

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

MPH.1 Foundational Knowledge

All MPH students complete coursework that specifically addresses each of the following concepts.

Students with verified completion of a previous degree from a CEPH-accredited unit, including a bachelor's degree, can be considered to have completed coursework that addresses these concepts, if the unit desires.

Public Health Landscape

- FK1. Public health definition**
- FK2. Public health history**
- FK3. Public health ethics**
- FK4. 10 Essential Public Health Services**
- FK5. Comparison of U.S. public health systems to other nations' systems**
- FK6. Major causes of morbidity and mortality locally, nationally, regionally, or globally**
- FK7. Primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention definitions**
- FK8. Cross-sectoral collaborations to address population health**
- FK9. Legislative and other processes for advancing or changing laws that affect public health**

Interdependent Factors that Influence Health

- FK10. Environmental factors, including climate factors**
- FK11. Biological factors**
- FK12. Ecological factors**
- FK13. Behavioral factors**
- FK14. Cultural factors**
- FK15. Systemic factors**
- FK16. Globalization**

Required documentation:

- 1) List the coursework and other learning experiences required for the school or program's MPH degrees, including the required curriculum for each concentration in the format of Template MPH.1.1 (single- and multi-concentration formats available). (self-study document)
- 2) Document, in the format of Template MPH.1.2, how each of the indicated concepts is covered. (self-study document)
- 3) Provide a syllabus, detailed course outline, or equivalent set of documents for each course listed in Template MPH.1.2. The syllabus, course outline, or equivalent set of documents must outline ALL of the following. If the syllabus or course outline format does not contain all of this information, the unit must assemble multiple documents that present all of the following for each course:
 - Course goals and/or learning outcomes
 - Topics for each course meeting or session (or the equivalent for asynchronous courses)
 - Assigned readings
 - Significant assignments and course activities, including sufficient detail to understand the requirements for major course projects, as applicable

Highlight the portion(s) that demonstrate coverage of the knowledge areas; this must include information beyond course goals, learning outcomes, and/or a restatement of the knowledge areas. This is not required if the full course is dedicated to the content area. (electronic resource file)

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- 4) If alignment with the knowledge area is not fully documented by the highlighted text provided in documentation request 3, provide supplementary documentation (e.g., excerpt from lecture slides) for each specific facet(s) of content coverage referenced in Template MPH1.2. (electronic resource file)

MPH.2 Foundational Competencies

The MPH curriculum provides instruction in and assessment of each of the following competencies through didactic coursework.

Each MPH student must have an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to perform each competency and to receive feedback on their performance, as appropriate. Therefore, assignments or products produced by a group of students may not serve as the sole method of assessing a competency; when group projects are used for competency assessment, they must be supplemented with other methods designed to distinguish individual students' ability to perform the competency.

Methods & Data

- FC1. Apply epidemiological methods to address public health issues**
- FC2. Analyze quantitative data using statistical methods**
- FC3. Analyze qualitative data using appropriate methods**
- FC4. Assess the credibility of data sources**
- FC5. Interpret results of data analysis for public health research, policy, or practice**

Community Context

- FC6. Assess needs, assets, and capacities that affect a community's health**
- FC7. Examine systemic factors that contribute to inequitable health outcomes for a given community or communities**
- FC8. Propose strategies to collaborate across groups for influencing public health outcomes**

Public Health Interventions

- FC9. Design a population-based program or policy, taking into consideration social or community contexts**
- FC10. Design a plan to evaluate a public health program or policy, taking into consideration social or community contexts**
- FC11. Advocate for policies to improve health**
- FC12. Assess the impact of policies on public health**

Communication

- FC13. Communicate audience-appropriate public health content orally**
- FC14. Translate public health science for the general public**
- FC15. Apply communication strategies to address inaccurate or misleading public health information**

Leadership & Systems Thinking

- FC16. Apply leadership principles to address an organizational challenge**
- FC17. Develop a project or organizational budget, with justification**
- FC18. Use a systems thinking tool to visually represent and explain a public health issue**

Required documentation:

