

UAB SCHOOL OF
PUBLIC HEALTH

Knowledge that will change your world



**DEPARTMENT
OF
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
SCIENCES**



2017-18

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN PUBLIC
HEALTH (MSPH)**

ACADEMIC PROCEDURES

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Appendix A: Industrial Hygiene MSPH Degree - Curriculum Planning Worksheet

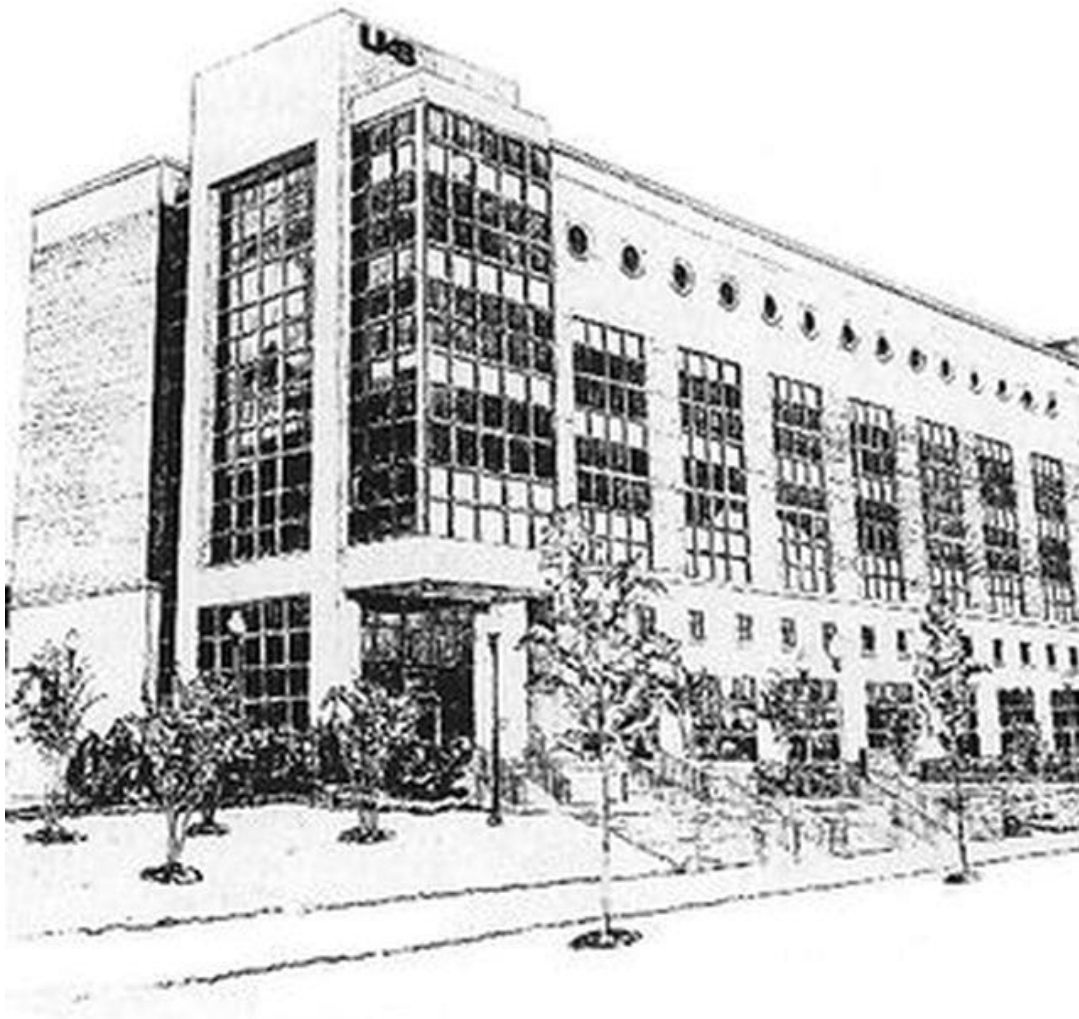
Appendix B: Environmental Health Sciences MSPH Degree - Curriculum Planning Worksheet

Appendix C: Department of Environmental Health Sciences Mentoring Policy

Introduction

The Department's Academic Procedures handout is meant to be a supplement to the Graduate School catalog and is intended to explain the policies and procedures particular to our department and the degrees we offer. Each student should access and become familiar with the UAB Graduate School of Public Health Catalog, online at <http://catalog.uab.edu/graduate/>

The first section of the Procedures covers subjects common to the department as a whole. The subsequent sections deal with subjects pertaining to particular degree tracks. These procedures may not satisfactorily address all possible circumstances; therefore, if the need arises, the procedures may be amended during the academic year. A copy of amendments will be provided to all EHS faculty, staff, and students.



