FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Public Health?
Public health is the art and science of preventing disease and disability and nurturing health in communities and populations. Some of the ways that public health fosters health is by monitoring and responding to disease epidemics, developing clinical and policy-oriented disease prevention initiatives, and promoting healthy lifestyles through education and community engagement. Public health is practiced by inter-professional teams whose members’ training spans a broad array of academic and vocational fields.

The American Public Health Association has some great information on their website about public health practice and careers: https://www.apha.org/what-is-public-health

Why Public Health in North Dakota?
Practitioners in our region – North Dakota and other Northern Plains states - have limited opportunities for advanced, practical public health training that focuses on the unique challenges facing this largely rural area. There are many underserved populations living in the region that would benefit from expanded public health interventions. For example, the American Indian communities have typically been underserved and significant health disparities between this population and others have resulted. One of the ways in which the MPH program at NDSU is serving this need in our state is through the creation of the innovative American Indian public health specialization. There is a substantial American Indian population in the upper Midwest, including North Dakota, with unique public health challenges related not only to diversity, but also to rurality.

What is NDMPH?
NDMPH is the MPH program offered by the two state research universities – the University of North Dakota (UND) and North Dakota State University (NDSU). Students apply to and complete their degree at one campus only - either UND or NDSU. Students choose NDSU or UND based on the MPH specializations offered at that campus, which are unique to that school. Although each MPH program is distinct and offers unique specializations, the two programs work together on common matters such as developing Practicum sites and offering public health events during Public Health Week. By working together, the MPH programs at NDSU and UND provide comprehensive public health training and service to North Dakota and the Northern Plains.

When can I start the MPH program?
Applications are reviewed each year beginning in March for a fall semester start.
Is the GRE required for admission?
Yes. Your success as a Graduate Student at NDSU is important and so we require a standardized test score to be submitted.* The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test, Medical College Admission Test (MCAT), Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT), Dental Admission Test (DAT), Law School Admission Test (LSAT), Pharmacy College Admission Test (PCAT), and United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) are accepted. While there is no minimum score required for admission on standardized tests, performance is used an indicator of an applicant's verbal and quantitative skills.

* A standardized test is not required of applicants who are currently enrolled in good academic standing or have completed a degree in a graduate program at an accredited U.S. or Canadian institution of higher learning that required a standardized test score for admission. This test is also waived if applicants can show a minimum of five years of relevant experience in public health that would show ability to engage in graduate level coursework in the field of public health. Please contact the Academic Coordinator, stefanie.meyer@ndsu.edu, if you would like to be considered for this waiver.

How long will it take to complete the MPH program?
The MPH degree can be earned through full-time or part-time study. Full-time students can complete the 42-credit program in two years. Part-time students can complete the program in three to five years.

When are MPH courses offered?
All MPH core courses are offered in the evening to accommodate students who work. Courses are only offered in the Fall and Spring semesters. There are no summer courses at this time. See the curriculum page at www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/curriculum for information on course offerings and schedules. Current students are encouraged to talk with their faculty advisor for the most up-to-date information on course offerings.

Does the MPH program accommodate distance learners?
MPH students can take their courses on campus or off-campus through live broadcast. Interactive Video Network (IVN) is used for students to connect live to classes.

How much will the MPH degree cost?
The cost of the MPH degree is approximately $28,000, not including student fees and books, for in-state residents. More information regarding tuition can be found at https://www.ndsu.edu/bisonconnection/accounts/tuition/graduate_tuition_full_time/

Are there assistantships available?
Assistantships are available for MPH students. At NDSU, assistantships are available through the program’s research projects, with faculty across campus working on research, and with departments across campus for service appointments or teaching assistants. As assistantships become available, they will be communicated to students through the Academic Coordinator and posted at: https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/student_opportunities/

Are there any scholarships available?
Yes, the department of public health offers a few scholarships in-house which can be found at: https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/student_opportunities/. We also accept outside scholarships and financial aid.
Can I take courses in more than one area of specialization?
Yes, students may enroll in courses in other specializations if they meet the course prerequisites. However, these courses would be in addition to the 42 credits required for the degree. Another option is to consider adding on a certificate to the MPH degree. Certificate information can be found here: https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/certificate/

Can I change my area of specialization after starting the MPH program?
Yes, students may request to change their specialization once accepted into the NDSU MPH program. 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

Where can I do my Practicum? Can the Practicum be done in another country?
NDMPH has secured Practicum affiliation agreements with local, national, and global public health sites. Students can also request a Practicum site without an existing affiliation agreement, but this must be done a minimum of 6 months in advance of the Practicum start date to ensure that a working agreement can be established.

Is NDMPH accredited?
Each program will apply to the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) for accreditation. NDSU will host their site visit May 9-10, 2016th.

Is there an MPH student organization?
Yes, the student Public Health Association (PHA) is a small but very active organization. To join PHA, visit https://www.ndsu.edu/sg/cso/blackboard_organization_transition/

Can I transfer credits to the MPH program?
Up to 9 credits can be transferred into the Graduate School. Please see the applicable Graduate Schools’ policy: http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/bulletin/graduate_school_policies/masters/#c75251 at NDSU. In addition to meeting Graduate School criteria, NDSU requires that only courses taken at a CEPH-accredited public health program or school can be used to replace MPH Core courses. Further, a transfer course must be equivalent to the course that it will replace. Typically, the faculty member who teaches the course being replaced will review the syllabus of the transfer course to determine equivalency.
What are the hardware and software requirements for off-campus students?
The computers of students calling-in from an off-campus location will need to meet the
following hardware specifications and have the following software installed.

Minimum Hardware requirements:
- Working webcam & headset
- 4GB RAM
- 1 GB available storage space
- Broadband connection of $\geq 1$ Mbps download and 512 Kbps upload
  - Connection speed can be tested at:
    [http://speedtest.dakotacarrier.com](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/personal_software/](https://www.ndsu.edu/its/software/personal_software/)
    [https://www.ndsu.edu/its/software/software_licensing_program/microsoft_office_proplus/](https://www.ndsu.edu/its/software/software_licensing_program/microsoft_office_proplus/)
- Adobe Flash Player (newest version)
  - Available at: [http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/](http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/)
- Mozilla Firefox (newest version)