

Master of Public Health (MPH) & Graduate Certificates Handbook

MPH, MSW/MPH, & Online MPH Programs in Health Promotion, Education, & Behavior

Graduate Certificate Programs: Aging, Health Communication, & Global Health



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH CAROLINA

Preface

The Graduate Studies Bulletin

The [Graduate Studies Bulletin](#) is the official manual of regulations and guidelines for graduate study at the University of South Carolina. Graduate students are expected to read and adhere to the regulations of this publication throughout their matriculation at the University. Students are bound by the bulletin in effect at the time they begin or renew their enrollment in The Graduate School. If they wish to make a change to a subsequent bulletin, they must obtain permission of The Graduate School to do so.

The *Graduate Studies Bulletin* and this 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.

Carolina Community Student Handbook and Policy Guide

Please refer to the [USC Policies and Procedures Manual](#) (see section for Student Affairs and Academic Support) for policies on the student code of conduct, student grievance, sexual harassment, and other areas.

Acronyms

ASPH	Arnold School of Public Health
BIOS	Biostatistics (part of the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics)
COMD	Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
ENHS	Department of Environmental Health Sciences
EPID	Epidemiology (part of the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics)
EXSC	Department of Exercise Science
GA	Graduate Assistant; Graduate Assistantship
GRE	Graduate Record Examination
HPEB	Department of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior; or “Department”
HSPM	Department of Health Services, Policy, and Management
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
USC	University of South Carolina

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Introduction

Overview of the USC Arnold School of Public Health

The Arnold School of Public Health was established by legislative action in 1974 and was fully accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) in 1979, 1984, 1990, 1996, 2001, 2010, and 2017. The mission of the Arnold School of Public Health is to expand, disseminate, and apply the body of knowledge regarding prevention of disease, disability, and environmental degradation; promote health and well-being in diverse populations; and provide effective, efficient, and equitable health services. An integral part of the training of students at the school is participation in research activities. Since the state is experiencing rapid demographic and industrial changes, health problems range from those of a traditional rural setting (infectious diseases, infant mortality, access to health care) to those of a modern industrial setting (impact of new industries on air and water quality and the safety of the workplace). The school has been committed to “action research” since its inception. The importance of dealing with operating programs and defined problems has led to close working relationships with human service programs, health care facilities, and governmental agencies throughout the state and region.

In November 2000, the University of South Carolina announced that the School of Public Health would be named in honor of a longtime Columbia business leader and philanthropist, Norman J. Arnold. The Arnold School of Public Health is in recognition of a gift from Mr. Arnold to the school and for his long-term commitment to improving the health of South Carolinians. The Arnold School of Public Health became only the third school of public health in the United States to be named for an individual. The others are the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University and the Joseph L. Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University.

The school contains the Prevention Research Center, the Nutrition Consortium, the Center for Applied Research and Evaluation, the Cancer Prevention and Control Program, the SC Institute of Medicine and Public Health, the Rural and Minority Health Research Center, the Consortium for the Latino Immigration Studies, the Center for Healthcare Quality, the Office for the Study of Aging, and the Speech and Hearing Center.

Overview - Department of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior

The Department of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior (HPEB) at the University of South Carolina's Arnold School of Public Health conducts innovative research and prepares future leaders to improve public health locally, nationally, and globally. In partnership with organizations and communities and using principles and methods from the social and behavioral sciences, our faculty and students address how interventions, social context, health care systems, and physical environments influence health behaviors and health status, with an emphasis on disadvantaged populations.

The department is committed to a three-part mission of:

- Conducting timely interdisciplinary research that attracts extramural funding and generates knowledge leading to improvements in public health practice and outcomes
- Attracting and training talented and motivated students who will work to improve public health locally, nationally, and globally
- Providing research-linked service to professionals and communities to advance practice, support the profession, and improve public health

Departmental strengths include:

- community-engaged interventions
- economics of behavior
- global health
- health communication and use of digital technology
- healthy aging
- HIV/AIDS
- nutrition and food security
- physical activity
- prevention of cancer and other non-communicable diseases
- public policy and advocacy
- research methods, program evaluation, and implementation science
- sexual and reproductive health
- social determinants of health and health inequities
- tobacco use and vaping

Programs leading to degrees in health promotion, education, and behavior center on changing health practices. Health promotion is an activist discipline that employs community development, organizational behavior, policy change, and applied communication strategies to promote healthy behaviors by influencing knowledge, attitudes, social support systems, patient/provider relationships, access and barriers to health care, and the environments in which people live, work, and play. Courses emphasizing principles of organizational and individual learning, motivation, behavior change, program planning, and evaluation constitute the basis of professional preparation.

The Department of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior offers the following degrees and certificates: Master of Public Health (MPH), Master of Social Work/Master of Public Health (MSW/MPH) (a combined degree with the college of Social Work), Certificate of Graduate Study in Aging, Certificate of Graduate Study in Health Communication, Certificate of Graduate Study in Global Health, and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD).

Faculty and Areas of Specialization

Ahmer Afroz, DrPH, MPH, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (2024)

Clinical Assistant Professor

Health equity; LGBTQ+ health, HIV prevention; HIV treatment; STI prevention; sexual health; culturally competent care models; public health leadership and management; nonprofit organizations; systems-level changes to increase health equity; integrated behavioral healthcare models; public health communication and marketing; qualitative and quantitative survey design; community engagement.

John Bernhart, PhD, MPH, CHES, University of South Carolina (2019)

Research Assistant Professor and Behavioral Research in Eating Lab

Community-Based Participatory Research, Dissemination and Implementation, Healthy Eating and Physical Activity

Christine Blake, PhD, RD, Cornell University (2006)

HPEB Graduate Director and Associate Professor

Factors that influence food choice; dietary patterns and situational eating; food meanings, schema, and scripts in context; eating identity; maternal and child nutrition; obesity and chronic disease; qualitative research and mixed methods

Marta Bornstein, PhD, MPH, University of California, Los Angeles (2021)

Assistant Professor

Mixed methods research, sexual and reproductive health (SRH), including fertility, infertility, contraceptive use, and abortion; reproductive justice framework to understand how individual experiences and health outcomes related to SRH are shaped by structural and social inequalities. Current primary research focused on understanding 1) infertility and perceived (in)fertility within different populations, 2) reproductive decision making among LGBTQ+ individuals, and 3) abortion patient and provider experiences.

Rachel Davis, PhD, University of Michigan (2008)

Associate Professor

The role of culture in tailored and narrative-based health communication interventions; measurement error due to cultural influences on health survey methodology; interventions to address racial and ethnic disparities related to nutrition behaviors, childhood obesity, and Type 2 diabetes.

Jennifer Fillo, PhD, MPH, University of Minnesota - Twin Cities (2014)

Assistant Professor

Social and interpersonal processes; influence of close others (e.g., family, friends, romantic partners) on health behavior; use of alcohol and other substances; stress coping and emotion regulation; health and well-being of US Military service members; military spouses/partners and families; service-connected stress and trauma; design and analysis of dyadic and longitudinal studies.

Lauren Fowler, PhD, George Washington University (2018)

Assistant Professor

Mixed methods to examine multi-level social and environmental influences on health and well-being with a focus on intersectional weight stigma, LGBTQIA+ health equity, and body image promotion/disordered eating prevention.

Daniela B. Friedman, MSc, PhD, University of Waterloo (2006)

Interim Associate Dean for Research, Professor

Health and cancer communication with diverse populations; role of social context, media, and technology in health communication interventions; health literacy measurement; healthy aging and gerontology; cognitive health promotion

Edward A. Frongillo, Jr., PhD, Cornell University (1991)

Professor

Growth, development, and feeding of infants and young children; family stress and parenting; measurement and consequences of food insecurity for children, adults, elders, and people living with HIV; policy and programs for improving nutrition and development; advancing consensus, commitment, and capacity for nutrition in poor countries; design and analysis of longitudinal studies

Hala Ghattas, PhD, University of London (2004)

Associate Professor

Links between inequity, food insecurity, nutritional status, and health; social and structural determinants, and health consequences of both under- and over-nutrition in the contexts of the global nutrition transition, and regional conflicts in the Middle East; multidimensional poverty surveys and vulnerability assessments, and design and evaluation of public health programs to address the overlapping burdens of food insecurity, malnutrition and chronic diseases particularly in refugee populations.

Casey Goldston Giraudy, MEd, EdD, University of South Carolina (2004)

Senior Instructor and Academic Programs Coordinator

First Aid/CPR; First Year Experience (college students); adult education; international education (TESOL, F-1/J-1)

Edena Guimaraes, DrPH, MPH, CHES, University of South Carolina (2011)

MPH Program Director and Clinical Associate Professor

HIV and STD prevention among Latinos/as; utilization of community health worker (promotora) model; health disparities in vulnerable populations; health promotion program planning, implementation, and evaluation; community health problems and health disparities.

