Graduate Program in Epidemiology MS/PhD

ACADEMIC GUIDE

2019-20

Subject to Revision Fall 2019
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 September 2019.
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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/.

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 https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/. 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. Find information on the IELTS at 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 (https://integrativebiology.wisc.edu/courses-2/), 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 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 (https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/) for answers to their questions. When students need additional clarification on issues and rules, there are various faculty and staff resources 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 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). Graduate School deadlines can be found at https://grad.wisc.edu/currentstudents/degreedeadlines/.

**Academic Advisor:** All students must have an Epidemiology faculty member as advisor or co-advisor. A list of Epidemiology faculty can be found at PHS Epidemiology Faculty List. 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 online Course Advising Form each semester (printing the page that displays the selected courses) and, in the spring semester additionally, an Individual Development Plan (IDP). The latter can be one of the adviser’s choice or the one available through this link. These forms include a summary of progress and accomplishments such as which program milestones were met, what kind of funding the student has and a statement of future goals. The academic advisor and student discuss plans for the next semester and the online form is reviewed by the GPC. The IDP serves as a road map for discussion between the adviser and student, and is not turned in to the Graduate Program Office. 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 using the Course Advisor Change Request Form (available online). The student should complete the form, bring it to both the current and new advisors for their approval and signature, and return 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/Epidemiology_MS-PhD_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 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.
- PHS 820 is a research seminar for students in the Population Health Sciences Graduate Programs. Presentations are generally made by graduate students, but may also be made by professors, public health professionals and experts, designed to cover the depth and breadth of research in the fields of population health and epidemiology.
- The purposes of PHS Monday Research Seminar are to 1) expose students, staff, faculty and colleagues to a broad range of population health research and practice; 2) critically think about diverse methodological and conceptual approaches to population health; and 3) build collegial networks among speakers and attendees.

**Required 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 797**  Introduction to Epidemiology (3 cr) **Fall**
- **POP HLTH 798**  Epidemiologic Methods (3 cr) **Spring**
- **POP HLTH 805**  Advanced Epidemiology: Causal Inference in Epidemiologic Studies (3 cr) **Fall**
  - OR
- **POP HLTH 806**  Advanced Epidemiology: Practice of Epidemiology (3 cr) **Spring**
Responsible Conduct of Research credits:

Students are required to take a minimum of one credit of coursework in the responsible conduct of research.

With the exception of HIST SCI 545, courses on the below list cover all topics included in NIH requirements for trainees: 1. animal welfare; 2. collaborative science; 3. conflict of interest and commitment; 4. data acquisition, management, sharing and ownership; 5. protection of human subjects; 6. mentor/trainee responsibilities; 7. publication practices, responsible authorship; 8. peer review; 9. research misconduct; and 10. societal and environmental impacts of scientific research.

Students may submit requests in writing to the Graduate Program Director through the Graduate Program Coordinator proposing other UW ethics courses be considered as fulfilling PH Graduate Program requirement. Courses from our earlier lists taken prior to Spring 2018 will be considered as fulfilling PH program requirements. Students on NIH training grants, who have taken courses not including all the above topics, are recommended to supplement via auditing parts of the below courses or other relevant lectures.

BMI 826-008 Ethical Conduct of Research for Data Scientists (1 cr)
HST SCI 545 Ethical and Regulatory Issues in Clinical Investigation (1 cr)
NUR 802 Ethics and the Responsible Conduct of Research (1 cr)
VET SCI/SURGERY 812 Research Ethics and Career Development (2 cr)
OBGYN 955 Respons. Conduct of Research for Biomedical Grad. Students (2 cr)
OBGYN 956 Refresher: Advanced Responsible Conduct of Research (1 cr)

Epidemiology Specialization Courses:

Students must complete at least nine credits of epidemiology specialization coursework from the list on pages 19 and 20. Epidemiology specialization classes should be chosen by the student in close consultation with his or her advisor.

Learning Goals: Epidemiology MS Learning Goals

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/Epidemiology_MS-PhD_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: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/how-to-apply-application-guide.html
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 via CANVAS.

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 form 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.
- Students are welcome to produce a bound copy of their thesis for their advisor, and the departmental library, but this is not required.
- 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: 60 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.

