Master of Public Health

Academic Year 2016-2017

Student Handbook
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I. Welcome Messages

Welcome to the College of Health Professions. We are excited that you are a student in our professional program and I want to provide for you some information that I hope will be of assistance to you during your academic journey with us.

A very important person during your time with us is your advisor. This individual is available to assist you in planning your program of studies and answer questions about future career options. I urge you to meet regularly with your advisor especially if you have any questions, concerns or need help with any academic, College, or campus issues. Faculty and staff are prepared to work with you on an individual basis and help guide you through your journey with us. Additional career information can also be found in our Administrative Office, Sudro 123, and by attending our Annual Career Fair in September at the Fargodome.

The professional curriculum is designed to challenge you and to teach you to become an independent learner. Therefore, students are expected to take a very active role in their education and take responsibility for their own learning. Student active learning is a major emphasis of our program. You will be asked to apply your knowledge, dig for the answers to questions, communicate both verbally and in writing, critically think and problem-solve through case discussions, and participate in numerous experiential activities. I encourage you to ask questions in class and to learn by understanding and applying the material presented rather than by simply memorizing factual information. The goal of our curriculum is for you to achieve the necessary life-long learning skills which will become important to you in your future career as a health professional to be able to “keep up” with the plethora of new information associated with our rapidly changing health care system. Your ultimate success will be determined by the amount of effort you are willing to put into your academic studies. So work hard and give your best effort in all that you do. If you give us your best, you will receive the best in your educational experience with us.

We desire to provide a positive learning environment for all students here within the College and we strive to continually improve our program. Students are a very important part of this process and we actively solicit your input and active participation through various formats. Students are elected from each class to serve on the Dean’s Student Liaison Committee. This committee meets with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs & Faculty Development throughout the year to bring student concerns to the attention of the administration. In addition, the College holds a Deans’ Open Forum each semester to allow students an opportunity to interact directly with the Dean (and his administrative leadership team) on matters of interest and concern to students. And I also want you to know that my door is always open to you, so please don’t hesitate to stop by my office if you need my assistance for anything. We encourage you to use these sources as well as visits with faculty, or any of the members of the staff in our Administrative Office whenever you have issues that need to be brought to our attention. In addition, I encourage you to become actively involved with your profession by joining one of our student professional organizations. This is a great way to learn about what’s going on within your profession and begin contributing to the advancement of your future professional career and practice.
This “Handbook” is devoted to academic information to help enhance student success within our program. We hope you find it helpful to you. I wish you much success in your educational pursuits with us and in your later professional practice.

Best wishes to you for a successful year!

Charles D. Peterson, Pharm.D.

Dean, NDSU College of Health Professions
Dear MPH students,

Welcome to the North Dakota State University MPH Program! You are about to embark on an exciting and important journey. With the guidance and mentorship from MPH Program faculty and staff, you will develop the public health skills that will serve the people of North Dakota and the Northern Great Plains in the years to come. Together, we will work to create an intellectually challenging and socially engaging experience that provides graduates with the motivation, expertise, and knowledge to improve health in communities and populations, particularly in rural areas. This is both a responsibility and an opportunity for all of us to learn and grow as public health professionals.

Consistent with the public health approach, our educational, service, and research initiatives will stress an ecological understanding of health problems and a systems approach to developing innovative solutions for them. In keeping with this orientation, our program draws its faculty from many disciplines representing the clinical, social and behavioral sciences, as well as the humanities.

As part of our support for your journey, we have developed this Student Handbook, which contains a wealth of information to help you succeed. Please keep and refer to it as you progress through the program. We also want to remind you that you will be required to complete pre- and post-competency surveys for the MPH degree. These surveys have been crafted to assess learning and to help us improve the quality of our program and to meet accreditation criteria.

Finally, we want to assure you that the MPH Program is committed to obtaining accreditation from the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) as soon as possible. Our CEPH site visit was held May 9-10, 2016 and we anticipate becoming accredited in the Fall of 2016. The CEPH accreditation status will be retroactive back to the date of our application, therefore graduates from December 2014 and after will have completed an accredited public health curriculum. CEPH is the only accrediting body for public health schools and programs in the United States.

Once again, we welcome you to the program and trust that each of you will challenge yourself to develop new ways to solve our society’s complex health problems. Most importantly, we hope that with the knowledge and skills you gain as a student in the NDSU MPH, you will lead our world to better health!

Sincerely,

Donald Warne, MD, MPH
MPH Director
Chair, Department of Public Health
II. Policy Manuals

College of Health Professions Policy Manual
https://www.ndsu.edu/healthprofessions/college_information/policy_manual/
Required to sign College Student Academic and Conduct Standards Policy 3.01

Plagiarism is addressed in the College Student Academic and Conduct Standards Policy 3.01, Academic Misconduct Section 1.g. and is defined as follows:

“Plagiarism: Submitting work that is, in part or in whole, not entirely the student’s own, without attributing such portions to their correct sources. Unauthorized collaboration with another student and representing it as one’s own individual work is also considered plagiarism. Ignorance is NOT an excuse.”

NDSU Graduate School Policies
https://bulletin.ndsu.edu/graduate/graduate-school-policies/

NDSU Code of Student Conduct

For a printed copy of any of the above policies, please contact the Academic Coordinator.

III. Campus Safety

Personal Safety and Security
For all NDSU safety and security related policies and preparedness, please see the Personal Safety + Security report at http://www.ndsu.edu/police_safety/universitypolice/annualsecurityreport/

Escort Service is available on the NDSU main campus and immediate surrounding area as a 24-hour service by the University Police; call 701-231-8998.