Mission of the UAB School of Public Health

The mission of the School of Public Health is to create, disseminate, apply, and teach knowledge to improve health and wellbeing. Because of its inherent breadth, public health is comprised of many disciplines. Thus the school achieves its mission by bringing the various disciplines together to educate individuals who will be working to prevent disease and improve the health of the school's constituent populations. These individuals include experienced public health and other health professionals, undergraduates with education backgrounds in the sciences, and persons from developing countries with health-related backgrounds. An implicit part of this mission is a commitment to increase and validate, through research and practice, the body of knowledge upon which the school's educational programs are necessarily based.

The goal of the curriculum at the UAB School of Public Health is to combine innovative teaching methods with hands-on, community-based experience to give students the depth of expertise required of the public health professional in the 21st century.

Environmental Health Sciences Foci

The Department of Environmental Health Sciences focuses on understanding the causes, mechanisms, and consequences of environmental and occupational hazards, as well as the prevention and management of these hazards.

The department has two main areas:

- Environmental Toxicology

- Occupational and Environmental Health

Environmental Toxicology focuses on the areas of toxicant exposure and human disease, and gene-environment interactions. It develops and uses model biological systems to determine the mechanisms through which exposure to environmental toxicants alters gene expression, and, how natural variation in gene expression causes altered susceptibility to environmental toxicants.

Occupational and Environmental Health focuses on the identification and assessment of human health threats; on the prevention of disease and injury related to occupational and environmental agents; and, on the promotion of health among workers, individuals and communities. This includes studies in Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S) and Industrial Hygiene (IH).

The Department of Environmental Health Sciences offers MPH, MSPH, and PhD degree programs.

Environmental Health Science Competencies

CEPH requires competencies be identified for each degree program and area of specialization within the program. Below are the departmental competencies for the PhD program. The competencies that guide the development of specific specializations are listed under the individual programs.

General ENH MSPH Competencies

- MSPH-ENH 1: Describe critical factors of exposure assessment studies.
- MSPH-ENH 2: Explain how environmental factors impact human health.
- MSPH-ENH 3: Specify approaches for assessing environmental hazards.
- MSPH-ENH 4: Employ risk assessment approaches
- MSPH-ENH 5: Describe regulatory programs and agencies that influence environmental and occupational health issues.

- MSPH-ENH 6: Explain how environmental justice impacts health.
- MSPH-ENH 7: Communicate scientific information in public and professional venues.
- MSPH-ENH 8: Conduct a literature review on an ENH topic.
- MSPH-ENH 9: Write a research proposal appropriate for degree.
- MSPH-ENH 10: Perform supervised research appropriate for degree
- MSPH-ENH 11: Write a manuscript for a peer-reviewed journal based on own research.

Environmental Toxicology focus

All General ENH MSPH Competencies, plus:

- MSPH-ENH 12: Demonstrate practical knowledge of environmental regulations.
- MSPH-ENH 13: Specify approaches for assessing air- and water-borne agents.

Industrial Hygiene focus:

All General ENH MSPH Competencies, plus:

- MSPH-ENH 14: Recognize workplace risk factors for musculoskeletal disorders and understand general methods for controlling them.
- MSPH-ENH 15: Apply experiences learned in practicums to industrial hygiene practice.
- MSPH-ENH 16: Apply fundamental concepts of industrial hygiene theory and practice.
- MSPH-ENH 17: Demonstrate proficiency in industrial and occupational exposures and controls
- MSPH-ENH 18: Design, conduct, and evaluate research studies

