

Social and Behavioral Sciences MPH

COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Learn more about the Master of Public Health in Social and Behavioral Sciences.

About the Program

The Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences offers the Master of Public Health in Social and Behavioral Sciences (MPH-SBS). The MPH in SBS is a terminal, professional degree that prepares students to design, implement and evaluate interventions directed toward public health problems in communities, within the lens of inclusive practice. This program aims to prepare public health practitioners to identify and assess the needs of populations; plan, implement and evaluate programs to address those needs; and ensure that the needs of diverse populations are met to improve overall health status and outcomes. The program has a strong focus on addressing the behavioral, social and cultural factors related to individual and population health and health disparities over the life course, as well as the social and behavioral aspects of community health, health communication, program implementation and evaluation, and health education. Research and practice in this area contribute to the development, administration and evaluation of programs in public health, which promote and sustain healthy lives for individuals and communities.

Applicants to the MPH in Social and Behavioral Sciences can choose between our on-campus and online programs, both of which adhere to the same competency-based curriculum and content. Only the delivery formats differ:

- The on-campus format is designed for students who prefer live interaction with instructors and fellow students, access to campus activities, and the opportunity to choose regional Philadelphia fieldwork placements with the assistance of our fieldwork coordinator. Students can enroll full-time or part-time. While some courses may be offered online or in hybrid formats, most of the coursework is delivered in person over a full 16-week academic term during evening hours.
- The online format is designed for working professionals interested in completing their degree remotely with courses that include synchronous classes held via Zoom and asynchronous activities. Students can enroll full-time or part-time. A fieldwork coordinator works with students to find appropriate placement in their preferred geographic location.

For more information about the on-campus or online MPH program, please contact the CPH Office of Admissions at cph@temple.edu or 215-204-5200.

Time Limit for Degree Completion: 4 years

Campus Location: Main for in-person instruction or Online

Full-Time/Part-Time Status: Full-time students usually complete the program within two academic years, while part-time students usually take three to four years to complete their degree.

Interdisciplinary Study: Interdisciplinary MPH coursework, research and interactions with students and faculty in other departments are encouraged to give students as broad a perspective as possible to excel in the complex, diverse and dynamic state of public health. Through associations with research laboratories in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, such as the Center for Obesity Research and Education, the Health Behavior Research Clinic, the Health Disparities Research Lab, the Risk Communication Laboratory, and the Social and Behavioral Health Interventions Laboratory, as well as other laboratories throughout the College, students have access to over 100 faculty at Temple University and additional regional scholars who are actively involved in programs, research and teaching in public health. Further, as with other MPH degree programs offered by the College of Public Health, the MPH in Social and Behavioral Sciences can be undertaken as part of these dual MPH degree programs:

- MD/MPH with the Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University
- MS Health Informatics/MPH within the Temple University College of Public Health
- MSW/MPH with the Temple University School of Social Work

For more information, visit <https://www.temple.edu/academics/dual-degree-programs> or contact the CPH Office of Admissions at cph@temple.edu.

Affiliation(s): The MPH-SBS maintains dozens of affiliation agreements with community partners relevant to public health professionals studying and applying social and behavioral interventions to address public and community health priorities. MPH students choose community agency fieldwork placement from this array of options throughout the Philadelphia region and beyond. For example, the program has long-standing research and fieldwork affiliations with The Food Trust; Fox Chase Cancer Center; Health Federation of Philadelphia; Maternity Care Coalition; NORTH, INC.; Philadelphia Department of Public Health; Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC) and its subsidiaries; the School District of Philadelphia; and many other community health agencies. These partnerships allow us to offer students a wide range of fieldwork opportunities to translate skills learned in the classroom to actual practice in the community.

The MPH fieldwork coordinator assists online students in finding appropriate placement in their preferred geographic region.

Study Abroad: Depending on faculty availability, study abroad opportunities may be offered during the summer and are open to both undergraduate and graduate students.

