The Department of Population Health Sciences, part of the School of Medicine and Public Health, strives to provide leadership in the emerging, integrative field of population health. Its mission is to create, integrate, disseminate, and apply knowledge promoting the most efficient, equitable, and effective possible use of resources to maintain and improve the health of populations.

The department offers two graduate degree programs: an M.S. and a Ph.D. in population health and an M.S. and Ph.D. in epidemiology. The M.S and Ph.D. in Population Health can also be taken with an available named option in Epidemiology (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/population-health-sciences/population-health-ms/population-health-epidemiology-ms).

The research-oriented degree programs are designed to provide rigorous, interdisciplinary training to develop students’ abilities to synthesize knowledge and skills needed to address today’s health-related problems. Methodological and analytical training is grounded in biostatistics, epidemiology, and health services research, but also emphasizes methods employed in the social sciences and econometrics that contribute to the study of health in populations. While the program is based on a sequence of core courses, students, in consultation with their major professor, have the flexibility to design advanced study and research that best prepares them for their chosen area of interest.

Individuals choose this program because of its innovative approach, strong research focus, and personal attention to students. It is an ideal option for those considering a broad array of fields including epidemiology, public health, health policy, health economics, health services research, environmental health, industrial engineering, demography, and more. UW–Madison ranks as one of the most prolific research universities in the world, consistently placing in the top five among American public universities for research expenditures. The program’s interdisciplinary focus allows students the flexibility to work with a wide array of research/faculty on campus. For instance, program faculty include members from a number of other departments such as business, family medicine, industrial engineering, law, medical history and bioethics, medicine, nursing, ophthalmology, public affairs, sociology, and veterinary medicine. The multidisciplinary faculty coupled with the diverse backgrounds of the students provides a rich and stimulating training environment.

Faculty, staff, and students in the Department of Population Health Sciences engage in a wide variety of epidemiological and health services world-class research projects to understand determinants of health and health problems in populations, to analyze public and clinical health policies, and to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of healthcare. Research topics may include (but are not limited to) chronic, infectious, and environmental disease epidemiology; public health; studies of medical outcomes; health economics; maternal and childhood health; the determinants and measurement of population health status; and health administration and policy. These multidisciplinary research programs may include (but are not limited to) the study the effects and interactions of genetic traits; biologic and metabolic processes; pathogens; pollutants; lifestyles; behaviors; economic social and physical environments; and public health and health care systems on the health of populations. Methods employed involve developing and maintaining long term cohort studies, disease registries, population surveys, and retrospective analyses of large observational databases. Researchers in the department also work to advance methodology in health economics, population health evaluation, and statistical analyses.

For more information, see the graduate program Academic Guide (https://pophealth.wisc.edu/grad/academicGuide).

**ADMISSIONS**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS**

Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic degree programs and the Graduate School. Applicants must meet requirements of both the program(s) and the Graduate School. Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (https://grad.wisc.edu/admissions).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall Deadline</td>
<td>January 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Deadline</td>
<td>The program does not admit in the spring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Deadline</td>
<td>The program does not admit in the summer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRE (Graduate Record Examinations)</td>
<td>Required.*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Proficiency Test</td>
<td>Every applicant whose native language is not English or whose undergraduate instruction was not in English must provide an English proficiency test score and meet the Graduate School minimum requirements (<a href="https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/#english-proficiency">https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/#english-proficiency</a>). For the Test of English as a Foreign Language, (TOEFL), a minimum score of 580 (written), 237 (computer-based), or 92 (Internet-based) or above is absolutely required. For the International English Language Testing System, (IETLS), a minimum score of 7 is required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Test(s) (e.g., GMAT, MCAT)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters of Recommendation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* For applicants who have completed a doctoral degree, GRE scores are preferred, but we will accept scores from the entrance exam required for the doctoral degree (e.g., MCAT, LSAT).

Applications are welcome from students with diverse academic backgrounds. Students with strong academic preparation in the biological/medical sciences, quantitative analysis, and/or population health related social sciences are strongly encouraged to apply. Historically, many applicants who have succeeded in our program have come to the program with backgrounds in fields as diverse as microbiology, genetics, nutritional sciences, medicine, nursing, pharmacy, veterinary medicine, environmental sciences, political sciences, business, sociology, education, engineering, psychology, and economics.

