



SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Academic Policies and Procedures

Academic policies can be changed at any time by the University of North Texas Health Science Center School of Public Health (UNTHSC-SPH). Students should review the Student Policy Handbook for additional policies and procedures concerning their roles as students.

Enrollment of Continuing Students

A continuing student is defined as a student who enrolls in one of three consecutive semesters. Example: student enrolls Summer 2011, no enrollment Fall 2011 or Spring 2012, re-enrolls Summer 2012. Continuing students do not need to reapply to the UNTHSC-SPH to take classes if they meet all of the following conditions:

1. The student has not received a degree from the UNTHSC since last enrollment;
2. The student does not have any current holds on his or her record (i.e., immunizations or academic); and
3. The student has not attended any other academic institution during his/her absence from the UNTHSC.

Students who do not meet these requirements must give a written explanation of the facts surrounding the situation to the UNTHSC-SPH Office of Student and Academic Services (UNTHSC-SPH-OSAS) for consideration. Students who are unsure if they meet all of the above conditions for re-enrollment should contact the UNTHSC-SPH-OSAS at <mailto:sph@unthsc.edu> or 817-735-2401 before the registration period.

Re-Admission of Former Students

Students who previously have been admitted to the UNTHSC-SPH but have not enrolled during the last three consecutive semesters (i.e., Fall, Spring, Summer) must follow these re-admission procedures:

1. Submit an updated admissions application (contact the UNTHSC-SPH-OSAS to have application emailed).
2. Submit transcripts from all colleges attended (if any) since leaving the Health Science Center showing eligibility to re-enroll at each institution.

3. Former students who have not enrolled elsewhere since leaving the UNTHSC-SPH and are in good academic standing are required only to submit an admissions application and the application fee.
4. All completed applications are reviewed by the department chair for which the student is re-applying. Admissions decisions will be communicated to the student by the UNTHSC-SPH-OSAS.

Non-Degree Admission of Students

Admission to the UNTHSC-SPH as a non-degree seeking student may be granted subject to the following provisions:

1. The applicant must meet all of the general admission requirements described in the non-degree section and must meet all application deadlines.
2. The student in this status is required to receive credit in all courses taken and must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better.
3. A student who is admitted to non-degree status has no assurance that work completed under this status will be applicable toward degree requirements if he or she is subsequently admitted to a degree program at the UNTHSC. Completion of departmental graduate courses by non-degree students does not obligate the UNTHSC-SPH to grant admission to a degree program at a later date, unless all general and specific requirements for admission to that program have been met. Use of Transfer Credit policies are listed in the SPH Academic Policies and Procedures section of the catalog.
4. A maximum of 12 SCH are allowed while in this status.
5. Non-degree seeking students are not eligible for financial aid.

Use of Transfer Credit

A student who holds a bachelor's degree may apply up to 12 SCH of appropriate graduate work completed elsewhere toward the completion of a graduate degree at the UNTHSC-SPH if the coursework has not been used toward the completion of another degree. A maximum of 12 SCH of graduate work beyond a master's degree may be accepted and credited toward a doctoral degree if the coursework has not been used toward the completion of a master's or doctoral degree. All transfer credits are subject to the approval of the department chair. Requests for waiving a core course with transfer credit must be approved by the appropriate department chair and instructor associated with the course. The request must be accompanied with documentation showing that the previous coursework is comparable to the requirements of the core course. Only those courses with a grade of B or higher from an accredited institution will be transferred. These courses must have been completed within seven years of the date of first acceptance for any degree program. Any course work from a prior degree may not be transferred toward the MPH, MHA, DrPH or PhD degree. It is the student's responsibility to make sure official transcripts of courses completed elsewhere are furnished to the UNTHSC-SPH-OSAS.

Change of Department/Concentration Area

Students who wish to change departments or their area of concentration must submit a new application, statement of professional goals and resume to the UNTHSC-SPH-OSAS. There is a \$25 processing fee. The student's new application and academic file will be forwarded to the chair/faculty of the new department/concentration for review and an admissions decision will be sent to the UNTHSC-SPH-OSAS.