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCES FACULTY AND STAFF

Allen, Shantice	996-6915	RPHB 534B	sallen1@uab.edu	Assistant Professor
Brown, Julie	975-8075	RPHB 227B	jbrown@uab.edu	Coordinators, Graduate Programs
Chalbot, Marie-Cecile	934-5931	RPHB 530-C	chalbot@uab.edu	Research Assistant Professor
Dickinson, Dale	975-7493	EB 240	dadickin@uab.edu	Associate Professor
Harvard, Ginny	975-7032	RPHB 534A	ginnyd@uab.edu	Financial Associate
Fanucchi, Michelle	934-7230	RPHB 534C	fanucchi@uab.edu	Associate Professor and UAB Ombudsman
Fields, Tara	934-6080	RPHB 530	tfields@uab.edu	Office Svcs Specialist III
Holt, Paulisha	934-7178	RPHB 520A	pholt@uab.edu	Program Manager 1
Holladay, Allyn	934-7209	RPHB 520C	allynh@uab.edu	Continuing Education Director
Iles, Karen	975-9691	AB 719A	kiles@uab.edu	Associate Professor & Director, Conflict of Interest Review Board
Judd, Gabe	934-2740	RPHB 524A	gjudd@uab.edu	Research Engineer and EHS Safety Director
Kavouras, Ilias	934-6089	RPHB 524B	kavouras@uab.edu	Associate Professor and MPH, MSPH & PhD Programs Director
Lungu, Claudiu	934-2072	RPHB 520B	clungu@uab.edu	Associate Professor & Director, ERC
Oh, Jonghwa	934-7060	RPHB 530A	jonghwa@uab.edu	Instructor
Wilson, Craig	975-7608	RPHB 523	cwilson@uab.edu	Professor and Interim Chair
Wilson, Laura	934-7178	RPHB 520D	wilson75@uab.edu	Program Coordinator

FACULTY RESEARCH INTERESTS

Shautice Allen, PhD, Assistant Professor and Program Director for One Great Community/Center for Clinical and Translational Science. Research interests include community resilience and livability; environmental justice and health equity along with community-based action research that enhances community health. sallen1@uab.edu



Marie-Cecile Chalbot, PhD, Research Assistant Professor. Research interests include Biomarkers of exposure and effect to environmental pollutants; organic aerosols and dust characterization; NMR metabolomics; environmental and occupational toxicity; cardiovascular health. chalbot@uab.edu



Dale A. Dickinson, PhD, Associate Professor and Director University Quality Enhancement Plan. Research interests include molecular mechanisms of the adaptive response to environmental toxicants and pollutants; mechanism of action of naturally occurring compounds; environmental justice; development and implementation of reflective pedagogies to enhance public health education. dadickin@uab.edu



Michelle V. Fanucchi, PhD, Associate Professor and UAB Ombudsperson. Research interests include environmental justice and community-based participatory research; childhood lung disease and its etiology; pulmonary cell biology and toxicology of air pollutants, including particulates, ozone, chlorine and various polyaromatic hydrocarbons; and cell-to-cell interactions in the developing lung as well as in repair after lung injury and disease in children. fanucchi@uab.edu



Karen E. Iles, PhD, Associate Professor and Director, Office of Conflict of Interest Review Board. Research interests include nutrient regulation of gene expression; toxicology; type II diabetes; integration of technology in research administration. kiles@uab.edu



Ilias G. Kavouras, PhD, Associate Professor and MPH, MPSH, & PhD Programs Director. Research interests include health impacts of PM_{2.5} and ozone; organic aerosol characterization; atmospheric chemistry; exposure assessments; climate-sensitive (droughts, fires and weather extremes) phenomena and human health. kavouras@uab.edu



Claudiu T. Lungu, PhD, Associate Professor and Director of the Deep South Center. Research interests include evaluation of adsorption characteristics of granular activated carbon and activated carbon fibers used in respiratory protection, protective clothing and environmental remediation applications. Use of carbon nanotubes in air sampling devices. Design of new respirators using 3D scanning and rapid prototyping technology. Measurement and evaluation of VOC exposure in various workplaces; VOC emissions from building materials; Exposure to ionizing radiation. clungu@uab.edu



Jonghwa Oh, PhD, Instructor. Research interests include Investigation on biomass-derived micro-/nano- materials for VOC sorption; innovative VOC analytical methods; Development of customized personal protective equipment (PPE) via 3D printing; Noise exposure map; Improvement of industrial ventilation. jonghwa@uab.edu



Information for Secondary and Emeritus Faculty can be found on the department's webpage, <http://www.soph.uab.edu/ehs/faculty>

Departmental Information

General Information

Fax Machine

The department has a fax machine (205-975-6341) located in room 530. The fax machine is for the business use of faculty and staff of the department. The charge for sending a personal domestic fax is \$3 for the first page plus \$1 for each additional page and a personal international fax is \$5 for the first page plus \$1 for each additional page.