New students are admitted to start in the fall semester of each school year. Applications are due by January 15 of each year. Late applications are not accepted.

Minimum requirements are:
1. Applicants must fulfill all Graduate School requirements.
2. Applicants must have an undergraduate degree with a grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale). Successful applicants generally have GPAs well above 3.0.
3. GRE scores no more than five years old are required for admission. Applicants with professional degrees may substitute their scores for the entrance exam that was required for the degree (e.g., MCAT, LSAT), if taken within the last 5 years. For more information on the GRE, see this link (http://www.ets.org/gre).
4. Applicants whose native language and language of study is not English must submit official TOEFL scores. Scores must be no more than five years old at the start of the semester for which an applicant is applying. Further details are available on the Graduate School website (http://grad.wisc.edu/admissions/requirements). Note that the minimum test scores for the program are higher than those required by the Graduate School. For the Test of English as a Foreign Language, (TOEFL) (http://www.toefl.org), a minimum score of 580 (written), 237 (computer-based), or 92 (Internet-based) or above is absolutely required. For the International English Language Testing System, (IETLS) (http://www.ielts.org), a minimum score of 7 is required. Use ETS institution code 1846.
5. At least one semester of advanced quantitative preparation (calculus is strongly preferred) with a grade of B or better.
6. A personal statement is required.
7. Three letters of recommendation are to be submitted electronically.

Upon entry to the graduate programs, students are matched with a faculty advisor. Faculty advisors helps students hone their interests, assists with identifying research projects, provide support for career development, and link students to the greater campus community. Students have the benefit of regular dialogues with faculty members. Seminars and integrated discussion groups allow for increased interaction with core faculty and community lecturers. Finally, the work of students is valued as evidenced by their entries in the annual department poster session, participation in public health symposia, authorship of publications, and involvement in community/research projects.

**Funding**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES**

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information (https://grad.wisc.edu/funding) is available from the Graduate School. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and processes related to funding.

**PROGRAM RESOURCES**

Students admitted to our degree programs are automatically considered for any available scholarships, traineeships, or graduate assistant positions in the department. The most common forms of funding support for our students are assistantships, traineeships, and fellowships.

**CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Credit</td>
<td>33 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence Credit</td>
<td>21 credits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Minimum of all coursework taken as a graduate student must be in graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university's Course Guide.

**REQUIREMENTS**

**MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS**

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiesandrequirementstext), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

**MAJOR REQUIREMENTS**

**MODE OF INSTRUCTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Face to Face</th>
<th>Evening/Weekend</th>
<th>Online</th>
<th>Hybrid</th>
<th>Accelerated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mode of Instruction Definitions**

**Evening/Weekend:** These programs are offered in an evening and/or weekend format to accommodate working schedules. Enjoy the advantages of on-campus courses and personal connections, while keeping your day job. For more information about the meeting schedule of a specific program, contact the program.

**Online:** These programs are offered primarily online. Many available online programs can be completed almost entirely online with all online programs offering at least 50 percent or more of the program work online. Some online programs have an on-campus component that is often designed to accommodate working schedules. Take advantage of the convenience of online learning while participating in a rich, interactive learning environment. For more information about the online nature of a specific program, contact the program.

**Hybrid:** These programs have innovative curricula that combine on-campus and online formats. Most hybrid programs are completed on-campus with a partial or completely online semester. For more information about the hybrid schedule of a specific program, contact the program.

**Accelerated:** These on-campus programs are offered in an accelerated format that allows you to complete your program in a condensed time-frame. Enjoy the advantages of on-campus courses with minimal disruption to your career. For more information about the accelerated nature of a specific program, contact the program.
Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.25 in all graduate work (including transfer credits) unless conditions for probationary status require higher grades. Students must also maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.25 or better in all coursework completed while enrolled in the population health graduate program. No grade of BC or lower in epidemiology required courses will be accepted for the degree.

Other Grade Requirements
Maintain no more than 6 credits of Incomplete (I) grades during any semester.

Assessments
No formal examination required.

Other Grade Requirements
No language requirements.

