

SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY  
HEALTH SCIENCE DEPARTMENT  
MPH PROGRAM

**GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

All MPH students must satisfactorily complete the required 45 units of coursework, fieldwork, and graduation requirement, plus 3 units for the concurrent prerequisite (HS 167 Biostatistics), and file the appropriate forms with Graduate Studies and Research in order to graduate.

- **COURSEWORK** - The 45 required MPH units are organized as follows:

|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| <b>Health Education Core Courses</b>                                 | 12 units        |
| <b>Public Health Core Courses</b>                                    | 24 units        |
| <b>Fieldwork</b><br>(400 hours plus Fieldwork Seminar and Synthesis) | 6 units         |
| <b>Culminating Experience</b>  |                 |
| Comprehensive Exam   | 0 units         |
| Project, or Thesis   | 3 or more units |

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**Total** **42 units (plus 3+ for Thesis or Project option)**

**Per University policy, graduate students must fulfill SJSU's Graduation Requirement through successful completion of a Comprehensive Exam, a Master's Thesis, or a Graduate Project. The University's Graduate Division mandates that, whichever option is selected, the required activities must demonstrate the student's mastery of the breadth and depth of coursework completed for the degree.**

**The Comprehensive Exam**

The comprehensive exam consists of two-parts. The first part is completed in the HS 296 course where students use a case study scenario to answer a series of questions that require the analysis and interpretation of data for program evaluation purposes. The second part of the comprehensive exam, is a multiple choice exam based on the essential objectives from the MPH courses. Students will answer 200 or less questions. Competencies derived from the Association of Schools of Public Health and the Competencies Update Project (CUP) form the foundation for the essential objectives for MPH course. As such, students who successfully pass this part of the comprehensive exam should do well on the Certified in Public Health credentialing exam.

**The Master's Thesis**

The thesis option allows students to develop and implement original research under the guidance of a faculty advisor and thesis committee. MPH students are eligible to submit a thesis proposal to the Department's Graduate Research Committee after they have completed HS 295 *Research Methodology* and earned a minimum B+ grade on the final assignment (the research proposal) and the semester grade. Students must also earn a minimum grade of A- on the primary writing assignments in HS 272 (Health Promotion Planning and Evaluation), HS 271 Theory, and for the final grade in each course. All thesis research must be approved by the Department's Graduate Research Committee and receive Human Subjects approval by the SJSU Institutional Review Board before data collection can begin. Students must enroll in HS 299 *Master's Thesis* (3 units each semester), until the thesis is complete. Theses must be approved by the Thesis Committee, the Thesis Chair, and the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research. It has been our experience that a thesis usually

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takes 12-24 months of concentrated work from approval of the proposal to final submission to Graduate Studies. No matter how many semesters it takes to complete the thesis, only three units can be applied toward the 45 unit MPH Program requirement, even though students must be enrolled in HS 299 Masters Thesis until the thesis is approved by Graduate Studies.

**The Graduate Project**

There are two types of projects offered in the MPH Program; an **Independent Project** and an **Applied Project**. The Independent Project can result in a final written document that can be useful to a community-based organization and/or a publishable article. The project requires a faculty advisor, one other faculty committee member, and a community practitioner mentor. Students must have met or partially met the MPH Writing Requirement upon first submission. Students must also earn a minimum grade of A- on the primary writing assignments in HS 272 (Health Promotion Planning and Evaluation) and HS 271 (Theory). Students must not have received a grade that is less than a B- for any Health Education Core or Public Health Core course. The Independent Project is not available to students on the 2-year MPH program plan. All students proposing research or evaluation with human participants must obtain approval from the Human Subjects-Institutional Review Board prior to the start of any data collect. Students enroll in HS 298 Graduate Project for a minimum of one semester (3 units) while they are working on the project and the write-up. The Independent Project will take between 6 months to 12 months, after approval, to complete.

The Applied Project has two parts. The first part is an integrated writing assignment on a topic of the student's choice and that includes a contextual and ecological analysis, along with a commitments to practice narrative. The second part of the requirement is completion of a faculty sponsored project that requires analysis and reporting of data (e.g., analyzing and reporting MPH curriculum review data). The Applied Project option is also available to students who qualify for the Independent Project. Students who are on the 2-year plan can only do an Applied Project.

- **FORMS**

**Departmental Request for Candidacy**

**Application for Award of Master's Degree**

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION is available from the following sources:**

Graduate Studies and Research website at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gradstudies>

MPH Student Handbook

MPH Core Faculty Advisors