

NDSU

PUBLIC HEALTH

# Student Handbook

Academic Year 2021-2022



*NDSU's Aldevron Tower - the Department of Public Health is on the 6th floor  
Image Source: <https://www.ndsu.edu/alphaindex/buildings/Building::454>*

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## I. Welcome Messages

Welcome to the College of Health Professions. We are excited that you are a student in our program. 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.

The curriculum is designed to challenge you and to teach you to become an independent learner and to work in collaborative interprofessional healthcare teams. Therefore, students are expected to take a very active role in their education and take responsibility for their own learning. 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, practice team-based care with students from other disciplines, 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. 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. It will also be important that you learn more than just the technical skills of practicing in your discipline, but that you also learn what it means to become a health professional and practice professionalism in every and all situations. You will need to learn how to practice ethically, responsibly, with honesty, integrity, and good moral character, and treating others with compassion, caring, understanding, and respect which is expected of any health professional.

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 Senior Associate Dean 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.

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 Offices 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.

Best wishes to you for a successful year!

Charles D. Peterson, Pharm.D.  
Dean, College of Health Professions

Dear Public Health students,

Welcome to the *North Dakota State University MPH Program!* You are about to embark on an exciting and important journey. Public health has long been a foundation for a healthy society. With last year's global outbreak and ongoing concerns about COVID-19, the continued civil and social unrest, and the troubled US economy, public health has never been more visible and more important. Whether you are specializing in Community Health Sciences or Epidemiology, as a public health professional you will play a significant role in creating the conditions for everyone to reach their fullest health potential.

With guidance and mentorship from MPH Program faculty and staff, you will develop the public health skills that will serve the people of North Dakota, the Northern Great Plains, and beyond. Together, we will work to create an intellectually challenging and socially engaging experience that provides graduates with the motivation, skills, and knowledge to improve health in our communities and in populations. 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 to promote and protect the health and wellness of people and communities. In keeping with this, our program draws its faculty from many disciplines representing expertise in social and behavioral sciences, epidemiology, and clinical healthcare, as well as the humanities.

The NDSU MPH Program is accredited by the *Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH)*. CEPH is the only accrediting body for schools and programs of public health in the United States. An accredited program guarantees that you are getting the highest level of public health education available. As an accredited program, we are also members of the *Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH)*, which provides numerous opportunities for national activities, fellowships, and networking.

Finally, 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.

Once again, we welcome you to the program. We 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* program, you will lead our world to better health!

On behalf of the Faculty and Staff of the NDSU Department of Public Health,

Pamela Jo Johnson, MPH, PhD, FACE  
Mary J. Berg Distinguished Professor of Women's Health  
Associate Professor and Chair

## I. Policy Manuals

NDSU public health students can draw from the following policy manuals;

College of Health Professions Policy Manual

[https://www.ndsu.edu/healthprofessions/college\\_information/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/>

The bulletin covers all academic policies as well as resources and processes toward graduation. There are electronic forms that the student must initiate, usually after consultation with their advisor. This page includes forms for change of advisor, change to plan of study (course substitution), and special request forms such as leave of absence, delayed enrollment, or withdrawal from graduate school.

Students may need to access forms\* to:

- Swap a course requirement (due to department curriculum change or other approval)
- Using the NDUS collaborative course option (e.g. taking a class from the UND MPH program)
- Taking an elective course not currently listed on our approved electives list

*\*Note: Dr. Stefanie Meyer is to be listed as the ‘Program Coordinator’ as the signatory. The MPH is a Plan C and we do not use a committee structure, just the advisor.*

NDSU Code of Student Conduct

<https://bulletin.ndsu.edu/student-resources-policies/code-of-student-conduct/>

## II. Campus Safety

### Equity

It is the responsibility of the entire university community to foster a safe and non-discriminatory learning, living, and working environment at NDSU. NDSU has specific policies related to equity as well as a process for reporting discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation.

