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Joint Juris Doctor  
and Master of Public Health Degree

Harvard Law School  
Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

JD/MPH  
PROGRAM GUIDE  
2023 – 2024

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While every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this guide is accurate at the time of publication, the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and Harvard Law School reserve the right to make changes, at any time, regarding the curriculum, degree requirements, course offerings, policies, or any other information contained herein.

## OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

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The Juris Doctor (JD) and Master of Public Health (MPH) joint degree program at the Harvard Law School (HLS) and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health (Harvard Chan School) is designed to support and encourage individuals with an interest in law and public health in the development of interdisciplinary knowledge and skills in preparation for a career in health law, public health policy, or a related field.

Students in the program fulfill all requirements necessary to earn a JD from HLS and an MPH from the Harvard Chan School. Students enroll in the [MPH 45-credit program](#) and pursue either the Global Health (GH) or Health Policy (HP) field of study. Upon successful completion of the program, joint degree students will be awarded both a JD and an MPH from the respective Harvard schools. Graduates are prepared for positions in a variety of settings, including law firms; local, state, provincial, or national government or intergovernmental organizations; donor aid agencies; nongovernmental or nonprofit organizations; entrepreneurial initiatives; and academia.

## DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND STRUCTURE OF COURSEWORK

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### STRUCTURE OF COURSEWORK

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The JD/MPH offers an intensive course of study to be completed in three academic years. Students spend their first academic year solely at HLS taking the standard first-year [Law School curriculum](#). During the second and third years of the program, joint degree students are enrolled in, and take courses at, both schools. Students who meet all JD and MPH degree requirements receive both degrees in May of the third year.

The required HLS curriculum for joint degree students includes the following: the standard first-year curriculum including the January Experiential Term and an HLS upper-level spring elective, and a minimum of 52 upper-level credits (which includes a minimum of 36 Law School classroom credits; the experiential learning requirement; the professional responsibility requirement; the JD written work requirement; the international and comparative law course requirement); and the pro bono requirement. Joint-degree students are, like other JD students, permitted to select their upper-level law courses from the Law School's wide array of offerings. (See the [Harvard Law School Handbook of Academic Policies](#) for a full description of HLS JD degree requirements.)

The MPH curriculum for joint degree students is highly structured and suitable for those with a preexisting focused interest within global health or health policy, rather than a general desire to explore the field of public health.

## FIRST YEAR

Joint degree students begin their program by enrolling first (and exclusively) in the Law School and completing the first-year HLS curriculum:

- The required first-year courses: Civil Procedure, Constitutional Law, Contracts, Criminal Law, Legislation and Regulation, Property, and Torts;
- The January Experiential Term;
- First-Year Legal Research and Writing, which includes the First-Year Ames Moot Court Program; and
- A spring upper-level elective course of a minimum of two and a maximum of four Law School classroom credits.

## UPPER-LEVEL YEARS

In the second and third years of the program, students take courses at both the Harvard Chan School and the Harvard Law School. During this time, students will need to complete a minimum of 52 upper-level credits (which includes a minimum of 36 law classroom credits; a minimum of 6 experiential learning credits; the professional responsibility requirement; the JD written work requirement; the international and comparative law course requirement; and the pro bono requirement).

Students may take an immersion semester at the Harvard Chan School during the fall term of the second year and may choose to spend another upper-level semester entirely at HLS to accommodate the demands of particular activities (e.g., clinical work, job search). Students still need to enroll in a minimum of four HLS law classroom or clinic credits each semester to meet minimum residency requirements. Students should make appointments to meet with April Pettit ([apettit@law.harvard.edu](mailto:apettit@law.harvard.edu)), Associate Director of Academic Affairs in the HLS Office of Academic Affairs to go over HLS degree requirements, and Steve Bearden ([sbeardon@hsph.harvard.edu](mailto:sbeardon@hsph.harvard.edu)), Senior Associate Registrar at the Harvard Chan School to go over HSPH degree requirements, before the fall term of the second and third years of the joint degree program.

When beginning the MPH degree during the fall semester of the second year, students should take at least 25 credits, including the required MPH public health core curriculum. The MPH public health core curriculum is comprised of a school-wide, pre-matriculation course, ID 100: *Foundations for Public Health*; the biostatistics and epidemiology core; and six courses (MPH 101 – MPH 106) in other foundational public health areas (see most recent [MPH-45 Curriculum Guide](#)).

