

**Master of Public Health**

**Student Handbook**

Fall 2021

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# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

On behalf of faculty and staff at the School of Public Health (SPH), we welcome you to the Master of Public Health (MPH) Program! This handbook can be used throughout your program to provide guidance for requirements, expectations, and opportunities within the SPH and the Graduate School.

**Vision of the School of Public Health**

Equitable, healthy, and resilient communities. We achieve this vision through these **values:**

* 1. Promoting health equity
  2. Embracing diversity
  3. Advancing knowledge
  4. Succeeding through collaboration
  5. Developing workforce excellence

**Mission of the School of Public Health**

To develop, disseminate, and apply knowledge to protect and promote the health and well-being of individuals, families and communities. The school’s goals that describe strategies to accomplish the defined **mission:**

* 1. Develop and advance knowledge for public health through research and practice
  2. Cultivate and prepare a skilled and diverse workforce that can sustain equitable and healthy communities
  3. Prepare students to become public health practitioners, researchers, educators and leaders
  4. Lead innovative approaches to improve public health and reduce health disparities
  5. Engage with diverse communities through professional, educational, and scholarly service

MPH PROGRAMS OF STUDY

The [SPH](https://www.unr.edu/public-health) offers a Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) accredited Master of Public Health (MPH) degree with specializations in Epidemiology, Health Administration and Policy, and Social and Behavioral Health. A BS to MPH program and a MD/MPH dual degree are also offered. Students graduating from a CEPH accredited program are eligible to sit for the national Certified in Public Health (CPH) exam.

Students must designate a specialization for the MPH degree (Epidemiology, Health Administration and Policy, or Social and Behavioral Health) at the time of application to the program. Students are admitted to a specific specialization based on their qualifications and background; therefore, if they want to change specializations after acceptance, they must first discuss it with their advisor and then the Director Graduate Studies to determine if it is feasible.

The goal of the MPH program is to prepare students to be effective public health professionals. Public health professionals work in a variety of organizations and agencies to contribute to the common aim of promoting and protecting health in human populations through innovative research, policy analysis, and education that draws upon multidisciplinary expertise. The school serves local, national, and international communities with its knowledge through practicum experience.

**Contact Information**

For any program or application related questions or inquiries, please contact the Director of Graduate Studies, Dr. Kristen Clements-Nolle, at [clements@unr.edu](mailto:clements@unr.edu) or the Student Services Coordinator, Melanie Flores at [melanief@unr.edu](mailto:melanief@unr.edu)

## MPH COMPETENCIES

**MPH Foundational Competencies**

1. Apply epidemiological methods to the breadth of settings and situations in public health practice
2. Select quantitative and qualitative data collection methods appropriate for a given public health context
3. Analyze quantitative and qualitative data using biostatistics, informatics, computer-based programming and software, as appropriate
4. Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy or practice
5. Compare the organization, structure and function of health care, public health and regulatory systems across national and international settings
6. Discuss the means by which structural bias, social inequities and racism undermine health and create challenges to achieving health equity at organizational, community and societal levels
7. Assess population needs, assets and capacities that affect communities’ health
8. Apply awareness of cultural values and practices to the design or implementation of public health policies or programs
9. Design a population-based policy, program, project or intervention
10. Explain basic principles and tools of budget and resource management
11. Select methods to evaluate public health programs
12. Discuss multiple dimensions of the policy-making process, including the roles of ethics and evidence
13. Propose strategies to identify stakeholders and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes
14. Advocate for political, social or economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations
15. Evaluate policies for their impact on public health and health equity
16. Apply principles of leadership, governance and management, which include creating a vision, empowering others, fostering collaboration and guiding decision making
17. Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges
18. Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors
19. Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation
20. Describe the importance of cultural competence in communicating public health content
21. Perform effectively on interprofessional teams
22. Apply systems thinking tools to a public health issue

**Epidemiology MPH Competencies**

1. Analyze the purposes, strengths, and weaknesses of various study designs
2. Assess the impact of bias and heterogeneity in analytic studies
3. Implement data management techniques using SAS or other statistical software
4. Construct epidemiologic models using statistical programming
5. Investigate informatics methods and resources as strategic tools to promote public health