[https://www.ndsu.edu/equity/forms/ndsu\\_equity\\_policies/](https://www.ndsu.edu/equity/forms/ndsu_equity_policies/)

[https://www.ndsu.edu/equity/reporting\\_responsibilities/](https://www.ndsu.edu/equity/reporting_responsibilities/)

The following confidential resource is available to those who would like to discuss concerns involving discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation:

## CONFIDENTIAL SUPPORT RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

NDSU Counseling Center  
212 Ceres Hall  
NDSU Main Campus  
[\(701\) 231-7671](tel:(701)231-7671)  
<https://www.ndsu.edu/counseling/>

### **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/annualecurityreport/](http://www.ndsu.edu/police_safety/universitypolice/annualecurityreport/)

For weather-related and all other postings for University closures, please check local media outlets and [www.ndsu.edu](http://www.ndsu.edu) for an announcement on the homepage.

### **Campus Emergency Notification Systems (CENS)**

NDSU utilizes a number of emergency notification systems that comprise NDSU CENS. These methods of communication include the NDSU-CAMPUS-ALERT@LISTSERV for official email notification to all current students and employees, communications sent through the state provided email notification system to registered cellphone and/or landline phones, NDSU telephone voice mail broadcast to the AURA phone system, and an emergency alert system for audio and video interruption of available on-campus analog cable television service. [https://www.ndsu.edu/police\\_safety/communications\\_call\\_center/campusemergencynotification\\_systems/](https://www.ndsu.edu/police_safety/communications_call_center/campusemergencynotification_systems/)

## III. 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 in the College of Health Professions, 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 the Senior Associate Dean. The plaintiff(s) will receive email notification (via NDSU email) within forty-eight hours of the receipt of the complaint. In the email, the Senior Associate Dean shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint and assign a specific College of Health Professions committee to review the complaint. The Senior Associate Dean shall also provide a brief rationale for assigning the complaint to a particular committee. The determination of the appropriate committee to review the case rests solely with the Senior Associate Dean. Plaintiff may not appeal the committee assignment, so long as the rationale for the assignment is provided by the Senior Associate Dean.
4. The Senior Associate Dean shall convene a meeting of the College Academic Affairs (if the complaint is primarily “academic” in nature, as defined by College Policy 3.01) or the Student Affairs Committee (if the complaint is “non-academic” in nature, as defined by College Policy 3.01) to review the complaint. The Committee meeting shall occur within thirty days from the time that the Senior Associate Dean receives the written complaint.
5. Once the Committee has met, the Senior 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 Senior 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

### Student Course Experience (SCE)

The MPH program monitors the effectiveness of instructors through SCE surveys and follows University policy 332: <https://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/332.pdf>

Students are encouraged to evaluate the quality of teaching and perceived knowledge of the instructors by completing the SCE surveys for each class, each semester. Responses are reviewed by the individual faculty and the Department Chair. Responses are reported as in aggregate with students’ written comments. Students’ grade in a course is not affected by the feedback given in a SCE as responses are collected by a different department and not distributed to faculty until after grades post each semester.

### 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 practicum and integrative learning experience, 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 know what forms are required and where and when to submit them. You will be 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. Here is the direct link to follow the graduate school pathway to graduation (follow plan C):

[https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current\\_students/pathway\\_to\\_degree\\_completion](https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current_students/pathway_to_degree_completion)

### Class Attendance

Attendance in MPH classes is a requirement whether the student participates in the classroom directly or via the internet through live streaming. If a student has a conflict, they must contact the instructor for approval to miss and establish a makeup plan.

### 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.

### 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](mailto:firstname.lastname@ndsu.edu) (optional) / www.ndsu.edu  
(remove hyperlink)



### Degree "In Progress"

The Department of Public Health does **NOT** support the practice of adding the letter (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.

### Computer/Technology/Software

Students are strongly encouraged to have a laptop. One purpose is for exams that may be given through Blackboard. Each course proctors exams differently but must allow for course content and exam delivery to be consistent for in-class and distance students. *Some courses will require an electronic device such as a laptop or tablet to be brought to each class period along with a headset.*

The Microsoft Office Suite is available for free for NDSU students. Microsoft Office is required for all public health students.

<https://kb.ndsu.edu/page.php?id=100617>

The statistics software for PH Biostatistics includes Minitab and R. Minitab is available on campus computers and can be rented or purchased online. R is a free software. PH Research Methods requires SPSS which is available on campus computers and can be rented or purchased online. Instructors will provide you with details.

