

1 **Definitions**

2
3 The term “**joint degrees**” applies to all programs of study that combine two separate degrees into
4 a coordinated plan of study. These may also be called combined degrees, concurrent degrees,
5 coordinated degrees, or universities may use other terminology.
6

7 Any plan of study publicly listed as available to students in which they can complete two degrees
8 together is considered to be a joint degree, regardless of the terminology used by the university,
9 regardless of the design of the instructional program (e.g., whether credits are shared between
10 the two programs or not), regardless of whether the two degrees are housed in the same
11 university, etc.
12

13 When the joint degree combines a public health degree (e.g., MPH) with a non-public health
14 degree (e.g., MD, MSW, MBA), the non-public health degree is referred to as the “**external**
15 **degree.**” Any instructional credits associated with the external degree are referred to as “**external**
16 **credits.**”
17

18 *See [interpretation guide](#) for explanation & examples of intent. Interpretation guide will be released*
19 *alongside criteria & updated over time as Council sees more examples & has cause to interpret*
20 *novel situations that could not be anticipated when drafting criteria.*
21

22 **Joint.1: Joint bachelor’s degrees with graduate degrees**

23
24 **Students completing a plan of study designed to confer any bachelor’s degree together**
25 **with a graduate public health degree must complete all courses required for the graduate**
26 **degree. Graduate-level courses and credits may be used to satisfy the requirements for**
27 **the bachelor’s degree, in accordance with university policy, but no bachelor’s-level**
28 **courses or credits may be applied to the requirements of the graduate degree.**
29

30 Required documentation:

- 31
- 32 1) Provide documentation, via hyperlink and/or other materials (e.g., advising sheets, student
33 handbook), of the full set of curricular requirements for all joint bachelor’s and graduate
34 degrees in the unit of accreditation. The documentation must include all public-facing
35 materials and materials provided to prospective students. (electronic resource file)
36
 - 37 2) Succinctly summarize any reduction in credits, i.e., credits that would be required for a
38 student completing the two degrees separately that are not required for a student in the
39 joint bachelor’s and graduate degree programs. (self-study document)
40
 - 41 3) List any cross-listed classes included in the plan of study, i.e., classes with two course
42 numbers where undergraduate and graduate students are enrolled in the same class at
43 the same time. For each course:
44 a. Affirm that joint degree students all register using the graduate course number.
45 b. Explain the differences in assignments or expectations that differentiate enrollment
46 under the graduate course number from enrollment under the undergraduate
47 course number.
48
49

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52 *novel situations that could not be anticipated when drafting criteria.*

53
54 **Joint.2: Joint MPH degrees**

55
56 **This criterion relates to any joint degree that combines another graduate or professional**
57 **degree with the MPH or an equivalent degree.**

58
59 **Students enrolled in a joint degree that combines the MPH with another graduate public**
60 **health degree also housed within the SPH or PHP complete a plan of study that ensures**
61 **all CEPH criteria for each of the degrees are met. Public health faculty define a clear**
62 **rationale for credit sharing across the two degrees.**

63
64 **Students completing joint degrees that combine the MPH with an external degree program¹**
65 **must complete a plan of study designed to provide equivalent public health depth and**
66 **breadth for the joint degree student as a student who is not enrolled in the joint degree**
67 **program.**

- 68
- 69 • **Public health faculty must review the curricula for any external credits used to satisfy**
70 **the requirements for the public health degree and affirm that the course substitutions**
71 **address all characteristics included in this criterion.**
 - 72
 - 73 • **External credits counted toward public health degrees must have a population-level**
74 **orientation. External credits may not be counted toward public health requirements if**
75 **they focus on clinical skills, patient care, etc.**
 - 76
 - 77 • **External credits used to replace a *required* public health class require the highest level**
78 **of scrutiny. Public health faculty must affirm not only that specific skills or**
79 **competencies associated with the two courses are equivalent, but also that the context**
80 **and frame of instruction in the external course is equivalent to what the student would**
81 **receive if they completed the required public health course.**
 - 82
 - 83 • **For elective credits, public health faculty must articulate a rationale for accepting the**
84 **external credits toward the minimum degree requirements; this rationale must be**
85 **specific to each external course accepted.**
 - 86
 - 87 • **Joint degree students may complete required practice experiences or integrative**
88 **learning experiences via courses or credits associated with the external program ONLY**
89 **if all of the following are true:**
 - 90 ○ **Public health faculty or qualified staff approve the experience before it begins,**
91 **verifying that the experience is positioned to meet all elements of the criteria for**
92 **public health practice or integrative experiences.**
 - 93 ○ **Public health faculty or qualified staff are involved in supervising and**
94 **monitoring the experience while it is ongoing.**

¹ This portion of the criterion also applies to students in an SPH completing a plan of study designed to confer a graduate public health degree in the unit of accreditation with a non-public health degree that is also housed in the unit of accreditation, e.g., an MPH/MSN degree where the SPH also offers the nursing degree as a non-public health offering. In this scenario, “external credits” and “external degree” refer to the non-public health degree, even if is housed in the SPH.

