of learning opportunities the department offers outside of the classroom. Please plan to regularly attend the monthly departmental seminars. In addition, try to attend student thesis and dissertation defenses, journal clubs, and other seminar series as frequently as possible to enrich your learning experiences. You will be expected to demonstrate expertise in a specific content area for your thesis or dissertation research, but deepening the breadth of your understanding of key issues facing epidemiology and biostatistics will carry you far in the long run.

As you get settled in, please let us know how we are doing. In our quest for excellence, we are constantly striving to improve. Please let us know what we are doing well, but also where you feel improvements are warranted and how we can better assist you to achieve your career goals.

Welcome to the Department, and best wishes for a smooth transition and much success in your degree program.

Sincerely,

Anthony Alberg, Ph.D., M.P.H.
Professor and Chair
Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics

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NOTE: The academic bulletin and this student handbook are for information purposes only and do not constitute any contractual agreement between a student and the University of South Carolina. The University reserves the right to make changes in curricula, degree requirements, course offerings, or academic regulations at any time when, in the judgment of the faculty, the president, or the Board of Trustees, such changes are in the best interest of the students and the University.

OVERVIEW

The University of South Carolina

Among America's oldest and most comprehensive public universities, USC Columbia is the major research institution of the University of South Carolina system and its largest campus, enrolling nearly 35,000 students, with over 8,000 of these in graduate and professional programs. At the heart of its mission lies the University's responsibility to the state and society to promote the dissemination of knowledge, cultural enrichment, and an enhanced quality of life.

The University serves a diverse population of students with widely varying backgrounds, career goals, and levels of aspiration. USC Columbia offers over 320 degrees at the bachelor's, master's, doctoral, and professional program levels, affording students the most comprehensive array of educational programs in the state. Additional opportunities for personal and career development, including an associate degree program at Fort Jackson, are provided to the citizens of South Carolina through outreach and continuing education activities.

Through the combination of traditional classroom instruction and distributed learning, degree programs are offered in the following areas: arts and sciences; education; engineering and computing; hospitality, retail, and sport management; mass communications and information studies; music; **public health**; and social work; and in professional programs such as business, law, medicine, nursing, and pharmacy. The depth and breadth of its graduate programs in the arts and sciences, international business, **public health**, social work, and library and information science distinguishes USC Columbia from all other institutions of higher learning in South Carolina.

Recognized by the Carnegie Foundation as a top research and service institution, nationally ranked in start-up businesses, and conferring over 30% of all bachelor's and graduate degrees awarded at public institutions in South Carolina, the University has a profound relevance, reach, and impact on the people of the state. As the flagship institution of the state system, USC Columbia leads the way in providing all students with the highest-quality education, including the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for success and responsible citizenship in a complex and changing world through engagement in nationally and internationally ranked research, scholarship, community outreach, and artistic creation.

The Arnold School of Public Health

The Arnold School of Public Health was established in 1975 as the 19th accredited school of public health in the nation and remains the only accredited school or program of public health in South Carolina. The School has a rapidly growing undergraduate program, diverse and vibrant graduate programs, and continues to experience record growth in faculty research funding and research impact. We have a broad range of academic programs, world-renowned areas of research expertise, and far-reaching centers and community programs. The Arnold School of Public Health

is improving public health by preparing future scholars and the public health work force as well as conducting, translating and disseminating groundbreaking research. Our [Departments](#) are home to nationally recognized faculty, award-winning students, and impactful research and community engagement activities.

Norman J. and Gerry Sue Arnold

In 2000, Columbia business leader Norman J. Arnold and his wife, Gerry Sue, gifted \$10 million to create an endowment to support the teaching, research, and public education efforts of the School. The Arnold School became the third named school of public health in the U.S., and the first at a public institution to have this honor. The Arnolds' gift, which was inspired by Norman's successful battle against pancreatic cancer, was a transformative event. It has funded research and outreach that have helped South Carolinians become healthier and experience higher quality of life.

The Arnolds' dedication to improving health for all populations is evident through their generous gifts to the Arnold School. The Norman J. Arnold Endowment, established with their initial gift, supports the Arnold Doctoral Fellowship program to recruit and support top doctoral students in the School's funded research activities. In 2015, the Arnolds pledged an additional \$7 million to create the [Gerry Sue and Norman J. Arnold Institute on Aging](#). The new Institute supports a broad range of center-level activities in collaboration with entities such as the National Institutes of Health, to address issues such as childhood obesity prevention, nutrition and food safety, stroke recovery, and dementia, that affect our most vulnerable populations—children and the elderly.

Mission, Vision and Values

The Arnold School of Public Health is the primary public health research and education resource for the citizens of our state. With particular focus on physical activity, nutrition, and cancer prevention, we prepare the next generation of professional practitioners and scholars to serve our communities and impact disease prevention through public health education and intervention.

Mission

The Arnold School of Public Health will improve population health and well-being by fostering innovative education and research that promotes health and healthy environments and will use that knowledge to prevent and effectively respond to disease, disability, and environmental degradation in diverse communities.

Vision

The Arnold School of Public Health advances inquiry, discovery, and innovation; develops outstanding graduates; and promotes health through collaboration, dissemination and outreach in our local and global communities.

Values

- Community - The Arnold School actively engages and collaborates with community partners in its education, research and public service.
- Diversity and Inclusion - The vibrant intellectual environment of the Arnold School embraces respect for diversity and inclusion of all persons.
- Impact - Through inquiry, discovery and dissemination, the Arnold School improves community health, health systems and the environment for populations and individuals worldwide.
- Integrity - The Arnold School adheres to the highest standards of honesty, fairness, stewardship, professional responsibility and scholarly ethics.
- Learning - Students are the foundation of the school. With its outstanding faculty and staff, the Arnold School provides diverse and dynamic educational and experiential opportunities for learners at all levels.
- Social Justice - In pursuit of health equity for all populations, the Arnold School seeks to bridge any divisions that prevent individuals from attaining complete environmental, physical, mental and social well-being.
- Translation - Through scholarship and outreach, the Arnold School supports the application of scientific knowledge and use of evidence-based practices and policies to improve individual, community and societal health.

Centers and Programs

Our service and outreach activities impact various populations across South Carolina and beyond. The Arnold School houses and partners with a wide range of centers, institutes and other programs that conduct original research, engage in translation and dissemination, and connect directly with the public through clinical and other interactive services. These groups reflect our strengths as a School of Public Health and enable us to make a targeted and lasting impact on the populations whose lives we strive to improve.

Cancer Prevention and Control Program (CPCP)

CPCP conducts cancer research with the aim of reducing the burden of cancer by eliminating cancer disparities and making effective methods of preventing and controlling cancer available to all. We are committed to integrating service, education and research in engaging the community.

Core for Applied Research & Evaluation (CARE)

CARE integrates two previous research offices in the Arnold School of Public Health: the Center for Health Services and Policy Research (CHSPR) and the **Office of Research's** Evaluation, Translation, and Community Engagement. This integration yields over 30 years of core methodological expertise in program evaluation, survey development, qualitative research, primary and secondary data analysis, quality improvement methods and consultation, community engagement, strategic planning and organizational development.

Center for Environmental Nanoscience & Risk (CENR)

CENR is a SmartState™ Center that investigates the effects and behaviors of manufactured and natural nanoparticles in the environment and the subsequent effects on environmental and human health. We also work on the development of low hazard and low risk nanotechnologies for the benefit of public health.

Center for Research in Nutrition and Health Disparities

The Center partners with community groups, public agencies, other research institutions and professional organizations to lead nutrition and health disparities research and activities. Our interdisciplinary researchers work to understand how nutritional components interact with a variety of contexts, including political, physical, economic and social structures.

Children's Physical Activity Research Group (CPARG)

CPARG brings together faculty, staff and students from various disciplines dedicated to expanding the body of knowledge on physical activity and its promotion in children and adolescents. We strive to enhance the health of young people by generating the knowledge needed to design and implement effective public health policies.

Clinical Exercise Research Center

CERC is equipped for state-of-the-art measurement of metabolic and cardiorespiratory responses and adaptations to exercise in human subjects. A fully automated system for measurement of metabolism is included. This facility is also equipped with the state-of-the-art DEXA machine for body composition and bone mineral analysis. We have full phlebotomy capability and provide assay analyses. This facility provides an important resource for conducting undergraduate and graduate student research projects.

Consortium for Latino Immigration Studies

The Consortium coordinates and promotes multidisciplinary research related to Latinos in South Carolina and the Southeast. We also foster the dissemination of research findings and their application/translation into practice and policy, support teaching related to Latinos, and collaborate with other entities involved with the state's growing Latino population.

Disability Research and Dissemination Center (DRDC)

DRDC is a partnership among the University of South Carolina, the State University of New York Upstate Medical University and the American Association of Health and Disability. Our purpose is to conduct research, train professionals, complete specific projects and disseminate knowledge related to birth defects, disabilities, human development and blood disorders.

Global Health

The Arnold School has been involved in global health initiatives and growing our international presence through education, research and outreach programs since 1975. Our goal is to respond to global health challenges by promoting collaborative research among students, faculty and stakeholders around the world.

Office for the Study of Aging (OSA)

OSA promotes healthy aging through program development, evaluation, education/training and research. We seek to improve long-term care service delivery for South Carolina's older adults by providing evidence-based information to policy makers, health care professionals and the public.

PASOs

PASOs is a community-based organization that helps the Latino community and service providers work together for strong and healthy families. Our community health programs include prenatal education, outreach on women's and family health topics, connection to needed resources, increasing access to health care, cultural competency and development of community leaders.

Prevention Research Center (PRC)

PRC is a part of the Prevention Research Center Program of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and sponsors projects that encourage people of all ages to become more physically active. Committed to improving the health of individuals, families and communities, we promote physical activity through community intervention, training, dissemination and applied research.

South Carolina Cancer Disparities Community Network-II (SCCDCN-II)

SCCDCN-II is one of 23 Community Network Programs Centers funded by the National Cancer Institute. Focusing on the African-American population, our goal is to reduce cancer disparities through community-based participatory cancer education, research and training.

South Carolina Institute of Medicine and Public Health (IMPH)

IMPH convenes academic, governmental, organizational and community-based stakeholders around issues important to the health and wellbeing of all South Carolinians. We also provide evidence-based information relevant to policy decisions and other actions that impact health and health care.

South Carolina Rural Health Research Center

The Center investigates persistent inequalities in health status within rural populations with an emphasis on inequities stemming from socioeconomic status, race and ethnicity, and access to healthcare services. We strive to make our research findings useful to organizations and individuals working to improve quality of life for rural residents.

Technology Center to Promote Healthy Lifestyles (TecHealth)

TecHealth is a SmartState™ Center comprised of an interdisciplinary team of research scientists and students. We are dedicated to creating and utilizing innovative technology to encourage healthy lifestyle behaviors, which can solve some of the most pressing chronic health problems facing the citizens of South Carolina.

USC Speech and Hearing Center

The Center provides a variety of diagnostic and treatment programs for individuals of all ages with communication disorders. We train future speech-language pathologists and researchers while providing our patients with the highest quality evaluation and treatment to improve social, educational and vocational participation.

Communication and Contact Information

Communication

E-mail is the official means of communication at the Arnold School of Public Health. You are also assigned a mailbox in Discovery Room 432. This will be used to communicate items such as notes, invitations, deadlines for various events, mail from your professor, etc. It is the student's responsibility to check your email and mailbox regularly for important information.

Department Listserv

Keep up with what is happening in your department and the Arnold School by subscribing to the Department Listserv. Seminars, class changes, job opportunities, registration requirement updates, and other important information will be sent to you through the Listserv. Instructions for subscribing are below.

To Subscribe to the EPIDBIOS Listserv:

- Send an e-mail to: listserv@listserv.sc.edu
- No subject
- In text area type the following: "SUBSCRIBE EPIDBIOS Your Name"
Send the message without a signature

Note - If the subscription is successfully sent, you will receive a message from the Listserv system informing you of your acceptance. If you are not successful, visit the Arnold SPH Health Sciences Computer Lab or call University Technology Services at 803-777-1800 for assistance.

To Unsubscribe

To cancel your subscription to the listserv, you can send an email message to the server hosting the specific list, for example, listserv@listserv.sc.edu, and in the body of the message include the command: SIGNOFF EPIDBIOS. You must send this command from the account you subscribed from (otherwise it won't recognize you as a member and won't delete your subscription).

Contact Information for Graduate Directors and Support Staff

The following are individuals with whom you will become familiar while you are a student here. Their contact information is given below.

Graduate Directors

Dr. Linda Hazlett
Graduate Director for Epidemiology
ljhazlet@mailbox.sc.edu
803-777-6653
803-361-6840 (cell)

Dr. Robert Moran
Graduate Director for Biostatistics
rrmoran@mailbox.sc.edu
803-777-7876
803-665-6741 (cell)

Administrative Staff

LaToya Reese
Program Coordinator
reeselz@mailbox.sc.edu
803-777-7666

Dana Klinepeter
Student Services Program Coordinator
dbarker@mailbox.sc.edu

Stephanie Kline
Business Manager
sdriver@mailbox.sc.edu
803-777-5876

Facilities

Libraries

The University Libraries foster learning and discovery by connecting people with significant collections and expert support of research. Ranked 34th by the Association of Research Libraries among U.S. Public Libraries, the University Libraries are the only ARL member in South Carolina. The libraries are comprised of the historic South Caroliniana Library; Ernest F. Hollings Special Collections Library; Music Library; Moving Image Research Collections; and Thomas Cooper Library, a seven-level facility with 290,000 square feet of floor space that is open 24/7 to students. Scholars from the around the world seek the libraries' holdings, which include comprehensive collections of F. Scott Fitzgerald, crime fiction writers Elmore Leonard and Dashiell Hammett, natural history, astronomy, news, film, and state political leaders.

The Arnold School of Public Health's liaison to the Thomas Cooper Library is Amy Edwards (amjedwar@mailbox.sc.edu).

Information Technology

The Division of Information Technology (DoIT) provides strategic leadership for information technology, instructional services, e-learning and research cyberinfrastructure at the University of South Carolina. For more information visit www.sc.edu/it and for technical assistance contact the Service Desk at servicedesk@sc.edu or (803) 777-1800.

The Information Technology Core provides IT support for the Arnold School of Public Health faculty and staff. This team also oversees the Arnold School of Public Health's main computer lab for students, located in Discovery Room 431. Within the computer lab there are 34 workstations and two black and white laser printers.

Discovery Computer Lab hours (fall, spring & summer)

Monday-Friday: 8:00am - 10:00pm

Saturday: 10:00am - 8:00pm

Sunday: closed

Information for International Students

International Student Services is your go-to resource for all things immigration related, particularly when it relates to F-1 and J-1 visas. The advisors at ISS are your resource and guide when it comes to immigration and cultural matters so that you can achieve your educational and personal goals in the U.S. The school's website for ISS is www.iss.sc.edu.

Carolina Card

The Carolina Card is your permanent USC ID card plus a flexible-spending declining balance card. Each time you make a purchase, the amount of the purchase is deducted from your account balance. Carolina Cash can be used for dining and non-dining purchases. For more information, see the frequently asked questions online: <http://carolinacard.sc.edu/faqs.html>.

Student Services

Academic achievement is the primary goal for every graduate student, but making it happen while maintaining life balance can be challenging. We encourage you to take advantage of the many services available to you through the Division of Student Affairs ([Div of Student Affairs and Academic Support - Offices](#)). In addition to the rigors of your studies, the change of being in a new community can create a stressful environment that impacts your health and well-being. Multiple services include Healthy Carolina, Multicultural Student Affairs, and Student Health Services, located directly behind the Russell House (1401 Devine St), which provides comprehensive physical and mental health care services on campus. For more information about Student Health Services, including the new Center for Health and Well Being, visit their website: https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_health_services/.

Office of Disability Services

The Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS) serves students with disabilities and temporary injuries in managing the varying demands of the University experience. In addition to serving students, the staff assists the University community in making programs, services, and activities accessible for everyone. To **apply for accommodations**, you should start the application process as soon as you are admitted to the University. Please visit the [Apply for Accommodations](#) page for more information. For **students registered with OSDS**, visit the [Students Registered with OSDS](#) page for request forms/links.

Student Grievances, Appeals and Petitions

The policies and regulations of the University of South Carolina serve as purposeful guidelines and standards for students as they pursue degree objectives. Occasionally, individual students may feel they have grounds to seek exception from the uniform application of such regulations and policies. Undergraduate students may file written grievances, appeals or petitions to the Office of Public Health Education/Office of Undergraduate Student Services. Graduate students may file written grievances, appeals or petitions to Office of Faculty Affairs seeking to reverse or modify decisions made at a lower level of authority. Resolution of any written grievance must follow the procedures outlined in policies maintained by the USC Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support ([STAF 6.27 Student Grievance Policy – Non-Academic \[pdf\]](#)) and [STAF 6.30 Academic](#)

[Grievance Policy \[pdf\]](#)). As described in STAF 6.27, student ombudsmen are also available to help students resolve grievances and maintain policy compliance. For more information, please go to [SPH Graduate Student Grievance Procedure](#).

The Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics

Achieving gains in improving the public's health depends on the ability to identify and solve community health problems. As measurement and research sciences, epidemiology and biostatistics are critical disciplines for the ascertainment and characterization of public health problems and generating public health action. Both epidemiology and biostatistics are key components of the scientific core of public health and are included in the training of every public health professional. Combining epidemiology and biostatistics in the same department creates the opportunity for tremendous synergies in education and research. At the same time, the unique features of each discipline is acknowledged in the Department's administrative structure which is comprised of two divisions, the Division of Biostatistics and the Division of Epidemiology.

Vision, Mission, and Values

The Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics is a community of scholars characterized by an atmosphere of collaboration, collegiality, and mutual respect.

Mission

Our mission is to develop, teach, and apply innovative and efficient methods to solve contemporary public health issues.

Vision

Our department will advance science and health through quality instruction and nationally recognized research programs that attract, support, and train tomorrow's public health leaders.

Values

The Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics affirms the seven Arnold School of Public Health value statements listed on page 6.

Our additional department-specific value statements are:

- 1) **Innovation** – Using innovative methods, we test new theories, models and technologies to determine more efficient ways of analyzing and sharing data.
- 2) **Communication** –We endeavor to turn data into information that can be communicated to scientific and nonscientific audiences.

Goals

Education:

We are committed to training the next generation of public health leaders. Doctoral and Master's students in the programs of the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics will gain state-of-the-art knowledge and develop skills in both epidemiology and biostatistics. These concepts and skills will enable students to effectively and appropriately identify, evaluate, and solve public health problems. Upon successfully completing the program, the student will demonstrate:

- A knowledge base of the various processes relating to disease, disability, and other health conditions;
- An ability to apply epidemiologic and biostatistical methods in identifying the determinants of disease, and other health conditions;
- An understanding of the design and conduct of research in public health; and
- Skills in data analysis and interpretation of research results in the context of prevention and improvements in human health.

Research:

The research goals of the Department stress contributions to the field of public health through the development of new knowledge related to health and disease, and through the application of this knowledge to address current public health issues and problems. Broad objectives are targeted toward:

- Impact on public health;
- Ability to identify and respond to emerging health problems; and
- Partnerships with public health agencies at the local, state (e.g., South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control), and federal levels (e.g., Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institutes of Health).