Accreditation: The MPH is fully accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). Achieving accreditation in 1985, Temple's MPH program is one of the longest established accredited MPH programs in the country.

Areas of Specialization: The MPH degree program is offered in six specialty fields of study:

- Applied Biostatistics (APBIO)
- Environmental Health (EH)
- Epidemiology (EPI)
- Health Policy and Management (HPM)
- Nutrition (NUTR)
- Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS)

Students in the Social and Behavioral Sciences MPH program may complete transcripted College of Public Health certificate programs by taking their 9 credits of electives in the relevant coursework. For questions about certificates, please contact the CPH Office of Admissions at cph@temple.edu or 215-204-5200.

Job Prospects: Graduates with an MPH in Social and Behavioral Sciences have positions in a wide range of health-related settings, including state and local public health departments, community-based organizations, voluntary health agencies, health maintenance organizations, hospitals, clinics, schools and public health-related work sites. Graduates are employed as health educators and counselors, evaluation specialists, marketing specialists, prevention specialists, project directors, research and community health program managers, HIV/AIDS coordinators, infection control coordinators, adjunct faculty and consultants. Virtually all students are placed within three to six months of graduation.

Licensure/Certification: Students who complete an MPH at Temple University are eligible to sit for the Certified in Public Health (CPH) exam offered by the National Board of Public Health Examiners and the Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES®) exam offered by the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, Inc. (NCHEC). For more information about credentialing in public health, visit <https://www.nchec.org/>.

Non-Matriculated Student Policy: Non-matriculated students are required to speak with an advisor before registering for classes and to obtain the permission of the professor, whether the coursework is taken in the on-campus or online format. If accepted to the program, a maximum of three courses (9 credits) may be applied toward the degree program.

Financing Opportunities: Limited Teaching and Research Assistantships are available in the College of Public Health and are assigned on a competitive basis among students who academically excel. The Graduate School website details the types of graduate student support. Assistantships are awarded on a term or annual basis. Students whose Fall applications are complete prior to or at the application deadline are reviewed for eligibility for Teaching Assistant (TA) positions. TAs can work 5 to 20 hours per week in any combination of teaching assignments made by the department and must meet the English Language Proficiency standards set by the University and the College. Students who hold Teaching or Research Assistantships are not permitted to hold other employment without the written prior approval of their advisor, the Director of Graduate Programs and the Graduate School. To be considered for a Teaching or Research Assistantship, complete an application form that is sent to students upon admission to the MPH program.

In both the Fall and Spring terms, the College of Public Health and Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences award a limited number of partial scholarships on a competitive basis to students with an outstanding academic record. No separate application is needed for these awards as outstanding applicants are automatically considered following submission of their application. Other available scholarships are listed at <https://cph.temple.edu/admissions/scholarships>. Students may also be eligible for financial support through the Office of Student Financial Services. For more information, please contact the CPH Office of Admissions at cph@temple.edu or 215-204-5200.

Admission Requirements and Deadlines

Application Deadline:

Fall: March 1

Spring: November 1

All applicants to the MPH program must apply via the Centralized Application Service for Public Health (SOPHAS). The system can be accessed at <https://sophas.liaisoncas.com/>.

Applicants should check their application status on the SOPHAS portal often and inquire directly of SOPHAS about receipt of materials. For other questions, please contact the CPH Office of Admissions at cph@temple.edu or 215-204-5200.

Deposit Deadline for Admitted Applicants:

Fall: April 30

Spring: December 15

Applicants who are accepted to the program must pay a \$500 deposit to secure their enrollment. For questions about the deposit and payment process or to request an extension, please contact the CPH Office of Admissions at cph@temple.edu or 215-204-5200.

Letters of Reference:

Number Required: 3

From Whom: Letters of recommendation, which are completed electronically through the SOPHAS system, should be obtained from college/university faculty members familiar with academic competence. If the applicant has been out of school for an extended period of time, ensure that letters are provided by supervising employers or professional colleagues who can discuss your relevant academic skills, including critical thinking, research and writing.