- 1) Provide a matrix, in the format of Template MPH.2, that indicates the course and assessment activity for each of the foundational competencies listed above. (self-study document)

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- 2) Provide supporting documentation for each assessment activity listed in Template MPH.2. Documentation must include the following, as relevant, for each listed assessment:

- assignment instructions or guidelines as provided to students
- writing prompts provided to students
- sample exam question(s)

(electronic resource file)

- 3) Provide a syllabus, detailed course outline, or equivalent set of documents for each course listed in Template MPH.2. The syllabus, course outline, or equivalent set of documents must outline ALL of the following. If the syllabus or course outline format does not contain all of this information, the unit must assemble multiple documents that present all of the following for each class:

- Course goals and/or learning outcomes
- Topics for each course meeting or session (or the equivalent for asynchronous courses)
- Assigned readings
- Significant assignments and course activities, including sufficient detail to understand the requirements for major course projects, as applicable

(electronic resource file)

MPH.3: Required Concentration Coursework

Students complete at least nine semester credits of defined coursework beyond the coursework associated with the foundational competencies. The defined concentration coursework allows students to attain an appropriate depth of knowledge and skills beyond the foundational competencies listed in Criterion MPH.2. This applies to all MPH offerings, including generalist degrees and in programs with a single concentration.

There are three possible approaches to defining the minimum credits of concentration coursework:

- 1) **Unit-defined concentration:** The school or program defines at least nine semester credits of concentration coursework. All students in a concentration take exactly the same courses for at least nine semester credits.
- 2) **Concentration with selectives:** The school or program defines at least six semester credits of coursework that all students enrolled in a concentration must take and provides a specific list of permissible options among which students may select to constitute at least three additional semester credits. The list of selective options must be thoughtfully constructed to build skills or knowledge associated with the concentration, and the school or program must be able to articulate a sound rationale for including courses in this list.
- 3) **Individually defined concentration:** All curricula that do not meet the characteristics of one of the categories above assume this category. In individually defined concentrations, the advisor and student, together, are responsible for identifying a coherent set of courses to create appropriate curricular depth beyond foundational knowledge and competencies. The program must establish specific advising and clear policies to guide students' choices and must maintain appropriate documentation to support compliance with this criterion.

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Required documentation:

- 1) *For unit-defined concentrations and concentrations with selectives:* List the required coursework, beyond the foundational courses associated with building foundational knowledge and foundational competencies, for each concentration or generalist degree, in the format of Template MPH.3.1.

For individually defined concentrations: mark NA. (self-study document)

- 2) Provide a web link that lists the required coursework, beyond the foundational courses associated with building foundational knowledge and foundational competencies, for each concentration or generalist degree. (self-study document)

- 3) *For concentrations with selectives:* Explain the rationale for the courses listed as options among which students may choose.

For unit-defined concentrations and individually defined concentrations: mark NA (self-study document)

- 4) *For individually defined concentrations:* provide sample student plans of study that highlight the nine semester credits of coursework chosen to constitute the student's concentration. Provide plans of study from 10 students who have graduated within the last three years or as many as available, if fewer than 10 students have graduated from an individually defined concentration in the last three years. (electronic resource file)

For unit-defined concentrations and concentrations with selectives: mark NA (self-study document)

MPH.4: Defined Concentration Knowledge and Skills

The school or program

- **succinctly articulates the unique set of knowledge and skills that students should gain by completing the required courses listed in MPH.3. An appropriately defined set of competencies would constitute an acceptable description of knowledge and skills but is not required.**
- **transparently communicates the intended focus and outcomes of the plan of study, including possible career paths or roles, to students, prospective students, and the public. This includes clearly disclosing whether the plan of study makes graduates eligible for a specific disciplinary credential (e.g., CHES, RD, REHS).**

Required documentation:

- 1) Paste, from the school or program's public-facing documents (website or student handbook), a description of each concentration that

a) articulates the unique set of knowledge and skills gained by completing the required coursework

b) communicates the intended focus or outcomes of the plan of study, including possible career paths or roles, to students, prospective students, and the public

