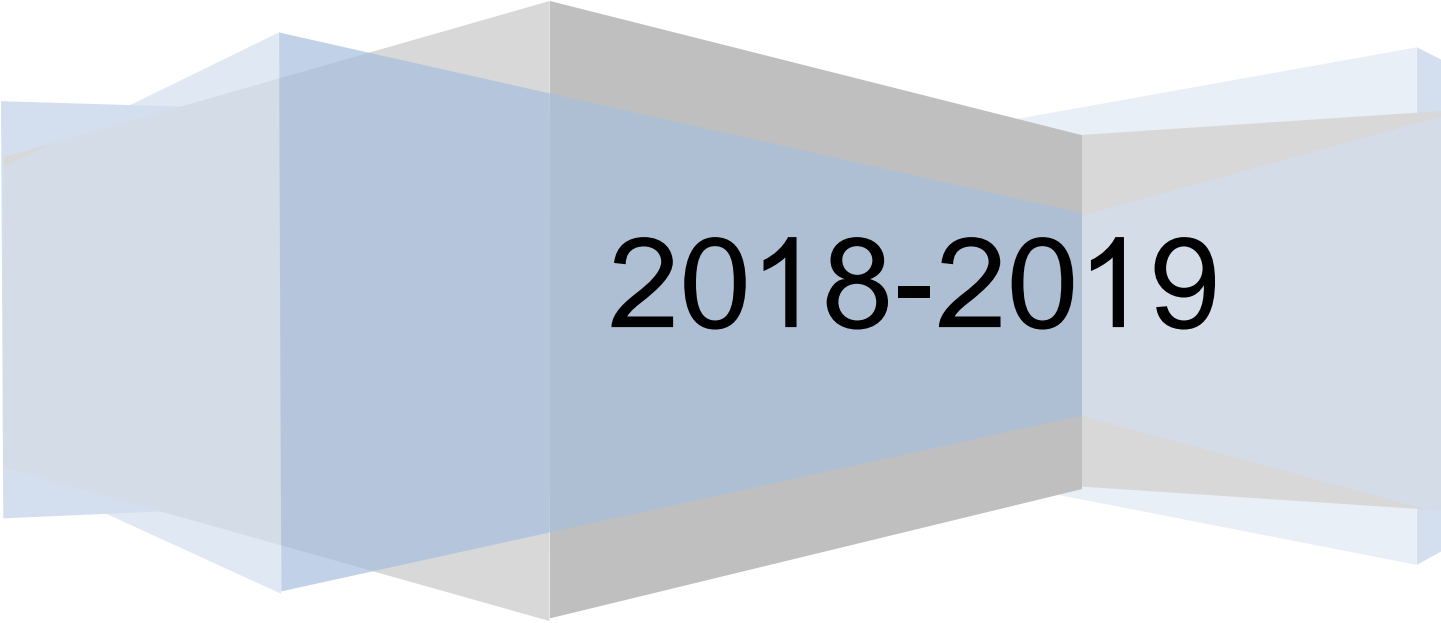


# Doctoral Degree Programs

Maternal and Child Health



2018-2019

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# Introduction

The Department of Maternal and Child Health (MCH), founded in 1950, awarded its first doctoral degree, the Doctor of Public Health (DrPH), in 1973. In 1998 the department began offering a second doctoral degree with the addition of a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) program. Over the next 15 years demand for the PhD greatly surpassed that for the DrPH and in 2015, the latter degree program was discontinued. Today, the department offers a consolidated doctoral training program leading to the PhD degree. This handbook provides detailed information about our doctoral program in maternal and child health covering admissions, general academic policies, coursework, exams, and the dissertation.

## Admissions

The MCH department begins to accept online applications (via the Schools of Public Health Application Service, known as SOPHAS) in mid-August for consideration for admission one year later (e.g., apply mid-August 2018 for admission August 2019). **The application deadline for SOPHAS is January 2, while the application deadline for the UNC Supplemental Application is January 12. The application deadline for students eligible to be nominated for the Graduate School Merit awards will be December 1, with a deadline of December 15 for the UNC Supplemental Application.**

In reviewing applications, members of the Doctoral Committee independently consider the applicant's standing on the following criteria:

- Academic excellence (as indicated by grades, GRE scores, awards, etc.);
- Interest in and commitment to MCH research, policy, and/or practice (as indicated by applicant's statement, past experience and/or coursework, letters of reference);
- High quality letters of reference from appropriate sources (e.g., academic instructors, employment, internship supervisors, etc.);
- Potential for MCH leadership;
- Potential to enhance the MCH student body;
- Whether the applicant's research interests align with those of a MCH faculty member who can act as the student's advisor.

In addition to these qualities of the applicant, the committee considers the availability of MCH faculty to mentor and advise students with similar areas of substantive interest. Only applicants who meet the above criteria and for whom a well-matched advisor is available are offered admission.

The MCH Doctoral Committee, a committee of several MCH faculty members and students reviews all doctoral applications. Following the Doctoral committee's review, the Department recommends admission or non-admission of an applicant to the Graduate School. Applicants receive written offers of admission or notice of non-admission from the Graduate School. Applicants receive notice of wait-listing from the MCH Student Services Manager. Notices are sent as soon as possible. Because the department typically offers admission to only 5 to 7

applicants out of a much larger number of qualified candidates, the department maintains an admission waiting list until April 15, when applicants to whom admission offers have been extended must accept or decline admission.

Please see the UNC Graduate School [<http://gradschool.unc.edu/>] and MCH Department [<http://www.sph.unc.edu/>] web pages for additional information about the online application process.

### **Admission Deferrals**

The MCH department does not defer admissions to the doctoral program.

## **Departmental Academic Policies**

Generally, the curriculum requirements that are in effect at the time of a student's matriculation remain in effect for that student, regardless of curriculum changes that occur during the time of the student's progress through the program. Students have the option of switching to curriculum requirements implemented after their matriculation, with the approval of their advisor, doctoral curriculum committee, and the MCH Director of Graduate Studies (see later entries in this handbook which describe each of these groups/persons).

Beyond curriculum requirements, students are governed by current procedures and policies as stated in this handbook, or as determined by the Chair of the Doctoral Committee and/or Director of Graduate Studies.

### **Procedures for Exemption or Waiver from Standard Departmental Policies**

The steps for seeking an exemption or waiver are as follows:

1. A student who wishes to be granted a waiver or exemption from Departmental policy or a course requirement should discuss the matter with her/his advisor and, when appropriate, her/his doctoral curriculum committee. If the advisor (and, when appropriate, the student's doctoral curriculum committee) is in agreement with the request, the advisor will transmit it to the Department's Doctoral Program for approval. If a student wishes to waive a course requirement, s/he should complete the "Required Course Exemption Form." If the advisor is not in agreement, the student may take the request directly to the Director of the Department's Doctoral Program.
3. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Doctoral Program, s/he may request that the Doctoral Program consult with the Director of Graduate Studies for final resolution.

### **Residency**

As part of the requirements for the doctoral degree, at least two of the required four semesters of residence must be earned in continuous full-time registration on the UNC-Chapel Hill

campus. Further details are available in the UNC Graduate School Handbook (<http://handbook.unc.edu/pdf/handbook.pdf>).

### Full-time/Part-time Status

Beginning with entry into the program, the MCH Department requires that students maintain full-time status (nine or more credit hours per semester) until the completion of coursework required by the Department and the student's doctoral curriculum committee.

In special cases, midway through coursework, a student may request a transfer to part-time status. The request should be submitted first to the student's advisor. If the advisor agrees, the advisor forwards the request to the Department's Doctoral Program for approval. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Doctoral Program, s/he may request that the Doctoral Program consult with the Director of Graduate Studies of the Department for final resolution.

After completion of required coursework, a student may reduce his or her status to part-time if the advisor agrees.

### Time Limitations and Leaves of Absence

A doctoral student admitted directly into the doctoral program (rather than being admitted to the masters-to-doctoral program) has eight calendar years from the date of first registration in the doctoral program to complete the doctoral degree (example: if the date of first registration is August 2014, the eight-year time limit expires at Commencement, August 2022).

A student admitted to a master's program and later given formal permission to proceed to the doctoral degree (i.e., those admitted to the masters-to-doctoral program) has eight calendar years from the date of receipt of the master's degree to complete the doctoral degree.

Within the eight-year limit, the UNC Graduate School allows one leave of absence from graduate study for doctoral students in good academic standing. The request for a leave of absence must be for a definite, stated period of time (up to one year) during which the student does not plan to make academic progress. To be eligible for a leave of absence, a student must not have received an extension of the time limit for the degree and must not have temporary grades of IN ("incomplete") or AB (absent from the final exam) on courses taken. For those students in the Masters to Doctoral track, a **leave of absence between the master's degree and the doctoral degree is not allowed.**



Before the leave period, the student submits a [Request for Leave of Absence Form](#) to The Graduate School. Submission of this form requires approval by the Department's Doctoral Program. If the Graduate School approves the leave of absence, the time of that leave will not count against the total time allowed for the degree. [Readmission](#) to The Graduate School after an approved leave of absence is usually a formality. A leave of absence may not typically be renewed.

### Procedure for Appeal of a Grade

University policy regarding the appeal of a grade is clearly spelled out in the *Graduate School Handbook*. An appeal of a grade must be based on one of the following:

1. Arithmetic or clerical error;
2. Arbitrariness, such as possible discrimination based on race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, etc.;
3. Personal malice; and/or
4. Student conduct "cognizable" under the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance.

According to University guidelines, a grade may not be changed as a result of re-evaluation of the quality of the student's work.

Before filing a formal appeal of a grade in a course offered by the Department of MCH, a student first should approach the course instructor directly to discuss the disagreement. If the protest remains unresolved, the student may then initiate a formal, written appeal to the Chair, with a copy to the course instructor. Students should check the procedures for appealing a grade from a course offered in a department other than MCH if they feel the need to do so.

The Chair must adhere to the following procedures, described in detail in the *Graduate School Handbook*:

1. Solicit a reply to the charges in the student's letter from the course instructor.
2. Determine whether sufficient evidence exists to pursue the appeal. If the Chair denies the appeal at this stage, the student may appeal in writing to the Administrative Board of the Graduate School.
3. If, in the opinion of the Chair, sufficient evidence exists to warrant further investigation, she or he will empower a committee of no fewer than three graduate faculty to investigate the charges and render a recommendation. The Chair will forward the recommendation to the student, the course instructor, and the Graduate School. In the event that the committee recommends no grade change, the student may appeal, in writing, to the Administrative Board of the Graduate School.

### Necessary Forms for Documenting Your Progress in the Doctoral Program

The following list includes the forms, in the order they must be completed, as the student reaches certain milestones in the doctoral program. **The student is responsible for**

**completing the forms, obtaining the appropriate signatures, and submitting them to the Student Services Manager.** More information and sample forms are found in Appendix B, and Appendix G notes the Illustrative Sequence and Timetable which may be helpful to view when examining the timing of the necessary forms. Except for the Curriculum Committee Composition Form and the Required Course Exemption Form, all are available on the Graduate School website.

- Report of Doctoral Curriculum Committee Composition (filed with the Department's Student Services Manager after first committee meeting and then updated after the second meeting of the Doctoral Curriculum Committee)
- [Report of written comprehensive exam](#) (filed with the MCH Student Service Manager when the exam has been successfully completed)
- [Report of Doctoral Dissertation Committee Composition](#) (filed when Doctoral Dissertation Committee is convened)
- [Report of first oral comprehensive examination](#) (filed when the student successfully defends dissertation proposal)
- [Report of approved dissertation project](#) (filed when the student has been admitted to candidacy)
- Application for admission to candidacy<sup>1</sup> (completed on Connect Carolina)
- [Report of the final oral comprehensive examination](#) (filed after the final dissertation defense, completed form sent to the Graduate School)

In addition, students who exempt out of required course work are required to file another form, specifically, the:

- Required Course Exemption Form (filed with the Department's Student Services Manager)

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<sup>1</sup> Students may apply for admission to candidacy after they have passed both the doctoral written and oral examinations, have submitted an acceptable dissertation prospectus, have completed all courses required by the major and minor programs, and have satisfied any foreign language or language substitute requirements.