Service:

The service goals of the Department are to contribute to the University, the public and the health profession through the direct involvement of the faculty, staff, and students in a range of activities. Service goals are geared:

- To the University through participation in governance and contributions to institutional development;
- To the health profession through contributions to the advancement of science through peer-reviewed publications, editorial and peer review activities, participation in professional and scientific forums and organizations, and assistance to health-related program personnel and policy-makers in their efforts to keep abreast of new knowledge; and
- To the public through continuing education, demonstration projects, consulting and other advisory services, and support in the diffusion and dissemination of new knowledge and applied technology to advance the public's health.

Degree Programs

The Department includes two major disciplines, epidemiology and biostatistics, and offers master's and doctoral degrees in each.

The major in *epidemiology* is designed for students pursuing careers in the study of patterns of diseases, disabling conditions and other indicators of health in human populations. The field of epidemiology involves research into factors that influence human health states or events and evaluation of prevention and treatment interventions. Epidemiologists attempt to establish the causes of health problems by describing the genetic, biological, environmental, social and behavioral factors affecting illness and premature death as well as factors that contribute to health and well-being. Descriptive and analytic techniques are used to gather information on disease occurrence, extend basic knowledge about the biologic, physical, mental and social processes affecting health, develop effective disease control measures, and examine health services, treatments and intervention programs. The evidence generated from epidemiologic research is relevant to developing health promotion/disease prevention programs and formulation of health policy. Epidemiologic studies often require innovative approaches to study design and exposure assessment to identify representative samples and to allow for assessment of the associations of various factors with development or progression of the disease or health condition of interest. As a discipline committed to the health and well-being of human beings, epidemiology places an emphasis on ensuring adherence to ethical standards of practice regarding persons' participation in research as well as to maintaining high standards of research integrity in implementing research studies. Epidemiologist work in leadership and collaborative roles on interdisciplinary teams, whether these teams are focused on advancing research or public health practice.

The major in *biostatistics* is designed for students pursuing careers in community health measurement, design and management of health data systems, and the development and application of quantitative methods to health problems. Biostatisticians apply statistical theory, methods, and techniques to the planning, development, and evaluation of health programs and problems. They collect and analyze various types of information such as: demographic and vital statistics, social and business data, health resources statistics, and other forms of social and economic data that are relevant to modern health problems. Biostatisticians design experiments and observational studies, use various computer operating systems and software packages to store and analyze information, develop methods to compare population groups, and prepare inferential and probabilistic statements based on biological, social, and environmental data. Biostatisticians are the theoretical researchers and applied statisticians of public health. Our work ranges from the application and interpretation of standard analytic techniques to the development of novel methodological approaches to unique forms of data.

The **Master of Public Health (M.P.H.)** in epidemiology degree is designed for those who wish to acquire skills necessary to work as an epidemiologist in a public health setting. The M.P.H. with a major in epidemiology provides a foundation in epidemiologic methods with a focus on applying epidemiologic skills in the setting of public health practice.

The **Master of Science in Public Health (M.S.P.H.)** degree is designed for those who wish to acquire skills necessary for public health research. The M.S.P.H. with a major in epidemiology focuses on development of research skills for the study of determinants of disease and other health conditions. The M.S.P.H. with a major in biostatistics prepares researchers to apply statistical techniques to health problems.

The **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)** is an advanced graduate degree for those who intend to pursue teaching and research careers. The major objective of the Ph.D. degree in Epidemiology is to prepare an individual to pursue original epidemiologic investigation of diseases and develop novel methodological approaches. The major objective of the Ph.D. degree in Biostatistics is to prepare an individual to develop and apply biostatistical principles and methods to public health problems.

Dual Ph.D. Program in Epidemiology and Environmental Health

Given the increasingly prominent role of the environment in determining human health, and the unique set of requirements in relation to study design and measurement of both environmental exposures and environment-related health outcomes, this program provides students the opportunity to obtain a dual Ph.D. in Epidemiology and Environmental Health Sciences. To be admitted to this dual degree program students must meet all entrance requirements of each department and be accepted as a Ph.D. student in each. Few students will have master's degrees in both environmental health sciences and epidemiology, so most successful applicants will have substantial prerequisite work to complete in one or both disciplines. Students currently enrolled in either program may enter the dual degree program and apply for appropriate credit granted by both programs. Any student enrolled in the dual degree program must meet all academic requirements applicable at the time of enrollment to remain in the dual degree program. For more information about this dual degree program and its requirements, please see the Graduate Director in either department.

General Policies

Academic Integrity

Only in an environment where honesty and integrity are core values can we truly advance the science and practice of public health. The Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics places a premium on academic integrity. Violations of academic integrity are thus taken very seriously. Many details about academic integrity are described below, but a fundamental precept to guide your approach is to take pride in doing work to the best of your natural abilities and doing so honestly and fairly.

The following excerpts are taken from STAF 6.25 Academic Responsibility – The Honor Code, last revised August 1, 2017.

“The Honor Code is a set of principles established by the university to promote honesty and integrity in all aspects of a student’s academic career. It is the responsibility of every student at the University of South Carolina to adhere steadfastly to truthfulness and to avoid dishonesty in connection with any academic program. A student who violates, or assists another in violating the Honor Code, will be subject to university sanctions. The Honor Code delineates the values set forth in the tenets of the Carolinian Creed (www.sa.sc.edu/creed). When a student is uncertain as to whether conduct would violate this Honor Code, it is the responsibility of the student to seek clarification from the appropriate faculty member or instructor of record. “

The following is a list of Honor Code Violations with associated prohibited behaviors.

Plagiarism:

Use of work or ideas without proper acknowledgment of source. Prohibited behaviors include:

- Partial or incomplete citation of work or ideas.
- Improperly paraphrasing by acknowledging the source but failing to present the material in one’s own words.
- Paraphrasing without acknowledgment of the source.
- Multiple submissions of the same or substantially the same academic work for academic credit.
- Copying, partially or entirely, any material without acknowledgement of the source.

Cheating:

Improper collaboration or unauthorized assistance in connection with any academic work. Prohibited behaviors include:

- Copying another individual’s or group’s academic work.
- Receiving and utilizing academic work for purposes of fulfilling an academic requirement.

- Completing any academic work for someone else or permitting someone else to complete academic work on your behalf.
- Using any bribe or unauthorized aid (e.g., outside source, cell phone, calculator, notes, previous testing materials).

Falsification:

Misrepresenting or misleading others with respect to academic work. Prohibited behaviors include:

- Signing in for another student who is not in attendance or requesting this action.
- Interfering with an instructor's ability to evaluate accurately a student's competency or performance on any academic work.
- Fabrication of documents submitted in connection with academic work.

Complicity:

Assisting or attempting to assist another in any violation of the Honor Code. Prohibited behaviors include:

- Sharing academic work with another student (either in person or electronically) without the permission of the instructor.
- Communicating (either in person or electronically) with other student(s) or other individual(s) during an examination without the permission of the instructor.

All work submitted by a student is expected to be that student's own work **unless the instructor specifically states that students may work together on the assignment/homework/project, etc.** If permitted by the instructor, students may use their notes and books and other references for take-home examinations but cannot consult with each other.

If a student is writing a paper that uses external sources of information, **all external sources of information must be cited.** If the sources are used verbatim, the words must be in quotation marks and the source must be cited. If the sources have been paraphrased, the sources still must be cited. A paper submitted for one class may not be submitted for a subsequent class, unless a student has the express permission of the professor of the subsequent class. This might happen if the current work builds upon previous work.

These rules are not meant to cover all circumstances. If any questions arise, please discuss them with your instructor, advisor or Graduate Director. Plagiarism and other violations of the Honor Code are serious offenses and will be taken up with the Office of Academic Integrity. For more information, visit the Office of Academic Integrity website at:

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_conduct_and_academic_integrity/index.php.

The Carolinian Creed

The Carolinian Creed was authored by a group of students, faculty, and staff and approved by the Faculty Senate, Student Senate, and the USC Board of Trustees. The principles delineated in the Carolinian Creed articulate a vision of civility and positive inter-personal skills that are critical to career success in epidemiology and biostatistics.

The community of scholars at the University of South Carolina is dedicated to personal and academic excellence. Choosing to join the community obligates each member to a code of civilized behavior.

As a Carolinian ...

- I will practice personal and academic integrity;
- I will respect the dignity of all persons;
- I will respect the rights and property of others;
- I will discourage bigotry, while striving to learn from differences in people, ideas and opinions;
- I will demonstrate concern for others, their feelings, and their need for the conditions which support their work and development.

Academic Progress

The following has been taken from the 2018-2019 Graduate Academic Regulations, located on the Graduate School's website: <http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=78&navoid=2271>.

All graduate students are subject to the academic policies, regulations, and academic standards of both The Graduate School and the department, school and/or college in which enrolled. Graduate programs may have more stringent standards and additional regulations and requirements than that of The Graduate School. Program academic policies, regulations, and standards are available from the graduate director of the program. [Contact information for academic programs](#) is available on the website of The Graduate School.

It is the responsibility of all students to be aware of USC academic standards and their own academic record. At the very least, students should check their Record of Academic Work in [Self Service Carolina](#) at the conclusion of each semester. The academic record will list any academic or registration issues or probationary status that requires attention by the student.

Graduate students are bound by the academic policies, regulations, standards, and degree requirements found in the *Graduate Studies Bulletin* in effect at the term of enrollment. With approval of the academic program in which enrolled and the Dean of The Graduate School, a student may elect during the course of a Program of Study to change to standards, regulations, and requirements found in a subsequent *Graduate Studies Bulletin*. However, the student may not pick and choose from different Bulletins, but must select one *Graduate Studies Bulletin* during the

period of the student's graduate enrollment and conform to all policies, regulations, and degree requirements of the selected Bulletin.

Graduate students in Master's, specialist, and certificate programs have a period of six years, inclusive and continuous, in which to claim the rights of a specific *Graduate Studies Bulletin*. Doctoral students have a period of 10 years. Any student whose admission lapses for three years loses the right to claim a previous Bulletin and becomes bound to the Bulletin in force when readmitted.

The academic standards for grade point average, progression and graduation listed below were taken from the 2018-2019 Graduate Academic Regulations, which can be found on the Graduate School's website at: <http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=78&navoid=2271>.

Academic Standard for Grade Point Average

The cumulative grade point average (GPA) is defined as the GPA of all graduate credit courses recorded on the official USC transcript. In-date courses are ten or fewer years old for doctoral students and six or less years old for Master's, specialist, graduate certificate, and nondegree students. Revalidated courses are also included in the cumulative GPA calculation. Grades earned for graduate credits transferred from other colleges or universities are not included in the cumulative GPA.

Academic Standard for Progression

Graduate courses may be passed for degree credit with a grade as low as C, but a degree-seeking student must maintain at least a **B** (3.00 on a 4.00 scale) cumulative grade point average. Some programs stipulate that no grade below **B** can be applied to a core course. Programs may cancel a student's registration privilege if the student fails to make adequate progress toward degree as defined by the program's academic policies. A student's registration privileges may also be cancelled for failure to meet academic standards as defined by The Graduate School.

NOTE: The following departmental policy is more stringent than the general policy for the Graduate School.

Master's students:

A grade of "U" or grades below "B" on six (6) or more graduate credit hours in the Department's core courses will result in the dismissal of the student from the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics Graduate Program and disqualification for a graduate degree in Epidemiology or Biostatistics. Core courses for biostatistics students are BIOS 701, BIOS 710, BIOS 757, BIOS 758, and EPID 701. Core courses for epidemiology students are EPID 701, BIOS 701, BIOS 710, BIOS 757, and EPID 741. A student with a lower than "B" grade on a single core course must retake the class prior to graduation, regardless of performance on the Progression or

Comprehensive Exam. Retaking the course and receiving a grade of “B” or better does *not* replace the original grade on the student’s record.

Doctoral students:

A grade of “U” or grades below “B” on nine (9) or more graduate credit hours taken at the University within a ten-year period will result in the dismissal of the doctoral student from the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics Graduate Program and disqualification for a graduate degree in Epidemiology or Biostatistics. This rule applies to all graduate courses taken at the University of South Carolina whether or not they are included on the student’s Program of Study; it also applies to courses taken in two or more-degree programs.

Additionally, for Biostatistics Doctoral students:

Grades below “B” on six (6) or more graduate credit hours in 800 level biostatistics courses will result in the dismissal of the Biostatistics doctoral student from the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics Graduate Program and disqualification for a graduate degree in Epidemiology or Biostatistics. Students are not required to retake the course. If, however, a student should choose to retake the course, a grade of “B” or better does *not* replace the original grade on the student’s record.

Academic Standard for Graduation

At the time of graduation, the student’s graduate cumulative grade point average (GPA) must be at least 3.00 (**B**) on a 4.00 scale. Additionally, the student’s average on all grades recorded on the program of study for courses numbered 700 or above must be at least 3.00 and all courses listed on the program of study must be at least 3.00.

Academic Advisor

After admission to the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, each student will be assigned a departmental faculty member to serve as an academic advisor. Generally, this advisor will work with the student throughout the course of the program. Students are advised as to appropriate courses, sequencing of courses, independent study topics, thesis/dissertation topic, public health practice, and any additional work appropriate to preparing the student to meet career objectives. Students meet with their advisors before each semester to fill out advisement forms. In the advisor’s absence, the form can be signed by the Graduate Director. This form must be filled out and turned in to the Office of Student Services before a student can register for classes. The student may ask the Graduate Director for a change of academic advisor; students are encouraged to speak with the Graduate Director well in advance if contemplating a change in advisor.

Seminar Attendance

In addition to formal training experiences, the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics offers a monthly departmental seminar series that students should plan to attend to expand their breadth of knowledge of leading edge research in an informal setting.

In addition to the monthly departmental seminar, students are encouraged to seek out other seminars offered with the Arnold School of Public Health as well as other departmental learning forums such as thesis, dissertation and practicum presentations.

Revalidation of out-of-date courses

The maximum time to degree completion is 6 years for Master's students and 10 years for doctoral students. This is enforced by the Graduate School by requiring that the Program of Study not have any courses taken more than 6 years and 10 years ago for Master's and Doctoral students, respectively. However, it is still possible to revalidate the courses that exceed these deadlines. The form (PRE-Permit for Revalidation Examination) is available on the Graduate School Forms Library website (<http://gradschool.sc.edu/DocLibrary>). The requirement for revalidation of the courses will be left up to the discretion of the faculty member who originally taught the student. If the instructor is no longer on the faculty, a faculty member who currently teaches the class will be responsible for revalidating the coursework.

Required Teaching Assistant Training for Incoming Doctoral Students

As an entering doctoral student, you must register for the Graduate School's teaching assistant and instructional assistant (TA/IA) training. Prior to or concurrent with your first USC teaching experience, all graduate students must successfully complete this training. You are also required to sign up for GRAD 701 (no cost and zero credits). If you do not complete the requirements, you will not be considered credentialed for performing TA/IA duties (even if you were teaching the semester you were enrolled), and you may lose your assistantship funding and in-state tuition. The link to register for orientation/training is: [TA Orientation](#). Training is offered in Fall and Spring semesters. Having TA/IA training credentials looks great on your CV.

Additional Orientation and TA Training Requirements for International Students

In addition to participation in the TA/IA workshop, all **international graduate students** must attend the International Teaching Assistant Training Workshop (ITA) and receive a satisfactory evaluation of their oral English skills to be eligible for appointment as a teaching/instructional assistant. For more detailed information, please visit the [ITA workshop](#) website or contact English

Programs for Internationals: epi-info@epi.sc.edu or call 803-777-3867.

Additionally, **all newly enrolled international students** are required to attend the International Student Services (ISS) Orientation session, regardless of how long they have been in the United States. International students cannot sign up for classes until they have attended the ISS Orientation Session. Please visit the [ISS Orientation](#) website, or contact ISS: iss@sc.edu or 803-777-7461 for more information.

Required Immunizations – All Students

If you were born after December 31, 1956, you must provide evidence of immunity or immunization for measles (rubeola and rubella) before you will be eligible to register for classes. If you have not already submitted the required documentation, you should submit it as soon as possible so you will be eligible to register after completion of virtual registration. More information can be found here: [Immunization Information](#).

Required Health Insurance

The University requires all full-time graduate students (enrolled in 6 hrs. or more), all graduate assistants, and all international students to either purchase the University's health insurance plan, or to provide evidence of coverage on another comparable health insurance plan. If you fall into one of the three categories listed above, the charges for the plan will appear automatically on your tuition bill, unless you submit the appropriate waiver form with the requested documentation, and your waiver request has been approved. More information about health insurance and the waiver form can be found here: [Health Insurance](#).

Masters' Degree Programs: Important Dates & Forms

- To be eligible for In-State tuition rate, out-of-state & foreign students must secure an assistantship no later than 30 days into the semester
- 1st Year – Progression Exam – Friday of the first full week after spring commencement
 - Progression Re-take (if necessary) – Friday before the first day of Fall semester
- 2nd Year – Submit Program of Study (MPOS) form no later than September of second year to Graduate Director for Approval
 - Any changes to the POS form should be submitted using the Request for Adjustment in Graduate Program form (GS-43 or POSA)
- 2nd Year – Comprehensive Exam – 3rd Friday of Spring Semester
- 2nd year - Submit a Master's Committee Appointment Form (department form) to the Graduate Director for approval
- Graduation Application – submitted no later than 15 days after the *beginning* of the term in which graduation is expected.
- Thesis Proposal – at least *three months prior* to the thesis defense. After successful completion of proposal, submit the Master's Thesis Proposal Form (department form) to the Graduate Director.
- First Draft of Thesis – submitted to the Thesis Committee at least 2 weeks before the defense (6 weeks before the date of graduation), or earlier if specified by the committee.
- Thesis Format Check - submitted to the Graduate School at least 5 weeks before the date of graduation.
- Thesis Defense – at least one week prior to final thesis submission (4 weeks before the date of graduation). An announcement must be posted & sent out on the EPID-BIOS listserv 1 week prior to defense and posted on the Graduate School website.
- Final Thesis – submitted to the Graduate School at least 20 days before the date of graduation.
- A hard copy of the Master's Thesis Signature Form, *with original signatures*, must be submitted to your Graduate Director for signature after the defense. The signed form gets sent to the Graduate School. If you are requesting a publication embargo, attach a letter to the Thesis Signature Form, signed by your thesis chair and the Graduate Director.

Program of Study

The “Program of Study” is a critical step to accomplish for each graduate student in the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics. The Program of Study lists all courses taken to fulfill degree requirements. The Program of Study is developed by the student and advisor by the completion of the spring semester of student’s first year. All coursework taken by the student must be approved by the academic advisor and Graduate Director. The Program of Study Form (MPOS) must be signed by the student, student’s advisor and the Graduate Director and filed with The Graduate School no later than September of the student’s second year. There is no foreign language requirement. Courses taken for undergraduate credit can never be on any master’s program of study.

Transfer Credits

The Program of Study may include graduate credits transferred from another USC program, or another institution. To be accepted for transfer credit, the courses must:

- Be relevant to the program into which they are transferred.
- Have course content equivalent to similar courses at USC, and a level of instruction equivalent to that of the Arnold School of Public Health.
- Have a grade of “B” or better from an accredited institution.
- Be completed within the six-year period for courses used in the master’s program.
- Must not have appeared on another program of study.

Transfer credit is at the discretion of the department and must be approved by the Graduate Director. The student may be required to provide course syllabi (including course schedule) and transcript verifying grade received prior to approval of transfer credits. **No more than 12 hours of graduate credit can be transferred to master’s programs in Epidemiology and Biostatistics.**

Departmental Core Courses

BIOS 701, EPID 701, BIOS 710, and BIOS 757 are considered departmental core courses for all students in the Masters’ programs. For epidemiology majors, EPID 741 is also considered a core course. For Biostatistics majors, BIOS 758 is considered a core course.

