



M.D./M.P.H. Program Guide

Public Health as a Field of Study

Public health consists of organized efforts to improve the health of communities. The operative components of this definition are that public health efforts are organized and directed to communities rather than to individuals. Public health practice does not rely on a specific body of knowledge and expertise; rather, a combination of science and social approaches are used. The definition of public health reflects its central goal – the reduction of disease and the improvement of health in the community. Acknowledging that there are multiple determinants of health and embracing the vision for health improvement articulated in Healthy People 2020, we see the practice of public health as including partnerships with the community, health and social services, industry and business, academia, and the media. M.D./M.P.H. professionals have the opportunity to pursue careers in academic medicine, hospital administration, or clinical medicine from a public health perspective. They also serve as health department directors, medical directors, clinical administrators, or other positions requiring medical and public health expertise.

M.D./M.P.H Program Synopsis

The M.D./M.P.H. dual degree program is open to currently enrolled medical students and physicians in residency training programs. This additional twelve-month program consists of 42-45 semester credit hours and can be completed by medical students taking M.P.H. coursework during the period between the second and third years of medical school as well as summer vacations. Students who do not complete their professional paper during the year-long leave of absence from medical school may use a fourth year elective to complete the requirement. A sample timeline can be seen in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1. Sample Timeline for M.D./M.P.H. Program

M.D. Year 1	Summer May-July	M.D. Year 2 (M.D./M.P.H. Application) Aug.-May	Summer (USMLE Step I) May-Aug.	M.P.H. Coursework Aug.-June	M.D. Year 3 July-June	M.D. Year 4 July-June
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Admission Requirements

Medical students must successfully pass Step I of the USMLE to enter the program as well as be in good standing with the medical school. The GRE is not required as MCAT scores will be used. Students must complete an online application via the Graduate School by April 15th for fall matriculation. It is suggested that students interested in the program meet with the Student Affairs Office and the Public Health Department chair, prior to this date and before initiating the application process.

Curriculum

Forty-five (45) credit hours are required for the M.P.H. degree. In the M.D./M.P.H. program, three credit hours may be fulfilled by medical school coursework if all other program requirements are met. As presented in **Table 1**, curriculum requirements are 24 hours of required core courses, 9 hours of concentration-specific courses, 6 hours of capstone courses (internship and professional paper), and 6 hours of electives. The 3 waived hours, if applied, will reduce the elective requirement to 3 hours.

Table 1. Summary of Requirements by Credit Hours

Course Requirements	Number	Total Credits
Core Courses	8	24
Concentration-Specific Courses	3	9
Capstone Courses (Internship and Professional Paper)	3	6
Electives	1-2	3-6
Total for the Program	15-16	42-45

Students will select a concentration area either in Analysis and Management (which includes Epidemiology or Health Administration) or Health Behavior. The core courses, concentration specific courses, capstone courses, and a sampling of available electives is shown in **Table 2** (on the next page).

Table 2. M.P.H. Courses

Category	Area	Class	Class Name	Hours	
Core	Health Services Administration	MPH 6000	Public Health Practice	3	
		MPH 6002	Ethics and Law in Public Health	3	
		MPH/NURS 6035	Interdisciplinary Rural Health	3	
	Environmental Health	MPH/EHST 6010	Environmental Health	3	
	Epidemiology	MPH 6011	Epidemiology	3	
		MPH 6020	Research Methods	3	
	Social and Behavioral Science	MPH 6013	Behavior Health	3	
Biostatistics	MPH/BIOS 7021	Biostatistics for the Health Professionals 1	3		
Concentration	Epidemiology	MPH 6022	Epidemiology of Infectious Disease	3	
		MPH 6023	Epidemiology of Cancer	3	
		HIMA 6060	Health Informatics	3	
	Analysis and Management	Health Administration	MPH 6025	Delivery of Health Care Services	3
			MPH 6100	Aging and Health	3
			MPH 6040	Long Term Care Administration	3
			MPH 6200	Community Health Organization and Leadership	3
			COHE 6310	Health Care Accounting and Financial Administration	3
			PADM 6400	Health Policy	3
	Health Behavior	HLTH 6001	Foundations of Health Education and Promotion	3	
		HLTH 6110	Intervention Strategies for Health Education and Promotion	3	
		HLTH 6600	Needs assessment in Health Education and Promotion	3	
	Capstone	Internship	MPH 6903	Comprehensive Field Placement	3
Professional Paper		MPH 6991	MPH Professional Paper Proposal	1	
		MPH 6992	MPH Professional Paper	2	
Electives (not a complete listing)	Public Health	MPH 6005	African-American Health	3	
		MPH 6007	Global Public Health: A Global Perspective	3	
		MPH 6008	Ethnic Health and Health Disparities	3	
		MPH 6009	Capstone Experience in Ethnic Health and Health Disparities	3	
		MPH 6025	Delivery of Healthcare Services	3	
		MPH 6027	Applied Mixed-Methods Research	3	
		MPH 6036	Fundamentals in Agromedicine	3	
		MPH 6040	Long Term Care Administration	3	
		MPH 6200	Community Health Organization & Leadership	3	
		MPH 6670	Public Health Perspectives on Maternal and Child Health	3	
	Communication	COMM 6210	Media and Health Communication	3	
		COMM 6220	Interpersonal Health Communication	3	
		COMM 6221	Intercultural Communication in Health Contexts	3	
		COMM 6224	Communication and Health Organizations	3	
		COMM 6230	Introduction to Health Communication	3	
	Adult Education	ADED 6307	Proposal Writing for Grants and Contracts	3	
	Community Health	COHE 6000	Health Care Systems and Problems	3	
		COHE 6100	Community Health Administration	3	
	Health Information Management	HIMA 5060	Health Informatics	3	
	Health	HLTH 6700	Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods	3	
		HLTH 6900	Managing Health Education and Promotion Programs	3	
		HLTH 7100	Qualitative Research: Analysis and Interpretation	3	
	Public Administration	PADM 6150	Seminar in Public Administration	3	
PADM 6400		Health Policy	3		