## Doctoral Advisor

At the time of admission, the Department's Doctoral Committee assigns a student to a MCH faculty academic advisor. The Committee uses information from the student's application materials, faculty interviews, and its knowledge of relevant expertise among available faculty to identify a suitable advisor.

Student/faculty communication is viewed as a mutual responsibility. Meetings are scheduled on a periodic basis as requested by the student or the advisor. The advisor will serve as the major source of guidance until the student's Doctoral Curriculum Committee is in place. Students are also encouraged to consult with other department faculty for advice. In addition, other MCH students who are more advanced in their studies are often helpful in providing information.

If it becomes necessary to change advisors, the student should discuss this first with the current and intended advisors. The student should then write a brief letter formally requesting the change to the Department Doctoral Committee. The student may also consult with the Director of Graduate Studies for assistance to expedite the change. The Doctoral Committee will notify the Department's Student Services Manager about the change.

## The Doctoral Curriculum Committee

Each doctoral student's course of study is guided by the student's faculty academic advisor and a Doctoral Curriculum Committee (chaired by the advisor). During the student's first semester, s/he and the advisor will identify potential faculty members to serve on the Doctoral Curriculum Committee. The Doctoral Curriculum Committee must include no fewer than three members. Typically, at least two of the faculty members are full-time, tenured, tenure-track, or fixed term members of the regular MCH Department faculty; however, arrangements can be made for other types of MCH faculty to serve on students' doctoral curriculum committees. Fixed term appointees to the Graduate Faculty may serve on committees of students and, at the request of the program and approval of the Graduate School, may chair a doctoral committee. These appointees may include: faculty emeriti, clinical or research professors, scholars from other institutions, independent scholars, and practitioners.) Since all PhD students take a minor, one of the faculty committee members must be from the minor Department. The academic advisor and minor advisor must be different people. Students enrolled in the **masters-to-doctorate track (MtD)** should form their doctoral curriculum committee after they have completed their master's coursework, during the first year of their doctoral coursework (see the doctoral timeline below)

The responsibilities of Doctoral Curriculum Committee members are to:

1. advise in the selection of courses during the student's second and subsequent semesters and approve the overall course of study, and
2. participate in the development and grading of the Written Comprehensive Examination process as appropriate.

**The First Doctoral Curriculum Committee Meeting.** Ideally the first formal meeting of the Doctoral Curriculum Committee will be held by the end of the student's first academic semester, but should occur no later than the end of the spring semester of the first academic year. Students enrolled in the **masters-to-doctorate track (MtD)** should form their doctoral curriculum committee after they have completed their master's coursework and by the end of the student's second semester of doctoral coursework. The student must declare at least three areas of proficiency, two of which will be "maternal and child health" and "research methods." The third area should be the student's substantive specialty area (e.g., perinatal health services, substance abuse, etc.). Substantive specialty areas can be individualized for each student; there is no predetermined list of specialty areas, though examples of previous substantive areas are available on p.23. Students should discuss the selection of their specialty area with their advisor. A fourth area of proficiency is the student's minor coursework. **(Note: One course may serve in two areas of proficiency. However, courses counting for the formal minor cannot also be counted toward the MCH requirements.)** Appendix F has an example of the paperwork that students should prepare for their first meeting of the Curriculum Committee, and more information is presented on this later in this Handbook.

The main purpose of the first Curriculum Committee meeting is to define a course of study that will provide competence in the selected areas. At this meeting, the committee will review the student's previous education and work experience, courses taken in the first semester, and any preliminary ideas for dissertation research. The committee members will also discuss and approve the student's proposed areas of competence.

**The Second Doctoral Committee Meeting.** The student's second curriculum meeting is held near the time of completion of the student's coursework (usually the end of the second year of study). The purpose of this meeting is to determine whether the student is prepared to take the Maternal and Child Health Written Comprehensive Examination. The committee will review the student's progress in coursework and plans for dissertation research. The committee may recommend additional courses before the student can take the Written Comprehensive Examination. The committee must approve the student's readiness to take the exam.

**Materials for the First and Second Doctoral Curriculum Committee Meetings.** In preparation for both the first and the second Doctoral Curriculum Committee meetings, the student should distribute to all committee members:

- an up-to-date curriculum vitae;
- a list of courses proposed and taken (with grades, if available), organized in two ways: chronologically and by area of proficiency; and
- a brief statement of dissertation interests or plans.

An example set of materials is in Appendix F. After each curriculum committee meeting, the student prepares a brief written summary of how the meeting progressed and the important decisions made at the meeting. This summary is reviewed by the advisor and then distributed to all committee members and the Department's Student Services Manager.

The membership of the student's Doctoral Curriculum Committee may change for a variety of reasons. If this need arises, the student should consult her or his advisor. The student should follow the same procedures for choosing new members as for choosing the original members. The student and advisor together should notify the Department's Student Services Manager of changes in committee membership.

## Departmental Resources and Financial Support

Financial assistance is available through the Department, the School of Public Health, the Graduate School, the University, and private and public agency sources. The Department works with students to meet their financial needs. Students should discuss their financial needs first with their advisors and be sure an updated financial status form has been filed with the Department's Student Services Manager. This form can be updated at any time during the student's tenure as a doctoral student.

### Funding Guides and Establishing Residency

Information about funding through the Graduate School is available on their website: <http://gradschool.unc.edu/funding/>

Out-of-state students may reduce their financial burden by applying for in-state residency. Because of the limited number of tuition remissions offered by the Department, **it is important for doctoral students to begin making their cases for North Carolina residency as soon as possible.** Students who are earlier in their program have priority for tuition remission.

According to North Carolina Statute, to establish residency for tuition purposes a student must:

1. establish domicile (physical presence and intent to make North Carolina his/her permanent home for an indefinite duration) 12 months prior to the beginning of the term (1st day of classes)
2. maintain that domicile for at least 12 consecutive months, and
3. not be in North Carolina solely to attend college.

Students interested in establishing residency status in North Carolina should apply directly to the Graduate School. In the event of a residency denial, a student may appeal. More information about establishing residency for tuition purposes is included in the MCH Department's Master's Handbook, which is available on the department's website. A guide to the residency application and appeal process is available on the Graduate School's [website](#) or through the Graduate and Professional Student Federation (GPSF). GPSF also periodically conducts workshops on achieving residence status. For further information, and to complete the on-line residency application, please go to <http://gradschool.unc.edu/residency/index.html>.

### Training Grant and Research Assistantships

Beyond tuition remission, there are two types of financial support available directly from the MCH Department and/or MCH faculty: training grant support and graduate research assistantships (GRA). The MCH financial status form, used to request aid, must be completed

and filed with the MCH Student Services Manager's office. There are a limited number of one-year fellowships available from the MCH training grant. Students who are earlier in their program have priority for training grant support, but every effort is made to ensure that all students get some type of funding.

Faculty with funded research projects may have research assistantships available. Information about openings are typically disseminated through email announcements. However, it is also very helpful if students let their advisors and the MCH Student Manager know if they are looking for funding.

## Gillings School of Global Public Health Resources

Public Health Service Traineeships are distributed by the Dean's Office to Departments, which then may allocate these among students in need. In MCH, these generally are awarded to students who have had no previous or concurrent financial aid from the Department or the University.

### *Training Program in Reproductive, Perinatal, and Pediatric Epidemiology*

The overall goal of the training program in Reproductive, Perinatal, and Pediatric Epidemiology (RPPE) is to train outstanding researchers and scholars for productive careers in the field. The program cuts across three departments: Epidemiology, Nutrition, and Maternal and Child Health (note: eligibility is restricted to doctoral students with a formal major or minor in epidemiology). Participants must complete a curriculum based on courses in Epidemiology, Biostatistics, Maternal and Child Health, Nutrition and Biology; attend seminars on developing research topics; and conduct research guided by an experienced Program Faculty member (research preceptorship and the dissertation). Students are typically funded for a period of 1 year and then re-apply for subsequent years with maximum funding duration of 3 years. Questions about the program should be directed to Dr. Julie Daniels.

## UNC Graduate School Resources

Graduate School Fellowships may be awarded to entering doctoral students with outstanding qualifications who are recommended by the Department. Only new students who submit their completed applications for admission by **December 1** are eligible for consideration. The Graduate School also awards fellowships for on-campus as well as off-campus dissertation research. The MCH department's internal deadline for receipt of dissertation completion fellowships is **three weeks before** the stated Graduate School deadline. For information about fellowships and Teaching Assistantships and Research Assistantships go to [http://gradschool.unc.edu/fellowships\\_and\\_funding/index.html](http://gradschool.unc.edu/fellowships_and_funding/index.html)

The Graduate School also operates the Graduate Funding Information Center, which has online portals to help students search for both internal and external sources of funding. They also offer

periodic trainings on how to search for funding. For more information go to <http://gradfunding.web.unc.edu/>

## University Resources

University financial assistance is described in the *Graduate School Handbook* and *The Record of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*. The Office of Scholarships and Student Aid (<http://studentaid.unc.edu/>) awards loans and Tuition Enhancement Grants to graduate students who qualify, based on information provided in the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application form. Application for financial assistance may be made to the University Student Aid Office after January 1 and must be received by March 1 in order to meet the priority deadline. Graduate students must submit the FAFSA (available on-line at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>) by Feb. 15 for priority consideration.

Students may also be interested in the Office of Information and Communication's newsletter, *Research Support*, <http://research.unc.edu/rs/>, or the Office of Sponsored Research's website, <http://research.unc.edu/offices/sponsored-research/index.htm>

### Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowships

Students interested in studying a 'lesser commonly taught language' may also apply for the Foreign Language Area Studies (FLAS) awards. These awards cover tuition, fees, and stipend. They are federally funded by the Department of Education but competitive at the University level. Students undertake language coursework in addition to "area studies" coursework, which can often include existing courses in MCH or the School of Public Health. In order to apply, students must apply through the area studies center of interest. Deadlines are typically in January for the following academic year. For more information, go to: <http://cgi.unc.edu/funding-opp/flas/>

## Awards for Minority Students

### North Carolina Excellence Fellowship (Incoming Students Only)

The State of North Carolina offers the North Carolina Excellence Fellowships as one mechanism to increase the diversity of the graduate student body engaged in doctoral study within the UNC system. Diversity is broadly defined, including:

- Educational Preparation
- Life Experiences
- Factors that may contribute to diversity of presence
- Demonstrated ability and motivation to overcome disadvantage or discrimination
- Desire and ability to extend knowledge-based services to enhance the quality of life of all citizens
- Motivation and potential to make a positive contribution to the educational environment of the University

Recipients must be residents of North Carolina (for tuition purposes) and pursuing a doctoral degree. Awards provide a competitive stipend plus tuition and student health insurance. Minority awards are competitive on a campus-wide basis. There is no application process for this award; eligible students are nominated by their department.

(<http://gradschool.unc.edu/funding/gradschool/diversity.html> )

### **NIH Predoctoral Awards for Minority Students**

These are individual NIH awards. Minority students who have been admitted to doctoral programs may apply, with support of the department and advisors. Students should consult with faculty advisors for details.

### **NIH Minority Supplements to Research Grants**

Supplements are sometimes available to enable faculty holding NIH research grants to appoint a minority student for a research assistantship. Supplements are sought on an individual basis as appropriate. Students should consult with faculty advisors for details.

## **Other Sources of Funding on Campus**

### **Carolina Population Center**

The Carolina Population Center (CPC) provides fellowship support for doctoral study in preparation for careers in population research. Applications are typically due at the end of January (check website for specific date). Further information about the Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Training Programs in Population Research is available on the Center's website (<http://www.cpc.unc.edu/training>).

### **Carolina Consortium on Human Development**

The Carolina Consortium on Human Development, housed at the Center for Developmental Science, provides a dissertation support for students working in the area of human development who are completing their doctorates. Applications are due early and require faculty sponsorship. The deadline may change from year to year. Further information is available from the [Carolina Consortium on Human Development](#), 100 E. Franklin St., Suite 200, CB# 8115, UNC-CH, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-8115. (Contact Dr. Jennifer L. Coffman, Assistant Director for Training and Research, 843-2401, [coffman@unc.edu](mailto:coffman@unc.edu) or visit this website: <http://cds.web.unc.edu/training/predoc/> )

### **Cecil G Sheps Center for Health Services Research**

The Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research awards predoctoral fellowships to students interested in health services research who have completed most of their courses. Applications are available online at <http://www.shepscenter.unc.edu>. Please see the Center's website for deadlines: <http://www.shepscenter.unc.edu/fellowships/nrsa-fellowships/>



Further information is available from the Sheps Center, 725 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd (Historic Airport Road), CB# 7590, UNC-CH, NC 27599-7590. (Contact Lindsay McCall, Program Coordinator, [lmccall@email.unc.edu](mailto:lmccall@email.unc.edu)).