Examinations (Progression and Comprehensive)

In addition to the coursework, each student must pass two examinations, the Progression Examination and the Comprehensive Examination. At the end of the spring semester during which the departmental core courses are completed, each student must take the Progression Examination.

This exam must be passed before continuation in the program and before registering for practicum or thesis hours. At or near completion of required departmental coursework (i.e., on program of study), each student must satisfactorily complete a Comprehensive Exam, which is normally given the third Friday of the spring semester.

Progression Examination

The Progression Examination will be taken when students complete the department core courses. Biostatistics students will be tested on material from BIOS 701, BIOS 757, BIOS 758, EPID 701 and STAT 512 (Mathematical Statistics). Epidemiology students will be tested on material from BIOS 701, EPID 701, EPID 741 and BIOS 757. The Progression Examination will be offered after the end of each spring semester on the Friday of the first full week after commencement. If a student completing the department core courses in the spring semester does not take the exam, it will count as a failed first attempt unless she/he has made prior arrangements with the Graduate Director due to emergency circumstances.

After obtaining advisor's approval, students must register with the Program Coordinator to take the Progression Examination. Registration is open from one month prior to one week prior to the exam. If a student registers to take the Progression Examination and does not take it, this will count as one attempt unless the registration is canceled at least one week prior to the examination date or prior arrangements with the Graduate Director have been made.

Biostatistics students must earn at least a "B" in BIOS 701 and EPID 701 to progress to BIOS 757 & BIOS 758. Epidemiology students must earn at least a "B" in EPID 701 and BIOS 701 to progress to EPID 741 and BIOS 757, respectively. A grade of "B" or better in EPID 741 or BIOS 757 (& BIOS 758 for BIOS Majors) is not required to take the progression exam. Students who earn below a "B" on any core course must retake that course prior to graduation regardless of performance on the Progression Exam. Receiving lower than a "B" grade in six (6) or more graduate credit hours in the Department's core courses results in the dismissal of the student from the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics Graduate Program and disqualification for a graduate degree in Epidemiology or Biostatistics.

The Progression Examination for biostatistics is prepared by the Division of Biostatistics' Exam Committee; the Progression Examination for epidemiology is prepared by the Division of Epidemiology's Exam Committee. At least two faculty members will grade each question blinded and independently.

The Progression Examination will be given in a classroom setting. The exam will be closed book, but students will be provided with a formula sheet of the standard formulas needed for the exam content. Students may use a calculator but electronic devices (including laptops, cell phones, etc.) except for basic calculators are forbidden.

Students taking the Progression Examination will be notified in writing of the results (pass/fail) as soon as possible after faculty finish grading the examination. Faculty members will not discuss exam results with any individual student until all students have received official notification. A

debriefing session will be held after examination results are released to students. A student also may meet with his or her academic advisor to discuss performance on the exam.

If a student does not pass the Progression Examination during the spring administration, he or she will be allowed to take a second exam in August the Friday before fall semester classes begin. A student who must repeat the Progression Examination may take one or more courses (with the exception of practicum or thesis) during the Summer sessions but will not be allowed to register for classes in a major semester (fall or spring) until a satisfactory performance on the exam is recorded. The Progression Examination retake could be the entire exam, or a portion of the exam, at the discretion of the Examination Committee and the appropriate Graduate Director. If a student does not pass the Progression Examination on the second attempt, he or she will not be allowed to continue in the program.

Biostatistics students have the opportunity to be exempted from the Progression Examination. Biostatistics students meeting the following criteria are exempted from taking the Progression Examination and may continue with fall coursework: 1) an overall GPA of 3.5 with no C's or below upon completing the following first-year courses: BIOS 701, EPID 701, BIOS 757, BIOS 758, STAT 512, & BIOS 710 and 2) a B+ or better course grade in both BIOS 757 & BIOS 758.

Comprehensive Examination

A Comprehensive Assessment, required by the University for all Master's students, is in the form of a comprehensive examination. The purpose of the exam is to evaluate the knowledge acquired by the student in the core and major courses, and to evaluate mastery of the major concepts and methodologies in the discipline. The comprehensive exam must be within two years of your graduation or you must retake the comprehensive exam.

The Comprehensive Examination is normally offered on the third Friday of each spring semester. This will in most instances be taken upon completion of the majority of major coursework, defined as satisfactory completion or current enrollment in all departmental courses listed on the student's program of study (or within at least 3 credit hours thereof), excluding thesis preparation or public health practice. Thus, master's students will generally take this exam during their second year in the program. All students should be ready to begin or be currently working on a thesis or practicum when taking the Comprehensive Examination.

After obtaining advisor's approval, students must register with the Program Coordinator (currently LaToya Reese) to take the Comprehensive Examination. Registration is open from one month prior to one week prior to the exam. If a student registers to take the Comprehensive Examination and does not take it, this will count as one attempt unless the registration is canceled at least one week prior to the examination date.

The Comprehensive Examination is distinct for Epidemiology students and Biostatistics students. The exams are prepared by the Exam Committees of the Division of Epidemiology and the Division of Biostatistics, respectively, with assistance from other faculty in that discipline. The committee evaluates the results and determines the outcome. The Comprehensive Examination will be evaluated as a whole; the student will either pass or not pass the entire Examination.

For Epidemiology students, the examination will focus on design and methodology issues and content areas. Advanced material from EPID 701 and EPID 741 may be reflected on the examination. The exam may include reading a published manuscript (distributed prior to the exam) and responding to conceptual, design and methodological questions related to this publication or its subject matter. No software can be used, and no further research can be done while sitting for the exam (e.g., via e-mail or the Internet).

For Biostatistics students, the examination will focus on the theory and methods presented in the various Biostatistics and Statistics courses, possibly including more advanced concepts from BIOS 701, BIOS 757, BIOS 758, STAT 512 as well as material from BIOS 759, BIOS 761, and STAT 513. Students will be given a set of questions based on material from these courses. Each question will be aimed at evaluating the knowledge on a specific topic as presented in any of the core and major courses. Biostatistics students will complete the examination using pen/pencil and paper. Students will be allowed to use a calculator but not any statistical software. They will be given a sheet of standard formulas, as in the Progression Exam.

Students taking the Examination will be notified of the results in writing as soon as possible after faculty evaluation of the Examination. Faculty members will not discuss exam results with any individual student until all students have received official notification. A debriefing session will be held after examination results are released to students. The student also may meet with his or her advisor to discuss performance on the exam.

Each student is allowed two attempts at the Comprehensive Examination. If the second attempt is required, it should occur at the next administration of the exam, which will be after the end of the spring semester on the Friday of the first full week after commencement. Because the student has essentially completed his or her program of study, he or she may take additional elective courses during this time. If a student does not pass the examination on the second attempt, he or she is not allowed to continue in the program.

Examination Schedule

	2019	2020
Progression*	17-May	16-May
Progression retake †	16-Aug	15-Aug
Comprehensive ‡	1-Feb	31-Jan
Comprehensive retake*	17-May	16 – May

* Friday of the first full week after Spring commencement

† Friday before the first day of Fall semester

‡ Third Friday of Spring semester

Goals and Learning Outcomes for Master's Programs

Goals and Learning Outcomes for the M.P.H. in Epidemiology

The specific mission of the Master of Public Health (MPH) degree in epidemiology is to prepare students to apply epidemiologic skills in a practice setting. A student who successfully completes this degree will satisfy the following goals.

Goal #1.

Graduates of this program will be exposed to and demonstrate an understanding of a variety of public health areas, and will perform well when tested on competencies as defined by the recently completed Association of Schools of Public Health Master's Degree in Public Health Core Competency Development Project.

- Learning outcome #1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of a) fundamental principles and practices in health promotion, education, and behavior; b) organization, principles, and practices in health administration; c) principles and practices in epidemiology and tools for translating epidemiological findings into public health action; d) public health statistical applications; e) environmental health from the perspective of the earth as a complex, dynamic system.

Goal #2.

MPH program graduates will understand concepts of epidemiology relating to study design, implementation and evaluation of investigations.

- Learning outcome #1. Students will differentiate between common epidemiologic study designs.
- Learning outcome #2. Students will demonstrate the ability to calculate and interpret measures of association.

Goal #3.

MPH program graduates will gain a broad understanding of diversity and culture, ethical principles, program planning and systems thinking.

- Learning outcome #1. Students will understand basic ethical principles pertaining to public health research and practice.
- Learning outcome #2. Students will describe the roles of history, power, privilege and structural inequality in producing health disparities.

- Learning outcome #3. Students will explain how the findings of a program evaluation can be used.
- Learning outcome #4. Students will explain how individuals, social networks, organizations and communities may be viewed as systems in the analysis of public health problems.

Goal #4.

MPH program graduates will have adequate knowledge in biostatistical procedures as well as be competent in information technologies and data management required to be successful in public health practice settings.

- Learning outcome #1. Students will create and manipulate datasets and analyze data using appropriate statistical methods and software packages.
- Learning outcome #2. Students will create tables and reports using appropriate software packages.
- Learning outcome #3. Students will correctly interpret results from statistical analyses.

Goal #5.

MPH program graduates will demonstrate integration of the MPH core competencies and an understanding of public health practice.

- Learning outcome #1. Students will demonstrate practical skills in a public health practice setting.
- Learning outcome #2. Students will demonstrate proficiency in public health practice by successfully completing at least two of the following competencies during their practicum:
 1. Designing a public health program
 2. Monitoring and evaluating a public health program
 3. Writing progress report for funding agency or reporting authority
 4. Participating in data analysis related to public health program
 5. Participating in applying for funding for public health program
 6. Participating in public health related service delivery

Degree Requirements for the M.P.H. in Epidemiology

Summary of Degree Requirements for M.P.H. in Epidemiology

SPH Core	9 hours
Department Core	19 hours
Major Courses	6 hours
Elective	3 hours
Practice	<u>6 hours</u>
Total	43 hours

Suggested Course Load

We generally advise students to register for no more than 12 credits in any given semester. Most students find the graduate curriculum to be considerably more demanding and time-consuming than their undergraduate experiences.

School of Public Health Core (9 hours)

ENHS	660	(3)	Concepts of Environmental Health Sciences
HSPM	700	(3)	Approaches and Concepts of Health Administration
HPEB	700	(3)	Concepts and Methods in Health Promotion

Department Core (19 hours)

BIOS	701	(3)	Concepts and Methods of Biostatistics
EPID	701	(3)	Concepts and Methods of Epidemiology
BIOS	710	(3)	Effective Data Management in Public Health
BIOS	757	(3)	Intermediate Biometrics
EPID	741	(4)	Intermediate Epidemiologic Methods
EPID	745	(2)	Seminar in Epidemiology (2 semesters)
BIOS	745	(1)	Seminar in Biostatistics

Major Courses (6 hours)

EPID	730	(3)	Public Health Surveillance Systems
EPID	758	(3)	Application of Epidemiology in Public Health

Elective (3 hours)

Electives may be chosen from epidemiology or other courses in the University that support the overall educational goals of the student. The Faculty Advisor must approve all elective courses. Epidemiology courses are listed below:

EPID	J661	(4)	Parasitology
EPID	725	(3)	Biologic Basis of Public Health
EPID	744	(3)	Cardiovascular Disease Epidemiology
EPID	746	(3)	Cancer Epidemiology
EPID	747	(3)	Environmental Epidemiology
EPID	749	(3)	Infectious Disease Epidemiology
EPID	763	(3)	Nutritional Epidemiology
EPID	765	(3)	Reproductive Epidemiology
EPID	767	(3)	GIS and Public Health Applications
EPID	770	(3)	Social Epidemiology
EPID	788	(3)	Practical Methods for Secondary Data Analysis
EPID	790	(3)	Independent Study
EPID	800	(3)	Advanced Methodological Theory in Epidemiology
EPID	801	(3)	Advanced Analytic Methods in Epidemiology
EPID	802	(3)	Epidemiologic Methods III
EPID	820	(3)	Seminar in the Epidemiology of Health Effects of Physical Activity
EPID	869	(3)	Clinical Effectiveness

Practice (6 hours)

EPID	798	(6)	Public Health Practice
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Goals and Learning Outcomes for the M.S.P.H. in Epidemiology

The purpose of the Master of Science in Public Health (MSPH) degree in Epidemiology is to prepare students for involvement in epidemiologic research that addresses the distribution and determinants of disease and other health-related conditions and behaviors. A student who successfully completes this degree will satisfy the following goals.

Goal #1.

MSPH program graduates demonstrate an ability to apply epidemiologic methods in identifying the determinants of disease and other health-related conditions.

- Learning outcome #1. Students will demonstrate the ability to calculate and interpret measures of association.
- Learning Outcome #2. Students will differentiate between common epidemiologic study designs.

Goal #2.

MSPH program graduates will gain a broad understanding of diversity and culture, ethical principles, program planning and systems thinking.

- Learning outcome #1. Students will describe the roles of history, power, privilege and structural inequality in producing health disparities.
- Learning outcome #2. Students will explain how the findings of a program evaluation can be used.
- Learning outcome #3. Students will explain how individuals, social networks, organizations, and communities may be viewed as systems in the analysis of public health problems.
- Learning outcome #4. Students will understand basic ethical principles pertaining to public health research and practice.

Goal #3.

MSPH program graduates will have effective written and oral communication skills for presenting public health information and epidemiologic data to the scientific community.

- Learning outcome #1. Students will demonstrate their research capabilities by designing a research project which is presented orally in class.

Goal #4.

MSPH program graduates will have adequate knowledge in biostatistical procedures as well as be competent in information technologies and data management required for successful completion of epidemiologic studies.

- Learning outcome #1. Students will create and manipulate datasets and analyze data using appropriate statistical methods and software packages.
- Learning outcome #2. Students will demonstrate proficiency in creating tables and reports using appropriate software packages.
- Learning outcome #3. Students will correctly interpret results from statistical analyses.

Degree Requirements for the M.S.P.H. in Epidemiology

Summary of Degree Requirements for M.S.P.H. in Epidemiology

SPH Core	3 hours
Department Core	22 hours
Major Courses	9 hours
Electives	3 hours
Thesis	<u>6 hours</u>
Total	43 hours

Suggested Course Load

We generally advise students to register for no more than 12 credits in any given semester. Most students find the graduate curriculum to be considerably more demanding and time-consuming than their undergraduate experiences.

School of Public Health Core (3 hours)

PUBH 700 (3)	Perspectives in Public Health
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Department Core (22 hours)

BIOS 701 (3)	Concepts and Methods of Biostatistics
EPID 701 (3)	Concepts and Methods of Epidemiology
BIOS 757 (3)	Intermediate Biometrics
BIOS 710 (3)	Effective Data Management for Public Health
EPID 741 (4)	Intermediate Epidemiologic Methods
EPID 745 (2)	Seminar in Epidemiology (2 semesters)
BIOS 745 (1)	Seminar in Biostatistics
BIOS 754 (3)	Discrete Data Analysis

Major Courses (9 hours)

EPID 758 (3)	Application of Epidemiology in Public Health
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Plus any two of the following:

EPID J661 (4)	Parasitology
EPID 725 (3)	Biologic Basis of Public Health
EPID 730 (3)	Public Health Surveillance Systems
EPID 744 (3)	Cardiovascular Disease Epidemiology
EPID 746 (3)	Cancer Epidemiology
EPID 747 (3)	Environmental Epidemiology
EPID 749 (3)	Infectious Disease Epidemiology
EPID 763 (3)	Nutritional Epidemiology
EPID 765 (3)	Reproductive Epidemiology
EPID 767 (3)	GIS and Public Health Applications
EPID 770 (3)	Social Epidemiology
EPID 788 (3)	Practical Methods for Secondary Data Analysis
EPID 790 (3)	Independent Study
EPID 800 (3)	Advanced Methodological Theory in Epidemiology
EPID 801 (3)	Advanced Analytic Methods in Epidemiology
EPID 802 (3)	Epidemiologic Methods III
EPID 820 (3)	Seminar in the Epidemiology of Health Effects of Physical Activity
EPID 869 (3)	Clinical Effectiveness

Electives (3 hours)

Electives are chosen from courses in the University that support the overall educational goals of the student. The Faculty Advisor must approve all elective courses. Typically, the elective course is chosen from the list above, in addition to the two major courses.

Thesis (6 hours)

EPID 799 (6)	Thesis Preparation
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Typical Course sequence for MPH & MSPH EPID students

MPH

Semester	1	2		3	4
	Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring
DEPT	EPID 701	EPID 741			
CORE	EPID 745	EPID 745			
(19)	BIOS 701	BIOS 757			
	BIOS 710	BIOS 745			
MAJOR (6)				EPID 758	EPID 730
SPH CORE (9)		SPH1	SPH2	SPH3	
ELECT (3)				ELECT 1	
PRACTICE (6)				EPID 798 (1 credit)	EPID 798 (5 credits)
Credits (43)	10	12	3	10	8

MSPH

Semester	1	2		3	4
	Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring
DEPT	EPID 701	EPID 741		BIOS 754	
CORE	EPID 745	EPID 745			
(22)	BIOS 701	BIOS 757			
	BIOS 710	BIOS 745			
MAJOR (9)				EPID 758 MAJOR2	MAJOR3
SPH CORE (3)			PUBH 700		
ELECT (3)					ELECT 1
THESIS (6)				EPID 799 (3 credits)	EPID 799 (3 credits)
Credits (43)	10	9	3	12	9

Goals and Learning Outcomes of the M.S.P.H. in Biostatistics

The purpose of the Master of Science in Public Health (MSPH) degree in biostatistics is to prepare students, through quality lecture and practical experiences and other research opportunities, for involvement in biostatistical research, including application of existing statistical theory to health problems, formulation of designed experiments, and adaptation of existing statistical theory for emerging health related problems. Specifically, a student who successfully completes this degree will satisfy the following goals.

Goal #1.

MSPH program graduates will demonstrate a mastery of biostatistical techniques, know which of these is most appropriate in a given situation, and know how to perform and interpret the analyses of these techniques.

- Learning outcome #1. Students will demonstrate the ability to evaluate a given health related problem, and to identify the most appropriate statistical technique (e.g., t-test, contingency table, correlation) for analysis.
- Learning outcome #2. Students will demonstrate the ability to interpret the results of a statistical analysis, and to communicate such interpretations in an easily comprehensible manner.
- Learning outcome #3. Students will display a mastery of a variety of traditional and newly developed statistical techniques, including multivariable methods for continuous and categorical data analysis.

Goal #2.

MSPH program graduates will demonstrate the ability to use a variety of statistical software packages to obtain, manage, and analyze public health data.

- Learning outcome #1. Students will demonstrate the ability to structure available data in an easily useable form, using a variety of data management software tools.
- Learning outcome #2. Students will demonstrate the ability to use a variety of statistical software packages, to create and maintain databases, and to analyze data.

Goal #3.

MSPH program graduates will effectively communicate with both biostatisticians and non-biostatisticians to explain methodology and interpret results of analyses.

- Learning outcome #1. Students will demonstrate the ability to work independently on a research problem, outside of the classroom setting and present the results to an audience.
- Learning outcome #2. Students will demonstrate the ability to modify and extend existing statistical techniques to answer questions posed by health-related situations, and to synthesize such research results into acceptable research papers.

Goal #4.

MSPH program graduates will demonstrate an overall mastery of the core concepts of public health.

- Learning outcome #1: Students will demonstrate an understanding of current public health practice and how various health-related disciplines contribute to achieving public health goals.

