MASTER OF HEALTH SCIENCE, MASTER OF SCIENCE AND BA/MHS DEGREE REQUIREMENTS
MASTER OF HEALTH SCIENCE (MHS) AND MASTER OF SCIENCE (ScM) DEGREES

Michel A. Ibrahim, MD and Priya Duggal, PhD serve as the directors and faculty liaison for masters' students. We hold sessions throughout the year to help students through the Masters process and to identify areas of concern and to resolve issues. Dr. Ibrahim can be reached at mibrahim@jhsph.edu or E6140 or 410-502-6650. Dr. Duggal can be reached at pduggal@jhsph.edu or E6539 or 410-955-1213.

DEFINING THE MHS AND SCM PROGRAMS IN EPIDEMIOLOGY

Both degree programs are similar in that they equip students with the knowledge and skills to do epidemiologic research in the health field. Specifically, the two programs train students in basic epidemiologic methods, concepts, and principles and provide opportunities for research and field work in epidemiology. Both degrees require that students develop a research and experiential plan with their advisors, pass written comprehensive exams in epidemiologic general knowledge and in their particular area of concentration, and complete a publishable-quality manuscript to fulfill the thesis requirement.

Differences between the two degree programs exist in the way they help students begin a career in epidemiology and in the nature of data needed to fulfill the thesis requirement. The MHS degree can be viewed as a starting point in epidemiology that meets the needs of different groups of students. It can be an entry to the field for recent college graduates who wish to gain the skills necessary to work on public health projects. It can also be useful for physicians and other health professionals who wish to acquire research skills. The MHS thesis can be based on original or secondary data analysis.

The ScM degree can also be viewed as a starting point in epidemiology but entails more emphasis on epidemiologic methods. Students in this program are usually interested in pursuing a research career. The ScM thesis is based on either original data analysis or other research data that is approved by the University Graduate Board.

BA/MHS PROGRAM IN EPIDEMIOLOGY

The Department of Epidemiology in collaboration with the Johns Hopkins University School of Arts and Sciences offers a combined Bachelor of Arts in Public Health Science- Master’s of Health Science in Epidemiology (BA/MHS) program. This combined program allows undergraduate students majoring in Public Health Science at the Homewood campus to apply at the end of their 3rd year of undergraduate for direct entry into this program (4 years undergraduate, 2 years MHS). A portion of the credits taken at the Bloomberg School of Public Health during their 4th year of undergraduate may then be applied to the MHS degree.

Undergraduate applicants for this combined degree program apply by June 1 after their junior year for this combined degree program. During their senior year, undergraduates may enroll in Epidemiology courses related to substantive topic areas, Biostatistics and other Public Health courses. Dr. Terri Beaty, Deputy Chair of Epidemiology, will serve as their advisor during this year. After completion of their undergraduate degree, the student will enroll as an MHS student, the department will assign an academic advisor in Epidemiology and they will complete the same requirements as other MHS students in their Area of Concentration.
The following is a lighthearted look at what you could expect during the masters programs:

**The First - Year Student:**
Oh, the confusion, the possibilities! Courses, more courses, quite a number of sleepless nights, a real break for the Winter Holidays, a roller coaster of responsibilities culminating with the Comprehensive Exams in June!

Some hints:
- Try to make friends at your lab tables - these people will be invaluable to you throughout your program.
- Attend journal clubs, AoC seminars and Friday Departmental seminars to get a feel for the kind of research going on in the field and at the School.
- Introduce yourself to your student mentor and ask lots of questions.
- Come to the parties, stop by the student room (always a good place for extra food), join our intramural teams or just come and cheer.
- Try to get to know the second and third year students - they are invaluable for getting to know faculty, taking the “right” courses, studying for comps, and showing you the ropes!
- Beginning first or second term, take at least one credit of “Special Studies and Research” with your advisor. This gives you a formal way to begin a dialogue and identify directed readings in areas that may be of interest to you, and will serve as a springboard for thinking of research topics and hypotheses.
- During Winter Intersession or third term set up an internship or other experience for the summer. It is possible to use your summer experience for your thesis. Start thinking, but not worrying, about your thesis topic. You will have plenty of time for that after you pass the Comprehensive Exams.

**The Second - Year Student or “What do I do now?”:**
Congratulations! You survived the first year, but you’re not finished yet! Amazingly, you will find that you have a few more minutes in your day. You may begin drifting - thinking you have months before your thesis is due.
- Don’t wait too long to refocus.
- The secret is to stay involved.
- Become a Teaching Assistant for one of the first year courses
- Volunteer to be a mentor for a new student
- Sign up for thesis research with your advisor and set up biweekly or monthly discussions
- Take the classes that interest as well as challenge you.
- Continue to attend journal clubs and seminars.
- Join SER and APHA and read the journals!

