Graduate Program in
Epidemiology MS/PhD

ACADEMIC GUIDE

2017-18

Subject to Revision Fall 2017
The Epidemiology MS and PhD degree and course requirements may change over time. Important changes in the last 5 years are noted. In situations where policies have changed during a student’s time of enrollment, the Graduate School and the academic program, together with the student, may elect to enforce requirements that are in the best interest of the student i.e. the old or new requirements.

In addition, administrative procedures and processes often change over time. Students are required to follow the procedures and processes listed in the current Academic Guide. Consult your major advisor for additional guidance.

All website links are current as of August 2017.
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Chapter 1: Admissions

Admission to the MS or PhD program in Epidemiology will be limited to applicants with academic preparation in math and the biological sciences. Academic preparation is assessed by undergraduate course work, graduate or professional degrees, grades, GRE scores, recommendation letters, the statement of purpose, and prior research and/or professional experience. See the department website for details about the admissions process.

Minimum admission requirements are as follows:

1. Applicants must fulfill all Graduate School’s admission requirements.

2. Applicants should have an undergraduate or graduate GPA of at least 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale). Successful applicants generally have GPAs well above 3.0.

3. GRE scores no more than five years old are required for admission. Applicants with professional degrees may substitute their scores for the entrance exam that was required for that degree (e.g., MCAT, LSAT), if taken within the last 5 years. For more information on the GRE, visit: [http://www.ets.org/gre/](http://www.ets.org/gre/).

4. Unless the applicant’s native language and/or language of study was English, official scores from an English proficiency test are required. You can find further details on the Graduate School website [http://www.grad.wisc.edu/education/admissions/requirements/](http://www.grad.wisc.edu/education/admissions/requirements/). Please note that the minimum tests scores required for our program are higher than those required by the Graduate School. Students can submit scores for the TOEFL or the IELTS exam. For the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), a minimum score of 580 (written), 237 (computer-based), or 92 (internet-based) is required. For the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), a minimum score of 7 is required. Use ETS institution code 1846. Find information on the TOEFL at [http://www.ets.org/toefl](http://www.ets.org/toefl). Find information on the IELTS at [http://www.ielts.org](http://www.ielts.org).

5. At least one semester of calculus with a grade of "B" or better. Having passed AP Calculus AB is considered equivalent.

6. College level biology is required. Student should have completed course work equivalent to UW-Madison Biology 151&152 [http://zoology.wisc.edu/courses/151-152](http://zoology.wisc.edu/courses/151-152), covering cellular and molecular biology, mammalian anatomy and physiology, evolution and ecology.

7. A personal statement is required.

8. Three letters of recommendation are to be submitted electronically.

Applications are welcome from students with diverse academic backgrounds. Students who have strong academic preparation in the biological/medical sciences, math/statistics, or population health related social sciences are strongly encouraged to apply. Applicants who have succeeded in our program have come to us with backgrounds in fields as diverse as microbiology, genetics, nutritional sciences, medicine, nursing, pharmacy, veterinary medicine, environmental sciences, sociology, biomedical engineering, and psychology.
Chapter 2: Information Sources and Advising

There are many information sources available to MS/PhD students. For example, students can always reference the department’s website (http://pophealth.wisc.edu), this Academic Guide, the Graduate School’s website (www.grad.wisc.edu) and the Graduate School’s Policies and Procedures for answers to their questions. When students still need clarification on issues, there are various faculty and staff resources also available (described below). Generally, faculty and staff are best able to assist students who have done their own homework on a topic (using the resources mentioned above). One very important additional advising resource that students should continually review (on their own and with their advisor) is the MS Degree/Graduation Timeline (see section 3.A.1 of this Guide) or the PhD Degree/Graduation Timeline (see section 4.A.1 of this Guide).

Academic Advisor: All students must have an Epidemiology faculty member as advisor or co-advisor. A list of Epidemiology faculty can be found at https://pophealth.wisc.edu/grad/faculty. Most of these faculty hold > 0% appointments in the Department of Population Health Sciences and are therefore also on the list of Departmental Faculty at https://pophealth.wisc.edu/faculty. Upon entry into the program, each incoming student is assigned an initial academic advisor. This advisor is a member of the Epidemiology faculty in the Department of Population Health Sciences and tracks the student’s progress toward degree completion, assists with course selection and academic planning, and helps students identify possible research mentors and opportunities. The initial academic advisor may or may not also serve as a source of funding (see the Financing Your Education section on the department website for more information about funding).

Students are required to meet with their academic advisors prior to registering each semester. In preparation for this meeting, the student will fill out the Course Advising Form, https://pophealth.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/advising_form_fill.pdf including what courses s/he completed, which program milestones were met, what kind of funding the student has and a statement of future goals. The Graduate Program Office will send out an email to students before each semester with advising information. The academic advisor and student discuss course plans for the next semester, and then fill out and sign the form for that semester. Students must return a copy of the completed and signed advising form to the Graduate Program Office prior to registration. Students will not be authorized to register for courses until a signed advising form with all sections completed has been submitted to the Graduate Program Office. After the meeting, the advisor will also complete and provide to the student a brief written assessment of progress toward the degree, summary of strategies to achieve goals and suggestions for resolve any problems discussed. Students also benefit from information and workshops offered by the Graduate School Professional Development Office http://grad.wisc.edu/pd/.

The initial academic advisor may become the student’s research mentor and/or thesis/dissertation committee chair, but this is not required or expected. When students pick a thesis/dissertation chair who is different from their academic advisor, they should make that person their new academic advisor. Students can change advisors at any time by submitting the Course Advisor Change Request Form (available online). The current and previous (if applicable) advisors sign the form, and the student returns it to the Graduate Program Office.
Thesis/Dissertation Advisor (Chair): Epidemiology Program faculty may serve as thesis/dissertation advisors (thesis/dissertation committee chairs). It is permissible to have a person who is not Epidemiology faculty as chair as long as an Epidemiology faculty member serves as co-advisor. A list of Epidemiology faculty is available at https://pophealth.wisc.edu/grad/faculty. The student should identify a thesis/dissertation advisor who does research in his/her general area of interest. Students are encouraged to gather information from courses, faculty and student seminars, the Department website, and publications to help identify faculty with matching research interests. The academic advisor assigned to the student is expected to help in the process of choosing a thesis/dissertation advisor. Students should ask the prospective advisor to serve as their thesis/dissertation chair and submit the Course Advisor Change Request Form (available online) if there is a change in advisor and/or co-advisor designations.

Thesis/Dissertation Co-chair (Co-Advisor): As Epidemiology is a multidisciplinary field, it is not unusual that a student receives substantial academic and/or research guidance from an individual additional to the advisor. It is then appropriate to designate the individual a co-advisor, and fill out a Course Advisor Change Request Form to formalize the relationship. On the dissertation/thesis committee, the co-advisor can serve in any of the capacities described in Sections 3.B.2 and 4.E.1, respectively, for MS and PhD students.


Relationships and Expectations: The relationships students have with all their thesis/dissertation committee members (including the chair) are based on mutual respect and are generally mutually beneficial as well. They provide feedback and evaluate student knowledge in order to determine eligibility to pass the preliminary exam (for PhD students) as well as to graduate during the thesis/dissertation oral defense.

Graduate Program Office (WARF 744): Students should always reference the Department website (http://pophealth.wisc.edu/), this Academic Guide, the Graduate School’s website (http://www.grad.wisc.edu/) where the link to Academic Policies and Procedures, https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/ is especially helpful for finding answers to various program-related questions.

When students need additional clarification on any of these policies or procedures they should contact the MS/PhD Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC).
Chapter 3: M.S. in Epidemiology

3. A. Degree Requirements

Credits: 33 Required
A maximum of 5 credits of POP HLTH 990 research may be applied toward degree requirements.

A maximum of 3 credits of POP HLTH 699 independent reading may be applied toward degree requirements.

Thesis: Required

Seminar: 1 credit POP HLTH 820, Graduate Research Seminar
- All students are expected to attend and to participate in the Monday and Wednesday Departmental and Graduate Seminars each semester.
- All students are expected to enroll for credit in Seminar 820 during the semester in which they expect to defend their thesis.

Required Courses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Semester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH 451</td>
<td>Introduction to SAS Programming for Population Health</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH 551</td>
<td>Introduction to Biostatistics for Population Health</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH 552</td>
<td>Regression Methods for Population Health</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH 797</td>
<td>Introduction to Epidemiology</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH 798</td>
<td>Epidemiologic Methods</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH 805</td>
<td>Advanced Epidemiology: Causal Inference in Epidemiologic Studies</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH 806</td>
<td>Advanced Epidemiology: Practice of Epidemiology</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Medical Ethics:

Students are required to take a minimum of one credit of biomedical research ethics.

The courses listed below will fulfill the medical ethics requirement. Students may submit requests in writing to the Graduate Program Director through the Graduate Program Coordinator proposing other UW medical ethics courses to be considered to fulfill this requirement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HST SCI 515</td>
<td>Public Health Ethics (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HST SCI 545</td>
<td>Ethical and Regulatory Issues in Clinical Investigation (1 cr)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Specialization Courses:

Students must complete at least nine credits of specialization coursework from the list on page 19 or others by permission. Specialization classes along with minor courses should be chosen by the student in close consultation with his or her advisor.

3. A. 1. Time Line and Credits

The thesis process required of MS students will take at least two semesters to complete. The thesis must be completed no later than two years after the completion of all coursework. A recommended two-year time line is:

Year 1 (Semester 1)
- Enroll in core and elective courses

Year 1 (Semester 2)
- Enroll in core and elective courses
- Identify thesis advisor and topic

Year 2 (Semester 1)
- Enroll in elective courses
- Select thesis committee (beginning of semester).
- Complete and distribute a 5-6 page thesis proposal at least 1 week before meeting with committee (beginning of semester).
- Obtain committee approval for thesis proposal and obtain signatures for Master’s Thesis Approval Form (often done via a meeting).
- Submit Master’s Thesis Approval Form (middle of semester) to Graduate Program Office.
- Obtain IRB approval
- Send an email to the Graduate Program Coordinator requesting an audit of your coursework.

Year 2 (Semester 2)
- Enroll in elective courses if appropriate.
- Confirm completion of degree requirements by reviewing your Curriculum Audit
Form.
- Resolve incompletes.
- Schedule final meeting/defense as well as reserve room and any needed audiovisual equipment (several weeks before the end of the semester).
- Obtain a Graduation Request Form and a Master’s Degree Warrant Request Form online.
- Return both forms to Graduate Program Office before March 15 for spring/summer graduates OR before October 15 for fall graduation (or 4 weeks before defense – whichever is earlier).
- Distribute thesis to committee at least 2 weeks before defense date (middle of semester).
- Present research in the Graduate Research Seminar (PHS 820).
- Student will be notified via email when the warrant arrives from the Graduate School and is available for pick-up.
- Present thesis to committee and have committee members sign the warrant. Do NOT write the title of your thesis on the warrant! If you do, your degree will not be posted until you have deposited your thesis at Memorial Library.
- Turn in signed graduation warrant to Graduate Program Office before graduation deadline.
- Remove outstanding progress (P) grades.
- Turn in final copy of thesis to at least the committee chair within two weeks of graduation deadline (see section 3.B.9 for further details).
- Email a final electronic PDF of your thesis as well as an electronic copy of your updated resume/CV to Graduate Program Office within two weeks of graduation deadline (see section 3.B.9 for further details).

