

MD-MPH Dual Degree  
Background Information for Current and Prospective Medical Students

The University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health offers a 5-year MD-MPH dual degree, for those students interested in becoming fully trained in public health. It is recommended that students complete their MPH degree between their 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> years of medical school. During this time, they will complete approximately 30 credits of course work required for the MPH degree with the remaining 12 credits being taken during medical school (some in coursework during the first 3 years of medical school). Following their MPH year, students will re-enter their 4<sup>th</sup> year of medical school and prepare for clerkships and interviews for residency.

The following describes the opportunities available for students interested in considering an MD-MPH dual degree.

### **YEARS 1-2 OF MEDICAL SCHOOL**

Students interested in the MD/MPH program have an opportunity to integrate public health education throughout during the first 2 years of medical school through required courses, electives, student interest groups, the LOCUS program, and summer research opportunities:

#### **1. Public Health and Medicine Interest Group (PHMIG)**

Established in 2006, this student group works to increase awareness of public health issues through education and activism. The mission of PHMIG is to: 1) Promote increased awareness of public health issues, provide exposure to the work being done in public health by UW faculty and give students the opportunity to learn by initiating, developing, and participating in their own public health projects, 2) Provide discussions and seminars dedicated to increasing the awareness of public health issues, and 3) Inspire and motivate students from all health care fields to become more aware of public health issues and their complexities as well as to understand medicine and public health as integrated and overlapping concepts. Membership is open to any student enrolled in the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, resident, or staff member and any practicing physicians in the Madison community. Members are self-selected based on interest in public health and the organization.

#### **2. Elective Interdisciplinary Seminar Courses**

During the first years of medical school students have the opportunity to expand their horizons through a variety of one credit seminar courses. The following courses provide students with an open forum to discuss relevant issues facing today's physicians:

- **Physicians as Activists.** In Physicians as Health Activists, students meet doctors who work as community health activists and develop activist skills such as delivering effective presentations, organizing community efforts, fundraising, working with the media.
- **SEED (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity).** Student SEED is a social justice seminar where students examine issues of privilege and oppression as they play out in the arenas of ethnicity, socioeconomics, geography, gender, sexual orientation, and religion through both the "textbooks of our lives" and scholarly readings.

- Intercultural Communications in Health Care. Students seeking an experiential learning approach can learn about differences linked to power, culture, gender, age and professional roles within the context of healthcare in the seminar, Intercultural Communication in Health Care.

### **3. LOCUS**

LOCUS is an extracurricular, longitudinal service-learning program at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health that aims to enhance students' leadership knowledge and skills, self-awareness, and preparation for community health service. Medical students, faculty and staff of the UW Department of Family Medicine established LOCUS in 1998 with the idea that students have opportunities to remain actively involved in community service during medical school. Their vision was to create a program to support medical students who: 1) enter medical school with a strong commitment to community service; 2) acknowledge problems in our current health care system and wish to enhance health care for medically underserved populations; 3) recognize that effective leadership skills may be combined with medical skills to improve health care; 4) wish to join a community of like-minded students, staff and faculty; and 5) are self-directed learners who are willing to enhance their skills through participation in the program and completion of a community health project. The result of their vision was the LOCUS program.

### **4. Shapiro Summer Research Program**

The University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health provides support for medical students seeking mentored research experiences between their 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year of medical school. The purpose of the program is to provide funded opportunities for students to participate in a full-time summer research project for 8 to 12 weeks under the supervision of a faculty member. Projects may be in all areas of basic science, clinical, translational, health services, global and public health research.

The program is designed to provide students with an appreciation for the nature of scientific research and develop skills in data collection, analysis, and presentation of results to the medical community. Proposed projects should have a central hypothesis or research goal, with methods that are designed to test the hypothesis through the collection of quantifiable data. The student should play an active role in conducting the experiments or gathering the data, and in the analysis of the data, rather than function in a purely technical role on the project.

### **5. Milwaukee Public Health Scholars Program**

The Milwaukee Public Health Scholars Program supports innovative student projects designed to meet the public health needs of the greater Milwaukee community. The Milwaukee Public Health Scholars Program provides students with an increased understanding of the effects of poverty, and of racial and ethnic health disparities in an urban community, and assists them in developing the leadership, research and programmatic skills necessary to reduce such disparities. Eligible students must be pursuing a graduate or professional degree.

## **3<sup>RD</sup> YEAR CLINICAL ROTATIONS**

Students interested in the MD/MPH program typically follow their classmates into the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of clinical rotations. During this time they may take a public health elective, such as the public health elective at the Division of Public Health.

Medical students interested in applying to be a part of the dual degree program should begin collecting their application materials for submission in the fall of their third year of medical school. The application deadline is March 1 for summer enrollment. Students seeking earlier notification of candidacy for the MPH program should apply by November 1.

