

## FIELD OF STUDY: HEALTH AND SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

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### OVERVIEW

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 for the development of interventions. In addition, communication, advocacy, and policy formation in the public sector are addressed. Beyond the MPH public health core curriculum, students are expected to develop expertise in a skill or topic area of interest. Guidance is provided to develop a more in-depth understanding of specific health problems and vulnerable groups.

This field of study prepares students 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. Posts filled by graduates include state health director; medical director of programs for child, adolescent, and women's health; health policy analyst; and health educator. Other graduates have gone on to academic positions.

### CURRICULUM

The curriculum for the health and social behavior field of study consists of the required MPH public health core curriculum as well as required field of study-specific courses. All students must take a survey course in society and health, three other specific SBS courses that apply these principles to understanding and intervening on the health of populations, and complete additional required coursework in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Students must also complete an approved Applied Practice and Integrative Learning Experience (Practice and Culminating Experience). Students have some credits available for elective courses, which may be taken at the Harvard Chan School or by cross-registering ([hsph.me/cross-registration](https://hsph.harvard.edu/cross-registration)).

### COMPETENCIES

- Critically appraise behavioral and social theories and conceptual paradigms to design of basic and applied inquires
- Formulate social and behavioral change interventions based on these theories that are appropriate and responsive to the social and cultural context
- Critically appraise principles of research and evaluation methodology to address research hypotheses and interventions
- Understand and apply rigorous, theory-based approaches to research translation for practice, policy, and public health settings
- Develop advanced professional skills including:
  - The ability to explain and defend complex scientific concepts
  - Skills in the review, synthesis, and critique of research
  - Familiarity with cultural competency and ethical principles in research and interventions

## MPH-45 in Health and Social Behavior



### CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

Course Number	Title	Credits	Semester
<b>MPH PUBLIC HEALTH CORE CURRICULUM (12.5 credits)</b>			
To learn more about the MPH public health core curriculum, see page 6			
Fall (12.5 credits)			
ID 201	Core Principles of Biostatistics and Epidemiology for Public Health Practice	7.5	Fall
ID 216	Critical Thinking and Action for Public Health Professionals	5.0	Fall
<b>FIELD OF STUDY REQUIREMENTS (20 credits)</b>			
All courses <b>must</b> be taken for an ordinal grade unless otherwise noted.			
Fall (8.75 credits)			
SBS 201	Society and Health	2.5	Fall 1
SBS 281	Principles of Social and Behavioral Research	2.5	Fall 2
SBS 508	Successes and Challenges in Health Behavior Change	2.5	Fall 2
SBS 945A	Practice and Culminating Experience for Health and Social Behavior	1.25	Fall
Spring (3.75 credits)			
SBS TBD	Program Planning: Course 1	2.5	Spring 1
SBS 945B	Practice and Culminating Experience for Health and Social Behavior	1.25	Spring
Additional HSB Requirements (7.5 credits)			
Varies	Take 7.5 credits from the full list of SBS course offerings <a href="https://hsph.me/sbscourses-by-topic">hsph.me/sbscourses-by-topic</a>  Note: 5.0 of the required 7.5 credits <b>must</b> be taken for an ordinal grade. An independent study (e.g., SBS 300) does not count towards this requirement.	7.5	Fall & Spring
<b>ELECTIVES (12.5 credits)</b>			
To view a sample list of cross-registration electives, visit <a href="https://hsph.me/mph-suggested-cross-reg-electives">hsph.me/mph-suggested-cross-reg-electives</a>			

**TOTAL 45 CREDITS**

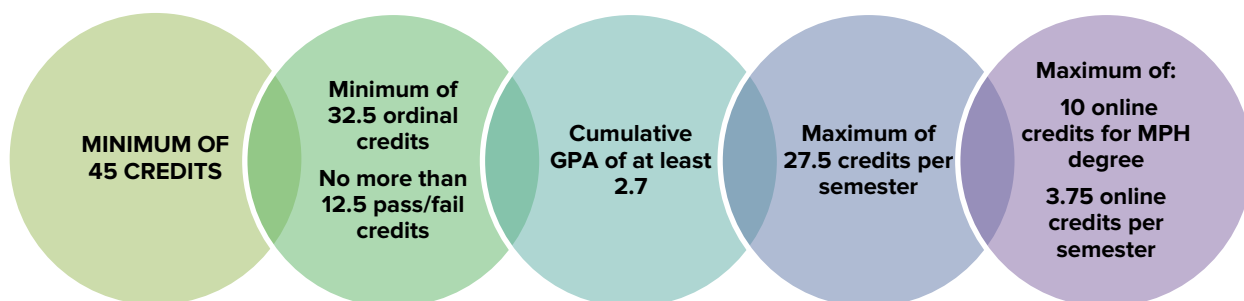
## Notes for Students

All full-time MPH students are expected to participate in a Winter Session activity approved by the MPH-OED Office. To learn more, visit [hsph.me/mphwintersession](https://hsph.harvard.edu/mphwintersession)

## Maternal and Child Health Interdisciplinary Concentration

Students who received any funding through the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) training grant **must** meet with Bethany Kotlar, [bkotlar@hsph.harvard.edu](mailto:bkotlar@hsph.harvard.edu), at the beginning of the fall semester to ensure they meet the training grant requirements. Students interested in the *MCH interdisciplinary concentration*, who did not receive any funding, are also welcome to reach out to Bethany about participating in the concentration and its requirements.

## Important Program Reminders



## Sample Curriculum for MPH-45 in HSB (45 credits taken over 9 months)

FALL			WINTER	SPRING		
ID 201	Core Principles of Biostatistics and Epidemiology for Public Health Practice	7.5cr	Work on Practicum	SBS TBD	Program Planning: Course 1	2.5cr
ID 216	Critical Thinking and Action for Public Health Professionals	5.0cr		Varies	Additional SBS Coursework Requirement	7.5cr
				SBS 945B	Practice and Culminating Experience for HSB	1.25cr
SBS 201	Society and Health	2.5cr		Work on Practicum		
SBS 281	Principles of Social & Behavioral Research	2.5cr				
SBS 508	Successes and Challenges in Health Behavior Change	2.5cr				
SBS 945A	Practice and Culminating Experience for HSB	1.25cr				
Electives		2.5cr				
TOTAL CREDITS	23.75 credits		21.25 credits (includes Winter Session)			END OF PROGRAM = 45 credits