**Health Administration and Policy MPH Competencies**

1. Formulate health policies using systematic methodology
2. Critically evaluate current health policy developments
3. Use rigorous health policy analysis techniques, such as difference-in-difference
4. Analyze economic incentives present in healthcare markets
5. Examine how healthcare policy can influence economic incentives present in healthcare markets
6. Apply economic concepts to better understand the production, consumption, and distribution of health
7. Analyze financial data to inform decision making in a health care organization
8. Apply principles of strategic planning in developing a business plan
9. Develop and present a report on the financial status of a health care organization

**Social and Behavioral Health MPH Competencies**

1. Develop a grant proposal that addresses unmet needs of a population.
2. Analyze theories, concepts and models that are used in public health research and practice.
3. Apply theories in proposed interventions to address health issues in specific populations
4. Demonstrate effective group facilitation skills
5. Apply procedures for evaluation of public health programs and interventions
6. Develop theory of change and theory of action logic models.
7. Apply ethical principles to guide professional practice in evaluation.

NEW STUDENT INFORMATION

New student orientations are held after admission into the MPH program to provide students with important information and to facilitate the start of their program. The orientations also allow students to be introduced to the UNR campus, faculty members, and to fellow students in the program. Additionally, the orientations will allow the students to meet their advisor and ask any prepared questions.

**University of Nevada Student ID and Communication**

* After admission to UNR, students need to obtain and set up an account with [MyNevada](https://mynevada.unr.edu/).
  + Under “For Current Students,” “Create My Profile”, students can set up their university account, including providing an email address that will be used for all university and program communication. Use of the Nevada.edu email address is required.
* Set up NetID and password at [Net ID Activation](https://identity.unr.edu/)
  + This site assists students in activating their NetID and user password, which will be used to access MyNevada, WebCampus, and other university resources.
* Log into [WebCampus](https://wcl.unr.edu/webapps/login/) with your UNR NetID to view course content and announcements.
* Purchase a [WolfCard](http://www.unr.edu/wolfcard) student ID
  + Visit the WolfCard office on the first floor of the Joe Crowley Student Union and bring a valid U.S. State or Federally issued photo ID or a passport to purchase a Wolfcard

**Class Registration**

After admission into the MPH program, an email will be sent to each student from the Office of Admissions and Records with a fall semester enrollment date. All students need to register for fall courses after discussion with and approval from their faculty advisor or the MPH Graduate Program Director. Students can register for classes at [MyNevada](https://mynevada.unr.edu/).

**Tuition and Fee Information**

* Information about [tuition and fee payments](https://www.unr.edu/grad/admissions/tuition-and-fees)
* [Financial Aid](http://www.unr.edu/financial-aid)

**Academic Calendar and Deadlines**

* [Academic Calendar](https://www.unr.edu/academic-central/academic-resources/academic-calendar#2018-2019)
  + Important dates and holidays
* [Graduate School Deadlines](https://www.unr.edu/grad/graduation-and-deadlines)
  + Deadlines for the academic year

# ADVISEMENT AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

REQUIRED FORMS

All students will have an academic advisor beginning their first semester in the program. Students will meet regularly with their academic advisor to ensure that they are completing the appropriate degree requirements. Each student must complete a Declaration of Advisor/Major Advisor/Committee Chair form and submit it to the Graduate School no later than the end of the second semester of coursework. This form is available online at [Declaration of Advisor](https://www.unr.edu/main/pdfs/verified-accessible/colleges-schools/grad/progressions/declaration-of-advisor.pdf). Students will also meet with their academic advisor to discuss and complete a planned [Program of Study (POS),](https://powerforms.docusign.net/f4c5cda5-9551-4439-863f-c63295f484e4?env=na3-eu1&acct=00b1dddc-e55a-4962-9660-d691e16a2f23) a written plan of the courses required to complete their MPH degree. This plan must be approved by the student’s advisor, and the Director of Graduate Studies, and should be completed no later than the end of the third semester. Finally, students will work with their academic adviser to complete the Notice of Completion form in order to graduate. The Notice of Completion form should be submitted by the deadline listed in the UNR academic calendar of their final semester: [Notice of Completion](https://powerforms.docusign.net/0061da16-4657-42fb-92fc-9b9be9e7cfa4?env=na3-eu1&acct=00b1dddc-e55a-4962-9660-d691e16a2f23). An up-to-date list of forms and requirements can be found here: [Graduate School Forms](https://www.unr.edu/grad/student-resources/forms)

