
Master of Science (MS) Degree Overview

Epidemiology master's degree programs include:

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| ▪ Master of Public Health (MPH) | 45 credit minimum |
| ▪ Master of Science (MS) | 45 credit minimum |
| ▪ Master of Science (MS) | 30 credit minimum |

MASTER'S PROGRAM DIRECTOR – Nancy Glynn, PhD epidnwg@pitt.edu

Degree Purposes

[MS in Epidemiology](#)

The MS degree includes a more flexible mix of courses in epidemiology and biostatistics for those with a research focus. The **45-credit MS degree** is designed, in general, for individuals who do not hold a professional degree in the health sciences or a doctoral degree. Although it is a terminal master's degree, it may also serve as prerequisite training a doctoral degree program in the Epidemiology Department.

The condensed **30-credit MS degree** is available for health professionals who are US citizens or permanent residents with graduate degrees in the health sciences (e.g. medicine, dentistry, nursing, etc.). It is meant to augment prior professional training acquired by the individual. Health professionals seeking a broader exposure to public health should consider the MPH program.

Academic Advisement and Research Mentorship

[Dr. Nancy Glynn](#) acts as an academic advisor for new MS students. When students have completed their required coursework and are prepared to move forward with development of their culminating thesis projects, they may be assigned to proceed under the direction of another Epidemiology faculty member who will act as a research mentor.

Degree Completion Timeframes

- Master's students begin their program of study in fall term.
- A 45-credit MS program for a matriculated graduate student may be completed in 3 academic terms (fall, spring, and the following fall); the required thesis project is typically completed in fall term of the second academic year.

The 30-credit MS program may be completed in 3 terms as well; the required MS

- thesis project may be optionally registered for in summer term of the first academic year.
- University of Pittsburgh undergraduates who qualify may enter the [Pitt Public Health Accelerated Bachelor's/Master's Program](#), and complete both their undergraduate and MPH or MS program in a compressed timeframe.
 - Note that Pitt undergraduates may qualify for [Pitt2Pitt scholarship](#) funding if they wish to pursue an MPH or MS program.
- **University of Pittsburgh Statute of Limitations** policy indicates that MS students must complete their degree requirements within 4 concurrent years after their matriculation terms.

Master's Program Course Sequences (suggested course plans for MS students)

- Refer to the **MS Course Sequence** for matriculants in current and prior academic years in the Curriculum section of the Epidemiology Student Handbook.

Student course enrollment

- Master's program students will meet individually in-person or remotely with the master's program director concerning course selection prior to each academic term.
- The student services manager and program administrator will e-mail new and continuing students instructions for self-enrollment.

Financial aid and student employment

- Contact Dr. Nancy Glynn, epidnwg@pitt.edu, with questions.

MS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Pitt Public Health & Departmental core course requirements

- Refer to the **Core Courses and Requirements** document in the Curriculum section of the Student Handbook to review a roster of current and prior year required coursework and experiences for the MS.

Communications Competency Requirement

- Master's program students must complete one presentation at a professional conference or meeting approved by their advisors prior to completing their degrees. A [Communications Competency Requirement Record form](#) should be signed and completed to document fulfillment of this experience and e-mailed to the Epidemiology Student Services Office.
- Note that the MS Comprehensive Exam and the MS Thesis defense **cannot** count as eligible presentations.

MS Oral Comprehensive Examination

- The **MS Thesis Guidelines** section of the Student Handbook provides information concerning the Comprehensive Exam milestone, as well as the faculty committee that must be proposed and approved to administer it and direct student ongoing research efforts.

Master's Thesis (MS students) [EPIDEM 2210]

- The **Overview of the MS Thesis** section of the Student Handbook provides additional details concerning thesis development and protocols.
- Thesis credits
 - MS Students should register for 3-5 credits when enrolling in EPIDEM 2210. Credits may be spread across multiple terms.
 - Students must be registered for at least 1 course credit in the term of their graduation.
- Topic selection
 - Should be discussed with advisor and/or research mentor.

Thesis Defense

- The Overview of the MS Thesis section of the Student Handbook provides information concerning Thesis Defense milestone protocols.

Report on Requirements for Master's Degree form

- This form must be completed after the student's Comprehensive Exam and the thesis defense have been passed, and a thesis approved by the student's committee has been submitted.
- It should be signed by all Comprehensive Exam/Thesis Defense Committee members and the Department of Epidemiology chair (or his/her designee), as evidence that both milestones have been passed, other degree requirements have been completed, and the student is prepared to graduate. The University Pittsburgh DocuSign tool may be utilized to obtain signatures.
- Form copies must be on file in Pitt Public Health Student Affairs as well as in the Epidemiology Department.
- Students cannot be certified to graduate by the Student Services manager and program administrator if these forms are not retained as noted above.
- More details about this form and its significance may be reviewed on the Pitt [Public Health Graduation Website](#).
- Contact the Student Services Offices to learn more about form processing.

Graduation

Students anticipating graduation receive support from the Epidemiology master's program director, the Student Services Office staff, and graduation coordination staff in the school's Student Affairs Office to ensure they are aware of all required departmental and school operational processes.

Refer to the [Graduation](#) section of the Pitt Public Health Website to learn more about processes and requirement deadlines.

- Students should discuss graduation readiness with their advisors.
- If advisors confirm they are academically prepared, students should follow their recommendations to proceed, and follow protocols to electronically apply to graduate.
- The Student Services Office specialist for master's degree programs will identify what departmental forms must be submitted in a meeting for prospective graduates.

- Students are responsible for communicating with the Student Affairs Office graduation communication staff at stuaff@pitt.edu with questions about school-level form requirements and protocols (including uploading of their committee-approved theses).
- All Epidemiology students are certified for graduation by the Epidemiology student services manager and program administrator.