

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH

The mission of the Department of Public Health is to promote health at the individual, community, and structural levels through transformative education, research, scholarship and service, all of which value diversity, engage communities, and are grounded in cultural humility.

Accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health [CEPH], the Master of Public Health program provides professional preparation in the core competencies, functions, and responsibilities required of master level public health professionals. The program embraces an ecological approach, including a curriculum that critically explores determinants of health at the individual, interpersonal, organizational, community, and public policy levels. Students apply theory and research to practice in partnership with communities to address social determinants of health, reduce inequities, and contribute to building healthy communities. The MPH program emphasizes collaborative leadership and team building through a cohorted learning community approach. In addition, the program serves the campus community and the communities of the Bay Area through developing mutually beneficial partnerships with communities, community-based organizations, public health departments, and other public and private institutions.

Program Learning Outcomes

- Identify effective strategies for advocacy and community organizing to improve health and health equity.
- Analyze behavioral, biological, social, environmental, economic, policy and systems level factors influencing public health.
- Communicate orally, in writing and visually, coherently and persuasively in the context of public health using multiple platforms.
- Apply qualitative and quantitative research, including assessment, evaluation, data collection, analysis, and reporting.
- Plan interventions using research and theory to improve population health and reduce health inequities.
- Analyze the influences of social policy and health systems on population health and apply that analysis in public health policy-making process.
- Demonstrate professional skills including teamwork, leadership, cultural humility, community engagement, and critical reflection.

Admission Criteria

- A minimum of 3,700 cumulative hours (equivalent to two years full-time) of previous health-related work experience; paid or volunteer; part-time or full-time positions. Application strengthened by public health/health equity positions, particularly post-baccalaureate and leadership roles, and by additional public health/health equity work experience beyond the required minimum hours.
- Evidence of academic excellence, as reflected in a grade point average of 3.0 or higher in a baccalaureate degree or the last 60 semester (90 quarter) units attempted of higher education coursework or a previously earned post-baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited university.
- Graduate-level proficiency in written English, as demonstrated by a writing sample submission or by a 4.0 or higher on the Analytical Writing Section of the GRE General Test, if taken. GRE not required.
- A completed college course in each of four areas: statistics or calculus, social science, composition, and cultural, ethnic, or social diversity (CESD). Strong academic performance in the four prerequisite course areas further strengthens the application.

View detailed information about the prerequisite courses on the departmental website (<https://publichealth.sfsu.edu/>). The statistics/calculus course must have been completed with a grade of B– or higher within six years of the MPH program application year. If an applicant has not completed the statistics/calculus course within six years of applying to the program or has not met the minimum B– course grade requirement, admission to the program may still be recommended, but with the admission condition that a refresher statistics course is completed with grade of B– or higher *before* the first fall semester of intended enrollment.

- If applicable, TOEFL test or equivalent: grad.sfsu.edu/ (<http://grad.sfsu.edu/>)
- Linguistic competence in English and a second language strengthens the application.

Admission Procedures

- Strongly Recommended: Attend a Prospective MPH Student Information Session.** Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend one of these sessions. See the Information Sessions web page (<https://publichealth.sfsu.edu/mph-admissions/>) for the calendar of sessions offered each academic year. These faculty-led sessions provide detailed information about the program, curriculum, admission criteria, selection procedures, and the application process. To reserve a space in one of the sessions, follow directions indicated on the web page. Applicants unable to attend an information session can email hedMPH@sfsu.edu (hedmph@sfsu.edu) to receive a set of program informational documents by email.
- Application Process:** New MPH students are admitted only during fall semesters, as a cohort learning community. An applicant must submit all required application materials by the regular admissions application deadline to be considered during the regular admission review period for subsequent fall semester admission. These application materials include both those required by the SF State Division of Graduate Studies and those required by the SF State Department of Public Health Applications received after the regular admissions deadline will be reviewed on a space available basis until the cohort is deemed full by the program. Please refer to the MPH Program Admission website (<https://publichealth.sfsu.edu/mph-admissions/>) for updated deadlines for each admission cycle.
- Admission Decision Notification.** Applicants who apply by the regular admissions application deadline will receive an admission decision notification from the Division of Graduate Studies. For applicants who submit their applications after the regular admissions deadline during a rolling admission period, admission decision notification will take place within 2-3 weeks of application submission. Please refer to the MPH Program Admission website (<https://publichealth.sfsu.edu/mph-admissions/>) for updated notification dates for each admission cycle.
- MPH Student Move to Classified Status.** Admitted MPH applicants enroll in the SF State MPH program with conditionally classified status. To move to classified status, a student must meet all of the conditions specified by the Division of Graduate Studies and the Department of Public Health. These include any specialized conditions indicated in the Department of Public Health admission recommendation letter and MPH Student Handbook, both the Level One and Level Two written English proficiency requirements for Master of Public Health students, meeting all the course grade thresholds as specified in the MPH Student Handbook, completion of at least two consecutive semesters of coursework of 3.0 or higher grade point average, and the demonstration of professional ethics