Although uncommon, circumstances may arise that require the change of advisor. The SPH will consider the request for an advisor change for a legitimate, professional reason. All conversations and documents relevant to an advisor change are confidential, will be added to the student’s file, and will not be disclosed to unrelated parties. Either the student or the faculty advisor may initiate a change. In the event that a student wishes to initiate the change, please communicate directly with the Director of Graduate Studies about your intention to change advisors and they will go over the required procedure and documentation.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

All MPH students must complete a minimum of 42 graduate level credits: 21 credits from the MPH core courses, 12 credits from required specialization courses, a 3-credit specialization elective, a 3-credit practicum (field studies course), and a 3-credit integrative learning experience (capstone course).

Please see the required curriculum outlined for each specialization on the following pages. Elective courses must be pre-approved by the student’s advisor. Elective courses are not limited to those offered by the School of Public Health (SPH); graduate courses from other departments are acceptable and students are encouraged to evaluate all graduate course offerings each semester to determine the most relevant elective courses (many graduate courses have prerequisites which may limit their availability).

REQUIRED PREREQUISITE COURSEWORK

Completion of an undergraduate or graduate course in statistics is required prior to beginning MPH coursework.

In addition, students who did not graduate from an undergraduate program accredited by the Council on Education in Public Health must complete the Basics of Public Health course that covers the 12 Foundational Public Health Knowledge learning objectives. The Basics of Public Health course is completed for no academic credit and the student pays no fees or tuition for completing the course. This course should be completed before the start of the program.

## CURRICULUM FOR EPIDEMIOLOGY EMPHASIS

**Public Health Core Courses (21 credits)**

* + - * + CHS 701: Social and Behavioral Dimensions of Health (3)
        + CHS 712: Epidemiology in Public Health (3)
        + CHS 725: Health and the Environment (3) \*
        + CHS 747: Applied Research Methods in Public Health (3)
        + CHS 755: Health Policy (3)
        + CHS 756: Organizational Behavior and Leadership in Health Services (3)
        + CHS 780: Biostatistics in Public Health (3)

\* Epidemiology students can substitute CHS 724: Environmental Epidemiology for CHS 725: Health and the Environment.

**Epidemiology Emphasis Courses (12 credits)**

* CHS 703: Applied Health Data Analysis (3)
* CHS 708: Epidemiology II (3)
* CHS 723: Epidemiology of Infectious Diseases (3)
* CHS 753: Health Informatics (3)

**Elective Courses (3 Credits)**

* Electives should be selected with advisor approval. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain approval and determine if pre-requisites are needed BEFORE signing up for the course.

**Practicum (3 credits)**

The practicum is an important element of the MPH curriculum through which the student obtains experience in a practice setting (150 hours) appropriate to the development of professional practice skills.

* CHS 798: Field Studies in Public Health (3)

**Integrative Learning Experience (3 credits)**

All MPH students will complete an integrative learning experience that demonstrates synthesis of foundational and concentration competencies. This will be achieved by writing and presenting a MPH capstone paper.

* CHS 796: MPH Capstone (3)

*Table 1: Course Progression for the Epidemiology Emphasis*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year 1: Fall semester**  CHS 712: Epidemiology in Public Health (3)  CHS 780: Biostatistics in Public Health (3)  CHS 701: Social and Behavioral Dimensions of Health (3)  CHS 753: Health Informatics (3) | **Credits**  **12** | **Year 1: Spring semester**  CHS 723: Epidemiology of Infectious Diseases (3)  CHS 703: Applied Health Data  Analysis (3)  CHS 747: Applied Research Methods in Public Health (3) | **Credits**  **9** |
| **Year 1: Summer semester**  CHS 798: Field Studies in Public Health (3) | **Credits**  **3** |  |  |
| **Year 2: Fall Semester**  CHS 755: Health Policy (3)  CHS 708: Epidemiology II (3)  CHS 725: Health and the Environment (3) \*  \* Can substitute CHS 724: Environmental Epidemiology | **Credits**  **9** | **Year 2: Spring Semester**  CHS 796: MPH Capstone (3)  CHS 756: Organizational Behavior & Leadership in Health Services (3)  Elective (3) | **Credits**  **9** |