NDSU has anti-harassment and sexual harassment policies as well as a reporting system for bias, bigotry or hate. Main contacts for reporting and assistance are the University Police and Safety Office at 701-231-8998 and the Office of the Vice Provost at 701-231-7708.

For weather-related and all other postings for University closures, please check the following media outlets:
www.ndsu.edu for an announcement on the homepage
231-INFO (4636) - the emergency announcement phone number
Local TV and radio stations
Campus Emergency Notification System (CENS)
NDSU utilizes a number of redundant emergency notification systems that together comprise the CENS. Some or all of these methods of communication may be activated in the event of an immediate threat to the campus community. These methods of communication include emails, emergency voice messages that can be sent to a cellular or landline phone through a system named NotiFind, a recorded information telephone line, Audix voice messages to university phone lines, and audio and video interruption of televisions on campus tuned in to local or cable programming. This can be accessed not only by students, faculty and staff, but to anyone with Internet access.

Students other than student employees, although not required to participate, shall be notified of their opportunity to participate in the emergency notification system and encouraged to do so during registration or as otherwise provided under an institution’s emergency notification system policy or procedures.

IV. MPH Specific Policies

Student Complaint Procedure
The Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), requires all accredited public health programs to establish, implement and assess a formal complaint policy for students. More specifically, all accredited programs or schools of public health must establish a comprehensive policy with a simple set of procedures whereby all students enrolled in the College (and the public health program in particular) can submit and resolve a complaint about the educational process. While such procedures do not always produce an outcome that meets the student’s preferences, they do ensure that students have access to an equitable and efficient means to remediate their complaints. The NDSU College of Health Professions takes student complaints very seriously. Our goal is to ensure that students have access to transparent, due process in a manner that leads to an appropriate resolution of the complaint. A discussion of this policy shall take place annually during the orientation process for incoming public health students. Each student complaint will be appropriately documented and investigated. A chronological record of each complaint, including the nature of the complaint, written records of the complaint procedure and the final outcomes of the resolution process shall be maintained in the Office of the Dean, and shall be available for review by CEPH or its representatives upon written request or in the process of an on-site evaluation visit.

Student complaints generally fall within two major categories: complaints about unfair grading and all other, non-grade-related complaints. Student complaints about grades are generally handled at the level of the University, since grades are usually administered through the NDSU Office of Registration and Records. Other student complaints remain under the purview of the individual colleges within NDSU.
**Student Complaints Regarding Grades**

*University Grade Appeal Policy*

NDSU has an established policy regarding complaints about grading, otherwise known as “grade appeals”. The full grade appeal policy (section 337), which includes hearing procedures, is available at [www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/337.pdf](http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/337.pdf). While students actively considering a grade appeal are referred to the aforementioned website for the specific details of the policy, a summary of the policy is outlined below.

With the exception of incomplete grades, a course grade is considered final unless an appropriate appeal is filed by the student. Grade changes are also considered only for those students who have not yet earned a degree for which the course in question was applied.

For a student who has reason to believe that they have been issued an incorrect or inappropriate grade, he/she must initiate a request for a change of a grade with the instructor within fifteen (15) instructional days of the first day of the semester immediately following the semester in which the grade was awarded. For Spring Semester courses, the request may be made within fifteen (15) instructional days of the start of Fall Semester, if the student is not enrolled for a Summer term in the same academic year.

A grade appeal is formally initiated when the student presents the Grade Appeal Form to the instructor. If there is an unsatisfactory decision, the student must consult the Department Head, and the Dean or a designated college committee, proceeding from one level to the next only after an unsatisfactory decision of the conflict at that level. In the event that the instructor is also the Department Head or Dean, he or she need only be consulted in the capacity of instructor. In the event of an unsatisfactory decision within the college, the student may submit a formal written appeal to the Grade Appeals Board Chair. Such an appeal shall be made within fifteen (15) instructional days after conclusion of the college proceedings as stated above.

**Non-Grade Student Complaints**

Public health students who have a non-grade-related complaint can seek resolution of that complaint through the following procedures. It is important to note that these procedures represent the sole avenue for student complaints regarding non-grade-related issues, including (but not limited to) CEPH standards, policies and procedures. Additionally, because the public health program spans multiple departments, the non-grade complaints are handled through the Dean’s Office, rather than by the departments themselves.

1. The student(s) or, in cases where student anonymity is required, their advocate (also known as the “plaintiff(s)”) will file a formal written complaint (delivered through the postal service or NDSU email) to the Dean’s Office in the NDSU College of Health Professions.
2. The written complaint must include a description of the issue, policy, or procedure in question. It must also summarize the argument of the plaintiff (including the grounds for the appeal or complaint) and provide a reasonable amount of evidence supporting the claim.

3. Upon receipt of the written complaint, the complaint will be assigned to either the Senior Associate Dean (as the Chair of the College Academic Affairs Committee) if the complaint is primarily academic in nature, or the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Faculty Development (as the Chair of the College Student Affairs Committee) if the complaint is primarily non-academic. The plaintiff(s) will receive email notification (via NDSU email) within forty-eight hours of the receipt of the complaint concerning the identity of the Associate Dean handling the complaint.