## Federal Sources of Funding

### National Research Service Awards (NRSA)

Every Institute within NIH awards NRSA's. The National Institute for Nursing Research, for example, awards NRSA Predoctoral Fellowships to support nurses for supervised research training leading to a doctoral degree in areas related to the mission of the NINR. For more information on awards available from the National Institutes of Health, please see <http://www.nih.gov>.

### Agency for Health Care Research and Quality (AHRQ)

AHRQ provides predoctoral and postdoctoral health services research education support and career development through a variety of programs. Visit <http://www.ahrq.gov/fund/training/trainix.htm>, or request further information from the Director of Planning and Development and the University's Office of Sponsored Research.

## Other Resources on Campus

UNC Campus Health Services offers a variety of services to help students cope with the demands of graduate study. Information about these services is available online at <http://campushealth.unc.edu/index.php>

The Graduate School's Diversity and Student Success Program aims to support the successful degree completion of each student through targeted academic and professional development programs:

<http://graddiversity.web.unc.edu/>

There are a variety of services related to research offered through the School of Public Health (NOTE: some services may only be available for faculty).

<http://www.sph.unc.edu/research>

In addition, the Odum Institute for Research in Social Science offers a series of short courses and a variety of helpful consultation services. <http://www.odum.unc.edu/odum/home2.jsp>

# Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

*Developing research scholars who are capable of producing and disseminating new knowledge and methods for the public health profession in the field of MCH*

## Program Competencies

Upon satisfactory completion of the PhD, graduates will be able to:

1. Summarize, synthesize, and critically evaluate research evidence on a maternal and child health (MCH) topic of public health significance.
2. Identify at least one theory--and summarize any related evidence—that links maternal, infant, child, and/or adolescent health to health and well-being at a different period in the life course.
3. Drawing upon MCH-relevant theory, formulate a testable research hypothesis that will make a novel contribution to the knowledge base.
4. Demonstrate familiarity with the main experimental and non-experimental designs and methods used by MCH program evaluators.
5. Understand and appropriately formulate an MCH program impact evaluation protocol.

## Competency Assessment and Exit Surveys

Incoming doctoral students should discuss these competencies with their advisors when they first enter the program (at baseline). Students are also encouraged to formulate an Individual Development Plan (IDP) utilizing the American Association for the Advancement of Science's (AAAS) website (<http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/>). After baseline, the competency assessment is completed two more times. The second time is just before the second meeting of the Curriculum Committee meeting that precedes taking written comprehensive exams. This allows the committee to review any areas in which students feel they have weaknesses, and to discuss ways to strengthen those skills. The third completion is at graduation.

The graduating student also completes an exit survey that solicits input about various facets of the department and the student's experience. The purposes of the exit survey are: (1) to review the development of the student's goals and competencies; (2) to consider how well the Department and the School facilitated the student's achievement of those goals and competencies; and (3) to consider the student's professional aspirations with the expectation that the interview will be useful for future recommendations. The exit survey will be e-mailed to students. Students are expected to bring the completed survey and their 3 baseline assessments to an in-person interview with their academic advisor before graduation. Students may also submit anonymous comments to the survey by sending a hard copy to the Director of the MCH Doctoral Program.

## Gillings School of Global Public Health Requirements

Upon entry to graduate school, all public health students are required to take two web-based trainings to prepare them to conduct research with human participants. This includes:

**Human Research Ethics Training** – go to this website to take the training:  
<http://research.unc.edu/offices/human-research-ethics/getting-started/training/> and

**Conflict of Interest (COI) Training** - go to this website to take the training:  
<https://apps.research.unc.edu/coi-training/>.

PhD students must also complete EPID 600, 710, or an approved substitute (EPID 711, PUBH 760), and BIOS 600 or another approved substitute if they have not already completed a similar course in their master's work. These courses are recommended to be taken in the fall of the student's first year of study, and do not count towards research methods or multivariate statistics requirement. Student should talk with their advisors about appropriate course selection based on coursework from their Master's.

## Department of Maternal and Child Health Requirements

For the PhD, the MCH department requires 38 semester hours in the major plus 15 hours for the minor course of study, totaling a minimum of 53 credit hours.<sup>2\*</sup> Note that master's coursework cannot be applied toward the minimum 38 semester hours required for the doctoral degree.

The following are the required courses:

### 1. MCH Master's Core Course

PhD students entering without an MPH in Maternal and Child Health must take the MCH Department's year-long MCH master's core course, "Foundations of Maternal and Child Health" (MHCH 701-702, 6 credits), or have a record of equivalent courses or knowledge. A description of this course can be found on the department's web page. This course is typically taken in the first year of doctoral study. Course instructors may authorize exemption from MCH core course requirements by evidence of equivalence, knowledge, or by examination.

### 2. MCH Doctoral Seminar (MHCH 801)

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<sup>2\*</sup> Note that the Graduate School requires 18 semester hours or more beyond the Masters coursework for Admission to Candidacy ("Admission to candidacy recognizes the achievement of a significant milestone in the career of a doctoral student and signifies that the only outstanding requirement for the degree is the dissertation) (The student is then designated ABD—all but dissertation)." See *Graduate School Handbook*, [available] <http://gradschool.unc.edu/handbook/index.html> [cited].

During the fall semester, all first year PhD students must take the MCH Department's Doctoral Seminar (MHCH 801). The goal of this seminar is to provide an introduction to the faculty within the Department, as well as an introduction to the work that they do. It provides a forum for deeper discussion of the major issues that affect the health and well-being of women during their reproductive years, infants, children, and adolescents in domestic and international settings. Activities center on skill building, particularly locating scientific research studies and critical review and synthesis of the scientific evidence to address important MCH questions.

**3. MCH Theoretical Foundations of Maternal & Child Health (MHCH 859)**

During the second year of study, typically in the fall of the second year, all doctoral students are required to take MHCH 859 which provides information on theories used in MCH research and also hones students' skills in grant writing. Students are encouraged to use the course to build towards a grant proposal for their dissertation, when possible.

**4. Maternal and Child Health Program Evaluation Research (MHCH 862).** This course is offered in the Spring and is typically taken during the second year of doctoral study. As a prerequisite, students must have taken a multivariate linear regression course.

**5. Research Methods**

All students must complete at least two 3-credit courses in research methods. These courses can be taken outside of the MCH Department, but must be approved by the student's advisor.

**6. Three Analytic Courses**

- One of the analytic courses is MHCH 862, as described above. A minimum of two other quantitative analytic courses that include multivariate analysis. These may be taken in the departments of Biostatistics, Epidemiology, Education, Health Policy and Management, Psychology, or Sociology, and must be approved by the student's advisor. In addition, students are also encouraged to take BIOS 511 or HPM 880 if they have little or no experience with a statistical package such as SAS (BIOS 511) or Stata (HPM 880), in their first semester of study. However, these programming classes do not count toward the analytic course requirements.

**7. Teaching Internship and Seminar (MHCH 840, Section 1, Teaching)**

Students are expected to spend an average of 5 hours per week on the internship; this should be negotiated with the internship preceptor and the student's academic advisor. In the semester of the internship students should register for MHCH 840, Section 1 (Teaching) for one course credit. See additional information later in the Teaching Internship section of this Handbook.

**8. Research Internship (MHCH 840, Section 3, Research)**

Students are expected to spend an average of 5 hours per week on the internship; this should be negotiated with the research internship preceptor and the student's academic advisor. In the semester of the internship students should register for MHCH 840, Section 3 (Research) for one course credit. See additional later in the Research Internship Section of this Handbook.

## **9. Formal Minor**

PhD students must declare a formal minor course of study in another department or program in the School of Public Health or in the Graduate School. Fifteen hours of coursework in the minor department are required. See additional information on this in the Formal Minor section of this Handbook.

## **10. Doctoral Dissertation (MHCH 994)**

Students must enroll in at least six credit hours of this course after the completion of all other required courses and successful completion of the written comprehensive exam.

After completion of required doctoral courses, students must pass the following in the order listed:

1. The MCH Written Comprehensive Examination;
2. The First Oral Examination, which is the defense of the dissertation proposal; and
3. The Second Oral Examination, which is the defense of the completed dissertation

## **Teaching Internship and Seminar (MHCH 840, Section 1)**

The teaching internship is intended to increase doctoral students' instructional skills and is also a service to the department. MCH courses that require teaching interns, including MHCH 701-702 (the master's 2-semester core course), MHCH 713, and MHCH 862, have priority as contexts for the fulfillment of the teaching internship. Students must complete their internships in one of these courses if a teaching intern is needed. Doctoral students may not serve as a teaching intern in MHCH 862 until they have successfully completed MHCH 801.

The Director of Graduate Studies assigns teaching internships, in consultation with course instructors and students registering for a teaching internship. The Director of Graduate Studies will send a list of potential teaching assistant position and description of responsibilities to doctoral students for the coming academic year (i.e. before the end of the fall 2017 semester, a description of available positions will be sent out for the 2018-2019 academic year). Students interested in serving as a teaching assistant for that following year will then apply by sending their resume, and may also rank courses in order of preference if students have such a preference. Interviews may then be scheduled for selection.

The teaching internship must include some direct teaching experience in the course or an associated lab. Other appropriate activities related to learning objectives of the internship include development of lectures and/or class activities, leading lab discussions, and grading classroom assignments (with preceptor review). Teaching interns also help with course logistics, including setting up the course Sakai site, arranging for course reserve readings, and communicating with students and guest lecturers, etc. In consultation with the preceptor (course instructor) and faculty advisor, the student will prepare an internship agreement that indicates at least three SPH or MCH competencies to be addressed in the internship. The agreement should also specify the activities to be undertaken to achieve the stated

competencies. With prior approval of the advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies, teaching internships outside of the department may count as the teaching internship. See additional information in Appendix B about internship agreements.

### Research Internship (MHCH 840, Section 3)

The research internship is intended to increase doctoral students' exposure to and participation in various stages of research and is also a service to the department. Collaborations with faculty who are preparing grant proposals have priority as contexts for the fulfillment of the research internship. If no faculty members are working on a grant application during the internship semester, the student will collaborate with a faculty member on other research activities, typically data analysis and manuscript preparation. Faculty advisor approval is needed where a research internship involves non-SPH faculty. Students should consult with their faculty advisor about options before registering for their internship. Appropriate research activities include, but are not limited to: literature search, retrieval, and/or summary; data analysis; writing; and manuscript review. In consultation with the faculty research internship preceptor and faculty advisor, the student prepares an internship agreement that indicates at least three MCH competencies to be addressed in the internship. The agreement should also specify the activities to be undertaken to achieve the stated competencies. See additional information below about internship agreements in Appendix B.

The internships are intended to be learning experiences for the student, in addition to any paid research or teaching assistantship or employment in public health practice that the student may have. The preceptor for the internship, who should be a full time or adjunct faculty member, is expected to meet with the student on a regular basis, generally, at least weekly. The student is not working for the preceptor or agency, but is participating in a course of study. Any product that is the result of the internship is intended to be a direct result of the student's learning experience.

Setting up an internship is the joint responsibility of the student and the faculty advisor. As with any course, there should be a statement of competencies addressed by the internship, and there should be a written agreement between the student and the preceptor, approved by the advisor, which acknowledges the acceptance by the preceptor of the teaching obligation and which specifies the schedule of the proposed internship, the competencies addressed, the expected activities, and the anticipated outcomes(s). See Appendix C for examples of written agreements for internships. A hard-copy signed agreement must be sent to the Student Services Manager, to be filed in the student's folder, or an electronic copy of the agreement, along with emails from the student, advisor, and preceptor acknowledging acceptance of the agreement, must be emailed to the Student Services Manager for electronic filing.

