

ADVISOR / ADVISEE
MANUAL

INTRODUCTION

Students entering a degree program in the Department of Epidemiology face a seemingly endless educational sequence that begins with course work and ends with the successful completion of a thesis or dissertation. Along the way, there are many decisions to be made and many challenges to be met. Therefore each student in the Department is assigned an advisor who has the responsibility of serving as a guide and mentor. This manual is intended to guide the student and the faculty member in making the advisor / advisee relationship as successful as possible.

This manual has two goals:

- to provide answers to questions that students frequently ask and,
- to provide guidance on how the student and advisor can interact most effectively.

Of course, a manual cannot do any more than provide guidance. Faculty advisors are encouraged to bring concerns or questions to their colleagues through the Faculty Executive Committee. The suggestions in this manual are derived from the experience of faculty who have worked with students for many years and from students who themselves have been guided by these faculty members. This document is dynamic and needs input from students and advisors as they use it. Please submit comments and concerns to the Academic Coordinator.

The Office of Graduate Education and Research has also published guidelines for faculty advisors located: <http://www.jhsph.edu/GER/AcademicAdvisor.pdf> and reprinted here.

An Academic Advisor should:

1. Provide oversight of the student's academic progress by:

- Assisting in the selection of courses
- Ensuring student is meeting degree milestones in a timely manner
- Being available for regular meetings with student
- Assessing and developing the student's interests and abilities
- Monitoring student progress in academic coursework through periodic examination of transcripts
- Monitoring student progress in field work
- Writing letters of reference
- Assisting with grant preparation (doctoral students)
- Referring students to the appropriate Individuals or offices that provide academic support and/or resources

2. Provide leadership in matters of academic integrity:

- Being knowledgeable about ethical issues that pertain to academics, research, and practice
- Helping students interpret and understand institutional policies and procedures regarding the responsible conduct of research
- Discouraging students from circumventing institutional policies and procedures, and when confronted with such issues, directing students to appropriate institutional resources or contacts
- Avoiding actual or appearance of conflicts of interest
- Respecting confidentiality of students

3. Encourage active participation in the greater community (department, School, University, local, State, National, International):

Resources:

Academic Advisor's Handbook, Northeastern State University
Roles and Responsibilities of the Academic Advisor, Tufts University
Advisor Handbook, The University of Texas at Arlington

THE ADVISOR / ADVISEE RELATIONSHIP

All students in the Department are assigned an advisor who is a full-time member of the Department of Epidemiology. Occasionally, students request advisors who have a joint appointment but not a primary appointment. Also, we offer co-advising in some cases. Special requests are handled through the area of concentration director and approved by the Admissions and Credentials Committee.

The advisor has the responsibility of assisting the student in designing an academic program that meets the student's goals within the framework of the School and the Department. Additionally, the advisor serves to direct the student to appropriate resources and research opportunities. The advisor should also be a first point of contact in resolving academic problems.

Advising students is an integral part of every faculty member's responsibilities. Thus, the student should not feel that he/she is imposing by asking for advice. Faculty members expect to be available to students, although the students should be respectful of the faculty's time by scheduling and respecting appointments. The responsibility for arranging meetings lies with the student. Students should not expect advisors to seek them out for needed appointments.

Advisors and advisees should communicate at least once per term. The student bears the responsibility of consulting the advisor when necessary and arranging periodic appointments, even if there are no specific problems. Course registrations must be approved by the advisor at the beginning of each term. The student remains obligated to schedule

a meeting in order to assure that the advisor has reviewed the student's schedule and to plan any special studies projects or thesis research as needed with the advisor before the registration period deadline.

STUDENTS MAY EXPECT THE FOLLOWING FROM THEIR ADVISORS:

- Advisor's approval for course registrations, course changes, and pass/fail agreements, and on all petitions to the Admissions and Credentials Committee.
- At least one meeting per term with the advisor.
- Oversight of the student's overall academic program and a sensitivity to any academic difficulties.
- Knowledge of and interest in the student's career objectives.
- Review of required and recommended courses for the area of concentration.
- Assistance in designing a plan for the fulfillment of required courses and assistance with planning the course schedule for the year.