Degree Requirements for the M.S.P.H. in Biostatistics

A minimum of 45 credit hours is required for the Master of Science in Public Health with a major in Biostatistics. Students are required to have two semesters of calculus and an introductory course or its equivalent in matrix algebra or will be expected to make up the deficit beyond the minimum program of study. Additional courses may be required to meet prerequisites or to accommodate electives. All department core courses must be passed with a grade of “B” or better. Failure to do so will necessitate repeating the course; these courses can only be repeated once. Course requirements are below.

Summary of Degree Requirements for M.S.P.H. in Biostatistics

SPH Core	3 hours
Department Core	18 hours
Major Courses	15 hours
Electives	3 hours
Thesis	<u>6 hours</u>
Total	45 hours

School of Public Health Core (3 hours)

PUBH 700 (3) Perspectives in Public Health

Department Core (18 hours)

BIOS 701 (3) Concepts and Methods of Biostatistics
BIOS 757 (3) Intermediate Biostatistics
BIOS 758 (3) Advanced Biostatistics
EPID 701 (3) Concepts and Methods of Epidemiology
EPID 745 (1) Seminar in Epidemiology
BIOS 745 (2) Seminar in Biostatistics
BIOS 710 (3) Effective Data Management in Public Health

Major Courses (15 hours)

BIOS 759 (3) Biostatistical Methods for Rates and Proportions
BIOS 761 (3) Survival Analysis
BIOS 770 (3) Applied Longitudinal Data Analysis
STAT 512 (3) Mathematical Statistics
STAT 513 (3) Theory of Statistical Inference

Electives (3 hours)

Electives are chosen from courses in the University which support the overall educational goals of the student. The Faculty Advisor must approve all elective courses.

Recommended Electives:

BIOS 760 (3) Biostatistical Methods in Clinical Trials
BIOS 765 (3) Research Design in the Biomedical Sciences
BIOS 780 (3) Quantile Regression
BIOS 805 (3) Categorical Data Analysis
BISO 811 (3) Survival Analysis II
BIOS 820 (3) Bayesian Biostatistics and Computation
BIOS 822 (3) Statistical Methods in Spatial Epidemiology
BIOS 825 (3) Public Health Applications of Multivariate Methods
EPID 741 (4) Epidemiologic Methods I
STAT 518 (3) Nonparametric Statistical Methods
STAT 519 (3) Sampling

Thesis (6 hours) BIOS 799 (6) Thesis Preparation

Typical Course sequence for MSPH BIOS students

MSPH

Semester	1	2		3	4
	Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring
PUBH 700 (3)			PUBH 700 (3)		
DEPT	EPID 701 (3)	BIOS 757 (3)		BIOS 761 (3)	
CORE	BIOS 701 (3)	BIOS 745 (1)			
(18)	BIOS 710 (3)				
	BIOS 745 (1)				
	EPID 745 (1)				
MAJOR		BIOS 758 (3)		BIOS 759 (3)	BIOS 770 (3)
COURSES		STAT 512 (3)		STAT 513(3)	
(15)					
ELECTIVES (3)					ELECTIVE (3)
THESIS (6)				BIOS 799 (1)	BIOS 799 (5)
Credits (45)	11	10	3	10	11

STAT 512 is also offered in the first summer session, so students could take it then. Many times, students like to take thesis hour(s) in the fall of their second year.

Public Health Practice/Practicum Information

Practicum Requirements for the M.P.H.

The purpose of the practicum is to blend practical field experiences with academic learning. The practicum is an essential part of the MPH program curriculum and is intended to provide hands-on public health experience. The practicum aims to provide each student with opportunities to apply and test public health concepts and theories in practical settings and to provide mastery of the program's public health competencies.

The practicum is a three-way partnership between the student, faculty advisor and preceptor. Each partner in this relationship assumes certain responsibilities, performs specific functions, and receives benefits. The practicum is guided by a set of goals, competencies, and objectives, which are based on the needs and resources of all parties involved. A practicum is individually developed; therefore, the focus, substance, and approach of the practicum will vary depending on a student's individual interests and professional goals. However, the objectives of the practicum must be consistent with the vision, mission, and goals of the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics and the Arnold School of Public Health.

From practicum planning through completion, a student works under the guidance of a departmental faculty member (practicum advisor) and the supervision of a professional (preceptor). Decisions on the nature, site, specific objectives, and activities of the practicum are determined through discussions and agreements among the student, preceptor, and advisor (and perhaps other faculty who have expertise in the area). The roles and responsibilities of each person are outlined below.

A practicum cannot be part of a student's existing job or graduate assistantship (GA). It is possible to carry out a practicum at an existing job or GA if it is above and beyond the job or GA requirements and results in the appropriate amount of contact hours. This exception should be carefully negotiated with the advisor. The practicum report is considered part of the culminating, or capstone, experience of each MPH curriculum, much like a project or a thesis. Faculty research projects are generally not appropriate for the practicum experience.

The practicum is a professional position and one in which students are representatives of the Arnold School and University of South Carolina. Students are expected to always conduct themselves and dress in a professional manner.

Experience with organizations that have sponsored Arnold School of Public Health students suggests that the following six major conditions are essential to a successful practicum:

- The student has competence/experience that indicates the potential for contributions to the organization, including knowledge gained in prerequisite courses.
- The student and the advisor have developed thoughtful and well-articulated learning objectives that can be pursued in the framework of the practicum experience.

- The student demonstrates an understanding of the practicum objectives and identifies a network of people to help achieve the objectives.
- The student seeks advice and mentoring from his/her practicum advisor.
- A preceptor is identified who wants a productive experience for both the organization and the student.
- An organization wants a project accomplished, and it “owns” the work results.

Prerequisites

MPH students are expected to complete the following before enrolling in a practicum:

1. departmental core classes
2. at least one of the three public health core courses, and
3. pass the progression exam.

Criteria for Practicum Sites and Preceptors Sites

The Arnold School of Public Health has a long history of working with agencies and organizations that provide practice opportunities. To be considered an eligible practicum site, an organization must meet the following criteria: (<http://mysph.sc.edu/om>)

- Have a completed and approved Practicum Site Application through the MySPH Opportunity Manager
- Address or serve a public health or health service mission
- Offer students the opportunity to learn from professionals in a supervised environment
- Establish a Memorandum of Agreement with the Arnold School of Public Health

Preceptors

Preceptors for the practicum are professionals who work in public health practice or health service organizations, such as those who develop, manage, or evaluate programs at the SC Hospital Association, American Lung Association, and The American Cancer Society. To be considered an eligible preceptor, a professional must meet the following criteria:

- Employment by an approved organization (see site criteria available on mysph.sc.edu)
- Have at least a bachelor’s degree and two years’ experience (master’s degree preferred)
- Complete Preceptor/Supervisor [online orientation](#), available through MySPH’s Practicum Website
- Agree to professional standards and ethics and to abide by the policies and procedures established by the Arnold School
- Create a profile on MySPH Opportunity Manager

Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)

The Arnold School of Public Health provides a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to establish a formal business agreement between the Arnold School and practicum sites. The MOA is used to create a cooperative work agreement that outlines the responsibilities of each party. Please contact Josh Jenkins at jenki275@mailbox.sc.edu to receive a copy of the Arnold School's MOA template.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students

Students are expected to:

- take initiative and responsibility to:
 - explicitly address proposal or work agreements
 - define clear practicum work and learning objectives
 - arrange or select an appropriate setting for a practice activity
 - complete work, learning tasks, and evaluations by the specified deadlines
 - arrange appropriate meetings with the faculty advisor and preceptor, including the final oral presentation
- discuss practicum-related issues & requirements with the practicum advisor and preceptor
- register for the practicum in the semester in which the practicum begins
- submit a complete practicum proposal for review and approval by your practicum advisor
- complete practicum agreement online through MySPH Opportunity Manager and ensure that your practicum advisor and preceptor electronically sign the practicum proposal
- function with a high level of professionalism at all times when representing the Arnold School of Public Health
- submit all required reports and products to the department and submit the practicum report through MySPH Opportunity Manager.
- complete evaluation in MySPH Opportunity Manager upon conclusion of the practicum

Practicum Advisor

The practicum advisor is expected to:

- advise student in developing practicum learning objectives
- review practicum proposal and any requested revisions
- approve the final agreement in MySPH Opportunity Manager
- advise student regarding an Ethics Review if required of the practice project
- communicate with the student and preceptor throughout practicum
- provide ongoing expert advice and guidance as needed or required
- assess learning objectives and assign pass/fail grade at appropriate times
- attend final oral presentation by student
- review and evaluate the practicum final report
- complete practicum evaluation through MySPH Opportunity Manager

Preceptor

The preceptor is expected to do the following:

- assist Arnold School of Public Health faculty (i.e., practicum advisor) and student to define short-term tasks of potential use to his or her organization
- review the student's practicum proposal for usefulness to the organization
- determine limits of preceptor's role with student
- electronically sign the practicum proposal through MySPH Opportunity Manager
- provide on-site direction to the work component of the practicum
- provide student logistical support (e.g., arranging space, equipment, use of phones, use of computer and/or computer software, secretarial help, making introductions, providing data or helping gain access to it, general advice, etc.) within the organization
- assist the faculty advisor with assessment of student's work and growth in competence during the practicum
- attend the student's required final oral presentation if possible
- review and evaluate the practicum final report
- complete practicum evaluation through MySPH Opportunity Manager

Developing the Practicum Proposal

During this stage of the process, the student works with the preceptor and practicum advisor to develop a practicum proposal that includes the components listed below. This proposal includes all information needed for the practicum proposal that is submitted to MySPH. This proposal must be substantially completed before the practicum starts. The student, faculty advisor and preceptor indicate their approval of the proposal within MySPH. In addition to entering some specific fields in MySPH, the proposal document will be uploaded in its entirety.

The practicum proposal includes the following:

- Title page
- Introduction to the public health problem
- Problem statement and rationale; literature review
- Setting (description of the practicum site)
- Project-specific learning objectives linked to program practicum learning objectives. These objectives should clearly relate to the program learning outcomes and reflect synthesis of the public health core.
- Performance objectives that describe project-specific activities including any deliverables and the time line to accomplish these objectives
- Description regarding each party's responsibilities; interaction among student, advisor and preceptor; what resources will be provided by each party; how student's performance will be monitored; any particular restrictions for the project identified in the agency MOA.
- Bibliography

The Practicum Experience

During the practicum, the student is responsible for completing the activities as specified in the practicum proposal. During the practicum, the student should interact with the preceptor and practicum advisor to assess progress and to address any concerns, challenges or unexpected developments as described in the practicum proposal.

Final Report and Oral Presentation

The student is responsible for arranging the time and place of the oral presentation. The practicum advisor and preceptor must be present at the presentation. Announcements of this presentation must be posted throughout the Arnold School buildings and online on the MySPH calendar at least one week prior to the presentation.

Practicum Evaluation

Three weeks prior to the practicum's end date, the practicum advisor, preceptor and student will receive an email to complete the student's practicum evaluation through MySPH. The evaluation is designed primarily to provide feedback on job performance and related issues to assist the Arnold School in monitoring practice and academic preparation for the MPH program.

Ethics and Professional Standards

Professional conditions of confidentiality are to be honored according to prevailing practice of the practicum site. In general, information received from an individual or organization belongs to that individual or organization, and recipients (i.e., students) are not free to pass along this information to other parties without the consent of the individual or organization.

USC does not require the IRB process and approval for practicum work. However, some projects may need to be approved by the agency review committee at which the practicum is conducted. Any necessary approvals must be obtained prior to beginning work on the defined practicum tasks. Some practicum activities related to an ongoing research project may be covered under that project's IRB approval. Such approval should be discussed with the project principal investigator and/or practicum advisor. In most situations, notification to the IRB of a change in protocol is sufficient.

Financial support

If financial resources are required for doing a Public Health Practice activity, the responsibility for negotiating these arrangements rests with the sponsoring agency and the student. These costs and responsibilities for coverage are included in the practicum proposal. Responsibilities of a graduate assistantship cannot be used to satisfy practice requirements.

Thesis Information

Purpose of the Master's Thesis

All MSPH students must complete a research project culminating in a thesis. The purpose of the Master's Thesis is to apply the principles and methods learned during coursework and demonstrate competence of basic epidemiologic/biostatistical research. At the end of the thesis, the student should be able to demonstrate the ability to:

Epidemiology Thesis:

- Develop a testable research question of public health significance;
- Review the current literature as context for the research question;
- Describe the research design and analytic strategy;
- Conduct analyses appropriate for the research question;
- Clearly present the results;
- Draw appropriate inferences based on the results;
- Discuss the findings in context of current knowledge and implications for public health and future research.

Biostatistics Thesis:

- Extend a known statistical technique to a new area, or apply a known technique in a novel manner;
- Review the current literature as context for the research question;
- Describe the statistical issue in the context of the current literature and the focus of the thesis;
- Conduct analyses to illustrate the technique or statistical issue;
- Clearly present the results;
- Draw appropriate inferences based on the results;
- Discuss the findings in context of the current knowledge literature and implications for public health and future research.

Thesis Committee

Students must pass (or be exempted from) the progression examination before forming the Thesis Committee and beginning thesis work. The student, in consultation with the Academic Advisor, will select a Thesis Director from the departmental faculty. The selection of the Thesis Director should reflect the student's area of research interest. The Thesis Director is primarily responsible for advising and mentoring the student throughout the thesis. The Thesis Director and student will work together to identify additional members of the Thesis Committee. The student is expected to be actively involved in assembling the committee,

asking each prospective faculty member if he or she would be willing to serve. The committee will consist of a minimum of three members, including the Thesis Director and at least one other departmental faculty member whose interests are related to the student's research goals. The third member may be from any other academic department who has an interest in the student's research area. Additional members having special expertise may serve at the student's and Thesis Director's discretion. Once the committee members are finalized, the student completes a Master's Thesis Committee Appointment Form (see appendix) and submits it to Graduate Director for approval.

Registering for Thesis Hours

Students can register for thesis credit hours (EPID 799) only if approved by the Thesis Director and actively working on the thesis. A total of 6 thesis credit hours are required for graduation.

If a student completes the requisite 6 thesis credit hours and has not defended and submitted the thesis, the student must register for at least one thesis credit hour each semester he or she is working on the thesis.

Human Subjects Approvals

In consultation with the Thesis Director, the student may need to obtain IRB approval. All thesis research involving human subjects must be reviewed and approved by the appropriate ethics review committee. Research qualifying for exemption (typically secondary data analysis of existing data, observational studies with adults, or evaluation of service/public activities) should be approved by the SPH Institutional Review Board Liaison. The IRB application must be completed online at <http://orc.research.sc.edu/irb.shtml>. It will be necessary to register the first time you enter the site. Some projects must also be approved by the review committee at the agency where the research is conducted. Any necessary approvals must be obtained prior to beginning work on the defined thesis tasks. Some thesis activities related to an ongoing research project may be covered under that project's IRB approval. This should be discussed with the project principal investigator and/or practicum advisor. In most situations, notification of the IRB or IRB liaison of a change in protocol is sufficient.

Deadlines

The complete thesis must be read, critically evaluated, and approved by all members of the Thesis Committee. In accordance with [Graduate School guidelines](#), the following deadlines must be met.

- a. Initially, the student **must prepare a written thesis proposal and conduct a presentation** to the Thesis Committee for approval. Typically, the thesis proposal consists of the introduction, literature review, and methodology that the student intends

to use for the thesis. In many cases, this forms the basis of the first three chapters of the final thesis. The proposal approval form must be submitted to the Graduate Director (see appendix). The presentation of the proposal should be no less than 3 months prior to the thesis defense.

- b. A First Draft of Thesis should be submitted to the Thesis Committee at least 2 weeks before the defense (6 weeks before the date of graduation), or earlier if specified by the committee.
- c. The final copy is to be submitted to each committee member at least 30 days prior to the end of the semester (see time table for approximate dates) or at least two weeks prior to the thesis defense, whichever is earlier.
- d. The thesis defense should be scheduled after all members of the Thesis Committee receive the final copy of the thesis.

Announcements of the presentation should be posted at least one week prior to the defense. The thesis defense should be scheduled in an available classroom.

There are two phases of the thesis defense: public presentation and the oral exam. The candidate must publicly present the thesis in a 30-45-minute presentation. Following this, the candidate must pass an oral examination, which shall be administered immediately following the presentation and evaluated by the Thesis Committee. The oral examination will focus on the technical and scientific aspects of the thesis topic and may cover any subject matter relevant to the student's field of study. One of three decisions may be reached at the end of the thesis defense: 1) accepted as is; 2) accepted on the condition that certain changes are made within a specified time frame; 3) rejected.

Not later than five weeks before graduation, the thesis draft should be submitted via the electronic thesis and dissertation (ETD) process to the Graduate School for preliminary thesis format check. You can view the format guide, ETD samples, and templates and submit your document at the Thesis & Dissertation portal. Students are responsible for making sure the thesis meets the Graduate Schools' requirement (<http://gradschool.sc.edu/students/thesisdiss.asp>).

All Thesis Committee members must approve the final version and sign the Thesis Signature and Approval (TSF) form (<http://gradschool.sc.edu/forms/G-TSF.pdf>). The hard copy of the signed form, *with original signatures*, is submitted to the Graduate School. Multiple copies of this form can be used for those committee members who are out of the country provided all completed forms are returned to the Graduate School with original signatures (if you have questions, see your Graduate Director). If the student, with committee approval, should wish to publish a manuscript from his/her thesis, a letter requesting delayed release (embargo) of dissemination must accompany the TSF, signed by the student's thesis advisor and Graduate Director. Epidemiology master's students typically request a one-year embargo.

- e. The student should provide each Thesis Committee member a PDF copy of the thesis as submitted to the Graduate School or in a manner agreed upon by the committee member. Final approval is given by the Graduate School via the ETD process. The final approved Thesis must be submitted via the ETD process no later than 20 days before graduation.
- f. Specified deadlines can be shortened if the majority of faculty in the student's division (epidemiology or biostatistics) vote to allow an exemption.

Master's Thesis FAQs

- **When should I start working on my master's thesis?**

The process can begin, at least informally, as soon as the student starts the program. Students are encouraged to discuss ideas with faculty advisors. Attending departmental, research center/institute, school-wide, and university seminars to learn about the research of faculty members or emerging topics in the field may help one develop a topic. Other ways to begin the thesis include reading and researching topics that you find interesting, working as a graduate research assistant.
- **Should I collect my own data for the master's thesis?**

No! Master's students are not expected to undertake their own original research because it may be difficult to complete original research within the time frame of a master's program. Students are strongly encouraged to use data already available.
- **How can I find a dataset to analyze for my master's thesis?**

There are a several publicly available datasets (e.g. BRFSS, NHANES, and NHIS). Additionally, students may be granted access to a faculty members research data. However, written permission from whoever controls that dataset, and necessary IRB approval must be obtained.
- **What are the roles of the thesis committee members?**

The Thesis Director has the primary responsibility for advising you throughout the entire thesis process. This includes helping you to form the thesis committee, providing close guidance and feedback (i.e., help to refine research question, identify sources of data), convening and chairing committee meetings, and helping you to troubleshoot issues and in developing high quality thesis drafts.

The other committee members may advise on the designing the project, analysis of data, and interpreting the results. These members may also provide comments, lend expertise on the development of your thesis, and reviews drafts.
- **What are acceptable research studies for an epidemiology thesis?**

There are several acceptable types of research that are acceptable for the epidemiology thesis. The most common research approach is a study of determinants of disease, i.e.,

testing one or more hypotheses about the relationship between an exposure(s) and a health-related outcomes(s). Other acceptable formats include validation of a measurement or screening test, and a formal systematic review or meta-analysis.