### Distance Education Expectations and Requirements

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 their 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.

#### *Minimum Hardware requirements:*

- Working webcam & headset
- 4GB RAM
- 1 GB available storage space
- Single-core 1 Ghz or higher processor (dual-core 2Ghz or higher recommended)
- Broadband connection of  $\geq 1$  Mbps upload and 600 Kbps download:
  - Connection speed can be tested at: <https://broadband.nd.gov/speed-test>

#### *Minimum Software requirements:*

- Windows 7 Basic (and higher) OR Macintosh OSX 10.9 (and higher)
- Microsoft Office
  - Available for NDSU students for free at: [https://www.ndsu.edu/its/software/software\\_licensing\\_program/](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

The MPH program uses Zoom, which unifies cloud video conferencing, simple online meetings, and group messaging into one easy-to-use platform. It offers video, audio and wireless screen-sharing experience across multiple platforms. Distance students are required to videoconference in "live", and participate via video and audio in every class.

It is up to the instructor if a class session will be recorded for purposes of student viewing at a later date. 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 Zoom connections**

MPH courses are made available via Zoom. 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 Zoom requirements and helpdesk suggestions prior to the first class. More information can be found here: <https://kb.ndsu.edu/zoom>
2. Zoom sessions open approximately 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.
3. 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 IT staff notifies the instructor of a problem on 'our end.' Note: this rarely happens.
4. Drops during the class are very disruptive and, similarly, nearly always result from students failing to follow the IT 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).

### Media Use

Our program and college have Facebook pages as well as other social media accounts that we use to share positive stories of our students, faculty, staff, and alumni. You may be asked to participate in brief videos and/or photos. If you agree, we request to have a release form on file with your permission.

1. Go to <https://www.ndsu.edu/registrar/records/ferpa/>
2. Click on the Photo/Video release link
3. Enter your name and email address
4. Include the following information for the Office/Department Contact: Carol Renner; [carol.renner@ndsu.edu](mailto:carol.renner@ndsu.edu)
5. Click Begin Signing, read and complete the photo/video release form, and submit

## Advisors

Students are assigned an academic advisor upon admittance to the program. The assigned advisor is immediately responsible for answering questions and guiding the advisee.

Any time after orientation, a student can request a change in advisor or request to be considered for another specialization.

The advisor's role is as a guide through the program, and plays an important part in the MPH program experience. To gain a greater understanding of student advising needs, students will be asked to complete an evaluation of their advisor every spring semester.

As an advisor to public health students, the expectation is to mentor students in their academic and professional endeavors. This includes, at a minimum:

- Meet with advisees once per semester
- Promptly respond to student inquiries
- Assure students enroll in the appropriate courses each semester
- Assure all necessary paperwork is completed with the department, college, and Graduate School
- Discuss and assist in narrowing options for the Applied Practice Experience
- Serve as the grader for the Integrative Learning Experience
- Discuss future career aspirations and opportunities

Students often work with faculty other than their advisor on research projects or graduate assistantships. It is understood that research projects and any potential publications that may develop do not need to include the advisor by default, but based on mentorship and work output.

## Advising Report

Advisors are to use the 'Advisement Report' in campus connection to ensure their students are fulfilling all program curricular requirements. To access this report:

- Log in to campus connection
- Click on the Navigation icon (compass image) on the top right
- Then, click on the 'Navigator' icon and select 'Academic Advisement' from the list.
- Next, select 'Student Advisement' and then 'Request Advisement Report'
- To set up the report, chose 'Add a new value' – click on the magnifying glass to search for your student and then the other magnifying glass to chose **ADXIP** for the report. Click 'Add'
- Click 'Process Request'

If you want to save this tile on your homepage, click on the 3 vertical dots on the top right side and chose 'Add to Homepage'. If you have any trouble with this report, reach out to our College liaison at the Graduate School.