In the third year, students complete the Applied Practice Experience and the Integrative Learning Experience required for the MPH program. Some students may elect to complete the field portion of their MPH practicum requirement in conjunction with their JD Written Work Requirement or through an approved job in the summer prior to their third year. If receiving compensation for the MPH practicum, students cannot count this work toward their JD requirement (see Section I(K)(6) of the [HLS Handbook of Academic](#)

[Policies](#)). Students should meet with Stacey King ([seking@hsph.harvard.edu](mailto:seking@hsph.harvard.edu)), Director of Field Education and Practice at the Harvard Chan School, during their second year to discuss arrangements for the required field practice and coursework.

## COURSE AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

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### Harvard Law School

In addition to credits earned during the first year, Law School requirements for the second and third years include completion of at least 52 total upper-level credits (subject to the requirements set forth in the most recent [HLS Handbook of Academic Policies](#)) as follows:

- A minimum of 36 credits in Law School classroom work (a category that includes courses, seminars, and reading groups). Classroom courses taken in fulfillment of the professional responsibility requirement and the international/comparative law requirement count toward this minimum.
- At least 16 additional credits, up to 12 of which may come from qualifying coursework at the Harvard Chan School, and the remaining earned by completing written, clinical, or additional classroom work at the Law School.

In addition, all JD/MPH students must maintain HLS residency requirements during their 2L and 3L years, which consist of the fall, winter, and spring terms:

- Required minimum of HLS Law School classroom and/or clinical credits per semester: 4
- Required minimum total HLS plus Harvard Chan School converted credits per semester: 10
- Required minimum total HLS plus Harvard Chan School converted credits per year: 24

It is recommended that students spread their Law School required credits evenly over their upper-level semesters. All joint degree students must enroll in the [Law School Winter Term](#) during each upper-level year. (*JD/MPH students are not expected to enroll in Harvard Chan courses during Winter Session.*)

### Harvard Chan School

At least 45 credits are required for the MPH degree, which includes satisfaction of the Council on Education for Public Health's 12 Foundational Public Health Knowledge learning objectives and 22 MPH Foundational Competencies, as well as the Applied Practice Experience, the Integrative Learning Experience, and the Global Health or Health Policy field of study-specific requirements (see most recent [MPH-45 Curriculum Guide](#)).

At least 35 credits must appear on the Harvard Chan transcript. Of those credits, 22.5 must be taken for an ordinal grade.

### **Double-Counting Credits**

JD/MPH students may double-count up to 10 HLS credits at the Harvard Chan School and up to 12 converted upper-level credits at the Harvard Law School. The rules for double-counting credits are set forth in [JD/MPH Credit Requirements](#) and in the appendix to this program description.

### **OTHER PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

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#### *Integrating the JD Written Work Requirement and the MPH Applied Practice Experience and Integrative Learning Experience Requirements*

For the JD degree, students must complete option 1 or option 2 of the Law School's [JD Written Work Requirement](#).

For the MPH-45 degree, students must complete a required [Applied Practice Experience and an Integrative Learning Experience](#). These requirements are satisfied by enrolling in classroom-based course(s) (GHP 945 and GHP 530 for students in the Global Health field of study and HPM 945 for students in the Health Policy field of study) and completing a practicum.

Joint degree students may choose to integrate the practicum work with their law studies or their summer work in one of two ways:

- (1) By designing an integrated written project as described below, or
- (2) By selecting an approved job experience for the summer after their second year in which they will engage in work that meets the requirements for the MPH practicum

If receiving compensation for the MPH practicum work, students will not be able to count the work toward their JD requirements. Students should make an appointment with the practice team ([mph-practice@hsph.harvard.edu](mailto:mph-practice@hsph.harvard.edu)) in the Harvard Chan School's Office of Educational Programs, and with April Pettit ([apettit@law.harvard.edu](mailto:apettit@law.harvard.edu)), Associate Director of Academic Affairs in the HLS Office of Academic Affairs, early in their second year to discuss their options and any related time-sensitive requirements.

Students may complete the Law School's JD written work requirement and the Harvard Chan School's applied practice experience requirement in one integrated project. Integrated projects must involve both a substantial writing component and a substantial experiential component. The amount of time required to complete an integrated project will approximate the amount of time that would be required to satisfy the two requirements separately.