3. B. Thesis and Graduation

Master’s students in Epidemiology are required to complete a thesis. Before proceeding with the work on their thesis, all MS students must submit a Master’s Thesis Approval Form (see section below titled Thesis Proposal).

The thesis is a detailed and careful study of an epidemiology problem or methodology. It includes a statement of conclusion with the work and logic to back it up. The thesis must address a question or hypothesis. It must provide a defense of the position. A thesis can involve new data on an important issue, an innovative data collection method, an analysis of existing data sets in new ways to answer new and important questions, or a derivation of new research methods and a demonstration of their usefulness.

The purpose of the thesis is to help the student learn how to think through and investigate a relevant research question. The thesis should show competence in the development, implementation, and reporting of a research project. It provides the student with experience in conducting independent research, with guidance from qualified researchers, and it also provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate research skills to future employers. The thesis should be of suitable quality and scope for submission to a peer-reviewed scholarly journal or funding
agency.

More specifically the thesis serves to demonstrate the student’s ability to:

1. Define a research question of importance to epidemiology.
2. Describe current knowledge as a context for the thesis based on a careful review of the relevant literature.
3. Explain the research design, conduct, and analysis.
4. Conduct analyses appropriate for the thesis.
5. Present and interpret the findings and/or implications for epidemiology clearly.


The biggest step for your thesis is deciding on a topic. It should be a topic that interests you and can demonstrate your abilities. It also should be a topic for which you can find interested faculty with whom you would like to work and who can serve as an important resource for you.

Finally, it should be a topic that is feasible in the time allotted. For example, MS students should not plan to collect original data or think they are writing a dissertation. The actual writing of the master’s thesis should be something you can do in a semester.

Students should select thesis topics that are of interest to them but there is no need to officially decide until the start of your final year. MS and PhD students alike should discuss potential topics with current, more advanced students as well as with their academic advisor. Consider writing down your ideas as they become firmer.

The student should identify a thesis advisor from the Epidemiology faculty who does research in the general area of interest to the student. In some cases, a person who is not Epidemiology faculty may be the closest match. In such cases, it is important to identify an Epidemiology faculty member who is willing to serve as co-advisor. Students are encouraged to gather information from courses, faculty and student seminars, the program website and publications to help identify faculty with interests matching those of the student. The course advisor assigned to the student at the time of admission to the program is expected to help in the process of choosing a thesis advisor. The specific thesis topic should be developed jointly between the student and the thesis advisor.

3.B. 2. Choosing a Thesis Committee

Please see section 7.A of this guide for a definition and list of Epidemiology Program faculty. A list is also available on the PHS website https://pophealth.wisc.edu/grad/faculty to help you meet the committee membership requirements described below. In consultation with the thesis advisor, who serves as committee chair, students must choose two additional committee members. The following conditions must be met:
• Thesis committees must have at least three members.
• The chair or co-chair of the committee and at least one other member must be Epidemiology Program Faculty.
• A third committee member may be from any of the following categories: (1) Epidemiology Program Faculty; (2) Graduate Faculty; (3) tenured or tenure track faculty from a department without a graduate program; (4) academic staff (including emeritus faculty); (5) visiting professors; (6) faculty from other institutions; (7) externally funded researchers; (8) postdoctoral scholars; or (9) other individuals deemed qualified. The suitability of this third committee member will be reviewed and approved by your advisor in consultation with the Director of the Graduate Program.
• These requirements are broader and therefore automatically satisfied for committees selected by criteria from previous years.

Be sure to fill out the Master’s Thesis Approval Form as far in advance as possible and turn it in to the Graduate Program Office. Staff will review the committee members you listed to make sure they meet the requirements.

All committee members should read students’ thesis/dissertation proposals as well as their drafts. They provide feedback and evaluate student knowledge in order to determine eligibility to graduate during the thesis/dissertation oral defense.

To receive a master's degree, students must receive no more than one dissenting vote from their committee.

The relationships students have with all their thesis/dissertation committee members (including the chair) are based on mutual respect and are generally mutually beneficial as well. The working relationship between advisor and student can vary by personality, thesis topic and logistics.

Because Epidemiology is an interdisciplinary area, committee members should represent a spectrum of disciplines in the field. If the student requires extensive advice and input from a committee member in addition to the thesis advisor it is appropriate to recognize that committee member as a co-advisor for the thesis.

It should also be recognized that committee members (and in some rare cases, other individuals) who make substantial contributions to the research should have the opportunity to be included as co-authors on any publications that result, following the journal guidelines of authorship. The thesis advisor and student should discuss potential authorship issues at the outset, and as needed during the project to ensure mutual understanding.

Please contact the Graduate Program Coordinator for any questions concerning the thesis committee membership and structure.
3.B. 3. **Thesis Options**

There are three format options: 1) traditional format 2) paper option or 3) grant proposal. The thesis advisor must approve the choice of format.

1) **Traditional Format**

A traditional thesis should contain the following sections:

- Title page (see Format for more information)
- Abstract (structured or unstructured) of 250 words or less
- Acknowledgements (including a list of the members of the committee, funding sources, and date of IRB clearance)
- Table of Contents (including a list of tables and figures)
- Introduction
- Background/Literature Review
- Methods
- Results
- Conclusions
- Bibliography
- Appendices (including material such as extensive tables, questionnaires and measurement protocols)

The length of the thesis excluding the appendices should be no more than 40-60 double-spaced pages.

2) **Research Paper**

A paper option should contain the following sections:

- Title page (see Format for more information)
- Abstract (structured or unstructured) of 250 words or less
- Acknowledgements (including a list of the members of the committee, funding sources, and date of IRB clearance)
- Table of Contents (including a list of tables and figures)
- Introduction and literature review
- Manuscript (formatted for the proposed journal)
- Bibliography
- Appendices (including detailed methods, material such as extensive tables, questionnaires and measurement protocols)

The introduction must include a critical literature review, the objectives of the research study, and a discussion to provide an overall evaluation of the research study. The manuscript should be appropriate for publication in a peer reviewed national or international journal. The manuscript should be ready for submission and follow the
format of a journal chosen by the thesis advisor and the student. The appendices must demonstrate the full development of the thesis material and are constructed based on the guidance of the thesis advisor and committee. In the instance of any apparent conflict between formatting guidelines of the chosen journal and the Department of Population Health Sciences thesis requirements, the journal guidelines will take precedence for the manuscript section of the thesis.

3) Grant Proposal

When the thesis is a grant proposal, it should contain the following sections:

- Title page (see Format for more information)
- Abstract (structured or unstructured) of 250 words or less
- Acknowledgements (including a list of the members of the committee, funding sources, and date of IRB clearance)
- Table of Contents (including a list of tables and figures)
- Specific Aims
- Significance
- Innovation
- Approach
- Human Subjects
- Literature Cited
- Appendices (including additional materials such as data collection instruments)
- Refer to the NIH guidelines at: [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/writing_application.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/writing_application.htm)

3. B. 4. The Thesis Proposal

After choosing a topic, the student is expected to write a 5-8 page thesis proposal for review by the thesis advisor and committee. The thesis proposal should include a description of the research question, a review of the most relevant existing literature, what format you wish to utilize (research paper, proposal-type, etc.), a description of the data, and the methodology to be used to answer the research question.

After the thesis advisor’s approval, the proposal is distributed to the thesis committee. It is recommended that the thesis advisor, student, and members of the committee meet to discuss the proposal. **The thesis proposal must be given to all committee members at least one week before the meeting.** Once the thesis committee approves the proposal the student must submit the [Master’s Thesis Approval Form](#) to the Graduate Program Office.

Committee members sign the proposal form to indicate acceptance of committee membership and support of the chosen topic. The form must be signed and submitted before the student proceeds with the thesis.
3. B. 5. IRB Clearance

Students planning to engage in research involving human subjects must satisfy current IRB requirements which include completion of the online Human Subjects Training Module. You can find more information at the following website:

https://kb.wisc.edu/gradsch/page.php?id=32559

Students planning to engage in research involving protected health information must satisfy all current HIPAA requirements which include completion of the online HIPAA Training Program at Learn@UW.

This clearance must be done prior to initiation of the research. In addition, the proposed work must be presented to the University of Wisconsin and other relevant IRBs for clearance before the work can begin. The thesis advisor must be involved in this process. If the work is part of a larger project that has already received clearance, the student must be added as key personnel to the IRB protocol.


Please review the Timeline in 3.A.1 for a summary of the steps leading up to graduation. Students must formally notify the department and the Graduate School of their intention to graduate.

Notification consists of confirming completion of degree requirements by requesting an audit of your coursework from the Graduate Program Office, completing an Intent to Graduate Form and submitting a Master’s Degree Warrant Request Form to the Graduate Program Office by the deadlines below.

Fall: October 15 or 4 weeks before defense (whichever occurs sooner)
Spring/Summer: March 15 or 4 weeks before defense (whichever occurs sooner)


The thesis committee is required to attend a final meeting, scheduled by the student, in which the student will present his or her work. The student is also responsible for reserving the room and any required audiovisual equipment for this final meeting. Please see the Administrative Assistant in room 707 for more information on reservations. It is advised that students’ schedule this final meeting several weeks before the semester ends since revisions are often required before the warrant will be signed and the graduation date is based upon the date the warrant is signed.

You are responsible for knowing and meeting the Graduate School deadlines for degree completion. The deadlines can be found at:
https://grad.wisc.edu/currentstudents/degreedeadlines/

The thesis must be delivered electronically or in paper format to all committee members depending on the members’ preference at least 2 weeks before the final meeting. The final meeting can be rescheduled if a committee member feels there is insufficient time to review the thesis prior to the final meeting. At the final meeting, the committee will discuss the thesis work with the student and determine revisions, if any. The committee decides when and how the master’s degree warrant will be signed.

3. B. 8. Depositing of Thesis/Warrant to Department

- On or before the graduation deadline, a signed Master’s Degree Warrant Request Form must be submitted to the Graduate Program Office.
- Within two weeks of the graduation deadline, a copy of the completed thesis (incorporating the revisions from the final meeting) must be provided to at least the chair of your committee utilizing one of the following options: thermal glue binding, coil binding, spiral binding, or ACCO binding (no stapling or three-ring binders). One or more of these types of services are offered at Bob’s Copy Shop (608.251.2936) or Student Print (608.262.6216).
- Within two weeks of the graduation deadline, email a PDF copy of the thesis to the Graduate Program Office.
- Within two weeks of the graduation deadline, an electronic copy of your resume/CV must be emailed to Graduate Program Office staff.


There are specific guidelines which should help you prepare your thesis, so that it will constitute a permanent document of quality. For formatting instructions see the Graduate School’s Guide to Preparing Your Master’s Thesis at https://grad.wisc.edu/currentstudents/mastersthesis/.


The Department of Population Health Sciences does not require that your thesis be deposited in Memorial Library; however, the student may choose to do so. If you choose to deposit your thesis in the Memorial Library, please refer to the Graduate School Guide to Preparing Your Master’s Thesis.

3. B. 11. Graduation FAQs

If you are not able to find the answer to your graduation-related question here, please review the other sections of the Academic Guide or the department website (including FAQ categories in the Prospective Students section).
**When do I receive my actual diploma?**
Please find the answer at the Registrar’s website.