Internship and Professional Paper

Students must complete a 240 hour field placement, which offers students the opportunity to integrate and demonstrate the academic knowledge learned from public health core competencies in a practice setting. A professional paper is also required of all students and serves as a capstone, applied-learning experience. The paper will typically describe a public health action, intervention, or an increase in knowledge useful to public health practice that has resulted from the student's internship experience, professional employment, or research.

Optional Certificate Programs

Students in the M.D./M.P.H. program may also obtain a certificate in Community Health Center Administration (CHCA) and/or Ethnic and Rural Health Disparities (ERHD) by completing the required coursework. Both have a separate application process and more information can be found at www.ecu.edu/ MPH. The CHCA program requires completion of MPH 6200, COHE 6100, COHE 6600, COHE 6310, and HIMA 6060. The ERHD program requires completion of MPH 6005, MPH 6007, MPH 6008, and MPH 6009.

Sample Plan of Study

The sample plan of study in **Figure 2** below is representative of a student in the M.D./M.P.H. program. Actual schedules may change based on when courses are offered, elective choices, course waivers, and the student's choice of when to complete the professional paper.

Figure 2. Sample M.P.H. Plan of Study

Course	Course Hours	Course	Course Hours	Course	Course Hours
Fall Semester		Spring Semester		Summer Session I	
MPH 6000	3	MPH 6002	3	MPH 6991 O*	1
MPH 6011	3	MPH 6010 O	3	MPH 6992 O*	2
MPH 6013	3	MPH 6020 B	3	CONC/ELECT	3
MPH 6035 B	3	MPH 6903 O	3	CONC/ELECT**	3
BIOS 7021	3	CONC/ELECT	3		
CONC/ELECT	3	CONC/ELECT	3		
Semester Total	18	Semester Total	18	Semester Total	9
Overall Totals:		Classes:	15-16	Semester Hours:	42-45

O = Online	B = Both Face-to-Face and Online	M.P.H. Required	Concentration or
*Can be continued into M4 year elective if not completed during Summer Session I			Elective Course
**May be waived using a medical school course if concentration requirements are met			

Tuition, Financial Aid, Assistantships, and Grants

Tuition rates are set annually by the North Carolina Legislature and can be found at www.ecu.edu/cashier/tufee. Financial assistance is available through scholarships, graduate and teaching assistantships, and ECU's financial aid office. For more information on these and other forms of financial aid, please visit www.ecu.edu/financial. Below are brief descriptions of common forms of financial aid for M.D./M.P.H. students.

Graduate Assistantships

Any student gaining regular admission is eligible for consideration of a graduate assistantship. Only a limited number of these are available. These awards provide a stipend of \$5,000 per semester. They require that the student be full-time (taking 9 semester hours or more) and that they provide 20 hours per week of service to the program. Service includes assisting faculty in teaching or research.

Graduate Scholar Award

Graduate Scholar Awards of up to \$4,000 per year may be granted to students with outstanding academic records, and includes a graduate assistantship (with additional funding as above), and an out-of-state tuition remission (if needed). Minimum requirements are a 3.5 overall GPA while in the program, outstanding admissions test scores, and nomination by the department.

A Final Note

Many interested students are concerned about the lapse in medical education while they pursue the M.P.H. degree. While this is a serious concern, students who have completed the program have found little difficulty beyond that which is to be expected when entering their third year clerkships. The program itself will provide students with a new perspective on patients, the sources of their illnesses, and the ways their behaviors and environments alter the course of their lives. It also provides substantial literature searching, presentation, and leadership skills, all of which will be useful both in the remainder of medical school and the student's future career. Furthermore, M.D./M.P.H. students may independently seek to maintain their familiarity with medical knowledge through participation in medical school programs (like co-facilitating PBL sessions), shadowing, and research.

M.D./M.P.H. Program Enrollment Checklist

- 1. Talk with mentors, clinicians, colleagues, public health workers, and M.D./M.P.H. program faculty to determine if the program fits with your future goals.
- 2. During the early spring of your second year of medical school, make an appointment to meet with Dr. Randall Renegar, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs for the Brody School of Medicine, to discuss whether you meet the academic eligibility requirements for the M.D./M.P.H. program.
- 3. After the above meeting, make an appointment to meet with Dr. Lloyd Novick, Chair of the Department of Public Health, to discuss your enrollment into the program and to develop a plan of study that meets your needs.
- 4. Complete an application via the Graduate School of East Carolina University by April 15th of your second year of medical school.
- 5. Once admitted to the program and at the end of your second year of medical school, complete a leave of absence request with the Student Affairs Office at the Brody School of Medicine.
- 6. Successfully pass Step I of the USMLE.
- 7. Register for classes via the M.P.H. student services coordinator during the summer before the start of the program.
- 8. Attend the Graduate School and departmental orientations in August.

M.D./M.P.H. Program

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