4. The Senior Associate Dean or Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Faculty Development or, if a non-academic issue, Student Affairs, shall convene a meeting of College Academic Affairs or, if a non-academic, Student Affairs Committee to review the complaint. Because the procedures for both Associate Deans and Committees are similar in procedure, they will henceforth be referred to generically as “Associate Dean” and “Committee”, respectively. The Committee meeting shall occur within thirty days from the time that the Associate Dean receives the written complaint.

5. Once the Committee has met, the Associate Dean shall prepare and submit a formal, written reply to the student(s) based on the recommendation of Committee. The reply shall include an evaluation of the complaint, a description of any violations, and a proposal for any necessary corrective action. The reply will be sent through official NDSU delivery methods (i.e., the postal service, campus mail and/or the NDSU email system) within fifteen business days from the time that the Committee makes a decision.

6. Decisions of the Committee that demonstrate arbitrary and capricious treatment, or that are fundamentally inappropriate in the eyes of the plaintiff(s) may be appealed to the Dean of NDSU College of Health Professions. In such cases, the student(s) file an appeal using steps one through three outlined above, except the written complaint would be addressed directly to the Dean. The written complaint would also identify and provide evidence indicating that the Associate Dean and/or the Committee acted in an arbitrary, capricious or otherwise inappropriate manner.

7. If unsatisfactory resolution occurs after the appeal to the Dean, a final appeal may be made to the Provost. Once again, the student(s) must file an appeal using steps one through three outlined above, except the written complaint would be addressed directly to the Provost, rather than the Dean, and would provide evidence substantiating the claim of unfair treatment at prior procedural levels.

**Expectations of Students**

**Graduate Student Responsibilities**

As a graduate student in a professional program, you are expected to take on more responsibility and initiative to complete your degree than in your undergraduate experience. You will need to plan your program, keep up with classes, complete your practical experience and paper, and leave sufficient time for reading, writing, and thinking.
Specifically, it is your responsibility to know what classes you need, take these classes when offered, keep in contact with your advisor, know when deadlines are, and what forms are required and where and when to submit them. You will be very supported by faculty, staff, and student peers but it is ultimately your responsibility to be prepared for classes and to complete your coursework. In order to be successful in your graduate work, you will need to outline your goals and work towards them.

**Background Check**
The NDSU MPH program is committed to providing an atmosphere that encourages learning, the exchange of ideas and interacting with one another in a safe environment. The MPH program reserves the right to refuse admission or re-enrollment or to place conditions on admission or re-enrollment of applicants and former students, or in certain instances, suspend or terminate the enrollment of students, who NDSU determine represent a safety risk to NDSU students, employees, property, or affiliated teaching sites and their employees and patients.

The MPH program utilizes criminal background checks on students enrolled to help the program identify individuals who may be a risk to our people, property, and programs. Students who do not comply with the background checks, release of information, and the required deadlines for procuring background checks will be prevented from registering for and/or attending classes.

A certified background check is required prior to the practicum experience. Instructions and program code will be provided to students prior to the start of their practicum experience. **The student is responsible for the fee.**

Please see the College policy book for detailed processes in reporting and working through any negative results.

**Class attendance and on-campus requirements**
Attendance in MPH classes is a requirement whether the student participates in the classroom directly or via the internet through live streaming or the University Interactive Video Network (IVN). If a student has a conflict, she/he must contact the instructor for approval to miss and establish a makeup plan.

Students will have the opportunity and are highly encouraged to visit campus at least once per academic year.

**Computer/technology**
Students are highly encouraged to have a laptop; mostly for exam purposes given through blackboard. Each course proctor exams differently but must allow for course content and exam delivery to be consistent for in-class and distance students.
The statistics software for the MPH core course Biostatistics is JMP (version 12). Students are required to rent/purchase JMP statistical software and are responsible for the cost associated. JMP statistical software can be found at the following site http://www.onthehub.com/jmp/.

Distance Education Expectations and Requirements

Definition of Distance Education
Distance education is an effective and flexible alternative for students who are prevented from attending on-campus classes due to personal or work commitments and/or distance from campus. The MPH program requires synchronous distance education, in which students videoconference into the live course in real time.

Distance learning is not easier than on-campus learning; students should be prepared to spend as much or possibly more time on a distance learning course. While the difficulty level of courses taken on-line or on-campus is the same, the benefit of distance education is the possibility of receiving high quality education while attending classes from a remote location.

Distance learning classes carry the same course numbers and credits as their traditional counterparts and appear on the student's transcript just like any other course; there is no designator identifying class attendance through distance education. Credits earned through distance learning are transferable and are applicable to graduation requirements in the same manner as traditional classes.

Prerequisites and Readiness
The ability of a student to succeed in a distance education class depends on his or her ability to understand both the course structure and the associated technology. Informing students of what skills and technology are needed for distance education allows them the opportunity to self-evaluate their capability to succeed in the course.

At the time of admission to the program, students are required to ensure that their computers meet the minimum hardware and software requirements described below. Registration for the course constitutes the student’s understanding and acceptance of the requirements necessary to participate in the course.

Minimum Hardware requirements:
- Working webcam & headset
- 4GB RAM
- 1 GB available storage space
- Broadband connection of ≥ 1 Mbps download and 512 Kbps upload
  - Connection speed can be tested at: http://speedtest.dakotacarrier.com
Minimum Software requirements:

- Windows 7 Basic (and higher) OR Macintosh OSX 10.7.4 (and higher)
- Microsoft Office
  - Available for NDSU students for free at: https://www.ndsu.edu/its/software/software_licensing_program/
- Adobe Flash Player (newest version)
  - Available at: http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/
- Mozilla Firefox (newest version)
  - Available at: https://www.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/new/
  - Additional course-specific software

A successful connection test is required at least 2 business days before the first class meeting date and each new network/location also needs to be tested before it can be used to connect to a class meeting (e.g. if you are traveling and are using a different computer or internet connection).