Students typically are not compensated for the internships because of the possibility that such compensation would change the expectations of the experience from those of a one-credit course to those of a job, where the expectations of the employer take priority over the needs of the student. The compensation for an internship is a credit toward the degree. However, if the proposed preceptor is willing to undertake the obligation to teach the student and to meet the

student's expectations with regard to their learning experience as the first priority, then payment for the internship may be considered for approval by the faculty advisor and Director of the Doctoral Program.

### Areas of Proficiency

Each doctoral student is expected to develop and demonstrate proficiency in at least three areas, and the student's selected minor:

1. core maternal and child health content,
2. research methods,
3. a chosen substantive area of specialization, and
4. The student's selected minor.

The substantive area is topic-specific and should be related to the area chosen for the student's dissertation research. In addition, the substantive area should be used to guide course selection. Even though there is not a particular number of credits required for the specialization area, the student, her/his advisor, and the Doctoral Curriculum Committee should ensure that the student takes enough coursework so that the student can successfully conduct research within that area. Collaborative research with her/his advisor or other faculty is another key mechanism by which the student will gain competency in their specialization. Following is a list of illustrative substantive areas of specialization selected by current and former doctoral students.

- family planning
- reproductive health services
- perinatal epidemiology
- perinatal health services
- infant mortality
- child care health and safety
- child abuse and neglect
- child survival in developing countries
- child health policy
- program and policy development for children with special health care needs
- breastfeeding
- health disparities
- adolescent health
- adolescent sexuality
- STIs, HIV/AIDS
- injury prevention
- substance abuse
- maternal morbidity and mortality
- neighborhood effects on health
- intimate partner violence/gender based violence

### Formal Minor

PhD students must also choose a fourth area of proficiency, namely, a minor course of study in another department in the School of Public Health or in the Graduate School.

For a minor to be recognized by the Graduate School (i.e., appear on the student's transcript), a student must minor in a **program that offers a graduate degree**. However, the MCH Department (but not the Graduate School) also recognizes a minor in Population Studies as fulfilling the department's minor requirements. The following disciplines are illustrative minors, based on their provision of extensive methods training and/or complementary theoretical/disciplinary foundations.



*In SPH:*

Epidemiology, Biostatistics, Health Behavior, Health Policy and Management, Environmental Sciences and Engineering. Nutrition does not offer a formal minor, but as with Population Studies, a student may choose to minor in Nutrition to fulfill MCH departmental requirements. However, this minor will not appear on their transcript, and the graduate student will need to work with a minor advisor in Nutrition to determine appropriate coursework.

*Outside SPH:*

Anthropology, Economics, Education, Psychology, Public Policy, Sociology, Population Studies (MCH recognition only)

Minors outside these areas, or self-designed minors, are possible but must be approved by the academic advisor, the Director of the Doctoral Program, and the Director of Graduate Studies.

The Graduate School requires at least 15 credit hours for the minor. According to the Graduate School Handbook: "All credits must be for courses listed (or cross-listed) in programs other than that of the major, and cannot also be counted toward the major. So, courses in the minor area cannot also be counted as MCH courses. A minor may consist of a set of related courses, some of which are listed by one program and some of which are listed by another. In most cases, the minor would not include courses from more than two programs. Only one program name will be listed as granting the minor, and the director of graduate studies in the minor program must agree to accept any courses from outside the minor program offerings." For students entering the doctoral program with a master's degree, coursework completed as part of a master's program cannot be included in the required 15 minor hours. For students in the MCH MtD track, minor coursework completed as part of the master's program can be applied toward the 15 minor hours as long as the minor coursework was not counted toward the master's major hours.

A minor advisor must be selected when a minor is declared. The minor advisor should be from the department in which the minor is being taken, or a department represented in the program. (For the latter, for example, a minor advisor for Population Studies might be from sociology, economics, etc. and must be a faculty fellow at the Carolina Population Center.) The minor advisor serves on the student's Doctoral Curriculum Committee and typically also on the Doctoral Dissertation Committee. The minor advisor and academic advisor cannot be the same person. A minor advisor for Population Studies may be a MCH faculty member who is also a faculty fellow at the Carolina Population Center

The minor coursework plan is approved by the student's Doctoral Curriculum Committee and by the department in which the minor is taken. Students are advised to contact the Student Services Manager and Director of Graduate Studies in their respective departments to determine required courses for their potential minors, since courses for minors are often taken in sequence and require advanced planning. Students may need to work with faculty in their minor department or take coursework during their 3<sup>rd</sup> year if minor courses conflict with required MCH courses.

For a minor in Population Studies, courses approved by the CPC Training Committee are eligible, but at least 6 credits toward the minor must be “substantive” population courses, as designated by the CPC Training Committee. Once approved, the plan reflected in the "[Minor Declaration Form](#)" is signed by the major and minor advisors, chairpersons of both departments, and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for the SPH. The original copy is sent to the Graduate School for retention in the student's permanent file. Copies should also be filed with the Student Services Manager in the minor department and the MCH Student Services Manager. Minimum requirements for a formal minor are also found in the *Graduate School Handbook*.

Each of the three competency areas and the minor area should be discussed and approved during the first Doctoral Curriculum Committee meeting. A faculty member with expertise in the selected specialty area should be included on the committee; this will typically be the student's academic advisor. These three competencies form the basis for the written comprehensive examination. When a minor area of study is chosen, the minor area will count as a fourth area of competence and will also be examined during the comprehensive exam.

As an example, minor requirements for selected departments are included as Appendix C in the Doctoral Handbook, but please check with the Departments about their minor requirements since these may change over time. Note also that some departments have formalized minor requirements; others rely on the recommendations of the faculty member serving as the minor advisor. It is imperative to check on the minor course requirements soon after being admitted to the doctoral program since some requirements may be sequential courses that need to be taken over more than one year's time.

## Department of Maternal and Child Health Recommendations

### Independent Study Courses

A student's Doctoral Curriculum Committee may recommend Independent Study courses to help the student achieve learning goals or to prepare for dissertation research. Students will need to contact relevant faculty members to arrange these courses. As with internships, a learning agreement should be drafted that states the goals of the independent study, activities to be undertaken as part of the independent study, and any “products” (e.g., manuscripts, reading lists, etc.) from the course of study.

### Statistical Computing and Data Management

Recognizing that statistical computing skills are a prerequisite for MCH research, students are advised to acquire proficiency in SAS, Stata, and/or other types of statistical programming software. Students without previous knowledge and experience in using SAS or Stata are strongly encouraged to enroll in BIOS 511 (for SAS), HPM 880 (for Stata), or an equivalent class. Students without previous knowledge and experience in using Stata are strongly encouraged to enroll in HPM 880 or an equivalent class. Students need a strong foundation in statistical computing and data management to successfully complete quantitative courses and dissertation research.

### **Multivariate Statistical Analysis**

Typically, students take statistical analysis courses as part of a multi-course series. Most, but not all, analytical series begin in the Spring and are offered as two or 3 course series. However, some students choose courses from different series to meet their individual needs. Biostatistics, Epidemiology, Health Behavior, Health Policy and Management, Social Work, and Sociology are popular departments that offer series in multivariate statistics. Most series will require BIOS 600 (or its equivalent) as a prerequisite, and some series will have additional requirements. Students should email the relevant department to confirm course sequencing, prerequisites, and availability. Additional coursework in multivariate statistical analysis beyond the two required courses is strongly encouraged. Appendix E. contains information about a variety of useful methods courses, but please check with the Department offering the course as course offerings may change.

### **A Course in Which Students Analyze Data and Report Their Findings**

Students are encouraged to enroll in a course or complete projects with faculty through which they can apply their statistical and computing skills. In particular, students are strongly encouraged to collaborate in the development, writing, and publication of peer-reviewed manuscripts. This may be done via courses that are routinely offered or via an independent study course or research internship.

### **Additional Theory Coursework**

MHCH 859 is an introduction to theories that are applicable to MCH topics. Students are encouraged to complete additional coursework that includes significant theoretical content as additional preparation for dissertation development. This is ideally accomplished through minor coursework.

### **Auditing Courses**

See Graduate School requirements

### **Collaborations with Faculty**

Students are encouraged to seek out opportunities with their advisors and other faculty that will promote professional development. This includes activities such as collaborating in the review of manuscripts submitted to peer-review journals, presenting empirical work at professional conferences, participating in crafting responses to peer-reviewers for journal and grant submissions, and mentoring more junior students.

## **Master's to Doctorate (MtD) Track**

The Department of Maternal and Child Health has established a doctoral degree track for students who hold a bachelor's degree but have not yet completed a master's degree. Students in this degree track earn either the MCH Master of Public Health (MPH) degree or the MCH Master of Science in Public Health (MSPH) degree before completing the requirements to earn the PhD. As with the original MCH PhD track that requires a master's degree for eligibility, the Masters-to-Doctorate (MtD) track is intended for applicants who plan a research career, whether in basic or applied research, that focuses on the MCH population.

## Eligibility

Applicants to this track must have completed a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. The bachelor's degree must have been awarded by the time of matriculation into the MtD program. Previous experience in public health settings, while not required, is strongly encouraged. Other Graduate School requirements apply.

## Curriculum Requirements

Students enrolled in the MtD track complete a minimum of 103-credit hours (e.g., 50 credit hours for the master's degree, 38 credit hours for the PhD, and 15 credit hours for the minor, if no minor credits were completed as a master's student. If minor credits were completed in the master's program, and those credits did not count toward the minimum master's degree major requirements, these masters hours can be applied toward 15 hours minor degree requirement. Coursework towards the masters includes the 12-credit Gillings MPH Core, two core MCH courses, and three MCH skills courses. MPH master's students are **ALSO** required to complete: at least eight credit hours (equivalent to eight weeks of full-time work), and MSPH master's students are required to take at least six weeks) of field training; an oral comprehensive examination; and an empirical master's paper that is suitable for journal publication. More detailed requirements are listed below.

## Completion of Minor Coursework

Students earning a PhD must complete a formal minor, which entails a minimum of 15 credit hours in the minor discipline. Minor courses completed while earning the masters' degree CAN count toward the minimum 15 credit hours required for a formal minor, if they are not part of the 50 credit hours counted toward the master's major. However, those credit hours CANNOT count toward the 38 major credits needed to earn the PhD (after completion of the masters' degree).

## Eligibility to proceed to doctoral study

After successfully completing all the requirements for the MPH or MSPH, a MtD student is eligible for doctoral study. A student may proceed to take doctoral coursework and masters coursework in the same semester if they are finishing credits for their MPH or MSPH. For example, if a student has three credit hours left to complete their Master's after their first year, and is taking 12 hours in the fall semester, they may count three hours towards their Master's and the remaining nine towards their doctoral requirements.

**Once eligible for doctoral study, a student on the MtD track MUST enroll for the next regular semester (fall or spring) after the master's degree is completed.** In doctoral study students complete additional required MCH doctoral coursework, additional multivariate statistics courses, a formal minor if working towards the PhD, written comprehensive exams, and a doctoral dissertation.

## Application Process

Applicants for the MtD track will be reviewed and offered admission by recommendation of the Doctoral Committee. Applicants should apply to the doctoral program, and in their personal statement indicate that they are applying to the MtD program. They should also indicate whether they are interested in being considered for the terminal master's program if they are not offered

admission to the MtD track. Entry into the terminal master's program does not preclude the opportunity to reapply for the doctoral program after completing the master's degree.

## **Gillings School of Global Public Health and Department of Maternal and Child Health Requirements for the MPH and MSPH Degrees**

The MPH and MSPH requirements for students in the MtD track are identical to those master's students not in the MtD track, **except** that the Master's Paper (MHCH 992) of those in the MtD track must be completed through original research (most typically an empirical secondary data analysis). See the MCH Master's Handbook for the master's degree requirements.

## **Culminating Experiences: Comprehensive Exams and Dissertation**

The culminating experiences provide students an opportunity to synthesize, integrate and apply knowledge and skills learned in coursework and other learning experiences and require students to demonstrate attainment of program competencies.

## **The Written Comprehensive Examination**

The Maternal & Child Health Department fulfills the Graduate School's written exam requirement by having students take the MCH Doctoral Written Comprehensive Exam.

### **Purpose**

The purposes of the MCH Doctoral Written Comprehensive Exam are:

- To document candidates' mastery of the MCH knowledge base and current MCH practice (as covered in the core master's and doctoral course sequence MHCH 701-702); and
- To document candidates' knowledge and use of theory, review of the literature, research design, and analytic approaches in addressing a MCH question (as covered in MHCH 801, MHCH 859, and MHCH 862).