## CURRICULUM FOR HEALTH ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY EMPHASIS

**Public Health Core Courses (21 credits)**

* + - * + CHS 701: Social and Behavioral Dimensions of Health (3)
        + CHS 712: Epidemiology in Public Health (3)
        + CHS 725: Health and the Environment (3)
        + CHS 747: Applied Research Methods in Public Health (3)
        + CHS 755: Health Policy (3)
        + CHS 756: Organizational Behavior and Leadership in Health Services (3)
        + CHS 780: Biostatistics in Public Health (3)

**Health Administration and Policy Emphasis Courses (12 credits)**

* CHS 759: Health Services Finance (3)
* CHS 720: Health Program Planning (3)
* CHS 741: Methods in Health Policy Analysis (3)
* CHS 757: Health Economics (3)

**Elective Courses (3 Credits)**

* Electives should be selected with advisor approval. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain approval and determine if pre-requisites are needed BEFORE signing up for the course. CHS 758: Information Systems in Health Services Management (3) is a recommended elective

**Practicum (3 credits)**

The practicum is an important element of the MPH curriculum through which the student obtains experience in a practice setting (150 hours) appropriate to the development of professional practice skills.

* CHS 798: Field Studies in Public Health (3)

**Integrative Learning Experience (3 credits)**

All MPH students will complete an integrative learning experience that demonstrates synthesis of foundational and concentration competencies. This will be achieved by writing and presenting a MPH capstone paper.

* CHS 796: MPH Capstone (3)

*Table 2: Course Progression for Health Administration and Policy Emphasis*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year 1: Fall Semester**  CHS 755: Health Policy (3)  CHS 712: Epidemiology (3)  CHS 701: Social and Behavioral Dimensions of Health (3) | **Credits**  **9** | **Year 1: Spring Semester**  CHS 741: Methods in Health Policy Analysis (3)  CHS 756: Organizational Behavior and Leadership in Health Services (3)  CHS 780: Biostatistics in Public Health (3)  CHS 759: Health Services Finance (3) | **Credits**  **12** |
| **Year 1: Summer semester**  CHS 798: Field Studies in Public Health (3) | **Credits**  **3** |  |  |
| **Year 2: Fall Semester**  CHS 720: Program Planning (3)  CHS 725: Health and the Environment (3)  CHS 757: Health Economics (3) | **Credits**  **9** | **Year 2: Spring Semester**  CHS 747: Applied Research Methods in Public Health (3)  CHS 796: MPH Capstone (3)  Elective (3) | **Credits**  **9** |

## CURRICULUM FOR SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AREA OF EMPHASIS

**Public Health Core Courses (21 credits)**

* + - * + CHS 701: Social and Behavioral Dimensions of Health (3)
        + CHS 712: Epidemiology in Public Health (3)
        + CHS 725: Health and the Environment (3)
        + CHS 747: Applied Research Methods in Public Health (3)
        + CHS 755: Health Policy (3)
        + CHS 756: Organizational Behavior and Leadership in Health Services (3)
        + CHS 780: Biostatistics in Public Health (3)

**Social and Behavioral Health Emphasis Courses (12 credits)**

* CHS 705: Theoretical Foundations of Health Promotion (3)
* CHS 720: Health Program Planning (3)
* CHS 721: Program Evaluation in Public Health (3)
* CHS 704: Grant Writing (3)

**Elective Courses (3 Credits)**

* Electives should be selected with advisor approval. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain approval and determine if pre-requisites are needed BEFORE signing up for the course.

**Practicum (3 credits)**

The practicum is an important element of the MPH curriculum through which the student obtains experience in a practice setting (150 hours) appropriate to the development of professional practice skills.

* CHS 798: Field Studies in Public Health (3)

**Integrative Learning Experience (3 credits)**

All MPH students will complete an integrative learning experience that demonstrates synthesis of foundational and concentration competencies. This will be achieved by writing and presenting a MPH capstone paper.