Students: determine from your advisor the best time and means by which he/she may be reached. For instance, will you use e-mail to communicate? How quickly should you expect an answer? Do you need to make appointments directly with the advisor, or do you go through someone else? Are there certain times of the day that your advisor prefers to meet?

RESPONSIBILITIES: ADVISOR

- To assist in determining the advisee's educational goals and needs upon starting the program.
- To serve as an educational and/or professional mentor for the student.
- To maintain awareness of and sensitivity to the level of compatibility between the student advisee and him/herself in terms of academic, professional, and personal interests.
- To facilitate a change of advisor or program, if deemed appropriate for the student.
- To monitor the advisee's overall academic program and be sensitive to signs of academic difficulty.
- To provide guidance throughout the academic program.
- To be sensitive to cultural, medical, legal, housing, visa, language, financial, or other personal problems experienced by the advisee and to be aware, sensitive, understanding, and supportive. The Department has a sizable portion of foreign students coming from diverse pre-professional and professional educational settings and, because of these unique experiences, these students have diverse needs as professionals, students, and individuals.

RESPONSIBILITIES: ADVISEE

- To arrange to meet with the advisor at least once each term. Observe registration and administrative deadlines.
- To identify and develop professional career goals and interests.
- To understand administrative policies and procedures and be familiar with the *Academic Guide*.
- To maintain the academic checklist and review it at meetings with the advisor.

CHANGE OF ADVISOR

For a variety of reasons, a student or a faculty member may wish to have the student change advisors. Faculty wishing to initiate a change should discuss this with the Admissions and Credentials Committee. Faculty will need to submit a report of the student's progress at the time of this request. Student initiated changes of advisor are made without penalty.

Requests to complete a course pass/fail or audit and waiving a course are handled through the office of the academic coordinator.

Requests to change advisors and areas of concentration require discussion with the current advisor and a letter of request submitted to the Admissions and Credentials Committee through the office of the academic coordinator. Advisors must endorse request each request.

REQUIRED COURSES CHECKLIST

One purpose of this Academic Guide is to assist students in monitoring their progress in completing the requirements for their degree program. Students are responsible for making sure that they have fulfilled all requirements for the degree program in which they are registered. If there are specific questions regarding requirements, students may consult the Academic Coordinator, in Room W6508C, correspond by email at fburman@jhsph.edu, or call extension 5-3926.

This checklist is to be maintained by the student. In anticipation of graduation, students should check with the Registrar's Office to make sure all degree requirements have been met

BASIC CORE CURRICULUM:

FIRST TERM

- _____ 340.751 Epidemiologic Methods 1 (5) Lecture and Lab Sections
- _____ 140.621 Statistical Methods in Public Health I (4) Lecture and Lab Sections
- OR
- _____ *140.651 Methods in Biostatistics I (4) Lecture and Lab Sections
- _____ 550.865 Public Health Perspectives in Research (Pt. 1) (1)
- _____ +340.863 Doctoral Seminar in Epidemiology (2) *required year 2 for doctoral students*

SECOND TERM

- _____ 340.752 Epidemiologic Methods 2 (5) Lecture and Lab Sections
- _____ 340.627 Epidemiology of Infectious Diseases (3)
or another approved introductory survey course
- _____ 140.622 Statistical Methods in Public Health II (4) Lecture and Lab
Sections
- OR
- _____ * 140.652 Methods in Biostatistics II (4) Lecture and Laboratory Sections
- _____ 550.865 Public Health Perspectives in Research (Pt.2) (1)
- _____ 550.860 Research Ethics (1) *can take 306.665 instead, offered third term.*
- _____ +340.863 Doctoral Seminar in Epidemiology (2) *required year 2 for doctoral students*

THIRD TERM

_____ 340.753 Epidemiologic Methods 3 (5) Lecture and Lab Sections

_____ 140.623 Statistical Methods in Public Health III (4) Lecture and Lab Sections

OR

_____ * 140.653 Methods in Biostatistics III (4) Lecture and Laboratory Sections

_____ 306.665 Research Ethics and Integrity (3) *optional if needed to replace 550.860.*

_____ +340.86 Doctoral Seminar in Epidemiology (2) *required year 2 for doctoral students*

FOURTH TERM

_____ + 340.754 Methodologic Challenges in Epidemiologic Research (5) Lecture and Lab Sections (*optional for DrPH and MHS / ScM students*)