## Eligibility to Take the Exam

Students are eligible to take the exam after they have successfully passed all of the required MCH core and analytic coursework, and the students' Curriculum Committee members agree the student is ready to take the exam. Students may take the exam if they still have additional coursework for their minor or substantive areas with approval from their committee. In exceptional circumstances, students may take the exam before they have completed required MCH and analytic coursework, with approval from the Curriculum Committee and the student may complete one of their two required internships after the exam with the approval of their curriculum committee.

## Exam Format

The exam is taken over 3 days; typically days are consecutive. Allowance for a "break day" is possible with approval of the Director of Graduate Studies and Director of the Doctoral Program. Students have access to one question per day via email or Sakai, and will have 6 hours (plus an hour for breaks) to complete each question. Students access a question beginning at 9:00 AM and are required to email their answer by 4:00 PM of that same day, or may receive the question at 8:00 AM and email their answer by 3:00 PM. Student preferences regarding times will be accommodated by the Student Services Manager, and student preferences will be solicited by the Student Services Manager one week before the exam. The exam format is that of a take-home, open-book exam.

If a student perceives ambiguity in a question or has some other problem regarding the question, the student should state their interpretation of the question and answer accordingly. Students may not ask questions to the faculty about the meaning or interpretation of questions.

Students must answer three questions, or one question per day. These questions will be the same for all students:

- two questions from the core master's/doctoral course sequence; and
- one question on theory/literature review/research design/analytic methods.

## Exam Coordination and Development

The Director of Graduate Studies and the Doctoral Program Director coordinate the exam process. Students who plan to take comprehensive exams should notify the Department's Student Services Manager at the beginning of the semester in which they hope to take the exam. The Student Services Manager provides the Director of Graduate Studies and the Director of the Doctoral Program with a list of these students and the names of faculty who serve as academic advisors for these students.

The two exam questions that document candidates' knowledge of core MCH content and practice are written by the instructors of MHCH 701-702 and faculty with expertise in these areas.

The exam question that documents candidates' knowledge of theory/literature review/research design/analytic methods is written by the instructors of MHCH 801, MHCH 859 and faculty with expertise in these areas.

## Exam Timing

The Director of Graduate Studies determines the timing of the exam. Typically the exam is offered once a year in late spring, when most students are eligible to take the exam. **The comprehensive exam must take place before the end of the spring academic semester.** All doctoral students taking the exam must take it on the same dates. Doctoral cohorts are responsible for sending their preference for timing of the exam to the student services manager and the Director of the Doctoral Program their availability and preference for exam timing by March 31st. It is preferable that cohorts consult with each other and send a single email with the preferences and availability of the group. If this coordination is not possible, or if there are scheduling challenges within a cohort, students should alert the Student Services Manager, who will help facilitate scheduling. During some years, the exam may be offered at a different time of the year, with this timing determined by the Director of Graduate Studies after reviewing the needs of students and faculty availability for exam preparation/grading.

## Honor Code, Style, and Response Length

Students must sign an Honor Code pledge for each day of the exam. The Student Services Manager will send the Honor Code to the students taking the exam one week before the first day of the exam so that students may prepare it for the exam. All exam responses must include citations and a reference list. Reference lists and citations must be in AMA format. All exam responses must be word-processed according to the following specifications: double-spaced, one-inch margins on all four sides, and font size 11. Each exam question includes a suggested length for each part of the response. Answers are limited to six pages, excluding references.

## Grading

Two faculty members, including one who participated in writing the question, anonymously grade answers to each exam question. All examination answers are individually graded either pass (P) or fail (F). In addition to assigning a grade, each examiner is expected to provide the student with a narrative evaluation. Examination committee members have at least one week to read their assigned questions and submit their grades and narrative evaluations to the Director of Graduate Studies. If, after consulting with each other, the two faculty graders disagree on the grade for a given answer, another faculty member other than the student's academic advisor will be asked by the Director of Graduate Studies to read the answer to determine which grade will prevail. Students are notified of their grades via email and a sealed letter from the Director of Graduate Studies, usually within two weeks of exam completion.

## Inadequate Exam Performance Procedures

### Failing one question at the first exam attempt

Failing one question on the first exam attempt is considered a “conditional pass.” Students who fail one question on the first attempt must rewrite their answer to that one question. Failing the re-written question constitutes failing the exam, and is reported to the Graduate School. When the first exam is failed, the student must take an entirely new exam (a second test of three new questions) after waiting at least three months. If the student fails one or more questions on the second exam, the entire exam will be considered a failure and is reported to the Graduate School. With two exam failures a student is ineligible for further graduate work in the MCH department.

### Failing two or more questions on the first exam attempt

Failing two or more questions on the first exam attempt is considered as a failure of the exam, and is reported to the Graduate School. Students who fail two or more questions on the first exam attempt must take an entirely new, three-question make-up exam after waiting at least three months. . If students fail one or more questions on the second exam, the entire exam is considered a failure and is reported to the Graduate School. With two exam failures a student is ineligible for further graduate work in the MCH department.

The timing of second exams will be set by the Director of Graduate Studies in consultation with student advisors and will depend on the needs of other students in the department and faculty resources. Students must be registered in the semester in which they take the initial exam, rewrite an individual question, or take a re-test of the entire examination.

## The Dissertation

### Doctoral Dissertation Committee

The Doctoral Dissertation Committee is formed shortly after the student **passes** the MCH Doctoral Written Comprehensive Examination. It consists of no fewer than five members, at least three of whom are full-time, tenured, tenure-track, or fixed term members of the regular MCH faculty. One member of the Doctoral Dissertation Committee must be the student’s minor advisor. The Chair of the Doctoral Dissertation Committee (i.e, who is typically the student’s academic advisor) is the faculty member primarily responsible for assuring that the student meets all the necessary commitments to earn the degree, and as such, must be a full time, tenured, tenure-track or fixed term member of the regular MCH faculty. The Dissertation Advisor (i.e., the faculty member who works most closely with the student on their research project) can be from another department or institution. It is possible for a faculty member from another department to chair an MCH dissertation committee, but this must be approved by the student’s MCH academic advisor, the Director of the MCH Doctoral Program, the Director of Graduate Studies in MCH, and the Graduate School. Likewise, if a student’s committee membership is not majority MCH faculty, committee makeup must be approved from the aforementioned parties.



Students will then need to work with the Director of the MCH Doctoral Program to send a letter to the Graduate School, and the Graduate School must approve this committee membership. Other members of the committee may be "Special Appointees" (fixed term graduate faculty) approved by the Graduate School. Arrangements can also be made for appointed adjunct MCH faculty to participate on dissertation committees.

Although the student cannot officially form their dissertation committee before passing their comprehensive exams, students are encouraged to begin conversations with potential committee members during their 2<sup>nd</sup> year of study. Furthermore, students are encouraged to use MHCH 859, taken in the fall semester of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of study, to work towards a grant for a dissertation proposal.

### Fixed Term Graduate Faculty as Members of the Dissertation Committee

Persons may be appointed to the Graduate Faculty for fixed term membership. Fixed term appointees to the Graduate Faculty may serve on committees of students and, at the request of the program and approval of the Graduate School, may chair a doctoral committee. These appointees may include: faculty emeriti, clinical or research professors, scholars from other institutions, independent scholars, and practitioners. They are appointed for terms not greater than five years in length, though such terms may be renewed for subsequent five-year terms.

Nominations for Fixed Term Graduate Faculty are forwarded by program directors/chairs, and must include an indication that the prospective appointee has been reviewed by the academic program and found to have appropriately high qualifications. In the MCH department, the student's academic advisor emails the Student Services Manager the CV of the nominated person, as well as a brief description of their qualifications and the Student Services Manager will submit a request to the Graduate School electronically through the [Recommendation for Fixed Term Appointment system](#). Any restrictions the nominating unit wishes to place on the appointee's service should be specified by the program to the appointee at the time of the nomination.

**NOTE: Holding Fixed Term Graduate Faculty status confers no other rights or responsibilities other than the ability to serve on student committees. This is NOT the same as a fixed term appointment for teaching at the University.**

### Committee Process

Prospective Doctoral Dissertation Committee members are invited individually by the student and his/her academic advisor to be members of the committee. Although Doctoral Curriculum Committee members frequently continue to serve on the student's Doctoral Dissertation Committee, usually only those whose expertise is most relevant to the student's dissertation project will remain.

The Doctoral Dissertation Committee is approved by the Director of Graduate Studies using the "Report of Doctoral Committee Composition" form (<http://gradschool.unc.edu/pdf/wdcomm.pdf>) which must be transmitted to the Graduate School for approval. The student begins the process by notifying the Student Services Manager of the intent to defend and/or the exam date. The student and his/her doctoral committee chair (usually the academic advisor) are responsible for

completing the form, obtaining the signatures, and returning the form to the Department's Student Services Manager, who then submits it to the Graduate School.

Each doctoral student is expected to consult with members of the Doctoral Dissertation Committee at regular intervals throughout the progress of his or her research.

The responsibilities of Doctoral Dissertation Committee members are to:

1. Examine and approve the dissertation proposal, as part of the oral examination required for admission to candidacy,
2. Consult with the student throughout the progress of the dissertation research, and
3. Participate in the final oral examination in defense of the dissertation.

### **Dissertation Proposal Content**

Each candidate is required to write a dissertation reflecting research of such scope, originality, and skill in presentation as to indicate that the student has a command of the subject and has demonstrated an ability to contribute fresh knowledge or perspectives on the subject. In addition, the dissertation should demonstrate mastery of the research methodology of the discipline. The proposal format and length are determined by the nature of the research, but a typical proposal should include the following areas.

- Abstract
- Specific Aims
- Background and Significance (this section would include a critical literature review and the conceptual/theoretical basis of the project)
- Preliminary Studies (this refers to studies done by the student if pertinent)
- Research Design and Methods (including such topics as the study design, study sample and recruitment procedures, assessment tools and procedures, statistical analysis plan, study timetable, human subjects concerns)

When developing the proposal, students should consult with all the members of their committee. In addition, it may be helpful for students to examine past MCH dissertations which are available online via the UNC library.

When the Doctoral Dissertation Committee Chair agrees that the proposal is ready to be defended, it should be distributed at least two weeks before the date of the oral examination to all members of the committee. The student should notify every member of the committee of the time and place of the examination. The student must pass the written comprehensive exam prior to scheduling the oral examination / dissertation proposal defense.

### **First Oral Examination: Dissertation Proposal Defense**

Usually the first formal meeting with the Doctoral Dissertation Committee is an oral defense of the dissertation proposal. Ordinarily, the student prepares a 20-30 minute presentation of the

proposal, and committee members pose questions and issues for discussion. It is sometimes helpful, however, to hold a preliminary planning meeting to solicit input and discussion from committee members as a group about conceptual or methodological issues relevant to the proposal.

A grade of Pass will be based on the presentation of an acceptable proposal and demonstration of a satisfactory level of knowledge on the dissertation subject and related areas. The student must receive a passing grade from two-thirds of the members of the committee. If the dissertation proposal is not approved (i.e., the student fails the oral exam), the examination is rescheduled after revision or completion of a new dissertation proposal. A student who fails the first oral examination twice becomes ineligible to continue graduate study or to take an examination a third time without special approval by the MCH Department and the Administrative Board of the Graduate School.

### **Final Oral Examination: Dissertation Final Defense**

The second formal meeting of the Doctoral Dissertation Committee is the "final oral examination." During this meeting, the committee examines the student on the dissertation for approval. The "defense" is usually composed of an "open" presentation by the student (which anyone may attend), followed by a "closed" meeting which includes only the student and the dissertation committee. **Notice of the defense date and location, which includes a (maximum) one-page abstract of the dissertation, is distributed to SPH faculty at least one month before the defense.** Graduate School guidelines require that no fewer than five persons constitute the committee for the final oral examination. Of these, a majority of the members of the student's doctoral committee and a majority of the persons approving the student's doctoral dissertation must be full time tenured, tenure-track, or fixed term members of the Graduate Faculty.