* CHS 796: MPH Capstone (3)

*Table 3: Suggested Course Progression for Social and Behavioral Health Emphasis*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year 1: Fall semester**  CHS 712: Epidemiology in Public Health (3)  CHS 701: Social and Behavioral Dimensions of Health (3)  CHS 705: Theoretical Foundations of Health Promotion (3)  CHS 720: Health Program Planning (3) | **Credits**  **12** | **Year 1: Spring semester**  CHS 721: Program Evaluation in Public Health (3)  CHS 747: Applied Research Methods in Public Health (3)  CHS 780: Biostatistics in Public Health (3) | **Credits**  **9** |
| **Year 1: Summer semester**  CHS 798: Field Studies in Public Health (3) | **Credits**  **3** |  |  |
| **Year 2: Fall Semester**  CHS 725: Health and the Environment (3)  CHS 755: Health Policy (3)  CHS 704: Grant Writing (3) | **Credits**  **9** | **Year 2: Spring Semester**  CHS 756: Organizational Behavior and Leadership in Health Services (3)  CHS 796: MPH Capstone (3)  Elective (3) | **Credits**  **9** |

## MPH INTERNSHIP

The purpose of the internship requirement is to provide each MPH student with significant practical public health experience in an agency outside of the University. There are a wide variety of organizations that qualify as an internship site locally, nationally, and internationally.

The MPH student is expected to find an organization to complete the internship opportunity. The Internship Coordinator, the student’s Faculty Advisor and other faculty can provide support through their various connections in the communities, but it is up to the student to arrange an internship that fits best with their area of interest.

Students must register for a total of 3 credit hours of CHS 798 and complete a minimum of 150 total work hours, of which no more than 50 hours can be completed remotely. Students can meet the hour requirement at their own pace with the understanding that all 150 hours must be completed within the second spring semester.

Students should plan on taking CHS 798 during the summer after the first year of coursework. **However, interprofessional education didactic and practice sessions, a core component of the CHS 798 course, take place throughout the entire program, starting at orientation. Internship meetings start in the spring semester of the first year and conclude at the end of their internship experience.** All meetings for the MPH internship course will be on a designated date/time/place for students to plan ahead with their studies and/or work plans. **Attendance and participation in each of the internship meetings is required.**

Spring semester of the first year, students will begin meeting with their Faculty Advisor to determine interests, concentration, competencies, and goals for the internship. When determining an internship site, emphasis should be placed on arranging an internship experience that will provide the student with new skills and experiences, where the student will be working in a professional capacity. Once a site and preceptor (site supervisor) have been identified and arranged, the student will work with all parties to complete the Student Learning Contract (SLC), which outlines student goals, objectives, and competencies to be addressed during the Internship. Competencies are defined by CEPH as: *Competencies clearly define what the student will do to demonstrate learning for a workforce-related need. The course objective specifies what the institution intends to do to achieve its course goals.”*

**The SLC is due spring semester, before the internship begins. The SLC must be signed by all parties and submitted to the Internship Coordinator prior to the start of any internship hours**. Preceptors must have significant education and/or work experience in public health in order to qualify. Final determination of preceptor qualification will be made by the Faculty Advisor and Internship Coordinator. For more information on the MPH internship policies and procedures please see: [Introduction to Field Studies](https://www.unr.edu/public-health/students/internships/graduate). Part-time students should consult their Faculty Advisor and the Internship Coordinator to determine Internship timing.

MPH CAPSTONE COURSE: CAPSTONE PAPER AND PRESENTATION

According to the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) all MPH students must demonstrate skills and integration of knowledge through a culminating experience. A culminating experience is one that requires a student to synthesize and integrate foundational and concentration competencies. Students will complete an MPH capstone paper that represents the culmination and mastery of the MPH curriculum.

The MPH capstone course will provide the structure students need to complete their capstone paper and presentation. Students will also be given the opportunity for peer evaluation on their paper and presentation in the capstone course. Students will receive points in the capstone course for meeting paper and presentation deadlines and the quality of ALL submissions. The student’s paper must be of sufficient academic rigor to demonstrate mastery of the curriculum and competencies.

Students should plan on taking CHS 796 during the spring semester of their second year.