_____ 140.624 Statistical Methods in Public Health IV (4) Lecture and Lab Sections

OR

_____ * 140.654 Methods in Biostatistics IV (4) Lecture and Laboratory Sections

_____ + 340.715 Problems in the Design of Epidemiologic Studies (6) (*required year 2 for doctoral students*)

* Required only if taking the biostatistics methods sequence.

+ Required for doctoral students only.

Please Note: It is the student's responsibility to maintain a minimum overall 3.0 grade point average in CORE COURSES AS ABOVE and in courses required in his/her Epidemiology program areas. One grade of C will be permitted, two grades of C or one grade D or F will result in probationary review by the Departmental Admissions and Credentials Committee.

ADVISOR / ADVISEE MANUAL

MHS & ScM Students:

The guidelines listed below are the absolute minimum interactions students and advisors should expect. Many of our students and faculty meet much more frequently and often become life-long colleagues as a result of the mentoring experience.

Year One: First Term

Check off activities / Dates of Meetings

Minimum of two meetings --

An advisor may choose to meet once with all advisees, then once with individual advisees. *New students must meet with their advisors before or during the add / drop period (first 10 days of school).*

Appt #1 _____ Appt #2 _____

Items that may be covered:

- Identify professional goals and educational objectives _____
- Review competencies, departmental requirements, develop a written plan of courses and experiences to meet the student's educational goals
- Review administrative deadlines
- Identify additional people or offices and resources of which students should be aware

Discuss plans for Special Studies course _____

- Enculturation process; "Getting acquainted"/Special Studies tutorial review paper or directed readings (minimum of one unit during first or second terms)

Year One: Second Term

One meeting: _____

Review first term transcript & student's progress _____

- Monitor student's progress, evaluate, discuss first term grades
- Provide feedback on first term courses

Continue process of discussing possible thesis activities _____

Follow up on plan set out in first term _____

Complete registration plan for third and fourth terms _____

Year One: Third Term

One meeting: _____

- Monitor student's progress; evaluate; discuss second term grades
- Provide feedback on second term courses _____

Discuss preparation for comprehensive examination, student study groups _____

Discuss experiences for student to diversify exposure; i.e., internships _____

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MHS & SCM Students

Year One: Fourth Term

One or two meetings:

Review 3rd term transcript _____

Monitor student's progress; evaluate; discuss third term grades _____

Provide feedback on third term courses _____

Encourage participation in study groups for comprehensive examination _____

Discuss summer job plans and ways of diversifying student's exposure to other public health opportunities _____

Advise student of opportunities and resources i.e., Career Services Office, AWSA, Epi Monitor, Epi Source, job boards, and agencies _____

Assist student in identifying thesis topic and outlining timeline of events _____

Year Two: First and Second Terms

Monitor thesis progress, following timeline set out during thesis proposal _____

Students should begin working with the Career Development Services Office for post-graduate positions or programs _____

Year Two: Third Term

Help student choose thesis readers _____

Review masters thesis _____

Discuss job prospects, assist in identifying dep't and school-wide resources, encourage participation in Career Fair, and other networking possibilities _____

Year Two: Fourth Term

Assist in poster preparation for the Masters' Poster Symposium _____

Attend Masters' Poster Symposium _____

Conduct exit interview _____

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PhD, ScD, & DrPH

The guidelines listed below are the absolute minimum interactions that students and advisors should expect. Many of our students and faculty meet much more frequently and often become life-long colleagues as a result of the mentoring experience.

Year One: First Term

An advisor may choose to meet once with all advisees, then once with individual advisees. New students must meet with their advisors once during the add / drop period (first 10 days of school).