It is the responsibility of the Dissertation Advisor to see that the draft is in an appropriate form for evaluation by committee members. The committee should have a copy of the draft at least two weeks prior to the final defense. The oral defense is held only after all members of the committee have had an adequate opportunity to review the dissertation. The committee may, at the time of the final oral examination (but not later), require alterations and corrections. The dissertation advisor is responsible for verifying that the changes required by the committee have been made but may delegate this responsibility to the committee members who imposed the requirements. A student passes the final oral examination only upon approval of at least two-thirds of the members of the examining committee, including a majority of the MCH members. If a second defense is needed, it must occur within the original eight calendar years allowed for completion of the doctoral program. A third defense is allowed only with special approval of the MCH Department and the Administrative Board of The Graduate School.

### **Dissertation Format**

Students in MCH have three dissertation format options. One is the traditional monograph. The second and third options are variations on a manuscript format. For the manuscript format, a student may choose to do a three-paper dissertation or to do a two-paper dissertation, each with

an opening and closing chapter. With the two-paper format, at least one of the papers must be submitted to a peer-review journal before the final dissertation defense. This submission must be documented by a confirmation letter or email from the journal editor; documentation should be provided to the dissertation chair by the time of the final defense.

Some studies that offer data for secondary analysis require that any manuscripts based on those data be reviewed and approved by a parent study oversight committee before submission to a peer-review journal. In some instances, significant lead time may be required to complete the review and approval process. Students selecting the two-paper option should investigate the parent study's procedures on this issue early on, so that any requirements of the parent study may be factored into the defense time frame. Requests that manuscript submission to the parent study's oversight committee substitute for journal submission (in exceptional circumstances) must be individually reviewed and approved by the Doctoral Committee.

### Selecting the Dissertation Format

In selecting the format, the student must consult with her/his advisor and dissertation committee to determine the most appropriate format, given the dissertation subject matter and organizational possibilities. Choice between the two and three paper option should be based on the number of research questions that merit separate treatment in "stand alone" manuscripts. There should be agreement between the student and committee at the end of a successful oral defense of the proposal as to what the format will be. For the manuscript formats, it is acceptable for students to submit journal length papers that are formatted according to target journal requirements. However, the student should confirm that their selected format conforms to Graduate School specifications regarding format and content (see below). For the manuscript formats, students should use additional sections or appendices to provide the detail traditionally included in a monograph but not journal articles. For example, an introductory chapter – typically based heavily on the dissertation proposal – would provide the detailed literature critique that is not usually included in empirical journal articles. A closing chapter would synthesize findings across dissertation papers and discuss their implications for future research, practice, and/or policy.

### Authorships on Dissertation Papers

Conventions vary across disciplines, but the collaborative nature of public health typically leads to committee co-authorships on dissertation manuscripts. The dissertation chair/advisor is usually a co-author on all publications derived from the dissertation. Other committee members may also serve as co-authors, depending on their preferences and the significance of their contributions to the manuscripts. Dissertation chairs and students should collaborate on the negotiation of authorship roles, with the chair and/or advisor leading this process as needed. Early discussion and agreement on authorship is advisable, although progression through dissertation development and writing may lead to later, mutually agreed upon, changes in responsibilities and authorships.

## Dissertation Submission Guidelines

Dissertations must be submitted to the Graduate School according to the schedule in the Calendar of Events (see *Graduate School Record*). Dissertations must be prepared in accordance with the standards in *The Graduate School Theses and Dissertation Guide*, available from the Graduate School at the following website: <http://gradschool.unc.edu/etdguide>. On matters of form, the student should also consult published manuals of style, and for manuscript format dissertations, journal style requirements. Approved technical processes for reproducing special materials or for reproducing the entire thesis or dissertation are described in the Graduate School's *Guide*. All dissertations are submitted electronically to the Graduate School. **Graduating students should also submit the dissertation cover page, which includes the final dissertation title, to the MCH Department's Student Services Manager and to the Administrative Assistant to the Department Chair.**

## The IRB

All student research must be reviewed by a member of the **UNC Non-Biomedical Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB)**, which determines whether the proposed research is exempt from IRB review (not human subject research, NHR), qualifies for expedited review, or requires full board review. Regardless of the kind of review, all applications use the same submission form. Some students will collect their own primary data, and others will analyze data collected by someone else (secondary data). Because it is not always clear whether secondary data analysis constitutes human subjects research for IRB purposes, students proposing secondary analyses must submit an application form. Go to <http://irbis.unc.edu> to submit your application to the IRB.

As previously mentioned, all students must complete training in the responsible conduct of research. For information on training, go to the UNC website of the Office of Human Research Ethics: <http://ohre.unc.edu/index.php>.

# Graduation and Afterwards

## Evaluations and Exit Interviews

The doctoral program requests that all graduating doctoral students provide written feedback about their experiences in the MCH department via a set of exit interview questions sent to the student by the Student Services Manager. Students should also complete a final assessment of competencies. These items should be completed by the end of the semester in which the student plans the final defense of their dissertation. The student should notify their academic advisor and the Student Services Manager that they have completed the exit interview questions. Completion of this evaluation should be followed by an in-person exit interview conducted by either the student's academic advisor, or if requested by the student, the Director of the Doctoral Program.

## **Commencement and Doctoral Hooding Ceremony**

In addition to the University and School of Public Health Commencement ceremonies, the Graduate School conducts a hooding ceremony for graduating doctoral students each spring. This ceremony is a long-standing tradition in graduate education in which the faculty advisor/dissertation chair places the hood of the commencement regalia on his/her doctoral student. This ceremonial hooding symbolizes the completion of doctoral training and the special bond between the student and dissertation mentor. Unless the student's dissertation chair requests otherwise, the MCH dissertation committee chair participates in this ceremony with the student. For more information see <http://www.unc.edu/commencement/hoodinginfo.html>

## **Alumni Follow Up**

To monitor the effectiveness of the programs we offer, including assessment of areas that need improvement, it is essential for the Department to track where graduates are working or continuing their education after graduation. Toward this end, the Department's Student Services Manager will send a form to all graduates requesting updated contact information.

## Appendices

Appendix A. Forms, Checklists, and Sample Documents

Appendix B. Sample Internship Documents

Appendix C. Minor Requirements by Department/Program

Appendix D. Other Course Options

Appendix E. Example Materials for Curriculum Committee Meetings

Appendix F. Illustrative Sequence & Timetable for Doctoral Degree Tracks

Appendix G. Competencies

## Appendix A. Forms, Checklists, and Sample Documents



## **Appendix A1: Required and Recommended Coursework by Semester**

Courses in bold are requirements for MCH students to take in the below sequence. If a student wishes to take these courses out of sequence, they must obtain approval from their advisor and the Director of the Doctoral Program. Courses with \* indicate that students must take these courses (or an equivalent substitute) if they did not take a similar course in their Master's work. Courses with a + (or an equivalent substitute) are recommended for those without exposure to a statistical package, though abbreviated statistical package training is available through short courses at the Odum Institute. The sequence of these courses is not required as with required MCH doctoral courses, but please note that BIOS 600 is a prerequisite for multivariate statistical courses, and EPID 710 is a prerequisite for many advanced epidemiology classes. Students should work with their advisor to determine the most appropriate sequencing for their goals and needs, since each student's circumstances will be different. MtD sequencing will be slightly different due to coursework taken in the Master's year(s).

### **Fall of 1<sup>st</sup> Year:**

<b>MHCH 701</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Foundations in MCH</b>
<b>MHCH 801</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Doctoral Seminar</b>
BIOS 600	3	Principles of Statistical Inference*
EPID 600	3	Principles of Epidemiology for Public Health* <b>OR</b> ;
EPID 710	5	Fundamentals of Epidemiology*
BIOS 511	3	Introduction to Statistical Computing and Research Data+ <b>OR</b> ;
HPM 880	1	Mathematical and Stata Tutorial+
XXX	X	Minor Coursework (As possible if a student enters with BIOS/EPI Coursework from Master's)

### **Spring of 1<sup>st</sup> Year:**

<b>MHCH 702</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Foundations in MCH</b>
XXX	3	A course in multivariate statistics (usually linear regression)
XXX	3	Minor, substantive, research methods, or elective course
XXX	3	Minor, substantive, research methods, or elective course

### **Fall of 2<sup>nd</sup> Year:**

<b>MHCH 859</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Theoretical Perspectives on Maternal and Child Health</b>
XXX	3	An advanced course in multivariate statistics (possibly a graduation from the student's previous course in multivariate statistics)
XXX	3	Minor, substantive, research methods, or elective course
XXX	3	Minor, substantive, research methods, or elective course

### **Spring of 2<sup>nd</sup> Year:**

<b>MHCH 862</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Maternal and Child Health Program Evaluation</b>
XXX	3	Minor, substantive, or multivariate statistics course
XXX	3	Minor, substantive, research methods, or elective course
XXX	3	Minor, substantive, research methods, or elective course

At least one of the required internships (teaching or research) must be completed by the time the student takes their comprehensive exam. Other courses towards minor or elective hours may be taken after comprehensive exams with approval from the Curriculum Committee.

**Department of Maternal and Child Health**  
**Doctoral Checklist**  
*(Revised July 31, 2017)*

<b>MCH Doctoral Requirements – Students Entering with Master’s</b>	
MHCH 701/702 (if MPH or MSPH not in MCH) (6 credits**)	6
MHCH 801: Doctoral Seminar (3 credits)	3
MHCH 859: Theoretical Perspectives on Maternal and Child Health (3 credits)	3
MHCH 862: MCH Evaluation Research (3 credits)	3
Research Methods Courses (6 credits)	6
<b>Two Multivariate Statistics Courses (beyond master's work; min 6 credits)</b>	
1. [Course name]	3
2.	3
<b>MHCH 840: Two Internships (1 credit for each of 2 semesters)</b>	
1. Teaching, semester completed	1
2. Research, semester completed	1
MHCH 802: Teaching Seminar (1 credit)	1
<b>Electives in substantive area (Determined in Consultation with the Doctoral Curriculum Committee)**</b>	
1. [Course name]	
2.	
3.	
Written Doctoral Comprehensive Exam [date completed]	
Oral defense of Dissertation Proposal [data completed]	
MHCH 840 Dissertation & final oral defense (min 6 credits)	6
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS WITHOUT MINOR COURSEWORK</b>	<b>38</b>

**Graduate School Requirements Formal Minor**

Minor Department/program: [Name]

Formal approval by MCH and minor department [Confirm approval]	<input type="text"/>
Approval sent to Graduate School [Confirm sent]	<input type="text"/>
<b>Minor Requirements (15 hours)</b>	
1. [Course name]	<input type="text" value="3"/>
2.	<input type="text" value="3"/>
3.	<input type="text" value="3"/>
4.	<input type="text" value="3"/>
5.	<input type="text" value="3"/>
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS MINOR COURSEWORK</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS MAJOR AND MINOR COURSEWORK</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Recommended Courses and Electives</b>	
Bios 511, HPM 880 or Alternative (SAS/Stata skills)	<input type="text"/>
Independent Study	<input type="text"/>
Theory-related course	<input type="text"/>

**Department of Maternal and Child Health**  
**Master's to Doctorate (MtD) Checklist**  
*(Revised July 31, 2014)*

[NOTE: master's requirements appear after doctoral checklists]

<b>MCH Doctoral Requirements – MtD Students completing no minor coursework in master's curriculum</b>	
MHCH 801: Doctoral Seminar (3 credits)	3
MHCH 859: Theoretical Foundations of Maternal and Child Health (3 credits)	3
MHCH 862: MCH Evaluation Research (3 credits)	3
Research Methods (6 credits)	6
<b>Two Multivariate Statistics Courses (beyond master's work; min 6 credits)</b>	
1.	3
2.	3
<b>MHCH 840: Two Internships (1 credit for each of 2 semesters)</b>	
1. Teaching, semester completed	1
2. Research, semester completed	1
<b>MHCH 802: Teaching Seminar (1 credit)</b>	1
<b>Electives in substantive area (Determined in Consultation with Curriculum Committee)</b>	
1. [Course name]	3
2.	3
3.	2
Written Doctoral Comprehensive Exam [date completed]	
Oral defense of Dissertation Proposal [date completed]	
MHCH 994 Dissertation & final oral defense (6 credits)	6
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS WITHOUT MINOR COURSEWORK</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Graduate School Requirements Formal Minor</b>	
Minor Department/program:	