**When is my degree posted on my transcript?**
Please find the answer at the Registrar’s website.

**When is my commencement ceremony at Camp Randall?**
Please find the answer at the Commencement website.

**How/when do I need to order my commencement attire?**
Please find the answer at the Commencement website.

**Is there a department commencement celebration in addition to the campus-wide ceremony at Camp Randall?**
Yes! The department event honors its graduates prior to the larger, Camp Randall commencement ceremonies for MS and PhD students. The MS/PhD graduation event is held once a year in May for MS and PhD graduates who have graduated in the fall term, spring term, or the upcoming summer term (for example, for the academic year 2014-15 Graduation Luncheon, we honored the graduates of Fall 2014, Spring 2015, and Summer 2015).

Faculty, staff, students, and the graduates’ families are invited to this celebration. The event typically occurs the Friday of Spring Commencement weekend. Please confirm date/time/location with staff prior to making any plans.

Please note that MS Commencement ceremonies at Camp Randall Stadium are not typically held on the same day as the department graduation event. The ceremonies are often held on the Saturday or Sunday of Commencement weekend. Students are advised to confirm dates/times/locations of commencement ceremonies and of our department graduation events prior to making any plans.

**Is there anything else?**
Expect the Graduate School to send you a link to take an exit survey. You may also be contacted by the Graduate Program Coordinator to do a brief exit interview to help us improve the Program.

**What can I do to stay in touch with the department and/or students/faculty after I graduate?**
Graduates are strongly encouraged to stay in touch with the department and each other after graduation since it is a great way to build your professional network. Please contact the Graduate Program Coordinator (pophealth@mailplus.wisc.edu) to find out how you can stay in touch with us!

Alumni are a valuable source of feedback and program improvement, so you can expect us to contact you periodically. Please keep us updated on your address and employment situation.
3. C. Double Degrees (2 degrees, 2 majors)

Double degrees are two same-level (Master’s or Doctoral) degrees from two separate graduate programs and can be earned at either the Master’s or Doctoral level. A student completing a double degree earns two degrees (two programs), and receives two diplomas. The student has two advisors and two separate committees, and completes two theses (masters) or dissertations (PhD). Students may apply for an additional program at the time of original application, add a program at any time during enrollment, or reapply and pursue a second degree after completion of the first. For additional information see https://nelson.wisc.edu/graduate/joint-double-dual.php.
Chapter 4: Ph.D. in Epidemiology

4. A. Degree Requirements

**Credits:**
65 Required

**Dissertation:**
Required
A maximum of 11 credits of POP HLTH 990 may be applied toward degree requirements.

A maximum of 6 credits of POP HLTH 699 may be applied toward degree requirements.

**Seminar:**
2 credits (POP HLTH 820, Graduate Research Seminar, 1 cr.)

- Students are expected to attend and to participate in the Monday and Wednesday Departmental and Graduate Seminars each semester.
- All PhD students are expected to enroll for credit in Seminar 820 twice during their program before becoming a dissertator, including the semester before or during the semester in which they expect to present their preliminary exam B proposal.

**Required Core Courses:**

POP HLTH 451  Introduction to SAS Programming for Population Health (2 cr) Fall

POP HLTH 551  Introduction to Biostatistics for Population Health (3 cr) Fall

POP HLTH 552  Regression Methods for Population Health (3 cr) Spring

POP HLTH 651  Advanced Regression Methods for Pop. Health (3 cr) Fall

POP HLTH 652* Topics in Biostatistics for Epidemiology (3 cr) Spring

*OR course from list: Acceptable Courses to Satisfy the 4th Semester Biostatistics Requirement. See page 20 for the list.

POP HLTH 797  Introduction to Epidemiology (3 cr) Fall

POP HLTH 798  Epidemiologic Methods (3 cr) Spring

POP HLTH 805  Advanced Epi.: Causal Inference in Epidemiologic Studies (3 cr) Fall

POP HLTH 806  Advanced Epi.: Practice of Epidemiology (3 cr) Spring
Medical Ethics:

Students are required to take a **minimum** of one credit of biomedical research ethics.

The courses listed below will fulfill the medical ethics requirement. Students may submit requests in writing to the Graduate Program Director through the Graduate Program Coordinator proposing other UW medical ethics courses to be considered to fulfill this requirement.

- **HST SCI 515**  Public Health Ethics (3 cr)
- **HST SCI 545**  Ethical and Regulatory Issues in Clinical Investigation (1 cr)
- **HST SCI 558**  Ethical Problems in Biomedical Technology (3 cr)
- **HST SCI 559**  Topics in Ethics and History of Medicine (3 cr)
- **HST SCI 565**  Ethics of Modern Biotechnology (3 cr)
- **HST SCI 610**  Regenerative Medicine Ethics and Society (1 cr)
- **HST SCI 728**  Biomedical Ethics and Society (1-3 cr)
- **HST SCI 730**  Ethical Issues in Medicine (1 cr)
- **HST SCI 734**  Graduate Studies in Medical Ethics (1-3 cr)
- **NUR 802**  Ethics and the Responsible Conduct of Research (1 cr)

Specialization Courses:

PhD students must complete **at least twelve** additional credits of specialization coursework from the lists below. Note that the same course cannot be counted for both specialization and quantitative requirement, but once the quantitative requirement is fulfilled, additional courses from that list can be counted for specialization. Specialization classes should be chosen by the student in close consultation with his or her advisor.

- **STAT 541**  Clinical Trials (3cr)
- **PHS 621**  Intro to Nutritional Epidemiology (1 cr)
- **PHS 650**  Special Topics in Environmental Health Epidemiology (2 cr)
- **PHS 713**  Epidemiology of HIV/AIDS (1 cr)
- **PHS 740**  Health Impact Assessment of Global Environmental Change (3 cr)
- **PHS 750**  Cancer Epidemiology (2 cr)
- **PHS 780**  Public Health Principles and Practice (3 cr)
- **PHS 786**  Social and Behavioral Sciences in Public Health (3 cr)
- **PHS 789**  Principles of Environmental Health (3 cr)
- **PHS 791**  Physical Activity Epidemiology (3 cr)
- **PHS 801**  Epidemiology of Infectious Diseases (3 cr)
- **PHS 805**  Advanced Epi.: Causal Inference in Epidem. Studies (3 cr) *
- **PHS 806**  Advanced Epidemiology: The Practice of Epidemiology (3 cr) *
- **PHS 807**  Reproductive and Perinatal Epidemiology (2 cr)
- **PHS 847**  Cardiovascular Epidemiology (1 cr)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHS 849</td>
<td>Genetic Epidemiology (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHS 888</td>
<td>Public Health Genomics (1 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHS 904-103</td>
<td>Analytic Methods of Genetic Epidemiology (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHS 904-104</td>
<td>Global Health Epidemiology (2 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHS 955</td>
<td>Seminar in Physical Activity Epidemiology (1 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC 751</td>
<td>Methods of Survey Research: Design &amp; Measurement (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC 752</td>
<td>Methods of Survey Research: Applications (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*As noted above, PhD students are required to take both 806 and 807, and can therefore not count these toward the specialization requirement. Masters students are required to take one of these, and if taking both can count the other towards the specialization requirement.*

**Acceptable Courses to Satisfy the 4th Semester Biostatistics Requirement:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BMI 652</td>
<td>Topics in Biostatistics for Epidemiology (1-3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stat 349</td>
<td>Introduction to Time Series (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stat 351</td>
<td>Introductory Nonparametric Statistics (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stat 411</td>
<td>Introduction to Sample Survey Theory &amp; Methods (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stat 456</td>
<td>Applied Multivariate Analysis (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stat 471</td>
<td>Statistical Computing (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stat 575</td>
<td>Statistical Methods for Spatial Data (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stat 641</td>
<td>Statistical Methods for Clinical Trials (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stat 642</td>
<td>Statistical Methods for Epidemiology (3cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stat2 761</td>
<td>Decision Trees for Multivariate Analysis (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soc 952^1</td>
<td>Causality: Mathematical and Statistical Applications in Sociology (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soc 952</td>
<td>Event History Analysis (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soc 952</td>
<td>Path Analysis and Structural Equation Models (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soc 952</td>
<td>Graphical Models for Causal Inference (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EdPsych 711</td>
<td>Topic Course (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EdPsych 773</td>
<td>Factor Analysis, Multidimensional Scaling and Cluster Analysis (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EdPsych 861</td>
<td>Nonparametric Statistics (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EdPsych 862</td>
<td>Multivariate Analysis (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EdPsych 871</td>
<td>Item Response Theory (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EdPsych 960</td>
<td>Structural Equation Modeling (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EdPsych 964</td>
<td>Hierarchical Linear Modeling (3 cr)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) Sociology 952 is a topics course that can be taken with approval for appropriate topics
2) Other Statistics Department courses with numbers 700 and above can be approved on an individual basis for students with required prerequisites in Mathematical Statistics

**Minor Requirement (Applies to all Epidemiology PhD students):**

All Epidemiology doctoral students are required to complete a minor. Student should decide on a minor, complete the [PhD Minor Agreement Form](#) and turn it in to the Graduate Program Office BY THE END OF THEIR SECOND YEAR.
Two options exist for a PhD minor: A) external and B) distributed. **It is important to note that courses used to meet minimum degree requirements cannot also be counted as part of the 10 credits minor.**

Two options exist:

**Option A (external) --** Requires a minimum of 9 credits of course work in a single department or major field of study. Selection of this option requires the approval of the minor department. Most Graduate Programs offer minors. Additional minors can be found at: [https://grad.wisc.edu/catalog/degrees.htm#minors](https://grad.wisc.edu/catalog/degrees.htm#minors)

**Option B (distributed) --** Requires a minimum of 10 credits of course work in two or more departments and can include course work in the major department. A distributed minor should have a cohesive focus and those selecting this option must explain this on the **PhD Minor Agreement Form.** Selection of this option requires the approval of the major department. Turn in the completed form to the Graduate Program Office.

**Deadline Summary:**

**Qualifying Exam for Epidemiology PhD Students**

Full-time PhD Students: Must pass the exam by the end of the summer following their 2\textsuperscript{nd} year

Part-time PhD Students: Must pass the exam by the end of the summer following their 3\textsuperscript{rd} year

Notify the Graduate Program Office of your intent to take the qualifier. Notification should be given by June 1\textsuperscript{st} for the summer exam, and December 1\textsuperscript{st} for the January exam. After declaring your intent to take the exam, a decision not to take the exam less than 4 weeks before the first day the exam is administered will result in an automatic failure.

**Preliminary Exam A**

Full-time PhD students: Must pass the preliminary exam **A** within three years of matriculation.

Part-time PhD Students: Must pass the preliminary exam **A** within five years of matriculation.

**Preliminary Exam B**

Full-time PhD Students: Must pass their preliminary exam **B** within four years of matriculation. Part-time PhD Students: Must pass their preliminary exam **B** within six years of matriculation.

The final copy of the preliminary exam proposal **B** must be circulated to the preliminary exam committee **at least two weeks** prior to the oral exam.

**Dissertation**

Doctoral students are expected to pass the oral defense of their dissertation and deposit no later than five years from the date of passing the preliminary examination.

The dissertation final draft to be defended must be submitted to the committee **at least 4**
weeks prior to the final defense date.