Telephones

A phone is available for student use in the Ryals Building first floor lobby. Students may use department phones for official use when approved by one of the department's faculty or staff.

Lab Access

While in the research phase of study, it may be necessary for a student to have a key for lab access. The student should contact his/her advisor who will in turn generate a request for the student to obtain a key. Presently, UAB Key Control requires a deposit of \$1 per key when the key is picked up. The money is refunded when you return the key to Key Control.

Reference Materials

Students are welcomed to use books and journals located in the department. Check with each faculty member before looking for, or borrowing, any materials from his office as each has his own "check-out" procedures. The department maintains several journal subscriptions, as well as departmental copies of theses and dissertations and other reference materials, presently in the back hall. These references can be "checked-out", but are not to be removed from the building.

Reserving Conference and Class Rooms and Equipment

Conference and class rooms and equipment (e.g. pointer, laptop) are to be reserved on-line through [25 Live](#) room reservation system.

SOPH Addresses

Department Mailing Address

Department of Environmental Health Sciences
RPHB 530
1720 – 2nd Avenue South
Birmingham, Alabama 35294-0022



Department Web Site

For other departmental information and news please access our website at:

<http://www.soph.uab.edu/ehs>

School of Public Health Physical Address

UAB School of Public Health
Ryals Public Health Building 530
1665 University Blvd
Birmingham, Alabama 35294-0022



School of Public Health Web Site

For other student information please access the school's website at:

<http://www.soph.uab.edu>

SOPH Information

Dean's Office

Max Michael, M.D. (205/975-7742) is Dean of the School of Public Health.

OSAS – The Office of Student and Academic Services

Peter M. Ginter, Ph.D. (205/975-8970) is Associate Dean for Graduate Education

pginter@uab.edu

Lisa McCormick, Ph.D. is the Assistant Dean for Public Health and Practice.

lmccormick@uab.edu

Cheryl Johnson (205/934-4993) is Director of Academic Accountability Services and is the Dean's Office contact for questions concerning courses, student record updates, policies and procedures – clynnj@uab.edu

OSAS Departmental contacts

Front Desk & Reservations:

A variety of work study students work at the front desk; job responsibilities including helping with admission, answering general questions as well as vending machine refunds and making room reservations.

Electronic message board postings:

Brad Daniel is responsible for updating the lobby message board. tbdaniel@uab.edu

Admissions:

Angela Sullivan (205/934-2684) is director of admission for the school. amsulli@uab.edu

Student Internships:

Meena Nabavi, MPH is the contact for EHS students regarding their internships. Her email is mnavabi@uab.edu

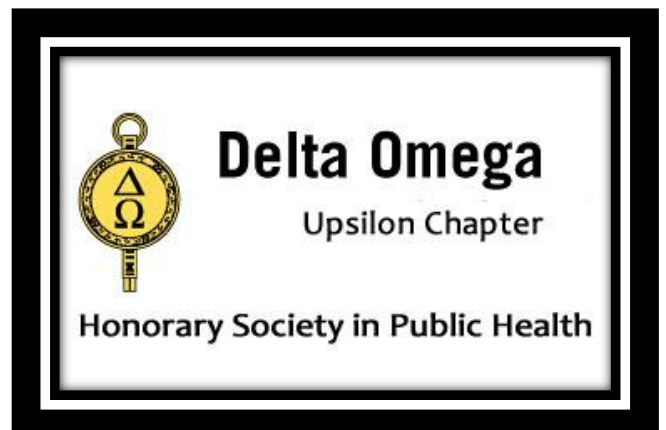
Public Health Student Association Representative:

Public Health Student Association (PHSA) elections are typically held during the fall term for departmental representatives. Students from each department elect one to two representatives. [Meena Nabavi](#) is the staff advisor. Her number is (205) 975-7644.



