

**University of Louisville**

**School of Public Health and  
Information Sciences**

**Master of Public Health  
Student Handbook**

**NOTICE:** The material presented in this student handbook was developed in conjunction with University of Louisville and School of Public Health and Information Sciences (SPHIS) guidelines. Some of the information presented here is applicable only to the MPH program.

*Welcome to the Master of Public Health (MPH) Program of the University of Louisville School of Public Health and Information Sciences (SPHIS)! This Handbook is a compilation of information you need to know about the program, what you can expect from us and what we expect from you. If you have questions not addressed in this handbook, please contact the MPH program office by phone or e-mail. We will find an answer for you. We are here to assist you if you have any problems, personal or academic, in the program. Do not hesitate to contact us.*

#### **MPH PROGRAM OFFICE—CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Staff:**

Robert R. Jacobs, PhD, MS  
Director of the MPH Program  
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Office of Student Services

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This handbook is organized in several sections: General Information, University of Louisville services, University of Louisville Graduate Student policies, MPH program services, MPH academic policies. Should you have any questions regarding any information contained within these pages, please contact the MPH program office.

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# SECTION ONE

## GENERAL UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

### UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION

General university administration can be found at the main university website <http://www.louisville.edu>. Information about the University central administration, financial aid office, bursar's office, can all be accessed through the main university website.

### UNIVERSITY RULES AFFECTING STUDENTS

Rules and Policies affecting students are published in the Student Handbook at: <http://campuslife.louisville.edu/policies/studenthandbook/>. Included in the Student Handbook are the following:

- Academic Grievance Procedure,
- Code of Student Conduct, Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities,
- Policy on Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages for Recognized Student Organizations, Hazing and Initiation
- Activities Policy,
- Non-academic Grievance Policy, and;
- Sexual Harassment Policy.

Several items will be covered in detail during New Student Orientation.

### UNIVERSITY IDENTIFICATION CARDS

U of L identification cards will be issued during new student orientation. Lost identification cards must be reported as soon as possible to the Cardinal Card Office <http://www.louisville.edu/campuscard>. All found Cardinal Cards should be immediately returned to the Campus Card Office. If you have lost your card or it has been stolen, contact the Campus Card Office at (502) 852-7520 to see if you're Cardinal Card has been turned in. If you have a meal plan, immediately contact the Campus Card Office to have a hold placed on your meal plan account to restrict further use. If you have used your card at the University Libraries you should also alert them of the missing Cardinal Card. If the theft occurred on campus, it should be reported to the Department of Public Safety at (502) 852-6111.

### INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather please listen to local radio and television stations to determine if the U of L campus is open. The U of L website <http://www.louisville.edu> and telephone information line (502-852-5555) broadcast delays or closings. If U of L employees are sent home due to inclement weather during the course of a work day then the campus will remain



- an undergraduate student taking 6 or more credit hours
- a graduate student taking 3 or more hours or degree candidate,

Graduate Teaching Assistants and Graduate Research Assistants receiving a stipend check from the University receive the Comprehensive Plan coverage as a benefit of their employment. If you believe you are eligible for this benefit please check with your department to verify coverage.

Dependents of insured students are eligible for the Comprehensive Medical benefits for an additional premium. Insured spouses are eligible for coverage at the HSO facilities. Children under the age of 18 are not eligible for the Health Services benefit and cannot be seen in the HSO.

The Belknap HSO is located on the main Campus, 2207 South Brook Street, in the Student Health & Counseling Building, between the Student Activities Center and the Post Office. The Health Sciences Center HSO is located at 401 E. Chestnut, Suite 110.

For more information and appointments, please call the Belknap Office at (502) 852-6479, the HSC Office at (502) 852-6446, or go to [www.louisville.edu/campushealth/insurance](http://www.louisville.edu/campushealth/insurance). The Insurance Advocate, Linda Westenhofer, can be reached at (502) 852-6519.

## **UNIVERSITY DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS**

The mission of the division of Student Affairs is to provide students with effective services and developmental opportunities that augment their academic experience and enhance the quality of their lives while enrolled at the University of Louisville. The Vice President for Student Affairs, located at 203 Grawemeyer Hall, administers and oversees non-academic services and programming for students.

The Division of Student Affairs includes:

### *Student Services*

Student Services Administration, Admissions, Orientation, Testing Services, Financial Aid, Registrar, Enrollment Systems, Commencement, Residency, and Student-Athlete Certification.

### *Student Life*

Housing and Residence Life, Intramural and Recreational Sports, Student Activities, Greek Life, Recognized Student Organizations, Student Government Association, ACCESS (Adult Services), Service Learning, Swain Student Activities Center Administration, Student Disciplinary Services, Counseling Center, Career Development Center, and International Service Learning Program.