4. A. 1. PhD Timeline and Credits

Years 1-2
- Enroll in required coursework, electives, and the Wednesday seminar for the first time (suggested 3rd semester).
- Begin to think about dissertation topic and engage in research.
- Pass Qualifier Exams by the end of the second year.
- Decide on a minor, complete the PhD Minor Agreement Form, and turn it in to the Graduate Program Office BY THE END OF THE SECOND YEAR.

Years 3-4
- Satisfactorily complete all courses (including minor coursework credits) and resolve any outstanding incomplete grades.
- Enroll in seminar 820 for the second time either the semester before or the semester of the preliminary exam.
- Confirm completion of degree requirements by reviewing your Curriculum Audit Form. Send an email to the Graduate Program Coordinator requesting an audit of coursework during the fifth semester or earlier.
- Form preliminary examination committee, checking the committee requirements in the Academic Guide, and have the list of members approved by the Graduate Program Office.
- Prepare concept sheet for dissertation and distribute to committee members.
- Schedule preliminary exam A meeting and reserve room.
- Pass preliminary exam A by the end of the third year.
- Prepare preliminary exam B research proposal.
- Schedule preliminary exam meeting as well as reserve a room and any needed audiovisual equipment.
- Obtain a Request for Preliminary Warrant and send to the Graduate Program Office at least three weeks before the date of the exam.
- Student will be notified when the preliminary warrant arrives from the Graduate School and is available for pick-up in the Graduate Program Office.
- Distribute final copy of proposal at least 2 weeks before the date of the preliminary exam B.
- Defend proposal (preliminary exam B) by the end of your 4th year. Return completed and signed warrant to the Graduate Program Office.

Dissertator Years
- Read Dissertator Status FAQ: http://www.grad.wisc.edu/admin/gradcoordinators/dissertator.html.
- Enroll in three credits of PHS 990 each semester.
- Enroll in summer 990 credits if you will graduate in the summer or if your
assistantship or fellowship requires it (See https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/?policy=enrollmentrequirements for specifics).

- Form Dissertation Committee (often the same as preliminary exam committee). If there are changes to the committee be sure to check with the Graduate Program Office to ensure the committee requirements are being met.
- Obtain IRB approval.
- Conduct research and prepare dissertation.
- Schedule final meeting/defense as well as reserve room and any needed audiovisual equipment (several weeks before the end of the semester).
- Obtain a Graduation Request Form online and a PHD Final Oral Committee Approval Form.
- Student will be notified via email when the Warrant arrives and is available for pick-up.
- Return both forms to Graduate Program Office before March 15 for spring/summer graduates OR before October 15 for fall graduates (or 4 weeks before defense – whichever is earlier).
- Distribute a hard or electronic copy of dissertation to committee members at least 4 weeks before the defense date.
- Seminar must be publicized at least 2 weeks in advance by hanging signs on the Departmental bulletin boards (on floors 3, 5, 6, 7, and 10) and by sending an email to the Graduate Program Coordinator who will forward the information to students and faculty.
- Present dissertation to committee and have all committee members sign the warrant.
- Remove all P-grades.
- Turn in final copy of dissertation to at least the committee chair within two weeks of graduation deadline (see section 4.E.5 for further details).
- Email a final electronic copy of dissertation and email a copy of resume/CV to Graduate Program Office staff within two weeks of graduation deadline (see section 4.E.5 for further details).

Of the 65 credits required for a PhD degree in Epidemiology, a maximum of 11 credits can be granted for research work. Students should register for these credits as Pop Hlth 990. PhD students must be enrolled in at least three graduate-level credits during the semester in which they graduate (this is considered full-time status).

4. B. Qualifying Examination

The qualifying examination is designed to assess the readiness of students to proceed to
advanced coursework and to beginning to design their dissertation research. For Epidemiology PhD students it consists of two part: Epidemiology and Biostatistics. Content reflects first year coursework in these areas, and tests students’ application, comprehension and critical evaluation of this material as encountered in real life journal articles, study design, analyses and interpretation. PhD students are encouraged to take the exam during the nearest exam date following the successful completion of the core courses. However, some students may decide to wait after consulting with their advisor. Students have up until the end of their second year to pass the Qualifying Exam. A student who sits for the first time at the end of their second year (in summer) will not have the opportunity to retake the exam if s/he does not pass on the first attempt, due to the overall time limit.

The Qualifier is a closed book exam, allowing one page of notes for the biostatistics section. Exams are graded as pass/fail by masked graders.

The Qualifying Exam is administered over a two-day period in late summer, and in January, dependent on demand. Students take one exam section each day, with each exam period being four hours long. Each section of the qualifier (epidemiology, biostatistics) is graded separately. Both exams must be passed in order to pass the qualifier. Students must take both sections of the exam on their first attempt and retake all failed sections during their second sitting.

Here are additional details regarding the Qualifying Exam:

The PhD qualifying exam is offered in late summer (and January) each year for students enrolled in the PhD program.

- PhD students must complete the four core, methods, and quantitative analysis courses (PopHlth 551, Pop Hlth 552, Pop Hlth 797, Pop Hlth 798) with grades of B or better prior to taking the exam.
- Any “Incomplete” (I) grades in the four core and required courses must be resolved and letter grades assigned before a student may sit for the qualifying exam.
- To sit for the examination, the individual must satisfy one of the two following conditions:
  - have been accepted in the PhD program and have accepted the offer of admission.
  - be currently enrolled in the Graduate Program or have been enrolled in the past.

Students intending to sit for the Qualifying Exam must notify their advisors and the Graduate Program Office no later than December 1 for the January exam and July 1 for the summer exam. It is important to discuss your plans with your advisor before indicating that you intend to take the exam(s) on a particular date. This is especially important because students may not withdraw within four weeks of the date of the exam unless there are exceptional circumstances. Students who do not report to take the exam(s) and/or have not contacted their advisor and the Graduate Program office in advance about their exceptional circumstances, will receive an automatic “fail” on their exam(s). Any appeals of this rule will be decided by the Epidemiology Steering Committee.
Past qualifying exams are available in the Department Commons, 730 WARF Building.

**Deadline for Full-time Ph.D. Students**

Students following a full-time course of study (approximately three courses or a minimum of 8 credits each semester) are expected to *pass* the exam by the end of their second year. Generally, students take the exam during the July exam dates after their first year of study but can elect to delay the exam in order to allow for additional preparation time. If students do not pass one or more sections the first time, they may sit for those exam sections again during the January or summer exam date(s) prior to the end of their second year.

**Deadline for Part-time Ph.D. Students**

Part-time students (typically enrolled in one or two courses each semester or less than 8 credits each semester) are expected to *pass* the exam before the end of their third year (regardless of whether the student is continuously enrolled).

For example, a part-time doctoral student who entered the program in Fall 2014 may take the exam for the first time in the summer of 2015 (the end of their first year), January or summer of 2016 (during or at the end of their second year), or January or summer of 2017 (during or at the end of their third year). The exam must be passed by the end of the third year. Part-time students who sit for the first time at the end of their third year (in summer) will not have the opportunity to retake the exam if they do not pass on the first attempt, due to the overall time limit.

**Notification of Results**

Students are notified of their exam results prior to the first day of classes of the semester immediately following the exam date. Exams are not returned to students nor are the specific answers discussed or written comments provided. Students receiving a “Failure” on one or more of the exams should meet with their academic advisor to discuss her/his options.

No section can be taken more than a total of two times. Students who do not pass after two attempts are given the option of leaving the program or completing the Master’s degree. They cannot continue in the PhD program.

PhD students who fail the qualifying exam two times are not eligible to request admission into a Special Graduate Committee Degree Program through the Department of Population Health Sciences. For specific policies about the intent of Special Committee Degrees please see the Graduate School publication, “Academic Guidelines” or visit the web page: https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/?policy=specialgraduatecommitteedegrees.

**Viewing Results**

A student’s advisor can view the original, unmarked Qualifying exam taken by their advisee(s) or
assign another faculty member to view it. The exam may be viewed in the office of the GPC when a Graduate Program Office staff person is available. The exam cannot leave the GPC office for any reason. Once the exam has been viewed, the staff person will refile it with the other exams. Grading of the exam cannot be questioned.

If an advisor wishes to view an exam:
1) Advisor emails the GPC requesting an appointment to view the Qualifying Exam.
2) The GPC will email back to confirm appointment or suggest another appointment time.
3) Exam will be given to advisor at the appointment time to view in the GPC office.
4) Exam will be returned to the Graduate Program Office staff person and it will be refiled.

4. C. Preliminary Examinations A & B

Epidemiology Doctoral students are required to pass a preliminary exam A after passing the qualifying exam. Doctoral students must pass a preliminary examination A no later than three calendar years following admission for graduate study in the Department (if full-time) or no later than five calendar years following admission (if part-time).

Before proceeding with the work on their dissertation, all Epidemiology PhD students must also pass a preliminary exam B. This preliminary exam is the written proposal and oral defense of the student's anticipated dissertation research (see section below titled Dissertation/Graduation for a definition of a dissertation). Doctoral students must pass a preliminary examination B no later than four calendar years following admission for graduate study in the Department (if full-time) or no later than six calendar years following admission (if part-time). Requests for special extension of the deadline for completing the preliminary examination B must be made to the Director of the Graduate Program through the Graduate Program Coordinator. Passing preliminary examination B leads to the granting of dissertator status by the Graduate School, which implies lower tuition and that only research (PHS990) credits can be taken.

4.C.1 Preliminary Examination A – Specific Steps

The specific steps leading the student up to and completing Preliminary Exam Part A are:

1. Develop a short dissertation concept (1 page) with advisor.
2. Assemble a dissertation committee with guidance from the advisor. The student and/or advisor will use the dissertation concept to solicit commitment to serve on the dissertation committee.
3. The date and time for Preliminary Exam Part A is scheduled. The examination will last approximately 2 hours.
4. Six weeks before the Preliminary Exam Part A, committee members are to submit to the advisor questions broadly relevant to the student’s dissertation concept. The advisor also adds questions to the pool. The Dissertation chair evaluates the submitted questions and may choose to consolidate some or solicit new ones at their discretion. A total of five to ten questions (i.e., average of 2 per committee member) are assembled and given to the student four weeks before the preliminary exam part A. Each question
will require written responses that are a maximum 1 single-spaced page in length; for some questions, a paragraph may be sufficient.

5. Two weeks before the preliminary exam part A date, the student submits his or her written responses to the questions. The written responses are to help committee members identify strengths and weaknesses in the student’s knowledge of topics related to his or her proposed research area.

6. At the Preliminary exam part A, the dissertation committee asks questions of the student. The questions will be related but not necessarily limited to the original questions.

At the end of the preliminary exam part A, the student exits the room and the committee determines if the student passed preliminary exam Part A. The committee will vote one of the following: (1) pass, (2) retake, or (3) fail. If the committee does not reach consensus, then the majority vote serves to determine the outcome. A student may retake the exam once. In this instance, student will begin at step 3. A student who does not pass the preliminary exam A after one retake will not be allowed to remain in the Doctoral program. That student could be given the option to complete a Master’s thesis.

The student must have the committee sign the Preliminary Examination A Form and return the signed form to the Graduate Program Coordinator’s Office.