Andrew Kaczynski, PhD, University of Waterloo (2007)

Interim Associate Department Chair and Associate Professor

Built environment and physical activity; parks and recreation management and community health; environmental and policy approaches to active transportation; research methods, program planning and evaluation in public health, environmental health.

Minji Kim, PhD, University of Pennsylvania (2016)

Assistant Professor

Targeted and tailored health communication; message effects and persuasion; social influence; health equity; health promotion campaigns; tobacco control; cancer prevention and control

Leila Larson, PhD, Emory University (2017)

Assistant Professor

Maternal and child nutrition; infant and child development and growth; anemia; interventions and programs for improving nutrition and development; measurement of child cognition and nutritional outcomes; design and evaluation of efficacy and effectiveness studies

Xiaoming Li, PhD, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis (1992)

SmartState Endowed Chair for Clinical Translational Research and Professor.

Research methodology; psychological measurement; program evaluation; migration; social stigma; mental health; parenting and family function; resilience among children; health risk behaviors and perceptions among minority adolescents and other vulnerable or at-risk populations; behavioral HIV prevention intervention; HIV disclosure; global health; implementation sciences.

Emily Mann, PhD, University of Maryland, College Park (2010)

Associate Professor

Latino health disparities; social determinants of health; community-based participatory research; teenage⁷ sexuality; reproductive health; social justice.

Courtney M. Monroe, PhD, EP-C, University of Tennessee, Knoxville (2014)

Associate Professor

Technologies for health behavior changes; mHealth and eHealth; physical activity promotion and assessment; obesity prevention and treatment; approaches for facilitating social support for enhanced improvements in health-related behaviors and outcomes.

Shan Qiao, PhD, Johns Hopkins University (2012)

Associate Professor

Health education and health promotion, program implementation and evaluation; adolescent drug use; female sex workers; HIV/AIDS in children and other populations; HIV disclosure and stigma; social relationships and HIV cure; and, implementation science.

Amanda Rebar, PhD, Pennsylvania State University, State College (2013)

Associate Professor

Motivation of health behaviors, specifically the automatic, non-conscious aspects that influence people. Time series data and understanding the dynamics of how people feel, what motivates them, and how they act.

Caroline Rudisill, MSc, PhD, London School of Economics & Political Science (2009)

Director, Population Health Sciences Greenville and Associate Professor

Health economics; economics of health-related behavior; financial incentives; cost-effectiveness, health policy; diabetes and obesity

David Simmons, PhD, Michigan State University (2002)

Associate Professor (joint appointment with Anthropology)

International health; social justice; social and health disparities; health and healing in the African diaspora; community-based participatory research; community-university partnerships

George Tam, PhD, Virginia Commonwealth University (2019)

Research Assistant Professor

Technology-based psychosocial intervention for prescription drug misuse and biopsychosocial influences on prescription drug misuse; psychological and behavioral aspects of COVID-19; resilience-based intervention to mitigate HIV-related stigma and its influences in people living with HIV.

Jim F. Thrasher, PhD, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (2005)

Professor

Cancer prevention and control; tobacco; health policy; mass media and health communication; social and cultural determinants of health; globalization and global health; mixed methods (i.e., combining qualitative and quantitative methods); measurement development

Gabrielle (Brie) Turner-McGrievy, PhD, RD, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (2009)

Professor, Interim Department Chair

Emerging technologies to create health behavior changes; mHealth and eHealth; vegetarian and vegan dietary approaches in the prevention and treatment of chronic diseases; diet quality and assessment; obesity prevention and treatment

Xueying Yang, PhD, The Chinese University of Hong Kong (2018)

Assistant Professor

HIV epidemic among MSM; health promotion for HIV treatment and adherence; HIV-associated comorbidity; mental health; HIV stigma and disclosure; big data research related to HIV and COVID-19 clinical outcomes

Nicholas Younginer, PhD, University of South Carolina (2016)
Clinical Assistant Professor
Childhood nutrition; food insecurity; qualitative evaluation methods.

Emeritus Faculty

Donna L. Richter, Ed.D., University of South Carolina (1982)
HIV/AIDS prevention and research; public health practice; public health leadership; women's health issues; gerontology

Ruth Saunders, PhD, University of South Carolina (1986)
Physical activity promotion; health promotion programs in organizational settings; social and physical environment interventions; implementation, monitoring, and process evaluation

Ken Watkins, PhD, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI (1999)
Clinical Professor Emeritus

Adjunct Faculty

Deborah Billings, PhD
Adjunct Associate Professor
Senior Advisor, Group Care Global and the What Works Association
Project Coordinator, Voices/Voces, Institute for Families in Society

Heather Brandt, PhD
Adjunct Faculty
Director, HPV Cancer Prevention Program & Co-associate Director for Outreach, St. Jude Comprehensive Cancer Center

Staff

Wendy Clemmer

Grant Administrator

Clayton McMillan

Grants and Account Manager

Pam Metz

Administrative Assistant (Office Manager)

Catrina Plyler

Grant and Account Manager

Anjell Session

Business/Human Resources Manager

Joni Zwemer

Administrative Coordinator at the Center for Healthcare
Quality, HPEB

Guidelines and Regulations

Students are responsible for information in the University's Graduate Studies Academic Bulletin and on the Graduate School website, as well as information in the handbook. Please see the [HPEB departmental webpage](#) for current students for updated information and links to HPEB and Graduate School forms.

Graduate Academic Bulletin

Frequently requested information from the [Graduate Studies Academic Bulletin](#):

Graduate Admissions – Degree-seeking admission

- Valid Period of Admission
- Additional Coursework
- Registration Requirements
- Course Enrollment, Prerequisites, Course Loads

Degree Requirements

- Concurrent Enrollment
- Special Enrollment (Z-status, GA-underenrolled, Family Leave)
- Master's Program of Study
- Concurrent and Dual Enrollment Programs of Study
- Transfer of Coursework

After admission to the program in HPEB, students may request to transfer previous courses into the MPH program pursuant to our policy below. Transfer requests are reviewable - course transfer is not automatic.

HPEB policy: Students may transfer up to nine graduate hours of credit taken outside of a completed program of study with approval from the student's academic advisor. All transfer courses must meet Graduate School requirements regarding the six-year period of viability, taken from an accredited institution recognized by USC, carrying graduate credit with a grade of "B" or better, and number of USC reduced tuition rate hours allowed (6), as described in the Graduate Studies Bulletin. Students must complete the Request for Transfer of Graduate Credit at the [Graduate School's Forms webpage](#). Students wishing to transfer a course that will replace a similar public health core course housed in another USC department should contact the HPEB Graduate Director to receive approval from that department.

- Transient Enrollment Privilege
- Revalidation of Out-of-Date Courses
- Independent Study
- Comprehensive Assessment

Academic Regulations

Academic Credit and Course Policies

Courses at the 500 and 600 level can be included in a graduate Program of Study as long as at least half of the credit hours on the Program of Study, exclusive of thesis or practice experience hours (797 or 799), are earned in courses numbered 700 and above.

Course Enrollment Load

Dropping/Withdrawing from a Course

Grading Policies

Academic Standard for GPA, Progression, and Graduation

Academic Suspension

Student Records and Transcripts

Frequently requested information from the [Graduate School website](#)

Getting Started

Academics

Calendar

Campus Resources

Forms Library

International Students

International Travel Policy

Paying for Graduate School

Ombudsman

Update Application/Admission

Roles and Responsibilities of Graduate Students

Your responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Guidelines - be aware of and follow requirements as stated in the USC Graduate Academic Bulletin, USC Graduate School website, and guidelines provided in the HPEB Master Handbook.
- Advisement - students are responsible for knowing program requirements, taking an active role through all steps of their program, and keeping copies of all important records and documents.
- Keeping the advisor apprised of your progress and barriers you are experiencing.
- Deadlines - be aware of and meet graduate school and university deadlines.
- Transfer credit - inform your advisor of your intention to apply for transfer credit immediately during advisement. Transfer credit must be approved as part of your program of study and is subject to approval.
- Comprehensive examination – with your advisor, determine the appropriate time for you to take the examination; take appropriate steps to prepare for the exam.
- Practice experience – be familiar with and follow all guidelines
- Forms – Ensure all HPEB and Graduate School forms are submitted through the department at the appropriate times.
- Professional responsibility – Graduate assistantships and practice experiences are intended to serve as an extension of the teaching mission of the Department of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior by giving students work experience in public health settings in which they eventually pursue careers. While serving in on- or off-campus graduate assistantships or practice placements, students are representatives of the Department. As such, they should always comport themselves with professionalism and as guided by the professional code of conduct in existence at their placement agency.

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to adhere to the university's policies regarding academic integrity. Students should consult the [Office of Academic Integrity](#) for policy concerning issues related to academic dishonesty. Any student caught violating any of these regulations will be subject to penalties associated with such acts.