- **What are acceptable research topics for a biostatistics thesis?**

Acceptable research topics for a biostatistics thesis include the development of a new data analytic method, detailed study of an existing method or comparison of performance of various methods (e.g., simulation study), and a review or synthesis of a new or emerging area of statistical methodology or application

- **Am I required to publish my master’s thesis?**

Publishing the master’s thesis is not a requirement for earning the master’s degree. However, the thesis should be of sufficient quality to serve as the basis for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. (A master’s thesis will usually contain substantially more detail than is appropriate for journal publication.) As a department committed to the highest levels of scholarship and to your professional well-being, we encourage publication of your master’s thesis. Regardless of your career path, first authorship on a peer-reviewed publication speaks to the quality of your thesis research and will open doors in the public health practice and research settings. You are encouraged to discuss this issue with your Thesis Director.

- **How many pages is the thesis proposal? The thesis?**

There are no requirements for this – it varies greatly from student to student and depends on the nature and scope of the project proposed. Students are encouraged to read theses of students who have graduated from the department to get an idea as to the scope and length. You can access these theses using the library website: <http://library.sc.edu/webdiss.html>. Click on CurrentResearch@USC.

- **Approximate Thesis Milestone Deadlines for Graduation in May, August, or December.**

Task	For graduation in		
	May	August	December
Thesis proposal defense	Early Jan	Early Apr	Early Aug
First complete version to committee	Mid March	Mid June	Mid Oct
Thesis defense deadline AND Thesis format and check deadline via ETD	Early April	Early July	Early Nov
Final submission of thesis approved by committee - submitted via ETD	11 days after final defense deadline (3 rd week April)	11 days after final defense deadline (3 rd week July)	11 days after final defense deadline (3 rd week (Nov))

****IMPORTANT:** Please note that these dates are only approximations of the actual dates. It is your responsibility to check the updated school calendar regarding the actual dates.

Doctoral Programs – Important Dates and Forms

- To be eligible for In-State tuition rate, out-of-state & foreign students must secure an assistantship no later than 30 days into the semester.
- Form an Advisory Committee (Faculty Advisor and Graduate Director) during the first term of enrollment and draft a Program of Study.
- Qualifying Exam – – 3rd Friday of Spring Semester, after either first or second year of coursework.
 - Qualifying Exam Re-take the Friday of the first full week after spring commencement (if necessary)
- Doctoral Program of Study Form (DPOS) must be approved by the Doctoral committee and Graduate School. This form is abbreviated DPOS in the Graduate School Forms Library.
 - Any changes to the POS form should be submitted using the Program of Adjustment Form, (POSA)
- Admission to Doctoral Candidacy requires **both** passing the Qualifying Exam **and** having an approved Program of Study and must be one full academic year prior to graduation.
- Submit a Doctoral Committee Appointment Request (G-DCA) to form the committees needed for the comprehensive exam and dissertation. Typically, the same individuals serve on both these committees.
- Dissertation Proposal – at least *six months prior* to the dissertation defense. After successful completion of defense, submit the PhD Dissertation Proposal Form (department form) to the Graduate Director.
- Doctoral Comprehensive Exam – completed at least 60 days before the date of graduation. The PhD Examination Verification Form must be completed and sent in to the Graduate School.
 - The oral component of the exam should follow within one month of the written exam
 - Biostatistics Student may elect to have an oral exam replace the written comprehensive exam given immediately following their dissertation proposal.

- Graduation Application (Form AS-126)– submitted no later than 15 days after the beginning of the term in which candidate expects to graduate
- Dissertation Draft – Within 15 days after the start of the final term of study, submit draft of dissertation to advisor and committee members (or earlier if requested by the committee) and schedule dissertation defense. Submit a Dissertation Defense Announcement, using the Graduate Management System (GMS).
- Dissertation Format Check - submitted to the Graduate School via ETD process no later than 5 weeks before the date of graduation.
- Dissertation Defense – at least one week prior to final dissertation submission. An announcement must be posted & sent out on the EPID-BIOS listserv 1 week prior to defense. A hard copy of the Dissertation Signature and Approval Form, with original signatures, must be submitted to the Graduate School after the defense.
- Final Dissertation – submitted to the Grad School via ETD no later than 20 days before the date of graduation.

Program of Study

As early in the program as possible, in consultation with the Advisory and/or Dissertation Committee (described on page 61 under Doctoral Committees), a doctoral student should complete a Program of Study. The DPOS form must be signed by the student, student's advisor and the Graduate Director prior to submission to the Graduate School for approval. Doctoral program of study approval is required for official candidacy.

With the approval of student's academic advisor and Graduate Director, up to 12 hours of course requirements can be satisfied by previous graduate coursework (content) which was part of a completed master's degree. All content coursework must be completed within 10 years of doctoral graduation, and the final grade in each course must be "B" or better. The student is responsible for providing course syllabi and/or other supporting documentation. Content coursework older than 10 years earned at another institution cannot be revalidated. Biostatistics students cannot use Statistics courses below the 700 level as content coursework.

Given all doctoral students in epidemiology and biostatistics are required to have completed a master's degree prior to admission, the program of study submitted to the Graduate School must meet the following requirements:

1. Forty-two credit hours unique to the University of South Carolina, taken to fulfill requirements for the degree, which includes 12 credit hours of dissertation (EPID/BIOS 899)
2. At least half of the courses are at a 700 level or higher
3. The Advisory Committee has signed off on the program of study
4. Pre-requisite courses (e.g. for epidemiology: EPID 701, EPID 741, BIOS 701, BIOS 710, BIOS 757 and their equivalents; and for Biostatistics: EPID 701, BIOS 701, BIOS 757 and BIOS 710) cannot be on the program of study
5. Courses taken for undergraduate credit can never be on any doctoral program of study

University of South Carolina courses at the 500 and 600 level (which can be graduate or undergraduate), and any other such courses taken at other institutions, may be acceptable if they are outside of the student's discipline but applicable to the student's area of study. For example, a 500-level statistics class for an epidemiology major, or a 500-level geography course for a student working with geographic information systems (GIS) as part of the dissertation are acceptable.

Occasionally, changes are needed in the Program of Study. In this case, a Program of Study Adjustment Form (POSA) must be filed with the Graduate School. Extra courses taken, which are not required for graduation, should not be listed on the Program of Study.

Transfer Credit

Students may transfer credits (up to 12 hours maximum) from previous graduate coursework, provided the credits were NOT part of a completed degree program. Students wishing to transfer credits for inclusion on their program of study must complete a Request for Transfer Credit Form (G-RTC) for each course they wish to transfer. All requests must be accompanied by the course syllabus be and approved by the student's academic advisor and graduate director. To be listed on the doctoral program of study, transfer courses must have been completed at an accredited institution, with a grade of "B" or better, within ten years preceding the date of doctoral graduation. Transfer credits older than 10 years earned at another institution cannot be revalidated for use on a program of study. BIOS students cannot transfer any hours for STAT courses below the 700 level to the doctoral Program of Study.

Annual Academic Review of Ph.D. Students

Each Ph.D. student's academic progress is evaluated annually by the student's academic advisor and by the Department's Leadership Team, which includes the department Chair, Division Directors, and Graduate Program Directors for each program. These reviews should be completed after the first semester of enrollment and annually thereafter. Forms will be distributed to students from the department and an announcement/reminder of this requirement will be made each spring. There are two parts to the evaluation and review: a part completed by the student and a part completed by the student's advisor.

The annual report covers the following information:

1. Academic record including
 - a) overall grade point average;
 - b) any incomplete courses;
 - c) overall progress toward completing the coursework phase of the program.
2. Progress in completing or preparing for the Qualifying exam
3. Submission of an approved Doctoral Program of Study form
4. Discussion of progress in acquiring research experience (including citations for participation in conference presentations and peer-reviewed publications)
5. Formation of dissertation committee
6. Development of the dissertation proposal and planning for presentation of the proposal
7. Progress toward degree completion.

Students determined to be making unsatisfactory progress must meet with their academic advisor and Graduate Director to discuss plans for improving progress.

Qualifying Examination

The Qualifying Examination for Epidemiology students is normally offered on the Friday before the beginning of each Fall Semester, usually the second or fourth semester of the student's residency. For Biostatistics students, the qualifying exam is administered the third Friday of the spring semester. Passing the Qualifying Exam is one of the requirements for admission to doctoral candidacy.

The intent of the Qualifying Exam is to measure potential for doctoral study and to assess the student's basic technical and professional knowledge. Doctoral students who completed a Master's degree in Epidemiology or Biostatistics at the University of South Carolina are encouraged to take the Qualifying Examination following their first year in the doctoral program. Students admitted from Master's programs at other universities may wait to take the Qualifying Examination until their second year of doctoral studies (all students are expected to take the exam no later than this). This exam must be passed before admission to doctoral candidacy and continuation in the program and must be completed at least one full academic year prior to the date the doctoral degree is awarded.

A student must register with his or her advisor's approval to take the Qualifying Examination. The deadline for this registration is posted as soon as the examination date is set and is generally one week prior to the examination date. If a student registers to take the Qualifying Examination and does not take it, this will count as one failed attempt unless the registration is canceled at least one week prior to the examination date.

The Qualifying Examination is distinct for epidemiology students and biostatistics students. The exams are prepared by each division's Exam Committee, with assistance from other faculty in that discipline. The committee evaluates the results and determines the outcome. The Qualifying Examination will be evaluated as a whole; the student will either pass or not pass the entire Examination.

The Examination will consist of two parts, for which all students will need to appear. The first part is in the morning, generally from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and the second part is in the later afternoon, after a break for lunch. Both parts will be considered together to determine the overall performance on the examination.

For Epidemiology students, the examination will focus on design and methodology issues and on content areas. Advanced material from EPID 701, EPID 741, EPID 800, EPID 801, BIOS 701 and BIOS 757 may be reflected on the examination. The exam may include reading a published manuscript and responding to conceptual, design and methodological questions related to this publication or its subject matter. Students will be allowed to use a calculator; however, no software can be used and no further research can be done (e.g., via e-mail or the Internet).

For Biostatistics students, the morning examination will focus master level coursework including: BIOS 701, BIOS 757, BIOS 758, BIOS 759, BIOS 761, EPID 701, STAT 512, STAT 513. The afternoon session will be more on theory and methodologies presented in the various Biostatistics and Statistics courses, possibly including more advanced concepts. Biostatistics students will

complete the examination using pen/pencil and paper. Students will be allowed to use a calculator but not any statistical software. They will be given a sheet of standard formulas.

Students taking the Examination will be notified of the results in writing as soon as possible after faculty evaluation of the Examination. Faculty members will not discuss exam results with any individual student until all students have received official notification. A debriefing session will be held after examination results are released to students. The student may also meet with his or her Faculty Advisor to discuss performance on the exam.

Examinations are graded by multiple faculty members. Exam responses earning a score of 80% or above will be considered “Passing” and no Oral Examination will be required. Exam responses earning scores from 70%-79% will be considered “Passing” only upon successful completion of an additional Oral Examination. Exam responses earning scores below 70% will be considered “Failing”; students who fail the qualifying examination on the first attempt will receive feedback on gaps in mastery of material identified on the exam and will need to take the exam again.

The oral examination is conducted by at least three faculty members and focuses on areas of the written exam that may have been unclear, incomplete, or otherwise of concern. Following the oral exam, students will be determined to have either passed or failed the Qualifying Examination.

Each student is allowed two attempts at the Qualifying Examination. If the second attempt is required, it should occur at the next administration of the exam. The next qualifying examination for both Epidemiology and Biostatistics students is the third Friday in spring semester. The scoring and administration of the second attempt will follow the same process as the first, including the Oral Examination for those scoring in the range 70%-79%. If a student does not pass the examination on the second attempt, he or she is not allowed to continue in the program.

The examination schedule for epidemiology and biostatistics students are listed separately in the following table:

	2019	2020		2018	2019	2020
Type of Exam	Epidemiology Students			Biostatistics Students		
Comprehensive ‡				2-Feb	1-Feb	31-Jan
Comprehensive retake*				18-May	17-May	16-May
Qualifying†	16-Aug	14-Aug		2-Feb	1-Feb	31-Jan
Qualifying retake ‡	1-Feb	31-Jan		18-May	17-May	16-May

* First Friday after Summer classes start

† Friday before first day of class in Fall semester

‡ Third Friday of Spring semester

Doctoral Candidacy

Admission to doctoral candidacy and continuation in the program require passing the Qualifying Exam and filing an approved doctoral Program of Study (POS). Admission to Candidacy must be at least one full academic year prior to graduation, so students should plan for admission to candidacy no later than the end of the second year of study.

Residency Requirement

Excerpts taken from Doctoral Degree Requirements on the Graduate School's website, which can be found at: <http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=76&navoid=2129>.

A residency requirement is intended to ensure that doctoral students benefit from and contribute to the full spectrum of educational and professional opportunities provided by working closely with the graduate faculty and other students of a research university. The membership of the Graduate Faculty of The University of South Carolina subscribe to the position that a residency requirement may be met in multiple ways, and that these ways may be unique to specific degree programs.

All graduate programs are expected to encourage, design, provide and monitor the means for doctoral students to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values appropriate to their discipline through mechanisms that extend beyond mere course work. Regular attendance in courses to gain experience with specialized equipment and other scholarly materials and at seminars presented by scholars at The University of South Carolina and other invited guests is a beginning point. Additional experiences may include, but not be limited to, attending and presenting at professional conferences, participation in presentations of scholarly work, assisting with the conceptualization, and development and application for funding of scholarly efforts.

In the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, doctoral students are required to meet their residency requirement as follows:

Option 1. Two consecutive semesters of full-time enrollment. Full time enrollment is defined as enrollment for 6 hours for students serving as graduate assistants and 9 hours for students who are not graduate assistants; consecutive semesters could be fall/spring, spring/summer, summer/fall, or spring/fall. Programs are expected to provide enrichment opportunities beyond course enrollment to help doctoral students understand and meet the intention of the residency requirements.

Option 2. A proposal for an individual residency plan may be submitted to The Graduate School for consideration and action.

The student's advisory committee certifies on the doctoral program of study (D-POS) form the term dates and courses or other means by which the student satisfies the residency requirement. In

the event unique circumstances arise, it may be possible for a student to meet the residency requirement through an individualized plan.

In the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, dissertation hours (BIOS 899 or EPID 899) will not count toward the minimum residency requirement. Additionally, seminars (BIOS 845 or EPID 845) will normally not count toward the minimum residency requirement.

Teaching Practicum

The teaching practicum focuses on pedagogical and practical issues related to teaching a course in epidemiology or biostatistics. Through the practicum, the student will serve as a junior colleague to the course instructor, and thereby gain experience in all aspects of teaching including session planning, conducting classroom teaching, assessment and evaluation. The teaching practicum is a required 3-credit course. Students register for the course as an Independent Study (EPID 890 or BIOS 890). The following methods courses are generally suitable for a student to do a teaching practicum (EPID 410, 700, 701, 741, 800, or 801 for epidemiology students and BIOS 700, BIOS 701 for biostatistics students).

To register for the course, the following are needed:

- Identify a course for the practicum. The Graduate Director will facilitate this process taking into account course offerings, requirements of the instructor, and student preference. The course instructor for the course will serve as a faculty mentor.
- Complete a teaching practicum contract (sample available from your academic advisor or Graduate Director). The purpose of the contract is to define the objectives, scope, and responsibilities for the practicum experience. This is prepared in consultation with the faculty mentor and student.
- Complete the Independent Study Contract (ISC) (sample available from your academic advisor or Graduate Director).
- Obtain the schedule code (CRN number) and Section for your faculty advisor from the Program Coordinator.
- Obtain the following signatures on your ISC: student, academic advisor and faculty mentor.
- Turn in your ISC and contract to the graduate director who will review, sign and give to the Program Coordinator for processing.
- Register for EPID/BIOS 890.

During the practicum, the student will work with the faculty mentor as defined in the practicum contract. At the end of the practicum the student will do the following:

- Ensure that Teaching Practicum Evaluation Form is completed by the faculty mentor.
- The evaluation form will be used by the faculty mentor when determining a student's final grade.

Consulting Practicum

(Note: This is different from the consulting practicum for MPH students. Documentation for that consulting practicum is at MySPH.)

The objective of this course is to provide the student with an opportunity to apply skills learned in the program to a real-world experience by collaborating with an outside health institution. Typically, the consulting practicum consists of data analysis requests from external departments or agencies such as DHEC, a hospital, or other health agency. The consulting practicum is a required 3-credit course. Students register for the course as an Independent Study (EPID 890 or BIOS 890).

To register for the course:

- Identify a venue, preceptor, and topic for the practicum. The preceptor (mentor) is the individual at the external agency with whom the student will work during the practicum. (The student's academic advisor or other faculty members can help with this.) Identify a faculty advisor (usually the academic advisor).
- Complete a consulting practicum contract (sample available from your academic advisor or Graduate Director). The purpose of the contract is to define the objectives, scope, deliverables, and time of the practicum experience. The contract is prepared in consultation with the faculty advisor, preceptor, and student.
- Complete the Independent Study Contract (ISC) leaving the course summary and evaluation criteria blank. Attach a copy of your completed consulting practicum contract to your ISC.
- Obtain the schedule code (CRN number) and section for your faculty advisor from the Program Coordinator.
- Obtain the following signatures on your ISC: student, academic advisor and faculty advisor.
- Turn in your ISC with attached contract to the graduate director who will review, sign and give to the Program Coordinator (currently LaToya Reese) for processing. Register for EPID/BIOS 890.

During the practicum, the student will work with the preceptor as defined in the practicum contract, keeping the faculty advisor informed.

At the conclusion of the practicum, the student will do the following:

- Deliver what was agreed upon in the contract (usually a written report and presentation). If, for some reason this does not happen within the defined period, the deadline can be extended after consultation with the faculty advisor and preceptor.
- Ensure that practicum evaluations are completed by the faculty advisor, preceptor, and the student. The evaluations are done by completing an electronic form. The department Program Coordinator will provide links for the student to send to the faculty advisor and preceptor, and the student will click on the appropriate link to complete the student evaluation.

Doctoral Committees

Within the first term of enrollment, the student should form a Doctoral Advisory Committee. This committee should have two or more members, including the student's academic advisor and the Graduate Director. This committee will help draft the student's Program of Study.

When appropriate, two other committees must be formed – the Written and Oral Comprehensive Examination Committee and the Dissertation Committee, which are subject to approval by the Dean of the Graduate School. The Doctoral Committee Appointment Request Form (G-DCA), found on the Graduate School website in the forms library, must be submitted to the Graduate School for approval PRIOR to the Dissertation Proposal and/or Comprehensive Exam Defense. Typically, the same individuals serve on both committees and the chair is the student's dissertation advisor.

The Written and Oral Comprehensive Examination and Dissertation Committees must consist of a minimum of four faculty members, at least one of whom must be from another USC department or another institution. At least half of the committee must be on the faculty in the department and must be Regular or Associate Members of the Graduate Faculty. The student is expected to be actively involved in assembling the committee, asking each prospective faculty member if he or she would be willing to serve on the committee. The committee guides the student's work and offers advice on the Program of Study. The student's final Program of Study must be approved by the committee. Approval of outside members of the doctoral committees who are not tenure-track graduate faculty at USC require a letter of justification and an accompanying CV. If a student has a need for more than one outside member on a dissertation committee, this can be requested by way of a letter of justification from the Program's Graduate Director and is subject to approval by the Graduate School.