4. C. 2. Choosing a Preliminary Examination B Committee and Topic

The student is responsible, in consultation with her/his advisor, to form the preliminary examination B committee. It is strongly recommended that students select the same members for their preliminary committee B as their dissertation committee. See the Guidelines for Choosing a Dissertation Committee in 4. E.1.

The subject matter of the preliminary exam research proposal will coincide with the student's anticipated dissertation research. The biggest step in the dissertation is deciding on a topic. It should be a topic that interests the student and can demonstrate his/her abilities. It also should be a topic for which the student can find interested faculty with whom to work and who can serve as important resources. Finally, it should be a topic that is feasible in the time allotted.

A student should begin thinking about possible topics upon entry into the PhD program, but there is no need to officially decide until after completion of the qualifying exam. It is recommended that PhD students identify a dissertation advisor and engage in research early in their program. PhD students should discuss potential topics with current, more advanced students as well as with their academic advisor. Students should consider writing down ideas as they become firmer. When a student has an idea s/he would like to pursue, doing some reading on the topic is important. Finally, talking with others about the idea is appropriate. The Graduate School’s Professional Development Resources can be helpful.

The student should submit the dissertation proposal early in the semester, after which the student must consult individually with each member of the Preliminary Exam Committee to solicit suggestions for revision. *The final draft of the proposal must be circulated to the Preliminary Exam Committee at least two weeks prior to the oral exam.*

The proposal will be prepared in a format similar to a “scientific proposal” section of a National Institutes of Health [postdoctoral] grant application. For help with the specific categories and format, please see [Strategy to Write the Research Plan](https://kb.wisc.edu/gradsch/page.php?id=32559) at the NIH website.

4. C. 4. IRB Clearance

Students planning to engage in research involving human subjects must satisfy current IRB requirements which include completion of the online Human Subjects Training Module. More information can be found at the following website: [https://kb.wisc.edu/gradsch/page.php?id=32559](https://kb.wisc.edu/gradsch/page.php?id=32559)

Students planning to engage in research involving protected health information must satisfy all current HIPAA requirements which include completion of the online HIPAA Training Program at the following website: [https://learnuw.wisc.edu/](https://learnuw.wisc.edu/)

This must be done prior to initiation of the research. In addition, the proposed work must be presented to the University of Wisconsin and other relevant IRBs for clearance before the work can begin. The dissertation advisor must be involved in this process. If the work is part of a larger project that has already received clearance, the student must be added as key personnel to the IRB protocol.

4. C. 5. Requesting the Preliminary Exam B Warrant

Please review the Timeline in 4.A.1 for a summary of the steps leading up to your preliminary examination B. Three weeks before the scheduled preliminary examination, a [PhD Minor Agreement Form](https://kb.wisc.edu/gradsch/page.php?id=32559) and a [Request for Preliminary Warrant](https://kb.wisc.edu/gradsch/page.php?id=32559) must be sent to the Graduate Program Office. The warrant request will not be filed until a student has passed the qualifying exam, passed preliminary exam A, cleared her/his record of all Incomplete “I” grades, and has completed (or is about to complete) coursework for the PhD major and minor. Thus, be sure to resolve any grades and confirm completion of all degree requirements via an [audit](https://kb.wisc.edu/gradsch/page.php?id=32559) done by the Graduate Program Office before submitting a warrant request form.


The Preliminary Exam B Committee is required to attend a final meeting, scheduled by the student, in which the student will present his or her proposal. The student is also responsible for reserving the room and any required audiovisual equipment for this final meeting. Please contact the Administrative Assistant in the main office (707) for assistance.
The final draft of the proposal must be circulated to the Preliminary Exam B Committee at least two weeks prior to the oral exam. The student will prepare an oral presentation of approximately 30-40 minutes with visual aids (e.g. PowerPoint presentation) describing the research proposal. After the presentation, the student will respond to questions by the Preliminary Exam B Committee. The questions will deal with the proposal itself and any related material. The oral exam is usually completed within two hours. Following the examination, the Preliminary Exam B Committee will reach a consensus on the student's performance.

At the end of the preliminary exam part B, the student exits the room and the committee determines if the student passed Preliminary Exam Part B. The committee will vote one of the following: (1) pass, (2) retake, or (3) fail. If the committee does not reach consensus, then the majority vote serves to determine the outcome. Even when the vote is “pass”, it is common for the student to emerge from the exam with numerous suggestions from the committee. The student’s advisor will summarize these, and the student should plan a meeting with the advisor and possibly other committee members as appropriate to clarify and plan for requested revisions to the plan.

4. C. 7. Preliminary Exam B Outcomes

If a student does not pass the preliminary exam B the major advisor and student should decide what course of action to take. Some options are: to substantially revise the proposal and reschedule the exam, terminate with a master's degree or discontinue the graduate program. A letter outlining the course of action to be taken should be sent to the Director of the Graduate Program through the Graduate Program Coordinator.

4. D. Advancing to Dissertator Status

Students advance to dissertator status and become PhD candidates after passing preliminary exam B. Dissertators are required to enroll in exactly (no more, no less) three credits of PHS 990 research each fall and spring semester. Dissertators holding traineeships, research assistantships (RA) or fellowships that require summer enrollment must also enroll in exactly three credits of PHS 990 research credits during the summer. Dissertators who expect to graduate in August must enroll in the eight-week general session for exactly three PHS 990 research credits.

4. E. Dissertation/Graduation

The dissertation is a detailed and careful study of an epidemiology problem or methodology. It is a statement of conclusion with the work and logic to back it up. It addresses a research issue of importance and part of your dissertation is defending that the topic is indeed important. The dissertation is the beginning of a career or work. A dissertation can be new data on an important issue; an innovative data collection method; an analysis of existing data sets in new ways to answer new and important questions; or a derivation of new research methods and a demonstration of their usefulness.
The objective is to help the student learn how to think through and investigate a research question. The dissertation should show competence in the development, implementation and reporting of a research project. It provides experience in conducting research, obtaining advice from very qualified researchers, and it demonstrates ability to conduct research to future employers. It should be of suitable quality and scope for submission to a peer-reviewed scholarly journal.

4. **E. 1. Choosing a Dissertation Committee**

The student is responsible, in consultation with her/his advisor, for forming the dissertation committee. The following conditions must be met:

- Doctoral committees/final oral examination committee must have at least five members.
- The chair or co-chair of the committee and at least two other members must be Epidemiology Program Faculty.
- At least one of the 5 members must be Graduate Faculty in a graduate program other than or additional to Epidemiology and Population Health (often from the student’s minor field).
- At most one member may be from the following categories: (1) tenured or tenure track faculty from a department without a graduate program; (2) academic staff (including emeritus faculty); (3) visiting professors; (4) faculty from other institutions; (5) externally funded researchers; (6) postdoctoral scholars; or (7) other individuals deemed qualified. The suitability of this fifth committee member will be reviewed and approved by your advisor in consultation with the Director of the Graduate Program.

Changes: In previous years, the following were more lenient and can be chosen by students admitted prior to 2016: PHS faculty who are not Epidemiology Program Faculty can be chosen for the two “other” members now required to be Epidemiology Program Faculty.

As Epidemiology is an interdisciplinary area, committee members should represent that broad spectrum of disciplines in the field. If the student requires extensive advice and input from a committee member in addition to their dissertation advisor it is appropriate to recognize that committee member as a co-advisor for the dissertation.

Dissertation committees must be reviewed and approved by the Director of the Graduate Program through the Graduate Program Coordinator. Please contact the Graduate Program Coordinator for any questions concerning the dissertation committee membership and structure.

It is expected that the student will meet with the committee members periodically, at least once each year. **The student will provide their committee with a written summary of progress annually, and after the committee meeting, the adviser will provide the student with a brief evaluation, suggestions and strategies that were discussed to meet any challenges identified.**
4. E. 2. Dissertation Options

The dissertation must be an original contribution; however, the data do not have to be original. Students may opt to submit either of the following to satisfy the dissertation requirement: 1) a traditional single topic, extensive exploration from which papers may be drawn later, or 2) three publishable papers. If the student desires to submit extensive additional analyses or other materials, these may be included in the appendix. Two of the papers must present new empirical analyses. Please see https://grad.wisc.edu/currentstudents/Doctoralguide/ for formatting information.

1) Traditional Format

A traditional dissertation should contain the following sections:

- Title Page (see Format for more information)
- Abstract (structured or unstructured) of 250 words or less
- Acknowledgements (including a list of the members of the committee, funding sources, and date of IRB clearance)
- Table of Contents (including a list of tables and figures)
- Introduction
- Background/Literature Review
- Specific aims
- Methods
- Results
- Conclusions
- Bibliography
- Appendices (including material such as extensive tables, questionnaires and measurement protocols)

2) Research Paper

The three paper option should contain the following sections:

- Title page (see Format for more information)
- Abstract (structured or unstructured) of 250 words or less
- Acknowledgements (including a list of the members of the committee, funding sources, and date of IRB clearance)
- Table of Contents (including a list of tables and figures)
- Introduction and literature review
- Specific aims
- Approach/Methods
- Manuscripts (formatted for the proposed journal)
- Conclusion
- Bibliography
- Appendices (including detailed methods, material such as extensive tables, questionnaires and measurement protocols)
The manuscripts should be appropriate for publication in peer reviewed national or international journals. The manuscripts should be ready for submission and follow the formats of the journals chosen by the dissertation advisor and the student. The appendices must demonstrate the full development of the dissertation material and are constructed based on the guidance of the dissertation advisor and committee. In the instance of any apparent conflict between formatting guidelines of the chosen journals and the Department of Population Health Sciences dissertation requirements, the journal guidelines will take precedence for the manuscript section of the dissertation.

4.E.3 Graduation Warrant Request Deadlines

Please review the Timeline in 4. A.1. for a summary of the steps leading up to graduation. Students must formally notify the department and the Graduate School of their intention to graduate. Notification consists of confirming completion of degree requirements, completing an Intent to Graduate Form and submitting a PhD Final Oral Committee Approval Form to the department by the deadlines below.

Fall: October 15 or 4 weeks before defense (whichever occurs sooner)

Spring/Summer: March 15 or 4 weeks before defense (whichever occurs sooner)


The dissertation committee is required to attend a final meeting, scheduled by the student, in which the student will present his or her work. The student is also responsible for reserving the room and any required audiovisual equipment for this final meeting. Please contact the Administrative Assistant in room 707 for assistance. It is advised that students schedule this final meeting several weeks before the semester ends. This is advisable since many times revisions are required before the warrant will be signed. The graduation date is based upon when students have their final review meeting at the Graduate School to submit their final version of their dissertation with their signed warrant (original not a copy).

You are responsible for knowing and meeting the Graduate School deadlines for degree completion. The deadlines can be found at: https://grad.wisc.edu/currentstudents/degree deadlines/.

The dissertation final draft to be defended must be submitted to the committee at least 4 weeks prior to the final defense date. All members of the committee must be provided with an electronic or hard copy of the document, if they so request.

As part of the final defense, presentation of a 30-minute public seminar with an open question and answer session is required. The seminar must be publicized at least 2 weeks in advance by hanging signs on the Departmental bulletin boards (on floors 3, 5, 6, 7, and 10) and by sending an email to the Graduate Program Coordinator who will forward the information to students and faculty.
During the public seminar the student presents research results, followed by questions from
the floor. At the end of the open session, the committee will go into closed session. The committee
will meet privately with the student after their closed session. The examination (public and closed
sessions) will last approximately 3 hours.