Few people actually complete their thesis on the topic submitted on their application. Just like undergrads, most graduate students change their topics three to four times between matriculation and graduation. This is normal and it’s ok! But if you are feeling frustrated, see your advisor, or stop in at the Academic Coordinator’s office.
RESIDENCY

The department requires up to two years of full-time registration dependent upon course and thesis completion. The residency requirement (four terms of at least 16 credits each) must be completed during the first year of the program. Those with pertinent prior training represented by a master’s or doctoral degree or equivalent experience may complete the degree in as little as one calendar year subject to the approval of their advisors, the Departmental Admissions and Credentials Committee, and the Department Chair.

For students in the Genetic Epidemiology Program, two full years are required. It is understood that students will spend the first year of their programs completing the course requirements. It is the student’s responsibility to maintain a minimum overall 3.0 grade point average in courses required in his/her Epidemiology Area of Concentration. One grade of “C” is permitted, two grades of “C” or one grade of “D” or “F” will result in probationary review by the Departmental Admissions and Credentials Committee.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

A written examination covering the general methods, principles, history of epidemiology, contemporary issues and leaders in public health, and the student’s area of concentration is administered at the end of the first academic year. By the time of the exam, students should have completed 64 credit units (one full year of residence), Epidemiology 340.751-753, Biostatistics 140.621-624 or 651-654; and the required Epidemiology coursework in their area of concentration. The content of the examination is directly related to the Department’s listing of competencies and students should use the competencies in developing a study plan for the examination. General knowledge of epidemiology and public health will be tested, even though such material may not be specifically covered in courses.

Students must pass both parts of the written comprehensive exams in order to begin the thesis portion of the degree and to qualify for the master’s tuition scholarship. Students failing this examination should consult with their advisor and consider the possibility of an appeal to the Admissions and Credentials Committee.

The committee may accept or reject the appeal, and may allow a repeat examination or request an alternative process of evaluation for the student. Offering a second attempt at passing the examination to all students is not standard departmental procedure. Once examinations have been graded, students may view their exams in the Student Academic Core Office, Room W6508, but may not remove them from that office. Students successfully completing the exam may proceed to thesis proposal development and qualify for the master tuition scholarship.

MASTER’S TUITION SCHOLARSHIP (MTS)

Masters' students who have completed one year of residence, maintained a 3.0 GPA in required courses, and passed both parts of the written comprehensive examination are automatically eligible for a Master's Tuition Scholarship (MTS), provided that they have no other School, Departmental, or external tuition support. Master's Tuition Scholarship provides a 75% tuition waiver from the School. Students must register for a minimum of 12 credits per term (16 preferred) to receive the MTS. The MTS covers 4 terms of tuition support only; additional support to complete the degree program is not available.

What makes a good thesis topic?

Visit the Student Room (W6309) and review the past dissertations. Read the journals. Attend seminars. Go to professional conferences like SER or APHA. Ideas will come to you. Discuss them with your friends, faculty members, and professionals in the field to see if you can turn your ideas into valuable research.
THESIS REQUIREMENT

Masters' candidates are expected to spend at least one year working on a thesis that is evaluated by the Department and / or School's faculty and is of sufficient quality to be considered acceptable for publication in a recognized journal. Students will produce a thesis (30-50 pages double-spaced) for binding and are required to present their research at a Departmental Masters Poster Symposium held annually in May.

Master of Health Science (MHS) students must complete a satisfactory thesis in their area of concentration. The thesis must be approved by two members of the Department's faculty including the advisor. The thesis may be a critical review of the literature pertaining to a specific area of interest, new analyses of existing data, or original research of a limited nature. It is expected that the student will meet with the three identified individuals throughout the duration of the research project. MHS students must send the title of their project and the names of their readers to the Academic Coordinator by April 1. The policy and procedures manual for the MHS - Academic degree program is located online at http://www.jhsph.edu/schoolpolicies/ppm_academic_programs_8.html.

Master of Science (ScM) students must complete a thesis based on original research. The readers committee is comprised of the advisor and one additional University faculty member outside the Department of Epidemiology. Prior to embarking upon the thesis project, the student and advisor should work together to select a thesis committee consisting of the advisor, one other Epidemiology faculty member and two members from two departments outside of Epidemiology with the rank of assistant professor or higher. The student should submit a three- to five-page protocol to each member of this committee. The thesis committee members will meet and decide whether the proposed work is of the scope and depth appropriate for a master's thesis in the Department, and whether it is conceptually valid and feasible. Upon completion, the thesis is submitted to these four readers for their approval. ScM students must complete the appointment of thesis readers' form and submit it to the Registrar's Office by the deadline in February, in order to be considered for May Graduation. The form is located online at: https://my.jhsph.edu/C13/MastersCandidateInformation/default.aspx. The policy and procedures manual for the ScM program is located online at: http://www.jhsph.edu/schoolpolicies/ppm_academic_programs_10.html.