The UNTHSC-SPH-OSAS will then notify the student of the admissions decision. If the student is admitted to the new concentration, the outgoing department will be notified by the UNTHSC-SPH-OSAS.

Academic Integrity

Cheating and plagiarism are types of academic misconduct for which penalties are described and assessed under the UNTHSC Student Code of Conduct.

The term “cheating” includes, but is not limited to: (1) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; (2) dependence upon the aid of sources specifically prohibited by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; and (3) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the Health Science Center.

The term “plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement. Plagiarism also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials. All sources, i.e., internet web pages must be cited appropriately.

All students are responsible for making themselves aware of the definitions and implications of academic misconduct. For further information on academic misconduct, penalties and appeal procedures, the student should refer to the Student Handbook available through the UNTHSC Division of Student Affairs.

Academic Standing of Student Officers

A student in the School of Public Health must be in good academic standing to run for office in any student organization and must remain in good academic standing throughout the term of office, if elected.

Appeal/Grievance Process

Specific policies and procedures have been established for students seeking to appeal an admissions decision, a grade in a course, or an extension of time to complete a degree. The policies are outlined below:

1. Appeals concerning admission to the UNTHSC-SPH should be addressed to the Dean.
2. To request an extension of time, a petition in the form of a letter must be submitted to the UNTHSC-SPH-OSAS. The student’s academic record and the petition letter is then forwarded to the appropriate department Chair for review and decision.
3. Information concerning how to pursue appeals on any other matter can be sought from the UNTHSC-SPH-OSAS.

Course Assignment Grade Appeal

Any student who believes a grade for a course assignment has been inequitably awarded should contact the instructor first within five (5) working days after the grade was assigned to discuss and resolve the issue. If unable to resolve the issue, the student should submit a written appeal to the faculty member’s department Chair. The decision of the department Chair is final. If the instructor is the department Chair, the appeal should be submitted to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

Course Grade Appeal

Any student who believes a course grade has been inequitably awarded should first contact the instructor who awarded the grade in order to discuss and attempt to resolve the issue. Any instructor no longer associated with the UNTHSC at the time of the appeal will be represented in these proceedings by the department Chair over the concentration in question. The student who is unable to resolve the differences with the instructor has five (5) working days following the first class day of the subsequent semester to file a written appeal with the appropriate department Chair. If the instructor is the department Chair, the appeal should be submitted to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, who will act as a substitute for the department Chair. If the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs is the instructor, the appeal should be submitted to the Dean of the UNTHSC-SPH for review and final decision of the course grade appeal.

Comprehensive Examination Grade Appeal

Any student who believes a grade in the comprehensive examination has been inequitably awarded should contact the Comprehensive Examination Coordinator first within five (5) working days after the grade was assigned to discuss and resolve the issue. If unable to resolve the issue, the student should submit a written appeal to the department Chair within five (5) working days. If unable to resolve after discussion with the department Chair, the student can submit a written appeal in the form of a letter to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs within five (5) working days.

Every stage of the appeal process will be carried out in an efficient manner to render a decision within thirty (30) days of the original appeal request.

If a grade appeal is requested by a student on academic probation, the student remains active in the program until the grade appeal process has concluded.

Application for the Completion of the Degree

It is the responsibility of the student to keep track of their progress toward the degree and to file an Intent to Graduate Form in the UNTHSC-SPH-OSAS. Consult the Academic Calendar for the appropriate dates. The applicant's grade point average on all work attempted must be at least 3.0 to be considered for candidacy. Failure to meet deadlines to submit the intent to graduate form, degree candidate information form, graduation clearance form, and the graduating study survey may result in a postponement of degree conferment.