How to Enroll as a Distance Student

1. Obtain approval from the MPH program to matriculate as a distance student.
2. Register for appropriate interactive video network (IVN) section so the program has the information necessary to create a distance account for you.
3. Download the appropriate software and secure hardware requirements to connect via distance
4. Practice the connection with Information Technology Services (ITS) staff Daniel.erichsen@ndsu.edu

Changing from an in-class student to a distance student should be worked out between the student and the program administration and should occur during a between-semester break.

The MPH program uses IVN, a videoconferencing system which simultaneously transmits computer screen content, webcam video, and audio. Distance students are required to videoconference in “live”, and participate via video and audio in every class.

Additionally, the MPH program has access to Tegrity, a fully automated lecture capture solution used in traditional, hybrid and online courses to record lectures and supplementary course content. Tegrity records computer screen content, audio and webcam video simultaneously, and then automatically generates a feature-rich recording available for viewing within minutes of recording.

It is up to the discretion of the instructor whether to use Tegrity lecture capture. It is also up to the instructor when to allow access to a Tegrity class recording. In the event that a course absence is necessary, students are responsible for contacting and informing their instructors in advance of missing the class.
Policy regarding IVN connections (recommended to be included on course syllabus)

MPH courses are made available via the IVN system. Use of this technology requires students to take certain positive steps to ensure reliable connectivity. Failure to do so is not only unprofessional, it is distracting to your instructor and to your fellow students.

1. You must download, install, and setup all required hardware and software in accordance with all IVN documents and helpdesk suggestions prior to the first class. You must also TEST IT with a member of the IVN staff. You will need to set up an appointment for this by contacting the IVN helpdesk. This is NOT the instructor’s responsibility. Do not ask.
2. IVN sessions open 10 minutes prior to the start of each class. It is your responsibility to test your connection before each of our scheduled start times, leaving sufficient time to troubleshoot the connection with helpdesk personnel, if needed. Again, your instructor cannot assist you in making the connection. Contact the helpdesk directly if problems are encountered.
3. IVN connection “issues” are NOT considered justified reasons for tardiness or absenteeism. In cases of a late connection or failed connection, the student is considered tardy or absent, respectively. As such, penalties described in the syllabus will be imposed. The only exception to this policy is when the IVN staff notifies me of a problem on ‘our end.’ Note: this rarely happens. The vast majority of IVN connection problems originate with the student’s system.
4. Drops during the class are very disruptive and, similarly, nearly always result from students failing to follow the IVN guidelines. (By using Wi-Fi instead of wired connections, for example). After 3 drops or a prolonged absence of 15 minutes or more, you are asked to NOT reconnect. You will be considered absent unless the drop(s) occurred in the last 30 minutes of class (for a 3 hour session), in which case you’ll be counted as tardy for administrative purposes.

Students attending class through the Interactive Video Network (IVN) will receive an account through the ITS staff prior to the start of the semester. This account is for Polycom CMA desktop. It is the students’ responsibility to test and ensure their technology features are functioning properly.

Students will connect to class using a call-in number provided which is unique for each class. For any issue connecting via distance, students can use the following contacts:
- Daniel Erichsen for distance accounts and IVN connection; (cell) 701-793-3105
- IT Help Desk; 701-231-6568 option 1
- To contact the QBB 422 classroom; 701-231-9455

If the video connection is down/not working, students can connect through audio to class by calling 701-328-1601 and then entering the class reservation number (not including the 60 at the beginning).
Grading and evaluation

Grading Scale
A  100-90%
B  89-80%
C  79-70%
D  69-60%
F  59% and below

Academic Standards
Only grades of A, B, C, or S are acceptable for graduate credit. All courses taken by a graduate student for which grades are given will be used in calculating the grade point average, except where a course has been repeated. Both grades will appear on the transcript, but only the second grade will be used in calculating the grade point average. Acquisition of more than two grades of C, D, F or U may be grounds for dismissal upon recommendation by the program administrator.

To be in a scholastic status of GOOD STANDING and to receive a graduate degree, a student must maintain a cumulative grade average of at least 3.0. Any student in GOOD STANDING whose cumulative grade average drops to less than 3.0 at any time of attendance is automatically placed on academic WARNING. Any student admitted in CONDITIONAL status because of grade deficiency is automatically placed on academic WARNING. If a student on academic WARNING fails to achieve a cumulative grade average of at least 3.0 in the subsequent semester of attendance or earns another C, D, F, or U, then the student will be placed on academic PROBATION.

A student on academic PROBATION may not continue the pursuit of the graduate degree program without a waiver from the Dean of the Graduate School acting on a recommendation from the program director/advisor. This recommendation must include a review of the student’s status and a propose plan of remediation which will allow the student an opportunity to return to a cumulative grade average of at least 3.0 within one additional semester. If the cumulative grade average is not at least 3.0 within one additional semester this student will be DISMISSED from the program.

A student on academic PROBATION is not eligible for a graduate assistantship or tuition waiver.

Advisors
Students are assigned an academic advisor upon admittance to the program. After orientation, a student can request a change in advisor or request to be considered for another specialization.