Doctoral Comprehensive Examination

The purpose of the Comprehensive Exam is to evaluate in-depth knowledge acquired by the student in the major area of concentration and in the cognate area. The exam is taken after the completion of doctoral coursework and is scheduled for the individual student. The exam will contain written and oral components. This exam is unique to each student and is prepared and administered by the Written and Oral Comprehensive Exam committee.

For epidemiology students, the purpose of comprehensive exam: To evaluate 1) in-depth knowledge acquired by the student in the major area of concentration and in the cognate areas, and 2) the ability to integrate concepts and apply them to epidemiologic research studies. The evaluation will include, but is not limited to, determining the extent to which the student is an expert in their dissertation topic area, is well-versed in the relevant literature, is competent in applying epidemiologic concepts as they relate to his or her research area and more broadly to epidemiologic research, and can demonstrate independent thinking as a PhD-level researcher. Students may choose one of two options for their comprehensive exam, although the final decision

rests with the student's dissertation advisor.

Option 1 – Traditional Comprehensive Exam (Separate from Dissertation Proposal)

The student's comprehensive exam committee is responsible for choosing the format of the Comprehensive Examination. The oral component of the exam should follow within one month of the written examination. The examination committee will prepare the oral component based on the student's performance on the written component and may also include questions about material not covered on the written component. As in the written component, any topic on the student's program of study could be represented in the oral component.

The exam committee evaluates both the written and oral components of the exam to determine whether the exam has been passed. Since the two components of the exam are evaluated together, the committee is not expected to give any response concerning the written component to the student before the oral component. If a student does not perform satisfactorily, both components must be repeated. The student is allowed two attempts to pass the examination. If a student does not pass the examination on the second attempt, he or she is not allowed to continue in the program. The examination must be completed at least 60 days before the date of graduation. The Comprehensive Examination Verification Form must be completed and sent in to the Graduate School upon completion of the examination.

Option 2. Comprehensive Examination Combined with Dissertation Proposal

Exam Structure

The written examination will consist of the dissertation proposal. The oral component of the comprehensive examination *must* include the oral defense of the dissertation proposal and an oral exam of additional questions from the dissertation committee. For epidemiology students, the oral exam offers the opportunity to ask more detailed questions related not only to the dissertation topic, but more broadly in the student's field of study, including: methods, measurement, biologic mechanisms, other literature related to the topic, and new approaches or research questions beyond the proposal. For biostatistics students, the oral exam focuses on questions related to the dissertation topic. Committee members will give the student questions one month prior to the oral examination. Students will prepare answers to the questions which will be assessed during the oral exam. Students are not required to provide written answers but may need or want to use the whiteboard to explain mechanisms or formulas.

The oral exam of additional questions should last approximately 30-60 minutes. The total time for the combined dissertation proposal and comprehensive exam should last approximately 3 hours.

Exam Implementation

Students are *not* allowed to bring in any outside materials or notes during the oral exam. Pass/fail is determined by the committee. A student can pass one or both components (dissertation proposal and comprehensive exam). A student is deemed to have failed if the committee feels his/her answers do not adequately convey the depth and breadth of knowledge expected of a doctoral

candidate. The exam committee will provide specific feedback to the student about the deficiencies. If a student should fail, the component(s) that need to be repeated are left up to the discretion of the exam committee. Portions can include any or all of the following: written dissertation proposal, proposal defense and/or oral defense of exam questions. If a retake is necessary, the student is strongly encouraged to retake the exam within 1-3 months following their initial attempt.

Dissertation Requirements

All doctoral students must complete a research project culminating in a dissertation. The dissertation must be based on original research, typically addressing a basic research problem. *Students must pass the Qualifying Examination* before enrolling in dissertation hours (EPID or BIOS 899). The student, in consultation with the Academic Advisor, will select a Dissertation Director from the departmental faculty. The Dissertation Director has primary responsibility for advising the student regarding technical work on the dissertation. **Students can register for dissertation hours only if approved by their Dissertation Director, and if actively working on the dissertation that semester.**

The first step in the dissertation process is developing the dissertation proposal. The second step is an oral defense of the dissertation proposal before the student's doctoral committee. The committee must provide written signatures of their approval of the proposal before the student can proceed with the research. Manuscripts for inclusion in the dissertation that have been submitted and/or published cannot precede the dissertation proposal defense.

Human Subjects Approvals

All dissertation research involving human subjects must be reviewed and approved by the appropriate ethics review committee. Research projects that qualify for exemption (typically secondary data analysis of existing data, observational studies with adults, or evaluation of service/public activities) can be approved by the SPH Institutional Review Board Liaison. The IRB application must be completed online at: [IRB application](#). It will be necessary to register the first time you enter the site. Some projects must also be approved by a review committee at the agency where the dissertation research will be conducted. Any necessary approvals must be obtained prior to beginning work on the defined research. Some dissertation activities related to an ongoing research project may be covered under that project's IRB approval; this should be discussed with the project PI and/or dissertation advisor; in most situations, notification of the IRB or IRB liaison of a change in protocol is sufficient.

Deadlines

The dissertation must be read, critically evaluated, and approved by all members of the Dissertation Committee. In accordance with Graduate School guidelines, the following deadlines must be met. The specific dates for a semester are available on the USC Graduate School home page <http://www.gradschool.sc.edu>. For items b-d below, "end of the semester" refers to the semester the student wishes to complete the PhD program.

- a. Initially, the student **must prepare a written dissertation proposal and conduct a presentation** to the Dissertation Committee for approval. The presentation of the proposal should be no less than 6 months prior to the dissertation defense.

- b. The first complete draft of the dissertation must be in the hands of the Dissertation Committee at least 60 days before the end of the semester (Graduate Studies Bulletin); the approximate dates are October 15, March 15, and June 15 for fall, spring and summer sessions respectively. This is approximately six weeks before the filing date for the dissertation and should be at least one month before the scheduled defense. The dissertation defense should be scheduled at this time.
- c. The final copy is to be submitted to each committee member at least 30 days prior to the end of the semester (Graduate Studies Bulletin) or at least one week prior to the dissertation defense, whichever is earlier.
- d. The dissertation defense must be held at least one week before the Graduate School filing date, which is 20 days before the end of the semester.
- e. The student must file the final dissertation by the filing date. Final approval is given by the Graduate School via the ETD process.

Dissertation Proposal

The first step in the dissertation process is the development of the dissertation proposal, and its oral defense before the student's doctoral committee. The committee must provide signatures approving the proposal before the student can proceed with the research. *Manuscripts for inclusion in the dissertation may not be submitted and/or published prior to the dissertation proposal defense.* Typically, the dissertation proposal consists of the introduction, literature review, and methodology that the student intends to use for the dissertation. In many cases, this forms the basis of the first three chapters of the final dissertation. The proposal approval form must be submitted to the Graduate Director (see appendix). The presentation of the proposal should be no less than 6 months prior to the dissertation defense.

Dissertation Defense

The candidate must publicly present the results of the dissertation research in a 45-60-minute presentation. Announcements of this presentation should be made at least one week before the defense and must include posting it on the Graduate School website (<http://gradschool.sc.edu/students/thesisdiss.asp?page=td>). The dissertation defense should not be scheduled during the scheduled class time of any department core course.

The candidate must also pass an oral examination that shall be administered immediately following the presentation and evaluated by his/her Dissertation Examination Committee. This examination will focus on the technical and scientific aspects of the dissertation topic and the scholarly delineation of the dissertation topic and may cover any other subject matter relevant to the student's field of study.

If the student chooses the dissertation style of three manuscripts, the manuscripts must address a

conceptually unified theme and a comprehensive, cumulative reference list is required. Evidence of approval to use articles which have been published or accepted for publication must be included for the Graduate School. It is the student's responsibility to secure copyright releases prior to document submission to the Graduate School. The Graduate School will accept a letter or email from the publisher.

Upon successful completion of the Dissertation Defense, all dissertation committee members must provide their original signature on the Dissertation Signature and Approval form. This form, with committee member names typed on the form, must be turned in along with the dissertation. Multiple copies of this form can be used for those committee members who are out of the country as long as all completed forms are returned to the Graduate School with original signatures (if you have questions, see your Graduate Director). Students are required to format their dissertation as directed by the Graduate School. Be sure your dissertation meets the Graduate School's requirements (see: <http://gradschool.sc.edu/students/thesisdiss.asp?page=td>). The student should provide each Dissertation Committee member a copy of the final dissertation in a manner acceptable to the committee member.

Ph.D. in Epidemiology

Goals and Learning Outcomes for the Ph.D.

The Doctor of Philosophy prepares students, through quality lecture, practical experiences and other research opportunities, for involvement in teaching and independent and collaborative epidemiological research; and trains researchers to teach and to pursue original research for investigating health-related conditions. The following goals are premised upon having successfully met all the objectives delineated previously that are common to the MPH and MSPH degrees.

Goal #1.

PhD program graduates will have mastery of the epidemiologic concepts, methods, and their application in health outcomes and health promoting behaviors and be able to communicate that understanding to others both inside and outside the field.

- Learning outcome #1. Each doctoral student will demonstrate mastery of biological concepts and epidemiologic methods relevant for estimating the association between at least one exposure and one outcome.
- Learning outcome #2. Each doctoral student will apply epidemiologic methods learned into solving an epidemiologic problem.
- Learning outcome #3. Each doctoral student will apply statistical methods learned during his/her master's program to solve more complex statistical questions.

Goal #2.

PhD program graduates will demonstrate the ability to teach epidemiologic methods in a formal classroom setting.

- Learning outcome #1. Each student will exhibit the ability to teach basic epidemiologic methods.

Goal #3.

PhD program graduates will demonstrate the ability to perform epidemiologic consulting, including methods development and interpretation of analysis results.

- Learning outcome #1. Each doctoral student will exhibit the ability to consult with clients outside the university setting and provide them with epidemiological assistance on a health-related problem.

Goal #4.

PhD program graduates will develop skills in research planning, implementation, interpretation and dissemination.

- Learning outcome #1. Each doctoral student will conduct rigorous and original epidemiologic research resulting in publishable manuscripts.

Degree Requirements for the Ph.D. in Epidemiology

Coursework for the Ph.D. in Epidemiology assumes that the applicant has taken sufficient courses in the biological or social sciences, and has solid preparation at the Master's level in Epidemiology.

Generally, if a student enters the program with a master's degree in Epidemiology received within the last few years, he/she can automatically register for EPID 800 without having to take EPID 701 or EPID 741. For students holding a master's degree in a discipline other than Epidemiology, preparatory course requirements may be set by the academic advisor. As a minimum, applicants must master the content and skills taught in the following basic courses: EPID 701, EPID 741, BIOS 701, BIOS 710, and BIOS 757. The departmental faculty also may require other extra courses on a case-by-case basis.

Per CEPH requirement, all doctoral students are required to take PUBH 700, a general public health course, as part of their curriculum. The requirement is waived for all students with an MPH degree. The requirement may also be waived with Graduate Director approval if a student can provide evidence of having taken a similar course during his/her master's degree program. In lieu of this course, the student will be required to take an additional 3 cognate hours.

Up to 12 credit hours of the required content listed below can be satisfied by previous graduate coursework which was part of a completed master's degree. The approved program of study must have a minimum of 42 hours post-master's hours, including 12 hours of EPID 899 Dissertation Preparation. For more information, refer to the section on Program of Study.

Required content listed below can also be satisfied by previous graduate coursework which was NOT part of a completed master's degree; however, the total number of transfer credit cannot exceed 12 credit hours. These courses will appear on the student's program of study if approved by the Graduate Director and the Graduate School. For more information, refer to the section on Transfer Credits.

Degree Requirements for the Ph.D. in Epidemiology (cont.)

Course Number	Title	Credit Hours
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH CORE		
PUBH 700	Perspectives in Public Health <i>(or elective if student has an MPH or has taken a similar course during their master's)</i>	3
DEPARTMENT CORE		
EPID 800	Advanced Methodological Theory in Epidemiology	3
EPID 801	Advanced Analytic Methods in Epidemiology	3
EPID 802	Epidemiologic Methods III	3
EPID 845	Doctoral Seminar (1 credit per semester for 3 semesters) (Students are required to take A, B and C)	3
EPID 890	Independent Study (Teaching Practicum)	3
EPID 890	Independent Study (Consulting Practicum)	3
MAJOR COURSES		
EPID	Other courses from Epidemiology	6
BIOS	Biostatistics courses	9
COGNATES (ELECTIVES)		
Electives	must be approved by Academic Advisor	6
DISSERTATION		
EPID 899	Dissertation Preparation	12
TOTAL REQUIRED CREDIT HOURS		54

Ph.D. in Biostatistics

Goals and Learning Objectives for the Ph.D.

The Doctor of Philosophy prepares students, through quality lecture and practical experiences and other research opportunities, for involvement in teaching and independent and collaborative biostatistical research; and trains researchers to teach and to pursue original research on analytical approaches to investigating health-related conditions, and to develop novel biostatistical approaches. The following goals are premised upon having successfully met all the objectives delineated previously for the MSPH degree.

Goal #1.

PhD program graduates will demonstrate a mastery of biostatistical techniques well beyond that required of an MSPH degree and will also demonstrate the ability to develop original methodological approaches.

- Learning outcome #1. Students will display command of a wide variety of biostatistical techniques, and have a deeper understanding of these techniques than an individual with Master's level training.

Goal #2.

PhD program graduates will demonstrate the ability to teach topics in Biostatistics in a formal classroom setting.

- Learning outcome #1. Students will demonstrate the ability to present basic statistical material in a formal classroom setting.

Goal #3.

PhD program graduates will demonstrate the ability to perform biostatistical consulting, including data analysis and interpretation.

- Learning outcome #1. Students will demonstrate the ability to consult with clients outside of the university setting and provide them with statistical assistance on a health-related problem.

Goal #4.

PhD program graduates will publish material from their dissertations in peer-reviewed professional journals in the areas of Biostatistics or Statistics.

- Learning outcome #1. Students will communicate results of newly developed techniques through publications and teaching.

Goal #5.

PhD program graduates will demonstrate an overall mastery of the core concepts of public health.

- Learning outcome #1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of current public health practice and how various health-related disciplines contribute to achieving public *health goals*.

Degree Requirements for the Ph.D. in Biostatistics

Coursework for the Ph.D. in Biostatistics is predicated upon the applicant having college-level courses in calculus and matrix algebra and solid preparation at the Master's level in biostatistics. Additional scientific background in the social or biological sciences is desirable.

For applicants holding Master's degrees in disciplines other than Biostatistics, preparatory course requirements will be set at the discretion of the faculty. As a minimum, applicants should have: a) completed the equivalent of 1-1/2 years of university-level calculus, i.e. through multivariable calculus (equivalent courses at USC include MATH 141, MATH 142, MATH 241); b) completed an introductory course or its equivalent in matrix algebra, including matrix operations and solutions of matrix equations; c) completed a year of mathematical statistics, the equivalent of STAT 512 and STAT 513; and d) mastered the knowledge and skills taught in the following basic courses: EPID 701, BIOS 701, BIOS 757 and BIOS 710. Applicants without evidence of the above knowledge-base will be expected to take the necessary basic courses immediately upon entry. The preparatory course requirements as specified by faculty are in addition to the minimal 54 hours of doctoral requirements. Per CEPH requirement, all doctoral students are required to take PUBH 700, a general public health course, as part of their curriculum. The requirement may be waived with Graduate Director's approval if a student can provide evidence of having taken a similar course during their master's degree program. In lieu of this course, the student will be required to take an additional 3 hours of cognate hours to replace this course.

Course Number	Title	Credit Hours
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH CORE		
PUBH 700	Perspectives in Public Health	3
STATISTICS CORE		
STAT 712	Mathematical Statistics 1	3
STAT 713	Mathematical Statistics 2	3
STAT 714	Linear Statistical Models	3
BIostatISTICS CORE		
	800 Level Biostatistics Courses	9
COGNATES (ELECTIVES)		
BIOS 845	Doctoral Seminar (1 credit per semester for 3 semesters) ¹	3
BIOS 890	Teaching Practicum	3
BIOS 890	Consulting Practicum	3
	Cognates	3
	Other Biostatistics and/or Statistics	9
DISSERTATION		
BIOS 899	Dissertation Preparation	12
TOTAL REQUIRED CREDIT HOURS⁽²⁾		54

⁽¹⁾One credit hour of EPID 845 may be substituted.

⁽²⁾With the exception of Master's core courses (EPID 701, BIOS 701, BIOS 757 and BIOS 710 and their equivalents), up to 12 hours from previous graduate work can be used as "content" credit toward their program of study. with the approval of the student's advisor and the Graduate Director. The final program of study must also meet the minimum university post baccalaureate of 60 hours, minimum 30 post master's hours, minimum 30 hours taken at USC, and all "content" credit coursework must be taken within 10 years of the time of graduation.

Financial Assistance, Graduate Assistantships and Travel Grants

In addition to financial aid and fellowship information described in the Graduate Studies Bulletin, a limited number of traineeships and assistantships are available. Faculty will nominate outstanding applicants for highly competitive fellowships offered through the Arnold School of Public Health and the USC Graduate School. The USC Office of Student Financial Aid provides access to a variety of grants and loans for students in the Graduate School. For further information and application forms for all types of financial aid, contact them at (803) 777-8134 or go to http://www.sc.edu/financialaid/contact_us.html

Behavioral-Biomedical Interface Program (BBIP)

The Behavioral-Biomedical Interface Program (BBIP) is an interdisciplinary research training program designed for select students beginning their doctoral studies in Epidemiology, Exercise Science, or Psychology. This training program is supported in part by a National Institutes of Health T32 pre-doctoral research training grant 5T32GM081740 from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences. BBIP focuses on cross-cutting themes related to prevention and developmental sciences broadly defined. BBIP is training the next generation of behavioral scientists with respect to biomedical conceptual frameworks and methods applied to understanding, treating, and preventing adverse health conditions/disorders and promoting optimal health outcomes. To be considered, prospective applicants must apply jointly to BBIP and Epidemiology and must be a US citizen or US permanent resident. BBIP applicants are first year prospective applicants to the PhD program. For further information or to apply for this training grant, see the [BBIP](#) website.

Assistantships

Purpose

A limited number of graduate assistantships are available for full-time students. These assistantships provide in-state tuition rate and a stipend in return for 10-20 hours of work per week for faculty of the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, in other departments on campus, or other organizations. A graduate assistant is a student who assists, under faculty supervision, functions related to teaching, research or other services that would otherwise be performed by regular faculty and staff members. In so doing, graduate assistants receive valuable practical experience in preparation for future teaching, research, or administrative responsibilities.

Assistantships funded by nonprofit organizations or State agencies other than USC must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. Students appointed to such positions work for the

sponsoring organizations, but are under the general supervision of their departmental faculty. When faculty identify positions in other agencies, they try to see that the major duties are related to academic skills that are a part of the discipline.

Requirements

- Must be fully admitted to a degree program and enrolled in The Graduate School.
- Must maintain a 3.0 GPA, and generally good academic standing.
- Must have received a satisfactory evaluation in previous assistantship positions.
- For TAs, must co-register or have previously registered for GRAD 701 – Teaching Assistant Development
- International students are required to attend two additional sessions: International Student Services' Orientation and English Programs for Internationals (ITA) training sessions.
- Must be registered for a minimum of six (6) semester hours in the Fall and Spring semesters. If a student is registered for fewer than six (6) semester hours in the Fall or Spring semesters, the student will not be eligible for a graduate assistantship, unless they are finished with their coursework and has filed an exemption (Z-status) at the Graduate School.
- Must adhere to the work schedule determined jointly by the supervisor (faculty or agency supervisor) and student.
- All assistantships are arranged through the Graduate Directors.
- Once a signed commitment to an assistantship position has been made, no change in position can be made without discussion by and approval of the Graduate Directors.