Information concerning graduation fees is available in the Tuition and Fee Register, on the UNTHSC website or may be obtained from the UNTHSC-SPH-OSAS. Students anticipating graduation should consult the Academic Calendar for important dates regarding payment of fees and other graduation requirements.

Auditing

To audit a course, an individual who is not enrolled as a student in the UNTHSC-SPH must contact the UNTHSC-SPH-OSAS, submit a resume, and complete the appropriate forms. Final approval to audit must be received by the Instructor and the department Chair before sitting in a course. An auditor will not receive credit for the course. The auditor's name will not be entered on the class roll, and the instructor will not accept any papers, tests, or examinations.

Attendance as an auditor may not be used as the basis of a claim for credit in the course. Students who are enrolled for credit may audit classes without payment of additional fees; others may be subject to pay a \$175.00 fee per course for auditing classes which will be submitted to the UNTHSC-SPH-OSAS.

A person 65 years of age or older may enroll as an auditor without credit and without payment of an audit fee if space is available and if approved by the instructor. Such enrollment entitles the person to library privileges, but not the use of laboratory equipment, supplies, or health/hospital benefits.

For additional questions, students should contact the UNTHSC-SPH-OSAS.

Class Attendance

Regular and punctual class attendance is expected. Although, in general, students are graded on intellectual effort and performance, absences may lower the student's grade where class participation is deemed essential by the faculty member. In those classes where participation is considered as part of the grade, the instructor should give written notice of the requirement at the beginning of the semester. An instructor may request the Registrar to withdraw a student from a course for lack of attendance.

If the instructor-initiated withdrawal falls within the time that the student is eligible to drop with instructor consent, a W will be assigned. If the withdrawal falls after this period, a W or WF will be assigned as appropriate.

Concentrations and similar academic units have authority to establish a concentration-wide or course-wide policy so long as the policy is in accord with the above stipulations.

For information on absence due to religious observances, visit the policy website at www.hsc.unt.edu/policies/policieslist.cfm.

Participation in Pre-Commencement & Commencement Ceremony

Students must complete all degree requirements for graduation to participate in pre-commencement and commencement exercises. If a student who has submitted their Intent to Graduate form has failed to satisfactorily complete all academic requirements for graduation, the UNTHSC-SPH-OSAS may permit the student to participate in commencement exercises at the discretion of the UNTHSC-SPH so long as degree requirements are anticipated by the completion of the current academic year, i.e., end of the summer semester.

Students who have three (3) or less semester credit hours remaining in the summer semester to fulfill degree requirements may be permitted to participate in pre-commencement and commencement exercises. Such students must be in good academic standing (3.0 or better grade point average).

Students who have 3 SCH or less and want to participate in either ceremony, must submit a written request to the UNTHSC-SPH-OSAS to receive permission to participate. The UNTHSC-SPH reserves the right to deny any request. Appeals to decisions pertaining to participation in commencement exercises may be made to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

No diploma will be awarded until the UNTHSC-SPH has verified that the student has completed all academic requirements and the Office of Student Financials has verified that the student has met all financial obligations to the UNTHSC. Diplomas will be mailed by the Office of the Registrar to those students who have been granted this option and who have subsequently satisfied all requirements.

Concurrent Enrollment at Another Institution

Students must secure written permission from the Academic Advisor and department Chair before registering for any course or courses at another institution while registered for any courses at the

UNTHSC. Failure to secure the required permission for concurrent enrollment prior to registration at the second institution may cause the UNTHSC to refuse degree credit for the work taken elsewhere.

Course Offerings

Individual courses are subject to change or withdrawal at any time and may not be offered each semester of every year. Any course may be cancelled from current offerings if the number of registrants is too small to justify conducting the course.

Full-time Enrollment

A student must enroll for nine semester hours for the fall or spring semester to be considered full-time for that semester. Enrollment in a total of six semester hours is considered full-time for the summer.

When a student is enrolled in a doctoral dissertation or residency, a master's practice experience, internship or thesis, the student will be considered full-time if enrolled in three semester credit hours.