• PHS 820 is a research seminar for students in the Population Health Sciences Graduate Programs. Presentations are generally made by graduate students, but may also be made by professors, public health professionals and experts, designed to cover the depth and breadth of research in the fields of population health and epidemiology.

• The purposes of PHS Monday Research Seminar are to 1) expose students, staff, faculty and colleagues to a broad range of population health research and practice; 2) critically think about diverse methodological and conceptual approaches to population health; and 3) build collegial networks among speakers and attendees.

Required Core Courses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Semester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH 451</td>
<td>Introduction to SAS Programming for Population Health</td>
<td>2 cr</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH 551</td>
<td>Introduction to Biostatistics for Population Health</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH 552</td>
<td>Regression Methods for Population Health</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH 651</td>
<td>Advanced Regression Methods for Pop. Health</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH 652*</td>
<td>Topics in Biostatistics for Epidemiology</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Semester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH 797</td>
<td>Introduction to Epidemiology</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH 798</td>
<td>Epidemiologic Methods</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH 805</td>
<td>Advanced Epi.: Causal Inference in Epidemiologic Studies</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH 806</td>
<td>Advanced Epi.: Practice of Epidemiology</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Responsible Conduct of Research and Ethics:

Students are required to take a minimum of one credit in the responsible conduct of research.
With the exception of HIST SCI 545, courses on the below list cover all topics included in NIH requirements for trainees: 1. animal welfare; 2. collaborative science; 3. conflict of interest and commitment; 4. data acquisition, management, sharing and ownership; 5. protection of human subjects; 6. mentor/trainee responsibilities; 7. publication practices, responsible authorship; 8. peer review; 9. research misconduct; and 10. societal and environmental impacts of scientific research.

Students may submit requests in writing to the Graduate Program Director through the Graduate Program Coordinator proposing other UW ethics courses be considered as fulfilling PH Graduate Program requirement. Courses from our earlier lists taken prior to Spring 2018 will be considered as fulfilling PH program requirements. Students on NIH training grants, who have taken courses not including all the above topics, are recommended to supplement via auditing parts of the below courses or other relevant lectures.

BMI 826-008 Ethical Conduct of Research for Data Scientists (1 cr)
HST SCI 545 Ethical and Regulatory Issues in Clinical Investigation (1 cr)
NUR 802 Ethics and the Responsible Conduct of Research (1 cr)
VET SCI/SURGERY 812 Research Ethics and Career Development (2 cr)
OBGYN 955 Responsible Conduct of Research for Biomed Grad Students (2 cr)
OBGYN 956 Refresher: Advanced Responsible Conduct of Research (1 cr)

Epidemiology Specialization Courses:

PhD students must complete at least twelve additional credits of epidemiology specialization coursework from the lists below. Epidemiology specialization classes should be chosen by the student in close consultation with his or her advisor.

STAT 542 Clinical Trials (3cr)
PHS 621 Intro to Nutritional Epidemiology (1 cr)
PHS 650 (sec 074) Special Topics in Environmental Health Epidemiology (2 cr)
PHS 650 (sec 084) Connections: Epidemiology Past, Present, and Future (1 cr)
PHS 713 Epidemiology of HIV/AIDS (1 cr)
PHS 750 Cancer Epidemiology (2 cr)
PHS 789 Principles of Environ. Health: A Systems Thinking Approach (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 810 Global Health Epidemiology (2 cr)
PHS 847 Cardiovascular Epidemiology (1 cr)
PHS 849 Genetic Epidemiology (3 cr)
PHS 888 Public Health Genomics (1 cr)
PHS 955 Seminar in Physical Activity Epidemiology (1 cr)
SOC 751 Methods of Survey Research: Design & Measurement (3cr)
SOC 752 Methods of Survey Research: Applications (3cr)
MM&I 603 Clinical and Public Health Microbiology (5 cr)
*As noted above, PhD students are required to take both 805 and 806, and can therefore not count these toward the epidemiology specialization requirement. Masters students are required to take one of these, and if taking both- can count the other towards the epidemiology specialization requirement.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BMI 652</td>
<td>Topics in Biostatistics for Epidemiology (1-3 cr)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT 349</td>
<td>Introduction to Time Series (3 cr)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>STAT 351</td>
<td>Introductory Nonparametric Statistics (3 cr)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>STAT 411</td>
<td>Introduction to Sample Survey Theory &amp; Methods (3 cr)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>STAT 456</td>
<td>Applied Multivariate Analysis (3 cr)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>STAT 471</td>
<td>Statistical Computing (3 cr)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT 575</td>
<td>Statistical Methods for Spatial Data (3 cr)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>STAT 641</td>
<td>Statistical Methods for Clinical Trials (3 cr)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT 642</td>
<td>Statistical Methods for Epidemiology (3 cr)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT 761</td>
<td>Decision Trees for Multivariate Analysis (3 cr)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC 952</td>
<td>Causality: Mathematical and Statistical Applications in Sociology (3 cr)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC 952</td>
<td>Event History Analysis (3 cr)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC 952</td>
<td>Path Analysis and Structural Equation Models (3 cr)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC 952</td>
<td>Graphical Models for Causal Inference (3 cr)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDPSYCH 711</td>
<td>Topic Course (3 cr)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDPSYCH 773</td>
<td>Factor Analysis, Multidimensional Scaling and Cluster Analysis (3 cr)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDPSYCH 861</td>
<td>Nonparametric Statistics (3 cr)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDPSYCH 871</td>
<td>Item Response Theory (3 cr)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDPSYCH 960</td>
<td>Structural Equation Modeling (3 cr)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDPSYCH 964</td>
<td>Hierarchical Linear Modeling (3 cr)</td>
<td></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 9 credit 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.