## **UNIVERSITY DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER**

The Disability Resource Center coordinates services and programs for students and prospective students with disabilities. Accommodations and support services are individualized, depending on the needs of each student. Services and programs are designed to assure access for qualified students with disabilities to all programs and activities of the university. Students are strongly















## **FORMS OF COMMUNICATION: GROUPWISE AND BLACKBOARD**

The primary vehicle for announcements will be the GroupWise email system. Prior to or during New Student Orientation, students will have GroupWise accounts created for them by U of L Information Technology. **Students are strongly encouraged to become familiar with and use these email accounts, as alternative emails WILL NOT be used for any programmatic communications.**

For courses, the Blackboard course system will be the primary vehicle for communication. All courses within the MPH Program will utilize Blackboard to some degree. The extent of that utilization will be determined by the individual course director.

## **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

There are growing activities for students in the MPH Program to engage in. The SPHIS Student Government Association, the governing student body organization, and the Student Chapter of the Kentucky Public Health Association are open to student participation. There is faculty advising for each, with participation possibly involving some type of membership fee. Additional opportunities for student involvement include serving in various capacities in our surrounding communities. The Student Association typically maintains those opportunities. For questions, please see the Office of Student Services.

Additionally, as community volunteer experiences and opportunities arise, the Program Office will notify students of such via email or notices in their respective mailboxes.

## **MPH STUDENT DRESS CODE**

For MPH classes on the U of L campus, students may dress casually and should be neat and clean in appearance. For formal MPH or U of L Events (professional program, meeting or other activities) appropriate business attire should be worn. **NOTE: Student dress should reflect the appropriate level of professionalism when working in ANY public health setting and/or organization.**

## MPH ACADEMIC POLICIES

***SPECIAL NOTE:*** For any information not presented or discussed in this section, the SPHIS Catalog and Rules and Policies published in DocuShare will serve as the primary policy documents. Additionally, the SPHIS Student Catalog contains all items pertaining to course offerings within the program. For course offering information, please consult the SPHIS Student Catalog, available on the SPHIS website.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the student to become familiar with and observe all policies and requirements of the SPHIS and of the MPH program. Policies, procedures, and requirements are subject to change, and it is the responsibility of the graduate student to keep her/himself apprised of current regulations. All students must respond to official notices issued by administrative offices and instructors, whether these notices are posted on official bulletin boards, are sent through postal, or e-mail. A student's status is not dependent upon a written notification but is a consequence of circumstances in the admission process and the student's academic performance. Written notification is simply a verification of status.

## ACADEMIC PROGRESS REVIEW

The MPH Program believes that regular assessment of students and feedback to them is essential to effective teaching and learning. The MPH Program Director, course directors, and department faculty mentors regularly review the academic progress for each student and evaluate the overall progress of each student throughout the academic year. The purpose of these reviews is to identify students whose academic progress is marginal or unsatisfactory before a course(s) is actually failed, so that the faculty and student together can develop appropriate remedial interventions.

- **Academic Mentors.** In the second year of the program, or after students have identified their target area of concentration, their departmental academic mentor will meet with the student to discuss their academic interest. The Academic Mentor will serve as the student's practicum advisor. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the Academic Mentor to meet with the student to: 1) assess the progress of the student toward achieving the competencies of the MPH Program; 2) assess the individual academic and professional goals of the student; 3) discuss options for field placements and special projects as needed, and; 4) address any apparent or emerging problems identified by the student or other faculty members.

It is the responsibility of the student, together with their Academic Mentor, to monitor progress toward the requirements of the program, the learning objectives of the program and the individual educational goals of the student. Student conduct is expected to be ethical and professional when dealing with peers and faculty and when representing the school.

- **Academic Review Process:** The MPH Program will maintain steady contact with program faculty in assessing student performance and progress.

- At the beginning of each semester, the Office of Student Services will distribute to each academic mentor transcripts for each of their advisees.
  - At the mid-point of each semester, the MPH program director will request that each course director identify any students that are at risk of failing their course.
  - At the end of each semester, the MPH program director will review each student's grades to determine if any student is to be placed on academic probation.
  - For those students identified at academic risk, the program director, in consultation with the student's academic mentor and specific course director will discuss their academic performance and, if necessary, develop a remediation plan.
- **Remediation Plan.** The remediation plan may require any of the following: 1). additional course work; 2) special studies or projects focused on addressing the areas of academic or non-academic skills; or 3) other activities or actions deemed necessary to enable the student to perform at an acceptable level. Remediation for specific courses must be approved by the instructor for each course. The program director will place a copy of the remediation plan in the students file.