## Accreditation

The NDSU MPH program is accredited through the Council on Education in Public Health (CEPH), <https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/about/accreditation/>

The MPH program conducts various assessments on a recurring basis; a component of the re-accreditation process includes student feedback. Student participation in gathering data for the

self-study over the course of their program is **KEY** to successful accreditation. 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 foundation competencies established by CEPH. Specialization-specific competencies have also been uniquely developed by the program faculty. These can be found at: [https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/about/mph\\_competencies/](https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/about/mph_competencies/)

### MPH Courses

Courses with the prefix “PH” are designed for students accepted into the degree-granting program Master of Public Health and Certificate program. Therefore, PH courses will be restricted for other students. If another graduate-level student in a degree-granting program is interested in a PH 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 as well as approved by program administration and faculty member of the course that is being replaced with the transfer credits.

### Changing Specialization or Subplan

As you progress through the program, you may be interested in switching your specialization or subplan. A student may request to be considered for another specialization or to switch subplan. This should be discussed with their current advisor and other faculty in the department who can help a student make this decision.

Changing your specialization or subplan is allowable but it is not guaranteed. The student must contact their advisor via email requesting to change specialization or subplan. The email should include which specialization or subplan the student would like to switch and a brief explanation of why and how the student is qualified (i.e., demonstrates that the new course requirements fit into a new plan of study). The advisor will discuss the potential change with the advisee, and then the advisor will share their recommendation with the admissions committee chair. The admissions committee will review and decide if the student’s background and success in the MPH program to-date warrants the change. Upon approval to change a specialization or subplan, a change form for plan of study and/or advisor may need to be submitted to the Graduate School.

The consideration process will ensure that a request to change specialization or subplan reflects genuine interest and is not driven by poor performance in their current specialization.

### Credits Required for Completion of the MPH Degree

The foundational curriculum consists of 20 credits and the following courses, by semester in which they are offered.

<i>Fall:</i>	<i>Credits</i>
PH 731: Biostatistics	3
PH 741: Social and Behavioral Sciences in Public Health	3
PH 704: Public Health Management and Policy	3
PH 712: Public Health Research Methods	3
<i>Spring:</i>	
PH 706: Epidemiology	3
PH 745: Community Health Leadership	3
PH 720: Environmental Health	2
 <i>Specialization-Related Coursework</i>	 18
 <i>Practicum</i>	
PH 794: Applied Practice Experience	3
 <i>Integrative Learning Experience</i>	
PH 789: Integrative Learning Experience (must be taken after, or concurrent in the final term with, all other courses/practicum)	1
 TOTAL	
Minimum credits to graduate with MPH degree	42

#### *Additional Details:*

##### Specializations (18 credits each)

1. Community Health Sciences
  - General
  - American Indian Public Health subplan
2. Epidemiology
  - General
  - American Indian Public Health subplan
  - Management of Infectious Diseases subplan

The required courses for each specialization, and subplans, are available by clicking on the titles here: [https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/degrees\\_and\\_programs/degree\\_specializations/](https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/degrees_and_programs/degree_specializations/)

The program is designed to be completed in two years by students with a full course load (9-12 credits/term). However, many students who are working professionals successfully complete the program by taking fewer credits each term and taking more years to complete the program; up to 7 years is allowed. Both types of students are encouraged to pursue their MPH, and students will be supported in their path by their advisor.

##### PH 794 Applied Practice Experience (APE) Guidelines (3 credits)

Concepts and competencies learned from MPH coursework are applied during an APE. Students take part in online assignments and discussion with other NDSU MPH students facilitated by the instructor, while simultaneously completing individual experiences. Practicums are available with a wide range of public health settings and organizations, and student's

experience is guided by a qualified site preceptor. More details about the process can be found at: [https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/degrees\\_and\\_programs/curriculum/](https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/degrees_and_programs/curriculum/).

The majority of students are able to complete their practicums during the summer, between their first and second year of studies. The practicum is designed to meet student goals, program competencies, and the needs of the agencies or institutions involved. Students cannot receive credit for past work experience.

***It is recommended that practicum proposal and associated requirements are completed and approved by the date that online registration opens in campus connection for the next semester/term.*** These dates can be found at: <https://www.ndsu.edu/registrar/dates/>. For the majority of full-time students who complete their practicum in the summer between their first and second year, the deadline will be a date in **April**.