Students are responsible for meeting enrollment requirements for federal or state financial aid purposes.

Academic Probation and Dismissal

A student who fails to achieve the required cumulative average of 3.0 GPA (B average) on all course work in a semester will be placed on academic probation for the subsequent semester. If the student achieves a 3.0 semester GPA in the subsequent semester, but the cumulative GPA is still below 3.0, the student will remain on academic probation. The student will be removed from academic probation when the 3.0 cumulative GPA is achieved.

A student who is placed on academic probation who does not receive either a semester or a cumulative 3.0 GPA during the following semester of probation will be dismissed from the UNTHSC-SPH. Upon dismissal, the student is not permitted to return to a degree program at the UNTHSC-SPH. Appeals to a dismissal must be made to the Dean of the UNTHSC-SPH. The student remains active in the program until the appeal process has concluded.

To graduate from UNTHSC-SPH, a student must have a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA.

Repeating Courses

If a grade of F is received in a required course, the course must be repeated. Students are not obligated to repeat a course if a grade of F is obtained in an elective. Students may repeat any course twice (maximum enrollment of 3 times). The best grade obtained will be used in the calculation of the GPA. If a grade of "W" (withdrawal) is recorded on the student's transcript, this is considered one of the three allowable attempts at successfully completing the course.

Withdrawal Limit

Students may withdraw from a maximum of four (4) courses throughout the completion of their degree requirements. A master's student with four (4) withdrawals will be reviewed by their Academic Advisor and the concentration department Chair. Doctoral students with four (4) withdrawals will be reviewed by their Academic Advisor and their respective committee, i.e., DrPh or PhD, for any appropriate remediation and/or modification to their curriculum plan.

Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory Grading in PhD Dissertation or DrPH Residency

Students enrolled in the PhD Dissertation or the DrPH Residency must make satisfactory progress toward the completion of the degree each semester. Students enrolled in these courses will receive either a Satisfactory (S) grade or an Unsatisfactory (U) grade each semester. Upon successful completion and defense of the dissertation, students will be assigned a grade of Pass (P). Upon successful completion of the DrPH Residency, students will be assigned a grade of Pass (P). Unsuccessful completion will result in a grade of Fail (F).

Time Limitations

All requirements for the Master of Public Health (MPH) or Master of Health Administration (MHA) degree must be completed within six years. All requirements for the Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) or Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree must be completed within seven years.

Time limits are strictly enforced. Students exceeding the time limit may be required to repeat out-of-date credits, and/or show other evidence of being up-to-date in their major field of study. Students anticipating that they will exceed the time limit should apply for an extension to the UNTHSC-SPH-OSAS for appropriate referral to their department, concentration and/or committee, i.e., Master's, DrPH, PhD, before the normal time period to complete the degree expires. Holding a full-time job is not considered in itself sufficient grounds for granting an extension.

Time spent in active service in the U.S. armed forces will not be used in computing the time limit. However, career members of the armed forces should consult the School of Public Health Office of Student and Academic Services concerning credit given to work completed before or during active military service.

Leave of Absence

If a situation arises where a student must set aside his/her graduate studies for a period of time, a leave of absence (LOA) may be requested. LOA may be requested for up to three semesters. If additional leave is needed, a new request must be submitted. The maximum amount of LOA is six semesters (two academic years). A student on LOA cannot receive funding as a graduate student. LOA status may affect student loans. Graduate advisors will be notified of any change to the LOA. The student initiates the request by completing the LOA Request Form, obtaining approval from his or her advisor or major professor (depending on where they are in their academic career), and submitting it to their department chair. Upon approval by the department chair, the form is submitted and filed with UNTHSC Registrar's Office.