Disability Services

Students with disabilities are assisted through the Student Disability Resource Center. Students with disabilities should contact the [Student Disability Resource Center](#) at 803-777-6144 (TDD) or 803-777-6142 for specific information about services, or access online. When students receive the Graduate School's offer of admission, they should notify the Student Disability Resource Center of their need(s) for specific accommodation(s). The Center is located at 1523 Greene Street in Room 112A.

Financial Aid

To be eligible for Financial Aid, you must enroll for a minimum of nine (9) credit hours at the beginning of the Financial Aid semester (i.e., Fall, Spring, or Summer).

If you have specific questions about your situation, you may contact the [Financial Aid Office](#) at 803-477-8134.

Information regarding Financial Aid and Scholarships is available at www.sc.edu/financialaid/.

Information regarding payment plans is available at the Bursar's webpage:

www.sc.edu/bursar/paying.shtml.

Admission

Students may apply for and be enrolled in only one HPEB MPH degree program. We do not allow concurrent applications or enrollment in both programs. Our policy is:

- The HPEB on-campus MPH and Online Master of Public Health in Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior - Professional Program are two distinct programs resulting in the same degree conferment; a student is admitted into one of these programs.
- Students enrolled in the on-campus MPH program must take the core public health courses in person. Any exceptions must be approved by the MPH Program Director.

Once fully accepted by the Graduate School, all students should follow the directions for [Getting Started](#) and submit immunization and citizenship forms before being able to register for classes.

SC Residents will need to submit the Legal Residency form to receive in-state tuition.

Self-Service Carolina is a portal for students to handle all personal, academic, and financial interactions with the university. Set up your account using the IDs provided on your [Application Status page](#). Once in Self-Service Carolina, you will be able to access your university email, view the course schedule, register for classes, view your bill and financial aid, etc.

Advising and Course Registration

Prior to each semester, students should contact their academic advisor to discuss course planning. Students should bring their unofficial transcripts to all advisement meetings. Should there be academic challenges regarding grades, the academic advisor may recommend a remediation plan that would be developed by the academic advisor and student, with oversight from the Graduate Director. The Graduate Director is the academic advisor for all MPH students.

Advisement must take place before clearance by the ASPH Office of Graduate Student Services to register for courses via my.sc.edu.

You are encouraged to review the [Part of Term Dates](#) associated with your specific section to ensure that you meet registration and fee payment deadlines.

Graduate Assistantships

Who is a Graduate Assistant?

A graduate assistant is a fully admitted graduate student who receives a stipend and some educational benefits in exchange for specific services that the student provides. A graduate assistant usually works directly with one or more faculty members in a university office or with a specific state agency.

The USC Graduate School offers training and evaluation activities for graduate teaching and instructional assistants (GTAs and GIAs). Our department requires all doctoral students to attend the training for GTAs and GIAs. In addition, all international doctoral students must attend the international teaching assistant working for training and evaluation of oral English skills. If a doctoral student does not attend this training, the department has the right to withdraw any offer of financial support for that student.

Who is Eligible to Receive a Graduate Assistantship?

Any fully admitted student taking nine or more graduate credits is eligible. There is generally no special consideration given for financial need or level of education. Employment is usually made based on specific qualifications and skills of the individual. Sometimes the degree program in which a student is enrolled is a consideration. A student receiving other financial assistance in the form of work-study, stipend, or grant from another agency may not qualify to receive a graduate assistantship, but some scholarships and fellowships may be received at the same time.

Graduate assistants are expected to devote full-time effort to their studies and their assistantship responsibilities. They are, therefore, discouraged from having additional employment on or off campus, during the term(s) for which they are appointed. In addition, regular University employees are not eligible for assistantships.

How do I Apply for a Graduate Assistantship?

To be considered for a position, the student should contact the HPEB Academic Programs Coordinator (Dr. Casey Giraudy) for more information. Students may also review openings on the [MySPH](#) website. Continuing students work with their faculty advisor(s) to identify and secure graduate assistantships.

What Types of Work do Graduate Assistants Perform?

The work responsibility of a graduate assistant depends on the skills and work experiences he/she has and the project on which they would be working. Some teach undergraduate courses, grade papers, or proctor testing; others do research and/or assist with the administration of programs. If you have any research skills/experience, be sure to include them on your resume. The assignment/tasks depend on the professional needs of the faculty members/supervisors with whom you work.

How are Graduate Assistants Selected?

Faculty members who have positions for graduate assistants review the student applications on file and make selections. Consequently, students are strongly advised to inform the faculty members in their individual program of their interest in an assistantship.

What Benefits Do Graduate Assistants Receive?

Graduate students from out-of-state who hold qualifying assistantships are given an automatic tuition reduction to the in-state tuition level. Graduate assistantship paperwork must be completed no later than 25 days from the first day of class to qualify for this reduction. In addition, graduate students who hold assistantships in the spring semester and pre-register for the upcoming fall semester automatically are accorded the reduced in-state tuition rates during the summer sessions.

GA Work Assignments & Course Load Limits:

Work Assignments	Minimum	10 hours per week (Half-time)
	Maximum	20 hours per week (Full-time)

Graduate assistants working more than the required hours per week must have approval from the Dean of Graduate School before the beginning date of their graduate assistantship appointment.

*Course Load Limits	Minimum	9 semester hours (1 hr. summer)
	Maximum	15 semester hours

Academic Fees (Same for all GAs)	Per credit hour amount
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* GAs working 10 hours per week are advised to limit their course load to no more than 15 credit hours per semester, while those working 20 hours per week should not enroll in more than 12 credit hours.

Graduate Assistantship tuition may increase when the University's tuition increases.

NOTE: Graduate assistants DO NOT receive any of the following benefits: free parking stickers; paid activity/technology fees; sick leave or paid holidays; insurance; or reduced textbook rates at either bookstore. Graduate assistants are NOT entitled to faculty benefits or privileges. Graduate assistants may pay separately for health services/activities fees by paying the University fee at the time of registration.

Do I Have to Make Up Time Missed for Holidays?

You are not required to work when classes are not in session, but, two weeks' notice and the permission of the supervisor are required for not working during USC-recognized holidays. Two weeks' notification and the permission of the supervisor are also recommended for any vacation days you wish to request.

While USC students are not required to work during days when classes are not in session, the student may be asked to make up the hours if they received pay from the agency for a workday falling on a USC holiday. We advise each student to check with the agency and the supervisor on the agency's policy, as different agencies have different vacation policies.

Note: Fall break and Spring break are not considered official USC holidays.

When Will I Know if I Have an Assistantship?

Assistantships are awarded on a semester basis beginning in late August and/or January. If you receive an assistantship from HPEB, a letter of offer will be mailed to you before the beginning of the semester. Usually, assistantships last for two semesters; however, money is allotted for one semester at a time, and there is occasionally a turnover of assistantships after one semester period. In this instance, assistantship offers may be extended as openings occur throughout the semester.

What Should I Do if I Hear About a Possible Position?

The Department has several recurring assistantships from year to year. Students who identify potential positions for graduate assistantships outside of the recurring positions may contact the Department's Academic Programs Coordinator for guidance to establish a new assistantship in an area of interest.

Do I Have to Reapply for an Assistantship Each Semester that I am in School?

It is a good idea to verify with your supervisor that your position will be funded for each upcoming semester. Paperwork may need to be completed upon acquiring a new assistantship position.

What Other Types of Financial Aid Are Available?

In addition to graduate assistantships, financial aid is available in the form of part-time jobs, consultancies, work/study opportunities, veterans' benefits, and loans. For information on grants, loans, and other financial assistance, contact the USC Student Financial Aid Office.

Degree Requirements

The following section presents curriculum guidelines for the HPEB Master and Certificate programs. These guidelines should be used, with the advice of your faculty advisor, to facilitate your successful progression through your graduate program. As a graduate student, you have the primary responsibility for your progression through the program.

The Department of HPEB offers two Master's Programs: Master's in Public Health (MPH) and combination degrees: Master of Social Work/Master's in Public Health (MSW/MPH) in conjunction with the College of Social Work and MPH/Preventive Health Residency with the USC Preventive Medicine Residency Program.

There are some variations in specific requirements for the Master's degree programs

- Develop a [Master Program of Study](#) (MPOS) by the beginning of the second year.
- Complete coursework (i.e., required courses and electives) (Course descriptions can be found in [USC's Academic Bulletin](#)).
- Complete the applied practice experience, and provide a written final report and oral presentation of the project.
- Successfully complete and defend a comprehensive examination.*

Most programs can be completed in two years of full-time enrollment including some summer school courses. Master students must complete all degree requirements within a period of six years as specified by the Graduate School.