*Practicums in the Place of Employment*—Students are able to use their place of employment as the Host Organization if (a) the project is unique and separate from the student's employment responsibilities and (b) the Preceptor is not the student's usual supervisor.

*International Practicums* - For practicum experiences that take place outside of the United States, NDSU students must complete a special application at the Office for International Student and Study Abroad Services' website: <https://www.ndsu.edu/international/>.

#### *Student Eligibility Criteria*

- Successful completion of 18 MPH credits
- Good academic standing
- Clear background check - 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.
- Completed and signed proposal

Students are NOT able to register for PH 794 until all the eligibility criteria are met.

In order to assure all visa requirements are followed, **international students** must consult with NDSU's [International Student and Study Abroad Services](#) before agreeing to accept a stipend or any form of payment for completion of the practicum.

#### *Roles and Responsibilities*

##### **Student**

- Contact potential Preceptors and discuss possible projects with them.
- Author a Practicum Agreement outlining a Practicum project based on those discussions.
- Conduct the work and produce the deliverables agreed upon in the Practicum Agreement.
- Meet regularly with the Preceptor during the course of the Practicum.
- Attend course sessions (online) hosted by the Practicum Instructor.
- Comply with the policies, procedures, and operational standards of the Host Organization.
- Behave professionally at all times including attention to punctuality and meeting deadlines.

- Provide the Practicum's final deliverables to the Preceptor and Practicum Instructor
- Complete all assignments required for the Practicum
- Comply with the Host Organization's privacy rules and policies related thereto and sign any necessary non-disclosure agreements.

### **Preceptor**

- Orient the MPH student to a public health-related problem, issue, or project of interest to the host organization.
- Review and comment on draft editions of the Practicum Agreement. Sign the final edition prior to the start of the practicum.
- Meet regularly with the MPH student to discuss approaches and progress—providing constructive feedback while encouraging autonomous pursuit of creative but effective solutions.
- Provide access to all resources necessary for completion of the practicum project. (Non-disclosure agreements and redaction of information in the student's final report is possible, if necessary).
- Contact the Practicum Instructor in case of deficiency or if any concerns arise at any point during the practicum.
- Complete an electronic evaluation of the student's work on the Practicum
- Treat as confidential student educational records, which are subject to the Federal Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA).

### **Practicum Instructor**

- Provide a list of possible Host Organizations that includes pertinent contact information.
- Review and approve the Practicum Agreement prior to the start of the practicum
- Provide permission for student to register for the Practicum
- Meet regularly with the MPH student to discuss approaches and progress
- Provide instruction in professional development and communication.
- Intercede on the student's behalf if necessary to clarify student and Preceptor roles and facilitate understanding and agreement as to goals, conduct, commitment, and deliverables.
- Academically evaluate the student's performance and issue a grade for the Practicum.

### *Student Technical Standards*

Students must consistently demonstrate professionalism. NDSU College of Health Professions has defined technical standards that all students are expected to follow and are found in college policy 3.11

### Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) (1 credit)

The ILE (PH 789) is a requirement for graduation and serves as the culminating experience for the MPH degree. 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 ILE requires both written and oral components.

The written product can be an expansion of a course project or practicum experience. The topic and format of the written product is developed through discussions between the student and their advisor.

As the program's culminating experience, the ILE must be taken during or after your final semester of coursework. Permission to enroll in PH 789 occurs upon faculty approval through the Request to Register Approval Form found at:

[https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/degrees\\_and\\_programs/curriculum/](https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/degrees_and_programs/curriculum/)

### Electives

[https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/degrees\\_and\\_programs/curriculum/electives/](https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/degrees_and_programs/curriculum/electives/)

## Dual Degree, Accelerated Degree, Certificate Options

### Dual Degree

#### *PharmD/MPH*

Public health is an interdisciplinary field; it is common for many people to gain competencies and/or training in a related field (medicine, nursing, pharmacy, business, engineering, etc.) and subsequently move into public health as a matter of vocation or occupation. The MPH degree is uniquely designed to accommodate the needs to these individuals. It blends theory and practical knowledge across a wide array of disciplines, and is the "degree of choice" among practitioners in the field.

