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**Maternal and Child Public Health  
Leadership Training Program**

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**Orientation Manual  
2009-2010**

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**Faculty Advisors**

Faculty advisors help students plan and complete their academic programs and prepare for careers in maternal and child health. This includes assistance in deciding on courses, thesis topics, practicum placements, clinical activities, and job seeking at the conclusion of the program. Students will initially be assigned to MCH faculty with complementary backgrounds, skills, and interests. Students are free to change their advisors, which particularly may occur when thesis topics are decided upon.

At least one formal meeting between students and their faculty advisors is required each quarter to discuss projects, review progress, and make plans for the next quarter. The sixth week of the quarter, when the next quarter's registration system becomes available, is the best time to meet for planning. During the formulation of research projects and presentations, students and their advisors meet more frequently.

**Practicum Project**

As a requirement for the Master of Public Health (MPH) degree, all students must complete a practicum in an organization or agency that conducts planning or provides

services to families and children, preferably one in which they do not have previous experience. The practicum is structured to meet the following objectives:

1. To provide the student with experience in the field of maternal and child health.
2. To help the student apply skills or competencies learned in the academic program in a public health practice setting. Examples of skills include program planning and evaluation, management, data analysis, and policy development.
3. To provide an opportunity for the student to carry out a project, the product of which may be a thesis proposal or a scholarly, written report or article.

Information about practicum projects is available at the [MPH Practicum Web site](#). Students must consult this Web site when setting up their practicum placements and are responsible meeting all requirements and completing the necessary forms. There is a \$500 fee due when a student signs up for practicum credits.

Students may start their practicum projects any time after their first quarter in the program: most students elect to start their projects during the spring or summer quarter at the end of the first year. Most projects are usually completed within one academic quarter, although some projects span two or more quarters.

The MPH Practicum Web site maintains a list of potential practicum sites and projects. MCH faculty will also advise students. After identifying potential practicum sites, students must meet with their MCH faculty advisors to determine if potential placements meet the needs of the MCH program and students.

## **Thesis Project**

The thesis project is an opportunity for MCH students to consolidate and advance the knowledge gained during graduate studies, to exercise and expand the research skills learned in the program, and to develop expertise in a specialized area of interest.

Working closely with a thesis advisor, each student identifies an area or problem of interest, poses a number of potential project ideas, narrows and hones these ideas into a feasible research question or hypothesis, and then designs a study using either primary or secondary data.

The design, conduct, write-up, and presentation of the thesis project is a major effort which is generally regarded by graduates as one of the most important and useful aspects of their graduate experiences. A [Thesis Timeline](#) has been developed to assist MCH students in completing all the steps of this complex task in a timely manner.

Examples of acceptable designs for the thesis project include analytic studies, program evaluations, case studies, policy analyses, descriptive studies, and experiments or quasi-experiments (although rarely performed for a master's thesis). A list of [thesis titles](#) from 2000-2009 is available.

More information about the thesis process is at [MPH Thesis Guidelines](#).

## **Master of Public Health Degree Request**

Students must apply for graduation at <http://www.grad.washington.edu/stsv/mastapp.htm> and must be registered for at least 2 credits for the quarter in which they apply to graduate.

Information about deadlines and fees is contained in the Graduate School's [Policy and Style Manual for Theses and Dissertations](#).

## **Student Annex**

The MCH Program provides a computer room for our students located at T-341E in the Health Sciences building. Basic office supplies, such as printer paper, staplers, and tape dispensers, are also provided for use in the room. Ask program staff for supplies, when needed. Students are responsible for keeping the room clean.

Check out a key for the student annex with the Carmen Velasquez, Program Administrator.

## **Office Support**

The MCH Program office will make every attempt to support students when expectations are reasonable. Please know that you are welcome to ask, and depending on other demands on staff time, they will determine how best to help you. The office will provide support for students using Catalyst tools for research related to thesis. The long-distance UWATS code may also be available for students working on MCH-related projects.

## **UW NetID**

In order to access the University of Washington's extensive on-line services, a student must set up a [UW Net ID](#). For more information about computing services available for students, go to <http://www.washington.edu/itconnect/forstudents.html>.

## **Software Training**

The MCH program assumes students are proficient with basic computer applications, such as email, word processing and Internet searches. In the program, students will become proficient in using personal computers for data analysis, presentations, and graphics. Students may also become proficient at database management and in the use of mainframe computers for manipulation and analysis of large data sets.

The University of Washington has available [free walk-in workshops](#) on computer applications. In addition, the UW also offers [computer training classes](#) at reduced fees for students.

## Computer Access

In addition to the MCH Student Annex, the [Health Sciences Microlab](#) and the [Catalyst's General Access Labs](#) have computers available for students.

## E-mail

The MCH Program maintains four listservs:

- **mchpost@u.washington.edu** for students, staff, and faculty
- **mchfac@u.washington.edu** for faculty and staff
- **mchalumni@u.washington.edu** for MCH program alumni
- **mcha@u.washington.edu** for affiliate faculty

Students can freely post to **mchpost** but the other bulletin boards require approval of the list administrator. These listservs can be used for the exchange of information and opinion. However, due to the requirements of our funding agency, students can not use **mchpost** for political lobbying or gathering petition signatures. We are not saying that you cannot participate in such activities but you cannot use program resources for this purpose.

## Campus Mail

Student mailboxes are outside the MCH Program offices at F351. Check them regularly for departmental and program announcements.

Your campus address is a department name and box number, for example:

- MCH Program, Box 357230
- Department of Epidemiology, Box 357236
- Department of Health Services, Box 357660

Mail can be sent through campus mail to some facilities located off campus, such as Seattle Children's Hospital and Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. Go to the [UW Office Directory](#) to check if a facility is listed with a campus box number.

## Library Resources

The MCH Program maintains a small library in the program office, F351 Health Sciences building. It includes required and supplemental readings for the MCH Topics courses, in addition to books, journals, videotapes, references, and reports on federal and state data sets related to maternal and child health.

The [Health Sciences Library](#) is located in T-334 Health Sciences building. The library has over 350,000 bound volumes and about 2,400 current journal subscriptions. In

addition, many resources and services are available online, such as a [Public Health Toolkit](#).

For information on how to set up a library account, go to <http://healthlinks.washington.edu/howto/getstarted/>. The Health Sciences Library also has tours of the library and [classes](#) on retrieving and managing health information.

For information on other libraries, go to <http://www.lib.washington.edu/about/hours/>.

## **Conferences**

The School of Public Health encourages student participation in local, regional, and national conferences and may cover travel expenses, registration fees, or per diem fees for students presenting papers at professional meetings. For more information, check with your departmental administrator.

For a partial list of MCH students who have presented at the American Public Health Association's annual meeting, with links to their presentations, go to <http://depts.washington.edu/mchprog/aphapresent>.

## **Student Public Health Association**

The [Student Public Health Association](#) hosts brown bag lunches to foster interdisciplinary learning, provides educational opportunities through conferences and tours of various facilities, and ensures student concerns are acknowledged in various committee meetings. The association is also committed to having fun!

Its purpose is to unify students within the School of Public Health, improve communication between the various departments in the school, and improve students' access to the Dean's Office. All students enrolled in the school are automatic members of the association.

Everyone is strongly encouraged to become involved, participate in the board meetings, and organize activities. If you are interested, contact the association at [spha@u.washington.edu](mailto:spha@u.washington.edu).