Student Evaluation
Each semester, the MPH student and advisor will meet and conduct a formal evaluation of progress on the student’s graduate activity. The MPH program is invested in the academic and professional development of our students and conducting
evaluation/feedback discussions on a regular basis will help students stay on track with their academic pursuits and future career goals.

Each specialization evaluation is available on the program’s website at: https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/specializations/

**MPH courses**
Courses with the prefix “PH” are designed for students accepted into the degree-granting program Master of Public Health. Therefore, MPH courses will be restricted for other students. If another graduate-level student in a degree-granting program is interested in an MPH course, the student must obtain instructor approval for an override.

**Transfer/Elective Credits**
The number of credits allowed to be transferred in from another University is nine. In order for these credits to be approved for the MPH program, they must be from a CEPH accredited MPH program and approved by the MPH Director and faculty member of the course that is being replaced with the transfer credits.

If a student would like to change specializations within the University:
1. Student must be in good academic standing
2. The admissions committee for that specialization must agree that background is sufficient to accept the transition

**Accreditation**
The NDSU MPH program is applying for accreditation through the Council on Education in Public Health (CEPH), www.ceph.org. The program hosted the accreditation site visit May 9-10, 2016 and expects a successful accreditation decision Fall 2016. Student participation in gathering data for the self-study is **KEY** to successful accreditation.

The CEPH accreditation status will be retroactive back to the date of our application, therefore graduates from December 2014 and after will have completed an accredited public health curriculum

The MPH curriculum aims to deliver a comprehensive set of competencies to MPH students through course objectives and learning experiences. In order to assess how well we convey these competencies, we ask all MPH students to complete a Competency Assessment survey at orientation and as they are about to graduate from the Program.

**Curriculum Competencies**
The MPH program is based on the core competencies of Epidemiology, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Biostatistics, Health Services Administration, and Environmental Health. Specialization-specific competencies have also been identified. These can be found at: https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/mphcorecomp/
Core Curriculum
The core curriculum consists of 18 credits and the following courses.

**Fall:**
PH 731: Biostatistics 3
PH 741: Social and Behavioral Sciences in Public Health 3
PH 704: Leading and Managing Public Health Systems 3

**Spring:**
PH 751: Epidemiology 3
PH 710: Health Care Delivery in the U.S. 3
PH 720: Environmental Health 3

**PH 794 Practicum Guidelines**
Concepts and competencies learned from MPH coursework are applied during an integrated practical experience. Usually during the summer semester, students take part in joint discussion sessions while simultaneously completing individual internships within a wide range of public health settings and organizations under the guidance of a qualified site preceptor. The practicum is designed to meet student goals, specialization criteria, and the needs of the agencies or institutions involved. The practicum is selected by the student in consultation with the advisor and approved by the site preceptor and Practicum Instructor. Planning for the practicum takes place during the second full semester in the program and the majority of internships take place during the summer semester between the first and second year for full-time students. However, some variation in scheduling is allowed in order to facilitate maximum flexibility and quality of internship experiences. Students cannot receive credit for past work experience and internships at the place of employment are generally discouraged (see the practicum manual for specific guidance).

The current list of practicum sites can be provided by contacting the Academic Coordinator and the practicum manual can be found at: [http://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/curriculum/](http://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/curriculum/).

We also have a list of our partners on the [www.ndmph.org](http://www.ndmph.org) site.

Once the practicum proposal is accepted, permission will be given to register. The default number of credits should be three but be sure to verify this and change this if you are only completing 1-2 during that semester.

**Proposal submission deadlines are the date that online registration opens in campus connection for the next semester.** These dates can be found at: [https://www.ndsu.edu/bisonconnection/dates/](https://www.ndsu.edu/bisonconnection/dates/). Most full-time students will complete their practicum in the summer between their first and second year and so the deadline will be a date in April.
PH Culminating Experience

The master’s paper (PH 793) is a requirement for graduation. This is an opportunity to work on public health projects under the direction of faculty and community public health practitioners or researchers. The goal is to synthesize, integrate and apply the skills and competencies acquired in the MPH Program to a public health problem. Completion of the MPH master’s paper requires both written and oral components and serves as the culminating experience for the MPH degree. The paper should be at a minimum 20 double-spaced pages not including references, tables and figures and must include an executive summary (limited to 300 words) and references.

Students are required to give a 20-minute oral presentation summarizing their master’s paper at a capstone symposium. Students who are distance learners may present over the Internet.

The master’s paper can be an expansion of a course project or practicum experience. The topic and format of the master’s paper is developed through discussions between student and advisor and formally approved by the supervisory committee. Some examples of formats or designs for the master’s paper include:

- **Literature Review** - analysis of an important public health problem through a survey of current literature. Describe the problem, assess the problem and its impact, evaluate its causes and determinants, and discuss prevention and intervention strategies.
- **Program Plan** - development of a plan to implement a public health program. Address critical areas such as a needs assessment, management, fiscal realities, ethical challenges and logistics.
- **Program Evaluation** – development of a plan to evaluate/monitor an existing public health program, such as process evaluation, monitoring of behavior change or population health outcomes, and/or cost analysis.
- **Policy Analysis** - analysis of the public health implications of a current or proposed policy. The project could include perspectives on economics and financing, need and demand, politics/ethics/law, or quality/effectiveness.
- **Research Proposal** – development of a grant proposal or research plan with a clear statement of the research question, the specific aims of the proposal, review of literature, study design, methods of analysis, implications and significance of the work. The research question should be one that is encountered in professional work, such as the evaluation of a public health intervention.
- **Research Report** - collection, analysis, and/or interpretation of data to address a public health problem. The project could include sections on the research question, study design, data collection procedures, data analysis, interpretation, and significance of findings. This may be secondary data analysis, using an existing data set. Appropriate IRB approval may need to be obtained for any project that uses data gathered from human subjects. The MPH capstone can also involve the primary collection and analysis of data. In this case, allow adequate lead time for research planning and IRB approval.
Other formats or designs may be used with prior approval from the advisor and committee.