The focus of the capstone paper will vary based on the student’s and area of specialization. In addition to the competencies identified by the capstone course instructor, students will choose one additional foundational competency and two additional competencies within their area of specialization that they will achieve with their paper and presentation**.**

In addition to providing the structure for completion of the MPH capstone paper and presentation, the capstone course will also address planning for ethical lifelong learning and professional service. At the end of the semester, students will complete an assessment of their culminating experience and will also identify competencies and skills that need to be further developed in a post-graduation professional development plan.

## GRADUATION PROCESS

All MPH students graduate in the spring semester that they complete the MPH capstone course. Students have a total of 6 years to complete all degree requirements. All candidates for graduation should communicate with their advisor to confirm expectations for the final semester.

The student should purchase a [graduation](https://www.unr.edu/grad/graduation-and-deadlines) application before the posted deadline. The Graduate School will review each application and email the students within 3-8 weeks with the result of their graduation review. Important dates, deadlines, and milestones are located on UNR’s website: [Graduation and Deadlines](http://www.unr.edu/grad/graduation-and-deadlines)

The MPH Hooding Ceremony is the highlight of the Graduation Process – all family and friends are invited. The timing of this allows for MPH students to attend the UNR Graduate Student Commencement as well.

# ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND POLICIES

## ACADEMIC STANDARDS

The University Academic Standards Policy defines academic dishonesty, and mandates specific sanctions for violations. See the [University Academic Standards](https://www.unr.edu/administrative-manual/6000-6999-curricula-teaching-research/instruction-research-procedures/6502-academic-standards) policy: UAM 6,502. Sanctions for violations of university academic standards for academic dishonesty may include academic and/or disciplinary sanctions. Academic sanctions for both undergraduate and graduate students may include: filing a final grade of "F", reducing the student's final course grade one or two full grade points; giving a reduced grade or zero on the coursework; or requiring the student to retake or resubmit the coursework. Before beginning the program, all students must review the University Academic Standards Policy.

## GOOD STANDING

All graduate students must maintain a cumulative graduate GPA of 3.0. If their GPA drops below 3.0, they are either placed on probation or dismissed from the program. Undergraduate courses will not count towards graduate GPA.

To be counted toward the MPH degree, each graduate course must be completed with a grade of “C” or better. To remain in good standing in the program, students are required to maintain a 3.0 “B” grade point average in both the core and the specialization, individually.

## PROBATION AND DISMISSAL

According to the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) Code, Title 2, Chapter 11, “*a student may be dismissed from a program for academic reasons which may include but are not limited to inadequate grades or failure to remain in academic good standing as defined by the program, a lack of professionalism or unethical conduct, or failure to comply with other specific program requirements. Failure to comport with professional and/or ethical standards applicable to the particular discipline or program may be grounds for dismissal from a program.*” The School of Public Health has developed a dismissal policy that includes dismissal for failure to maintain required grades or required grade point average, dismissal for lack of professionalism, unethical conduct, or failure to comply with other program requirements. Before beginning the program, all students must acknowledge that they have reviewed the [School of Public Health Dismissal Policy](https://www.unr.edu/public-health/students/dismissal-policy).

Students whose cumulative grade-point total is between 2.31 and 2.99 are placed on academic probation for one semester. Graduate students on probation are not eligible for graduate assistantships. If they fail to raise their cumulative GPA to 3.0 by the end of one semester, they are dismissed from their graduate program. Thesis, dissertation, S/U graded credits, and transfer credits have no impact on a student’s GPA.

If a student’s grade point average is 2.30 or lower, the student will be dismissed from graduate standing. A student dismissed from graduate standing because of grade-point deficiencies may enroll as a Graduate Special in undergraduate or graduate courses. To enroll in graduate-level courses, advance written approval must be obtained from the course instructor, the department/program concerned and the Graduate School. Enrolling in undergraduate courses will not raise the cumulative graduate GPA

Dismissal recommendations for reasons other than failure to maintain required grades or required grade point average require a written Notice of Dismissal from the Director of Graduate Studies to the student and the Graduate Dean, and the scheduling of a Review Conference, according to Chapter 11 of the Nevada System of Higher Education CODE. Students can appeal their dismissal from graduate standing by submitting a formal letter to the Dean of the Graduate School and to the Director of Graduate Studies. The letter must be submitted within 10 working days following notification of the dismissal (see the [School of Public Health Dismissal Policy](https://www.unr.edu/public-health/students/dismissal-policy) for more information).