Hours, Fees and Other Issues of Employment

- Graduate assistants are special part-time employees of the University and should treat the assistantship as they would a professional job.
- Graduate assistants are expected to devote full-time effort to their studies and their assistantship responsibilities. They are discouraged from having additional employment, on or off campus, during the term for which they are appointed. It is University policy that no student shall be permitted to hold more than the equivalent of one University half-time assistantship.
- The student is expected to work 10-20 hours per week (depending on their assistantship appointment) with pay appropriate to the total hours worked. Students with graduate assistantships qualify for in-state (resident) tuition and program fees (see the Bursar's website: <http://sc.edu/bursar/fees.shtml>). Tuition supplements are available for some Graduate Assistants either paid by department funds or contracts, on a sliding scale based on the number of credit hours taken and the number of hours of the assistantship or as indicated in the student's offer letter. The amount of the supplement is prorated for fewer hours worked or fewer course credits taken. Graduate assistantships outside the Department may not include a tuition supplement or may supplement at a different rate.
- Assistants appointed after the first 30 days of a semester (10 days of a summer term), whose duties terminate before the midterm date, or whose duties terminate before they earn the minimum stipend amount will be billed for full term tuition.
- Students will be evaluated on their performance in their assistantship at the end of every

semester using the appropriate form (TA or GA evaluation form). Assistants who fail to perform their duties satisfactorily may be terminated from their appointment. The Department is not obligated to offer assistantships in succeeding semesters for students terminated from an assistantship for this reason.

- Assistants do not accrue sick leave, so work missed due to illness should be made up.
- Graduate assistants are normally not expected to work during official school holidays or between semesters. Students requesting time off for quizzes, examinations or extended holidays may be required to make this time up. Official school holidays are Labor Day Holiday, Fall Break, Election Day (every other year), Thanksgiving Holiday, Spring Break, Easter Holiday, and Independence Day Holiday. However, some assistantships may require work during the holidays and between semester periods. Work schedules should be arranged with the supervisor at the beginning of each semester.

Placement in Assistantships

The Department makes every reasonable effort to place students in assistantships that are consistent with the students' academic interests. However, the Department is not obligated to identify an assistantship that perfectly matches the student's interests in every instance. Also, in some instances it may be necessary to place a student in an assistantship designed primarily to fulfill the Department's current needs. These positions will be consistent with the Department's goal of developing the student's abilities through the assistantship experience. Students who do not complete assigned assistantships satisfactorily are not guaranteed additional assistantships in succeeding semesters, even if this has been previously promised.

Time Limitation of Assistantships for Master's Students

The Department is committed to supporting students who are honored with guaranteed assistantships, as outlined in the student's admission letter. If a student desires funding for a period longer than defined in this letter, he or she may be considered for additional assistantships at the Department's discretion. In these instances, however, the student will have lower priority for Department funding than other students. Students should recognize that they may not be funded via assistantships for the full duration of their degree program, and plan accordingly. This time limitation applies only to Master's students who are offered guaranteed assistantships when admitted; the Department is not obligated to ensure that assistantships will be arranged for other Master's students who desire them, although we make every reasonable effort to assist these students to obtain assistantships. Successful placement in an assistantship for those not receiving a guaranteed placement does not obligate the Department to fund these students in succeeding semesters.

Time Limitation of Assistantships for Doctoral Students

Doctoral students are typically supported through research assistantships or teaching assistantships. These assistantships are an integral part of the student's doctoral preparation. They also provide the student with useful professional contacts, often forming the basis of research collaborations leading to publications and other benefits, and for letters of recommendation that are critical elements of the student's application for professional positions following graduation.

While the Department is pleased to honor its doctoral students with this support, doctoral students should recognize that the period of guaranteed support is limited to what is outlined in their admission letter. Thereafter, some students who continue to work actively on degree studies may receive continued support if it is available through sponsored research funds. However, the Department is not obligated to provide continued funding to students beyond what is stated in the letter, and should plan accordingly.

Other

- Assistantships are usually for a set time commitment. Any student considering a change in assistantship before the end of the agreed time must consult with his/her academic advisor and the Graduate Director.
- Some assistantships may require the student to adhere to a dress code commensurate with the respective assignment.
- Some assistantships may require travel, work at odd hours, or flexibility of hours. A graduate assistant should be very clear with his or her supervisor about the time he or she can be available.
- No graduate assistant is expected to work more than the agreed upon hours. However, graduate assistants are encouraged to look for opportunities to attend meetings, seminars, etc., which will enhance his or her learning or development of specific skills. These activities may or may not be included in the paid hours of the assistantship.
- Open communication is a key to good working relationships as a graduate assistant. Supervisors are willing to accommodate assistant needs but must be aware of the needs. Remember, supervisors of students are in charge and are responsible for setting graduate assistant work schedules.
- Assistantships will not be offered to satisfy any academic requirements, including practice requirements and thesis/dissertation research.

Travel Grants

- There are two opportunities for students to receive funding for travel. Funding is available through the Dean's office with the maximum award being \$300. Priority will be given to students who have not received a previous travel award from the school; no student will receive more than one award in a fiscal year. The Graduate School also offers funding, ranging up to \$500 for domestic travel and up to \$800 for international travel. Qualified students may receive up to two travel grants during their tenure in the graduate school. For both of these awards, the department may match funding up to \$450. For more information, including the applications and submission deadlines: Dean's office: [ASPH Travel Funding](#) Graduate School: [Graduate School Travel Funding](#)

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

- ENHS 660 **Concepts of Environmental Health Science.** (3) (every semester). Environmental health sciences presenting the earth as a complex system in which people, plants, animals and non-living physical-chemical components interact.
- HSPM 700 **Approaches and Concepts for Health Administration.** (3) (every semester). An interdisciplinary perspective on the field of health administration. Philosophy, concepts, and skills of community health services implementation, management and evaluation are presented and discussed. Principles in the practice of health administration are applied to identified problems and situations.
- HPEB 700 **Concepts & Methods in Health Promotion.** (3) (fall & summer (distance)) Fundamental principles and practices of public health promotion including history, ethics, cultural competence, professional responsibilities, overview of theory and models, and selection and implementation of instructional methods.
- PUBH 700 **Perspectives in Public Health.** (3) (every semester) Seminar-format orientation to history, mission, and core services and disciplines of public health to develop understanding of current public health practice and how many health-related disciplines contribute to achieving public health goals.
- PUBH 810 **Ethics in Public Health Research and Practice.** (1) (varies when offered) (Enrollment restricted to doctoral students and post-docs, master's students by permission of instructor). Foundation of public health ethics with application to practice and to responsible conduct of research in public health disciplines.
- EPID 410 **Principles of Epidemiology.** (3) (every semester and summer) (Required for Public Health undergraduate majors at USC). (Prereq or Coreq: STAT 201 or 205, and PUBH 102). Introduction to descriptive and analytical epidemiology. Topics will include the distribution and determinants of disease, surveillance, outbreak investigations, measures of association, screening tests, bias, and causal reasoning.
- EPID 490 **Independent Study.** (1-3) (Enrollment and topic to be approved in advance by advisor and instructor. May be repeated. Prerequisites: permission of instructor.)
- EPID 661 **Parasitology.** (4) (every spring semester) (Pre-requisite: 300 level Biology course or equivalent). Parasites of biological, economic, and public health importance. Three lecture and three laboratory hours per week.
- EPID 700 **Introduction to Epidemiology.** (3) (every semester) Principles of epidemiology with examples of selected health problems. Health status of populations and conceptual tools for translating epidemiologic findings into public health action.

- EPID 701 **Concepts and Methods of Epidemiology.** (3) (Prereq or Coreq: BIOS 701) (every fall) Conceptual foundation of epidemiologic research, quantitative methods, and epidemiologic study design. Intended for those who will be involved in epidemiologic research.
- EPID 725 **Biologic Basis of Public Health.** (3) (spring of every odd year) Survey of the biology of human disease processes at cellular, tissue and body system levels with the emphasis on the application of biological principles to contemporary public health problems.
- EPID 730 **Public Health Surveillance Systems.** (3) (Prereq or Coreq: EPID 700/701) (offered in spring based on MPH enrollment) Introduction to the concepts, implementation and evaluation of surveillance systems to monitor the health of human populations.
- EPID 741 **Intermediate Epidemiologic Methods.** (4) (Prereq: EPID 700/701; Coreq: BIOS 757/758, and **either** Prereq: BIOS 710 or Coreq: BIOS 709) (every spring) Application of epidemiologic methods to current health problems through analysis of secondary data. Strategies for investigating etiologic hypotheses, assessment and control of confounding.
- EPID 744 **Cardiovascular Disease Epidemiology.** (3) (Prereq: EPID 700) (spring of every odd year) Epidemiology of selected groups of cardiovascular diseases (CVD) including etiology, pathophysiology, identification, and description of events of CVD, and outcomes.
- EPID 745 **Seminar in Epidemiology.** (1) (every fall and spring) Analysis of current and prospective issues in epidemiology, including historical foundations. Includes student exploration and critical consideration of current research and unsolved problems in epidemiology. (Pass/Fail grading)
- EPID 746 **Cancer Epidemiology.** (3) (Prereq: EPID 700) (spring of every odd year) Epidemiology of selected cancers in humans, including etiology, pathophysiology, identification and description of events of cancer and outcomes.
- EPID 747 **Environmental Epidemiology** (3) (Prereq: EPID 700, BIOS 700) (spring of every even year) Emphasis on the epidemiology of selected environmental factors which may affect human health including the identification of health hazards and methods of investigation.
- EPID 749 **Infectious Disease Epidemiology.** (3) (Prereq: EPID 700 and BIOS 700, or consent of instructor) (every fall) Covers bacterial, viral, parasitic and fungal diseases of public health importance. Emphasis on epidemiologic methods basic to investigation, prevention and control of infectious diseases.

- EPID 758 **Application of Epidemiology in Public Health.** (3) (Prereq: EPID 701 and EPID 741) (every fall) The purpose of this course is to develop applied research skills in epidemiology in the context of public health research and practice. Covers methods focusing on competencies, skills, and characteristics essential to the practice of public health.
- EPID 763 **Nutritional Epidemiology.** (3) (Prereq: EPID 701 or 700 and BIOS 701 or 700). (every fall) Covers methodology for investigating nutrition's role in health, including nutritional assessment and the design and interpretation of research studies. Substantive issues emphasize major public health concerns of the 21st century.
- EPID 767 **GIS and Public Health Applications.** (3) (Every even fall). Principles and application of basic and intermediate-level GIS technologies in public health practice and research.
- EPID 765 **Reproductive Epidemiology.** (3) (Prereq: EPID 701/700, BIOS 701/700, or permission of instructor) (spring of every even year) Epidemiology of major reproductive outcomes in humans with emphasis on pathophysiology, risk factors, analytic methods of investigation and surveillance/monitoring of reproductive events.
- EPID 770 **Social Epidemiology.** (3) (Prereq: EPID 700/701 or equivalent) (currently not being offered) Influence of social factors and the distribution of those factors on patterns of health and disease. Including individual-level examinations of the role of social determinants in producing health, as well as more macro-level examinations of patterns of social disparities in health status.
- EPID 788 **Practical Methods for Secondary Data Analysis.** (3) (Prereq: EPID700/701, BIOS 700/701, EPID 741 or Co-req with instructor permission, pre/co-req: either BIOS 757/758 or BIOS 754). Introduction to data sources and methods commonly used by epidemiologists and health analysts in state or federal health departments and research settings. Methods include data management and analysis using SAS, data interpretation, survey designs, and innovative record linkages.
- EPID 790 **Independent Study.** (1-6) (Prereq: permission of instructor) Directed research on a topic to be developed by M.P.H. or M.S.P.H. student and instructor. May be repeated.
- EPID 794 **Special Topics in Epidemiology.** (1-6)
- EPID 798 **Public Health Practice.** (1-6) (Prereq: All core courses and at least one SPH course) Performance of a limited work of service project in a public need setting, pursuit of planned learning objectives related to previously identified aspects of the student's chosen role. Self-monitoring and regular seminars focusing on learning accomplishments. (Pass/Fail grading)

- EPID 799 **Thesis Preparation.** (1-9)
- EPID 800 **Advanced Methodological Theory in Epidemiology.** (3) (Prereq: EPID 741 or permission of instructor). (every fall) Advanced epidemiologic methods in the design of epidemiologic studies, with emphasis on causal inference. Theories and frameworks of causation and interactions between causes and graphical visualization tools.
- EPID 801 **Advanced Analytical Methods in Epidemiology.** (3) (Prereq: EPID 741 and BIOS 757 or equivalent courses) (every spring) Application of advanced analytical methods, relying heavily on problem solving, data analysis and interpretation.
- EPID 802 **Epidemiologic Methods III.** (3) (Prereq: EPID 800 or permission of instructor). (every Spring) Extension of research design and development issues with focus on grant writing.
- EPID 820 **Seminar in the Epidemiology of Health Effects of Physical Activity.** (3) (Prereq: EPID 741, BIOS 759) (currently not being offered) Seminar presentation and group discussion on the major issues in the study of physical activity and exercise and its impact on health.
- EPID 845 **Doctoral Seminar Topics.** (1, repeatable up to 3 times) (Prereq: complete at least one semester of coursework and consent of instructor) (every semester) May be repeated for credit as content varies by title. (Pass/Fail grading)
- Note: Each EPID doctoral student is required to take three seminars each covering a different topic area during his/her doctoral program. Seminar “A” covers topics such as plagiarism and professional writing. Seminar “B” covers topics such as contemporary issues and novel methodologic approaches in the field of epidemiology. Seminar “C” covers career development.
- EPID 869 **Clinical Effectiveness.** (3) (every odd fall). Prereq: EPID 700/701. This course develops skills in the application of epidemiologic methods to clinical effectiveness research, defined as generating evidence to inform stakeholders about treatment options, and improve treatment safety, quality, efficiency and effectiveness.
- EPID 890 **Independent Study.** (1-3) (Prereq: permission of instructor) Directed research on a topic to be developed by doctoral student and instructor.
- EPID 894 **Special Topics in Epidemiology.** (3) Discussion on current and emerging issues in epidemiology. May be repeated for credit.
- EPID 899 **Dissertation Preparation.** (1-12) (Prereq: one full year (18 hrs.) of graduate study beyond the Master's level and successful completion of the qualifying exam.

- BIOS 700 **Introduction to Biostatistics.** (3) (every semester) Health related statistical applications. Descriptive statistics, probability, confidence intervals, hypothesis testing, regression, correlation, ANOVA. May not be used for graduate credit in epidemiology or biostatistics.
- BIOS 701 **Concepts and Methods of Biostatistics.** (3) (every fall) Descriptive and inferential statistical applications to public health. Probability, interval estimation, hypothesis testing, measures of association. For students planning further study in epidemiology or biostatistics.
- BIOS 709 **Introduction to SAS.** (1) (every fall, Spring & summer) Statistical data management techniques. Microcomputer applications, communication between microcomputers and mainframe, tape and disk storage, access to large health-related databases.
- BIOS 710 **Effective Data Management for Public Health.** (3) (every fall & summer) This course teaches techniques for creating and using small data sets. Students will become familiar with four software packages used for data entry, data management, and presentation, PC/SAS, STATA, MS Excel, and MS Access.
- BIOS 745 **Seminar in Biostatistics.** (1-2) (every fall & spring) Analysis of current and prospective issues in biostatistics, including historical foundations. Includes student exploration of unsolved problems and examination of central issues in biostatistics. (Pass/Fail grading)
- BIOS 751 **Health Data Systems.** (3) (Prereq: HSPM 700, BIOS 700) (currently not offered) Origin and operation of databases serving governmental and institutional policy and management of programs.
- BIOS 752 **Vital Record and Health Survey Data Analysis.** (3) (Prereq: BIOS 700, BIOS 710, EPID 700) (currently not offered) Assessing, managing, analyzing, and interpreting results from state and national vital records and health survey data sets. Common problems, programming techniques, and analytic considerations.
- BIOS 753 **Community Health Studies.** (3) (Prereq: EPID 700, BIOS 700, consent of instructor) (currently not offered) Process, skills, and management of undertaking health studies in the human community.
- BIOS 754 **Discrete Data Analysis.** (3) (Prereq: BIOS 757 and EPID 700/701) (every fall) Analysis of discrete data in public health studies. Relative risk, odds ratio, rates and proportions, contingency tables, logistic regression, introduction to other advanced topics. Not for Biostatistics majors.

- BIOS 755 **Introduction to Longitudinal Data Analysis.** (3) (every spring) (Prereq: BIOS 757) An introduction to principles and methods for longitudinal data, which are often encountered in practice where multiple measures are observed over time on an individual. This course is designed for non-biostatistics major researchers, with a focus on data analysis and interpretation more than theoretical development. Problems will be motivated by applications in epidemiology and clinical medicine, health services research, and disease natural history studies.
- BIOS 757 **Intermediate Biostatistics.** (3) (Prereq: A course in introductory statistics) (every semester) Public health applications of correlation, regression, multiple regression, single and multi-factor analysis of variance and analysis of covariance.
- BIOS 758 **Advanced Biostatistics.** (4) (Prereq: BIOS 701) (every spring) Additional topics in analysis of health data including regression diagnostics, multicollinearity of observational data, ridge/nonlinear regression, principal components, random/missed effects, unbalanced designs, repeated measures, and sampling and design effects.
- BIOS 759 **Biostatistical Methods for Rates and Proportions.** (2-3) (Prereq: EPID 701 and BIOS 757) (every fall) The concepts, principles and biostatistical techniques necessary to analyze categorical epidemiological data including dose response curves, life tables and discrete measures of association. Estimation of parameters for logistic and other commonly used epidemiological models.
- BIOS 760 **Biostatistical Methods in Clinical Trials.** (3) (Prereq: EPID 700, BIOS 700, EPID 741, BIOS 757) (fall of every odd year) This course will cover the basic and advanced statistical techniques necessary for the design, conduct, analysis and interpretation of results of clinical trials.
- BIOS 761 **Survival Analysis.** (3) (Prereq: BIOS 757 or equivalent) (every fall) Methods for the analysis of survival data in the biomedical setting. Underlying concepts; standard parametric and nonparametric methods for one or several samples; concomitant variables and the proportional hazards model.
- BIOS 765 **Research Design in the Biomedical Sciences.** (3) (Prereq: BIOS 757) (spring of every odd year) Fundamentals of constructing, analyzing, and interpreting biomedical studies; internal and external validity, sample size determination, completely random designs, blocking, crossover designs, confounding, nested designs, repeated measure designs.
- BIOS 770 **Applied Longitudinal Data Analysis [= STAT 771].** (3) (Prereq: BIOS 757 or STAT 701 or STAT 705). (every spring) Modern methods for the analysis of repeated measures, correlated outcomes, and longitudinal data, including repeated measures ANOVA, generalized linear models, random effects, and generalized estimating equations.