RESEARCH RESPONSIBILITIES AND ETHICS

All research students including MHS and ScM candidates must complete a course in responsible conduct of research. This requirement can be satisfied by course 550.860.01, “Research Ethics”, offered each term online; course 550.861 “Responsible Conduct of Research”, offered first term or, course 306.665, “Research Ethics and Integrity”, offered in the third term. In addition, there may be other courses within the University that may satisfy this requirement. Approval of alternative courses must be obtained in writing from the Associate Dean.

In addition, students are required to take course 550.865, “Public Health Perspectives on Research.” This course is designed to introduce the breadth and methodological bases of public health research. Principles of high quality research, including the value of a population perspective, interdisciplinary cooperation, the importance of measurement techniques, and the interface between theory and practice will be stressed. This course is automatically waived for students holding an MPH earned within 10 years of enrollment or who are enrolled in the MPH program.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

The JHSPH IRB requires a web-based training program called the Collaborative IRB Training Initiative (CITI) Program. All investigators, students and staff listed on new application submissions and/or progress reports must meet this criterion. Please note that the CITI program must be completed prior to submitting to the IRB for initial review of a protocol, or for continuing review or amendment of a previously approved protocol. Completion of the JHSPH IRB required modules also satisfies the requirements of the Homewood campus IRB. The CITI training certificate expires after three years. The CITI learner must then successfully complete a refresher course.

DEADLINES

The Registrar's Office has provided dates to assist you in completing your degree requirements in time for graduation in May. Students must be continuously registered up to and including the term of completion. Completion means submission of the thesis to the Department (MHS) or the Registrar (ScM) and submission of letters of acceptance to the Academic Support Core Office in W6503 (for MHS) or to the Registrar's Office in Suite E1002 (for ScM). These deadlines are firm.

If a student misses the graduation deadlines, he/she will not be able to participate in the graduation ceremony and the degree will not be awarded at that year's convocation ceremony. The University awards degrees three times a year. If the student completes his/her degree requirements at any time after the deadlines, the following notation will be placed on the student's transcript: “degree requirements completed (and the date)” and the degree will be awarded at the next conferral. The School holds one Graduation ceremony per year in May and students from the previous August and December conferrals are encouraged to participate.

University regulations require a student be registered during the term in which he/she completes the degree requirements. Therefore, if a student anticipates completing the degree requirements during the summer term, he/she must be registered for that term. If a student anticipates completing during September, he/she does not need to be registered for summer but does have to be registered for first term. If a student completes during the Winter Institute, he/she must register for third term. Minimum registration for masters' students is two (2) credits per term. Please visit the Registrar's Office for further details. http://www.jhsph.edu/offices-and-services/student-affairs/records-and-registration/
### Timetable for Completion of Degree Requirements: ScM and MHS Candidates

(If Graduation is planned for AY 2013-2014)

#### Master of Science

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Due Dates for Summer Conferral</th>
<th>Due Dates for Fall Conferral</th>
<th>Due Dates for Spring Conferral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student has:</td>
<td>August 30, 2013</td>
<td>December 30, 2013</td>
<td>May 22, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verified with their Academic Coordinator that all academic requirements for the degree (except for submission of the thesis) have been fulfilled.</td>
<td>Friday June 21, 2013</td>
<td>Friday October 18, 2013</td>
<td>Friday February 14, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student has submitted:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Appointment of Thesis Readers Form to the Office of Records &amp; Registration.</td>
<td>Friday June 21, 2013</td>
<td>Friday October 18, 2013</td>
<td>Friday February 14, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student has submitted:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final copies of the dissertation and thesis acceptance letters to the Office of Records &amp; Registration.</td>
<td>Friday August 23, 2013</td>
<td>Friday December 20, 2013</td>
<td>Friday April 25, 2014</td>
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#### Master of Health Science

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Due Dates for Summer Conferral</th>
<th>Due Dates for Fall Conferral</th>
<th>Due Dates for Spring Conferral</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>has been submitted to the department chair or advisor.</td>
<td>Friday June 28, 2013</td>
<td>Friday October 18, 2013</td>
<td>Friday April 4, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department Chair has:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>° indicated in writing to the Office of Records &amp; Registration that all degree requirements have been fulfilled</td>
<td>Friday August 23, 2013</td>
<td>Friday December 20, 2013</td>
<td>Friday May 2, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>° certified the student’s eligibility for award of degree.</td>
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Tuesday, May 20, 2014 School Convocation*

Thursday, May 22, 2014 University Commencement (Homewood)*

*Diplomas for August and December graduates will be ordered at the time of conferral and must be picked up in E1002 (or mailed). August and December graduates are welcome to participate in the May Convocation/Commencement ceremony(ies), but diplomas will not be held for the May convocation or commencement.

Please direct questions about any aspect of this proposed timetable to the Office of Records & Registration, ebudlow@jhsph.edu

ACADEMIC GUIDE 2013-2014