

# Master of Public Health in Public Health Practice

Public health seeks to understand and address the relationships between determinants of health and health outcomes. This graduate program prepares public health practitioners to assess the needs of populations; plan, implement and evaluate programs to address those needs; and otherwise assure conditions that protect and promote the health of populations. The Master of Public Health (MPH) in Public Health Practice Program, within the Division of Population Health Sciences (DPHS), is designed to meet the challenges of the diverse and complex field of public health, with a particular focus on the needs of Alaska and the Circumpolar North. Students with backgrounds in the natural sciences, social sciences, business, health professions, human services, education, and law have successfully entered the field of public health at the graduate level.

Students may pursue their careers with minimal disruption while working on the MPH degree because all required courses are offered via distance format.

The MPH degree requires core courses in health education, environmental and occupational health, health management and policy, biostatistics, and epidemiology. It also includes coursework in research methods, program evaluation, circumpolar health issues, and management of public health emergencies and disasters, as well as the opportunity to create an individualized emphasis as the foundation for the required Applied Practice Experience (APE) and Integrated Learning Experience (ILE).

## Admission Requirements

- Complete the Admission Requirements for Graduate Degrees (<http://catalog.uaa.alaska.edu/academicpoliciesprocesses/admissions/graduate/>).
- In addition, students should:
  - Submit an essay in response to the following prompt: *Identify a major public health challenge in your community, describe its extent, and discuss one to two evidence-based solutions to address this challenge.* Essays must be no more than 2 double-spaced pages long, be typed using 11 or 12-point font, and include citations and references. The list of references does not count in the page limitations.
  - Provide a current resume or curriculum vitae (CV).
  - Submit a personal statement explaining how and why obtaining the MPH degree in Public Health Practice would contribute to the student's career goals. The personal statement must be no more than 2 double-spaced pages long and typed using 11 or 12-point font.

Completed applications are reviewed twice each year. The deadline for fall admission to the MPH Program is March 1. If openings remain available, applications will be accepted until July 1. Students are asked to contact the MPH program office prior to submitting an application after March 1. The deadline for spring admission to the MPH Program is October 1. UAA admission must be successfully processed before the

MPH Program will consider an application complete. The UAA process may take as long as four months, so applicants are encouraged to apply to the university first and early.

Note also that:

- Potential out-of-state applicants should be aware of the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA), which could affect their eligibility to enroll in the UAA MPH Program.
- Decisions by the admissions committee are considered final. Those not admitted to the program may reapply during the next review period but are encouraged to strengthen their application before reapplying.

## Professional Program Fee

A professional program fee is required of all students in the MPH program in addition to course tuition fees, lab fees, course material fees, and student activity fees. The professional program fee is a sum equal to 50 percent of resident tuition and is charged upon enrollment to each 600-level HS course. The fee contributes directly to program support.

## Academic Requirements

- See also General University Requirements for Graduate Degrees (<http://catalog.uaa.alaska.edu/graduateprograms/degree requirements/>) for requirements to remain in good standing and to meet academic expectations toward the degree.

## Candidacy Requirements

- See the Advancement to Candidacy (<http://catalog.uaa.alaska.edu/graduateprograms/degree requirements/>) section.

## Graduation Requirements

- Complete the General University Requirements for Graduate Degrees (<http://catalog.uaa.alaska.edu/graduateprograms/degree requirements/>).
- Complete the following program requirements:

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Core Courses</b>		
HS A605	Public Health and Society	3
HS A610	Environmental and Occupational Health	3
HS A615	Health Services Administration	3
HS A624	Circumpolar Health Issues	3
HS A625	Biostatistics for Health Professionals	3
HS A626	Principles of Epidemiology	3
HS/SWK A628	Program Evaluation	3
HS A629	Public Health Research Tools and Methods	4
HS A630	Public Health Emergencies and Disasters	3
Complete three focused public health-related emphasis courses at the 600-level with advisor approval		9

HS A695	Applied Practice Experience	3
HS A696	Integrative Learning Experience	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>42</b>

A minimum of 42 credits is required for the degree.

## Program Student Learning Outcomes

### MPH Program Goals and Program-Level Objectives

Based on national accreditation criteria (Council on Education for Public Health, [www.ceph.org](http://www.ceph.org)) and quality standards, the overall MPH Program student goal is to prepare public health professionals who can demonstrate attainment of the following 12 foundational public health knowledge learning objectives, 22 MPH program core competencies, and 5 public health practice generalist track-specific competencies.

### MPH Program Foundational Knowledge Learning Objectives

#### Profession and Science of Public Health

- Explain public health history, philosophy, and values.
- Identify the core functions of public health and the 10 Essential Services.
- Explain the role of quantitative and qualitative methods and sciences in describing and assessing a population's health.
- List major causes and trends of morbidity and mortality in the U.S. or other community relevant to the school or program.
- Discuss the science of primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention in population health, including health promotion, screening, etc.
- Explain the critical importance of evidence in advancing public health knowledge.

#### Factors Related to Human Health

- Explain effects of environmental factors on a population's health.
- Explain biological and genetic factors that affect a population's health.
- Explain behavioral and psychological factors that affect a population's health.
- Explain the social, political, and economic determinants of health and how they contribute to population health and health inequities.
- Explain how globalization affects global burdens of disease.
- Explain an ecological perspective on the connections among human health, animal health, and ecosystem health (e.g., One Health).

### MPH Program Competencies

#### Evidence-based Approaches to Public Health

- Apply epidemiological methods to settings and situations in public health practice.
- Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context.
- Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming, and software, as appropriate.

- Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy, or practice.

### Public Health & Health Care Systems

- Compare the organization, structure, and function of health care, public health, and regulatory systems across national and international settings.
- Discuss the means by which structural bias, social inequities, and racism undermine health and create challenges to achieving health equity at organizational, community and systemic levels.

### Planning & Management to Promote Health

- Assess population needs, assets, and capacities that affect communities' health.
- Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design, implementation, or critique of public health policies or programs.
- Design a population-based policy, program, project, or intervention.
- Explain basic principles and tools of budget and resource management.
- Select methods to evaluate public health programs.

### Policy in Public Health

- Discuss the policy-making process, including the roles of ethics and evidence.
- Propose strategies to identify stakeholders and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes.
- Advocate for political, social, or economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations.
- Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity.

### Leadership

- Apply leadership and/or management principles to address a relevant issue.
- Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges.

### Communication

- Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors.
- Communicate audience-appropriate (i.e., non-academic, non-peer audience) public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation.
- Describe the importance of cultural competence in communicating public health content.

### Interprofessional Practice

- Integrate perspectives from other sectors and/or professions to promote and advance population health.

### Systems Thinking

- Apply a systems thinking tool to visually represent a public health issue in a format other than standard narrative.

## **MPH in Public Health Practice Generalist Track-Specific Competencies**

### **Public Health Response**

- Address public health emergencies and/or disasters with a focus on preparedness, impact, response, and/or recovery.

### **Community Engagement**

- Engage community partner(s) in identifying and/or addressing public health issues.

### **Professionalism and Ethics**

- Demonstrate ethical decision-making in public health practice.

### **Diversity and Cultural Humility**

- Apply concepts of social justice, equity, and/or cultural humility in addressing public health problems.

### **Circumpolar Health**

- Analyze the unique social, cultural, and/or environmental conditions affecting population health in the Arctic.