

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL BEHAVIOR FIELD OF STUDY: MPH-65

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The Health and Social Behavior (HSB) field of study is devoted to understanding health disparities and promoting health. Coursework emphasizes theoretical and analytical strategies for characterizing health problems in populations and the development of interventions. In addition, communication, advocacy, and policy formation in the public sector are addressed. Beyond the MPH core requirements, students are encouraged to develop expertise in either planned social change or social determinants of health and disparities. Guidance is provided to develop a more in-depth understanding of specific health problems and vulnerable groups.

This field of study prepares those early in their careers to work in diverse spheres, including federal, state, and local government; advocacy groups; voluntary health organizations; and community-based primary care settings in the United States and other countries.

### **Curriculum**

The curriculum for the health and social behavior field of study consists of the required MPH program-wide core coursework in public health as well as required field of study-specific courses. All students must take an introductory course in society and health, one theoretical and one applied course in interventions (planned social change), one theoretical and one applied course in characterizing health problems in populations (social determinants of health and disparities), and complete additional required coursework in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Students must also complete an approved practicum and culminating experience project. Students have some credits available for elective courses, which may be taken at the Harvard Chan School or by cross-registering at other Harvard Graduate Schools, MIT, and Tufts Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy or Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy.

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL BEHAVIOR FIELD OF STUDY COMPETENCIES: MPH-65

### **Common Competency**

- Integrate disciplinary perspectives and methods to address a specific health and social behavior issue or problem

### **Planned Social Change**

The competencies for implementing planned social change are:

- Apply the theories underlying behavioral and social change to the development of interventions, including community organizing
- Analyze the context of change, including community and culture, and how that influences outcomes
- Demonstrate how to use a range of strategies for effecting change from individual programs, behavioral economics, policy, and communication
- Develop the elements of evaluation of interventions in context

### **Social Determinants of Health and Disparities**

The competencies for understanding and defining social determinants of health and disparities are:

- Analyze how social and behavioral factors determine health
- Analyze the role of social and behavioral factors in creating disparities
- Use concepts related to social determinants and disparities to inform data collection, measurement, and approaches
- Compare and contrast approaches to measuring disparities
- Develop inquiries that examine social determinants and disparities

**SECTION 1: MPH Program-Wide Public Health Core Requirements (12.5 – 15 credits)**

**(i) Biostatistics and Epidemiology**

**7.5 credits**

ID 201 [Fall]\* Core Principles of Biostatistics and Epidemiology for Public Health Practice  
or  
Other Approved Options as Appropriate (see pp. 7-8)

\*This integrated course will fulfill both the Biostatistics and Epidemiology core requirements.

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**Other Public Health Core:**

**5 – 7.5 credits**

- (ii) Environmental Health Sciences**
- (iii) Health Services Administration**
- (iv) Social and Behavioral Sciences\*\***
- (v) Ethics of Public Health Practice**

The School is continuing to transition to an integrated public health core. In fall 2017, some students will take a 5-credit integrated MPH core course, **ID 216, Critical Thinking and Action for Public Health Professionals** (see p. 15 for more information). Other students will take the individual public health core courses separately (see pp. 9-13 for approved options).

\*\*The Social and Behavioral Sciences core is included in the Health and Social Behavior field of study requirements.

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<b>SECTION 2: MPH-65 Health and Social Behavior – Field of Study Requirements (35 credits)</b>
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MPH-65 Health and Social Behavior students must complete the following field of study-specific requirements.

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|--|--------------------|-----|
| <b>1. Society and Health</b> (course must be taken for an ordinal grade) |                    |     |
| SBS 201 [1 <sup>st</sup> year; Fall 1]*                                  | Society and Health | 2.5 |

\*Fulfills Social and Behavioral Sciences core requirement

**2. Theory and Concepts and Applied Methods and Skills Coursework**

The HSB field of study requires coursework in two focus areas: Planned Social Change and Social Determinants of Health and Disparities. To fulfill this requirement, students in the HSB field of study are required to take at least one course in both theory and concepts and in applied methods and skills within each of the focus areas for a total of **10 ordinal credits**.

**Planned Social Change** (all courses must be taken for an ordinal grade)

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|---|---|-----|
| <i>a. Theory and Concepts</i> (select <u>one</u> of the approved options below):    |   |     |
| SBS 520 [Spring 1]  | Using Public Health Theories to Solve Community Health Problems | 2.5 |
| <i>or</i>   |   |     |
| SBS 503 [Spring 2]  | Explaining Health Behavior: Insights from Behavioral Economics  | 2.5 |
| <b><u>AND</u></b>   |   |     |
| <i>b. Applied/Methods/Skills</i> (select <u>one</u> of the approved options below): |   |     |
| SBS 508 [Fall 2]  | Successes and Challenges in Health Behavior Change              | 2.5 |
| <i>or</i>   |   |     |
| SBS 509 [Spring 1]  | Health Communication in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century            | 2.5 |
| <i>or</i>   |   |     |
| SBS 265 [Spring 2]  | Program Planning: Design and Evaluation                         | 2.5 |

**AND**

**Social Determinants of Health and Disparities** (all courses must be taken for an ordinal grade)

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|--|---|-----|
| <i>a. Theory and Concepts</i> (select <u>one</u> of the approved options below):   |   |     |
| SBS 506 [Fall 1]   | An Intro. to History, Politics, & Public Health: Theories of Disease Distribution & Health Inequities | 2.5 |
| <i>or</i>  |   |     |
| SBS 514 [Fall 2]   | Reducing Socioeconomic & Racial/Ethnic Inequalities in Health: Concepts, Models, Effective Strategies | 2.5 |
| <i>or</i>  |   |     |
| SBS 207 [Spring 1]**   | Race, Ethnicity, and Health   | 2.5 |
| <i>or</i>  |   |     |
| SBS 254 [Spring 2]   | Social Disparities, Stress, and Health  | 2.5 |
| <b><u>AND</u></b>  |   |     |
| <i>b. Applied/Methods/Skills</i> (select <u>one</u> of the approved options below) |   |     |
| SBS 281 [Fall 2]   | Principles of Social and Behavioral Research  | 2.5 |
| <i>or</i>  |   |     |
| SBS 513 [Spring 2]   | Measuring and Reporting Health Disparities  | 2.5 |