Formal approval by MCH and minor department [Confirm approval]	<input type="text"/>
Approval sent to Graduate School [Confirm sent]	<input type="text"/>
<b>Minor Requirements (15 hours)</b>	
1. [Course name]	<input type="text" value="3"/>
2.	<input type="text" value="3"/>
3.	<input type="text" value="3"/>
4.	<input type="text" value="3"/>
5.	<input type="text" value="3"/>
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS MINOR COURSEWORK</b>	<b><input type="text" value="15"/></b>
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS MAJOR AND MINOR COURSEWORK</b>	<b><input type="text" value="53"/></b>
<b>Recommended Courses and Electives</b>	
Bios 511 or Alternative (SAS skills)	<input type="text"/>
Independent Study	<input type="text"/>
Theory-related course	<input type="text"/>

**MCH Doctoral Requirements – Students completing MtD with some minor coursework completed in master’s curriculum**

MHCH 801: Doctoral Seminar (3 credits)	3
MHCH 859: Theoretical Foundations of Maternal and Child Health (3 credits)	3
MHCH 862: MCH Program Evaluation (3 credits)	3
Research Methods (6 credits)	6
<b>Two Multivariate Statistics Courses (beyond master's work; min 6 credits)</b>	
1. [Course name]	3
2.	3
MHCH 840: Two Internships (1 credit for each of 2 semesters)	
1. Teaching, semester completed	1
2. Research, semester completed	1
MHCH 802: Teaching Seminar (1 credit)	1
Electives in substantive area (Determined in Consultation with Curriculum Committee)	
1. [Course name]	3
2.	3
3.	2
Written Doctoral Comprehensive Exam [date completed]	
Oral defense of Dissertation Proposal [date completed]	
MHCH 994 Dissertation & final oral defense (6 credits)	6
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS WITHOUT MINOR COURSEWORK</b>	<b>38</b>

**Graduate School Requirements Formal Minor**

Minor Department/program: [Name]	
Formal approval by MCH and minor department [Confirm approved]	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approval sent to Graduate School [Confirm sent]	<input type="checkbox"/>

15 Credit hours completed in minor	
<b>Minor Requirements (15 hours total required; subtract master's minor credits)</b>	
1. Completed in master's curriculum: [Course name]	3*
2. Completed in master's curriculum: [Course name]	3*
3. Completed in master's curriculum: [Course name]	3*
4. Completed in doctoral curriculum: [Course name]	3
5. Completed in doctoral curriculum: [Course name]	3
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS MINOR COURSEWORK DOCTORAL</b>	<b>6</b>
	[15 incl. masters ]
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS MAJOR AND MINOR COURSEWORK</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Recommended Courses and Electives</b>	
Bios 511, Stata 880, or Alternative (SAS/Stata skills)	
Independent Study	
Theory-related course	

\*This example shows 9 credit hours in minor completed as a masters' student, so only 6 additional hours are needed to complete the 15 minor credits. **[NOTE: minor credits completed during the master's curriculum cannot count toward MCH major requirements for the master's degree.]**

## MPH Requirements MtD Students

<b>SPH Core Courses</b>	
<b>Four public health courses, at least 3 in non-MCH departments (12 credits):</b>	
SPHG 711, 712, 713	6
SPHG 721, 722	6
<b><i>At least one course relevant to health services delivery systems</i></b>	
MHCH 701-702 meets this requirement (6 credits)	6
<b>Three skills courses (10 credits), one of which must be:</b>	
1. MHCH 713/713L: Research Methods in MCH (or approved substitute)	4
2.	3
3.	3
<b>Four electives (may be MCH or outside MCH) (12 credits)</b>	
1.	3
2.	3
3.	3
4.	3
<b>Field Training (MHCH 717, MHCH 718) (8 credits)</b>	8
<b>Oral Masters Comprehensive Exam</b>	
<b>MHCH 992 Master's Paper (3 credits)</b>	3
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS MAJOR MASTER'S COURSEWORK</b>	<b>51</b>

[This example shows no minor coursework during master's curriculum.]



**Doctoral Curriculum Committee (DCC)**

*Composed of at least three members, at least two of whom are full-time MCH faculty  
(The DCC is a departmental requirement; form is for advisor and student services manager)*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*First meeting at end of first semester*

Date

: \_\_\_\_\_

DCC members:

_____	_____
_____	Minor Advisor
_____	_____
_____	_____

*Final meeting to determine eligibility to take written comprehensive exam*

Date of Meeting

: \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated semester/year of exam:

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Advisor

## MCH Written Comprehensive Examination

*(This is an internal Department Form to track student progress  
There is a different form for reporting results to the Graduate School.)*

Date Began:

Date Completed:

Grade (high  
pass/pass/fail)

Retake (only if necessary)

Number of questions in retake: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Began:

Date Completed:

Grade (high  
pass/pass/fail)

**Exam outcome reported to Graduate school:**

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date (retake)** \_\_\_\_\_

DEPARTMENT OF MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH  
Gillings School of Global Public Health

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*Proposal for Formal Minor*

(Please see <http://gradschool.unc.edu/documents/minordeclaration.pdf>)

## Forms to Submit

1. Report of Doctoral Curriculum Committee composition (filed when Doctoral Curriculum Committee is convened)  
*(The curriculum committee is a departmental requirement; form is for use of advisor and student services manager; not submitted to graduate school))*

Date submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Report of written comprehensive exam (filed when exam has been completed)

Date submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Report of Doctoral Dissertation Committee composition (filed when Doctoral Dissertation Committee is convened)

Date submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Report of first oral comprehensive examination (filed with student defends dissertation proposal)

Date submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Report of approved dissertation project (filed when student has been admitted to candidacy)

Date submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Report of the final oral comprehensive examination (filed after final dissertation defense)

Date submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

**Department of Maternal and Child Health  
Required Course Exemption Form**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor

Core Course to be Exempted  
from: \_\_\_\_\_

Basis for Exemption (please check one below):

\_\_\_\_\_ Equivalent course (request must include: course description and/or syllabus; copy of transcript; and copy of table of contents of textbook used, if any)

Title of Course: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Equivalent experience (attach detailed description of experience, including relevant titles, institutions/organizations, specific activities, and dates)

\_\_\_\_\_ Qualifying examination (this option is available at the instructor's discretion)

---

Required Signatures

Does this action have the support of the student's advisor?  
Explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

ف Yes

ف No

\_\_\_\_\_  
Major Advisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Does this action have the support of the course instructor?  
Explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

ف Yes

ف No

\_\_\_\_\_  
Required Course Instructor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Does this action have the support of the Director of Graduate  
Studies?  
Explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

ف Yes

ف No

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Graduate Studies

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## Appendix B. Sample Internship Documents

**Proposal for MHCH 840 (001): Teaching Internship  
July 27, 2013**

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<b>Student:</b>	Jane Doe
<b>Faculty:</b>	Lew Margolis
<b>Semester:</b>	Fall 2013
<b>Course:</b>	MHCH 701: Foundations of Maternal and Child Health
<b>Credit Hours:</b>	1
<b>Schedule:</b>	Minimum of 10 hours per week
<b>Competencies Addressed:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>• Course development</li><li>• Effective classroom techniques</li><li>• Student mentoring /guidance</li></ul>
<b>Activities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To work with the course instructors to update reading materials and classroom activities</li><li>• To lead and facilitate discussion groups</li><li>• To attend class meetings and hold office hours for students with questions about the course topics or requirements</li><li>• To grade assignments and provide feedback to students</li></ul>
<b>Outcomes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reading materials and classroom activities</li><li>• Mentoring experience</li></ul>
<b>Meetings:</b>	Weekly meetings with course instructor for planning and feedback and course attendance throughout the semester.

---

**Signatures indicate agreement of course plan:**

---

Lew Margolis, Faculty Member

---

Jane Doe, Student

**Proposal for MHCH 840 (003): Research Internship**



July 27, 2013

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<b>Student:</b>	Alejandro Murrieta
<b>Faculty:</b>	Jon Hussey
<b>Semester:</b>	Fall 2013
<b>Credit Hours:</b>	1
<b>Schedule:</b>	Minimum of 10 hours per week
<b>Competencies addressed:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review and synthesize research findings on an MCH topic</li><li>• Apply theory and develop conceptual models</li><li>• Formulate research questions and hypotheses</li></ul>
<b>Activities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To assist faculty member in literature search and synthesis</li><li>• To develop a reference data base for a grant application</li><li>• To collaborate in drafting sections of the Background and Significance section of a grant application</li><li>• To collaborate with faculty member to develop a conceptual model derived of relevant theory</li><li>• To assist in the formulation of research questions and hypotheses</li></ul>
<b>Outcomes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reference data base</li><li>• Components of grant application</li></ul>
<b>Meetings:</b>	Bi-weekly meetings will occur to assess progress and provide feedback on assignments, beginning the week of August 19.

---

**Signatures indicate agreement of course plan:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jon Hussey, Faculty Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Alejandro Murrieta, Student

**Proposal for MHCH 840 (002): Practice Internship**

July 27, 2013

---

<b>Supervisor/ Advisor:</b>	Janet Jones
<b>Student:</b>	Jane Smith
<b>Site:</b>	AHEC/UNC Reproductive Health
<b>Credit Hours:</b>	1
<b>Schedule:</b>	Minimum of 10 hours per week
<b>Competencies addressed: Activities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Effective managerial skills</li><li>• Develop professional networks</li></ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Facilitate the establishment of the AHEC/UNC Reproductive Health Research Network by:</li><li>2. Promoting communication with Coastal and Mountain AHECs within the School of Public Health.</li><li>3. Planning for key components of the network including mini-grants, seminars, and future network activities.</li><li>4. Providing logistical support for all components of the network.</li><li>5. Provide regular updates to supervisor regarding developments in the project.</li></ol>
<b>Outcomes:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Funding of first mini-grants through the network.</li><li>2. Schedule one to three teleconference seminars between network sites in the spring of 1999.</li><li>3. Awareness of the network among MCH faculty.</li><li>4. Regular updates and logistical communication with the network coordinators.</li><li>5. Investment by member sites indicated by planning for activities beyond year one of project.</li><li>6. Final report of progress to supervisor.</li></ol>

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**Grading:** Pass/Fail

**Signatures indicate agreement of course plan:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Janet Jones, Faculty

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jane Smith, Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Appendix C. Examples of Minor Requirements by Department/Program**

(Note: Please check with the department you plan to minor in since Departmental requirements for a minor frequently change)

## Health Behavior (HB)

The Health Behavior department requires minor students to take the doctoral seminars: HBHE 815 (Foundations of HBHE I), HBHE 816 (Foundations of HBHE II), and HBHE 811 (Development of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Interventions). In addition, students who have not had a similar course in their prior master's program or as part of their doctoral training on behavioral science theories must take HBHE 730 (Social and Behavioral Science Foundations) as a pre-requisite to HBHE 816. First year doctoral students take HBHE 815 and 816 in the fall and spring semesters, and second year students take HBHE 811 in the fall semester. HBHE 730 is also a fall semester course. Additional coursework, to complete the full 15 hours required for a minor, would be determined in consultation with the student's minor advisor.

## Epidemiology (EPID)

Minor requirements below taken from EPID webpage, July 30, 2013

Note that EPID has a form for requesting approval of an Epi minor, which can be accessed at:

[http://www2.sph.unc.edu/epid/minoring\\_in\\_epidemiology\\_17084\\_11718.html](http://www2.sph.unc.edu/epid/minoring_in_epidemiology_17084_11718.html)

### CRITERIA FOR MINORING IN EPIDEMIOLOGY

The department's Graduate Studies Committee has established a set of guidelines as to what constitutes a minor in this department. The following criteria must be met to declare a minor in Epidemiology:

- Doctoral level status
- Minimum of 15 credits hours in EPID
- EPID 710 **and** EPID 715/EPID 716 (co-requisites), with the remainder of credits in any other **substantive** epidemiology courses.

**[EPID 705 is a pre-requisite for EPID 715, but does not count toward the minor.] Do not list this course on your minor declaration form.]**

#### Additional Criteria:

- EPID 600 hours will not count toward a minor in epidemiology.
- Neither independent study hours nor research hours will count toward an epidemiology minor.
- No transfer courses will count toward an epidemiology minor.
- The EPID Office of Student Services [MC 2106] will assist in the planning of appropriate courses.
- A minor advisor is not required.