## MASTER’S DEGREE TIMELINE

All course work must be completed withinsix (6) years preceding the awarding of the degree.

## TRANSFER CREDITS

Transfer credits are credits transferred from another institution. Credits completed at UNR in another program do not need to be transferred. Transfer credit is requested by using the Graduate Credit Transfer Evaluation Request form available on the Graduate School website ([Graduate Credit Transfer Evaluation Request](https://www.unr.edu/main/pdfs/verified-accessible/colleges-schools/grad/admissions/graduate-credit-transfer-evaluation-request-2019.pdf)) and must be signed by the student, advisor, and Director of Graduate Studies. Up to nine (9) transfer graduate credits are permitted, however, with the approval of the faculty advisor and the graduate director, and under special circumstances, a student can petition the Graduate School to accept additional transfer credits.

## GRADUATE COURSES

Only graduate courses (numbered 600 or higher at UNR) are applicable toward the MPH degree and can include web-based courses, however graduate credit may not be obtained through Professional Development, Extension or Correspondence courses.

## STUDENT UNIT LOADS

A full-time graduate student may not register for more than sixteen (16) graduate units in any semester, or more than six (6) graduate units in any six-week summer session. Audited or undergraduate courses will not be counted toward the 6-credit minimum requirement. Graduate assistants may not register for more than twelve (12) graduate units per semester.

Students who register for nine (9) graduate units or more in a semester are considered full-time. For graduate assistants on a 20-hour (half-time) contract, six (6) graduate units or more constitute full-time. **To be considered full-time for financial aid purposes, all graduate students, including those on assistantships, must be enrolled in nine (9) graduate units; to be considered part-time for financial aid reporting purposes, graduate students must be enrolled in five (5) graduate units**. For those graduate students who are required to take Intensive English Language Center Bridge Courses, these courses can be considered part of full registration upon approval by the Dean of the Graduate School.

## CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT

To maintain in “good standing” all graduate students are required to enroll in a minimum of three (3) graduate credits each fall and spring semester until they graduate. International students may be required to enroll in nine (9) graduate credits each fall and spring semester depending on the requirements of their visa. All students holding assistantships (whether teaching or research assistantships) are required to enroll in a minimum of six (6) graduate credits each fall and spring semester they hold the assistantship.

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Students in good standing may request a leave of absence by completing a leave of absence form available on the Graduate School website ([Leave of Absence Form](https://www.unr.edu/grad/student-resources/forms)) during which time they are not required to maintain continuous registration. Usually, a leave of absence is approved for one or two semesters. The leave of absence request may be extended by the student filing an additional leave of absence form. Students applying for a leave of absence should not have any “incomplete” grades which could be changed to “F” and have a detrimental impact on their cumulative GPA. Requests for leave of absences must be received by the Graduate School no later than the last day of enrollment for the semester the leave is to begin.

## REINSTATEMENT

When a student has been absent for one semester or more without an approved leave of absence, he or she may request reinstatement via the [Reinstatement Form](https://powerforms.docusign.net/82e0bdd5-babf-4b64-b557-fe8fecd1e48e?env=na3&acct=00b1dddc-e55a-4962-9660-d691e16a2f23). This form allows the program the option to recommend the student be re-admitted to their graduate program based on their previous admission OR require the student to re-apply for admission which would require students to submit a new application for admission and pay the application fee. The Notice of Reinstatement to Gradate Standing must be received by the Graduate School no later than the last day of enrollment for the semester the reinstatement is to begin.