Useful Phone Numbers

Barnes and Noble Bookstore at UAB	205-996-2665
International Recruitment and Student Services	205-934-3328
Disability Support Services	205-934-4205
Graduate School.....	205-934-8227
Lister Hill Library	205-934-2230
Mervyn Sterne Library	205-934-6364
Student Health Services	204-934-3580
Student Housing.....	205-996-0400
UAB Parking	205-934-3513
UAB Police.....	205-934-4434
UAB Financial Aid	205-934-8223
Emergency.....	911



Registration Information

BLAZER ID

Every Student is required to have a BlazerID and email, as The School of Public Health and the Department of Environmental Health Sciences uses this email to disseminate information and inform of any changes in courses or scheduling. You will also need a BlazerID to register. This [link](#) will take you to BlazerID Central; from there you will be able to get answers to any questions you may have.

Banner Registration Information

All registration is done online through BlazerNET. BlazerNET is designed especially for the internal UAB community, and provides centralized access to the information and services that students, faculty and staff need on a daily basis. From there you can get up-to-date information about UAB news and events to access to class registration, financial aid, grading, policies and forms, the Oracle Finance and HRM systems and more, BlazerNET puts what you need at your fingertips.

You can log on with your BlazerID by [clicking here](#).

From there you can look up available classes. To be able to register you have to meet with your academic advisor or [Julie Brown, MS](#), Coordinator, Graduate Academic Programs to discuss degree planning and course selection.

Master of Science in Public Health

Introduction

The Master of Science in Public Health (MSPH) degree is designed to provide an intensive educational experience for students with or without previous experience in the desired track of study. Environmental health professionals must be able to recognize, evaluate, and control environmental situations that may lead to disease. They may also require knowledge in designing and conducting studies of environmental chemicals to assess the probability that environmental toxic agents present a risk to humans and/or the environment and to define safe limits of human exposure to them.

There are two MSPH tracks within the department: Environmental Toxicology, and Industrial Hygiene

Competencies

The departmental competencies covered by these degrees are:

- MSPH-ENH 1: Describe critical factors of exposure assessment studies.
- MSPH-ENH 2: Explain how environmental factors impact human health.
- MSPH-ENH 3: Specify approaches for assessing environmental hazards.
- MSPH-ENH 4: Employ risk assessment approaches
- MSPH-ENH 5: Describe regulatory programs and agencies that influence environmental and occupational health issues.
- MSPH-ENH 6: Explain how environmental justice impacts health.
- MSPH-ENH 7: Communicate scientific information in public and professional venues.
- MSPH-ENH 8: Conduct a literature review on an ENH topic.
- MSPH-ENH 9: Write a research proposal appropriate for degree.
- MSPH-ENH 10: Perform supervised research appropriate for degree
- MSPH-ENH 11: Write a manuscript for a peer-reviewed journal based on own research.

Environmental Toxicology focus

- MSPH-ENH 12: Demonstrate practical knowledge of environmental regulations.
- MSPH-ENH 13: Specify approaches for assessing air- and water-borne agents.

Industrial Hygiene focus:

- MSPH-ENH 14: Recognize workplace risk factors for musculoskeletal disorders and understand general methods for controlling them.
- MSPH-ENH 15: Apply experiences learned in practicums to industrial hygiene practice.
- MSPH-ENH 16: Apply fundamental concepts of industrial hygiene theory and practice.
- MSPH-ENH 17: Demonstrate proficiency in industrial and occupational exposures and controls
- MSPH-ENH 18: Design, conduct, and evaluate research studies

Curriculum Requirements

The curriculum is designed for the full-time student and therefore conflicts in scheduling may occur if courses are taken out of sequence or on a part-time basis. Students are generally admitted in the fall semester and should follow the appropriate program's curriculum outline.

Advisor

An academic advisor is appointed for each new student at the time of admission. A student may request a change in advisor at any time; however, all changes in advisor must be submitted on the appropriate form and approved by current advisor and Coordinator, Graduate Academic Programs. See Julie Brown, MS, for form and details.

Research Advisor

During the first year of study, MSPH Thesis students should discuss their research interests with all faculty in the department. By late spring semester, the student will identify and request one faculty member to be the research advisor for his/her project research committee. Be aware that in some cases faculty members of choice may not be able to comply with a request to be research advisor since this workload must be distributed roughly evenly among the faculty.

The research advisor also serves as the student's academic advisor. When there is a change of advisor, the student should advise the Graduate Program Director and submit the appropriate form to the Office of Student and Academic Services.