Overview of Degree Requirements

Master of Public Health (MPH) (45 hours):

MPH Course Work (must have Program of Study)

- Basic Public Health Core (16 hours)
- Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior Core (12 hours)
- Cognate Electives (12 hours)
- Applied Practice Experience (5 hours)

Master of Social Work/Master of Public Health (MSW/MPH) Dual Degree

See [School of Social Work](#) website:
<http://www.cosw.sc.edu/academic-program/msw-program/msw-dual-degree>

Master of Public Health (MPH) Preventive Medicine Students (45 hours):

MPH Course Work (must have Program of Study)

- Basic Public Health Core (16 hours)
- Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior Core (12 hours)
- Cognate Electives (12 hours) -9 hours from required courses, 3 hours selected by student
- Applied Practice Experience (5 hours)

*Comprehensive Examination

*(Students may request approval to write and defend a thesis in lieu of the comprehensive examination.)

Certificate of Graduate Study in Aging The Certificate of Graduate Study in Aging program addresses the educational needs of full-time and part-time students who will be engaged in the planning, administration, and provision of services for older adults. This is an 18-hour post-baccalaureate certificate program in which students earning Master or doctoral degrees in related disciplines are offered the opportunity to obtain specialized preparation for career paths in the expanding fields of gerontology and geriatrics.

The certificate provides graduate students with opportunities to learn from gerontology educators within several USC academic units. The program is administered by HPEB in the Arnold School of Public Health.

To earn the certificate, students must complete:

Nine (9) credit hours of core courses. Students must choose from the approved course list:

- HPEB 620: Nutrition through the Life Cycle
- HPEB 713 or EXSC 710: Behavioral Aspects of Physical Activity
- HPEB 731: Health Promotion for Older Adults
- HPEB 820: Public Health Advocacy and Policy
- COMD 714: Gerontology & Communicative Disorders
- SOWK 772: Programs and Services for Older Adults
- EPID 830: Seminar in the Epidemiology of Aging

(3 hours) Practicum at approved site

HPEB 798B: Public Health Practicum Fieldwork

(6 hours) electives chosen with the approval of the program director

Certificate of Graduate Study in Health Communication

The Certificate of Graduate Study in Health Communication is an interdisciplinary certificate administered by the Department of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior; the School of Journalism and Mass Communications; and the School of Library and Information Science. This is an 18-hour post-bachelor's program that provides students with opportunities to strengthen their knowledge in health communication content, research methods, and application. Students will select Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior; Journalism and Mass Communications; or Library and Information Science as an interest area.

An applicant for admission to the Certificate of Graduate Study in Health Communication will be evaluated on a combination of factors: undergraduate grades; performance on the GRE (if required); resume describing previous professional experience, especially if that experience is in health communication-related positions; three letters of recommendation; and a written statement of intent, in which the applicant outlines reasons for seeking a graduate-level Certificate in Health Communication. Qualified individuals who are not currently enrolled in a graduate degree can also take the certificate as a stand-alone program.

To earn the certificate, students must complete:

1. The certificate core (9 hours):

HPEB 711	Applied Health Communication
ISCI 749	Health Sciences Information Resources
JOUR 702	Communication Theory
JOUR 803	Seminar in Mass Communication Theory and Theory Construction
JOUR 772	Seminar in Health, Science, and the Media
JOUR 775	Strategic Communication for Behavior & Social Change

2. Six (6) directed elective hours from an approved list, depending on the student's interests as approved by the student's faculty advisor.

3. A three credit-hour practicum or project in the student's home department.

Examples of practica/internships include appointments with local agencies involved with health communication, or work on an active research project. Faculty members work closely with students to help them secure the practicum.

Certificate of Graduate Study in Global Health (CGSGH)

Modern society operates in a global environment with an increased need for clinical and public health professionals who understand health environments and policies that extend beyond local borders. The Certificate of Graduate Study in Global Health (CGSGH) prepares students with the knowledge and skills that are necessary to conduct international work, by focusing on topics such as population distribution of health conditions; environmental and social determinants of health; comparative health systems and policies; health care administration, finance and services; sociocultural perspectives on health; and development and evaluation of health promotion programs that are sensitive to local context. Students enrolled in both the certificate program and a USC graduate degree program can use up to nine (9) of the credit hours required for the certificate toward their degree program. Of the 18 hours required to earn the certificate, nine hours are required and consist of three 3-hour courses: (Substitutions for courses must be specifically approved by the certificate advisor.)

HPEB 772 Responding to Global Health Challenges;
 ENHS 660 Concepts of Environmental Health Science; and,
 HPEB 640 Behavioral Economics in Health.

Each student will then choose three courses from one of four tracks: (Substitutions for courses must be specifically approved by the certificate advisor.)

- Population Health Track: three 3-hour elective courses from:
 - HPEB 674 Social Networks, Social Capital, and Health
 - HPEB 748 Community Health Development
 - HPEB 820 Public Health Policy and Advocacy
 - EPID 701 Concepts and Methods of Epidemiology
 - EPID 749 Infectious Disease Epidemiology
- Environmental Health Track: three 3-hour elective courses from:
 - ENHS 793 Special Topics in Environmental Health Sciences
 - ENHS 592 Advanced Special Topics in Environmental Health Sciences
 - ENHS 625 Medical Mycology
 - ENHS 661 Parasitology (cross-listed as EPID 661 and BIOL 531)
- Food and Nutrition Track: three 3-hour elective courses from:
 - HPEB 560 Cooking Up a Storm: Food, Globalization, Localization, and Health-South
 - HPEB 620 Nutrition Through the Life Cycle
 - EPID 763 Nutritional Epidemiology
 - EXSC 620 Nutrition and Immunology
 - HPEB 752 Nutrition and Public Health
- Health Care Policy and Systems Track: three 3-hour elective courses from:
 - HSPM 712 Health Economics
 - HSPM 724 Health Law
 - HSPM 726 Applied Public Health Law for Administrators
 - HSPM 730 Financing of Health Care
 - HSPM 772 International Health

Important Terms Used in the Following Section:**Academic Advisor:**

The faculty member selected to advise you in your academic program; the person who approves your courses for registration and helps determine your Program of Study. The HPEB MPH Director is the academic advisor for HPEB MPH students.

Dean of Graduate School:

The Dean of the Graduate School signs off on all paperwork involving progression through graduate programs; all paperwork is routed through the HPEB MPH Director and the HPEB Graduate Director prior to being sent to the Graduate School.

MPH Program Director:

The faculty member in HPEB is responsible for signing off on documents (such as the Program of Study) that are filed with the Graduate School.

Applied Practice Experience Advisor:

The faculty member selected to direct your practice experience, not necessarily the same individual as your academic advisor. Must be a current full-time tenure- or clinical-track HPEB faculty member.

Practice Site Preceptor:

The individual who agrees to serve as your supervisor at the site of your practice experience. Must satisfy requirements described on the MySPH website and cannot be a USC faculty member.

Thesis (Optional) Advisor:

The faculty member selected to direct your thesis (optional), not necessarily the same individual as your academic advisor.

Master of Public Health (MPH) (45 hours)

Goal: To prepare public health professionals to serve as agents of social and behavioral change through the promotion of community and personal well-being.

Goals and Curriculum Requirements

(Note: Preventive Medicine residents follow a slightly different program of study and should contact the MPH Program Director.)

Upon completion of MPH coursework, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of foundational public health knowledge and achievement of MPH foundational competencies, as defined by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). (see Appendices)

Courses:

PUBH 724: Quantitative Methods for Public Health Practice I
 PUBH 725: Quantitative Methods for Public Health Practice II
 PUBH 726: Qualitative Methods for Public Health Practice
 PUBH 730: Public Health Systems, Policy, and Leadership
 PUBH 735: Practical Applications of Public Health Planning

2. Prepare to become effective agents in the development and promotion of informed decision-making and health behavior change in individuals, institutions, and communities.

Courses:

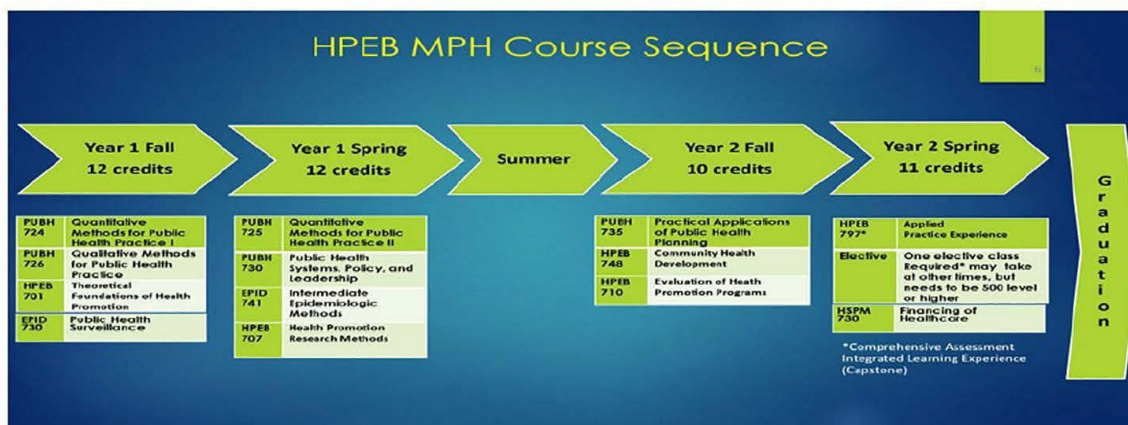
HPEB 701-Theoretical Foundations of Health Promotion HPEB
 HPEB 707- Health Promotion Research Methods
 HPEB 710-Evaluation of Health Promotion Programs HPEB
 HPEB 748-Community Health Development.