The Master’s Paper committee includes the student’s advisor and random assignment of other primary MPH faculty. It is the decision of the faculty advisor and student which reference style, AMA or APA, to use. The paper is to be uploaded and ran through Safe Assign in blackboard and then submitted through blackboard by the date determined by the major advisor. Upon completion of the paper, the oral presentation will serve as the final exam for the program; grading is A, B, C, D or F.

Students must reflect on their Master’s Paper and overall MPH Program experience in order to summarize how the stated program competencies were met. The Reflection must address core and specialization competencies and how the MPH experience addressed each competency area.

In each reflection on a competency, the student must use a combination of course readings, assignments, research conducted to write the Master’s Paper, and practicum work to demonstrate how the competency was met. Demonstrating an understanding of the competency requires the use of evidence including citations that show any claims made (such as facts or perspectives) are based in theory, research, and public health models. A combination of various forms of evidence will demonstrate the acquisition of a competency. A competency cannot be demonstrated with only one form of evidence. This assignment will be graded as pass/fail by the advisor.

Students are encouraged to save all course syllabi as they take classes to develop a portfolio for reflection.

As the program’s culminating experience, the Master’s Paper must be taken during or after your final semester of coursework. Permission to enroll in PH 793 occurs upon faculty approval through the approval form found at: https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/curriculum/

Specializations
There are four areas of specialization at NDSU:
- American Indian Public Health
- Health Promotion
- Management of Infectious Diseases
- Public Health in Clinical Systems.

As you progress through the program, you may be interested in switching your specialization. Changing your specialization is allowable but it is not guaranteed. The student must contact the Academic Coordinator via email expressing interest to change specializations. The email should include which specialization is of interest to switch and a brief explanation of why and how you are qualified. The Coordinator will forward
the request to the specialization faculty and include the student’s advisor as well as a copy of the student’s application to the MPH program.

The program needs to ensure that a request to change specializations is not because of poor performance but truly due to a change in interest.

The faculty will review and decide if the student’s background and success in the MPH program to-date warrants the change and a new advisor will be assigned. A new plan of study will need to be submitted if one had already been. If not, then a change in advisor form will need to be completed by the student.

**Certificates**

Within the MPH program four public health certificates are offered.

- Generalist Certificate of Public Health
- Certificate of American Indian Public Health
- Infection Prevention
- Health Systems Leadership

Coursework for each certificate can be found at: [http://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/certificate/](http://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/certificate/)

New students can apply online through the Graduate School [http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/](http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/)

To add on a certificate to your MPH degree if already admitted to the MPH program, you can complete the following form: [http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/gradschool.ndsu.edu/Forms/Student_Forms/Add_Certificate.pdf](http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/gradschool.ndsu.edu/Forms/Student_Forms/Add_Certificate.pdf). Contact the Academic Coordinator if you are interested and to discuss any potential course waivers for the certificate.

Once you have completed the course requirements for a certificate, you must apply for verification at: [http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/graduating_students/forms/](http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/graduating_students/forms/)

**Plan of Study**

By the second semester of the MPH program, the Graduate School requires completion of a plan of study. The Public Health plan of study can be found at [http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current_students/forms/](http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current_students/forms/).

**Communication**

Email is the official form of communication for the University and the MPH program. All students are expected to use their University email address and pay prompt attention to NDSU emails. Students are also responsible for maintaining contact with their NDSU advisor at least once a semester.
The ND MPH program’s official website is www.ndmph.org. Specific information for NDSU can be found at www.ndsu.edu/publichealth.

Most of your contact about the MPH program will be with the Academic Coordinator/Lecturer, stefanie.meyer@ndsu.edu 701-231-6549. It will also be helpful for you to know the Finance and Research Manager, angela.skaff@ndsu.edu 701-231-7238 and Administrative Secretary, bonnie.hurner@ndsu.edu 701-231-6269.

Email Signature Template
If you choose to use an email signature, you must use the format below to be in compliance with University branding.

Full Name
MPH Student Class of 20XX / Public Health
College of Health Professions
NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY
p: XXX.XXX.XXXX (optional) / firstname.lastname@ndsu.edu (optional) / www.ndsu.edu (remove hyperlink)

The Department of Public Health does NOT support the practice of (c) behind a degree that is in progress of completion. The (c) being used as part of a credential or in a signature line is not allowed for students in the Department of Public Health.

Summer Financial Aid
If less than a full-time credit load is being taken in the summer semester (Practicum or Paper), students must complete the Summer Financial Aid form at: https://www.ndsu.edu/onestop/finaid/application/summer/

This form must be returned to Bison Connection prior to summer semester.

Graduation and Commencement
In accordance with the Graduate School’s policy, the MPH degree must be completed in seven years or less. Students may complete their coursework and degree requirements for fall, spring, or summer semester graduation. You must apply for graduation through the Graduate School.