**Option B (distributed)** -- Requires a minimum of 9 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:** (Note: Matriculation refers to the date the student enrolled in the PhD program either de novo or after transferring from the MS program.)

**Qualifying Exam for Epidemiology PhD Students**
Full-time PhD Students: Must pass the exam by the end of the summer following their 2\(^{nd}\) year.
Part-time PhD Students: Must pass the exam by the end of the summer following their 3\(^{rd}\) year.

Notify the Graduate Program Office of your intent to take the qualifier. Notification should be given by June 1st for the summer exam, and December 1st 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.

**Learning Goals:** [Epidemiology PhD Learning Goals](#)

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
- 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.
- Turn in photocopy of signed graduation warrant to the Graduate Program Office before graduation deadline (retain original copy for Final Review) Graduation deadline: https://grad.wisc.edu/current-students/doctoral-guide/. Schedule “Final Review” and deposit final copy of dissertation with original signed warrant with the Graduate School (and copy of warrant to Graduate Program Office) before graduation deadline. https://grad.wisc.edu/current-students/doctoral-guide/.
- 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 60 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 a single exam on Epidemiology and Biostatistics. Content reflects first year course work in these areas, and tests students’ application, comprehension and critical evaluation of this material as encountered in journal articles and design, analyses and interpretation of studies. 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.

The Qualifying Exam is administered over a single-day in late summer, and in January,
dependent on demand. Students take the exam during a four hour period. Exams are graded as pass/fail by masked graders.

**Here are additional details regarding the Qualifying Exam:**

The PhD qualifying exam is offered in late summer (and January if sufficient demand exists).

- 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 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 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. 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 the exam should meet with their academic advisor to discuss her/his options.

The exam cannot 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 Graduate Program Coordinator when a Graduate Program Office staff person is available. The exam cannot leave the Graduate Program Coordinator’s 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 Graduate Program Coordinator requesting an appointment to view the Qualifying Exam.
2) The Graduate Program Coordinator 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 Graduate Program Coordinator 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. 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 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 must be made to the Director of the Graduate Program through the Graduate Program Coordinator. Passing preliminary examination 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. Contact the GPC for this form.

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 may be prepared in a format similar to the “Research Strategy” 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 at the NIH website and discuss with your advisor.

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
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 their MyUW website.

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 and a Request for Preliminary Warrant 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 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 matriculated 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/current-students/doctoral-guide/.

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.
4. 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).

- Students are welcome to produce a bound copy of their dissertation for their advisor, and for the departmental library, but this is not required.

- 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/.


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/.

4. 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 2018-19 Graduation, we honored the graduates of Fall 2018, Spring 2019, and Summer 2019).

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 will 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: https://grad.wisc.edu/academic-policies/

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: https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/enrollment-requirements/.
**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/](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](http://iss.wisc.edu/students/current-students/f1-information) and for those working on a J-1 visa at [https://iss.wisc.edu/students/current-students/j-1-information/](https://iss.wisc.edu/students/current-students/j-1-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/](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: [https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=26734](https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/page.php?id=26734).