Thesis Research

Students in the MSPH program do a masters thesis. Students pursuing the MSPH in Environmental Toxicology must earn at least 13 hours in conduct of their thesis research, while students pursuing the MPSH in Industrial Hygiene must earn at least 10 hours in the conduct of their thesis research. The thesis is based on an "apprenticeship" relationship between the student and his/her research advisor. The research advisor will be responsible for all aspects of the thesis research; however, a graduate committee must approve the ultimate work.

The committee should consist of at least three Graduate School faculty members, one of whom should be from outside the student's graduate specialization and each of whom should be able to bring some relevant insight and expertise to guide the student.

Recommendations for graduate study committee membership are submitted by the advisor and the student to the Graduate Program Director, who subsequently submits these recommendations to the Graduate School Dean.

Pre-proposal

During the second semester, the student should have selected a research advisor. A "Change of Advisor" form should be completed if the research advisor is different from the academic advisor. The student will present the advisor with a one- to two-page description (pre-proposal) of the problem to address, general strategy and expected outcomes before the end of the second semester.

Proposal

The student will register for ENH 698-Master's Directed Research during the second or third semester. Early in the semester the advisor and student will develop a research project committee consisting of three members. An "Appointment of Research Project Committee Approval Request" form should be completed.

A draft of the research proposal is due to the advisor one week before the end of the third semester.

The student will register for ENH 698 during the third or fourth semester. The student should schedule a proposal meeting within the first month of the fourth semester. After the proposal is accepted by the committee, an "Application for Admission to Candidacy for the Master's Degree" must be completed, and then the student may conduct the research work. Once admitted to candidacy the student will register for ENH 699: Masters Project Research the remaining semester/s. The student should meet often with his/her advisor, and with other committee members as appropriate, to discuss the status of work and problems. The student should meet with Julie Brown, Coordinator, Graduate Academic Programs to discuss appropriate form and paperwork.

Final Defense

A first draft of the thesis should be presented to the advisor. The submission and approval of a draft to the graduate committee is also recommended. After the thesis is acceptable to the advisor (and ideally the committee), a final defense may then be scheduled.

A memorandum and a copy of the thesis will be sent to the committee members and the Dean of the Graduate School. After a successful defense, the research advisor is responsible for obtaining signatures on the "Recommendation for the Master's Degree-with Committee". The student must make any necessary corrections to the report and deliver it to the advisor. Once the advisor acknowledges that all changes have been made, the student will submit it to the graduate school and provide the department with one original report (for binding) on 25% bond / or archival paper.

In addition, the department requires:

- that the student provide his/her advisor with an electronic copy of the document and data,
- clean up the lab area that he/she occupied
- correctly dispose of any hazardous material used
- and, turn in keys (or proof that keys were turned in to UAB Key Control).

Application for Degree

A student must be registered for at least 3 hours in the semester they intend to graduate. At the beginning of the semester of anticipated graduation (usually spring), the student will complete an "[Application for Degree](#)" form.

In order to graduate, all degree requirements must be satisfied and all "I" and "N" grades must be removed. The department will be responsible for assuring that all department requirements have been met (see checklist).

Award of Degree

Upon approval of the School of Public Health Associate Dean for Graduate Education, and payment of any outstanding financial obligations to the university, the candidate will receive the degree of Master of Science in Public Health. Diplomas are issued at the end of each semester. Degrees are formally awarded at commencement exercises in December and April.

If the new graduate wishes to participate in the ceremony, a cap and gown must be bought by the graduate through the Barnes and Nobel Bookstore before the event. Contact the UAB Bookstore for more information.

Please see the UAB Graduate School's website for further requirements.

Summary Procedures for the MSPH Degree

- ❑ Completion of first year coursework and appointment of research advisor
- ❑ Completion of a proposal and appointment of a research committee
- ❑ Admission to candidacy
- ❑ Application for degree first of final semester
- ❑ Successful defense of Thesis
- ❑ Provide department with one copy of thesis printed on bright white, 24lb paper.
- ❑ Provide advisor with an electronic copy of the document and data
- ❑ Clean up lab area utilized and properly store all supplies
- ❑ Correctly dispose of hazardous /biological/radioactive wastes
- ❑ Turn in keys
- ❑ Payment of appropriate fees by student
- ❑ Graduate program director sends School of Public Health all final papers