Proposals for integrated projects must be approved by a faculty member at each school prior to undertaking the work and must satisfy the criteria for both the JD written work

requirement and the MPH applied practice experience requirement. Even with an approved integrated project, students must still enroll in the required practice and integrative learning experience course(s) (GHP 945 and GHP 530 for Global Health and HPM 945 for Health Policy).

## ADMISSIONS

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Interested students enrolled at Harvard Law School should apply to the joint JD/MPH program during the fall of their first year at HLS. The Harvard Chan School's application deadline for JD/MPH applicants is December 1<sup>st</sup>.

### HARVARD T.H. CHAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH APPLICATION PROCESS

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The MPH application and admissions process is separate from the Harvard Law School application and admissions process. HLS students must separately apply and be admitted to the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

**SOPHAS:** All MPH applications must be submitted through [SOPHAS](#) – the centralized application for schools and programs of public health. In addition to the application, applicants must submit a statement of purpose and objectives, three letters of reference, résumé/curriculum vitae (CV), and all post-secondary transcripts, marks sheets, or degree conferrals. To learn more about the MPH application process, visit [Harvard Chan School Admissions](#).

JD/MPH applicants should select the appropriate designation in SOPHAS indicating that they are applying for the MPH45/JD joint degree program in either the Global Health or Health Policy field of study.

**Statement requirement for JD/MPH:** The [statement of purpose and objectives](#) should **not exceed 750 words**, although SOPHAS allows for a higher word count. There is no prescribed format for the essay, but it should include information about the following:

- Your focused interest within the field of public health
- Previous academic, professional, and/or extracurricular experiences that demonstrate your interest in public health or health-related issues
- Reasons for wanting to enroll in the joint JD/MPH degree program
- Career plans upon completion of the joint degree program

The essay should persuasively establish (1) your preparation to undertake this intense course of study, (2) your understanding of the MPH curriculum, and (3) a good fit between the curriculum and your interests and goals.

**Test scores:** The MPH program will not be considering GRE/LSAT scores during the 2023-2024 admissions cycle. We do, however, still require submission of either the TOEFL, IELTS, or Duolingo Test, if applicable.

## ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

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A number of factors are considered for admission to the joint JD/MPH program. Ordinarily, no single factor will eliminate an otherwise strong candidate; admissions decisions are based on an assessment of the “whole candidate.” Key considerations are the degree of fit between the program curriculum and the applicant’s interests and goals, and the applicant’s level of preparation for the proposed course of study.

Particular admissions criteria include the following:

### *1. Academic background*

- Completion of a bachelor’s degree or equivalent and completion of the 1L year at Harvard Law School prior to matriculation at the Harvard Chan School.
- Strong academic record in undergraduate work and any graduate study undertaken to date.
- Evidence of strong performance in prior coursework in mathematics and quantitative methods, and a comfort level with quantitative methods sufficient to undertake graduate-level study of biostatistics and epidemiology in an intensive, integrated course.
- Evidence of prior academic exposure to concepts in life sciences, health care, global health, and/or health policy.
- Proficiency in English.

### *2. Experience*

- A demonstrated commitment to public health interests through participation in relevant internships, volunteer experiences, research, and/or student and community activities.



### 3. *Goals*

The applicant's statement of purpose and objectives should:

- Show an understanding of the fields of law and public health and confirm a commitment to acquiring the skills and knowledge that form the core of the JD and MPH-45 degree programs.
- Establish a link between past training and experience, future professional goals, and the proposed program of study. Career objectives should be well articulated.
- Articulate a focused interest within law and public health arenas (for example, global health and human rights, U.S. health care policy, health sector reform, health technologies, environmental health).

### 4. *Potential contribution to the program*

- Sincere commitment to the fields of law and public health, including both an existing focused interest within the fields, the substantive and procedural intersections of the fields, and a curiosity about other areas of possible exploration.
- Extensive or unusual work experience or interesting personal background is a plus.
- Personal maturity and ability to work well with colleagues and contribute positively to a learning/working environment, as evidenced by letters of reference.

## TUITION AND FINANCIAL AID

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### COST OF PROGRAM

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Pursuing the JD and MPH through the joint degree program results in some tuition savings, compared to pursuing the two degrees separately. Tuition is paid as follows:

	HLS Tuition Paid	Harvard Chan Tuition Paid
<b>Year 1</b>	Full-time tuition is charged at 100%	None
<b>Years 2 &amp; 3</b>	Full-time tuition is charged at 75%	35 credits tuition charged over 2 years (4 terms) at the per credit rate for the current year. Charged as 8.75 credits (25%) during each of 4 terms (fall/spring).