(self-study document)

- 2) For each concentration, *explain* how completing the curricular requirements in MPH.3 positions students to attain the knowledge and skills and achieve the intended focus or outcomes. The

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explanation must succinctly address the content of the courses: a list of illustrative assignments without explanation is not sufficient. (self-study document)

- 3) For *individually defined concentrations* as defined in MPH.3: Present evidence, including policies and sample documents, that demonstrate that each student and advisor define a coherent plan of study with a defined set of knowledge and skills that aligns with the planned coursework. Include a description of these policies in the self-study document and official documentation (e.g., guidelines or handbooks provided to advisors or students) in the electronic resource file.

For unit-defined concentrations and concentrations with selectives: mark NA (self-study document and electronic resource file)

- 4) For *individually defined concentrations* as defined in MPH.3: Provide sample descriptions of the focus and intended outcomes, including possible career paths or roles, and explain how completing the coursework allows students to attain the stated knowledge and skills. The unit must provide a succinct description for *each of the plans of study presented in MPH.3, documentation request 3*.

For unit-defined concentrations and concentrations with selectives: mark NA (electronic resource file)

- 5) Provide the most current version available of the syllabus, detailed course outline, or equivalent set of documents for each required course listed in Criterion MPH.3. The syllabus, course outline, or equivalent set of documents must outline ALL of the following. If the syllabus or course outline format does not contain all of this information, the unit must assemble multiple documents that present all of the following for each class:

- Course goals or learning outcomes
- Topics for each course meeting or session (or the equivalent for asynchronous courses)
- Assigned readings
- Significant assignments and course activities, including sufficient detail to understand the requirements for major course projects, as applicable

(electronic resource file)

- 6) For concentrations that advertise that students will be eligible for a specific disciplinary credential after completing the program of study, provide the following:

1. a succinct explanation of how the curriculum addresses academic components of the credential's eligibility
2. a link to information on credential eligibility
3. any documentation needed to verify the explanation of how the curriculum addresses all academic components of credential eligibility

(self-study document and electronic resource file)

MPH.5: Signature Assessments

The school or program designs and implements robust, graduate-level assessment opportunities ("signature assessments") within the courses listed in MPH.3.

Signature assessments

- provide students the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and skills associated with their concentration or generalist degree
- demonstrate authentic learning

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Authentic learning mirrors real-life contexts and allows students to practice skills in a manner appropriate for their careers.

Signature assessments are distinct from the assessments that address foundational competencies (Criterion MPH.2) and occur outside of the requirements associated with applied practice experiences (Criterion MPH.6) and the integrative learning experience (Criterion MPH.7).

Required documentation:

- 1) *For unit-defined concentrations and concentrations with selectives:* Identify at least two signature assessments for each concentration, drawn from at least two separate required courses listed in MPH.3, and explain the rationale for each assessment in the format of Template MPH.5.1. The explanation must address why the assessment is appropriate to serve as a signature assessment for the concentration.

For individually defined concentrations: mark NA. (self-study document)

- 2) *For unit-defined concentrations and concentrations with selectives:* Provide the full prompt or set of instructions, as provided to students, for each signature assessment referenced in documentation request 1.

For individually defined concentrations: mark NA (electronic resource file)

- 3) *For unit-defined concentrations and concentrations with selectives:* Provide three samples of student work, drawn from within the last year at the time of self-study submission, for each signature assessment listed above.

For individually defined concentrations: mark NA (electronic resource file)

- 4) *For individually defined concentrations:* Identify signature assessments representative of the curriculum for *each of the plans of study identified in MPH.3, documentation request 4 (i.e., for the sample plans of study corresponding to 10 students who have graduated within the last three years or as many as available, if fewer than 10 students have graduated from an individually defined concentration in the last three years)*. For each student, complete Template MPH.5.1 with at least two signature assessments drawn from their chosen curriculum.

For unit-defined concentrations and concentrations with selectives: mark NA (electronic resource file)

- 5) *For individually defined concentrations:* Provide the full prompt or set of instructions, as provided to students, for each signature assessment referenced in documentation request 4.