Pharmacy students are welcome to choose either the Community Health Sciences or Epidemiology specializations. More details about the dual degree curriculum can be found with Pharmacy: <https://www.ndsu.edu/pharmacy/>

### Accelerated Degrees

The MPH has accelerated Bachelor to Master's programs in three areas:

- Dietetics,
- Microbiology,
- Emergency Management,
- Other programs based on interest upon request

More information about how these accelerated program work can be found:

<https://www.ndsu.edu/facultysenate/acadaffairs/reference/accelerated/>

### Certificates

For students who do not wish to complete the MPH degree, or who wish to add a certification for a topic within their specialization or another specialization, the MPH program offers three public health certificates. Contact your advisor if you are interested.

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

Coursework for each certificate can be found at:

[https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/degrees\\_and\\_programs/public\\_health\\_certificate/](https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/degrees_and_programs/public_health_certificate/)

To add on a certificate to your MPH degree if already admitted to the MPH program, you can complete the appropriate graduate school form, Add a Certificate:

[https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current\\_students/forms](https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current_students/forms)

Once you have completed the course requirements for a certificate, you complete the Verification of Certificate form with the graduate school:

[https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current\\_students/forms](https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current_students/forms)

## 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. Students must apply for graduation\* through the Graduate School, meeting certain deadlines for the respective term.

Non-thesis Master's students – Plan C:

[https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current\\_students/pathway\\_to\\_degree\\_completion](https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current_students/pathway_to_degree_completion)

\*Note: application for graduation is not the same as the commencement ceremony. The Registration and Records offices organizes the commencement ceremony.

Students completing their MPH coursework in the summer will participate in spring commencement.

The MPH program, College, and University 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.

## Financial Considerations

### Graduate Assistantships and Tuition Waivers

For all MPH students who have secured assistantships, the MPH program will grant base 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.*

Graduate school policies related to assistantships and waivers are found here:

<https://bulletin.ndsu.edu/graduate/graduate-school-policies/graduate-assistantship-policy/>

Take special note of summer waiver process and approval requirements. To be eligible for a summer tuition waiver, a student must have Graduate School approval and have received a tuition waiver for the preceding or following academic term (spring or fall semester). A tuition waiver will not be processed until a [Graduate Summer Tuition Waiver form](#) is received and approved by the Graduate School.

*Students eligible for a graduate assistantship waiver may not also receive other NDSU tuition waivers. If a student is eligible for more than one waiver, the waiver which results in the highest tuition to be waived will be applied.*

Tuition waiver for dual graduate career students (e.g. MS/MPH, PhD/MPH, MS/public health certificate)

Students who are active in more than one graduate career will need to request an adjustment in differential tuition for non-public health coursework. The student will complete an internal department form [MPH Request for Differential Waiver on Non-MPH credits form](#) so that program administration can request the adjustment AT THE START of the semester.

### Scholarships

The College of Health Professions has a limited number of scholarships and awards available to assist students financially. The online applications for College of Health Professions scholarships and awards are available the second Monday of April of each calendar year on the college web page (<https://www.ndsu.edu/healthprofessions/scholarships/>). The scholarship application deadline is the Friday after Spring graduation in May.

Scholarships available from the Department include:

- **Dean's Scholarship** (*Approximately \$1000*)  
High scholastic standing; extracurricular involvement; leadership skills demonstrated
- **Endowed Scholarship in American Indian Public Health** (*4 awards at \$10,000 each*)  
Two-year commitment to American Indian serving health program following graduation; demonstrated financial need; preference for students of American Indian or Alaska Native descent
- **Gilsdorf Public Health Scholarship Endowment** (*Approximately \$2500*)  
Full or part-time graduate MPH student
- **Chelsey Matter Public Health Scholarship** (*Approximately \$1000*)  
Full-time student; preference for student who plans to pursue career in ND or MN
- **Donald and Joan Miller Scholarship** (*Approximately \$1000*)  
Doctor of Pharmacy/MPH dual degree program or Community Health Sciences
- **RADM (Ret) (1970) and Mrs. Fred Paavola Master of Public Health Scholarship** (*Approximately \$3000*)  
US citizen; meets any of the following: (1) Doctor of Pharmacy/MPH dual degree student, (2) Community Health Sciences MPH and pharmacy student or pharmacist, or (3) commissioned officer in US Public Health Service