**Possible Outcomes of the Defense**
Possible outcomes of the committees’ closed session deliberations (discussed above) are pass,
fail, or conditional pass. In the case of a conditional pass, the dissertation advisor and in some
cases other committee members will not sign the final warrant until all revisions are completed
and approved.

**Deadline for Passing the Final Exam**
Doctoral students are expected to pass the final oral examination and deposit the dissertation no
later than five years from the date of passing the preliminary examination. The oral examination
is the oral defense of the completed dissertation. Full-time students generally complete the
dissertation within two years of the preliminary examination. Part-time students may take longer

3. E. 5. **Depositing Dissertation and Copy of Warrant to Department**

Specific guidelines for formatting the dissertation are listed below in 4. E.6. At your Final Review
with the Graduate School, the final copy of your dissertation will be retained and sent to Bell and
Howell Information Learning for microfilming and binding. In addition, you must submit the
following items:

- On or before the graduation deadline, a copy of the signed **PhD Final Oral Committee
Approval Form** must be submitted to the Graduate Program Office (retain original copy for
Final Review).

- Within two weeks of the graduation deadline, a copy of the completed dissertation
(incorporating the revisions from the final meeting) must be provided to at least the chair of
your committee utilizing one of the following options: thermal glue binding, coil binding,
spiral binding, or ACCO binding (no stapling or three-ring binders). One or more of these
types of services are offered at Bob’s Copy Shop (608.251.2936), Student Print
(608.262.6216), or DoIT Digital Printing (608-262-3461).

- Within two weeks of the graduation deadline, email a PDF copy of the dissertation to the
Graduate Program Office.

- Within two weeks of the graduation deadline, an electronic copy of your resume/CV must be
emailed to Graduate Program Office staff.

- For further information on many dissertation related topics, see link:
[https://grad.wisc.edu/currentstudents/Doctoralguide/](https://grad.wisc.edu/currentstudents/Doctoralguide/)

Please see the current guidelines at: https://grad.wisc.edu/currentstudents/Doctoralguide/

4.E. 7. Depositing Dissertation to Graduate School

The Graduate School web site contains information also on this topic: https://grad.wisc.edu/currentstudents/Doctoralguide/

5. E. 8. Graduation FAQs

If you are not able to find the answer to your graduation-related question here, please review the other sections of the Academic Guide or the department website (including FAQ categories in the Prospective Students section).

When do I receive my actual diploma?
Please find the answer at the Registrar’s website.

When is my degree posted on my transcript?
Please find the answer at the Registrar’s website.

When is my commencement ceremony at the Kohl Center?
Please find the answer at the Commencement website.

How/when do I need to order my commencement attire?
Please find the answer at the Commencement website.

Is there a department commencement celebration in addition to the campus-wide Kohl Center ceremony?
Yes! The department has continued the great tradition of honoring our graduates in a more intimate fashion prior to the larger, campus-wide Kohl Center commencement ceremonies. The MS/PhD graduation event is held once a year in May for MS and PhD graduates who have graduated in the fall term, spring term, or the upcoming summer term (for example, for Academic Year 2014-15 Graduation, we honored the graduates of Fall 2014, Spring 2015, and Summer 2015).

Faculty, staff, students, and the graduates’ families are invited to this celebration. The event typically occurs on the Friday of Spring Commencement weekend. Please confirm date/time/location with staff prior to making any plans.

Is there anything else?
Expect the Graduate School to send you a link to take an exit survey. You may also be contacted by the Graduate Program Coordinator to do a brief exit interview to help us improve the Program.
What can I do to stay in touch with the department and/or students/faculty after I graduate?
We strongly encourage our graduates to stay in touch with the department and each other after graduation since it is a great way to build your professional network. Please contact the Graduate Program Coordinator at pophealth@mailplus.wisc.edu to find out how you can stay connected!

Alumni are a valuable source of feedback and program improvement, so you can expect us to contact you periodically. Please keep us updated on your address and employment situation.
Chapter 5: Additional Policies

5. A. Maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress

Guidelines for Satisfactory Progress

Students must satisfy the following conditions to make satisfactory progress in the program:

1) Maintain a minimum cumulative graduate GPA of 3.25 in all graduate work (including transfer/equivalency courses).

2) Maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25 or better in all course work completed while enrolled in the Population Health Graduate Program.

3) Maintain a minimum term GPA of 3.0 or better in all course work completed for each enrolled term.

4) Meet Graduate Program grade requirements. No grade lower than a B, in Epidemiology core courses (797, 798, 551, and 552) or other required courses will be accepted for the degree. If necessary, students may retake a course.

5) Attend courses and seminars on a regular basis. If illness or other circumstances intervene, the student must notify his or her advisor as soon as possible.

6) Satisfy all program deadlines and time limits as outlined in the Academic Guide.

7) Remove Incomplete (I) grades within one semester or by the time specified by the course instructor if that is later.

8) Maintain no more than six credits of Incomplete (I) grades during any semester.

9) Non-dissertators must maintain continuous enrollment in a minimum of two graduate credits during fall and spring semesters (this is not considered full-time status; simply the lowest number of credits allowed). Dissertators must maintain continuous enrollment in a minimum of three 990 graduate credits during fall and spring semesters (this is considered full-time status).

10) Research, teaching, or project assistants, trainees, and other fellows must satisfy the Graduate School items #8 and #9 above AND any additional enrollment requirements based on their position. See your appointment letter and the Graduate School’s Academic Guidelines: [http://www.wisc.edu/grad/education/acadpolicy/guidelinesindex.html](http://www.wisc.edu/grad/education/acadpolicy/guidelinesindex.html).
11) MS students must pass their thesis defense within two years of completing all coursework.

12) Ph.D. students must:
   - Pass Qualifying Exam by the end of their second year (full-time students) or third year (part-time students) of matriculation as outlined in Academic Guide.
   - Pass preliminary exam A no later than three calendar years following admission for graduate study in the Department (if full-time) or no later than five calendar years following admission (if part-time).
   - Pass preliminary exam B within four (full-time students) to six years (part-time students) of matriculation.
   - Pass dissertation defense within five years of becoming a dissertator.

**Probation/Dismissal Policy**

Not meeting guidelines for satisfactory progress can result in immediate dismissal from the program or a semester of probation (followed by dismissal, if satisfactory progress is not achieved in the next semester). Students placed on probation will be placed on probation for one semester and will be reviewed by the Epidemiology Steering Committee following the probationary semester. Students may be dismissed or allowed to continue by the Epidemiology Steering Committee based upon review of progress during the probationary semester.

**5. B. Enrollment Credit Requirements**

Read all the categories to see if more than one category applies to you. If more than one category applies, student must follow the instructions for the one that requires the higher number of credits. **Students must/will be removed from payroll if they do not comply with these campus registration requirements.** In all cases, courses numbered below 300, audits, and pass/fail (990s are okay) do not satisfy these enrollment requirements. Generally, summer enrollment is not required unless a student is an RA, a trainee, or is defending/graduating. Please note that sometimes students need to have full-time status for purposes of financial aid, fellowships, scholarships, external funding, or other reasons only the student would know; consider these possible factors when deciding how many credits to take.

**Non-dissertators** – at least two credits every fall and spring semester; this is not considered a full-time load if you require full-time status for some reason.

**Dissertators** – exactly three 990 research credits every fall and spring semester (or the eight-week summer session if you are a summer RA, a trainee, defending or graduating); this is considered full-time status
TAs/PAs – at least two credits every fall and spring semester for non-dissertators (this is not considered a full-time load if you require full-time status for some reason); exactly 3 credits every fall and spring semester for dissertators (this is a full-time load); there are no enrollment requirements for summer as long as you were enrolled (and did not graduate) in the previous spring semester or will enroll in the fall – if you do not satisfy this criterion you may not be eligible for a summer TA/PA position.

A table specifying credit requirements can be found at:

http://academic.son.wisc.edu/studentnet/docs/phd-enrollment-requirements.pdf

RAs/Trainees/Fellows – must carry a full load each term (including summer); for non-dissertators this would be at least 8 credits every fall and spring semester and at least 2 credits during the eight-week summer session (these two summer credits constitute full-time enrollment for loan deferral); for dissertators this would be exactly three credits every fall, spring, and eight-week summer session.

Graduating Students – at least two credits for MS students (this is not considered a full-time load if you require full-time status for some reason) and exactly three credits for PhD dissertators (this is considered full-time status); this requirement applies for the eight-week summer session if you plan to finish after the summer window.

Full-time – for non-dissertators, at least eight credits every fall and spring semester and at least 4 credits for the 8-week summer session; for dissertators, exactly three credits for every fall, spring, or eight-week summer session; please see the Enrollment Requirements from the Graduate School’s academic policies for exceptions to these rules:

https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/

Part-time – for non-dissertators, less than 8 credits every fall and spring semester and less than four credits for the 8-week summer session; for dissertators, exactly three 990 credits for every fall, spring, or eight-week summer session (in theory, dissertators can’t be part-time).

International Students – must have full-time status every fall and spring semester (see full-time status); full-time status for summer is not required unless you also fall into another category that does require it. Please see further requirements for those working on an F-1 visa at http://iss.wisc.edu/students/current-students/f1-information and for those working on a J-1 visa at http://iss.wisc.edu/students/current-students/j1-information.

Overload Students – this is more than fifteen credits for the fall or spring term OR more than eight credits for the eight-week summer session; dissertators cannot have an overload; please see the Graduate School’s Academic Guideline’s Overloads section for more information:

https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/

Audit Students – audits are not free; they do not count toward program requirements and they do not count toward the credit requirements listed above; please see the Graduate School’s Academic Guideline’s Auditing Courses section for more information:
5. C. Equivalency Credits and Waivers

Graduate Work from Other Accredited Graduate Institutions

The MS/PhD Epidemiology Graduate Program will consider accepting a maximum of twelve credits of work completed as a graduate student at the UW-Madison or another accredited institution. Exceptions will not be granted.

The proposed equivalency credits must be at the graduate level and no older than five years old from the time of admission into the program. Credits cannot be split for a proposed course and the number of credits that are accepted cannot be more than the number of credits assigned for the UW-Madison course equivalent (if one exists). In addition, a grade of “B” or better must be earned for each proposed course.

Requests for equivalency credits from other accredited graduate institutions are reviewed only AFTER admission into the Graduate Program. Students requesting a course equivalency, substitution or waiver must submit a Course Transfer, Substitution & Waiver Form for each requested course along with a course description and syllabus. These requests will be presented to the Curriculum Committee for final approval/denial. Typically, credits earned at another accredited graduate institution count towards program electives and not required courses.

Special Student Credits

UW-Madison special students (i.e., non-degree seeking; not admitted to the Graduate School) may enroll in Population Health Sciences courses on a case-by-case basis with permission of the instructor and space permitting. The MS/PhD Epidemiology Graduate Program will consider applying a maximum of twelve UW-Madison special student credits toward completion of the MS or PhD degrees. Exceptions will not be granted. These must be graduate level courses taken after receiving an undergraduate degree.