3. Demonstrate an understanding of how health promotion, education, and behavior are carried out in various settings concerning various health practices and demonstrate the ability to apply formal learning in practice settings.

Courses:

Elective courses (4)
 HPEB 797 - Applied Practice Experience

The Preventive Medicine MPH Students' Course Sequencing is shown below.



HPEB MPH Milestone

Application and Admission



Coursework (40 hours)
Complete and Submit the Master's Program of Study



Applied Practice Experience (5 hours)



Applied Practice Experience, Written Report, and Oral Presentation Comprehensive Exam, Written Response, and Oral Defense



Application for Graduation

HPEBMPH Course Sequence

Course Number	Course Name	Credit	Sequence
PUBH724	Quantitative Methods for Public Health Practice I	3	Year1 - Fall
PUBH726	Qualitative Methods for Public Health Practice	3	Year1 - Fall
HPEB701	Theoretical Foundations of Health Promotion	3	Year1 - Fall
PUBH725	Quantitative Methods for Public Health Practice II	3	Year1 - Spring
HPEB707	Health Promotion Research Methods	3	Year1 - Spring
PUBH735	Practical Aspects of Public Health Planning	4	Year2 - Fall
HPEB748	Community Health Development	3	Year2 - Fall
HPEB710	Evaluation of Health Promotion Programs	3	Year2 - Fall
PUBH730	Public Health Systems, Policy, and Leadership	3	Year2 - Spring
Electives/Cognate	Various (thesis option:6 credits ofHPEB799)	12	Year1 or2
HPEB797	Applied Practice Experience	5	During or after the last semester of coursework
TOTAL		45	
Successful completion of a comprehensive evaluation			Conclusion ofHPEB797

Master of Social Work/Master of Public Health (MSW/MPH)

Graduates of the combined degree MSW/MPH program can expect to find employment in traditional health care settings that rely on the medical model of intervention as well as in settings that use a social health mode. Students may choose either the Health Promotion and Education (HPEB) track or the Health Services Policy and Management (HSPM) track in the MPH program. Students normally spend the equivalent of three years in their studies for their combined MSW/MPH degrees. Students' MSW fieldwork can be used to satisfy the MPH required practice experience – students should make those arrangements with the HPEB MPH. APE Faculty Advisor. For more specific degree information, go to the [MSW/MPH](#) section of the Academic Bulletin.

Note: MSW/MPH students are required to complete five (5) credit hours of HPEB 797-Applied Practice Experience- to graduate. Students normally complete HPEB 797 during the last year of the program. Two (2) of the five (5) HPEB 797 credit hours are to be completed during SOWK 783. The 2 credit hours will consist of ensuring fieldwork preceptor is in place, ensuring site has an MOA with USC, writing the APE proposal, getting it approved, and uploading proposal in the APEX tracking system. The remaining three (3) credit hours will be completed during SOWK 784. The MPH Program Director will provide more information about these requirements,

Program of Study

Every degree student must file a Master's Program of Study ([M-POS](#)) in The Graduate School for approval by the dean of The Graduate School. A program of study is a list of courses that satisfy degree requirements, and it must be approved by the student's advisor, the graduate director, and the dean of The Graduate School. This formal agreement serves a number of purposes that benefit both the student and the University. It allows the student and the advisor to engage in early planning of coursework, explore research interests, and discuss requirements for progress toward the degree; facilitates subsequent advisement; and protects the student in the event of unexpected curriculum or faculty changes. The student must file a completed Master's Program of Study form ([M-POS](#)) **within the first 12 months of coursework**. If necessary, an approved program of study can be modified with a [Program Adjustment form](#).

The program of study also indicates the Master student's intention to pursue the comprehensive examination or thesis option for meeting the program's integrated learning experience requirement.

Progression in Program

Comprehensive Examination

Students enrolled in the HPEB MPH (and combined degree) program are required to take a written and oral comprehensive examination in conjunction with the practice experience. The comprehensive examination, an integrated learning experience, is a part of the culminating/capstone experience of the MPH program and is designed to assess students' level of mastery of the core competencies acquired through core courses. (Students may request approval to write and defend a thesis in lieu of the comprehensive examination. See the Thesis section of this handbook.)

Eligibility

Students must be in good academic standing (i.e., GPA ≥ 3.0 and no grades below a C in core courses) and must have completed all HPEB core coursework. Most students will take the exam in the semester they are registered for HPEB 797. Students must register with the HPEB MPH Director to take the examination.

Note: Students with disabilities are assisted through the Office of Student Disability Services. Students seeking accommodation should contact the Office of Student Disability Services at 803-777-6744 (TDD) or 803-777-6142 for specific information about services, or access online at <http://www.sa.sc.edu/sds/>.

Examination Procedures

(The following timeline information is a general guideline. Students should follow the applied practice experience/exam event timeline posted early in the relevant semester.)

Students are responsible for registering for the comprehensive examination in the Fall or Spring semester following completion of the MPH (PUBH and HPEB) core courses. Usually, this occurs in the semester of the scheduled applied practice experience presentation. (Students are responsible for scheduling the presentation for an agreeable date for the student, site preceptor, faculty practice experience advisor, and secondary exam grader.) The Examination will be administered months before the scheduled applied practice experience presentation.

Written Comprehensive Examination

The examination is intended to assess students' critical thinking ability as a key determinant of overall mastery of the core competencies in HPEB. The exam contains questions from the core courses, in three sections: 1) Program Planning, 2) Program Implementation, and 3) Program Evaluation. Each section of the exam addresses a set of HPEB MPH competencies, which are addressed in core courses.

Exams are scored according to the student's application of critical thinking skills in the response provided. Answers are evaluated by the following criteria:

- Purpose: The extent to which the response addresses the question.
- Subject Matter Knowledge: The appropriateness and quality of supporting evidence.
- Depth and Breadth of Understanding: The degree to which the response demonstrates understanding and synthesis of MPH foundational competencies and HPEB competencies.

Responses must be communicated clearly enough (i.e., well-written) to permit the faculty who read them to make a valid judgment of students' knowledge and critical thinking skills. Responses should be the original work of the student, written in the student's own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work. The use of artificial intelligence or a human is strictly prohibited from answering questions. All responses should be the students' original work and in their own words.

The department adheres to the University of South Carolina Honor Code. It is the responsibility of every student at the University of South Carolina Columbia to adhere steadfastly to truthfulness and to avoid dishonesty, fraud, or deceit of any type in connection with any academic program. Any student who violates this Honor Code or who knowingly assists another to violate this Honor Code shall be subject to discipline, including the possibility of dismissal from the academic program.

Two graders (the APE faculty practice advisor and another full-time HPEB faculty member) will review and grade the student's written responses prior to the applied practice experience presentation.

Oral Exam:

During the presentation of the applied practice experience, the oral portion of the comprehensive examination will take place. The oral examination will cover material from the core courses and follow-up questions from the student's final written portion of the examination.

HPEB faculty vote on all comprehensive exam results, and students are notified via email of the results. Comprehensive examination results are either *Pass* or *Fail*. Students who pass the examination may apply for graduation. Students who fail the comprehensive examination may appeal to retake the written and oral examination after one, but no more than two, regular (Fall and Spring) academic semesters following the first administration. Students have a maximum of two administrations to pass the comprehensive examination.

Students who fail the second comprehensive examination administration will have their admission to the program cancelled and will not progress toward the degree.

IMPORTANT: Passing the comprehensive examination is a requirement for graduation. Questions about the examination should be directed to Dr. Edena Guimaraes (HPEB MPH Program Director).

Applied Practice Experience (HPEB 797)

The applied practice experience (APE) involves fieldwork at a practice site, requiring regular progress reports and a final written report.

Applied Practice Experience Goals

The goal of the APE is to strengthen a student's understanding of the realities of public health programs in practice settings. This is achieved by familiarizing the student with the practice of public health education to help the student identify with the profession; organizational and administrative dimensions of public health promotion; and functional activities of a specific setting. During the APE, the student will demonstrate attainment of a set of MPH foundational competencies (minimum of three) and HPEB competencies (minimum of two) through two work products as identified with their APE faculty advisor. See Appendices I and III.

The following objectives are presented to guide the achievement of this goal. Planned experiences contribute to the student's preparation by offering an opportunity for application of skills within the framework of an appropriate field organization through:

- Experience in working with and without supervision within the organization.
- Exploration of the ongoing planning, implementation, and evaluation activities in health education and promotion programs of the organization.
- Familiarization with the organization's public health mission.
- Actual working involvement in health promotion/education activities within the organization.