Once all required signatures are obtained, a copy will be sent to all parties via E-mail. Toward the end of a period of approved LOA, the student must take steps to resume studies at the beginning of the next semester, extend the LOA, or withdraw from the UNTHSC-SPH. To resume studies, the student obtains approval from the Academic Advisor /Major Professor and department Chair. To extend the LOA, the student completes and submits a new LOA Request form. To withdraw from school, the student follows the normal procedures for withdrawal, including completion of the clearance process. Time taken for an approved LOA is not counted toward the course/degree completion time limits.

Curriculum Plan

A curriculum plan listing all courses must be completed by the student, approved by the student's advisor and department chair, and submitted to the School of Public Health Office of Student and Academic

Services before the completion of the first semester of enrollment for all MPH, MHA, DrPH and PhD students. Please refer to the section on Use of Transfer Credit regarding transferring course work.

All subsequent requests for curriculum plan changes such as a substitution for electives or required course must be submitted through the Request for Modification of Curriculum Plan form by the student to their Academic Advisor and department Chair for approval. All changes must be submitted to the UNTHSC-SPH-OSAS. Curriculum plans must follow the guidelines outlined by the UNTHSC-SPH for the academic year in which it is filed.

Definition of a Credit Hour

A credit hour is the unit by which an institution measures its course work. The amount of credit hours awarded for a course is based upon the instructional time and the type of course. Instructional time is measured in "contact hours," which is defined as the time in which the student is involved in direct educational contact with the faculty member(s) teaching a particular course.

According to rules outlined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), a traditional course in a fall or spring semester is defined as containing 15 weeks of instruction plus a week for final examinations. The UNTHSC-SPH adheres to the THECB formula of 15 contact hours for each semester credit hour (SCH) and, thus, 45 contact hours for a three semester credit hour (3 SCH) course. (1 SCH=1 contact hour = 50 minute session).

For courses offered in an alternative format, i.e., 5 week, 8 week, or Weekend Alternative format, the class meeting time is adjusted so that 750 semester-minutes of instruction are offered during the length of the course.

Quality of Work Required*

All master's and doctoral students must make satisfactory progress toward completion of degree requirements. Unsatisfactory progress toward a degree is defined as:

- Having a cumulative GPA below 3.0; (See academic probation and dismissal policy)
- Obtaining a grade of F in any course attempted;
- Withdrawal from four courses;
- Withdrawal from the same course twice;
- Carrying multiple incompletes in one year;
- Not maintaining continuous enrollment in thesis, dissertation, practice experience, DrPH Doctoral Residency or other course with this requirement; or
- An unsatisfactory portfolio review for PhD students, with two (2) unsatisfactory reviews warranting dismissal from the program.

For master's students, any action taken as a result of not meeting the above expectations is subject to the discretion of the Academic Advisor and the department Chair. For doctoral students, any action taken as a result of not meeting the above expectations is subject to the discretion of the respective committee, i.e., DrPH or PhD, for any appropriate remediation and/or modification to their curriculum plan.

MPH Thesis, MHA Capstone, DrPH Residency, or PhD Dissertation

Please refer to the respective handbook, i.e., MPH, MHA, DrPH, or PhD, handbook for guidelines and expectations for quality of work associated with these courses.

Administration of Comprehensive Examinations

MPH

Beginning Fall 2012, all incoming students must take the Certified in Public Health examination (CPH Exam) and the concentration comprehensive examination to meet graduation requirements.

Certified in Public Health Examination- All students must receive permission to enroll in the 0 SCH course, PHED 5000, the semester in which they wish to take the Certified in Public Health examination (CPH Exam). Qualifications: You must have completed the core courses BACH 5300, BIOS 5300, EOHS 5300, EPID 5300, and HMAP 5300 and have completed or are concurrently enrolled in 21 semester credit hours.

Concentration Comprehensive Examination- The MPH comprehensive examination for the concentrations is administered twice each academic year: once in the fall and once in the spring.

Students are required to enroll in the appropriate 0 semester credit hour course (BACH 5001, BIOS 5001, EOHS 5001, EPID 5001, HMAP 5001) in the semester in which they intend to take the comprehensive examination. Students will receive a permission number from the departmental Comprehensive Exam Coordinator to enroll in the course.