Coursework Required for Admission Consideration: Applicants' files are reviewed for undergraduate coursework in mathematics and/or statistics, social sciences and writing. Applicants who completed prior graduate coursework or earned a graduate or professional degree are expected to submit such documentation as this will be considered in the application review.

Bachelor's Degree in Discipline/Related Discipline: All applicants must present credentials that are the equivalent of an accredited baccalaureate degree. The minimum acceptable undergraduate GPA is 3.0.

Statement of Goals: In 500 to 1,000 words, address the following questions:

- Why are you pursuing the MPH in Social and Behavioral Sciences, and what are your particular areas of interest in the field?
- What are your future career goals, and what have you done either academically or professionally to guide your interest in public health and to begin preparation toward your career goals?
- Are there any exceptional circumstances related to previous academic performance that you would like the Admissions Committee to consider?

Standardized Test Scores:

GRE: Optional. While the program takes a portfolio approach to admissions, standardized tests provide important insight into quantitative and verbal abilities. If submitted, scores above the 50th percentile on both the verbal and quantitative sections of the test are desired. Official GRE scores should be sent to SOPHAS using code 0151.

Standardized tests considered in lieu of the GRE include DAT, GMAT, LSAT, MCAT, OAT and PCAT.

Applicants who earned their baccalaureate degree from an institution where the language of instruction was other than English, with the exception of those who subsequently earned a master's degree at a U.S. institution, must report scores for a standardized test of English that meet these minimums:

- TOEFL iBT: 79 (send officially to SOPHAS using the SOPHAS-specific TOEFL code 5688)
- IELTS Academic: 6.5
- PTE Academic: 53
- Duolingo: 110

Resume: Current resume or CV required.

Laptop: All incoming students in the College of Public Health are required to have a laptop. Academic programs in the college are technology intensive. They incorporate statistical and database analyses; utilize specialized tools for athletic training, kinesiology and physical therapy; stream audio and video for communication sciences; facilitate online interactive counseling for social work; and foster clinical experiences and online assessments. The laptop requirement enables the College of Public Health to improve opportunities for active learning and provide greater access to specialized software and required tools in and out of the classroom, better preparing students for the workforce. Learn more about device specifications and suggested vendors. Students can use excess financial aid (i.e., funds that are reimbursed after all tuition and fees are paid) to meet student needs, including the purchase of a laptop. Scholarships may also provide funding.

Transfer Credit: Graduate credits from an MPH program accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) may be transferred into the MPH. The credits must be equivalent to coursework offered at Temple, and the grade must be a "B" or better in order to transfer. The MPH program director approves the transfer of credits based on a review of course materials provided by the student. The maximum number of credits a student may transfer is 9.

Clearances: The MPH program requires students to complete fieldwork education. In the MPH program, it is the fieldwork site that determines the clearances, such as criminal background check and FBI fingerprinting, needed by a student. The results of these clearances determine whether a student may be onboarded at a respective site.

Program Requirements

General Program Requirements:

Number of Credits Required Beyond the Baccalaureate: 42

Required Courses:

Code	Title	Credit Hours
College Core Course		
HRPR 5001	Current and Emerging Issues in Public Health and Health Professions	0
Public Health Core Courses		
ENVH 5004	Environmental Health	1.5
EPBI 5006	Biostatistics and Applied Analysis of Health	4.5
EPBI 5101	Fundamentals of Epidemiology	3
HPM 5006	Political and Economic Aspects of Health	3
SBS 5001	Fundamentals of Public Health	3
SBS 5002	Program Planning, Theory, and Practice	3
Social and Behavioral Sciences Core Courses		
SBS 8001	Research Methods in Public Health	3
SBS 8009	Health Psychology	3
SBS 8105	Health Communication	3
Social and Behavioral Sciences Electives ¹		9
Select three from the following:		
SBS 5004	Understanding Stress and Change	
SBS 5105	Maternal and Child Health	
SBS 8005	Health Promotion in Vulnerable Populations	
SBS 8006	Addictions and Dependencies	
SBS 8018	Obesity: From Genes to Junk Food	
MPH Fieldwork Experience		
SBS 9289	MPH Fieldwork I	3
SBS 9389	MPH Fieldwork II	3
Total Credit Hours		42

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Students may select as electives any of the courses listed or, with approval, other graduate courses offered by the College of Public Health.