Applied Practice Experience Overview

To complete the APE, students must select a public health organization to collaborate with, working under the supervision of a preceptor at the organization and following the guidance of a faculty member. Students should begin gathering ideas for potential sites throughout their program, especially after the first semester. Once a site is identified, students should find a full-time faculty member within the HPEB department who ideally has expertise related to the chosen health topic. Students need to register for HPEB 797 in the semester they plan to complete the experience. Each faculty member has a unique HPEB 797 registration code, and students must contact their faculty practice advisor to obtain this code before enrolling. Before starting fieldwork for the experience, students must complete an applied practice experience proposal with guidance and feedback from the preceptor and advisor. The proposal will outline two work product ideas, specify the five competencies they address, and serve as a blueprint for

the experience. The entire proposal development process can be conducted via email. Once the proposal is approved by the preceptor and advisor, students can begin their practice experience. Additionally, students must ensure that a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is established between the Arnold School of Public Health and the practice site before fieldwork starts. Students can verify that a formal agreement is in place before proceeding.

Students can check to see if their site has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Memorandum of Agreement (/MOA) when they sign into the Applied Practice Experience tracking database, [APEX](#), or contact Dr. Zach Jenkins. At the end of the APE, students should upload the proposal and all other relevant documents into APEX. For more specific instructions, students should consult the [Applied Practice Experience webpage](#) for specific resources, including the resources- [Introduction to the Applied Practice Experience](#) and the [Applied Practice Experience Checklist](#).

Contact [Zach Jenkins](#) with any additional questions or concerns. An oral presentation and written report of the APE are required at the conclusion of HPEB 797, where a faculty member will evaluate the competency attainment. (Note: The MPH comprehensive exam is administered concurrently with HPEB 797. See the prior section of this handbook for exam processes and timeline.)

Examples of previous practice sites can be found at [Past Applied Practice Experience Sites](#).

Setting, Applied Practice Experience Requirements, and Participant Roles

Setting

Numerous state and federal departments and agencies, as well as private hospitals, private organizations, and other health-related organizations, provide locations for the APE and projects.

Identify Practice Site and Preceptor

Students are responsible for identifying and securing a practice site and preceptor. A variety of strategies may be employed to assist students in this regard. Practice opportunities are posted in the [APEX](#) site (<https://mysph.sc.edu/apex/guest/login>). Opportunities are also posted internally in the Department via bulletin boards, flyers, and electronically via student listserv communication. Students may approach potential sites and/or preceptors based on their interests or on increasing their exposure to areas beyond their interests and current “expertise.” The site preceptor should be qualified to supervise students’ work and available to provide meaningful feedback on a daily or near-daily basis. The individual must satisfy the requirements described on the MySPH website and cannot be a USC faculty member. [Information](#) for the site preceptor is available on the APE website. The practice experience can be located outside of the Columbia area, outside of the state, or outside of the country. Students struggling to identify a preceptor can schedule a meeting with [Dr. Guimaraes](#) or [Dr. Zach Jenkins](#).

Identify Faculty Advisor for the Applied Practice Experience

Each student is responsible for finding a HPEB APE faculty advisor, who is not the student's academic advisor. The APE practice advisor must be a current full-time tenure- or clinical-track HPEB faculty member. Each student is required to contact a HPEB full-time faculty member to request an assignment; such an assignment is dependent upon the faculty member's availability and interest. The primary factor in selecting an APE faculty advisor should be the ability of the faculty member to assist in the development of the practice proposal and provide assistance throughout the practice field placement (i.e., HPEB 797). Students needing help in finding an APE faculty advisor may contact [Dr. Edena Guimaraes](#).

Develop an Applied Practice Experience Proposal, Complete Competencies and Work Products Form, and MOA, and Begin Fieldwork

A completed Applied Practice Experience Proposal and Competencies and Work Products Forms are necessary before a student can begin his/her fieldwork. Students are ultimately responsible for negotiating the proposal with both the site preceptor and their faculty practice advisor. This proposal is for the student's protection, as it will ensure that all parties agree upon the deliverables and experience within a pre-defined time frame. The proposal should follow the APE Outline Template (located in the ASPH Applied Practice Experience website). The proposal must include five competencies with two work products clearly aligned to those competencies. The APE faculty advisor will work with student to develop the proposal and to review the Competencies and Work Products Form to ensure the competencies selected by the student align with work products to be created. The MPH Program Director will review the Competencies and Work Products Form after approved by APE Faculty Advisor to ensure that the five competencies and two work products are appropriately aligned. Fieldwork cannot commence until the proposals have been reviewed and approved by the MPH Program Director. Contact information should be provided for all parties (i.e., student, site preceptor, and APE faculty advisor). At this same time, students should also work with Dr. Zach Jenkins in securing a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the site and the university if needed.

Although there is much variation among HPEB APE experiences, they all have in common a focus on a major project, activity, or experience in public health promotion/education. An outline for writing the [Applied Practice Experience Proposal](#) can be found on the Applied Practice Experience website.

Carry Out Applied Practice Experience

Students will continue at the practice field site and have primary contact with their site preceptor, who functions as a mentor. Students are expected to keep their APE faculty advisor updated as needed. If a problem arises, students are to inform their faculty practice advisor as early as possible.

Complete Written Comprehensive Examination

The written portion of the Comprehensive Examination is due to the HPEB MPH Program Director before the scheduled APE presentation, after completing the HPEB 797 course.

Present Results of Practice Experience

Students will need to prepare a 20–25-minute PowerPoint presentation following the [outline](#) for the oral APE presentation. Each student is required to orally present their APE publicly before the end of the 797 term. The main purpose of the presentation is to highlight the two work products and their relationship with the five competencies. Students are to arrange the specifics of the presentation (e.g., presentation date and time) with their APE faculty advisor, site preceptor, and secondary exam grader. The APE faculty advisor and preceptor must be present during the oral APE presentation. The comprehensive exam second grader does not have to be present during this portion of the oral defense. Students may invite others (i.e., students, friends, coworkers, family) to attend the oral APE presentation. The student may present in person or via video conferencing (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype,™).

HPEB MPH students are responsible for notifying the department regarding presentations. The student should provide the following information via email to both Casey Goldston Giraudy, HPEB Senior Instructor and Academic Programs Coordinator (goldston@mailbox.sc.edu), and Pam Metz, HPEB Office Manager and Administrative Assistant (pmetz@mailbox.sc.edu):

- APE title
- Practice agency/location
- Your name, earned degree
- Practice site preceptor
- APE faculty advisor
- Location and/or virtual link of presentation

Submission of Documents After Completion of Applied Practice Experience

Each student must complete an APE Final Report and submit the report, along with the two work products and PowerPoint presentation, in the “Documents” section of APEX before or immediately after scheduling their practice experience oral presentation. An electronic copy of the report should be sent to Pam Metz (pmetz@mailbox.sc.edu) at that time.

Additional Information:

A student’s APE cannot be part of their existing job or Graduate Assistantship (GA). It is possible to carry out an APE at an existing job or GA site only if the experience is above and beyond job and GA requirements and results in additional contact hours. This exception can only be granted with the consent of your APE faculty advisor in consultation with the HPEB MPH Director. Students are not generally, but may be, remunerated for their APE placements or work. The APE is considered the culminating, or capstone, experience of the MPH curriculum, much like a project or a thesis. The APE is a professional position and one in which students are representatives of ASPH and USC. Students, therefore, are expected to always conduct themselves professionally.

The student is expected to:

- Take initiative in addressing competencies, selecting an appropriate setting for practice activity, developing clear work and learning objectives, and completing work and learning tasks by the dates agreed upon.
- Upload the final written report of the APE in the APEX tracking system, and an electronic copy of the report to Pam Metz.
- Arrange appropriate meetings with the APE faculty advisor and site preceptor.
- Arrange final APE oral presentation date, time, and location with the faculty advisor, site preceptor, and comprehensive exam second grader if necessary.

The practice site preceptor is expected to:

- Assist students in defining activities of potential use to his or her organization.
- Review the student's proposal and contract for usefulness to the organization and provide on-site direction to the work component of the experience.
- Provide the student with logistical support within the organization.
- Review the student's final oral presentation of the practice experience.
- Attend the practice experience oral presentation.

The APE Faculty Advisor is expected to:

- Advise the student in developing work and learning agreements in the proposal.
- Ensure and approve that the students' two work products align with the five competencies selected.
- Communicate with the student and practice site preceptor as necessary.
- Provide ongoing advice and guidance as needed or required.
- Review the student's final report and attend the oral presentation of the practice experience.