- Reference the following webpage for important dates, deadlines, and processes for graduation:
  https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/graduating_students/non_thesis_masters_programs/#c294203
- If you have any questions about graduation requirements, please contact our College’s Graduate School representative, Melissa Selders-Ortez at Melissa.seldersortez@ndsu.edu
- If you are interested in participating in commencement, contact the Office of Registration of Records.

The MPH program, College, and University also must gather information on graduating students for accreditation and funding purposes to show appropriate curriculum delivery and track students in the field. It is expected that you participate in these surveys throughout your time in the MPH program.

**Assistantships and tuition waivers**
For all MPH students who have secured assistantships or are eligible for a tuition waiver under another program such as the Cultural Diversity Tuition waiver, the MPH program will grant tuition waivers as long as graduate assistant status is maintained. Below is the MPH Graduate Assistantship policy:

*If you are granted a tuition waiver, the waiver will only cover base tuition. The waiver does not cover the difference between the differential tuition charged for the MPH program and base tuition. You will be responsible for paying this difference even if you receive a tuition waiver. In general, the waiver covers approximately 45% of the tuition charged for the MPH program and you are responsible for paying the remaining 55% of the tuition.*

[https://bulletin.ndsu.edu/graduate/graduate-school-policies/graduate-assistantship-policy/](https://bulletin.ndsu.edu/graduate/graduate-school-policies/graduate-assistantship-policy/)

**Scholarships**
The College of Health Professions has scholarships available to public health students. Specific criteria is available upon request and applications are available February 1 for the next academic year. For more information about College scholarships for the next academic year, contact the Development Assistant at Kristi.weston@ndsu.edu

MPH specific scholarships include but are not limited to the Dean’s scholarship, Miller scholarship, and American Indian-specific scholarships.

Additional scholarship information can be found at:
[https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/student_opportunities/](https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/student_opportunities/)

[https://www.ndsu.edu/healthprofessions/scholarships/](https://www.ndsu.edu/healthprofessions/scholarships/)

**Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP)**
WRGP allows students who are residents in WICHE states to pay ND resident tuition. These states include Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawai‘i, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.
[http://www.wiche.edu/wrgp](http://www.wiche.edu/wrgp)
Starting Fall 2016, the MPH degree and certificate programs are included in this program. Students are automatically enrolled upon admission. If a student moves while enrolled in a public health program, proof of residency usually by a driver’s license is required to ensure WRGP tuition rate is charged appropriately. A scanned copy of the license can be sent to the academic coordinator prior to the start of a semester who will then work with the Registration and Records office to update the residency.

**Travel support**

The Master of Public Health (MPH) program will make every effort to support MPH student travel to professional conferences and public health activities. To be eligible for travel funds, the student must:

- Have an accepted conference paper, poster, professional presentation, or performance/exhibit related to public health

OR

- Be an active distance student member of the NDSU Public Health Association (PHA) student organization and organize/facilitate events hosted by the NDSU PHA
- Be enrolled in the MPH program (Certificate students are not eligible)
- Be in good academic standing with at least one semester of coursework completed
- Follow all NDSU travel rules and regulations. **It is the responsibility of the student to ensure they are familiar with these rules and regulations.** Failure to follow NDSU rules and regulations may result in lack of travel reimbursement: [http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/516.pdf](http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/516.pdf).

The Student Travel Fund Request form can be found at: [https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/student_opportunities/](https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/student_opportunities/)

V. **Student Services**

**Libraries**

[http://library.ndsu.edu/](http://library.ndsu.edu/)

The **Main Library** supports the learning and research needs of the students and faculty of NDSU. It also serves the community and general public. The Main Library is located on Albrecht Boulevard.

NDSU has access to other libraries on campus and across the state. The **Health Sciences Librarian** is the best contact for MPH students to find the appropriate reference materials and their location.

Merete Christianson  
NDSU Dept 2080  
120E Library  
701-231-7965  
[Merete.christianson@ndsu.edu](mailto:Merete.christianson@ndsu.edu)
Graduate Center for Writers
The Graduate Center for Writers provides free writing assistance to students, faculty, and staff. Services include strategies for writing proficiently and independently; assistance in reading materials from various disciplines; and assessing student writing.

At orientation, students will complete a writing assessment facilitated by Center for Writers staff. Reading comprehension and writing are very important aspects of the MPH degree and public health profession so extra attention is paid to this area of communication.

Additional writing resources include free classes that can be found at: https://www.ndsu.edu/its/training/register/ and two writing courses, ENGL 751 and 752, elective options within the MPH that focus on writing style and provide a focused approach to writing a big or key paper (e.g. practicum proposal or Master's Paper).