### FINANCIAL AID

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Joint degree applicants should apply for financial aid **through Harvard Law School only** for the three academic years of the program; no financial aid application should be submitted to the Harvard Chan School. All financial aid determinations for these semesters are made through Harvard Law School under its standard policies. Applicants should inform HLS Student Financial Services ([sfs@law.harvard.edu](mailto:sfs@law.harvard.edu)) that they are applying to the joint program and should let the office know when they have been accepted to the program. For further information about HLS financial aid policies, see [JD Student Financial Services](#).

In years 2 and 3 of the program, students who qualify for need-based grant assistance through HLS will receive funding based off of 100% HLS tuition charges in each year, 85% of Harvard Chan tuition charges in each year, and the remaining student budget categories as determined by HLS. The remaining 15% of Harvard Chan tuition charges, plus any other components of the HLS student budget not covered by need-based grant assistance, can be borrowed from federal or private loan sources.

JD/MPH applicants are eligible for aid specifically for the MPH portion of their studies through the [Zuckerman Fellows Program](#). The Zuckerman Fellowship provides generous support for joint degree students interested in public service. Students must submit a separate application to the Zuckerman Fellowship at the time of application to the MPH program. The timing of the fellowship application should be discussed with the [Committee on General Scholarships](#). Judith Murciano ([jmurcian@law.harvard.edu](mailto:jmurcian@law.harvard.edu)), Associate Director and Director of Fellowships in the Bernard Koteen Office of Public Interest Advising at Harvard Law School, is available to assist in the fellowship application process as well.

## CONTACTS

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For information about the **MPH application and admissions** process:

[Harvard Chan School Admissions Office](#)

617-432-1031; [admissions@hsph.harvard.edu](mailto:admissions@hsph.harvard.edu)

For information about **financial aid** arrangements:

[Harvard Law School JD Student Financial Services](#)

617-495-4606; [sfs@law.harvard.edu](mailto:sfs@law.harvard.edu)

For **programmatic and curriculum questions** about the:

### *MPH portion of the JD/MPH joint degree program*

Anne Occhipinti

Assist. Dean for Professional Education

Harvard Chan School

[aocchipi@hsph.harvard.edu](mailto:aocchipi@hsph.harvard.edu)

Ameet Sarpatwari

Faculty Co-Director

Harvard Chan School

[asarpatwari@hsph.harvard.edu](mailto:asarpatwari@hsph.harvard.edu)

### *JD portion of the JD/MPH joint degree program*

April Pettit

Associate Director of Academic Affairs

Harvard Law School

[apettit@law.harvard.edu](mailto:apettit@law.harvard.edu)

I. Glenn Cohen

Faculty Co-Director

Harvard Law School

[igcohen@law.harvard.edu](mailto:igcohen@law.harvard.edu)

For information about **course enrollment and transferring credits across schools**:

### *JD portion of the JD/MPH program*

Samantha Fitzgerald

Associate Registrar for Curriculum and

Academic Services

Harvard Law School

[sfitzgerald@law.harvard.edu](mailto:sfitzgerald@law.harvard.edu)

### *MPH portion of the JD/MPH program*

Steve Bearden

Senior Associate Registrar

Harvard Chan School

[sbearden@hsph.harvard.edu](mailto:sbearden@hsph.harvard.edu)

## APPENDIX: RULES CONCERNING COUNTING OF COURSE CREDITS

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JD/MPH students may count a limited number of credits toward both their JD and their MPH degree. This appendix explains the rules for counting credits (also see [JD/MPH Credit Requirements](#)).

Credits are described as “Harvard Chan School credits” and “HLS credits” herein because the two schools do not count credits in the same way. Typically, HLS credits are transferred to Harvard Chan School credits as follows:

HLS Credits	Harvard Chan School Credits
1 =	1.25
2 =	2.5
3 =	3.75
4 =	5.0

However, some courses may transfer differently due to the amount of coursework involved. To confirm the number of credits that will be applied, JD/MPH students are strongly encouraged to consult the Registrars of the respective schools **early in the semester** in which they plan to request that credits be counted across schools.

All Harvard Chan School credits are converted into the HLS credit equivalents when counting said credits toward the JD. HLS converts credits based on the ABA Standards for Legal Education and classroom minutes.