### 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

Leave of absence (a break in enrollment of one or more terms) is not possible according to Graduate School rules. However, a student can submit an application for readmission within 5 years (MS) or 10 years (PhD) of dropping out. This involves paying the $71 application fee, re-entering basic information, and then selecting the "readmission" option on the application site. Once this is done, the Grad School checks student eligibility, and then sends the request to the department for approval. It should be noted that dissertators who are more than 5 years post prelim may have to retake this examination.

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 department as outlined in the Graduate School’s Academic Guidelines, Grievances and Appeals at [https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/?policy=grievancesandappeals](https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/?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 Office of Professional Development 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 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-chair 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:
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 at least 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 an Epidemiology Graduate Program student to serve as a (non-voting) member.

The Steering Committee:

- Reviews program goals and performance and makes recommendations to the Department 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

**Curriculum Committee**

The Chair of the Department of Population Health Sciences, in consultation with the Graduate Program Director, appoints a Department of Population Health Sciences faculty member to serve as Chair of the PHS Curriculum Committee. The Committee will include at least seven voting members drawn from the Department’s faculty, instructors of required courses, affiliate faculty and possibly other faculty and staff involved in teaching and mentoring of Population Health, Epidemiology or MPH students. At least one member will be a faculty member of either the Population Health or Epidemiology Program Faculty with a core appointment outside the Department of Population Health Sciences. In addition, the Graduate Program Coordinator will be a voting member ex officio. Appointed members will serve three-year terms (subject to
renewal) to be staggered so that no more than 1/3 of the membership turn over each year. Student representation will be selected by the Population Health Sciences Student Organization.

The Curriculum Committee reports to the Executive Committee of the Department of Population Health Sciences and to the Population Health and Epidemiology Steering Committees.

The PHS Curriculum Committee Charge:

- Considers curricular issues that affect the MS/PhD Graduate Programs in Population Health and Epidemiology, and the Global Health Certificate Program. Changes to program requirements are initiated and first approved by the respective Steering Committees, but subject to final review by the Curriculum Committee.
- Coordinates all new and continuing course offerings within the Department to ensure availability and compatibility with program requirements.
- Acts as liaison to other departments and faculty whose offerings are important to training students in the program.
- Approves and recommends new courses and course change proposals.
- Reviews course evaluations and grade distributions of each course offered through the Department of Population Health Sciences biennially, and makes recommendations as appropriate. Additional information may be brought to the review.
- Reviews course syllabi and makes recommendations as needed, to assure compliance with standards set by the UW Curriculum Committee and the Provost.
- Approves course credit for non-PHS courses taken at other institutions or prior to enrollment in the Population Health or Epidemiology Graduate Programs. (UW substitutions while enrolled in these graduate programs are approved by the Graduate Program Director in consultation with course instructors.)

**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.

**PHS Student Review Committee**

The PHS Student Review Committee is appointed and Chaired by the PHS Director of Graduate Programs to provide overall uniform written feedback to PHS students and their advisors in the context of expectations and opportunities.

The membership of the Committee includes the PHS Graduate Programs Coordinator and faculty from the Population Health and Epidemiology programs; the number of faculty will vary depending on workload. The committee meets in September each year to review progress and performance of all students enrolled in the Epidemiology and Population Health graduate programs in both the preceding spring and the current fall semesters.

The Graduate Program Coordinator provides the committee with requested materials which typically include transcripts, advising forms and seminar attendance. The review produces brief written feedback to each student and their advisor noting areas of progress and recommending topics for further advising discussion.

**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.

School of Medicine and Public Health policies can be found via: https://intranet.med.wisc.edu/academic-affairs/

Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards policies can be found via: https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/

Graduate School policies and procedures can be found via: https://grad.wisc.edu/academic-policies/

Please read over these policies carefully. Certain training modules are required and available at your MyUW website.

8. A. Student Rights and Responsibilities

Students should refer to the policies and procedures listed at the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/) for information on professional conduct, academic integrity, and student resources available.

8. B. 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:**
For information on student resources for academic integrity, please visit: https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/student-resources/

**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://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/student-resources/.