

FIELD OF STUDY: HEALTH AND SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

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 those early on 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 public health core curriculum as well as required field of study-specific courses. All students must take a survey course in society and health, four 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 inquiries
- 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
- Integrate disciplinary perspective and methods to address a specific health and social behavior issue or problem

MPH-65 in Health and Social Behavior



CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

Course Number	Title	Credits	Semester
MPH PUBLIC HEALTH CORE CURRICULUM (12.5 credits)			
To learn more about the MPH public health core curriculum, see page 6			
Year 1: 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
FIELD OF STUDY REQUIREMENTS (32.5 credits)			
All courses must be taken for an ordinal grade unless otherwise noted.			
Year 1: Fall (5.0 credits)			
SBS 201	Society and Health	2.5	Fall 1
SBS 281	Principles of Social and Behavioral Research	2.5	Fall 2
Year 1: Spring (5.0 credits)			
SBS TBD	Program Planning: Course 1	2.5	Spring 1
SBS TBD	Program Planning: Course 2	2.5	Spring 2
Practicum (Summer or Spring/Summer)			
Year 2: Fall (2.5 credits)			
SBS 965F	Practice and Culminating Experience for Health and Social Behavior	2.5	Fall
Additional HSB Requirements (20 credits)			
<i>Can be completed during Year 1 or Year 2 of program.</i>			
SBS 508	Successes and Challenges in Health Behavior Change	2.5	Fall 2
Varies	Take 17.5 credits from the full list of SBS course offerings hsph.me/sbscourses-by-topic Note: 15.0 of the required 17.5 credits must be taken for an ordinal grade. An independent study (e.g., SBS 300) does not count towards this requirement.	17.5	Fall & Spring
ELECTIVES (20 credits)			
To view a sample list of cross-registration electives, visit hsph.me/mph-suggested-cross-reg-electives			

TOTAL 65 CREDITS

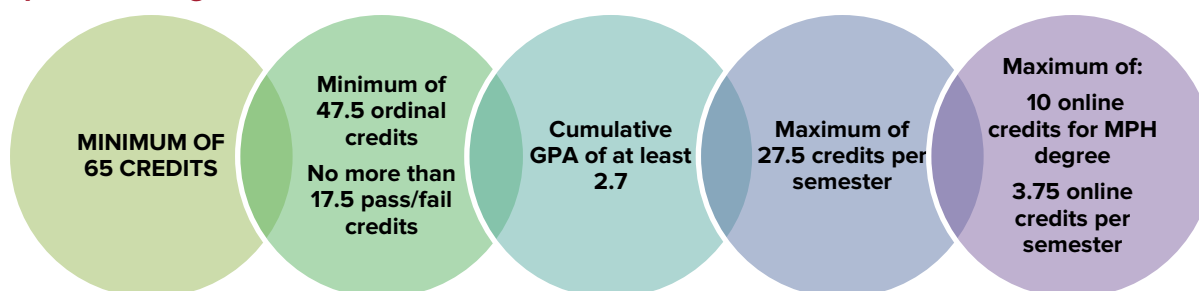
Notes for Students

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

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, 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-65 in HSB

Year one (Semesters 1 and 2)

FALL FIRST YEAR			WINTER	SPRING FIRST YEAR			SUMMER
ID 201	Core Principles of Biostatistics and Epidemiology for Public Health Practice	7.5cr		SBS TBD	Program Planning: Course 1	2.5cr	Practicum
ID 216	Critical Thinking and Action for Public Health Professionals	5.0cr		SBS TBD	Program Planning: Course 2	2.5cr	
				Varies	Additional SBS Coursework Requirement	7.5cr	
SBS 201	Society and Health	2.5cr					
SBS 281	Principles of Social and Behavioral Research	2.5cr					
Varies	Additional SBS Coursework Requirement	5.0cr					
Electives						7.5cr	
TOTAL CREDITS	22.5 credits		20 credits (includes Winter Session)				

Year two (Semester 3)

FALL SECOND YEAR			END OF PROGRAM = 65 credits
SBS 508	Successes and Challenges in Health Behavior Change	2.5cr	
Varies	Additional SBS Coursework Requirement	5.0cr	
SBS 965F	Practice and Culminating Experience for HSB	2.5cr	
Electives		12.5cr	
TOTAL CREDITS	22.5 credits		