Counseling
The NDSU Counseling Center provides a confidential setting in which students may explore concerns of a personal, academic, or career-related nature; makes referrals; and serves as consultants for faculty and staff. Students in counseling can explore a variety of concerns which may prevent them from functioning at their optimum levels. The center is sensitive to the needs of students of diverse backgrounds, cultures, ethnic groups, ages, and ability, and are LGBT affirming. http://www.ndsu.edu/counseling/

Career
NDSU Career Center is located in Ceres Hall and provides the resources and professional assistance to help students and alumni understand what employers expect and what kind of activities may advance their employability. Teaching students and alumni the job search skills required to successfully compete in today's labor market and connecting those students to employers is the commitment of the Career Center. http://www.ndsu.edu/career/
CAREERlink account

Career Center

Students/Alumni

My CAREERlink Account
Employment Opportunities
Resumes
Letters
References/Recommendations
Interviewing
Job Search Resources
Cooperative Education and Internship Program (CEIP)
Grad School Preparation
Career Fairs
Alumni Services

CAREERlink

Benefits of utilizing your CAREERlink account

- Search for jobs and co-op/internships and have updates automatically emailed to you by creating a job search agent
- Apply for and schedule on-campus interviews with employers visiting NDSU
- Research employers who have posted jobs for NDSU students
- Receive special announcements about Career Center events and activities

Login to your CAREERlink Account

- Login and activate your CAREERlink account
- See the Quick Start Guide for a quick overview of the system
- Creating a Job Search Agent in CAREERlink tutorial webcast
- Job Search Agent Cheat Sheet

Log In

New Users – Click on Forgot Password. Enter your Electronic ID (first part of your @ndsu.edu or @my.ndsu.edu email address) and click Go. Your password will be emailed to your NDSU account. What to do if you don’t receive your password.

Alumni – Complete the Alumnus Account Creation form to have an account created or login using your email address provided at time of registration.

Trouble Logging In? Complete the Assistance Form and we will contact you during regular business hours.

Username (see Above Instructions)
(your Electronic ID)

Password

Go Reset Forgot Password

Wellness Center/Health Services

The purpose of the Wellness Center is to support the academic mission of NDSU by providing an environment where students may learn behaviors conducive to creating healthy lifestyles. Wellness, which is about making healthy lifestyle choices regarding mind, body, and spirit, is the common thread of the Center's programs and services http://www.ndsu.edu/wellness/
The mission of the Student Health Service is to support the academic success of a diverse student population in an atmosphere of health and wellness through education and services. Services provided integrated health promotion, education for prevention of disease, and clinical treatment for illness. 
http://www.ndsu.edu/studenthealthservice/

**Multicultural Affairs/International Office**
International students are given an international advisor in addition to their academic advisor in the MPH program. Contact your student advisor in the Office of International Programs for all the regulations regarding your international student status.
http://www.ndsu.edu/international

For practicum experiences abroad, NDSU students are to complete a special application online at the International Office website. The deadline for the application and associated materials is March 1 for the next academic year.

**VI. MPH Committees and call for student involvement**

**NDSU Student Public Health Association (PHA)**
The purpose of the NDSU Public Health Association is to strive to meet the public health needs of the community through the multidisciplinary collaboration of NDSU students, faculty and staff with the goals of promoting health, preventing disease, and improving the quality of life. Students interested in becoming members can go to for more information.
https://apps.ndsu.edu/student-org-admin/selectorg

**North Dakota Associations**
North Dakota Public Health Association (NDPHA)
The NDPHA is an organization that gives a voice to public health matters and provides opportunities to partner, create new vision, and be an instrument affecting the health status for citizens all across the state. It is a conduit to bring together persons interested in public health for the purpose of fostering a better understanding of public health problems and practices and to facilitate the interchange of ideas relating to methods for solutions of these problems. NDPHA aids in the promotion of state and local legislation in the interest of public health with particular focus on the interrelationship between health and quality of life. http://www.ndpha.org/

As a student in the MPH program you are eligible for a free membership to the NDPHA.

**American Public Health Association (APHA)**
Student Membership $75
Individuals must be enrolled in a degree seeking program to qualify for the student membership. Qualifying student should be taking 3 credit hours (graduate degree) per semester or comparable credits in a quarter system. Student membership is available for up to six years per degree. Proof of status is required annually. http://www.apha.org/
**MPH Curriculum Committee**
The MPH Curriculum Committee is charged with curriculum development. This committee consists of representatives from each specialization and one current student. The student position is to serve as the voice for curriculum operations of the MPH program.

**Dean’s Liaison Committee**
The Dean’s Student Liaison Committee shall consist of the Associate Dean of Student Affairs, who shall be chair, and one student representative from each of the following areas: first year, second year, third year, and fourth year of the pharmacy professional program; first year, second year, and third year of the nursing professional program; two allied sciences professional students; one master of public health student; as well as one representative from each of the following student organizations: Academy of Students in Pharmacy, American Society of Health System Pharmacists, College Ambassadors, Kappa Psi, Kappa Epsilon, Rho Chi, Phi Lambda Sigma, Native American Pharmacy Program, National Community Pharmacists Association, Christian Pharmacists Fellowship International, American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists, Sigma Theta Tau, the Student Nurses Association, and the Public Health Association. Student representatives from each group will be elected annually by their respective class or student organization. The purpose of the Dean’s Student Liaison Committee is to provide students with an opportunity to interact directly with the Dean’s Office, to exchange information, to advise the Dean on student organization budget requests, and to problem-solve on matters of interest and concern to students.

**Native American Professional Programs (NAPP)**
The NAPP student organization focuses on recruiting Native American students into the College and professional programs offered. NAPP meets monthly to discuss a variety of topics related to the knowledge and skills needed to pursue a degree in the College of Health Professions. For more information and to get involved, contact the advisor Dana.davis@ndsu.edu
VII. Acknowledgement

I have read the 2016-2017 MPH Student Handbook and agree to abide by the Policies and Procedures contained therein. I understand that policies and procedures may change throughout the duration of my program of study and that I will be made aware of these changes by Program Administration and held accountable to these policy and procedural changes.

__________________________________________
Signature                                    Student ID #                     Date

__________________________________________
Print Name