

MPH STUDENTS AND THE CORE REQUIREMENT

A minimum base of knowledge and skills is required by CEPH for all MPH students in each of the five public health core disciplines: biostatistics; social and behavioral sciences; epidemiology; environmental health; and health administration. This knowledge is typically acquired through the successful completion of the core curriculum. However, in some cases an advanced course in one or more core discipline may be substituted for the core requirement. In the exceptional case, the student may be proficient in the requirement if there is ample evidence of prior mastery of the competency(ies) from a previous educational program. Each of these options is explained in detail.

MPH Competencies and Core Curriculum

The core curriculum consists of a set of learning objectives and courses designed to address the MPH competencies that have been established by the UTSPH faculty.

- The vast majority of MPH students are expected to complete the core curriculum (as designated in specific courses listed in the UTSPH catalog) and any additional courses deemed necessary by the student's advisory committee.
- All MPH competencies must be mastered by students prior to graduation, and faculty advisors must verify in writing (Graduation Check List) that these competencies have been adequately addressed.

Waiver of a Core Requirement

On rare occasions an MPH student may have advanced education in one of the core public health disciplines. In such a case, a core requirement may be waived if the student has mastered all of the competencies related to the particular core discipline.

The role of the MPH student's advisor and the other members of the Student Advisory Committee is central in the process of assessing a student's core competencies. The decision to waive a core requirement requires the careful attention of the student's Advisory Committee. This committee should meet and carefully review the student's academic and professional record, clearly delineating what specific feature of the student's experience support the student's exemption from the core requirement. The committee must document the evidence that the student's experience meets or exceeds the competency. It might be useful, and the committee has the authority to request, that the student take an examination or other quantitative, non-subjective assessment of the student's competency in the core course as a demonstration of the student's relevant experience. The committee should seek the useful advice of the curriculum coordinator in the area where competency is suggested.

The mastery of the competencies must be documented in the student file via the completion of a “Waiver for an MPH Core Competency“ form, including signatures of the academic advisor, Division director and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Please note that the Division director signature is from the Division in which the course is being offered.

Substitution of a UTSPH Core Course with an Advanced UTSPH Course

Occasionally an MPH student will have mastered some, but not all, of the competencies in a particular discipline prior to admission. In such a case, an advanced course can be taken in order to master the remaining competency(ies).

This course may be one of the permanent courses, special topics courses, or independent study courses offered by a full time UTSPH faculty member. As with the core course waiver, the substitution of the core course with an advanced course requires the attention of the student’s Advisory Committee. This committee must both delineate and document in detail the features of the student’s prior experience which singles that student out for exemption. If the committee supports a course substitution, the substituting course must be a course approved by the Division Director from the substituting course’s division.

This mastery of the competency(ies) must be documented in the student file via the completion of a “Waiver for an MPH Core Competency“ form, including signatures of the academic advisor, Division director and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Please note that the Division director signature is from the Division for which the waiver is being requested, which may not be the Division that the student is in.

Waiver for an MPH Core Competency

Student's name (please print):

Student's Division (please print):

Academic Advisor (please print):

The student listed above has mastered most or all of the following MPH competencies in the core public health discipline and is requesting a waiver for competencies that have been adequately addressed prior to admission to the MPH program.

Check the core public health discipline for which the waiver is requested.

- Biostatistics
- Environmental Health Sciences
- Epidemiology
- Health Administration
- Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences

Waiver of a Core Requirement:

List the competencies that have been mastered in the relevant core public discipline along with the specific course(s) and/or experiences responsible for the mastery.

Competency	How the competency has been met

Substitution of a core competency with an advanced course:

List the competency which has not been met and the advanced course that will be taken in order to meet the requirement

Competency	Course substitution

I _____ verify that the student listed above has successfully mastered the indicated competency(ies) or, where indicated, will complete the core requirement by taking an advanced UTSPH course.

Academic Advisor:

_____	_____
Signature	Date

2nd Committee Member

_____	_____
Signature	Date

Division Director*:

_____	_____
Signature	Date

Associate Dean for Academic Affairs:

_____	_____
Signature	Date

**Director of the division in which the course is being offered.*