On-Campus Full-Time MPH-SBS

Year 1		
Fall		Credit Hours
EPBI 5101	Fundamentals of Epidemiology	3
HPM 5006	Political and Economic Aspects of Health	3
HRPR 5001	Current and Emerging Issues in Public Health and Health Professions	0
Elective		3
Credit Hours		9
Spring		
SBS 5002	Program Planning, Theory, and Practice	3
SBS 8009	Health Psychology	3
SBS 8105	Health Communication	3
Credit Hours		9
Summer		
ENVH 5004	Environmental Health	1.5
EPBI 5006	Biostatistics and Applied Analysis of Health	4.5
SBS 5001	Fundamentals of Public Health	3
Credit Hours		9
Year 2		
Fall		
SBS 8001	Research Methods in Public Health	3

SBS 9289	MPH Fieldwork I	3
Elective		3
Credit Hours		9
Spring		
SBS 9389	MPH Fieldwork II	3
Elective		3
Credit Hours		6
Total Credit Hours		42

Online MPH-SBS

Year 1		
Fall		Credit Hours
SBS 5001	Fundamentals of Public Health	3
SBS 5002	Program Planning, Theory, and Practice	3
Credit Hours		6
Spring		
EPBI 5101	Fundamentals of Epidemiology	3
Elective		3
Credit Hours		6
Summer		
HPM 5006	Political and Economic Aspects of Health	3
Elective		3
Credit Hours		6
Year 2		
Fall		
SBS 8009	Health Psychology	3
SBS 8105	Health Communication	3
Credit Hours		6
Spring		
ENVH 5004	Environmental Health	1.5
EPBI 5006	Biostatistics and Applied Analysis of Health	4.5
Credit Hours		6
Summer		
HRPR 5001	Current and Emerging Issues in Public Health and Health Professions	0
Credit Hours		0
Year 3		
Fall		
SBS 8001	Research Methods in Public Health	3
SBS 9289	MPH Fieldwork I	3
Credit Hours		6
Spring		
SBS 9389	MPH Fieldwork II	3
Elective		3
Credit Hours		6
Total Credit Hours		42

Minimum Grade to be Earned for All Required Courses: B-

Culminating Events:

Fieldwork Practicum:

Students are required to synthesize and integrate the knowledge acquired in coursework and other learning experiences and to apply theory and principles in a situation that approximates some aspect of professional practice through an internship or practicum experience with a public health agency, health services organization, or under the supervision of a faculty preceptor. The MPH fieldwork experience serves as the applied practice

experience as required by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), the accrediting body for schools and programs of public health, for completion of the Master of Public Health degree. In addition, this applied practice experience provides the student with the opportunity to develop expertise in a topic area and to contribute original and independent observations to a body of knowledge.

Evaluative Paper:

For the applied practice experience to fulfill the requirements of SBS 9289 and SBS 9389, MPH in Social and Behavioral Sciences students are expected to complete a fieldwork experience. The required deliverable for the MPH fieldwork requirement is a final evaluative paper. Students must demonstrate their proficiency and the application of theory and principles in the paper.

Contacts

Program Web Address:

<https://www.temple.edu/academics/degree-programs/social-and-behavioral-sciences-mph-hp-sbbsc-mph>

Department Information:

Dept. of Social and Behavioral Sciences
Ritter Hall Annex, 9th Floor (004-09)
1301 Cecil B. Moore Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19122-6005
publichealth@temple.edu
215-204-8726

Submission Address for Application Materials:

<https://sophas.liaisoncas.com/>

Department Contacts:

Admissions:

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215-204-5200

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