To apply to the Master of Public Health program, students should submit the following materials to the School of Medicine and Public Health, Health Professions Program Office, 1140C Medical Sciences Center, 1300 University Avenue, Madison, WI 53706. All application materials must be received by the application deadline for full consideration. For detailed admissions criteria and application information, visit our website at [www.pophealth.wisc.edu/mph](http://www.pophealth.wisc.edu/mph).

- Master of Public Health Application Form
- University Record of Residence Form
- Personal Statement
- Resume
- Transcripts
- 3 Letters of Recommendation
- MCAT scores

### **MPH YEAR (TAKEN BETWEEN THE 3<sup>RD</sup> AND 4<sup>TH</sup> YEAR OF MEDICAL SCHOOL)**

The MPH curriculum follows guidelines for accreditation, developed by the Council on Education for Public Health and addresses the five core areas essential to public health: Biostatistics, Epidemiology, Environmental Health Sciences, Health Services Administration, and Social and Behavioral Sciences.

It is recommended that students complete their MPH degree between their 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> years of medical school. Students would take a leave from medical school beginning July 1, enroll in the MPH for 12 months (July 1 to June 30), and then return to medical school. During this time, they will complete approximately 30 credits of course work required for the MPH degree with the remaining 12 credits being taken during medical school.

Medical students will generally enter the MPH program with some elective credit already fulfilled. Their enrollment into the MPH program during their first summer begins with taking elective courses. The core MPH courses, along with any additional elective credits needed, are taken during the academic year.

## **MPH Curriculum (42 Credits)**

### *Core Courses (20 Credits)*

PHS 780	Public Health: Principles and Practice (3)
PHS 650	Health Management & Policy (3)
PHS 797	Introduction to Epidemiology (3)
BMI 511	Introduction to Biostatistical Methods for Public Health (3)
PHS 471	Introduction to Environmental Health (3)
PHS 650	Social and Behavioral Sciences for Public Health (3)
PHS 650	Introduction to Public Health Seminar (1)
PHS 650	Field Work Seminar (1)

### *Elective Courses (16 Credits)*

Elective courses are intended to deepen a student's knowledge in one or more areas of public health: epidemiology, health policy/administration, biostatistics, global health, health communication, environmental health, and cultural competence.

### *Field Experience (6 Credits)*

PHS 788 Public Health Field Experience (6)

MD/MPH students complete the MPH Program in an accelerated fashion, during one calendar year or four semesters (summer, fall, spring, and summer). Because of this accelerated pace, the MD students must begin to think about their field experiences much earlier in the MPH Program than other students.

It is highly recommended that MD/MPH students take the Field Experience Seminar during their first summer in the program. It is typically offered during the Summer Public Health Institute.

MD/MPH students may begin their field experience as early as during the fall semester, but should begin no later than the spring semester during the MPH year.

There may be some courses taken during Medical School which could count either in hours or credits towards the MPH Field Experience. These include:

- The 4<sup>th</sup> Year Community Preceptorship, which can count for 2 credits of MPH field experience and/or 135 hours
- The 4<sup>th</sup> year Public Health electives, including PHS 911 - 916 courses at the Division of Public Health, Population Health Policy Institute, and State Laboratory of Hygiene, which may also be used towards the MPH field work or as elective credits.
- An "Independent Study," research or practice related, begun during the first summer of the program which can count as MPH elective credits.

MD/MPH students should meet with the MPH Student Services Coordinator and/or the Associate Director to discuss an individual plan for his/her field experience shortly after matriculating into the MPH Program to determine the best program plan.

### *Capstone Project*

Each MPH student must complete a culminating experience as the final requirement for the MPH degree. The culminating MPH experience is a non-thesis "Capstone Project". The capstone

project represents the culmination of a major practice or research activity and consists of a formal written paper or manuscript that will become part of the Public Health archives, a formal public presentation open to students and faculty, and an oral defense, consisting of questions by the student's committee. The capstone project is an opportunity to integrate coursework and field experience into a singular applied project that demonstrates proficiency.

The nature of the capstone project should be consistent with the career goals of the student, and it should be viewed as a culminating display of ability, demonstrating that the MPH graduate is prepared to become a professional in the field of public health. The excellence in writing and oral presentation requirements reflects competencies that are essential to success in the field of public health. The "manuscript format" for the capstone project is intended to familiarize students with the rigors of preparing manuscripts for professional journals.

### **5<sup>TH</sup> YEAR REQUIRED COURSES AND ELECTIVES (4<sup>TH</sup> YEAR OF MEDICAL SCHOOL)**

Following their MPH year, students will re-enter their 4<sup>th</sup> year of medical school and prepare for required courses and clerkships, electives and interviews for residency. The 4<sup>th</sup> year of medical school provides students with an opportunity to participate in elective clerkships within the Department of Population Health Sciences. Potential electives include: Fundamentals of International Health, Epidemiology at the Division of Public Health, and Public Health Research at the Wisconsin Population Health Institute.

Students gain additional public health experience through their Preceptorship and Community Health rotations. Because of the constraints of a dual degree, students will be allowed priority in scheduling of neuroscience and the preceptorship.