## MANAGING STUDENT COMPLAINTS IN THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

1. The University of Nevada, Reno has clear policies either through the [Administrative Manual (UAM)](https://www.unr.edu/administrative-manual/3000-3999-students/3510-grade-appeal-policy-and-procedures) or other sources for policies and procedures for handling grade complaints (final grades) and those related to [Title IX (discrimination based on sex](https://www.unr.edu/equal-opportunity-title-ix/title-ix)). The following policies and procedures are designed to address complaints from students and from faculty not covered by these policies. Such complaints may involve grades, course management, faculty and/or student interactions, curriculum issues, and professionalism issues.
2. Complaints made by a student should follow these steps whenever possible:
   1. Always start with the instructor to see if the issue can be resolved at the class level. This is an important skill for students to learn as they progress through their studies and is highly encouraged as a first step. If the complaint is related to your advisor, it is best to start at this level.
   2. If the student feels uncomfortable bringing the issue to the instructor/advisor or if the issue remains unresolved, the complaint may be submitted to the SPH Associate Dean who will work with the Dean, appropriate Division Leads and/or Program Director to resolve the issue. A student’s name will not be disclosed during this process.
   3. If the complaint is not resolved at level b, it will then go to the SPH Dean for resolution/action.
      1. Important Notes: There is no wrong door for submitting complaints. Students can skip any of the steps described above. While it is best to work directly with the instructor first, certain complaints that deal with professionalism or other sensitive concerns may be best handled by the Associate Dean or Dean as a first step.
      2. Students may file a complaint using the [Complaint Form](https://www.unr.edu/public-health/students/student-complaint-form) on the School of Public Health website. These complaints will be forwarded directly to the SPH Associate Dean, unless the student requests that the complaint be submitted directly to the SPH Dean. Complaints can be submitted with your contact information or anonymously. While anonymous complaints may be more comfortable, it can make resolution more difficult if additional information is needed.
      3. Students who choose to share their contact information will receive an individual response within one week for individual complaints. Students who submit a complaint anonymously will only receive acknowledgement that the complaint was received.
      4. The [Concierge service](https://www.unr.edu/provost/student-resources/academic-concierge) through the Provost’s office is also available for all students if that is more comfortable. Complaints submitted through the Concierge service will typically be forwarded to the SPH Associate Dean and Dean.

# GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

Graduate assistantships (GA’s) may be available for full-time and part-time students who qualify. Graduate Special students and students on probation are ineligible for an assistantship. To apply for a GA position, complete the Graduate Assistant application that was sent to you with your notice of acceptance into the program.

GA’s may be for 10 or 20 hours of work per week. Typically, graduate assistantship work is teaching, or research related. In addition, state-funded GA’s are expected to serve in leadership positions, be on search committees, assist in recruitment of new MPH students, assist with new MPH student orientation, and serve as mentors to newer students. All GA’s must maintain satisfactory work performance during the duration of the assistantship.

All graduate students holding a GA position are considered Nevada residents for tuition purposes. GA positions include a monthly stipend, health insurance, and a partial tuition waiver. To be eligible for a GA student must be admitted to a degree-granting program and be in good academic standing. The student must have an overall GPA of at least 3.0 and must be continuously enrolled in at least 6 graduate level credits (600-700) during Fall and Spring for the duration of the assistantship. Federal financial aid is based on FULL TIME enrollment (9 credits) of graduate-level courses (600-700 level). An enrollment of less than 9 credits of graduate-level courses (600-700 level) will proportionately reduce federal financial aid.

State-funded assistantships (GTA/GRA) may be held for a maximum of three (3) years for master’s degree students.

* General information on [graduate assistantships](http://www.unr.edu/grad/funding/graduate-assistantships)
* [Graduate Assistantship Handbook](https://www.unr.edu/grad/admissions/funding/assistantships/graduate-assistant-handbook)

# Health insurance

All domestic degree seeking graduate students, who are enrolled in six or more credits (regardless of the course level) in a semester, will be automatically enrolled and billed for the University sponsored health insurance for each term they are eligible (fall & spring/summer). If a student has other comparable coverage and would like to waive out of the student health insurance, it is the student’s responsibility to complete the University online waiver form prior to the deadline. If approved, a health insurance waiver is good for the current academic year only. A new waiver must be submitted each academic year. All international graduate students are required to carry student health insurance, and the cost will be automatically added to your student account. Any international graduate students with insurance questions must contact the Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS) directly.

General information about Graduate [Health Insurance](http://www.unr.edu/grad/health-insurance).

# GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

The [Graduate Student Association (GSA)](http://www.unr.edu/gsa/) represents all graduate students and promotes the welfare and interests of the graduate students at the University of Nevada, Reno. The GSA works closely with appropriate university administrative offices, including the Graduate School and Student Services and reports to the President of the University. The GSA government functions through the Council of Representatives, Executive Council, and established committees.