



Department of Environmental & Occupational Health

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**MPH in Occupational Health Practice
Academic Year 2008-2009**

The occupational health practice concentration is intended for students interested in applied occupational health program design, development and management. This concentration is not a clinical or medical program. Graduates will be prepared to practice occupational health in a variety of settings with a multidisciplinary approach to the design, implementation, management, and evaluation of occupational health programs and services. The occupational health practice concentration is primarily designed for those individuals who are currently working in an occupational setting, who requires an M.P.H. for eligibility for board certification or for those who are interested in exploring the science of occupational health. The program is for individuals who wish to augment, enhance, or expand their current training or who wish to prepare for roles in health occupational health, including, but not limited to, the following areas: safety professionals, industrial hygienists, health practitioners (physicians, nurses, physician assistants) and human resource personnel (program management and procurement). This concentration is also designed for public health or occupational health professionals who wish to become knowledgeable in occupational health research, occupational health data management, and applied occupational health programs or management. By the conclusion of the M.P.H. program, a student in the occupational health practice concentration will be able to:

- 1. Identify and be familiar with regulatory or legislative authority directed at occupational health practice.
- 2. Acquire, compile, collate, store, evaluate and analyze occupational health data by applying statistical methodology.
- 3. Identify external factors which influence worker safety and health.
- 4. Work effectively as a team member with other occupational health professionals by understanding their roles in occupational health services.
- 5. Describe employee legal rights to confidentiality of medical record information.
- 6. Perform assessment, implementation and assurance analyses of occupational health programs.
- 7. Recognize the roles and functions of employee assistance programs, medical surveillance programs, duty fitness programs, safety programs, and substance abuse testing in the occupational health setting.
- 8. Plan and conduct independent research focusing on the analysis and solution of a problem in occupational health practice, via the completion of a thesis/project reports.

Occupational Health Practice Curriculum (48 Semester Credit Hours)

CORE COURSES: 15 SCH

BIOS	5210	Biostatistics for Public Health I	3 SCH
ENVR	5300	Environmental Health	3 SCH
EPID	5100	Principles of Epidemiology	3 SCH
HMAP	5210	Introduction to Health Management and Policy	3 SCH

SCBS 5115 Behavioral Foundations of Public Health 3 SCH

REQUIRED COURSES: 18 SCH

ENVR 5325 Industrial Hygiene 3 SCH
ENVR 5330 Environmental and Occupational Toxicology 3 SCH
ENVR 5345 Physical Hazards 3 SCH
ENVR 5350 Occupational Diseases and Health Practice 3 SCH
ENVR 5380 Environmental Health Microbiology 3 SCH
ENVR 5410 Environmental Data Analysis 3 SCH

PRACTICE EXPERIENCE: 3 SCH

SPH 5855 Public Health Practice Experience 3 SCH

ELECTIVE COURSES: 12 SCH

ENVR 5310 Exposure and Risk Assessment 3 SCH
ENVR 5311 Air Pollution and Health 3 SCH
ENVR 5420 Texas-Mexico Border Health Issues 3 SCH
ENVR 5500 Biomarkers in Environmental Epidemiology 3 SCH
ENVR 5550 Introduction to Genomics and Public Health 3 SCH
ENVR 5910 Independent Study in Environmental Health 3 SCH
ENVR 6600 Spatiotemporal Environmental Health Modeling 3 SCH
EPID 6690 Occupational Epidemiology 3 SCH

- Students may substitute an elective course not on this list only with prior written approval of their advisor.
- Courses not approved as substitutes will not be applied toward the degree plan.
- For the Texas - Mexico Border Health Issues course ENVR 5420, all students must have a Passport prior to taking this course, and international students must also have a US multi-entry Visa and purchase a travel visa for Mexico prior to taking this course.

CULMINATING EXPERIENCE:

Comprehensive Exam (see details below)

- Upon approval by the student's advisor and the department chair, students may elect to complete a Thesis for the culminating experience. In this case, students will take 6 SCH of "ELECTIVE" coursework and 6 SCH of Thesis.

Students who select the comprehensive exam option do not register for a course in order to take the exam. In order to take the exam, a student must have a grade point average of 3.0 or higher. Students are responsible for informing the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health of their intentions to take the exam. A student who encounters a last minute emergency (sickness, death in the family, etc.) may appeal to the exam committee for an opportunity to take a makeup exam. Students who fail the exam may, upon recommendation of the department chair, be allowed to retake a different exam. However, an opportunity for retaking the exam is not automatic, and students may only retake the exam once.

MPH students enrolled in the thesis as part of their degree plan are required to demonstrate that they are actively working toward its completion. This requires confirmed submission of written materials and on-going consultation with committee members within the first and subsequent semesters of registering for thesis credit. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain contact with their thesis advisor and committee members to assure satisfactory progress. MPH students choosing the thesis option but not making satisfactory progress as determined by their advisor may be required to take the comprehensive exam instead of the thesis or may be required to take additional courses to assure sufficient knowledge and skills needed to continue the research

project. Any action taken as a result of not meeting the above expectations is subject to the discretion of the department chair.

MPH students can use attendance at departmental seminars towards the 200 hours for the Public Health Practice Experience (SPH 5855) as follows: The practicum must include attendance at a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 16 departmental seminars. This is equivalent to a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 16 credit hours being credited towards the 200 hours of the practicum required. All students must complete at least 8 credit hours of seminars for graduation.