REQUIRED COURSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH/B M I 451</td>
<td>Introduction to SAS Programming for Population Health</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH/B M I 551</td>
<td>Introduction to Biostatistics for Population Health</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH/B M I 552</td>
<td>Regression Methods for Population Health</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH 795</td>
<td>Principles of Population Health Sciences</td>
<td>1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH/SOC 797</td>
<td>Introduction to Epidemiology</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH 820</td>
<td>Graduate Research Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select two additional methods courses 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select a minimum of 1 credit of courses in &quot;the responsible conduct of research&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP HLTH 794</td>
<td>Biological Basis of Population Health 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 One of which must be POP HLTH 796 Introduction to Health Services Research or POP HLTH 798 Epidemiologic Methods.
2 Some students must also complete this course.

RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH COURSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MED HIST 545</td>
<td>Ethical and Regulatory Issues in Clinical Investigation (Offered in Fall. MED HIST 545 does not fulfill all the NIH requirements for training in the responsible conduct of research for certain T and F awards.)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSING 802</td>
<td>Ethics and the Responsible Conduct of Research (Offered in Spring)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SURG SCI 812</td>
<td>Research Ethics and Career Development</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBS&amp;GYN 955</td>
<td>Responsible Conduct of Research for Biomedical Graduate Students (Offered in Fall)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBS&amp;GYN 956</td>
<td>Advanced Responsible Conduct of Research for Biomedical Students (Offered in Spring)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other courses may be substituted as approved by the advisor and director of grad studies.

NAMED OPTIONS (SUB-MAJORS)

A named option is a formally documented sub-major within an academic major program. Named options appear on the transcript with degree conferral.

View as list
View as grid

- POPULATION HEALTH: EPIDEMIOLOGY, M.S. (HTTP://GUIDE.WISC.EDU/GRADUATE/POPULATION-HEALTH-SCIENCES/POPULATION-HEALTH-MS/POPULATION-HEALTH-EPIDEMIOLOGY-MS)

POLICIES

GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School’s Academic Policies and Procedures (https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES

GRADUATE PROGRAM HANDBOOK

The Graduate Program Handbook (https://pophealth.wisc.edu/grad/academicGuide) is the repository for all of the program's policies and requirements.

PRIOR COURSEWORK

Graduate Work from Other Institutions

With program approval, students are allowed to count a maximum of 12 credits of graduate coursework taken from other institutions as a graduate student. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to a master’s degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

UW-Madison Undergraduate

No credits from a UW–Madison undergraduate degree are allowed to count toward the degree.

UW-Madison University Special

With program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 12 credits of coursework numbered 300 or above taken as a UW–Madison University Special student. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to a master's degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

PROBATION

A student not meeting guidelines for satisfactory progress will be placed on probation for one semester and will be reviewed by the steering committee following the probationary semester. Students may be dropped or allowed to continue by the committee based on review of progress during the probationary semester.
ADVISOR / COMMITTEE
All students will have a hold placed on their registration each semester. Students must meet with their advisor once each semester for academic advising to have the hold removed.

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED
15 credits

TIME CONSTRAINTS
Thesis required. Approval of a written proposal for thesis research is required before beginning thesis. M.S. candidates must submit Master's thesis to advisor within two years of completing all coursework.

Master's degree students who have been absent for five or more consecutive years lose all credits that they have earned before their absence.

OTHER
n/a

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES
Take advantage of the Graduate School’s professional development resources (https://grad.wisc.edu/pd) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
1. Articulate, critique, and elaborate the health services, health assessment, microeconomic, biostatistical, and epidemiologic foundations of Population Health research and practice.
2. Identify literature and data sources, assemble, evaluate and synthesize evidence through critical review and data analysis pertaining to questions and challenges in Population Health.
3. Demonstrate understanding of Population Health in its subject matter, historical and social context.
4. Select and utilize the most appropriate study designs and statistical methods for answering questions in Population Health.
5. Communicate clearly both in writing and orally in ways appropriate to Population Health.
6. Advance contributions to society of the methods and knowledge base of Population Health and Health Services Research.
7. Recognize and apply principles of ethical professional conduct in their scholarship.

PEOPLE

Faculty: Professors Durkin (chair), Cruickshanks, Gangnon, Kanarek, Mullahy, Oliver, Patz, Remington, M. Smith, Trentham-Dietz; Associate Professors Astor, Bautista, Burns, Ehrenthal, Engelman, Malecki, Peppard, Sethi; Assistant Professor Warren-Andersen