- Approval of the minor must be verified by the Department of Epidemiology, Office of Student Services, prior to declaring the minor. A form required for declaring the minor is available from the Student Services Office. The form must be signed by the major advisor and the Department of Epidemiology's Assistant to the Chair for Graduate Studies. **The student must file a copy with the Department of Epidemiology Student Services Office and the student's major department. The student is responsible for filing the original with The Graduate School.**
- Per Graduate School policy, "if the dissertation involves the minor field, the dissertation committee must include at least one member from the minor field."
- Effective Fall 2005, students must earn a grade of P or better in courses applying to the minor.
- **The Department's "L" grade policy applies to core methods courses for all minor students.**

### **"L" Grade Policy:**

The following policy applies to a grade of L in an Epidemiology "core methods" course (i.e., EPID 705, EPID 710, EPID 715, EPID 716, EPID 718, and EPID 722):

- A grade of L in a core methods course requires that a meeting among the student, the advisor, the course instructor, and the Student Services Office take place within two weeks. The purpose of the meeting is to ascertain the factors associated with the poor performance and to implement the steps described below. The student's advisor is responsible for initiating this meeting at the earliest convenience of all involved.
- Students who receive a grade of L in a core methods course must re-take the course and receive a minimum of a P, unless exempted as described below.
- The student is expected to retake the course – or to be granted an exemption by the GSC – within one year of taking the core methods course that resulted in an L grade. If this time line is not met the student must ask his/her advisor to present an alternative time line to the GSC.
- The time line for a student's Intradepartmental Review is not affected by an L grade.
- Students who take a core methods course as part of a minor in epidemiology are required to adhere to the L grade policy of the Department of Epidemiology.

### **Conditional advancement to a higher-level course for a student who receives a grade of L in a core methods course.**

- Students who receive a grade of L in a core methods course may advance to the pertinent higher-level methods course in epidemiology (prior to re-taking the course in which they received an L) only if approved by the instructor of the higher-level course and endorsed by the student's advisor.

**Exemption from the requirement to re-take a core methods course.**

- A high performance in the higher-level course (above the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile) allows the student to submit a request to the GSC to be exempted from having to re-take the lower level course graded as 'low pass' (L).

Questions should be directed to: Valerie Hudock, Assistant to the Chair for Graduate Studies (966-7459; ncolvin@unc.edu) or Jennifer Moore, Student Services Manager (966-7458).

The Epi Minor course sequence follows nearly the same course as the methods sequence, with the latter encompassing a couple more courses. Note that a couple changes may have been made regarding co-requisites; students should confirm with Epi that all of these courses are needed for the minor:

## **Appendix D. Some Other Useful Methods Course Options**

(Note: Please check with the Department offering these courses, as course offerings may change over time.)

## Qualitative Research Methods Coursework

There are three introductory level qualitative methods courses in the School of Public Health. Other recommended courses from Nursing and Social Work are listed below. For both SPH and non-SPH courses, please note that course offerings may vary from year to year.

HBHE 753: Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods

Prerequisite, HBHE 750 or equivalent. Theoretical and methodological approaches of applied medical anthropology for health program development and evaluation. Field methods for collecting and analyzing data through observation, interviewing, group methods, and case studies. Spring. This course requires permission of instructor, and Health Behavior students receive priority, so admission to the course is dependent on demand from Health Behavior Students. Maman

Comments: Based on syllabus review, it appears that **HBHE 753** provides a good and practical overview and is particularly strong in practicing data collection skills, an important component of qualitative work. It has a practical project that is done in groups. The professor also draws on relevant (the MCH) examples from her international reproductive health work.

There is also a well-liked two-semester sequence in Nursing.

NURS 977/979: NURS 977 (Qualitative Methods): which examines the philosophical orientation and methods of qualitative techniques including grounded theory and phenomenology, consideration of research designs, ethical issues, issues of rigor, data collection, and analysis, and NURS 979 (Qualitative Analysis) which emphasizes the work of analysis and interpretation. Students apply relevant qualitative techniques to their own data

Typically students take the first course during the fall of one year and the second one during the following year (a full year later). The second one is only offered every other spring. **NURS 977** delves into the philosophical underpinnings for qualitative work and talks about different qualitative traditions (e.g., ethnography, grounded theory, etc...) There is a good deal of reading of qualitative work throughout. There is some attention (but not a lot) to data collection. **NURS 979** is about analysis approaches and practicing coding- learning through doing. While students do use qualitative software, it is not taught in the class itself. While still introductory in nature, both classes are time-intensive.

There is also a course in Social Work (SOWO 919) that provides an overview of the fundamentals of the use of qualitative research, particularly as it applies to intervention research. The focus of this class is on the development of skills used by qualitative researchers.



Students must collect qualitative data during the semester, and it is recommended that students enter the course with a research question or idea.

For more specialized qualitative course work, students might consider “Anthropology for Ethnography” (ANTH 809 and 860) and “Education for Case Study Methods” (EDUC 883).

### Miscellaneous Other Course Suggestions

**Seminar Series at the Center for Developmental Science** - MCH students interested in human development should keep an eye on the CDS schedule - or, if the topic is especially relevant to their work, consider enrolling in the CDS class for credit. One student comments that “taking the class for credit is also a great professional development opportunity - the class essentially consists of a small group discussion with each week's speaker about their research and career trajectory.”

**The course GRAD 704, Effective Presentation Skills**, is offered through the Graduate School's professional development program for 1 credit.

There is also a **public speaking class** in the business school taught by Judy Tisdale.

**Odum Institute Short Courses** – The Odum Institute on the Carolina Campus offers a variety of short courses on various methodological topics. Check their web page to find out the dates and times of assorted offerings.

**Appendix E. Example Materials for Curriculum Committee Meetings**

**Curriculum Committee Meeting for Jane Student**  
**DATE**  
**12:30 – 1:30 pm**  
**McGavern-Greenberg, Room 2301**  
**AGENDA**

**Attendance:**

Dr. One (Chair)	MCH faculty	docone@unc.edu
Dr. Two	MCH faculty	doctwo@unc.edu
Dr. Three	MCH faculty	docthree@unc.edu

**I. Introductions and Meeting Purpose**

**II. Review of Proposed Coursework**

- a. Maternal and Child Health Coursework  
Research and teaching internship ideas?
  
- b. Specialization Area Coursework  
Recommended courses or readings on social network analysis?
  
- c. Research Methods Coursework
  
- d. Minor Area Coursework

**III. Student's CV**

Review of pertinent items

**IV. Student's Public Health and MCH Competencies**

Review of pertinent items

**V. Funding**

- a. Current
- b. Options for 2<sup>nd</sup> year funding:
- c. Third year options and suggestions

**VI. Comprehensive Exams**

- a. Will take after 2<sup>nd</sup> year

**VII. Dissertation plans**

**VIII. Open Discussion**

**IX. Next steps**

## **Attachment A: Proposed Coursework By Semester**

### **Fall 2011 (16 credits):**

MHCH 701	3	Foundations in MCH
BIOS 511	3	Introduction to Statistical Computing and Research Data
EPID 705	2	Introduction to Logic and Probability Logic in Epidemiology
EPID 710	4	Fundamentals of Epidemiology
MHCH 801	3	Doctoral Seminar

### **Spring 2012 (15 credits):**

MHCH 702	3	Foundations in MCH
XXX	3	A course in research methods
BIOS 845	3	Principles of Experimental Analysis
EPID 715	5	Theory and Quantitative Methods in Epidemiology

### **Fall 2012 (12 credits):**

MHCH 859	3	Theoretical Perspectives on Maternal and Child Health
EPID 718	3	Epidemiologic Analysis of Binary Data
EPID 719	1	Readings in Epidemiologic Modeling
MHCH 840	1	Doctoral Internship-Teaching
MHCH 802	1	Teaching Seminar
EPID 825	3	Social Determinants of Health: Theory, Method, and Intervention

### **Spring 2013 (13 credits):**

MHCH 716	3	International Family Planning and Reproductive Health
MHCH 722	3	Issues in International Maternal and Child Health
MHCH 862	3	Maternal and Child Health Program Evaluation
HBHE 189	3	Adolescent Health Risk Behaviors
MHCH 840	1	Doctoral Internship-Research

## Attachment B: Proposed Coursework By Proficiency Area

### Maternal and Child Health (23 credits)

MHCH 701	Foundations in MCH	Fall 2011, 3 credits
MHCH 702	Foundations in MCH	Spring 2012, 3 credits
MHCH 859	Theoretical Perspectives on MCH	Fall 2012, 3 credits
MHCH 722	Issues in International Maternal and Child Health	Spring 2013, 3 credits
MHCH 801	Doctoral Seminar	Fall 2011, 3 credits
MHCH 840	Doctoral Internship-Teaching	Fall 2012, 1 credit
MHCH 840	Doctoral Internship-Research	Spring 2013, 1 credit
MHCH 802	Doctoral Teaching Seminar	Fall 2012, 1 credit
MHCH 716	International Family Planning and Reproductive Health	Spring 2013, 3 credits

### Research Methods and Analysis (24 credits)

XXX	A course in research methods	Spring 2012, 3 credits
EPID 705	Introduction to Logic & Probability Logic	Fall 2011, 2 credits
EPID 710	Fundamentals of Epidemiology	Fall 2011, 4 credits
EPID 715	Theory and Quant Methods in Epidemiology	Spring 2012, 5 credits
BIOS 845	Principles of Experimental Analysis	Spring 2012, 3 credits
EPID 718	Epidemiologic Analysis of Binary Data	Fall 2012, 3 credits
EPID 719	Readings in Epidemiologic Modeling	Fall 2012, 1 credit
MHCH 862	MCH Program Evaluation	Spring 2013, 3 credits
<i>BIOS 865</i>	<i>Analysis of Categorical Data</i>	*
<i>PSYC 330</i>	<i>Multilevel Models or</i>	*
<i>SOCI 318</i>	<i>Longitudinal and Multilevel Data Analysis</i>	*

### Substantive Area of Specialization – Social Networks & Adolescent Reproductive Health (goal 12 credits)

EPID 825	Social Determinants of Health	Fall 2012, 3 credits
HBHE 189	Adolescent Health Risk Behaviors	Spring 2013, 3 credits
HBHE 303	Social Relationships and Health	*
<i>SOCI 217</i>	<i>Social Psychological Theory</i>	*
<i>SOCI 229</i>	<i>Social Structure And Personality</i>	*
<i>PSYC 155</i>	<i>Peer Relations</i>	*
<i>SOCI 312</i>	<i>Seminar on Social Networks</i>	*
<i>DUKE SOC 225F.01: Social Networks</i>		*

### Minor- Epidemiology (18 credits)

EPID 710	Fundamentals of Epidemiology	Fall 2011, 4 credits
EPID 715	Theory and Quant Methods in Epidemiology	Spring 2012, 5 credits
EPID 825	Social Determinants of Health	Fall 2012, 3 credits
EPID 718	Epidemiologic Analysis of Binary Data	Fall, 2012, 3 credits
EPID 719	Readings in Epidemiologic Modeling	Fall 2012, 3 credits

\*Potential courses after first two years

**Attachment C: Statement of Dissertation Interests and Plans**

I am interested in ..... I also am interested in ..... I hope to use XXXX data .....to explore these issues. (Note: also it is encouraged to add any additional information available, such as the study design, analytic plan, timeline, etc.).

**Attachement D: CV**

Add your CV here.

**Attachment E: Public Health and MCH Competencies**

Add your self-assessment of Public Health and MCH Competencies here



## Appendix F. Illustrative Sequence and Timetable

<b>Academic Event</b>	<b>Semester after Entry</b>
Complete competency self-assessment	1
First meeting doctoral curriculum committee	1 or 2
Completion of minimum graduate-level course requirements	4
Completion of formal minor coursework	4
Completion of internships	4+
Complete 2 <sup>nd</sup> competency self-assessment and e-portfolio	4
Second meeting doctoral curriculum committee	4
Written comprehensive examination	4
Selection of doctoral dissertation committee	5+
Oral qualifying examination (proposal defense)	6+
Admission to doctoral candidacy	6+
Submission of dissertation	6+
Final oral defense of dissertation	6+
Complete online evaluation of doctoral training	6+
Award of doctoral degree	6+