***Q: How many credits can I count toward both degrees?***

***A: Students may double-count credits in the following ways:***

- 1. Up to 5 Harvard Chan School credits from classes taught at HLS (on any subject) may be counted toward the MPH degree.***

*Example:* Jim Student registers at HLS for an Administrative Law class for 4 HLS credits and asks the Harvard Chan School Registrar to apply this as 5 credits toward his MPH degree. This will appear on Jim’s Harvard Chan transcript as a 5-credit course.

- 2. Up to 5 Harvard Chan School credits from an approved list of health law classes taught at HLS may be counted toward the MPH degree.***

If students earn additional credits in these courses beyond that number, they may count those credits toward the requirements for the JD degree, but not both degrees. Because the courses may have overlapping content, students must obtain approval from their Harvard Chan faculty advisor for the credits/courses that they intend to count toward both degrees. Courses offerings vary from year to year. **For**

**the 2023-2024 academic year, the eligible health law courses include (but are not limited to) the courses listed below.** For other health law courses not on this list, students must obtain approval from the faculty co-directors. Students should consult the [HLS Course Catalog](#) for the meeting times of the eligible health law courses.

<b>Course Number</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Semester</b>	<b>HLS Credits</b>
HLS 2091	Food and Drug Law	Winter 2024	3
HLS 2293	Drug Product Liability Litigation	Fall 2023	3
HLS 2293	Drug Product Liability Litigation	Fall 2023	2
HLS 2359	Food Law and Policy	Fall 2023 Spring 2024	2 per semester; register for one or both
HLS 2497	Public Health Law and Policy	Fall 2023 Spring 2024	2 per semester; register for one
HLS 2652	Health Law, Policy, Bioethics, and Biotechnology Workshop	Fall 2023	2
HLS 2989	Health Care Rights in the Twenty-First Century	Fall 2023	2
HLS 8033	Health Law and Policy Clinic of the Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation	Fall 2023 Spring 2024	3,4, or 5 credits per semester

*Example:* Jim receives permission from his Harvard Chan faculty advisor to count Health Law toward his MPH degree as 5 credits, in addition to the 4 credits he will receive at HLS. Jim registers for this course at HLS. Since Jim also plans to apply the 5 credits from his Administrative Law class toward his MPH, his Harvard Chan transcript at the time of graduation will need to show (at a minimum) 35 credits taken at the Harvard Chan School.

**3. Up to 12 converted credits from courses taken at the Harvard Chan School may be counted toward the upper-level credit requirement for the JD degree at HLS.**

*Example:* Jane registers at the Harvard Chan School in a course that meets for 90 minutes twice per week for 6 weeks; this course will convert to 1 HLS credit.

**Q: I read in the Harvard Chan School Student Handbook that Harvard Chan students can count up to 10 cross-registration credits per semester toward their MPH. Does this rule apply to JD/MPH students?**

**A: No, a special rule concerning cross-registration credits applies to JD/MPH students.** They receive the 5 Harvard Chan School credits for HLS classes under Rule A.1. above and may count 5 additional cross-registration credits toward their MPH degree only if they do not intend to double-count any of the health law courses listed above under Rule A.3. If health law courses are double-counted, the 5 additional possible cross-registration credits are proportionately reduced.

*Example:* Jim is interested in a class on Science, Technology and Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School. This course is equivalent to 5 Harvard Chan School credits. If Jim had not been planning to double-count any of the eligible HLS health law classes, he could apply the Kennedy School course credits fully toward his MPH. However, Jim's plan is to apply the 5 credits from Health Law as well as the 5 credits from his Administrative Law class toward his MPH. This brings him to 10 credits from courses taught outside the Harvard Chan School, so the Kennedy School class cannot also count toward his MPH. Jim decides not to ask the Harvard Chan School Registrar to count the 5 credits from the Health Law class toward his MPH, and instead plans to count the 5 credits from the Kennedy School course. Health Law will still count toward his Law School classroom credit requirement.

**Q. Can I cross-register for courses at other Harvard schools (e.g., Harvard Kennedy School) and apply those credits toward my JD?**

**A.** Not without special permission. JD/MPH students can receive up to 12 converted credits from qualifying MPH coursework; therefore, if approved to enroll in a cross-registered course, it is likely that the credits will not count towards the JD degree requirements.

This will be assessed and determined on a case-by-case basis, depending on current credit conversions and counts. Please contact the HLS Registrar's Office ([registrar@law.harvard.edu](mailto:registrar@law.harvard.edu)) to discuss further.