Required courses completed as a special student within five years of application and with a grade of B or better may be applied toward required courses upon request to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Requests for special student transfer credits as electives are reviewed only AFTER admission into the Graduate Program. Elective courses completed as a special student must be at the graduate level and no older than five years old from the time of admission into the program. Credits cannot be split for a proposed special student elective course. In addition, a grade of “B” or better must be earned for each proposed special student elective course. Students requesting a special student elective course to transfer are asked to submit their request in writing to their advisor and the Graduate Program Coordinator. Required courses completed as a special student within five years of application and with a grade of B or better can be applied toward required courses upon request to the Graduate Program Coordinator. Applicable required courses completed with a “B” grade or below and/or that are less than five years old can be submitted to
the Graduate Program Coordinator, but will be reviewed by the Director of the Graduate Program.

**VERY IMPORTANT for University Special Students:** In all cases of credit being granted for courses taken as a special student, the student would have to pay the difference in tuition for the terms in question. Those credits earned as a University Special student still appear in the transcript history as “University Special” student, but the Registrar’s Office will add a statement in the beginning of the transcript stating, “All credits taken in [term] as a University Special student have been accepted by the Graduate School toward a degree program” after the student has paid the difference in tuition.

5. D. Developing Pop Hlth 699 Independent Reading Agreements

The maximum number of Pop Hlth 699, Independent Reading, credits that may be applied toward an Epidemiology degree is three for masters and six for doctoral students. Students are free to take more than three (MS) or six (PhD) 699 credits, however, the credits taken beyond these credit maximums will not count towards their degree.

There must be an agreement between the student and faculty member of record documenting the type, scope, and amount of work that will be completed. Generally, the 699 course agreement is an agreement for the student to read and/or write topic papers that would be worth 1-2 credits. As a rule of thumb, 15-45 hours of work/discussion constitute 1 credit and 30-90 hours of work/discussion constitute 2 credits and 45-135 hours of work/discussion constitute 3 credits.

The **699/990 Authorization Form** must be submitted to the Graduate Program Office to file in the student’s academic folder. It is not possible to register for Pop Health 699 or 990 without first submitting a signed **Course Advising Form** and a signed **699/990 Authorization Form**. The forms are available through the department website.

To be authorized the student must:
1) Obtain the consent of the instructor with whom they will be studying
2) Submit the signed **Course Advising Form** AND the signed **699/990 Authorization Form** to the Graduate Program Coordinator and await a response indicating they have permissions to enroll.
3) Register for the course

5. E. Registering for Research Credits (Pop Hlth 990)

The maximum number of Pop Health 990 research credits that may be applied toward an Epidemiology degree is five for masters and eleven for doctoral students. Students are free to take more than five (MS) or eleven (PhD) 990 credits, however, the credits taken beyond these credit maximums will not count towards their degree.

Generally, 990 credits are reserved for thesis or dissertation research and are typically taken for 2-3 credits (although as high as 8 credits is permitted). As a rule of thumb, 15-45 hours of
work/discussion constitute 1 credit; 30-90 hours of work/discussion constitute 2 credits; and 45-135 hours of work/discussion constitute 3 credits.

It is not possible to register for Research 990 credits without first submitting a signed Course Advising Form and a signed 699/990 Authorization Form. The forms are available through the department website.

To be authorized, students must:
1. Obtain the consent of the instructor with whom they will be studying
2. Submit the signed Course Advising Form AND the 699/990 Authorization Form to the Graduate Program Coordinator and await a response indicating they have permissions to enroll.
3. Register for the course

5. F. Requesting a Leave of Absence

An MS or PhD student in good standing may request a leave of absence (a break in enrollment of one or more terms) for a period not exceeding one calendar year. The request may be renewed twice. Renewal requests must be submitted to a student’s academic advisor and the Director of the Graduate Program (through the Graduate Program Coordinator). A Leave of Absence Request Form can be found on the department website. Being granted a leave following these guidelines and the procedures outlined below guarantees reentry into the Program:

1. The student must submit a Leave of Absence Request Form to his or her advisor specifying the length of the leave and the reason for the request. Return the form to the Graduate Program Coordinator.
2. The Leave of Absence Request Form will be shared with the Director of the Graduate Program through the Graduate Program Coordinator for approval.
3. If an extension of leave is needed beyond one year, it will be the student’s responsibility to request the extension before the end of the leave period. A student who fails to do so will not be guaranteed readmission into the Graduate Program.
4. To be readmitted into the Graduate Program and Graduate School, the student must resolve all Incomplete (I) grades and complete the Graduate School reentry process.
5. The Director of the Graduate Program may provide a letter to the student specifying other conditions of reentry.

5. G. Requests for Exemptions or Changes to Program Requirements

Requests for course substitutions, exemptions, or other changes to the stated MS or PhD program requirements must be presented in writing to the Director of the Graduate Program through the Graduate Program Coordinator. The Director will review and determine the acceptability of all program proposals and proposed changes and exemptions.
5. H. Grievance Policy

With few exceptions, students should take the following steps to address a grievance related to a course grade or other Graduate Program related issue:

a. First express the concern/s to the person directly responsible for the action at issue.

b. If the direct interaction with the person directly responsible for the action does not result in a satisfactory solution of the conflict, if the student does not believe that such a direct approach will work, or if the student feels uncomfortable making the attempt, the next step is to address the concern with the person holding supervisory responsibility (the course director in the case of a grievance with a teaching assistant, research program director, graduate program director or department chair) for the unit or area in which the student is located or in which the action occurred.

c. Grievances that cannot be resolved through either or both of the first two steps should be presented to the Epidemiology Steering Committee in writing. The Epidemiology Steering Committee will follow open meetings policies when reviewing grievances and may move to go into closed session for these discussions pursuant to Wisconsin Statute 19.85(1)(f). Decisions arrived at during closed session will be announced in open session and will be documented in the minutes. The committee may request additional written information from both parties or may invite the student to answer questions during the meeting.

d. The Epidemiology Steering Committee will recommend options for resolution. At that time, the student may accept and act on the recommendation/s or take further action outside the

e. department as outlined in the Graduate School’s Academic Guidelines, Grievances and Appeals at https://grad.wisc.edu/acdpolicy/?policy=grievancesandappeals

It is expected that students will follow the procedures outlined above before seeking assistance from outside the department.
Chapter 6: Student Resources

6. A. Financing Your Education

Please see the Financing Your Education section on the department website for more information about the following: General Financial Information, Assistantships, Traineeships, Fellowships, Scholarships and Financial Aid, and Tuition and Fees.

6. B. Career Development

Please see the Career Resources section on the department website and the Planning Your Path to Graduate, School Success section on the Graduate School website for more information about the following: Career Paths, Professional Development, and Job Search.

6. C. Student Directory/Profiles

We encourage every student to participate and create a student profile within our online student directory. Our students come from diverse backgrounds and experiences representing states throughout the nation as well as countries around the world. The profiles of our students illustrate the breadth of their knowledge, experiences, and interests that are leading them to become outstanding researchers and public health practitioners. These profiles also serve the purpose of providing the following benefits:

- Help students connect with one another to build community
- Help faculty put names with faces which builds community
- Those with on-campus funding opportunities can search here for potential student hires
- Employers can look here to recruit upcoming graduates for "real world" jobs
- Students gain experience cultivating their professional image

6. D. Student Connections

Student Groups

Please see the Student Connections section on the department website for helpful links and more information about the following: MS/PhD Student Organization (PHSSO), and Other Student Groups.

News and Events

There are many places where students can learn about program-related news and events. Please see the Student Connections section on the department website for helpful links and more information about items such as: MS/PhD Program Newsletters, Department News/Events, Campus Seminars of Interest, and the Population Health Annual Poster Session.
6. E. Forms

Please see the Forms section on the department website for links to all forms.
Chapter 7: Faculty and Program Governance

7. A. Faculty

**Population Health Sciences Departmental Faculty**

All tenured or tenure-track faculty in the Department of Population Health Sciences are referred to as "Departmental Faculty." Tenured or tenure-track faculty members are those with one of the following titles: Professor, Associate Professor, or Assistant Professor. All departmental faculty members have graduate authority. Only Departmental Faculty who are also Epidemiology Program Faculty (see next section) may serve as initial academic advisors. Please review the online directory [https://pophealth.wisc.edu/people](https://pophealth.wisc.edu/people) for a listing of Departmental Faculty. Departmental faculty who resign or retire retain their status for one year.

**MS/PhD Epidemiology Program Faculty**

The Epidemiology Program Faculty are the tenured and tenure-track faculty in the Department of Population Health Sciences with significant training, expertise, or research experience in epidemiology. Non-Departmental tenured and tenure-track faculty who have comparable qualifications in epidemiology are eligible to join the Epidemiology Program Faculty upon approval by a majority vote of the Steering Committee of the Epidemiology Graduate Program, and a vote by the Population Health Sciences Executive Committee for an Affiliate appointment in the Department of Population Health Sciences. All Epidemiology Program Faculty may chair thesis and dissertation committees, serve as co-chairs of thesis and dissertation committees in cases where the chair is not Epidemiology Faculty, and vote as members of the Program Faculty. For Epidemiology Program Faculty, with zero-dollar appointments in Population Health Sciences, Epidemiology Program Faculty membership will be reviewed every 3 years, followed by Population Health Sciences Executive Committee review and vote on continued Departmental appointment status. All Epidemiology Program Faculty are also Graduate Faculty as defined by the Graduate School (see Faculty Policies and Procedures). Epidemiology faculty who resign or retire retain their status for one year.

Departmental Faculty, MS/PhD Program faculty, and graduate students may nominate additional Epidemiology Faculty to the Epidemiology Steering Committee. Membership in the program faculty is subject to change over time to reflect changes in the campus and in the Population Health Sciences Department, and to meet the needs of particular students.

**Graduate Faculty**

Graduate Faculty status is required for some roles on student committees (see section on selecting thesis/dissertation committee 4.E.1). Briefly, Graduate Faculty are tenured and tenure-track faculty in departments that grant graduate degrees and others who have been recommended by a departmental Executive Committee and approved by the Graduate School Executive Committee and dean.
List of Epidemiology Faculty
The following individuals may serve as advisors and/or committee chairs for Epidemiology Students or fulfill the role of co-chair on committees with a non-Epidemiology chair:

- Brad Astor
- Leonelo Bautista
- Karen Cruickshanks
- Maureen Durkin
- Deborah Ehrenthal
- Corinne Engelman
- Ronald Gangnon
- Marty Kanarek
- Kristen Malecki
- Mari Palta
- Jonathan Patz
- Paul Peppard
- Amy Trenham-Dietz
- Patrick Remington
- Ajay Sethi
- Kristen Malecki
- Mari Palta
- Jonathan Patz
- Paul Peppard
- Patrick Remington
- Ajay Sethi
- Amy Trenham-Dietz

7. B. Program Governance and Faculty Committees

The Epidemiology Graduate Program is administrated by the Department of Population Health Sciences. The Chair of the Department of Population Health Sciences serves as or appoints the Director of the Graduate Program. All Program Committees report to the Steering Committee. In the case of the Curriculum Committee it reports both to the Steering Committee and the Department Executive Committee. Committee governance responsibilities are described in the following section.

Epidemiology Steering Committee

The Graduate Program Director will chair the Epidemiology Steering Committee. The Committee will include five members of the Departmental Faculty plus at least one member of the Program Faculty with a core appointment outside the Department of Population Health Sciences and the Graduate Program Coordinator. These members are voting members. In addition, the student organization will nominate a Population Health Graduate Program student to serve as a (non-voting) member.