Incoming MPH students beginning Fall 2012 and after:

Students who do not pass the certified in public health examination and/or the concentration comprehensive examinations on their first attempt will be allowed to repeat the examination during the next regularly scheduled examination date/time. Students must re-register in a subsequent semester for the 0 semester credit hour course if retaking the examination. Students have three attempts to successfully pass any combination of the departmental comprehensive examination or the National Board of Public Health Examiner's (NBPHE), Certified in Public Health (CPH) examination. The MPH-Professional Option students take the CPH examination which is only offered once a year. MPH-Professional Option students have three attempts to pass the CPH examination.

If a student fails the Certified in Public Health examination (1st try), the student can continue with coursework and must take the Certified in Public Health examination the subsequent semester. If a student fails a second time, the student will be placed on academic probation and cannot take additional coursework until the Certified in Public Health examination is successfully passed. If a student fails the Certified in Public Health examination the third time, the student will be dismissed from the MPH program.

If a student fails the concentration comprehensive examination (1st try), the student can continue with coursework but may be required to take additional electives or advised to repeat core courses. If a student fails the second time, the student will be placed on academic probation. If the student fails the third time, the student will be dismissed from the MPH program.

Students who filed a degree plan prior to Fall 2012:

Students have three attempts to pass any combination of the Certified in Public Health examination (CPH Exam) or the concentration comprehensive examination.

MPH-Professional Option students:

The MPH-Professional Option students are only required to take the Certified in Public Health examination. MPH-Professional Option student have three attempts to pass the CPH examination.

DrPH

Students are required to enroll in PHED 6000, when they are ready to take the Integrated Competency Examination (ICE) which is the doctoral comprehensive examination experience. Students who do not

pass ICE on the first attempt will be referred to the DrPH program committee for appropriate remediation or modification to the curriculum plan. ICE is offered a minimum of once a year. Students have two attempts to successfully pass the ICE.

Incoming DrPH student beginning Fall 2012 and after:

DrPH students who began the DrPH program in Fall 2012 or after are required to successfully pass the Certified in Public Health examination (CPH Exam) after completion of core courses and 21 semester credit hours or concurrent enrollment in 21 semester credit hours. If a student has already obtained an MPH degree, the student may take the Certified in Public Health (CPH Exam) the first semester in which they are enrolled at UNTHSC-School of Public Health.

DrPH students must receive permission to enroll in the 0 SCH course, PHED 5000, the semester in which they wish to take the Certified in Public Health examination (CPH Exam).

If a student fails the Certified in Public Health examination (1st try), the student can continue with coursework and must take the Certified in Public Health examination the subsequent semester. If a student fails a second time, the student will be placed on academic probation and cannot take additional coursework until the Certified in Public Health examination is successfully passed. If a student fails the Certified in Public Health examination the third time, the student will be dismissed from the DrPH program.

PhD

Students are required to enroll in the concentration specific comprehensive examination course (BACH 6000, BIOS 6000, EOHS 6000, EPID 6000, HMAP 6000) to indicate they are ready to take the comprehensive examination. The PhD comprehensive examination is offered a minimum of twice per year. Students have two attempts to successfully pass the concentration specific comprehensive examination.

Continuous Enrollment of Doctoral Students

Unless on approved leave of absence, all doctoral students in the School of Public Health must register continuously for a minimum of two (2) semester credit hours until their degree is granted or until their status as a degree-seeking doctoral student is terminated. Students in good academic standing may request a leave of absence from the School for a defined period of time (up to three semesters), during which no academic progress is made. When a Leave of Absence is not appropriate due to extenuating circumstances for just one semester, students shall submit a written explanation to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for approval of the non-enrollment. After consultation with the academic advisor/mentor and approval from the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, students should complete a Request for Leave of Absence form, which can be obtained from the UNTHSC Office of the Registrar.