- 95 ○ **Public health faculty or qualified staff assess the student's performance, only**
96 **granting credit for completion if it meets all public health requirements.**
97
98 • **Even when external courses and credits meet all of the requirements listed above, no**
99 **more than 12 external semester-credits may be counted toward the 42 semester-credits**
100 **required for an MPH degree.**
101
102 • **External credits are not subject to the 12 semester-credit maximum ONLY if they**
103 **possess both of the following characteristics:**
104 ○ **Course was designed expressly for public health joint degree students AND only**
105 **or primarily enrolls public health joint degree students**
106 ○ **Taught by faculty with documented public health training and/or experience**
107
108 • **After initial review, public health faculty must regularly reaffirm the content and nature**
109 **of the external credits counted toward public health degree requirements, as courses**
110 **and instructors may change over time.**
111

112 Required documentation:

- 113
114 1) Provide documentation, via hyperlink and/or other materials (e.g., advising sheets, student
115 handbook), of the full set of curricular requirements for all joint graduate degrees in the
116 unit of accreditation. The documentation must include all public-facing materials and
117 materials provided to prospective students. If existing documentation or hyperlinks do not
118 clearly outline *the specific set of courses intended to constitute the 42 credits of*
119 *coursework for the MPH degree*, the unit must prepare a document that clearly outlines
120 this information. (electronic resource file)
121
122 2) List ALL differences between the curriculum completed by a joint degree student and the
123 curriculum completed by a student not enrolled in a joint degree. For external courses
124 used to satisfy public health degree requirements, the list must indicate, specifically, what
125 each external course replaces. (self-study document)
126
127 3) Succinctly summarize the rationale for each difference noted immediately above. (self-
128 study document)
129
130 4) Succinctly summarize the process for public health faculty members' initial review and
131 regular reaffirmation of external credits to assure continued compliance with this criterion,
132 and list the last time such review occurred. (self-study document)
133
134 5) Provide detailed course outlines or syllabi for all external courses used to satisfy public
135 health degree requirements. If degree plans vary from student to student over time, e.g.,
136 if joint degree students substitute an elective from the external degree for a public health
137 elective, document all external courses accepted for public health credits over the last
138 three years. (electronic resource file)
139
140

141 **See [interpretation guide](#) for explanation & examples of intent. Interpretation guide will be released**
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143 **novel situations that could not be anticipated when drafting criteria.**

144
145 **Joint.3: Joint highly specialized public health master's degrees and joint public health**
146 **doctoral degrees**

147
148 **Students completing joint degrees that combine a highly specialized public health**
149 **master's degree or a public health doctoral degree with another degree program must**
150 **complete a plan of study designed to provide equivalent public health depth and breadth**
151 **for the joint degree student as a student who is not enrolled in the joint degree program.**

152
153 **Public health faculty must articulate a rationale for accepting external credits toward the**
154 **minimum degree requirements when the external credits replace the standard**
155 **requirements for students who are not completing the joint degree. The rationale must**
156 **focus on ensuring that the joint degree student obtains an equivalent depth and breadth**
157 **of public health training to students who are not completing joint degrees.**

158
159 **Public health faculty must regularly reaffirm the content and nature of the external credits**
160 **counted toward public health degree requirements, as courses and instructors may**
161 **change over time.**

162
163 Required documentation:

- 164
165 1) Provide documentation, via hyperlink and/or other materials (e.g., advising sheets, student
166 handbook), of the full set of curricular requirements for all joint graduate degrees in the
167 unit of accreditation. The documentation must include all public-facing materials and
168 materials provided to prospective students. If existing documentation or hyperlinks do not
169 clearly outline *the specific set of courses intended to constitute the 42 credits of*
170 *coursework for the MPH degree*, the unit must prepare a document that clearly outlines
171 this information. (electronic resource file)
- 172
173 2) List ALL differences between the curriculum completed by a joint degree student and the
174 curriculum completed by a student not enrolled in a joint degree. For external courses
175 used to satisfy public health degree requirements, the list must indicate, specifically, what
176 each external course replaces. (self-study document)
- 177
178 3) Succinctly summarize the rationale for each difference noted immediately above. (self-
179 study document)
- 180
181 4) Succinctly summarize the process for public health faculty members' initial review and
182 regular reaffirmation of external credits to assure continued compliance with this criterion,
183 and list the last time such review occurred. (self-study document)
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185 5) Provide detailed course outlines or syllabi for all external courses used to satisfy public
186 health degree requirements. If degree plans vary from student to student over time, e.g.,
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188 elective, document all external courses accepted for public health credits over the last
189 three years. (electronic resource file)
- 190