The MPH Program Director is expected to:

- Review proposals, which include the two work products, during the creation phase for competencies and work products.
- Approve proposals, which include the two work products and competencies, before fieldwork
- Review and approve the final report, which includes the two work products, for competencies achieved

Thesis (Optional) Requirements and Guidelines

A thesis is optional for HPEB students seeking the MPH degree and may be completed instead of the comprehensive examination. (Note: The thesis does not replace the required practice experience.) The decision to pursue the thesis requires the willingness and availability of a minimum of two full-time HPEB faculty members and one faculty member outside of the department to serve on the student's thesis committee. The selection of a topic and work on the thesis are directed by a department-approved faculty thesis committee. This committee must be approved by the department before or at the same time as the student submits the program of study (MPOS). The MPOS form can be found on the Graduate School's website.

Graduate School Guidelines for Appointment of Thesis Committees

The Thesis Committee is a program faculty committee approved by the department or school. The Thesis Committee should be composed only of faculty from the Columbia campus. Regular and Associate graduate faculty of any rank who hold the doctorate or the discipline's terminal degree and tenured faculty at the rank of full professor who do not hold the terminal degree may serve on or chair thesis committees. Research, clinical, and adjunct faculty at any rank who hold the terminal degree may serve on and chair a thesis committee with approval of the program and the dean of The Graduate School. Instructors and lecturers who do not hold the terminal degree may serve as members of thesis committees with justification from the program and approval of the dean of The Graduate School. Emeritus or emeriti faculty may continue to chair the thesis committee of a student under their direction at retirement and may be appointed as a member or a thesis committee with the approval of the program and the dean of The Graduate School. In HPEB, the thesis committee must include at least two HPEB faculty members and one member from outside the department.

Before beginning to work on the thesis, students should obtain and read a copy of the [Graduate School's general thesis regulations](#).

Purpose of the Thesis

The thesis is a capstone experience and is enhanced through the student's application of principles and methods learned during coursework through the preparation of a research manuscript. The thesis must be original research designed to answer specific questions and to integrate new information contributing to the understanding and solution of public health problems. The thesis must synthesize selected MPH foundational and concentration-specific competencies. Students must select at least three competencies to address:

- One foundational competency
- One HPEB program competency
- One competency, either foundational or HPEB program specific

(See Appendices)

A minimum of six (6) hours of thesis credit (HPEB 799) must be applied to thesis work. A maximum of nine (9) hours of credit for thesis (HPEB 799) may appear on the student's program of study (MPOS). Three (3) of the nine (9) HPEB 799 credit hours can come from an elective course. ***Any student who uses University facilities or confers with faculty on thesis work must be officially enrolled for at least one hour of academic credit.***

Steps in applying for the thesis option:

1. Discuss your thesis ideas with the HPEB faculty member you wish to serve as your thesis committee chair, whose interests and expertise complement your research interests. Determine if that faculty member is willing and able to serve as your thesis chair.
2. With your chair, complete the thesis request form available on the department's website. Part of this form requires naming a proposed thesis committee. The thesis committee should include a minimum of two HPEB faculty (including the thesis chair) and one faculty member outside of the department. Submit the thesis request form to the Graduate Director. Your request will be reviewed by an HPEB faculty committee.
3. After review and approval from the HPEB faculty committee, prepare a thesis committee request form (HPEB website) and the Master's Program Study (MPOS from the Graduate School website). Both forms must be submitted to the Graduate Director before April in the first year of study.

Steps for completion of thesis work:

1. Negotiate thesis chapter/section due dates with thesis chairperson.
2. Submit your thesis proposal to the thesis committee. The proposal briefly outlines the thesis topic, hypothesis, and proposed methodology. The proposal is a contract between the student and the committee members and ensures that everyone has agreed upon the format and content of the thesis. All committee members are required to sign it as an acknowledgement of approval of the proposal. The student will prepare a written thesis proposal outlining:
 - The general problem to be addressed with adequate literature support.
 - The specific objectives of the study and how accomplishing these objectives will contribute relevant new knowledge to the field; objectives must be supported by a literature review.
 - Methods for accomplishing objectives.
 - The time, equipment, money, and other resources required.

The committee will review the appropriateness of the proposal; at least one meeting of the entire committee with the student will take place for proposal acceptance before major thesis work begins. It is the student's responsibility to reserve a meeting room and the proposal meeting.

3. The major portion of the thesis work itself (field, laboratory, literature analysis) will be conducted by the student in close collaboration with the thesis committee (especially the thesis Chairperson). Any changes in the former plan, as set forth by the proposal, must be

agreed upon by the committee. Except under unusual circumstances, the student will be registered for thesis work during the semester or session of graduation.

The student will obtain IRB approval prior to conducting the research. Information about this process can be obtained from the committee chairperson or online.

It is the policy at the University of South Carolina that no research or investigation involving human subjects, without regard for source of funding, may be undertaken until the approval of the Human Subject Institutional Review Board has been obtained.

4. During the semesters that students plan to conduct research and analyze data, students should enroll in HPEB 799 under the appropriate section (assigned) according to their thesis advisor in the Master Schedule for that semester of the session.
5. Complete data collection by the beginning of classes for the semester in which the student intends to graduate.
6. In consultation with the committee chair, submit draft copies of the thesis sections to the thesis committee as the student completes them.
The first draft of the thesis must be submitted to the thesis chair at least 60 days before the end of the semester of graduation.
7. After the thesis work, and at least 30 days before graduation, the student will present an informative seminar defense of the results of his/her thesis research. The student is responsible for arranging and announcing the seminar, which will be open to all interested parties (students, faculty, agencies, etc.). There are two equally important purposes for the seminars:
 - To transmit information that has been culminated from a concentrated body of work on the original research project. Thus, the presentation will be of considerable interest to colleagues and should be concise, well-organized, and supported by well-planned visual aids.
 - To serve as an important learning process for the student in executing an informative presentation and in responding to the discussion and criticism of fellow students and faculty.

The open seminar will be followed by a critical review of the thesis by student's thesis committee, with suggestions for improvement, publication, etc.

Format

Students write a manuscript-style thesis. Only one manuscript is needed to meet thesis requirements, but the student may write more than one manuscript. Thesis students will work with committee members to plan one distinctly significant focus for the manuscript/s. The following provides a generic outline for manuscripts: Manuscript Title; Format; Abstract; Introduction; Methods; Results; Discussion; References. Students must select a specific journal/s for manuscript submittal and follow the instructions to authors provided by the selected journal. Each journal provides a section to authors that includes information on manuscript length, number of tables and graphs, and reference style. Students follow authorship guidelines posted on the department's website. Students are expected to be

the first author of any article they write as a thesis. The order of author listing ***must be discussed with all committee members at the thesis proposal defense.***

As scientists, it is valuable to have publications on the curriculum vitae when applying for jobs or other academic programs.

Steps for concluding the thesis

All theses must meet [Graduate School requirements](#).

The deadline for submission of theses for each academic session is also posted on the Graduate School webpage.

In addition, students are responsible for notifying the department regarding thesis presentations. At least one week prior to the presentation, the student should provide the following information via email to both Casey Goldston Giraudy (goldston@mailbox.sc.edu) and Pam Metz (pmetz@mailbox.sc.edu):

Thesis title
Your name, earned degree
Thesis advisor
Day, Date, Year of your presentation
Time of your presentation
Room/Building location
Street Address/Zip (if not in HESC)

This information will be published on the department's main webpage and posted in the front office.

To reserve a room and/or equipment for your presentation, please contact Pam Metz (777-7096, pmetz@mailbox.sc.edu).

In general, students are required to present the research project (generally a 20–30-minute presentation of the Background, Methodology, Results, and Discussion) to the audience and allow for a question-and-answer period (usually 10-15 minutes). Students should also bring to the defense copies of the official Graduate School signature form.

IMPORTANT: Graduate School thesis preparation information may be obtained from the Graduate School website. https://sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/graduate_school/graduate-studies/thesis_and_dissertation/index.php

Examination/Defense Location

Combined oral and written examinations are held in HPEB for three purposes: 1) a comprehensive examination for doctoral students, 2) a dissertation defense for doctoral students, and 3) a thesis defense for MPH students. These examinations should be conducted on campus, and all committee members should be physically present with the student. Under exceptional circumstances, some committee members (but not the chair) may be located off-campus for the examination, connected via telephone or

videoconferencing to the student, chair, and other committee members who are on campus. Also, under exceptional circumstances, the student, the chair, and perhaps other committee members may be located off-campus for the examination, connected via telephone or videoconferencing with other committee members who are on campus. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the chair must be physically located with the student for the examination.

Resources and Information for Students

Thomas Cooper Library (Greene Street)

The Thomas Cooper Library has four stack levels of books, a ground floor, a main floor (where circulation and reference sections are located), and a mezzanine. (The mezzanine is the top floor; the main entrance floor; the ground floor, and the four stack floors go down. That is, Level 4 is the fourth floor below the ground level.)

The Thomas Cooper Library has other valuable services for graduate students, including 40 study rooms (seating up to four persons each), six seminar rooms for library-related seminars, and a classroom for the library-taught orientation and bibliographic instruction classes. Other special areas in the library include the Student Computer Labs (on Levels 3 and 5), the Science Library (on Level 4), Special Collections (on the Mezzanine Level), and the Map Library (on Level 5). The telephone number for the circulation department is (803) 777-3145.