Appendix A Environmental Health Sciences MSPH Industrial Hygiene Curriculum Planning Worksheet						
Name:	Banner ID::					
Course Name	Term			Credit Hours	Term / Year	Grade
	Fall	Spr	Sum			
Core Requirements: 13 credit hours						
BST 611: Intermediate Statistical Analysis I (or equiv.)	C	O		3		
BST 612: Intermediate Statistical Analysis II		C	O	3		
ENH 611: Environmental and Occupational Exposure Assessment	CO			3		
EPI 610: Principles of Epidemiological Research and Laboratory	CO			4		
IH Requirements: 26 credit hours						
ENH 612: Assessing & Managing Environmental Risks	CO			3		
ENH 621: Fundamentals of Industrial Hygiene	O			3		
ENH 624: Control of Occupational Hazards	CO			2		
ENH 625: Industrial Hygiene Case Studies		CO		2		
ENH 626: Physical Agents		CO		2		
ENH 650: Env. & Occp Toxicology & Diseases		C	O	3		
ENH 661: Environmental Sampling and Analysis	CO			2		
ENH 670: Fundamentals of Occ Saf & Ergonomics		O		3		
ENH 680: Field Interdisciplinary Studies	C			1		
ENH 680: Field Interdisciplinary Studies	C			1		
ENH 681: Interdisciplinary Worksite Evaluations		C		2		
ENH 681: Interdisciplinary Worksite Evaluations		C		2		
Masters Directed Research: minimum 4 credit hours						
ENH 698: Masters Directed Research	C	C	C	4		
Masters Level Research: minimum of 6 hours once admitted to candidacy						
ENH 699: Masters Level Project Research	C	C	C	6		
Department Seminar: 4 credit hours						
ENH 691: Current Topics in Environmental Health Sciences Research	C	C		1		
ENH 691: Current Topics in Environmental Health Sciences Research	C	C		1		
ENH 691: Current Topics in Environmental Health Sciences Research	C	C		1		
ENH 691: Current Topics in Environmental Health Sciences Research	C	C		1		
Internship: 3 credit hours						
ENH 697: Internship	I	I	I	3		
Total Credit Hours Earned for Degree				56		
Students receiving a MSPH are required to complete a 37 hour, self-paced online course entitled "Overview of Public Health" by the end of their second semester. Students with prior public health education (coursework in each of the public health core disciplines) or experience (5 years in public health) may be waived from this requirement by permission of the Associate Dean.						

Environmental Health Sciences MSPH Environmental Toxicology Curriculum Planning Worksheet						
Name:	Banner ID::					
Course Name	Term			Credit Hours	Term / Year	Grade
	Fall	Spr	Sum			
Core Requirements: 13 credit hours						
BST 611: Intermediate Statistical Analysis I (or equiv.)	C	O		3		
BST 612: Intermediate Statistical Analysis II		C	O	3		
ENH 611: Environmental and Occupational Exposure Assessment	CO			3		
EPI 610: Principles of Epidemiological Research and Laboratory	CO			4		
Department Track Requirements: 6 credit hours						
ENH 612: Assessing & Managing Environmental Risks	CO			3		
ENH 650: Env. & Occp Toxicology & Diseases		C	O	3		
Environmental Health Electives - 3 hours						
	CO	CO	CO	3		
Masters Directed Research: minimum 6 credit hours						
ENH 698: Masters Directed Research	C	C	C	3		
ENH 698: Masters Directed Research	C	C	C	3		
Masters Project Research: minimum of 7 hours once admitted to candidacy						
ENH 699: Masters Level Project Research	C	C	C	3		
ENH 699: Masters Level Project Research	C	C	C	4		
Department Seminar: 4 credit hours						
ENH 691: Current Topics in Environmental Health Sciences Research	C	C		1		
ENH 691: Current Topics in Environmental Health Sciences Research	C	C		1		
ENH 691: Current Topics in Environmental Health Sciences Research	C	C		1		
ENH 691: Current Topics in Environmental Health Sciences Research	C	C		1		
Total Credit Hours Earned for Degree				39		
Students receiving a MSPH are required to complete a 37 hour, self-paced online course entitled "Overview of Public Health" by the end of their second semester. Students with prior public health education (coursework in each of the public health core disciplines) or experience (5 years in public health) may be waived from this requirement by permission of the Associate Dean.						

