

Pre-MPH/DrPH (Master/Doctor of Public Health) Advising Recommendations for Health Studies Majors

What is public health?

Public health encompasses work in epidemiology, environmental health, health education, health policy, global health, disaster preparedness, health communication, maternal and child health, health services administration, and many other areas. Learn more about the field on the American Public Health Association website (<https://www.apha.org/what-is-public-health>).

What is the typical educational pathway for public health practitioners?

A Master of Public Health (MPH) program is typically completed over two academic years, with the summer between those two years used to complete a full-time practicum with a public health agency or organization. Core courses taken during the first year of the program build skills in areas such as epidemiological and statistical analysis, health systems analysis, project management, program evaluation, health policy analysis, and leadership and communication. The second year of an MPH typically focuses on completion of a concentration in one practice area. A Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) is a 3-year program that equips individuals with an earned MPH (except in special circumstances) and several years of work experience in the field with advanced leadership skills. MPH and DrPH degrees are applied practice degrees, not research or clinical degrees, and both should be earned from universities that are accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH).

What courses are required for admission to MPH programs?

There is no standard set of courses that must be taken prior to admission to an MPH program, but most schools recommend that applicants complete undergraduate courses in statistics (data science), the social sciences (such as psychology and sociology), the life sciences (biology and environmental science), and communication in addition to health-specific coursework.

Health Studies Major Curriculum

Required:

- Health Systems & Policy (HS 100)
- Global Health (HS 101)
- Epidemiology (HS 250)
- Statistics / Data Science
- Senior Capstone (HS 400)

Courses selected to align with your interests:

- Health humanities
- Social health
- Health science
- Health-related elective 1
- Health-related elective 2

Sample recommendations for humanities, social, and natural science perspectives electives:

- Interested in **health policy**? Take courses in areas like health law (HS 340), comparative health systems (HS 341), and planetary health (HS 331) and use [Spider Internship Funds](#) to complete a summer internship with an agency or organization working in this area.
- Interested in **health promotion**? Take courses in areas like medical anthropology (ANTH 30X), health psychology (HS/PSYC 323), and nutrition (HS 305) and get involved with UR's [peer health education](#) programs.
- Interested in **epidemiology**? Supplement courses like health ethics (HS 303) and special topics in health studies (HS 397) with a minor in [Data Science & Statistics](#) and a [summer research](#) project with an HS professor.
- Interested in other areas? Talk to an academic advisor in the Health Studies department.