### 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.

<https://www.ndsu.edu/onestop/accounts/tuition/>

Students are automatically enrolled upon admission. If a student moves while enrolled in the public health program, proof of residency usually by a driver's license is required to ensure WRGP tuition rate is charged appropriately. Students should work with One Stop to ensure their residency status and other personal contact information are always up-to-date.

### Travel support

There are no funds available for student travel support for 2021-2022 academic year.

## IV. Student Services

### NDSU Library Services

Details about library services, hours of operation, online search functionalities, and much more, are available here: <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 the south end of NDSU's main campus in Fargo on Albrecht Boulevard.

NDSU has other libraries on campus and has access to other libraries across the state. The Health Sciences Librarian is the best contact for MPH students to find appropriate reference materials and how to locate them, including the best databases and strategies for public health research and literature.

Merete Christianson  
NDSU Dept 2080  
120E Library  
701-231-7965  
[Merete.Christianson@ndsu.edu](mailto:Merete.Christianson@ndsu.edu)

### Center for Writers

The 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. Information about writing resources can be found at: <https://www.ndsu.edu/cfwriters/>

Two writing courses, ENGL 751 and 752, are elective options within the MPH program that focus on writing style and provide a focused approach to completing an important writing project (e.g., grant proposal or ILE written product).

### 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 LGBTQIA affirming. Information about how to access services can be found at: <http://www.ndsu.edu/counseling/>

### Career and Advising Center

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. They can also provide guidance on writing a resume or cover letter, and on preparing for an interview. 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/>

## 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 and practice 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. More information about NDSU's approach to promoting wellness can be found here: <http://www.ndsu.edu/wellness/>.

As part of the wellness center, all enrolled students have access to the exercise equipment, track, swimming pool, classes, etc. for free (i.e., paid through student fees). After signing a waiver, all that is needed is your student ID.

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 include integrated health promotion, education for prevention of disease, and clinical treatment for illness. Information about available health services can be found here: <http://www.ndsu.edu/studenthealthservice/>

## Diversity and Inclusion

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>

The Office of Multicultural Programs connects with NDSU's multicultural students, faculty, and staff, informing them of resources on and off campus to help them succeed and excel at NDSU. Multicultural students, along with the Office of Multicultural Programs, offer campus-wide cultural programming throughout the year. <https://www.ndsu.edu/multicultural/>

The Office of Gender and Sexual Diversity oversees LGBTQ Programs, which strengthens and sustains an inclusive campus community for LGBTQ students, faculty, and staff, providing programming that reduces homophobia and gender identity oppression. <https://www.ndsu.edu/lgbtq/>

## Information Technology Services

There are many locations around campus that offer computers and "GO Print" stations. Each cluster has internet access and Microsoft Office software. Some clusters have course specific software on them. NDSU has a wireless network that allows NDSU students, staff, and faculty with mobile computing devices to use the campus network and the Internet without an ethernet cable. Details can be found here: [https://www.ndsu.edu/studentactivities/off\\_campus\\_student\\_services/computer\\_clusters\\_and\\_wireless/](https://www.ndsu.edu/studentactivities/off_campus_student_services/computer_clusters_and_wireless/)

The IT Help Desk is available to support students, as well as faculty and staff, in their technology needs. Information to request service is available here: <https://www.ndsu.edu/it/help/>

The Learning and Applied Innovation Center (LAIC) works to integrate instruction with technology in order to enable the best possible strategies for teaching and learning. Services for students include one-on-one assistance, multimedia resources (media studio, WhisperRoom), and workshops and training. More information about the LAIC can be found here:

<https://www.ndsu.edu/it/help/laic/> and information about specific training opportunities, from podcasting to using Excel, are available here: <https://kb.ndsu.edu/99781>

Specifics on software programs that are available to students for free, including the Microsoft Office Suite, can be found here: <https://kb.ndsu.edu/search.php?cat=9932>.