Appt #1 _____ Appt #2 _____

Items that may be covered:

- Identify professional goals and educational objectives _____
- Review competencies, departmental requirements, develop a written plan of courses and experiences to meet the student's educational goals
- Review administrative deadlines
- Identify additional people or offices and resources of which students should be aware
- Discuss possible concurrent MHS programs or Certificate programs that may be appropriate to the student's research / professional goals. _____

Discuss plans for Special Studies course _____

- Enculturation process; "Getting acquainted"/Special Studies tutorial review paper or directed readings (minimum of one unit during first or second terms)
- How to organize readings, discuss and extend Epi 1 topic, attendance required at Departmental Seminars and Journal Club _____

Year One: Second Term

One meeting: _____

Review first term transcript & student's progress _____

- Monitor student's progress, evaluate, discuss first term grades
- Provide feedback on first term courses

Continue process of discussing possible thesis activities _____

Follow up on plan set out in first term _____

Complete registration plan for third and fourth terms _____

Discuss research ideas _____

Financial Aid packet deadline is February 15th _____

Work through plan set out in first term and revise if needed _____

Complete registration forms for third and fourth terms _____

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Year One: Third Term

One meeting:

Monitor student's progress; evaluate; discuss second term grades
Provide feedback on second term courses _____

Discuss preparation for comprehensive examination, student study groups _____

Complete Departmental Request for Financial Support form _____

Begin discussing summer internship opportunities, research or job prospects _____

Identify course(s) to work as a teaching assistant and apply
(PhD and ScD students must TA one "methods" course) _____

Year One: Fourth Term

One or two meetings:

Review 3rd term transcript _____

Monitor student's progress; evaluate; discuss third term grades
Provide feedback on third term courses _____

Encourage participation / leadership in student study groups for comprehensive examination and develop study plan as needed _____

Discuss summer job plans and ways of diversifying student's exposure to other public health opportunities _____

Advise student of opportunities and resources i.e., Career Services Office, AWSA, Epi Monitor, Epi Source, job boards, and agencies _____

Assist student in identifying thesis topic and outlining timeline of events _____

Planning for summer term

Advise student of paid and unpaid opportunities and resources such as Career Services Office, AWSA, Epi Monitor, Epi Source, job boards, and agencies _____

Discuss experiences for student to diversify exposure; i.e., internships or fellowships in local, national, or international settings. _____

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Year Two

NOTE: From Year Two until completion of the doctoral degree, student should bring brief, written progress reports to meetings with advisor.

Develop a plan timeline and plan for dissertation development _____

Monitor academic progress in Doctoral Seminars courses: 340.863
(Five papers assigned. Advisors should assist in monitoring progress.) _____

Encourage participation and development of research proposal and grant for 340.715 *Problems in the Design of Epidemiologic Studies*. Proposal is due prior to Spring break. _____

Assist student in identifying dissertation committee members, establish meeting schedule _____

Guide preparation for oral examinations, including participation in reading list study groups, scheduling journal clubs, research-in-progress presentation and Doctoral Proposal Seminar _____

Year Three

Maintain routine contact and support

Prepare/edit proposal, including IRB _____

Schedule and hold Departmental and School (Preliminary) Oral Exams

Dates identified: Dept _____ School-wide _____

Review IRB paperwork when project is about to begin _____

Monitor adherence to plan, continue meeting each term by phone, email, or in - person _____

NOTE: If the student moves away during this process, the advisor and the advisee should include some plan and timeline for monitoring process and in-person oversight.

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Years Four and Five

Monitor adherence to plan _____

Encourage students to submit abstracts or posters for appropriate conferences _____

As student begins the writing phase of dissertation:

Help student choose dissertation readers _____

Discuss future goals, evaluate job prospects, assist student in identifying departmental and school-wide resources, encourage networking, attendance at professional conferences, etc. _____

Prepare for final defense (including final seminar) _____

Conduct exit interview _____

Years Five through Seven

Students are expected to complete their degree programs within four years (16 terms). The School allows up to seven years (28 terms) from matriculation to graduation. Students should meet with their advisors and thesis committees often and keep them up-to-date with the status of research and any problems that may arise. Students should contact the Academic Coordinator if problems arise in completing the degree requirements within the designated time period.

Good luck,
See you at graduation!!!!!!