For unit-defined concentrations and concentrations with selectives: mark NA. (electronic resource file)

- 6) *For individually defined concentrations:* Select three of the student samples presented in documentation request 4 and provide each student's completed signature assessments.

For unit-defined concentrations and concentrations with selectives: mark NA. (electronic resource file)

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MPH.6: Applied Practice Experiences (APE)

MPH students complete applied practice experiences (APE) that allow them to practice skills outside the classroom.

Experiences must have the following characteristics:

- **Aligned with the student’s plan of study or intended career path.**
- **Conducted in an appropriate setting (“practice site”) that allows the student to meet all of this criterion’s listed requirements.**
 - **Governmental agencies, non-profit and non-governmental organizations, and private sector businesses may all be appropriate settings.**
 - **University-affiliated settings may be appropriate when they are primarily focused on service to or engagement with individuals and communities, e.g., university health promotion or wellness centers, extension services.**
 - **Faculty-led scholarly projects may provide appropriate settings when they**
 - **require the student to engage directly with individuals and communities outside the university setting OR**
 - **require the student to engage with university communities via the university health promotion or wellness center, university extension service, or similar university organizational unit**
- **Involve regular communication, collaboration, or mentorship between the student and a representative of the practice site (“preceptor”), typically a full-time employee at the practice site.**
- **Allow each student to produce a unique portfolio of deliverables and work products (“practice products”).**
 - **The portfolio, taken as a whole, must reflect graduate-level work and must demonstrate that the student has had the opportunity to practice skills relevant to the plan of study they are completing or their intended career path.**
 - **The portfolio for this criterion includes documents or materials created by the student during the APE. Other types of documents (e.g., artifacts created throughout the student’s plan of study in required classes) may not be included in the portfolio used to satisfy this criterion.**
 - **Practice products must be created by the student for the practice site’s use and benefit, based on requests or specifications identified by the practice site.**
 - **Practice products must be the types of work products an employee of the organization might produce for that organization’s operations.**
 - **In general, practice products must not be confidential to the practice site: they must be made available to the school or program for review by the end of the experience.**

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- In addition to the practice products, the portfolio must contain documentation in which the student explains how the practice products relate to their plan of study or future career path (“reflection”).
- Guided by clear written documentation that outlines the responsibilities for all parties.
- Planned, monitored, and assessed by faculty or qualified school or program staff. The faculty or staff member must
 - Approve a plan for the practice experience before the experience begins. The plan must include, at a minimum, the practice site, preceptor, planned scope of work or activities, expected practice products, and rationale or connection to the plan of study. The approved plan must outline an experience well-positioned to comply with this criterion’s requirements.
 - Provide support or consultation as needed to the student while the experience is underway.
 - Provide support or consultation as needed to the preceptor while the experience is underway.
 - Review and assess the student’s portfolio. Assessment must consider the quality of the materials in the portfolio, in the context of the student’s plan of study. This assessment
 - is based on the faculty or staff member’s grounding in the curriculum
 - extends beyond verifying that the student completed a specific number of hours or submitted all required documents
 - extends beyond affirming that the products were acceptable to the practice site

Schools and programs may not waive the APE requirement for any students. However, schools and programs may design pathways to producing the portfolio that are tailored to the specific needs and career plans of their student populations.

Required documentation:

- 1) Succinctly describe the guidance students receive on the types of sites and experiences that are appropriate for an APE and how they receive such guidance. (self-study document)
- 2) Succinctly describe the guidance students receive on the portfolio, including the expectation for practice products and reflection, and how they receive such guidance. (self-study document)
- 3) Explain who is responsible for approving students’ APE plans and succinctly describe the process for directing revision of plans when needed. (self-study document)
- 4) Explain who is responsible for providing support to students during the experience and succinctly describe the process. (self-study document)
- 5) Explain who is responsible for providing support to preceptors during the experience and succinctly describe the process. (self-study document)
- 6) Explain who is responsible for assessing students’ portfolios and succinctly describe the process, including
 1. how faculty or staff validate completion of graduate-level work that aligns with the program of study or intended career path

