Epidemiology Virtual Information Session-Q&A

Is the MPH two-year completion time based on full-time status? How long would it take for a part-time student to earn their MPH?

The two-year completion time is based on a full-time attendance of at least 9 credit hours per semester in the fall and spring.

For part-time students, the completion time could vary. A student who takes one class per semester will most likely take a longer time to complete the program than a student who takes two classes per semester.

You mentioned a transition from a MS to PhD. How would you describe a transition from the MPH to a PhD? Thank you.

We encourage students who are considering earning their PhD after completing their MPH to complete a thesis research paper for their culminating experience instead of the Capstone. The thesis research paper will help prepare students for the dissertation requirement in the PhD program.

Can you describe the year-by-year schedule/courses/average time schedule for both in-person and online MPH?

UTHealth School of Public Health students are in control of their schedules. The course schedule is posted every semester and students choose which classes they want to take with guidance from their faculty academic advisor. For students who want to attend full time, they would typically take anywhere from 9 to 16 credit hours per semester (fall and spring). Summer semester enrollment is not required. However, if you choose to enroll in the summer, you must take at least 3 credit hours.

Weekly time schedule?

A student’s schedule varies on his/her learning style, study skills and other time commitments. For every hour you spend in class, you will spend approximately two to three hours outside of class studying.

Does the MPH degree require a thesis?

MPH students have the option of completing a thesis research paper or doing a Capstone. However, we recommend that if you plan to move to a PhD program after your MPH, you should consider completing the thesis research paper as it helps to prepare you for the PhD dissertation research requirement.
Is it possible to complete the master's degree in two years while also working a full-time job?
Completing the master’s degree in two years while working a full-time job is possible. However, it will not be easy. It requires discipline and commitment to completing your coursework by the designated deadlines.

Are online MPH students required to come to campus periodically throughout the semester? For example, lab time, etc.
Students enrolled in the online MPH degree are not required to come to campus. All program requirements are completed online.

Can I see the research paper of faculty members so that I can collaborate my areas of interest and approach them directly?
Yes, we encourage all students to visit our website to view the research interests and projects of our faculty members. Communicating with a faculty member that has a research project you have an interest in could result in him/her agreeing to be your faculty academic advisor in the program. Click here to access our faculty page on our website.

Does having an MPH degree shorten how long it would take to complete a PhD?
The PhD program is separate from the MPH program. An MPH degree does not affect the time it takes to complete the PhD degree program. Please note that you will not be required to retake courses in the PhD program if you have already taken them in your MPH program, but you will be required to make up those credits taking other courses. Additionally, if you took courses that are required for the PhD while completing your MPH, you will not be able to count those credit hours towards your PhD.

Is there an opportunity to meet my professor's in-person if I enroll in the online MPH in epidemiology degree program?
Absolutely! We encourage you to use the communication channels that work best for you, the professor and the teaching assistant assigned to your course.

Are classes for the online program flexible time wise?
Yes, classes are flexible. However, please be mindful that it is up to you to complete your assignments by the designated deadlines. Syllabi will be provided for each course that details course assignments, information and expectations for the semester.

Are the certificates (specifically the data science and genomics/bioinformatics certificates) also available online?
The Genomics and Bioinformatics certificate program is available 100% online. For the Data Science certificate, only one course of that program is currently online.

What are the requirements to be admitted to the program?
Admission for the MPH or MS degree program:
- You must have a bachelor’s degree.
- Prior public health or epidemiology experience is not required.

Admission to the PhD degree program:
- You must have a master’s degree.
- Occasionally, we accept direct admits (students accepted directly into our PhD program without a master’s degree). However, they will be required to complete the required core
courses for our master’s program in addition to the required courses for our PhD program.

What is the expected ratio number of students and professors for the online MPH program?
The expected ratio number of students per instructor is 30. However, some classes have multiple faculty members and all of our required core courses are assigned a teaching assistant.

If we have a work experience of three years, should I provide letters of recommendation from academic or professional references?
We prefer to receive letters of recommendation from academic or professional sources.