- BIOS 775 **Biostatistical Aspects of Bioinformatics.** (3) (Prereq: BIOS 757) (currently not offered) Bioinformatics analyses related to public health and biomedical research. Gene-gene and gene-environment interaction, phylogeny analysis in disease classification, and clustering for expression data. Data analyses, simulation studies, algorithms, and interpretation of health data.
- BIOS 780 **Introduction to Quantile Regression.** (3) (Prereq: BIOS 757) (spring of every even year) Principles and methods for quantile regression analysis, which is a robust statistical approach that extends the classical mean regression analysis based on least squares.
- BIOS 790 **Independent Study.** (1-6) (Prereq: permission of instructor) Directed research on a topic to be developed by M.P.H. or M.S.P.H. student and instructor. May be repeated.
- BIOS 794 **Special Topics in Biostatistics.** (1-6)
- BIOS 798 **Public Health Practice.** (1-6) (Prereq: 9-10 hours of specified courses including EPID 700, EPID 741, BIOS 700) Performance of a limited work of service project in a public need setting, pursuit of planned learning objectives related to previously identified aspects of the student's chosen role. Self-monitoring and regular seminars focusing on learning accomplishments. (Pass/Fail Grading)
- BIOS 799 **Thesis Preparation.** (1-9)
- BIOS 805 **Categorical Data Analysis.** [=STAT 770] (3) (Prereq: BIOS 759 or STAT 704 and consent of instructor) (fall of every even year) Advanced methods for analysis of discrete data. Higher order contingency tables, log-linear and other generalized linear models. Multivariate methods for matched pairs and longitudinal data.
- BIOS 808 **Environmetrics.** [=STAT 708] (3) (Prereq: BIOS 757 or STAT 705) Statistical methods for environmental and ecological sciences, including nonlinear regression, generalized linear models, spatial analyses/kriging, temporal analyses, meta-analysis, quantitative risk assessment.
- BIOS 809 **Environmetrics II** [=STAT 709] (3) (Prereq: BIOS 809 or STAT 708; STAT 714) A continuation of STAT 708/BIOS 808 with emphasis on theoretical underpinnings of environmetrics. Topics include spatial statistics, temporal and longitudinal analysis of environmental data, hierarchical modeling, and Bayesian inference.
- BIOS 811 **Survival Analysis II.** (3) (Prereq: BIOS 761) (spring of every even year) Parametric survival analysis, accelerated failure time model, frailty model, competing risk model and multi-state model. Techniques motivated by applications in epidemiology and clinical medicine research, applications demonstrated using public health data sets.

- BIOS 815 **Generalized Linear Models** [=STAT 775] (3) (Prereq: STAT 713 or STAT 513, and STAT 705 or BIOS 757. Statistical theory and applications extending regression and analysis of variance to non-normal data. Encompasses logistic and other binary regressions, log-linear models, and gamma regression models.
- BIOS 820 **Bayesian Biostatistics and Computation** [=STAT 745] (3) (Prereq: BIOS 757 or STAT 705) (fall of every odd year) Bayesian methodology for randomized trials, epidemiology, survival, bioassay, logistic and log-linear regression modeling, longitudinal data, classification and bioinformatics, advances in computational methods.
- BIOS 822 **Statistical Methods in Spatial Epidemiology.** (3) (Prereq: BIOS 757 and 759) (fall of every even year) A comprehensive introduction to the statistical methods used in the analysis of geo-referenced spatial health data. Topics range from disease mapping to prospective surveillance.
- BIOS 825 **Multivariate Biostatistics.** (3) (Prereq: STAT 516 or BIOS 757) (spring of every even year) Analysis of multivariate data as found in biomedical studies; multivariate linear models, principal components analysis, factor analysis, discriminant and cluster analysis. Other special multivariate topics such as principal components regression.
- BIOS 845 **Doctoral Seminar.** (1-3) (Prereq: complete at least one semester of coursework and consent of instructor) May be repeated for credit. (Pass/Fail grading)
- BIOS 890 **Independent Study.** (1-3) (Prereq: permission of instructor) Directed research on a topic to be developed by doctoral student and instructor. May be repeated.
- BIOS 894 **Special Topics in Biostatistics.** (3) Discussion on current and emerging issues in biostatistics. May be repeated for credit.
- BIOS 898 **Doctor of Public Health Practicum.** (1-6)
- BIOS 899 **Dissertation Preparation.** (1-12) (Prereq: one full year (18 hrs.) of graduate study beyond the Master's level.

Faculty

Full-time Faculty

Swann A. Adams, Ph.D., University of South Carolina, 2003

Associate Professor, College of Nursing and Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics and the Cancer Prevention and Control Program

Research interests: cancer epidemiology, physical activity, breast cancer, and ethnic disparities in cancer

Cheryl L. Addy, Ph.D., Emory University, 1988

Professor and Vice Provost and Dean for Graduate Studies

Research interests: categorical data analysis, survey data analysis, epidemiologic methods, physical activity and public health, psychiatric epidemiology, maternal and child health

Anthony J. Alberg, Ph.D., M.P.H. Johns Hopkins University, 1994

Professor, Chair, Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics

Research interests: cancer epidemiology, including lung cancer, skin cancer, ovarian cancer; health effects of tobacco products; tobacco control; epidemiology of tobacco use

Nansi Boghossian, Ph.D., MPH, University of Iowa, 2011

Assistant Professor

Research interests: Perinatal epidemiology, pregnancy complications, preterm birth, birth defects, global health.

Monique J. Brown-Smith, Ph.D., MPH, Virginia Commonwealth University – SOM, 2014

Assistant Professor

Research Interests: Social and behavioral epidemiology, psychosocial and behavioral factors associated with living with HIV/AIDS, aging and HIV/AIDS, life course, vulnerable populations, health disparities, sexual health, mental health, meditation analysis, adverse childhood experiences

Jim Burch, PhD., Colorado State University, 1997

Associate Professor

Research interests: Molecular epidemiology, cancer epidemiology, environmental and occupational health

Bo Cai, Ph.D., University of Auckland, NZ, 2003

Professor

Research interests: Bayesian random effects selection, nonparametric modeling, multivariate analysis, mixture models, and the relevant application area including human reproductive study, child health and toxicology. Computational statistics, Markov chain Monte Carlo methods, sampling methods based on Markov chain.

Jan Eberth, Ph.D., University of Texas Health Science Center, 2011

Associate Professor

Research interests: Cancer screening and prevention, social epidemiology and health disparities, medical geography and GIS applications, access, utilization and quality of cancer screening and treatment services.

Marco Geraci, Ph.D., University of Florence, Italy, 2005

Associate Professor

Research interests: Statistical methods and applications for health sciences; quantile inference; random-effects models; multivariate statistics; missing data; statistical computing; R programming; spatial statistics; accelerometer data; physical activity; pediatrics; epidemiology.

James W. Hardin, Ph.D., Texas A&M University, 1992

Professor, Division Head for Biostatistics, Director, Biostatistics Collaborative Unit; Affiliate Faculty, Institute for Families in Society

Research interests: applied research in behavior outcomes (risky sexual behavior, smoking cessation, etc.), applied research in health outcomes (orthopedics, cancer and nutrition), network analysis, correlated data analysis, structural equation modeling

Linda J. Hazlett, Ph.D., M.P.H., M.T., (ASCP), University of South Carolina, 2004

Clinical Associate Professor, Graduate Director for Epidemiology

Research interests: Clinical epidemiology, cancer epidemiology, teaching methods, public health advocacy

James R. Hebert, Sc.D., Harvard University, 1984

Health Sciences Distinguished Professor; Director, Cancer Prevention and Control Program

Research interests: dietary assessment, diet and physical activity interventions, measurement bias, nutritional epidemiology, cancer epidemiology, complementary and alternative medicine

James R. Hussey, Ph.D., Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1983

Clinical Associate Professor

Research interests: experimental design, mixed models, longitudinal data analysis

Angela D. Liese, Ph.D., University of North Carolina, 1996

Professor, Director, Center for Research in Nutrition and Health Disparities

Research interests: dietary assessment, epidemiology of obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease, emphasis on children and youth

Jihong Liu, Sc.D., Harvard University, 2003

Professor

Research interests: children and adolescents' health epidemiology, reproductive epidemiology, social determinants of health, population health measurements, international health, survey data collection and analysis

Matthew C. Lohman, Ph.D., MHS, Virginia Commonwealth University, 2014

Assistant Professor

Research interests: Epidemiology of aging, psychiatric epidemiology, survey data analysis, cognitive health, determinants and distribution of falls, injuries, and hospitalization

Suzanne McDermott, Ph.D., University of South Carolina, 1991

Professor

Research interests: Epidemiology of neurodevelopmental disability in newborns, perinatal epidemiology, disability epidemiology, analysis of large data sets and design of randomized intervention studies.

Alex McLain, Ph.D., University of South Carolina, 2008

Associate Professor

Research interests: survival analysis, joint modeling of longitudinal and survival data, multiple testing, fecundity modeling, prediction of survival outcomes, and mixed effects models.

Anwar Merchant, Sc.D., Harvard University, 2001

Professor; Division Head for Epidemiology

Research interests: improving health and preventing disease through lifestyle changes; possible effects of lifestyle on disease, and societal and personal factors influencing lifestyle; relation between infection and chronic disease.

Maggi Miller Ph.D., M.S., University of South Carolina, 2012

Research Assistant Professor and South Carolina Alzheimer's Disease Registry Manager, Office for the Study of Aging.

Research interests: Alzheimer's disease and related disorders, caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's disease, social capital, survey development

Robert Moran, Ph.D., University of South Carolina, 2004

rrmoran@mailbox.sc.edu

Clinical Associate Professor; Graduate Director for Biostatistics

Research interests: nutritional instruments; data management

Melissa Nolan, Ph.D, MPH, Baylor College of Medicine, 2015

Assistant Professor

Research interests: infectious diseases and health disparities

Andrew Ortaglia, Ph.D., University of South Carolina, 2012

Clinical Assistant Professor

Research interests: semi-parametric models, survival analysis, health aspects of physical activity.

Harris Pastides, Ph.D., Yale University, 1980

Professor and President, University of South Carolina

Research interests: health disparities research, occupational and environmental epidemiology, international health, and applied research in developing country environmental health issues

Susan E. Steck, Ph.D., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1999

Associate Professor

Research interests: nutrition and cancer prevention and survivorship, gene-diet interactions in cancer etiology, health disparities, carotenoids

Myriam E. Torres, Ph.D., MSPH, University of South Carolina, 2001

Clinical Associate Professor, Director, Consortium for Latino Immigration Studies

Research interests: Hispanic/Latino health issues, perinatal issues among Latinas, HIV/AIDS among Latino populations, bi-national research.

Yuan Wang, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2018

Assistant Professor

Research interests: joint modeling of structural and functional neuroimaging data, topological signal processing of neuroimaging time series, topological brain network analysis

Michael D. Wirth, M.S.P.H., Ph.D., University of South Carolina, 2012

Research Assistant Professor

Research interests: circadian rhythm disruption (e.g., shift work, clock gene polymorphisms, sleep disruption, hormone secretion), cancer epidemiology, the Dietary Inflammatory Index, occupational epidemiology, cancer screening, health disparities.

Feifei Xiao, PhD, University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston & MD Anderson Cancer Center, 2013

Assistant Professor

Research interests: Gene-gene or gene-environment interaction, copy number variation (CNV) detection and association study, epigenetics modeling, cancer, pediatrics & psychiatry, big data analyses, cancer genetic epidemiology

Jiajia Zhang, Ph.D., Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2007

Associate Professor

Research interests: accelerated failure time model, frailty model, mixture cure model, statistical computation, semiparametric estimation method

Emeritus Faculty

J. Wanzer Drane, P.E., Ph.D., Emory University, 1967

Distinguished Professor Emeritus

Research interests: space-time statistics, biometric modeling of mammalian biology, nonlinear regression, statistics of geographical information systems, mail-back questionnaires, community trials, and improving biostatistics in developing countries

Robert E. McKeown, Ph.D., University of South Carolina, 1991; Ph.D., Duke University, 1976
Distinguished Professor Emeritus; Adjunct Faculty; Past Chair, Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics; Past President, American College of Epidemiology; Past Chair, APHA Epidemiology Section. Research interests: psychiatric epidemiology, child and adolescent health, public health statistics, public health ethics; social capital and faith communities

Adjunct Faculty

Omar Bagasra, M.D., Ph.D., Adjunct Professor; Professor and Director, South Carolina Center for Biotechnology, Claflin University.

Research interests: molecular basis of infectious diseases and cancer immunology.

Daheia J. Barr-Anderson, Ph.D., Adjunct Assistant Professor; Assistant Professor, College of Education and Human Development, School of Kinesiology, University of Minnesota.

Research interests: community and home-based interventions, physical activity epidemiology, obesity and physical activity among African Americans, particularly adolescent girls, social and environmental factors.

Nathaniel Bell, PhD. Adjunct Assistant Professor. Assistant Professor, College of Nursing, University of South Carolina.

Research interests: GIS; health geography and injury epidemiology; research related to injury recovery outcomes such as satisfaction with access/accessibility of health care (HC) services, spatial access to HC services, trauma care quality improvement studies, as well as HC access among Medicaid recipients; and a fundamental interest in addressing the spatial, socioeconomic, and behavioral determinants of health.

Eric Brenner, M.D., Adjunct Associate Professor; Consulting Medical Epidemiologist (WHO, UNICEF, ICRC, PAHO, USAID, IUATLD, and other agencies and organizations), Chargé de Cours, Institut de Médecine Sociale et Préventive (IMSP), University of Geneva School of Medicine, Geneva, Switzerland, and Medical Epidemiologist (part-time), Division of Disease Control and Epidemiology, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control.

Research interests: communicable disease control programs, tuberculosis and vaccine preventable diseases.

Steven P. Cuffe, M.D., Adjunct Professor; Professor and Chair, Department of Psychiatry, University of Florida, College of Medicine, Jacksonville.

Research interests: child psychiatry, adolescent depression, and childhood sexual abuse.

Virginie Daguise, Ph.D., Adjunct Assistant Professor; Epidemiologist at the South Carolina Cancer Association.

Research interests: cancer epidemiology.

James E. Ferguson, Dr.P.H., Adjunct Assistant Professor; Deputy Director, Public Health Statistics and Information Systems, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control.

Research interests: community health, epidemiologic methods, and vital statistics methods.

Nancy Fleischer, Ph.D., University of Michigan, 2010

Adjunct Assistant Professor of Epidemiology, School of Public Health, University of Michigan

Research interests: social and environmental determinants of health, health disparities, global non-communicable diseases and epidemiologic methods.

Abdul Ghaffar, Ph.D., Adjunct Associate Professor; Associate Professor, Department of Microbiology & Immunology, USC School of Medicine.

Research interests: macrophage immunobiology in health and disease (stress, infection, and cancer).

J. Jerome Gibson, M.D., Adjunct Professor; Director, Bureau of Disease Control, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control.

Research interests: epidemiology of sexually transmitted diseases.

Prakash C. Gupta, Sc.D., Adjunct Professor; Senior Research Scientist, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai, India.

Research interests: tobacco control epidemiology, cancers of the oral cavity and oral pharynx, upper aerodigestive tract cancers, and cancer prevention and control.

Khosrow Heidari, MA, MA, MA, Adjunct Instructor, Senior Epidemiology, Bureau of Drug Control, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control

Sue Heiney, Ph.D., Adjunct Professor; College of Nursing, University of South Carolina.

Research interests: psychosocial care of cancer patients, specifically group interventions.

William J. M. Hrushesky, M.D., Adjunct Professor, Chief Scientific Officer and Senior Executive Medical Director, Oncology Analytics Corporation

Research interests: chronobiology, oncology.

Michael J. LaMonte, Ph.D., M.P.H., Adjunct Associate Professor, University of New York at Buffalo, Department of Social and Preventive Medicine.

Research interests: physical activity and health outcomes.

Caroline A. Macera, Ph.D., Adjunct Professor; Professor of Epidemiology, Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Graduate School of Public Health, San Diego State University.

Research interests: health effects of physical activity among women and low SES groups; women's health; and factors influencing independent functioning among the elderly.

Charles E. Matthews, Ph.D., Adjunct Assistant Professor; Investigator National Cancer Institute - Epidemiology & Genetics, Nutritional Epidemiology Branch.

Research interests: physical activity and disease prevention, cancer epidemiology, energy balance, physical activity assessment and interventions

Godwin Mbamalu, Ph.D. FAIC, Adjunct Professor, Distinguished Professor of Chemistry at Benedict College.

Research interests: environmental and analytical chemistry and health disparities.

Rebecca A. Meriwether, MD, MPH, Adjunct Associate Professor, Associate Professor of Family and Preventive Medicine.

Research interests: Physical Activity, and the influence of built environment and policy on health.

Daniela K. Nitcheva, Ph.D., Adjunct Assistant Professor, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control

Research interests: environmental toxicology, quantitative risk assessment, hierarchical models, generalized linear models, branching processes.

Gowtham Rao, MD, PhD, MPH. Adjunct Assistant Professor, Chief Medical Information Officer at BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina.

Research interests: Medication safety, Patient safety, Cancer outcomes, Comparative effectiveness research

Richard M. Schulz, Ph.D., Adjunct Professor; Professor, SC College of Pharmacy. (retired)

Research interests: pharmacoepidemiology, quality of life assessment, and patient adherence to pharmacotherapy.

Nitin Shivappa, Ph.D. Adjunct Assistant Professor

Research interests: dietary inflammatory index, cardiovascular diseases and menthol cigarette smoking

James T Symanowski, Ph.D., Adjunct Associate Professor. Chair, Department of Cancer Biostatistics, Levine Cancer Institute, Charlotte, NC.

John E. Vena, Ph.D., Adjunct Professor; Professor and Founding Chair, Department of Public Health Sciences, College of Medicine, Medical University of South Carolina.

Research interests: Environmental epidemiology including persistent environmental pollutants, air and water pollution, coastal environments; environmental justice; community -based research; cancer epidemiology; reproductive and developmental health; occupational epidemiology.

FORMS

Forms Available on Graduate School Website.

<http://gradschool.sc.edu/DocLibrary/>

1. Application for Graduation (AS-126)
2. Doctoral Comprehensive Exam Verification
3. Course Overload Enrollment Authorization (GS-54 CEO)
4. Dissertation Signature and Approval Form (G-DSF)
5. Doctoral Committee Appointment Request (GS-48 G-DCA)
6. Doctoral Program of Study (DPOS)
7. Grievances, Appeals and Petitions form (G-GAP)
8. Immigration Forms/Documents
9. Immunization Form
10. Independent Study Contract (GS-50 G-ISC)
11. Master's Comprehensive Exam Verification
12. Master's Program of Study - Savable (MPOS (S))
13. Permit for Course Revalidation Examination (GS-04 PRE)
14. Program of Study Adjustment Form (GS-43 POSA)
15. Qualifying Exam Verification
16. Request for Transfer of Graduate Credit (G-RTC)
17. Request for Special Enrollment (GS-ZS)
18. Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED)
19. Thesis Defense Signature and Approval Form (G-TSF)

Forms available on Departmental Website.

https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/public_health/study/areas_of_study/epidemiology_biostatistics/student_toolkit/index.php

1. Checklist for Master's Students
2. Checklist for Doctoral Students
3. Advisement Form
4. PhD Comprehensive Exam Verification
5. PhD Dissertation Proposal (Department form)
6. Doctoral Committee Approval Form
7. Doctoral Dissertation Signature and Acceptance Form
8. Independent Study Contract Form
9. Master's Thesis Signature and Acceptance Form
10. Master's Committee Appointment form (Department form)

11. Master's Thesis Proposal Form (Department form)
12. Request for Z-status
13. Early Clearance Procedures
14. Request for Travel Reimbursement (Department form)

Request for Travel Authorization available online:

https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/public_health/study/areas_of_study/epidemiology_biostatistics/epid_bios_travel_authorization/index.php