### Zoom

NDSU has a campus-wide Zoom license, so all students have access to their own Zoom accounts. Instructions on login and use of Zoom are available here: <https://kb.ndsu.edu/zoom>

### Qualtrics

Each student has the ability to set up their own Qualtrics account through NDSU, for conducting survey research. Resources on logging in and using Qualtrics are available here: <https://www.ndsu.edu/gdc/qualtrics/>

### Residential Options

NDSU has apartment options available for enrolled graduate students. More information about the availability and cost of NDSU-run housing, as well as the online roommate matching program, is available here: [https://www.ndsu.edu/reslife/housing\\_options/apartments/](https://www.ndsu.edu/reslife/housing_options/apartments/). Student meal plans for NDSU Dining Services are also available: [https://www.ndsu.edu/dining/meal\\_plans/student\\_plans/](https://www.ndsu.edu/dining/meal_plans/student_plans/).

### Public Transportation Through Metro Area Transit (MATBUS)

NDSU and the City of Fargo has established an agreement with the Metropolitan Area Transit System, better known as “MATBUS” to provide a mass transit solution for NDSU students. MATBUS is the public transit system serving the cities of Fargo and Moorhead with service to West Fargo and Dilworth, including grocery stores, businesses, and recreation. The MATBUS system is operated by the cities of Fargo and Moorhead, working together to ensure that comprehensive mass transit services are available across the metro area. The U-Pass program offers unlimited rides to NDSU students on any MATBUS route and transfers free of charge by showing a valid NDSU Bison ID card when boarding. Information about routes is available here: [https://www.ndsu.edu/parking/matbus\\_transit/](https://www.ndsu.edu/parking/matbus_transit/)

## V. MPH Committees and Call for Student Involvement

### NDSU Public Health Association (NDSU PHA)

The purpose of the NDSU PHA 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. The NDSU PHA assists the department in organizing events of the annual Public Health Week in April. Students interested in becoming members can go to <https://myndsu.ndsu.edu/organization/publichealthassociation> for more information.

### North Dakota Public Health Association (NDPHA)

As a student in the MPH program you are eligible for a free membership to the 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 across North Dakota. 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/>

### American Public Health Association (APHA)

The APHA is the premier professional organization for the field of public health. Thousands of public health professionals across the nation maintain membership in this organization for opportunities for networking, staying abreast of current trends in their subdisciplines, and opportunities to attend and present their work at the annual summit. In order to allow students to take advantage of these opportunities right away, the APHA offers a reduced annual fee for student members. Individuals must be enrolled in a degree program. Qualifying student should be taking at least 6 credit hours (undergraduate degree) or 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. Students must provide [proof of status](#) to qualify for membership (e.g., a copy of current registration). More information is available here:

<https://www.apha.org/membership/student-membership>

### Department Committees

Student contributions to department committees are highly valued, and are critical to the ability of the program to continue to best meet the needs of students and the field of public health. In addition to the standing committees below, ad hoc opportunities arise such as faculty search committees and strategic planning sessions.

#### 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.

#### MPH Assessment and Accreditation Committee

This committee serves to conduct assessment activities for the department and MPH program. It also serves to gather and analyze data for accreditation reporting as well as assists with the self-study process. The student position is to serve as the liaison with the current student body regarding all aspects of accreditation and assessment functions.

#### DPH Anti-Racism Action Committee

This committee seeks input from students, staff, and faculty about strategies the department can enact to demonstrate our public health values for social justice, starting with improvements we can make within our department, college, and university.

### Dean's Liaison Committee

The Dean's Student Liaison Committee for the College of Health Professions consists 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.

#### Graduate School Professional Development

The Graduate Student Council is another professional development and committee opportunity: [https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/about/campus\\_involvement/gsc](https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/about/campus_involvement/gsc)

In addition, there is a Graduate Professional Skills Academy that provides opportunities: [https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/professional\\_skills\\_academy](https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/professional_skills_academy)

## VI. Acknowledgement

I have read the *2021-2022 Public Health 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.

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Signature

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Student ID #

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Date

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Print Name