The Steering Committee:

- Reviews program goals and performance and makes recommendations to the chair and Graduate Program Director for changes and improvements.
- Periodically updates the program requirements.
- Reviews and modifies membership in the program faculty at least once each year.
- Receives, reviews, and makes recommendations on program-related student issues.
- Develops and implements annual recruitment plans

MS/PhD/MPH Curriculum Committee

The MS/PhD Graduate Program Director and MPH Program Director will co-chair the Curriculum Committee. The Committee will include at least seven voting members drawn from Departmental Faculty, required course directors, representatives from approved dual degree programs and certificates, affiliate faculty and staff and other faculty involved in teaching and mentoring. No more than 1/3 of the committee members should be from any one discipline and no more than 1/3 should have appointments outside of the Department. Members will serve three-year terms to be staggered so that no more than 1/3 of the membership turn-over each year.
Each academic program (MPH, Population Health, and Epidemiology) will nominate a student to serve on the committee not to exceed three student members (non-voting). The academic staff members are voting members.

The Curriculum Committee:
- Considers curricular issues that affect department-affiliated programs such as the MS/PhD Graduate Program, MPH Professional Program, and Global Health Certificate Program.
- Recommends changes to degree requirements.
- Reviews and approves new courses and course changes for the Department
- Coordinates all new and continuing course offerings within the Department to ensure availability and compatibility with program requirements.
- Reviews courses for transfer of credit.
- Acts as liaison to other departments and faculty whose offerings are important to training students in the program.
- Develops and maintain a list of approved electives
- Reviews course evaluations and grade distributions of each course offered through the Department of Population Health Sciences biennially.
- Review MS/PhD MPH student curricular issues that warrant committee review.

**Population Health and Epidemiology Admissions Committee**

The Committee will include at least seven voting members with at least one member of the Program Faculty with an appointment outside the Department of Population Health Sciences and the Graduate Program Coordinator. All members will have voting privileges.

There will be a MS/PhD student representative (who will not have voting privileges). The Committee Chair, in cooperation with the Graduate Program Director and Graduate Program Coordinator, will administer program and departmental funds that may be available to help fund students. At the discretion of the Committee Chair, certain issues may be put to the Committee via a secure website for deliberation when timeliness is at stake and/or when the volume of business is sufficiently small that calling a formal meeting of the Committee would not be deemed an efficient use of the Committee's time and effort. Applications received after the deadline will be accepted from Medical Fellows and MDs only and may be decided by the Director of the Graduate Program and the Chair of the Admissions Committee.

The Admissions Committee:
- Develops and implements annual recruitment plans.
- Selects new students for admission.
- Assigns initial course advisors for students accepted into the program.
**Qualifier Committee**

The Committee will include at least three members: one from each section of the Qualifying Exam (with one serving as chair) and the Graduate Program Coordinator. All members will have voting privileges.

The Qualifier Committee:

- Develops and administers the annual PhD qualifying exam.
- Assures that the qualifying exam is representative of the PhD Program.
- Develops and annually reviews guidelines given to faculty for developing questions and to students for taking the exam.
- Develops and reviews rules for grading the qualifying exam.
- Historically tracks and annually reviews cumulative student pass/fail performance on the exam.

**7. C. Departmental Directory**

The department staff directory is available on the Population Health Sciences website and updated regularly. Please notify Departmental Main Office if you have changes/corrections for staff directory entry and please notify the Graduate Program Office if you have changes/corrections for a student directory/profile entry (for more information please read section 6.C. of this Guide).
Chapter 8: Policies

The Department of Population Health Sciences endorses the policies of the Division of Student Life, the Graduate School and the School of Medicine and Public Health. Please read over these policies carefully. Certain training modules are required and available at your MyUW website.

8. A. Campus Office for Equity and Diversity

The Office for Equity and Diversity (OED) (in partnership with other offices on campus) promotes, integrates, and transfers equity and diversity principles to nurture human resources and advance the mission of the University of Wisconsin-Madison (university). The university is committed to providing equal opportunity and equal access and to complying with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations and UWS and university non-discrimination policies and procedures. There are several bases for covering students and applicants for admission to the university; employees and applicants for employment; and those wishing to take part in university activities including visitors to campus. For more information, contact the Office for Equity and Diversity.

8. B. Student Rights and Responsibilities

Message to students from the Division of Student Life

UW–Madison is a community founded around the principles of knowledge, learning, inclusion and citizenship.

As we strive to educate and graduate good citizens of our campus, city and the world, our community has high standards and expectations for the conduct of its members. These expectations and responsibilities include:

- Your consistent practice of civility toward others
- Your respect for the expression of diverse opinions
- Your insistence on academic honesty and integrity
- Your demand that all members of the university be accepted and judged as individuals without regard to their race, sex, religion, color, creed, disability, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry or age
- Your efforts to insure that the community is safe from violence, harassment, fraud, theft, disruption and intimidation

Along with your added responsibilities, you have a right to expect that the university will support you as a student and enforce its standards of conduct. Refer to https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/nonacademic-misconduct/ for more information. Students are also encouraged to download the UW Police Department brochure on Hate and Bias and the others listed below:

- Students With Disabilities: Requesting Reasonable Accommodations
- UW-Madison Student Discrimination Complaint Process
• Discrimination Rights: It is important for students, staff, faculty and parents to know about Student Privacy Rights and Responsibilities. This link will provide information about Student Rights through the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

8. C. UW Health Policy for Professional Conduct in the Learning Environment

The Liaison Committee on Medical Education established new requirements for teacher-learner relationships in 1999. In accordance with MS-32:

*Each School of Medicine and Public Health must define and publicize the standards of conduct for the teacher-learner relationship, and develop written policies for addressing violations of those standards.*

Teachers and learners have expectations of performance and a responsibility to act in a manner conducive to promoting a positive learning environment.

UW Health (The UW School of Medicine and Public Health, the UW Hospital and Clinics, and the UW Medical Foundation) commits to ensure a professional and collegial environment for training and patient care in all sites throughout the State of Wisconsin. Each member of the faculty and staff, each postgraduate trainee, and each student must foster professional and personal behaviors based on mutual trust, respect, and responsibility. All are expected to respect the dignity and diverse backgrounds, personalities, and the learning needs of individuals in all training and patient care settings. We offer excellence in our learning environment when everyone works in harmony, free from ridicule, exploitation, intimidation, and harassment.

Supporting a positive learning environment requires creating an atmosphere in which the ability of individuals to function professionally is optimized. Unacceptable behavior can be unintended, yet perceived as abusive. Awareness of examples of inappropriate and unacceptable behavior should serve to help avoid such misperceptions. Examples of inappropriate and unacceptable behavior would include:

• Belittling or humiliation
• Insults or verbal attacks
• Threats of physical harm or physical attacks
• Threatening to assign a lower grade or to write a poor evaluation as a means of intimidation
• Taking credit for another individual’s work
• Disregard for the safety of others
• Sexual harassment, including unwelcome sexual advances or demands, either verbal or physical
• Discrimination on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ethnic background, age, or physical ability

The list of behaviors above sets out a few of many examples of inappropriate and unacceptable
behaviors to be considered within this policy. This statement should be read as consistent with and in conjunction with UW and UWHC policies relating to harassment and discrimination. No person shall be subject to reprisal for using or participating in an informal or formal complaint resolution process.

Concerns under this policy about behavior of faculty/staff that are employees of both UWMS and UWMF, should be reported to the UWMF Professional Conduct Committee, under the “Guidelines for Professional Conduct of Physician Faculty in the Clinical Setting” dated September 8, 2005. Concerns under this policy about behavior of other University, UWHC or UWMF employees or students or trainees are to be reported pursuant to other procedures already in place at those three organizations.

The School of Medicine and Public Health Dean and the Hospital CEO, as appropriate, or their designees, may review concerns and complaints, if the matters are not resolved.

8. D. Academic Policies

Attendance Policy:
Attendance is expected. Students are responsible for all information presented in the readings, course book and during lectures. Students should follow the attendance policy of the course instructor.

Class Meeting Cancellation Notices:
Occasionally, severe weather, illness, or other circumstances may require cancellation of a class meeting. If this is so, all best efforts will be made to inform students.

Non-Discrimination Policy:
The UW-Madison is committed to creating a dynamic, diverse and welcoming learning environment for all students and has a non-discrimination policy that reflects this philosophy. Disrespectful behaviors or comments addressed towards any group or individual, regardless of race/ethnicity, sexuality, gender, religion, ability, or any other difference is deemed unacceptable.

Disability Reasonable Accommodation Policy:
If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit a letter to the course director that outlines your request in a manner that is timely and consistent with established university policies for making such request so that your needs may be addressed. Policies for accommodating disabilities are available through the McBurney Disability Resource Center, 903 University Ave., 608-263-2741 (phone), 263-6393 (TTY), 265-2998 (Fax), mcburney@uwmadmail.services.wisc.edu. For additional information, please see http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/

Religious Reasonable Accommodation Policy:
Every effort shall be made to reasonably and fairly accommodate all students who, because
of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments, or required attendance, provided advance notification of the conflict is given. Whenever possible, students should give at least one-week advance notice to request special accommodation.

**Student Honesty and Rules of Conduct:**
Academic honesty requires that the course work (e.g., quizzes, papers, exams) a student presents to an instructor honestly and accurately indicates the student's own academic efforts.

These policies are available at [https://students.wisc.edu/doso/docs/UWS14.pdf](https://students.wisc.edu/doso/docs/UWS14.pdf). UWS 14 is the chapter of the University of Wisconsin System Administrative code that regulates academic misconduct. UW-Madison implements the rules defined in UWS 14.8 through our own "Student Academic Misconduct Campus Procedures." UWS 14.03 defines academic misconduct as follows:

Academic misconduct is an act in which a student:
(a) seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;
(b) uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;
(c) forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
(d) intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;
(e) engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance;
(f) assists other students in any of these acts.

If you are accused of misconduct, you may have questions and concerns about the process. If so, you should feel free to call Student Advocacy & Judicial Affairs (SAJA) in the Offices of the Dean of Students at (608) 263-5700 or send an email to [dean@studentlife.wisc.edu](mailto:dean@studentlife.wisc.edu).

**Civility Policy:**
Members of the University of Wisconsin-Madison community are expected to deal with each other with respect and consideration. The civility policy for this course promotes mutual respect, civility and orderly conduct among the faculty, teaching assistants, and students. We do not intend this policy to deprive any person of his or her right to freedom of expression. Rather, we seek to maintain a safe, harassment free workplace for the students, faculty, and teaching assistants. Positive communication is encouraged and volatile, hostile, or aggressive actions and language will not be tolerated. If the civility policy for this course is violated, the individual is subject to removal from the class and possibly the course altogether. In addition, the proper authorities at the UW Departmental, School, and University levels will be notified of such behavior accordingly and further action may be taken if necessary.

Violation of any of these policies or rules of conduct, may lead to disciplinary action up to and including being dismissed from the program, in accordance with UW-Madison policies: [https://students.wisc.edu/student-conduct/nonacademic-misconduct/](https://students.wisc.edu/student-conduct/nonacademic-misconduct/).