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2. how discrepancies or deficiencies in the portfolio are addressed

(self-study document)

7) Provide the syllabus, handbook, or other document that outlines APE requirements. Highlight the passages that relate to each of the elements in documentation requests 1-5 above and ensure that any required forms or templates are appended. (electronic resource file)

8) Include at least five samples from each concentration.¹ If possible, all five samples should be from within a year of the site visit, and no sample may be older than three years. If the unit has not produced at least five graduates in a concentration in the last three years (or has not produced any joint degree graduates in the last three years), include a note explaining that.

If the unit includes joint degrees, joint degree students must be included within the set of samples provided for the relevant concentration(s) and should be clearly labeled. The number of joint degree samples should be roughly proportional to the number of joint degree students enrolled but must include at least one in each concentration that has enrolled a joint degree student in the last three years.²

Each sample constitutes one student and includes all of the following elements:

- Planning form or proposal that lists the practice site, preceptor, planned scope of work or activities, expected practice products, and rationale or connection to the plan of study
- Portfolio, including practice products and reflection
- Evidence (e.g., rubric or checklist) that faculty or qualified staff reviewed the portfolio in accordance with this criterion's requirements

(electronic resource file)

MPH.7: Integrative Learning Experience (ILE)

MPH students complete an integrative learning experience (ILE) at or near the end of the program of study.

The ILE must

- **require professional or academic writing in sentences and paragraphs**
- **produce a comprehensive, analytical practice-based or scholarly product that is grounded in evidence**
- **include a review or analysis of the relevant literature**

The school or program must define an ILE format or formats that are

- **suitable to serve as the culmination of a master's degree**
- **reflective of the intended focus and outcomes of the plan of study, as described in Criterion MPH.4**
- **distinct from any assignments submitted to satisfy APE requirements (Criterion MPH.6)**
- **completed in a manner that allows for thoughtful writing and editing, e.g., not via an overnight exam**

¹ If this would result in more than 50 samples, contact CEPH staff for guidance on establishing an appropriate distribution.

² For complex arrays of joint degrees and concentrations, contact CEPH staff for guidance on establishing an appropriate distribution.

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- completed and submitted by students as individuals, not in groups
- planned, monitored, and assessed by faculty or qualified school or program staff. The faculty or staff member must
 - approve a plan or proposal, unless the experience is standardized for all students
 - provide support or consultation to the student as needed
 - assess the student's performance using a rubric or similar document that lists the expected substantive and formal attributes of the product

Required documentation:

- 1) Succinctly summarize the expected ILE product. At a minimum, describe the following:
 - what form(s) it is expected to take
 - what type(s) of academic or professional writing is required
 - the requirement for review or analysis of literature
 - any parameters given around length, organization, etc.

(self-study document)

- 2) Explain how the chosen format is
 - suitable to serve as the culmination of a master's degree
 - reflective of the contents and purpose of the plan of study, as described in Criterion MPH.4
 - completed in a manner that allows for thoughtful writing and editing

(self-study document)

- 3) Explain the process for planning the experience and succinctly describe the process for directing revision of plans when needed. (self-study document)
- 4) Explain the process for providing support to students while they complete the ILE. (self-study document)
- 5) Explain who is responsible for assessing ILE products. (self-study document)
- 6) Provide the syllabus, handbook, or other document that outlines ILE requirements. Highlight the passages that relate to each of the elements in the documentation requests above and ensure that the rubric or form used for assessment is included or appended. (electronic resource file)
- 7) Include at least five samples from each concentration.³ If possible, all five samples should be from within a year of the site visit, and no sample may be older than three years. If the unit has not produced at least five graduates in a concentration in the last three years (or has not produced any joint degree graduates in the last three years), include a note explaining that.