\*\*Next offered in 2018-2019

### 3. Additional SBS Courses

MPH-65 HSB students must take an additional 20 credits from any SBS course offerings. Please note that 17.5 of the 20 required credits must be taken for an ordinal grade. See sample list on next page.

### 4. Practice and Culminating Experience (course must be taken for an ordinal grade)

SBS 290 [2 <sup>nd</sup> year; Fall]	Practice and Culminating Experience for Health and Social Behavior	2.5
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*This course is the practice and culminating experience for the health and social behavior field of study. Students are required to complete a project with an outside organization or agency during the summer and attend various class sessions. The objectives of the course are to help students to integrate, synthesize, and apply the knowledge and skills from their coursework to a real world public health problem or issue, explore a substantive public health topic that is of interest to them, enhance the competencies and skills students need to function in a professional public health setting, and engage in professional self-assessment and critical reflection.*

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### Sample List of Additional SBS Course Offerings:

#### Planned Social Change

SBS 212 [Fall]	Developmental Disabilities I: Evaluation, Assessment, and Systems	2.5
SBS 214 [Spring]	Developmental Disabilities II: Values, Policy, and Change	2.5
SBS 222 [Fall 2]	Social Services for Children, Adolescents, and Families	2.5
SBS 231 [Spring 1]	Community Intervention Research Methods	2.5
SBS 246 [Fall 2]	Issues in Maternal and Child Health Programs and Policies	2.5
SBS 288 [Fall 1]	Qualitative Research Methods in Public Health	2.5
SBS 299 [Fall]	Driving Science-Based Innovation in Early Childhood Practice and Policy	5.0
SBS 504 [Fall 1]	Substance Abuse and Public Health	2.5
SBS 511 [Winter]	Social Policy and Health in International Perspective	2.5
SBS 515 [Fall 1]	Health Literacy: Measuring Accessibility of Health Information	2.5
SBS 516 [Fall 2]	Measures of the Health Literacy Environment	1.25
SBS 519 [Spring 2]	Patient-Centered Communication and Health Equity – Challenges and Opportunities in the Digital Era	2.5
SBS 550 [Winter]	Program Evaluation	2.5

#### Social Determinants of Health and Disparities

SBS 208 [Fall 1]	Adolescent Health	2.5
SBS 219 [Spring 2]	High Risk Behavior: Epidemiology and Prevention Strategies	2.5
SBS 220 [Spring 1]	Society and Its Effects on Child Health	2.5
SBS 288 [Fall 1]	Qualitative Research Methods in Public Health	2.5
SBS 296 [Fall]	Leadership in Minority Health Policy	2.5
SBS 514 [Fall 2]	Reducing Socioeconomic & Racial/Ethnic Inequalities in Health: Concepts, Models, Effective Strategies	2.5
SBS 519 [Spring 2]	Patient-Centered Communication and Health Equity – Challenges and Opportunities in the Digital Era	2.5
WGH 220 [Spring 1]	Sexuality and Public Health	2.5
WGH 250 [Winter]	Embodying Gender: Public Health, Biology, & the Body Politic	2.5

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### **SECTION 3: Electives (15 – 17.5 credits)**

Students are free to choose electives at the Harvard Chan School. Students also have the additional option of cross-registering for graduate-level courses at other Harvard Graduate Schools, MIT, and Tufts Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy or Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy.

**Please note:** Students in HSB who are funded through the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) training grant MUST meet with Trish Lavoie at the beginning of the fall term to ensure that they meet the requirements of the training grant.

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<u>MPH-65 Health and Social Behavior Degree Requirements</u>	
<b>MPH Program-Wide Public Health Core Requirements</b>	<b><u>Credits</u></b>
Biostatistics & Epidemiology	7.5
Other Public Health Core*	<u>5 – 7.5</u>
	<b>12.5 – 15 credits</b>
<b>MPH-65 Health and Social Behavior – Field of Study Requirements</b>	
Society and Health	2.5
Theory and Applied courses in Planned Social Change	5.0
Theory and Applied courses in Social Determinants of Health and Disparities	5.0
Additional SBS courses	20
Practice & Culminating Experience	<u>2.5</u>
	<b>35 credits</b>
<b>Electives</b>	<b>15 – 17.5 credits**</b>
<b>Total Requirements</b>	<b>65 credits</b>

\*The School is continuing to transition to an integrated public health core. In fall 2017, some students will take a 5-credit integrated MPH core course, ID 216, Critical Thinking and Action for Public Health Professionals (see p. 15 for more information). Other students will take the individual public health core courses separately (for MPH-HSB, 2.5 credits in Environmental Health, 2.5 credits in Health Services Administration, and 2.5 credits in Ethics or completion of the alternative non-credit option – see pp. 9-13). The Social and Behavioral Sciences core is included in the Health and Social Behavior field of study requirements.

\*\*MPH-65 students will be assessed a flat tuition charge per semester based on degree program and full- or part-time status that will include all registration for that semester. Students may elect to complete additional credits beyond the required 65, but must do so during their enrollment in the MPH degree program and may not use the additional credits to extend their expected graduation date.