Remediation must be accompanied by the student's active participation in the educational program as demonstrated by regular attendance, individual initiative, and utilization of resources available. Decisions regarding remediation will be made on an individual basis after considering all pertinent circumstances, review of the academic record, and consultation with the student's academic mentor, course director, and the MPH program director.

## ACADEMIC STANDING

- **Good Standing:** An MPH graduate student is in good standing when his/her graduate grade point average is 3.0 or higher. The graduate grade point average includes all coursework listed on a graduate transcript. A student must be in good standing in order to receive their degree.
- **Academic Probation:** An MPH student who has a graduate GPA which falls below a minimum level of academic quality (3.0 on a 4-point scale) will be placed on academic probation until the student regains a 3.0 average or is dismissed. **Students are ordinarily not permitted to continue on academic probation for more than one semester.** Upon request of the student's academic department, the program director and/or the associate dean responsible for academic affairs may approve continuation beyond a single semester.

## GRADES AND GRADING POLICIES

The University of Louisville utilizes a plus/minus grading system. **It is at the discretion of the instructor or course director to determine the use of plus/minus grading.** The following is the grading scale:

## Grade Quality Points

A+	4.0
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7
D+	1.3
D	1.0
D-	0.7
F	0.0

**PLEASE NOTE: All course grading scales are listed within the final course syllabus and are at the discretion of the individual course director.**

## C Grades

The MPH program may approve six hours of coursework in which a grade of "C+, C, or C-" was received to count toward the completion of degree requirements. Approval of the associate dean responsible for academic affairs must be secured in order to count additional hours with any grade of C in any course required in the degree program. In no case may more than nine hours of "C" be used to fulfill graduate degree requirements.

## Other Grades

- **"W"** - means Withdrew and carries no quality points. **No student may withdraw from any course after the published drop date.** In exceptional cases, the dean may grant a student's request to withdraw from courses because of illness or conditions beyond the student's control. Poor performance is not a valid reason to grant an exception.
- **"I"** - means Work in Course Incomplete. If the work is not completed by the end of the next term, regardless of whether the student is enrolled, the "I" automatically becomes an "F".
- **"X"** - means course work has not been finished because of the nature of the research or study involved, e.g., thesis work. This grade is reserved for courses that by their nature extend beyond one semester. This grade may not be used for coursework that is confined to a semester but not completed by the student.

## ACADEMIC COURSE LOADS

- **Full-Time Study.** Full-time study is defined as being 9 hours of credit during a regular semester or 6 hours during the summer term or in candidacy status. To be considered in full-time residency for one year, a student must be registered for 9 hours in each of two consecutive semesters.
- **Part-time study.** Part time study for the MPH program is defined by taking less than 12 hours per semester. This option must be discussed with the MPH program office prior to matriculation. Students who go part time generally will take four years to complete program requirements.
- **Course Loads.** The maximum number of hours that may be taken in a regular semester is 12; or 15 hours if 3 or more hours are research credit. The maximum number of hours that may be taken in the summer session (both terms) is 12, including research hours.
- **Overloads.** Any student who wishes to enroll in more than the maximum number of hours *must obtain the permission from their home department and the director of the MPH program who will then submit the request to the associate dean responsible for academic affairs*, Permission to enroll for excess hours is granted on a case by case basis. Approval of additional credit hours will be considered only after completion of the first semester of the MPH program. For consideration students must be in good academic standing (GPA >3.0) and not have received a grade below B in any class. In no case will more than 3 additional credit hours be approved for a given semester. Request to take additional credit hours must be at the beginning of the registration period for the semester in which the desired class is offered. For questions regarding the correct process for initiating the additional course request, contact the MPH program office.
- **Satisfactory Progress.** All graduate students are expected to make steady and satisfactory progress toward the completion of degrees. Students who fail to enroll for a period of more than 12 months will be considered to have withdrawn from the program. Students who seek to return after such a period of time are required to apply to their departments or programs for readmission. Based on the request of the department or program, the associate dean responsible for academic affairs will consider the student for readmission.

## REPETITION OF COURSES:

- **Repetition of Courses for any grade of C.** A student who has received the grade of less than B- may repeat that course upon the approval of the director of the MPH program and the associate dean for academic affairs. When a student repeats a course, the grade point average will be calculated on the basis of the last grade earned, although all previous grades will remain on the transcript.
- **Repetition of Courses for grades of D or F.** MPH students making a grade below C- or a grade of fail in a 'Pass-Fail' must repeat the course to complete the MPH degree. When a student repeats a course, the grade point average will be calculated on the basis of the last grade earned, although all previous grades will remain on the transcript.

## COMPLETION OF DEGREE REQUIREMENTS