Department of Environmental Health Sciences
Mentoring Policy

Approved September 9, 2011

This EHS departmental policy clarifies the responsibilities of the faculty advisor for MSPH and PhD students and the procedure that must be followed in order to change the faculty advisor. The intention of the policy is to provide a transparent set of responsibilities and procedures that protect both student and departmental interests.

Responsibilities of the Faculty Advisor

1. Following Graduate School policy, the advisor should “confer with the student about courses and any special work to be taken on the basis of the student’s previous experience and the requirements of the graduate program.”
2. To ensure this graduate school policy is followed in a timely manner, the appointed advisor must be available to the student at least once per semester, in the month preceding course selection.
3. Within the first year of study, the student and faculty advisor should determine the broad topical interest for their thesis or dissertation project. At a minimum, the appointed faculty advisor should meet with the student once in the first year of study to determine the focus of the thesis or dissertation.
4. Once the thesis or dissertation project topic is established, the faculty advisor and student should agree upon a regular meeting schedule to ensure timely organization of a committee, preliminary examination, and defense.

A PhD student’s first year

According to the Graduate School Policies and Procedures (Sections 9 and 10, Policy 1 and 2, for MSPH and PhD level, respectively), a faculty advisor should be assigned to incoming students, and this can be a temporary assignment. As stated in the EHS student handbook, EHS PhD students complete three research rotations in their first year. By the end of their first year, the student, along with the appointed faculty advisor and Graduate Program Director will formalize the faculty advisor for the student based on the student’s interest and faculty capacity.

Procedures for changing the faculty advisor--initiated by the student

1. The student should meet with the current faculty advisor to discuss the desire to change advisors. If the change in advisor is mutually agreeable to the current faculty advisor and requested future faculty advisor, a “change in advisor form” should be submitted to the Graduate Program Director. The Graduate Program Director can choose to approve the change directly. A denial must be reviewed by the Graduate Program Committee and the Department Chair. The final decision is made by the Graduate Program Director with input from the Graduate Program Committee and the Department Chair.
2. Alternatively, the student has the option of presenting a written request directly to the Graduate Program Director that describes the specific reasons for requesting the change. In this case, the Graduate Program Director will evaluate the request and aid the student in identifying a new faculty advisor. In addition, the Graduate Program Director will communicate with the current faculty advisor and request a written evaluation of the mentoring relationship, including a thorough account of meetings held and outcomes of those meetings. The Graduate Program Director will present the student’s request and the current faculty advisor will present his/her

evaluation of the mentoring relationship to the Graduate Program Committee and Department Chair. The Graduate Program Committee and Department Chair will then provide recommendations to the Graduate Program Director, who will make the final decision.

3. If the request is approved, the Graduate Program Committee and Department Chair will then provide recommendations to the Graduate Program Director to appoint the identified new faculty advisor.
4. If the faculty advisor change request is denied or if submission of dismissal forms is approved by the Graduate Program Director in the case where a new advisor cannot be identified, the student may then request an external faculty advisory committee be formed to re-review the request. This request will be forwarded to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Strategic Programs, who will lead the formation of the advisory committee and review of the request.

Procedures for changing the faculty advisor--initiated by the faculty advisor

1. The faculty advisor should meet with the student to discuss the desire to be relieved of his/her duties as the student's advisor. If the change in advisor is mutually agreeable to the student and to a requested future faculty advisor, a change in advisor should be submitted to the Graduate Program Director. The Graduate Program Director can choose to approve the change directly. A denial must be reviewed by the Graduate Program Committee and the Department Chair. The final decision is made by the Graduate Program Director with input from the Graduate Program Committee and the Department Chair.
2. Alternatively, the faculty advisor may present a written request directly to the Graduate Program Director that describes the specific reasons for requesting the change. In this case, the Graduate Program Director will schedule a Graduate Program Committee meeting where the current faculty advisor will present his/her justification for being relieved of his/her mentoring role. The Graduate Program Director will present an evaluation of the student's progress and the student's needs in terms of mentorship. The Graduate Program Committee and Department Chair will provide recommendations to the Graduate Program Director, who will make the final decision.
3. If the request is approved, the Graduate Program Director will then work with the student to identify a new faculty advisor. If the request is denied, or the student is not in good academic standing and a new advisor cannot be identified, the Graduate Program Director shall submit dismissal forms for the student.