School of Medicine Library

The School of Medicine Library at the University of South Carolina can be an excellent resource for students in Public Health. Many journals can be found at both Thomas Cooper and the Medical Library, so it is good to check with Thomas Cooper first (their listings will indicate what libraries or agencies in this area carry the health journals not available at Cooper). The Medical School Library is located on the Veteran's Administration Medical Center Grounds off Garners Ferry Road. The telephone number is (803) 733-3344 and website is <http://uscm.med.sc.edu/>.

The Richland County Public Library and Other Library Resources

The Richland County Public Library is Columbia's public library and provides access to more than 650,000 books and many other materials. This new library is located at 1431 Assembly Street. In addition, there are various other branches located in neighboring communities. The telephone number for the Richland County Public Library is (803) 799-9084, and the website is <http://www.richland.lib.sc.us/>. The Richland County Public Library requires residency in Richland County to check out materials and to access special services. In addition, completing the membership requirements to obtain a library card may also be necessary.

Several State government agencies have very good libraries that may be accessible to students. The [South Carolina State Library](http://www.statelibrary.sc.gov/) (803-734-8026; <http://www.statelibrary.sc.gov/>) has specific South Carolina Government Publications and Grants Research collections.

Communication

Each student has an assigned mailbox (Room 529 of Discovery I) in the Arnold School of Public Health. These mailboxes are used to keep the students up to date with information, events, etc., going on in HPEB and the School. It is also a base for communication with other students, staff, and faculty. Check your mailbox often.

Students are also required to submit e-mail addresses to the Department's administrative assistant to be included in the department's listserv. The listserv provides information that is critical for students' progression through the program.

Subscribe

- Send an e-mail to: listserv@listserv.sc.edu
- No subject
- In the text area, type the following: SUBSCRIBE HPEBLIST
{Subscribers name}
(for example: SUBSCRIBE HPEBLIST Ken Watkins)
- Send the message without a signature

Health Sciences Computing Labs

The Arnold School of Public Health is fortunate to have excellent computer facilities and excellent staff. The facilities include personal computers on the 4th floor of Discovery 1. Staff can assist with the use of the hardware and software that is available on this student's equipment.

ASPH Graduate Student Services

The Office of Student and Alumni Services provides many important services for students, including course registration assistance, guidance in locating financial assistance, and services in preparation for entering your chosen career. They can help you in too many ways to list. If you need any kind of information or assistance, this is a good place to start. If they cannot help you, they can tell you who can.

Student Health Services

The Center for Health and Well-being and the Thomson Building are located behind the Russell House. The Center, one of some 120 nationally accredited university student health centers, is staffed by board-certified or board-eligible physicians, certified nurse practitioners, and appropriate numbers of registered nurses, most of whom are certified in college health nursing. The Center is open mornings and afternoons, Monday through Friday, except on university holidays. A late Sunday afternoon and evening clinic is held during the Fall and Spring semesters to manage urgent conditions. No inpatient, overnight, or after-hours services are available.

Daily clinics at the Center include General Medicine and Women's Care. Weekly clinics in Orthopedics, Dermatology, Sports Medicine, and Minor Injuries are available. Ancillary services include pharmacy, diagnostic radiology, clinical laboratory, physical therapy, and immunization and allergy injection services. All students enrolled in Columbia campus classes are eligible for services. The Center can be

reached at <https://www.sa.sc.edu/shs/> or (803) 777-3175.

Campus Wellness

Campus Wellness is devoted to awareness and prevention of acute and chronic health issues for students, faculty and staff at the University of South Carolina. By offering a wide range of programs and services, this office assists campus community members with making healthy choices and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. For more information, go to: <http://www.sa.sc.edu/shs/cw/>.

Counseling and Psychiatry

USC Counseling Services is located on-campus in the Thomson Building (Second – Fourth floors), 1401 Devine St., behind the Student Center. The offices offer: brief outpatient psychiatric intervention; psychological services, including individual and group counseling and biofeedback and psychological testing services; and limited social work support for Columbia campus students. Students, who need inpatient care, extended outpatient services, or other clinical care that exceeds the capabilities of Counseling Services, are referred to community providers of the patient's choice. Professional staff clinical evaluation and management services are free to all students who have paid the Health Fee portion of the University Fee. Counseling Services are open daily, Monday-Friday (except on University holidays). Appointments are required except for acute or emergency situations. Counseling and Psychiatry Services can be reached at (803) 777-5223 and accessed online at https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_health_services/mental-health/index.php.

Off-Campus Student Services

Off-Campus Student Services is located in Suite 033 of the Russell House, and offers many services of interest to students who do not live on the USC campus. Among the many programs and services offered are a babysitter list, Columbia area resident assistance, a newsletter, and an off-campus housing locator service (finding roommates and/or apartments). Off-Campus Student Services can be reached at (803) 777-3366 and accessed online at <http://www.sa.sc.edu/ocss/>.

International Student Services

International Programs for Students is located in Suite 650 of the Close Hipp Building, 1705 College Street. International student services provide a wide range of services for international students, including pre-arrival information, orientation programs, immigration advising, personal assistance, and student programs and activities. Professionals with specialized training and expertise working with international students staff the office. International Student Services can be reached at https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/international_student_services/index.php or (803) 777-7461.

Disability Services

Students with disabilities are assisted through the Student Disability Resource Center. Students with disabilities should contact the [Student Disability Resource Center](#) at 803-777-6144 (TDD) or 803-777-6142 for specific information about services, or accessed online. When students receive the Graduate School's offer of admission, they should notify the Student Disability Resource Center of their need(s) for specific accommodation(s). The Center is located at 1523 Greene Street in Room 112A.

Center for Teaching Excellence

The Center for Teaching Excellence is committed to planning and implementing professional development programming for graduate teaching assistants. Graduate student workshops and events are designed to address teaching challenges unique to being a graduate student.

Appendices

Appendix I. MPH Foundational Competencies (CEPH)

Evidence-based Approaches to Public Health

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

Public Health & Health Care Systems

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

Planning & Management to Promote Health

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

Policy in Public Health

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

Leadership

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

Communication

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

Interprofessional Practice

21. Perform effectively on interprofessional teams

Systems Thinking

22. Apply systems thinking tools to a public health issue

Appendix II. Foundational Public Health Knowledge Learning Objectives (CEPH)

Profession & Science of Public Health

1. Explain public health history, philosophy and values
2. Identify the core functions of public health and the 10 Essential Services
3. Explain the role of quantitative and qualitative methods and sciences in describing and assessing a population's health
4. List major causes and trends of morbidity and mortality in the US or other community relevant to the school
5. Discuss the science of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention in population health, including health promotion, screening, etc.
6. Explain the critical importance of evidence in advancing public health knowledge

Factors Related to Human Health

7. Explain effects of environmental factors on a population's health
8. Explain biological and genetic factors that affect a population's health
9. Explain behavioral and psychological factors that affect a population's health
10. Explain the social, political and economic determinants of health and how they contribute to population health and health inequities
11. Explain how globalization affects global burdens of disease
12. Explain an ecological perspective on the connections among human health, animal health and ecosystem health (e.g., One Health)

Appendix III. HPEB Concentration Competencies

1. **Theory**- Apply social and behavioral theories and models to the development, implementation, and evaluation of public health programs.
2. **Multi-level Influences on Health** - Utilize multi-level approaches in understanding the importance of context in addressing public health issues.
3. **Collaboration** - Articulate how multi-sectoral, collaborative engagement advances health equity, and improves health outcomes.
4. **Evaluation** - Develop sound and feasible methods to evaluate public health programs, interpret results, and communicate those results effectively.
5. **Research Methods**-Make informed study design decisions and be able to articulate the strengths and weaknesses of a research study.

Forms

All forms required by the Graduate School and HPEB should be submitted through the HPEB MPH Director and Graduate Director.

Necessary forms can be found at [Graduate School Forms](#) and [HPEB Department](#) websites.

Information and Forms

Milestone	Event	HPEB information and forms	Graduate School forms
Admission to HPEB/First year			
	Application	http://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/public_health/apply/index.php	
	Change in application (deferment, change of degree)		Change of Status (COS)
	Program of study		Master Program of Study (MPOS) Program of Study Adjustment Form (POSA) Request for Transfer of Graduate Credit (GRTC)
Master comprehensive exam			
		MPH Comprehensive Exam Registration Form	Master Comprehensive Exam Verification Form
Completion of thesis (optional), practice experience and graduation			
	Thesis committee approval	Approval of HPEB Thesis Committee	
	Thesis proposal	Master's Degree Requirement Notification Form	

	Thesis defense	Master's Degree Requirement Notification Form See this handbook. Contact department for room reservation and posting notice.	Thesis Signature and Approval Form (G- TSF)
	Practice experience presentation	Master's Degree Requirement Notification Form See this handbook.	
	Graduation		Application for Graduation (AS-126)