and effective collaborative learning skills. In addition, to continue in the MPH program, a student must make satisfactory progress toward degree completion each semester, including meeting all standards as stipulated by the department. Departmental standards, detailed in the MPM Student Handbook, include meeting the specified departmental grade thresholds for individual courses. MPH students are allowed a maximum of two attempts to complete a required course at or above the threshold grade specified in the MPH Student Handbook. A course withdrawal counts as a course completion attempt. Students who do not meet the grade threshold after two attempts at a course will be declassified.

Application Period

New students are admitted as a cohort learning community for fall semesters only - there are no spring admits. The regular admissions application period begins on October 1st and continues until the regular admissions deadline for subsequent fall semester admission. Please refer to the MPH Program Admission website (<https://publichealth.sfsu.edu/mph-admissions/>) for the updated deadline. If spaces remain in the cohort after the regular admissions application deadline, then there will be a rolling admission period or until the incoming fall cohort is filled, whichever comes first.

Written English Proficiency Requirement

The university has a requirement for written English proficiency that is to be assessed at two different levels.

Level I

Students must demonstrate graduate-level proficiency in written English *prior to admission* to the MPH program through a submitted writing sample or with a score of 4.0 or higher on the Analytical Writing Section of the GRE. An applicant who scores below a 4.0 on the Analytical Writing Section of the GRE is required to submit an academic writing sample with the application, and may be admitted to the MPH program, but with the stipulation that the student engage in additional writing skills development activities before program commencement and/or during program enrollment. The enrolled student must also meet the Level II written English proficiency as specified below.

Level II

The student's ability to write in a scholarly manner in the field must be demonstrated by successfully meeting the B or higher grade thresholds of the first-semester first-year courses PH 810, PH 815, and PH 884.

Curriculum

The MPH curriculum emphasizes critical thinking skills, collaborative learning, problem-solving, practical experience, social justice, and advocacy. The program consists of 44 units, scheduled to accommodate working professionals while maintaining sound pedagogy. The program can be completed in a minimum of five semesters, which translates into two academic years, including a summer semester between the first and second year. More moderately paced degree completion plans are also available.

Master of Public Health – 44 units

Required Courses (38 units)

Code	Title	Units
PH 810	Public Health and Principles of Community Organizing	3
PH 811	Community Health Education Skills ePortfolio	1

PH 815	Theories of Social Behavioral Change in Community Health Education	3
PH 820	Community Health Assessment	3
PH 821	Public Health Profession Practice	3
PH 825	Epidemiology	3
PH 828	Biostatistics Lab	1
PH 829	Biostatistics and Public Health	3
PH 830	Public Health Planning, Management, and Administration for Community Change	3
PH 835	Public Health Policy	3
PH 840	Program Evaluation Design and Research	3
PH 845	Educational Processes, Training, and Curricula in Public Health	3
PH 855	Environmental Health	1
PH 884	Public Health Inquiry	3
PH 890	Master of Public Health Culminating Experience Seminar	3

Electives (6 units)

Select from graduate-level and upper-division courses with the approval of a faculty advisor.