If the unit includes joint degrees, joint degree students must be included within the set of samples provided for the relevant concentration(s) and should be clearly labeled. The number of joint degree samples should be roughly proportional to the number of joint degree students enrolled but must include at least one in each concentration that has enrolled a joint degree student in the last three years.⁴

³ If this would result in more than 50 samples, contact CEPH staff for guidance on establishing an appropriate distribution.

⁴ For complex arrays of joint degrees and concentrations, contact CEPH staff for guidance on establishing an appropriate distribution.

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If there are multiple options for completing the ILE within a single concentration, the five samples should be roughly proportional to the number of students who choose each option, and the samples should be labeled so it is clear which option each represents.

Each sample constitutes one student and includes all of the following elements:

- Planning form or proposal
- ILE product
- Completed form or rubric assessing the product

(electronic resource file)

MPH.8: Lifelong Learning

The school or program defines an approach to support students to cultivate and maintain curiosity for problem-solving, self-identify learning needs, and develop an orientation to lifelong learning.

The unit also ensures that all MPH students are exposed to information about structures to support lifelong learning as a public health professional. At a minimum, the unit must introduce students to the following:

- the American Public Health Association⁵ and state or regional public health affiliates
- the Certified in Public Health credential⁶
- other public health organizations, professional associations, credentials, or resources for lifelong learning relevant to their career paths, as applicable

Required documentation:

- 1) Describe the unit's approach to supporting students to cultivate and maintain curiosity for problem-solving, self-identify learning needs, and develop an orientation to lifelong learning and explain the rationale for this approach. (self-study document)
- 2) Describe, in the format of Template MPH.8.1, how the unit exposes students to
 - the American Public Health Association and state or regional public health affiliates
 - the Certified in Public Health credential
 - other professional public health organizations, credentials, or resources for lifelong learning relevant to their career paths, as applicable(self-study document)
- 3) Provide supporting documentation for each method of exposure listed in Template MPH.8.1. (electronic resource file)

MPH.9: Emerging Technologies

The MPH curriculum ensures that students can appropriately apply emerging technologies relevant to their public health careers. At a minimum, the school or program must document the following elements:

- Identification of appropriate emerging technologies to prepare students for their intended career outcomes

⁵ Units outside the United States may substitute an appropriate organization.

⁶ Units outside the United States may substitute as appropriate.

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- Intentional integration of instructional activities related to use of the identified emerging technologies
- Intentional instruction for students in opportunities, limitations, and ethical considerations related to technology use

Required documentation:

- 1) Describe the emerging technologies chosen by the unit as relevant and the rationale for these choices. (self-study document)
- 2) Describe the unit's approach to ensuring that students are prepared to appropriately use the identified technologies. (self-study document)
- 3) Provide at least one example of a required course that prepares students to use emerging technologies, describing the specific instruction provided or assignment(s) required. (self-study document)
- 4) Provide at least one example of a required course that addresses opportunities, limitations, and ethical considerations related to technology use, describing the specific instruction provided or assignment(s) required. (self-study document)
- 5) Provide supporting documentation for the examples in documentation requests 3 and 4. Unless the full document relates to this criterion's requirements, highlight the relevant portions of each document. (electronic resource file)

MPH.10: MPH Program Length

An MPH degree requires at least 42 semester-credits, 63 quarter-credits, or the equivalent for completion. Schools and programs use university definitions for credit hours.

All courses used to constitute the minimum credit requirement, including elective credits, must either be offered by the unit or approved as relevant to the public health degree by public health faculty or qualified school or program staff.

Required documentation:

- 1) Provide information about the minimum credit-hour requirements for all MPH degree options. If the university uses a unit of academic credit or an academic term different from the standard semester or quarter, explain the difference and present an equivalency in table or narrative form. (self-study document)
- 2) Define a credit with regard to classroom/contact hours. (self-study document)
- 3) If students are permitted to take elective courses that are not offered by the unit, explain the approval process, including who is responsible, and summarize the guidance provided to students and to faculty or staff responsible for approving electives. (self-study document)
- 4) If students are permitted to take elective courses that are not offered by the unit, provide hyperlink(s) to the documents providing guidance to students and the faculty or staff responsible for approving electives. (self-study document)